

THE CARMEN
DE
HASTINGAE PROELIO
OF GUY
BISHOP OF AMIENS

EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY
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CARMEN DE HASTINGAE PROELIO

PROOEMIUM

f. 227^v

Quem probitas celebrat, sapientia munit et ornat,
 Erigit et decorat, L(anfrancum) W(ido)¹ saluat.

Cum studiis clarus uidearis lucifer ortus
 Et tenebras pellis radiis dum lumina spargis,
 Per mare nec fragilis set sis tutissima nauis,

Te precor ad portum carmen deducere nostrum;
 Inuidie uentis² agitari nec paciari,

Nec Boree flatum timeat, set litus amenum
 Remige te carpat, ne lesum rupe labescat.

Sis iudex illi iustus, de more³ magistris
 Quod minus est addens et quod super, obsecro, radens.²

Nullus, credo, sibi sub te tutore nocebit;
 Sic tuus incipiat fieri meus iste libellus,

Vt careat uicis et laudibus amplifecur.
 Euitare uolens dispendia desidiose

Mentis et ingenii, placeant cum carmina multis,
 Carninibus studiis⁴ Normannica bella³ reponi.

Elegi potius leuibus cantare Camenis⁴
 Ingenium mentis uanis quam subdere curis.

Cum sit et egregium describere gesta potentum,
 Finibus occiduis que gessit regia proles

Willemus, titulis commisi posteritatis.
 Nam sibi sublatum regnum uirtute redemit

Et uictor patris extendit trans mare fines:
 Ergo decet memorare suum per secula factum.

f. 228^r

^a uentis *eds.*; mentis *A*; mentis *or* meritis (*with alteration*) *B*
^c studi *B*

^b more *eds.*, morte

¹ For L. and W., see above, pp. xiv ff., xxv.

² The first eleven verses are leonine with monosyllabic rhyme.

PROLOGUE

To L., renowned for his virtue, and protected, armed, embellished
 and exalted by wisdom, W. sends greetings.¹

Since, great scholar, like the risen Morning Star you dispel the
 darkness and spread light by your rays, and are not a frail, but a safe
 ship for carrying my poem to port, do not allow it, I beseech you, to
 be shaken by the winds of envy or frightened by Boreas' blasts or
 dashed on a rock and sink, but, with you as steersman, let it reach a
 friendly shore. Judge it justly; and, I beg, like a schoolmaster, supply
 what it might lack and erase any excess.² No one, I believe, with you
 as tutor, will come to grief. May, therefore, this little work of mine
 begin to become yours, so that it may be freed from errors and
 enhanced by virtues.

Wanting to avoid wasting my time and talents in idleness, I
 decided, since poetry is so popular, to write some verses about the
 Norman Conquest,³ and, instead of putting my mind to worthless
 business, to sing in light measures.⁴ Also, as it is praiseworthy to
 write of the deeds of mighty men, I have entrusted to the tablets of
 posterity the deeds which that royal offspring, William, performed
 on the world's western rim. For manfully he recovered a kingdom of
 which he had been deprived, and by his victory extended the
 boundaries of his ancestral lands across the sea—a deed worthy to
 be remembered for ever.

³ The plural noun, as often in verse and frequently in *Carmen*, is used, for metrical reasons, instead of the singular.

⁴ Davis, 'The *Carmen*', p. 256, following E. R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. W. R. Trask (London, 1953), p. 430, interpreted this as 'to write a secular poem'. And, he thought, as it is contrasted with 'devoting his genius to vain causes (or, worthless business)', it points away from episcopal authorship.

(CARMEN)¹

Iusticie cultor, patrie pax, hostibus hostis,
 Tutor et ecclesie, rex benedice, uale!
 Amodo torpentes decet euigilare Camenas
 Et calamos alacres reddere laude tua.
 Mutasti comitis regali nomine nomen?
 Quod tibi nobilitas contulit et probitas;
 Iulius alter,³ enim, cuius renouando triumphum
 Effrenem gentem cogis amare iugum.
 Innumerus terre populus, nec perfida nautis
 Equora, nec litus saxa nociua ferens,
 Incumbens hyemis nec te deterruit horror,
 Quin ab aus piteres regna relicta tibi.
 Posteritate⁴ fauet tibi ius, legis quoque summa;
 Ergo tibi terror omnis ademptus⁵ erat.
 Tempore set longo te trans freta ducere classes
 Tempestas prohibet imber et assiduus.
 Dum prestolaris uentorum prosperitatem
 Et mare turbatum cogit abire retro,
 Euris et equoreas crispabat flatibus⁶ undas.
 Tunc tibi planctus erat spesque negata uie;⁵
 Tuque, uelis nolis, tandem tua litora linquens,
 Nauigium uertis litus ad alterius.
 Portus ab antiquis Vinaci⁶ fertur haberi;
 Que uallat portum Somana nomen aque.
 Docta nimis bello gens est per cuncta fidele⁴
 Fluctuagis prebens sepius hospicium.⁷

^a adeptus B ^b fluctus B ^c nolis added in a second hand A
^d ? emend to fidelis Michel

¹ There is no break in the MSS. But elegiac couplets replace hexameters. Moreover, the poet now addresses the 'blessed king' and maintains this style for some 115 lines. It is, however, awkward that in the opening couplet, in contrast to the first lines of the preface, where L. is greeted, the king is bidden farewell (*uale*). This, however, may simply signify the change of subject, the *partitio* or *divisio* of the rhetoricians—or *uale* may have been used for the metrically impossible *salute*. M. & M. translated it 'Hail!'

² The change of title is repeated in vv. 595-6 and 756, and was, or became, a topos. Cf. Barlow, *William Rufus*, pp. 51-2. The problem is, at what point did William actually become king? See above, p. lxxxvi.

³ The likening of William to Julius Caesar (see also vv. 351-4) was taken up and developed in CG, and became a topos. See above, p. lvii.

⁴ The text, as Orlandi, 'Recension', p. 219, observed, does not make sense even if *posteritas* could be understood as referring to the succession of Harold. The desired sense is

(THE POEM)¹

Fare thee well, blessed king, guardian of justice, giver of peace to the fatherland, a foe to its foes and the protector of its church, for now must the sleeping Muses be aroused and my pen move swiftly to your praise. You changed your rank from count to king,² a title which your noble birth and virtue earned. For, another Caesar,³ by repeating his triumph you compel an unbridled people to love the yoke. Neither the dense population of the land, nor a sea treacherous to sailors, nor a dangerous rock-bound coast, nor the looming horror of winter deterred you from seeking a kingdom bequeathed you by your forebears. Since your hereditary right⁴ and every law were in your favour, you were relieved of all fear. But for a long time tempest and continuous rain prevented your fleet from sailing across the Channel. While you waited for a favourable wind, the rough sea compelled you to turn back, and the east wind curled the ocean's waves with its blasts.⁵ You were in despair when all hope of sailing was denied you. But, in the end, whether you liked it or not, you left your own shore and directed your ships towards the coast of a neighbour.

The port of Vimeu, which the river Somme enfolds, is said to have been known to the ancients.⁶ Its inhabitants, although well skilled in warfare, more often provide true hospitality to seafarers.⁷ Above the

¹ 'hereditary right' (through Edward's mother, Emma, the daughter of Count Richard I, William's great-grandfather), which, although disputable, all the Conqueror's apologists stressed. Cf. below, v. 37, and CG i. 14, 41, etc. But it seems never to have been suggested that Edward, instead of the bastard William, should succeed to Normandy in 1035.

² According to CG ii. 6, William assembled his fleet in the mouth of the river Dives (*Zeephyrus*) to Saint-Valéry and suffered loss of ships and personnel on the way. It is difficult to see how *Carmen*'s east wind (*Eurus*) would have prevented the fleet sailing north to England. But poets are careless of these distinctions. Below, vv. 59-60, however, at Saint-Valéry the south wind (*Auster*) is favourable and the north wind (*Boreas*) unfavourable. Chibnall, CG, pp. xxv ff., thinks, reasonably enough, that the expeditionary force's initial delay was caused less by adverse weather than by the time needed for the mobilization and training of William's army.

³ For Saint-Valéry and Vimeu, see above, pp. xxxi, xlii f. The relics of St Valéry were restored to the church from Normandy c.981: *AASS, April*, i. 23-4. King Richard I of England sacked Saint-Valéry in 1197 and had the reliquary taken to Normandy, but restored it with the truce with France in 1199: *Chronica Rogerii de Hovedene*, ed. W. Stubbs (RS), iv (1871), 19. And in 1651 the visitors of the Congregation of Saint-Maur inspected all reliquaries of saints and found, *inter alia*, the head, three teeth, and a number of bones of St Valéry, all of which were replaced in the reliquary: *AASS, April*, i. 15-16.

⁷ If Michel's suggested amendment to *fidelis* is accepted, it would translate as: 'His people, although well skilled in warfare, are always trustworthy and usually hospitable to seafarers.'

- Desuper est castrum quoddam Sancti Walarici.^a
 Hic tibi longa fuit difficilisque mora,
 Nam ter quinque dies complesti finibus illis,
 Expectans summi iudicis auxilium.
 Ecclesiam sancti deuota mente frequentans,
 Illi pura¹ dabas, ingeminando preces.
 Inspicis et templi gallus qua uertitur aura:
 Auster si spirat, letus abinde redis;
 Si subito Boreas Austrum diuerit et arcet,
 Effusus lacrimis fleitibus ora rigas.
 Desolatus eras; frigus faciebat et imber
 Et polus obtectus nubibus et pluuiis.
 Set pater omnipotens, in quo tibi spem posuisti,
 Tempora qui fecit, temperat, atque regit,
 Qui palmo celum, terram, mare ponderat equo;^{b2}
 Cui proprium constat omnibus esse locis
 Presentem, precibus dedit et calcabile Petro
 Equor sub pedibus,³ compaciendo sibi,
 Velle tuum tandem pius ut Deus est miseratus,
 Pro uotoque⁴ tibi suppeditauit opus.
 Expulit a celo nubes et ab equore uentos,
 Frigora dissoluit, purgat et imbre polum.
 Incaluit tellus, nimio perfusa calore,
 Et Phebus solito clarior emicuit.
 Festa dies Michaelis erat celebranda per orbem,
 Cum pro uelle tibi cuncta Deus tribuit.
 Prodius una fuit mens omnibus, equa uoluntas,
 Iam bene pacato credere se pelago.
 Quamquam diuersi tamen adsunt letificati;
 Nec mora; quisque suum currit ad officium.
 Sublimant alii malos; alique laborant
 Erechis malis addere uela super.
 Plurima cogit equos⁵ equitum pars scandere naues;
 Altera festinat arma locare sua.
 Haut secus inuadit classis loca turba pedestris
 Turba columbarum quam sua tecta^d petit.
 O quantus subito fragor illic ortus habetur,
 Cum naute remos, arma petunt equites!
 Hinc⁵ resonando tube uarios dant mille boatus,
 Fistula cum calamis et fidibus cythara,

port stands the town of Saint-Valery. Here you had a long and troublesome delay, spending a fortnight in that territory waiting for succour from the Supreme Judge. You visited the saint's church often and devoutly, with sighs and prayers making pure offerings to him.¹ You looked to see by what wind the church's weathercock was turned. If it was from the south, you departed happily. But if, on a sudden, the north wind interrupted and held it at bay, tears streamed down your cheeks. You were forsaken. It was cold and wet and the sky was hidden by clouds and rain. But Almighty God, on whom you rested your hopes, he who created, marks out and directs the seasons, who weighs the heavens, the earth and the sea in the hollow of his just hand,² who is always in all places, and who in his compassion gave Peter in return for his prayers a calm sea on which he could walk,³ that same gracious God at last took pity on you and your desires and, in return for your vow,⁴ furnished you abundantly with the means. He drove the clouds from the sky and the winds from the sea; he dispelled the cold and cleansed the heavens of rain. The earth became warm, bathed in great heat; and the sun shone with unusual brilliance. The festival of St Michael [29 Sept.] was about to be celebrated throughout the world when God granted you everything according to your desires.

Immediately all were of one mind and purpose—to entrust themselves to the sea, now calm at last. Although dispersed, all arrive rejoicing, and run instantly to take up position. Some step the masts, others then hoist the sails. Many force the knights' horses to clamber on to the ships. The rest hasten to stow their arms. Like a flock of doves seeking their lofts, the throngs of infantry rush to take their places on the boats. O what a great noise suddenly erupts from that place as the sailors seek their oars, the knights their arms! Then⁵ a thousand trumpets sound, and resound, their various calls. There are pipes

^a Walarici B; Walarici A, the third a struck through? by second hand
 equo A. B ends here; in A there is a wider spacing between vv. 65-6 and 66-7
 A, ? = acquos
^d ? corrected from recta A

¹ Hall, 'Critical notes', p. 905, has suggested *iura*. But *iura* in the sense of unencumbered gifts can stand. See also below, n. 4.

² Cf. Isa. 40: 12.

³ William's vow (cf. also below, v. 650), according to a document of about 1300 preserved among the deeds of Takeley priory near Dunmow in Essex, led to his foundation of that convent on 19 Oct. 1068 as a cell of Saint-Valery. 'Willelmus ac etiam Gwydo de Keynecurt, baro suus, dederunt die predicta elemosinam suam ecclesie memorate, ex voto et promissione debita in transfiguratione facie conquiesce Anglice, H. E. Salter, *Facsimiles of Early Charters in Oxford Muniment Rooms* (Oxford, 1920), no. 27 and n.; *VCH, Essex*, ii. 199. Guy de Raimbeaucurt, near Douai (Nord), to the east of Saint-Valery, was Domesday lord of Clipping Warden in Northants: I. J. Sanders, *English Baronies* (Oxford, 1960), p. 33: Dawson's translation starts here.

f. 228^b

Timpana taurinis implent mugitibus auras,
 Alternant modulos cymbala clara suos.¹
 Terra tremi; celumque paue; miratur et equor.
 Quadripedes fugiunt, piscis ausisque simul.
 Quippe decem decies, decies et milia quinque
 Diuersis feriunt uocibus astra poli.
 Set tu templa petis sancti supra memorati,
 Muneribusque datis, curris adire^a ratem.
 Clangendoque tuba, reliquis ut littora linquant
 Precipis, et pelagi tucius alta petant.²
 Hactenus adfixe soluantur litore puppes,
 Equor et intratur agrum composito.
 Cum breuiata dies, iam sol deuexus abibat,
 Cum tua praeipuit preuia naus iter.
 Nox ubi ceca polum tenebrosis occupat umbris,
 Et negat obsequium Cinthia recta tibi,
 Imples non aliter facibus rutilantibus undas
 Sydera quam celum, sole ruente, replent.
 Quot fuerant naues, totidem tu lumina spargis;
 (* * * * *)³
 Impositae malis permulta luce laterne
 Tramite directo per mare uela regunt.
 Set ueritus ne dampna tuis nox inferat atra,
 Ventus et aduerso flamine turbet aquas,
 Sistere curru iubes compellat ut anchora puppes;
 In medio pelagi litus adesse facis.
 Ponere uela mones, exspectans mane futurum,
 Vt lassata nimis gens habeat requiem.
 At postquam terris rutilans Aurora refulsit
 Et Phebus radios sparsit in orbe suos,
 Precipis ire uiam, committere carbasa uentis;
 Precipis ut solat anchora fixa rates.
 Tertia telluri supereminet hora diei
 Cum mare postponens littora tuta tenes.⁴
 E celo fulgens, extenso crine, cometes
 Anglis fatatum nunciat excidium.⁵
 Debata terra tibi, pauidis nudata colonis,
 Leta sinu placido teque tuosque capit.
 Rex Heraldus enim sceleratus ad ultima terre
 Fratris ad excidium perfida tela parat;
 130

with their reeds and zithers with their strings; drums bellow like
 bulls; and the loud cymbals chime in.¹ The earth shakes; the heavens
 quake; the ocean is amazed. Beasts flee, and likewise birds and fish,
 for one hundred and fifty thousand different voices make the welkin
 ring. But you seek the church of [St Valery] and, after making gifts,
 hurry back to go on board. By a trumpet's call you command all
 other vessels to leave the shore and make for the deep sea in safety.²
 The ships cast off their moorings and put out to sea in orderly
 formation. The day was already closing in, the setting sun departing,
 when your ship raced ahead and took the lead. When dark night
 covers the sky with its shades and the hidden moon denies you her
 aid, you fill the ocean with glowing torches just as the stars fill up the
 heavens once the sun has set. You scatter light from every ship.
 (* * *)³ The lanterns on the masts with their strong beams of
 light direct the ships on a straight course over the sea. But you,
 fearful that the dark night could harm your men or an adverse wind
 should stir up the waves, order the ships to heave to, held by their
 crooked anchors; and thus you create a harbour on the open sea. You
 also bid them, while waiting for the dawn, to strike sail, so that the
 exhausted crews should get some rest.
 But once the rosy dawn had brightened the land and the sun had
 irradiated the circle of the earth, you ordered a start, the ships to set sail
 and anchors aweigh. When you left the sea behind and seized a safe
 beachhead,⁴ the third hour of the day was rising over the earth and a
 blazing comet with outstretched tail informed the English of their
 destined ruin.⁵ The land owed to you, stripped of her terrified
 inhabitants, joyfully welcomed you and yours into her tender bosom.
 For the wicked king Harold was preparing his treacherous weapons for
 the destruction of his brother in the remotest reaches of the realm.

^a adire *eds.*; adire *A*¹ Cf. Venantius Fortunatus, ii. 9. 57 ff.: *MGH, Auct. Antiqu.*, iv. 39.² For the Channel crossing, see above, pp. lxiii–lxix.³ A pentameter is missing in the MS.⁴ For the landing at Pevensey, see above, pp. lxviii f.⁵ Halley's comet, visible from 24 April in England, disappeared in mid July: see above, p. xxvii, n. 54.

Non modicam regni partem nam frater adeptus,
Tecta dabat flammis et gladiis populum.

Marte sub opposito currens Heraldus in hostes,
Non timuit fratris tradere membra neci.¹

Alter in alterutrum plus quam ciuile peregit
Bellum, set uictor (proh dolor!) ipse fuit.

Inuidus ille Cain fratris caput amputat ense,
Et caput et corpus sic sepeliuit humo.

Hec tibi preuidit qui debita regna subegit:
Criminis infestū quatinus ultor eas.²

Litora custodis,^a metuens amittere naues,
Menibus et munis, castraque ponis ibi.

Diruta que fuerant dudum castella reformas;
Ponis custodes ut tueantur ea.³

Non multo spacio, tua gens, set pace potita,
Inuadit terram, uastat et igne cremat.⁴

Nec mirum, regem quia te plebs strula negabat;
Ergo perit iuste, uadit et ad nichilum.

Ex Anglis unus, latians sub rupe marina,
Cernit ut effusas innumeras acies,

Et quod agri fulgent pleni radiantibus armis,
Vulcano flammis depopulante domos,

Perfidie gentem ferro bachante perire,
Quasque dabant lacrimas cede patrum pueri,

Scandere curri equum, festinat dicere regi.
Rex redit a bello premia leta ferens;

Nuncius occurrit; que fert hoc^b ordine pandit:
'Rex, tibi pro certo nuncia dira fero.

Dux Normannorum, cum Gallis atque Britannis,
Inuasit terram, uastat et igne cremat.⁵

Milia si queris, tibi dicere nemo ualebit:
Quot^c mare fert pisces, tot sibi sunt equites;

^a custodis *eds.*; custod [= custodi] *A* ^b que fert hoc *eds.*; quam fert hec *A* (?)
^c quot *eds.*; quod *A*

¹ Harold defeated the invasion forces of his brother Tosig, the banished former earl of Northumbria, and Harold Hardrada, king of Norway, in a poorly described battle at Stamford Bridge on the river Derwent (E. Riding, Yorks) on 25 Sept. Both enemy leaders were killed. v. 135 is an allusion to Lucan, *Bellum civile* i. 15; cf. Statius, *Thebais* xi. 127 ff.

² These verses are puzzling. The general sense seems to be that God, who had given William victory at Hastings, had set up Harold's victory at Stamford Bridge so that some

This brother, having occupied no small part of the land, was setting houses on fire and putting people to the sword; and Harold, hastening with an army to meet the foe, did not shrink from delivering his brother's limbs to death.¹ Each waged against the other a worse than civil war. But the victor, alas, was Harold. This envious Cain cut off his brother's head with his sword and then buried head and trunk in the earth. He who subjected the realm which was owed to you ordained all these things so that you would go to avenge that violent crime.²

Guarding the shore and fearing to lose your ships, you protect them with ramparts and pitch camp there. You repair the remnants of earlier fortifications and set guards to protect them.³ With peace, indeed, but little ground acquired, your men go out and devastate and burn the land⁴—behaviour which, since the stupid people reject you as king, is not to be wondered at. It is entirely just that they should perish and come to naught.

When one of the English, hiding under a rock by the sea, saw the countless ranks of men spreading out, the fields glittering with the mass of shining weapons, Vulcan driving with his flames people from their homes, a perfidious race falling by the raging swords, and what tears the children shed at the slaughter of their parents, he ran to mount his horse and hastened to inform the king. Harold was returning from battle laden with great booty. The messenger came up with him and told him his story.

'O king! I bring for certain dreadful news. The duke of the Normans has invaded the land with French and Breton troops. He is destroying it and setting it on fire.⁵ If you ask how many thousands of them there are, no one can tell. He has as many knights as there are fishes in the sea.

of William's rivals should be eliminated and that William should then avenge Tosig. But in the Bible story of Cain and Abel (Gen. 4: 8-10), although God punished Cain by exile, he expressly protected him from a vengeful death.

³ The Roman perimeter walls with their flanking bastions are still impressive. There was, therefore, according to A. J. Taylor, in a personal communication, an immense ready-made fortified base just waiting for occupation and requiring no immediate improvements. In fact no early Norman earthworks overlying the Roman levels have ever been found by archaeologists. Castle-building started at Hastings, not Pevensey, and the poet may have confused the two. There was an exchange of letters between M. & M. and Taylor in Aug.-Sept. 1972 on the translation of *diruta* in v. 143. Taylor wanted 'dilapidated' or 'ruined'. M. & M. stuck to the more active 'dismantled' (i.e. by Harold). Moreover, they suggested that the destroyed *castella*, which William repaired, were wooden forts erected by Harold for the defence of the coast. Cf. also D. Greenway, 'Authority, convention and observation in Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum*', *ANS* xviii (1990), 105-21 at p. 109.

⁴ Cf. below, v. 160. ⁵ Cf. above, v. 146.

Et ueluti stellas celi numerare nequies,

Eius sic acies nec numerare^a uales.¹

Captiuos ducit pueros, captiasque puellas,¹

Insuper et uiduas, et simul omne pecus.²

Rusticus hec retulit. Rex contra sibilat illi:

Quamuis hec timeat, uelle tamen simulat.

Adlocat ipse duces, comites,² terrequé potentes;

Verbis, ut fertur, talibus alloquitur:

'Milicie pars summa mee, magnatibus orta,

Solus non bello uincere cui pudor est,³

Nothica⁴ quos misit per te superauimus hostes,

Et per te nostrum strauimus equiuocum.⁴

Nutrit et⁵ proprio matris⁶ quem⁶ lacte papilla.

Tu mihi presidium, murus, et auxilium,

Audisti nostrum quod gens Normannica regnum

Intrauit, predans, pauperat, exspoliat.

Hoc Willelmus (agit),⁷ qui te sibi subdere querit.

Nomen habet magnam; cor tamen est pauidum;

Est ualer et cupidus nimiumque superciliosus;

Nec nouit pacem nec retinere fidem.

Si possit, leuiter⁵ molitur tollere nostra,

Set Deus omnipotens non erit hoc patiens.

Quantus erit luctus, quantus dolor et pudor ingens,

Regni quanta lues, quam tenebrosa dies,

Si quod querit habet, si regni sceptrum tenebit.

Hoc omnes fugiant uiuere qui cupiunt.'

His ita prolatis, querit responsa suorum;

Scrutantur taciti dicere quid ualeant.

Nascitur extimulo clamor qui percussit astra,

Et uox communis omnibus una fuit:

'Bella magis cupimus quam sub iuga colla repomi

Alterius regis, uel magis inde mori.'

Exultans fatuus rex grates reddidit illis;

Insuper hoc unum consilium retulit:

'Primum legatos decet ut mittamus ad illum,

Illi qui dicant si placet ut redeat.

ad just as you cannot count the stars in the heavens, so you cannot count his men. He has taken captive boys and girls,¹ even widows, and all the cattle.'

These were the tidings the peasant gave, and the king hissed contemptuously in reply. Although he really feared the news, he tried to welcome it. He summoned his captains and comrades,² and the great men of his realm, and is said to have made them the following speech. 'Pick of my army, nobly born, for whom there is shame save to prevail without fighting,³ with your help I have defeated the forces sent by Norway and with your help laid low my kinsake⁴ and him whom my mother's breasts nourished with her own milk. You, my guard, my defence and help, you have heard that Normans have invaded, and devastate, impoverish and despoil our kingdom. It is William who does this, who seeks to subject you to his rule. He has great renown, but a fearful heart. He is cunning, religious, and most arrogant. He does not know how to keep treaties with knightly word. He would, if he could, try without compunction to rob us of all we possess. But God Almighty will not suffer what lamentation, what grief, how great the shame, what fortune for the kingdom there'll be, how dark the day, if he what he seeks, if he should wield the sceptre of this realm! Let who wish to live shun this.'

At the end of his speech he asked them what they thought. Silent at first while they searched for words, suddenly a great shout went up that shook the stars. With one voice they cried, 'We would rather fight than put our necks under the yoke of another king—indeed, we would rather die.' Rejoicing, the foolish king thanked his men, and then added this one proposal. 'But first, as is proper, let us send envoys to him to ask him to return home. If he wishes to enter into a treaty of

¹ Orlandi, 'Some afterthoughts', p. 125, suggests 'nuptiasque puellas', meaning 'wives and girls'. But the sentence balances well as it stands.

² Cf. below, v. 801. *Duces, comites* can mean dukes and counts, but that maybe is going too far.

³ Cf. Lucan, *Bellum civile*, i. 145 (of Caesar).

⁴ Harold had just defeated his namesake (Harold Hardrada) and his brother (Tostig) at Stamford Bridge: cf. Barlow, ed., *The Life of King Edward*, p. 88. A copula with v. 175, as M. & M. noticed, is needed; and they suggested that a couplet is missing. But, although v. 175 is obviously corrupt (as is 179), Hall's suggested emendation, with which Orlandi agreed, will serve.

⁵ As Orlandi, 'Recensione', p. 205, remarked, 'leuiter' goes with 'tollere', and the adverb means the thoughtlessness or capriciousness of youth. The charge is repeated in v. 217 and retuted by William in v. 231. Cf. v. 693.

^a numerare *eds*; numerare *A* ^b ? *emend* to Nordica Hall
*Orlandi*², Nutrit *A*, Nutritus *Petrie* ^d matris *Petrie*; matris (= matrum) *A* (*final letter smudged*) ^e quem *Petrie*; quam *A* ^f agit *eds*, *om.* *A*

- Pacificum si uult nobiscum fedus inire,
Vestro consilio, non ego reiciam.
Sin aliter, non sponte sua mea littora linquet.
Desinat hoc quod agit, trans freta regna petat.¹
Equo consultu maiorum necne minorum
Prouidus eloquio monachus eligitur
Exploret qui castra ducis, qui credita caute
Verba sibi referat. Regis ab imperto
Accelerauit iter, pedibus transuectus equinis,
Sub tunica nigra uerba uerenda gerens.
- Dux erat in castris;² intrans, hec monachus inquit:
'Est opus ut nostre sic ualeas patrie.
Rex et primates regni quoque iura tenentes³
Precipiunt dicto quod cicius redeas.
Mirantur super his de te que fama reportat,
Quod sine re⁴ regnum ducis ad excidium.
Captiuos reddas et quicquid ui rapuisti.
Indulget si uis cetera dampna tibi:
Etati parci; morum parci leuitati;⁵
Olim que fuerat parci amicitie.
Si contradiciis, uel si sua reddere tardas,
Bella tibi mandat; ergo decet caueas.
Milician uix ipse suam populumque cohercet;
Gens est que nullum nouit habere modum.
Nam, Dominum testor, bis sex sibi milia centum
Sunt pugnatorum, prelia qui siciunt.⁶
Talibus obiectis, mutata leonis imago.
- Pondus uirtutum, miles et intrepidus,
Dux, floccipendens quicquid sibi uana cuculla
Attulerat, fatuas approbat esse minas.
'Verba tui regis' dixit, 'non sunt sapientis.⁵
Nil latitare procul poterit. Hoc sapiat:
Excessi puerum, leuiter nec regna petui;
Defunctis patribus, debita iure mihi.⁶
Fodus amicitie nostre dissoluit inique,
Dum tenet iniuste que mea iure forent.
Quod monet, ut redeam, furor est, dementia summa;
Tempus enim prohibet, et uia non facilis.

¹ re *M.* & *M.*, re *A*² leuitati *eds.* (cf. v. 183), leuitati *A*

peace with us, I myself, after taking your advice, will not reject it. But if he won't, he will not leave my shores of his own accord. Let him abandon his scheme and return to his own mainland kingdom.¹

On the advice of both the senior and lower ranks of his army, an eloquent monk was chosen to reconnoitre the duke's camp and carefully bring back the answer to the message entrusted to him. On the king's orders he hastened on horseback, carrying the threatening words hidden beneath his black cloak. The duke was in his camp.² The monk entered and spoke these words. 'You must bid farewell to this land of ours. The king and also the magnates who have authority in the kingdom³ order you to leave immediately. They are astonished at what rumour reports of you—that, without good reason, you are bringing the kingdom to ruin. Release the prisoners and whatever else you have taken by force. If you want, the king condones all other injuries, for he takes into account your age, your callowness, and the friendship which once existed. But if you refuse this offer, or delay making restitution, he declares war upon you. So you had better take care. He himself can only just hold his army and people back, for it is a race which knows not how to keep within bounds. And, as the Lord is my witness, he has twelve hundred thousand warriors who are thirsting for battle.⁴

At these reproaches the lion was transformed. The duke, a fearless knight and full of valour, cared not a rap for what the foolish monk had said and showed that the threats were empty. 'The words of your king', he said, 'are not those of a wise man.⁵ In no way will he be able to skulk at a distance from me. Let him know this: I am no longer a boy; nor have I lightly attacked a kingdom to which I was entitled on the death of my forebears.⁶ It is he who has wrongfully violated our peace-treaty by taking unjustly what should rightly be mine. To order me to leave is insanity, the height of madness, for the sea passage is hazardous and the

¹ As Dawson, or, as *M.* & *M.*, 'let him look for kingdoms beyond the sea'.² CG ii. 11–12, expands this episode.³ A hexameter-ending repeated below, vv. 543 and 615, and never of the clearest meaning.⁴ This figure, like that in v. 96, can be variously interpreted; but, as they are merely rhetorical, no version reveals Guy's view of the actual size of Harold's army. For a discussion of the number of troops which could in fact be mobilized at this time (perhaps up to 14,000 thegns together with the household retainers of the king and the earls), see Barlow, *Edward the Confessor*, pp. 169–76.⁵ The duke answers Harold's charges, above, vv. 210–24, one by one. Especially he denies that he has broken their peace treaty and is wantonly invading. He is simply attempting to enforce his just and legal rights.⁶ Guy consistently presents William's claim that he was Edward's rightful heir and had been deprived of the kingdom by Harold's unlawful usurpation. His assertion that the duke should have succeeded his ancestors must allude to William's remote kinship with Edward, for which see above, p. 4 n. 4.

- Immerito quamuis committere bella minetur,
In Domino fidens, gens mea non refugit.¹
Nescit que² furtiva mihi periuria² fecit,
Nec penitus recoilit quod meus ipse fuit?
Si periura manus nondum dampnata resultat,
Diuino tamen est iam rea iudicio.
Si querit pacem, si uult delicta fateri,
Indulgens culpe parcere promptus ero.
Terram quam pridem tenuit pater,³ hanc sibi reddam,
Vt meus ante fuit, si meus esse uelit.⁴
Monachus accelerat reditum. Dux preparat arma;
Heraldi mentem nouerat atque dolum.
Admonet, inflammat, confortans corda suorum:
'Francia quos genuit, nobilitate cliens,
Belligeri sine felle uiri, famosa iuuentus,
Quos Deus elegit uel quibus ipse fauet,⁴
Fama uolat quorum per climata quatuor orbis
Inuictusque manens milicie titulus:
Gensque Britannorum, quorum decus extat in armis,
Tellus ni fugiat, est fuga nulla quibus:
Viribus illustres Cenomanni, gloria quorum
Bello monstratur per probitatis opem.⁵
Apulus et Calaber, Siculus quibus incola seruit,⁶
Normanni faciles actibus egregijs:
Falsus et infamis periturus rex et adulter?
Molitur nobis tendit et insidias.
Eius enim mos est non ui set uincere fraude,
Spondendoque fidem porrigit ore necem.
Ergo cauere decet ne decipiamur ab illo,
Ni simus risus, ludus et in populo.
Mandamus uobis quapropter castra tueri,
Irruat in castris ne malus ille latro.
Set cras, si dignum uobis uideatur et equum,
Contra quem misit uana referre mihi
Reddere legatum pro uerbis uerba paratum
Illi mittamus, qui minimum timeat.

¹ quod, corrected to ? qua (for que) A ² incola or accola seruit *Orlandi*?, iacula seruit A; iacula feruunt M. & M.; ac Iuba seruit *Hofjord-Strengens*

season forbidding. Although he threatens, unjustly, to make war, my men, trusting in the Lord, will not retreat.¹ Is he not aware of the oath made to me and covertly forsworn? Does he not in his heart remember that he was my vassal?² If his perjured hand does not yet recoil condemned, it has already been found guilty by the judgement of God. If he seeks peace and wants to confess his crimes, I will be indulgent and promptly overlook his faults. I will grant him the lands which formerly his father held if he is willing to be, as before, my vassal.³

The monk hastened back. The duke prepared to arm, for he knew Harold's intention and guile. To hearten his men he incited and inflamed them with these words. 'You warriors whom France, renowned for its nobility, has bred, soldiers without malice, famed youth chosen and beloved by God,⁴ whose enduring renown as invincible in war flies through the four quarters of the world; you nation of Bretons who excel in arms and for whom, unless the earth itself should flee, there is no such thing as flight; you illustrious men of Maine, who glory in battle with the help of your valour,⁵ you Normans, accustomed to heroic deeds, and to whom the Apulians, Calabrians, and Sicilians are slaves:⁶ I tell you all that this false, infamous, and perjured king, this adulterer,⁷ is attempting to lay snares for us. It is his wont to conquer not by force but by deceit, and, while pledging his faith with his lips, to hand out death. We must therefore take care not to be deceived by him lest we become a laughing-stock and a joke among his people. We order you, therefore, to guard well the camp lest that wicked robber should break in. But tomorrow, if you think it right and just, let us send, in answer to him he sent with empty words to us, an envoy to him, one without fear of him and ready to return word for

¹ But cf. below, vv. 441-4.

² A reference, presumably, to the oath 'of Bayeux'. Cf. CG i. 42; BT, pl. 28; Barlow, *Edward the Confessor*, pp. 220-9.

³ Harold would revert to being earl of Wessex and Kent.

⁴ The special relationship between the Franks and God is a topos.

⁵ A phrase repeated in v. 334. For the conduct of a knight of Le Mans in the battle, see below, vv. 485-94.

⁶ For this important crux, see above, p. xxxix. Several scholars have attempted to correct this metrically imperfect line and at the same time allow it to make good historical sense. It is tempting to model it on Ralf of Diss's motto.

⁷ Harold, who had had a longstanding relationship with Edith Swanneck, had married in 1066 Edith, sister of Earls Edwin and Morkere. But Guy may have been thinking of Harold's alleged promise to marry a daughter of Duke William.

Monachus est nobis quo non moderancior alter,
 Et nulli cedens rethoris officio,
 Signifer insignis, ni regula sacra negaret;
 Si vobis placeat, hic mea dicta ferat.²¹
 Dixit, et est actum; compleuit et actio dictum.
 Monachus accitit,^a nec mora, carpit iter.

275

Interea, sedes^f fuscate fraudis et heres,
 Nocte sub obscura, furis in arte uigens,
 Rex acies armare iubet, ducis atque latenter
 Mandat ut inuadant agmina si ualeant.
 Estimat inuigiles prosternere fraudibus hostes;

280

Fallere dum querit, fallitur atque ruit,
 Dux quia,^f directo legato, peruigili extat,^d
 Eius et ingenio conscius artis erat.
 Diuertens legatus iter per deuia terre,
 Nescius accessit rex ubi furta facit.

285

Pro merito, de parte ducis, rex^f, inquit, 'aueto,
 Quem non ex equo cogis inire malum.
 Hoc quia perplures testantur, et assentit idem,
 Assensu populi, consilio procerum,
 Eguardus quod rex ut ei succederet heres
 Annuit et fecit, teque fauente sibi.
 Annulus est illi testis concessus et ensis,²
 Que per te nostri missa fuisse sibi.

290

Est igitur seruanda fides, iurata teneri,
 Nexibus atque sacris dextera stricta manus.
 Ergo decet uideas ne te periuria ledant,
 Et iurata tene, saluus ut esse queas.³

295

Heraldus,^f uultu distorto, colla retorquens,
 Legato dixit, 'Vade retro, stolidel!
 Iudice cras Domino regni, pars iusta patebit;^f
 Diuidet ex equo sacra manus Domini.'
 Ille retro gressum uertens per deuia rursum,
 A quo missus erat huic maledicta³ refert.
 Imperiale decus, dux, pax et gloria regni,
 Preuius incedens ante suas acies,

300

^a accitit *Engeli*, *Orlandus*?; accitus *A* ^b fedes *A* (?)
^d extat *corrected to* extat *A* ^f Heraldus *ed.*; Heraldus *A* ^f qui à *A*
 patebat *corrected to* patebit *A*

305

word. There is a monk here who is second to none in reasonableness and yields to none in rhetoric, who would be a notable standard-bearer if his monastic rule did not forbid it. If it please you, let him convey my words.²¹ The duke proposed and it was done: the plan was put into action. The monk was summoned and immediately set off.

Meanwhile the king, the abode and inheritor of blackest deceit, skilled in the robber's craft, under cover of darkness secretly ordered his troops to arm and, if they could, attack the duke's army. He thought that, using guile, he could destroy the enemy when off its guard. But while he sought to deceive, he was himself deceived and destroyed, because the duke, after sending the envoy, remained fully on the alert. He was completely aware of the other's skill.

The envoy, using byways, came to where the unsuspecting king was engaged in his stealthy deeds. He said, 'Fitting greetings, O king, from the duke, whom you are forcing unjustly to do wrong. And this is so, because, as very many bear witness—and the duke himself maintains—King Edward with the assent of his people and the advice of his nobles, promised and decreed that William should be his heir; and you supported him. The ring and sword granted him, and, as you know, sent to him through you, stand witness to this.² You must, therefore, keep faith and observe your oaths. Your right hand is bound by sacred bonds. You should ensure that your perjury does you no harm. Observe your oaths if you want to be saved.' Harold, twisting his neck and scowling, replied, 'Get you behind me, you fool! Tomorrow it will be seen by the judgement of the Lord of the kingdom which party has right on its side, for the sacred hand of the Lord will make a just award.'

The envoy, returning by the same paths as before, reported these impieties³ to him who had sent him. The duke—the ornament of the empire, the peace and glory of the kingdom—put himself in front of his

¹ For the messenger, identified in *GC* ii. 12, pp. 120–1, as a monk of Fécamp, and by Dawson as probably a resident of Rye, a Fécamp manor, see above, p. 1xx.

² This investiture is not noticed elsewhere, even in *GC* or *BT*. If Harold's mission to the Continent in 1064/5 (Barlow, *Edward the Confessor*, pp. 220–9) was to renew a promise made by Edward to William, he would, most likely, have taken some significant tokens. The ring and sword were the first two of the five coronation regalia.

³ *Maledicta* need be no more than insults. But two of the impieties may be Harold's echoing Jesus's words to Peter, Mark 8. 33, 'Vade retro me Satana', and Sarah's words to Abraham, Gen. 16: 5, 'Iudicet Dominus inter me et te'.

Aggregat et strictum compellit adire^a quiritēs,¹
Et faciles hasta conglomerare facit. 310

Legati facies nativo cassa rubore,
Pallor et ostendit proxima bella fore.

Dux ait, 'Est ubi rex?' 'Non longe', monachus inquit.
Dixit in aure sibi, 'Signa uidere potes.

Plurima uerba ferro que censeo non referenda;² 315

Illa tamen dicam que reticere nocet:

Ex improviso sperat te fallere posse;

Per mare, per terram, prelia magna parat.

In mare quingentas fertur misisse carinas,

Vt nostri reditus prepediatur iter.³ 320

Quo graditur siluas plani⁴ deducit ad esse,⁶

Et per que transit flumina sicca facit.

Fors numerum metuis?⁵ Numerus set uiribus experts

Plurimus⁷ a minimo sepe repulsus abit.⁵ 325

Est sibi milices unctis depeza capillis,

Feminei iuuenes, Martis in arte pigri.⁶

Et quot sunt, ouibus totidem sunt equiparandi,

Vt uulpes pauidi fulguris ad sonitum.⁷ 330

Nobilium memor esto patrum, dux mague, tuorum,

Et quod fecit auus quodque pater, facias:

Normannos proauus superauit, auusque Britannos,

Anglorum genitor sub iuga colla dedit.

Et tu, quid facies, nisi quod, maiora parando,

Succedas illis per probitatis operi?⁸ 335

Paulo conticuit, faciens et se remoratum.

Armatas acies ordinat imperio.

Premisit pedites committere bella sagittis

Et balistantes inserit in medio

Quatinus infingat uolitantia uulibus arma,

Vulneribusque datis, ora retro faciant.⁹ 340

^a *abire A*; *adire makes better sense (Hall)*. For the confusion of the relevant particles, see *Orlandi*², p. 125. ^b *ad esse Orlandi*²; *adesse A*. ^c *metus ed.*, *metus A*. ^d *plurimus ed.*, *pluribus A*. ^e *Vt A*; *Vel M*. ^f *et M*.

¹ The duke, who was attempting to deploy his column of marching troops into a battle-line, would hardly have compelled the knights to 'fall back', as M. & M. thought. Dawson's, 'compelled the less warlike to depart' is imaginative. The authorial or textual confusion of *abire* and *adire* is frequent. Guy's use of *quiritēs* for *milites* (see also v. 341) is remarkably early.

² A cryptic remark, but possibly a reference to Harold's 'blasphemies'.

troops, called up the knights, ordered them to advance¹ in close array and with his lance mustered his willing men. The envoy's face, pallid and robbed of its natural ruddiness, showed that the battle was about to begin. 'Where is the king?', the duke asked. 'Not far off, the envoy replied, and whispered in his ear, 'You can see his standards. I have much information which I do not think I ought to repeat.² But I will tell you what it would be harmful to suppress. Harold hopes to be able to catch you unawares. He is preparing for a great offensive on both land and sea. He is reported to have sent five hundred ships to obstruct our passage home.³ Where he marches he reduces the forest to bare land and the rivers he crosses dry up.⁴ Perhaps you fear the numbers? But a multitude without great strength is often forced back by a smaller number.⁵ Harold's troops, with their combed and anointed hair, are nancy-boys, reluctant warriors.⁶ And, many though they be, they are like as many sheep, as fearful as foxes at the sound of thunder.⁷ Remember your noble ancestors, great duke, and do what your grandfather and father did. Your great-grandfather overcame the Normans and your grandfather the Bretons, while your father put the necks of the English under his yoke. And you, what will you do but, with the aid of your great valour, surpass them by attempting even greater deeds?⁸

Holding himself back, (William) was silent for a moment, then deployed his troops, who were already under arms. He put in front the infantry to attack with arrows, and set crossbowmen in their midst so that flying weapons should hit the enemy in the face. These troops, after they had inflicted wounds, would then withdraw.⁹

¹ Hastings was probably the most important port on the south coast, and, as one of the Cinque Ports, was required to provide a quota of ships for the royal navy. For Harold's naval preparations in the summer to meet the threat of an invasion, and the disbandment and misfortunes of that fleet in September, see above, p. lxvii. It is not known whether an operational unit was in fact reformed in October.

² White, 'Hastings', pp. 37 n. E, 39 n. j, pointed out that *plunum* has the technical sense of untimbered land, open country. Orlandi, 'Recensione', pp. 218-19, by splitting *adese* established the proper understanding of this verse. Cf. *GG* ii. 16, 'in eius transitu flumina epotata, siluas in plunum reducat'. ³ Cf. Vegetius, *Epitoma rei militaris*, iii. 26.

⁴ *GG* ii. 44 relates that when the Conqueror returned to Normandy and celebrated Easter 1067 at Fécamp abbey, there was amazement at the appearance of the Englishmen in his suite, 'the long-haired inhabitants of the western world . . . as beautiful as young girls.'⁵ Although various emendations to these lines have been suggested, the transmitted text seems to make sense.

⁶ For 'per probitatis operi', cf. above, v. 258. For the whole passage, see above, pp. xxxviii f. ⁷ Although it was usual to have considerably more infantry (serjeants) than cavalry in an army, the footsoldiers, as socially inferior (cf. below, v. 350), soon disappear from the narrative. Archers, however, are strongly featured later in the lower margin of BT (pls. 68-71). For the infantry, see above, pp. lxxiv f.

- Ordine post pedites sperat stabilire quiritēs,¹
 Occursu belli set sibi non licuit.¹
 Haut procul hostiles cuneos nam cernit adesse,
 Et plenum telis irradiare nemus.
 Mars deus o belli,² gladii qui seceptra coherces,
 Corpora cui iuuenum sanguinolenta placent
 Et cruor effusus permulta cede uiorum,
 Quis tibi tunc animus, quanta cupido³ mali,
 Cum mediis seuas acies miscere⁴ iubebas!
 Quo potius nullum te iuat excidium
 Ex quo Pompeium superauit Iulius armis,
 Et Romana sibi menia subripuit,
 Compulit atque metu Nili transire per amnem,⁵
 Nulla reor cedes tam tibi grata fuit.
 Nec iuuenile decus nec te reuerenda senectus,
 Nec peditum uilis et miseranda parentum,
 Flectere nec ualuit te nobilitudo parentum,
 Quin ageres quicquid mens tua torua cupit.
 Cecatos miseros radiantia trudi in arma,
 Et ueluti ludum cogis adire necem.
 Quid moror in uerbis cum iam furor extat in armis?
 Exple uelle tuum, Mars,⁶ age mortis opus!
 Ex improviso diffudit silua cohortes,
 Et nemoris latebris agmina prosiliunt.
 Mons silue uicinus erat uicinaque uallis,
 Et non cultus ager asperitate sui.
 Anglis ut mos est, densatim progredientes,
 Hec loca preripunt Martis ad officium.
 Nescia gens belli solamina spernit equorum,
 Virtus et fides, heret humo pedibus;
 Et decus esse mori summum diudicat armis
 Sub iuga ne tellus transeat alterius.
 Ascendit montem rex bellaturus in hostem,
 Nobilibusque uiris munit⁷ utrumque latus.
 In summo montis uexillum uertice fixit,
 Affigique iubet cetera signa sibi.⁴
 Omnes descendunt et equos post terga relinquunt;
 Affixique solo, bella ciere⁵ tubis.
 Dux, humilis Dominumque timens, moderantius agmen
 Ducit, et audacter ardua montis adit.

He had intended to station the cavalry in line behind them, but was prevented from doing so by the onset of the battle,¹ for he could see enemy units not far away and the whole forest glittering with spears.

O Mars, god of war,² who punishes kingdoms with swords and rejoices in the bloody corpses of the young and men's gore spilled in mass slaughter: how great then was your ardour, how strong your thirst for evil, when, standing in the midst, you ordered the savage ranks to join battle! No carnage delighted you more since Julius Caesar overcame Pompey in war, deprived him of Rome and compelled him in fear to cross the river Nile.³ No bloodshed, I think, gave you greater joy. Neither the beauty of youth, nor the reverence due to old age, nor the mean and pitiful throng of infantry, nor nobility of birth could deflect you from doing whatever your savage mind desired. You forced those deluded wretches into shining mail and sent them to death as though to a game. But why do I toy with words when already Fury appears in arms? Do what you will, O Mars. Do the work of death!

Suddenly the forest spewed out its cohorts; and columns of men stormed out of their hiding-places in the woods. Near the forest was a hill and a valley and land too rough to be tilled. The English, as was their custom, advanced in mass formation and seized this position on which to fight. For that people, unskilled in the art of war, spurn the assistance of horses: trusting in their strength they stand fast on foot. And they consider it the greatest honour to die in battle to prevent their country falling under the yoke of another. To prepare for the encounter the king mounted the hill, defended his flanks with noblemen, planted his standard on the summit, and ordered all other banners to be joined to his.⁴ They all dismounted and left their horses in the rear. Once in position, they had the trumpets sound their calls to battle.⁵

The duke, humble and God-fearing, had his men under better control as he led them fearlessly to mount the steep hill. The infantry

¹ *cupido edd.*; *cupiendo A* ² *miscere edd.* (*cf. v. 387*); *miscerere A* ³ *annem A*
⁴ *Mars edd.*; *mat A* ⁵ *munit edd.*; *munus A* ⁶ *ciere edd.*; *sciere A*

¹ This admission that the duke was unable to deploy his cavalry in line (*in ordine*) behind the infantry, suggests that the battle was disorderly. Yet later (v. 413) it is stated that the French attacked the left and the Bretons the right, which implies that some sort of line was achieved.

² Cf. Statius, *Thyb.* vii, 628 ff.

³ Following the battle of Pharsalus in 48 bc. For the river Nile, cf. below, v. 759.

⁴ Cf. J. Campbell's remarks on local communities and their banners in 'The late Anglo-Saxon state', p. 60.

⁵ For the trumpet-call to battle, see above, p. lxxix, n. 265.

Prelia precurrunt pedites miscere sagittis;
 Quadratis iaculis scuta nihil faciunt.
 Festinant parmas galeati iungere parmis;
 Erectis astis hostis uterque furit.
 Vt canibus lassatus aper stans dente tuetur
 Oreque spumoso reicit arma pati,
 Non hostem metuit nec tela minancia mortem,
 Sic plebs Angligena dimicat impauida.

385

Interea,¹ dubio pendent dum prelia Marte,
 Eminet² et telis mortis amara lues,
 Histrio, cor audax nimium quem nobilitabat,
 Agmina precedens innumerosa ducis,
 Hortatur Gallos uerbis et terriat Anglos,
 Alte proiciens ludit et ense suo.
 Anglorum quidam, cum de tot milibus unum
 Ludentem gladio cernit abire procul,
 Milicie cordis tactus feruore decenti,
 Viuere proponens, prosiliit ire mori.
 Incisor-ferri minus cognomine dictus,
 Vt fuerat captus, pungi equum stimulis.
 Angligene scutum telo transfodit³ acuto;
 Corpore prostrato distulit ense caput.
 Lumina conuertens sociis hec gaudia profert,
 Belli principium monstrat et esse suum.
 Omnes letantur, Dominum pariter uenerantur;²
 Exultant ictus quod prior extat eis,
 Et tremor et feruor per corda uirilia currunt,
 Festinantque simul iungere scuta uiri.
 Inuadunt³ primi peditum cetus pharetrati,
 Eminus et iaculis corpora trahiciunt.
 Et balistantes clipeos, ad grandinis instar,
 Dissolunt, quaciunt ictibus innumeris.
 Set leuam Galli, dextram peciere Britanni;
 Dux cum Normannis dimicat in medio.⁴
 Anglorum stat fixa solo densissima turba,
 Tela dat et relis et gladios⁴ gladiis.
 Spiritibus nequeunt frustrata cadauera stereri,
 Nec cedunt uinis corpora militibus.

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410

415

go ahead to join battle with arrows. Against quarrels shields are not secure. Helmeted soldiers rush to crash shields against shields. And both sides rage with brandished spears. Just as a wild boar, wearied by the hounds and at bay, protects itself with its tusks and with foaming jaws refuses to submit to the weapons, fearing neither the enemy nor the spears that threaten death, so the English phalanx fights on unafraid.

Meanwhile,¹ with the result hanging in the balance and the bitter calamity of death by wounds still there, a juggler, whom a brave heart ennobled, putting himself in front of the duke's innumerable army, with his words encourages the French and terrifies the English, while he played by throwing his sword high in the air. When one Englishman saw a single knight, just one out of thousands, juggling with his sword and riding away, fired by the ardour of a true soldier and abandoning life, he dashed out to meet his death. The juggler, who was named Taillefer, when he was attacked spurred on his horse and pierced the Englishman's shield with his sharp lance. He then with his sword removed the head from the prostrate body, and, turning to face his comrades, displayed this object of joy and showed that the opening move of the battle was his. They all rejoice and together supplicate the Lord.² They exult that the first blow was theirs. Both excitement and passion run through their manly breasts, and they all hasten to engage in the fight.

First³ the infantry units, furnished with quivers, attack, and from afar transfix bodies with their darts. Crossbowmen, with a shower of blows like a storm of hail, strike and destroy shields. The French attacked the left and the Bretons the right, while the duke with his Normans fight in the centre.⁴ The serried mass of the English stands rooted to the ground. They meet javelin with javelin, sword with sword. Bodies bereft of life are unable to fall. Nor do the dead make

¹ ? for *Imminet Hall*, but *Orlamund* doubtful; cf. below, v. 702
 transfixit A gladios eds.; gladio A transfodit Orlamund?

² For the episode, see above, pp. xxxiii f. It is not clear when exactly it occurred.

³ M. & M. suggested that this is a reference to the Norman battle-cry, 'Dex aie' ('May God help'); but this follows ill on *letantur*.

⁴ The narrative resumes, with some repetitions, from v. 388.

⁵ For the composition of the wings, see above, p. lxxix, n. 266. See further, below, p. 27, n. 4.

Omne cadaver enim, uita licet euacuatum,
 Stat uelut illesum, possidet atque locum.
 Nec penetrare ualent spissum nemus¹ Angligenarum,
 Ni tribuat uires uirtibus ingenium.
 Artibus instructi, Franci, bellare periti,
 Ac si deuicti fraude fugam simulant.
 Rustica letatur gens,² et superasse putabat;
 Post tergum nudis insequitur gladiis.
 Amotis sanis, labuntur dilacerati,
 Siluque spissa prius rarior efficitur.
 Conspicit³ ut campum cornu tenuare sinistrum,
 Intrandi dextrum quod uia larga patet,
 Perdere dispersos uariatis cladibus hostes
 Laxatis frenis certat⁴ utrumque prius.
 Quique fugam simulant instantibus ora retorquent,⁵
 Constrictos cogunt uertere dorsa neci.
 Pars ibi magna perit; pars et densata resisit;
 Milia namque decem sunt ibi passa necem.
 Vt pereunt mites bachante leone bidentes,
 Sic compulsa mori gens maledicta ruit.
 Plurima que superest bello pars⁶ acrior instat,
 Et sibi sublatos pro nichilo reputat.
 Anglorum populus, numero superante, repellit
 Hostes, uique retro compulsi ora dari.
 Et fuga facta prius fit tunc uirtute coacta.
 Normanni fugiunt; dorsa tegunt clipei.⁴
 Dux, ubi perspexit⁷ quod gens sua uicta recedit,
 Occurrens illi signa ferendo manu,
 Increpat et cedit; retinet, constringit et hasta.
 Iratus, galea nudat et ipse caput.⁵

^a certat *eds.*; cretat *A* ^b retorquent *eds.*; retorquant *A* ^c line inserted by
 second hand *A* ^d corrected from pars bello *A* (*cf. v. 610*) ^e ? emend to prospexit
 Engels

¹ This conceit is repeated below, vv. 428, 530.

² As Orlandi suggested, 'Some afterthoughts', pp. 220-1, *rustica gens* is equivalent to *rustica gens belli* (v. 369), the opposite to the French, who are *artibus instructi, bellare periti* (v. 423).

³ Dawson, probably, and M. & M., certainly, by making *rustica gens* the subject of *conspicit*, identified the two wings as English. But this, as Orlandi perceived, 'Some afterthoughts', pp. 220-1, is nonsense. The subject is *cornu sinistrum/dextrum* of the ducal army. This interpretation allows better, if not perfect, sense to be made of a passage which

space for the living, for every corpse, although lifeless, stands as though unharmed and keeps its place. Nor would the attackers have been able to penetrate the dense forest¹ of the English had not invention reinforced their strength.

The French, versed in stratagems, skilled in the arts of war, cunningly pretend to flee as though they had been defeated. The rustic folk² rejoice, thinking that they have conquered, and pursue them with naked swords. With the removal of the able-bodied, the corpses fall, and the once thick wood is thinned. When the left wing (of the ducal army)³ sees that the field of battle is being cleared, and the right wing that a large breach has been opened up, both wings give free rein and strive to be the first to destroy the dispersed enemy in scattered encounters, while those who simulated flight turn upon their pursuers and, holding them in check, force them to flee from death. A large part of these perished there; but some, packed even closer than before, fight on. Truly ten thousand there were killed. As fall the gentle sheep before the ravening lion, so the accursed race is forced to rush on to death. Most, however, of those who survived the fighting fought on even more keenly, and counted their losses as nothing. The English, superior in numbers, beat back the foe and forcibly compel them to flee. Thus a flight which had started as a sham became one dictated by the enemy's strength. The Normans turn tail; their shields protect their backs.⁴

When the duke saw that his people were beaten and in retreat, he rode up, and, signalling with his hand, rebukes and strikes them, and restrains and checks them with his lance. In his anger he himself removed his helmet from his head.⁵ To the Normans he showed a has always caused difficulty. The vocabulary would seem to owe something here to Caesar, *Bell. civ.* iii. 89.

⁴ Guy does not give an entirely clear account of the several stages of the battle. It would seem that the initial assault on the English phalanx was repulsed. So the duke resorted to a ruse. Some of his troops, unfortunately referred to indifferently as French or Normans, feigned flight. As, later, Guy gives the two wings of the ducal army roles in this phase, the decoy flight, which the English pursuers turned into a real retreat, may have been mounted largely by Normans from the centre. *CG* ii. 17, however, would have none of this. After the failure of the initial attack on the hill, the Bretons, both infantry and cavalry, and the other auxiliaries on the left flank flee in terror and almost the whole of the ducal line yields. The Normans believe that their duke has been killed. William of Poitiers accepts that this was a most serious, although not shameful, reverse. The *BT* (pls. 54-67) shows a general attack on the phalanx followed by the death of Harold's brothers, Gyth and Leofwine, and many casualties on both sides. For fuller treatment, see above, pp. lxxix-lxxxii.

⁵ This incident is accepted by all: *cf. CG* ii. 18, *BT*, pl. 68. On the Tapestry Odo of Bayeux encourages the troops, William raises his helmet and Eustace of Boulogne, carrying a banner, points to the duke.

Vultum Normannis dat, verba precantia Gallis?
Dixit, 'Quo fugitis? Quo iuvat ire mori?
Que fuera victrix, pateris cur uicta uideri

Regnis terrarum Gallia nobilior?

Non homines set oues fugitis, frustraue timetis;
Illud quod facitis dedecus est nimium.

Est mare post tergum; mais est iter ad remeandum

Pergrauē,^a quod uobis tempus et aura negat.

Ad patriam reditus grauis est, grauis et uia longa;

Hic uobis nullum restat et effugium.

Vincere ceteris, solum si uiuere uultis.^b

Dixit, et extimulo serpit ad ora pudor;

Terga retro faciunt; uultus uertuntur in hostes.

Dux, ut erat princeps, primus et ille ferit;

Post illum reliqui feriunt, ad corda reuersi;¹

Vires assumunt reiciendo metum.

Vt stipule flammis pereunt spirantibus auris,

Sic a Francigenis, Anglica turba, ruis.

Ante ducis faciem tremefactum labitur agmen,

Mollis cera fluit ignis ut a facie.

Abstracto gladio, galeas et scuta recidit;

Illius et sonipes corpora multa ferit.^{b2}

Heraldi frater, non territus ore leonis,

Nomine Gerint,³ regis traduce progenitus,

Librando telum celeri uolitante lacerto

Eminus emisso cuspidē, corpus equi

Vulnerat, atque ducem peditem bellare coegit.

Set, pedes effectus, dimicat et melius:

Nam uelox iuuenem sequitur ueluti leo frendens.

Membratim perimens, hec sibi uerba dedit:

'Accipe promeritam nostri de parte coronam;⁴

Si perit sonipes, hanc tibi reddo pedes.'

Dixit et ad bellum conuertit protinus actum,

Obstat et oppositis uiribus Herculeis.

Hos truncos facit, hos multos; hos deuorat ense;

Perplures animas mittit et ad tenebras.

furious face; to the French he made entreaties. 'Where are you off to?' he cried. 'Where do you want to die? France, the noblest of the earth's kingdoms, how could you, when you had been the victors, allow yourself to appear the vanquished? It is not from men but from sheep that you run. Your fear is mistaken. What you are doing is the most shameful disgrace. Behind you lies the sea. To return by sea is hard when both the wind and the weather are against you. Hard it is to return home, hard and long the way. There's no escape road for you here. If you want merely to live you must strive to conquer.'

At the end of this harangue shame spread over their cheeks and they turned their faces, not their backs, to the enemy. The duke, as he was the leader, struck the first blow. The others, returning to their senses, struck next. Throwing off their fear they take on strength. Just as stubble is consumed when the wind fans the flames, so, you English throng, you fall to the French. At the sight of the duke the enemy trembles and falls away, like soft wax flowing from the face of the fire. Drawing his sword, he cleaves helmets and shields and even his charger strikes many a corpse.² Harold's brother, Gyth,³ born of royal stock, was not frightened by the lion's face. Brandishing his spear, he hurls it from afar with his quick strong arm, and it wounds the duke's mount, forcing him to fight on foot. But, dismounted, he fights even better, for swiftly, like a roaring lion, he follows the youth and, tearing him limb from limb, exclaims, 'Take this trophy you have won from us. Since my steed has perished, as a footman I give you this trophy back.'⁴ From speech, he turned his efforts straightway to the battle and withstood his opponents with the strength of a Hercules. Some he beheaded, some he dismembered, and some he devoured with his sword. Many were the souls he dispatched straight to hell.

¹ Although *Ad corda reuersi* can be taken with v. 464, the general sense would not be changed.

² Most editors have thought the line corrupt, and F. Michel in 1840 and Orlandi, 'Recensione', p. 215, have suggested *ferit* ('strikes') for *facit* ('makes'). Dawson, indeed, translated, 'and his charger striketh full many a corse'. In 1906, however, Orlandi, 'Some afterthoughts', p. 126, offered instead *muta* for *multa*, a possible echo of Ovid, *Met.* xi. 736.

³ Gyth, born c. 1092, earl of East Anglia in 1057 and seemingly closer to Tosig than Harold until at least 1061, in 1066, however, may have been with Harold at the Battle of Stamford Bridge: *The Waltham Chronicle*, ed. L. Watkiss and M. Chibnall (OMT, 1994), p. 46. According to OV ii. 170-2, he joined with his mother Gytha at London in pleading with Harold not to go on to Hastings. He, who had taken no oath to William, would take over the command against the Norman. For different accounts of his death, see above, p. xxxiv.

⁴ As Orlandi, 'Recensione', p. 221, has explained, William is mockingly awarding Gyth the palms of victory which, had he killed the duke, he would richly have deserved.

^a Per mare corrected to Per graue A
Orlandi?

^b ferit Michel, Orlandi?; fac? A; multa facit

Per médias strages equitem dum prospicit ire
 Ex Cenomannorum^a progenitum genere,¹
 Infecto gladio cerebro uel sanguinis unda
 Innuit ut ueniat et sibi subueniat.
 Ille timens cedere negat illi ferre salutem,
 Nam pauit⁴ mortem ceu lepus ante canem.
 Dux, memor ut miles, subito se uertit ad illum
 Per nasum galee concitus accipiens,
 Vultum telluri, plantas ad sydera uoluit;²
 Sic sibi⁵ concessum scandere currit equum.
 O celi rector, nostri pius ac miserator,
 Nutu diuino qui regis omne quod est,
 Quas patitur clades Anglorum turba superstes!
 Occidit hic pietas, regnat et impietas;
 Vita perit, mors seua furit, bachatur et ensis;
 Nullus ibi parit, Mars ubi sceptrum regit.⁴
 Postquam factus eques dux est, mox acris hostes
 Vulnerat, aggredditur, fulminat, insequitur.
 Vincere dum certat, dum campum cede cruentat,
 Filius Hellocis,³ uir celer et facilis,
 Insidiando, ducem tractabat fine grauari;
 Set, misso iaculo, traditur⁵ ictus equo.
 Corruit in terram; pedes est dux, plenus et ira.
 Quomodo se teneat cogitat, aut quid agat,
 Nam binis miratur equis priuatus haberi.
 Heret in hoc paulo, set nihil esse putat;
 Censet enim, uirtute sibi fortuna fauebit,
 Subueniet uotis et sine fraude suis.
 Ergo sui mors iurat equi, si dextra manebit,
 Non sine uindicta transiet absque mora.
 Auctorem sceleris, multos inter latitantem
 Longe perspicens, perdere currit eum.
 Impulso dextre duro mucronis et ictu
 Ilia precidens, uiscera fudit humi.
 At comes Eustachius,⁴ generosis patribus ortus,⁵
 Septus bellantum multiplici cuneo,

^a corrected by expunction from Cenomannorum, *A*
¹ sibi edes; tibi *A* ² ? emend to gerit, *Hall*, cf. below, v, 564
³ patribus edes; patribus ortis (corrected to ortus) *A*
⁴ pauit edes; pauitem *A*
⁵ ? emend to

When he saw riding amid the carnage a knight who hailed from
 Maine,¹ he signalled to him with his sword, which was defiled by brains
 and streams of blood, to come to his aid. But the knight, fearing to die,
 refused to help. For, like a hare before the hounds, he was frightened of
 death. But the duke, like a mindful knight, turned sharply towards
 him, and, infuriated, seized the nasal of his helmet, pulled him to the
 ground head over heels, and speedily mounted the horse thus
 presented to him.²

O ruler of heaven, our gracious and merciful Lord Who rules by
 divine will everything that is, what calamities do the surviving English
 troops endure! Here pity goes down and pitilessness reigns. Life is
 destroyed, cruel death rages and the sword runs wild. Where Mars
 holds sway, no man spares another.

When the duke was again in the saddle, he attacked, wounded, struck
 like lightning and pursued the enemy even more fiercely than before.
 While he strove to conquer, while he bloodied the field of battle with the
 gore of the slain, the son of Hellox,³ a quick and ready man, lay in wait
 intending that the duke should meet his end. But when he threw a spear
 the blow fell on the horse. The duke crashed to the ground, on foot
 once again, and filled with rage. He wondered how he could protect
 himself, what he should do, for he was astounded that he had suffered
 the loss of two horses. He hesitated for a moment over this, and then
 thought it no matter, for he reckoned that, if he acted with courage,
 Fortune would smile upon him, and, without deceit, grant him all his
 desires. And so he swore that, if his right hand did not fail, the death of
 his horse would not go unavenged for long. When he spied the criminal
 hiding among a crowd some distance away, he ran to attack him. With a
 hard thrust of his right hand and his weapon's sharp point, he pierced
 his groin and spilt his entrails on the ground. Then Count Eustace,⁴
 scion of a noble dynasty, accompanied by a large escort of soldiers,

¹ William of Poitiers, *GC* ii, 19, as well as Guy, states that men from Maine took part in
 the battle. Jean Dunbabin, 'Geoffrey de Chaumont, Thibaud of Blois and William the
 Conqueror', *ANS* xvi (1994), 101-16, at pp. 111-12, suggests that Geoffrey, lord of
 Chaumont-sur-Loire, fought at Hastings.

² This sentence has provoked much editorial comment and many suggestions. But it
 makes good sense. The duke, unlike the cowardly knight, is a knight who knows what to do
 (*memor* means 'mindful', 'resourceful', or 'vengeful'), and does it.

³ Hellox/Helloc/Elloc and his son have not been identified. Cf. Wace, vv. 8809-14. For
 the episode, see above, pp. xxiv f.

⁴ The first appearance of the important Eustace II, count of Boulogne (1047-88),
 accompanied by his *convoi*, and the first of William's commanders to be named. For the
 significance of his prominence in the story, see above, pp. xxvi, xxxii f.

- Ad ducis auxilium festinat primus haberi;
Efficiturque pedes dux ut abiret eques.
Miles erat quidam comitis, nutritus ab illo,
Fecerat ut domino, fecit et ille sibi.
Talibus auspicis, comes et dux associati
Quo magis arma micant, bella simul repetunt.^a
Amborum gladiis campus rarescit ab Anglis,
Defluit et numerus, nutat et atteritur.
Corruit apposita ceu silua minuta securi,
Sic nemus Angligenum¹ ducitur ad nihilum.
Iam ferme campum uictrix effecta regebat,
Iam spoliū belli Gallia leta peti;²
Cum dux prospexit regem super ardua montis
Acriter instantes dilacerare suos,
Aduocat Eustachium; linguens ibi prelia Francis,
Oppressis ualidum contulit auxilium.³
Alter ut Hectorides, Pontii nobilis heres
Hos comitatur Hugo, promptus in officio;
Quartus Giffardus, patris a cognomine dictus;⁴
Regis ad exitium quatuor arma ferunt.
Ast alii plures; aliis sunt hi meliores.
Si quis in hoc dubitat, actio uera probat:
Per nimias cedes nam bellica iura tenentes⁵
Heraldum cogunt⁶ pergere carnis iter.
Per clipeum primus dissoluens cuspidē pectus,
Effuso madidat^a sanguinis imbre solum;
Tegmine sub galee caput amputat ense secundus;
Et telo uentris tertius exta rigat;
Abscidit coxam quartus; procul egit ademptam.⁶
Taliter occisum terra cadauer habet.
Fama uolans 'Heraldus obit' per prelia sparsit;
Mitigat extimulo corda superba timor.
Bella negant Angli. Veniam poscunt superati.
Viuerē diffisi, terga dedere neci.
Dux ibi per numerum duo milia misit ad orcum,
Exceptis aliis milibus innumeris.
Vesper erat; iam cardo diem uoluebat ad umbras,
Victorem fecit cum Deus esse ducem.^d
Solum deuictis nox et fuga profuit Anglis
Densi per latebras et tegmen memoris.

hastened to be the first to give him aid. He dismounted so that the duke could get away in the saddle. And then one of Eustace's household knights did for his lord what the count had done for his. After these auspicious events the count and duke return together to fight where the weapons gleamed the most. By their two swords they clear the battlefield of English troops. A good number desert, hesitate and are destroyed. Just as a wood, when the axe is applied, is chopped to pieces, so the English forest¹ was reduced to nothing.

When France was almost mistress of the field of battle and was already seeking the spoils of war,² the duke caught sight of the king on the top of the hill fiercely cutting down those who were attacking him. He called up Eustace and, leaving there the French to continue the fight, brought enormous relief to those under attack.³ With these two went Hugh, the noble heir of Ponthieu, like a scion of Actor ready to do his duty. The fourth was Giffard, known by his father's surname.⁴ These four bore arms to kill the king. Others indeed were there; but these were better than the rest. If anyone doubts this, what they did proves it true, for in accordance with the rules of war⁵ they compelled Harold by many blows to go the way of all flesh. The first of the four, piercing the king's shield and chest with his lance, drenched the ground with a gushing stream of blood. The second with his sword cut off his head below the protection of his helm. The third liquefied his entrails with his spear. And the fourth cut off his thigh and carried it some distance away.⁶ The earth held the body they had in these ways destroyed.

The report 'Harold is dead' flew throughout the battlefield and fear then softened brave hearts. The English refuse to fight. Defeated, they ask for quarter; despairing of life, they flee from death. In this place the duke dispatched two thousand to Hades besides thousands more beyond counting. It was evening. The day was already swinging to night when God granted victory to the duke. And only darkness and flight through the thickets and coverts of the dense forest saved the

^a *repetunt ed.; repetimus or repetimur A* ^b *Heraldum cogunt ed.; Heraldus cogit A* ^c *madidat ed.; maculat A* ^d *necem corrected to ducem A*

¹ Cf. above, vv. 421, 428.

² For the plundering of the corpses, cf. BT, pl. 71, lower margin.

³ For the killers of Harold, see above, lxxxii-lxxxv; for Hugh, see also above, pp. xxxv, xlv, l.

⁴ Note this early inheritance of a byname.

⁵ Cf. vv. 211, 615. M. & M., pp. 34-5 n. 4, argued that here the phrase means, 'the rightful victors'. But is it an early reference to the laws of chivalry?

⁶ Cf. Malmesbury, GR i, 456.

Inter defunctos noctem pausando peregit
Victor, et expectat lucifer ut redeat.
Petrugil Hectorides¹ sequitur cedendo fugaces;
Mars sibi tela gerit; mors sociata furit.
Duxit ad usque diem uario certamine noctem;
Nec somno premitur, somnia nec patitur.
Illuxit postquam Phebi clarissima lampas
Et mundum furuis expiat a tenebris,
Lustravit campum, tollens et cesa suorum
Corpora, dux terre condidit in grenio.
Vernibus atque lupis, aubus canibusque uoranda
Deserit Anglorum corpora strata solo.²
Heraldus corpus collegit dilaceratum,
Collectum texit sindone purpurea;
Detulit et secum, repetens sua castra marina,
Expleat ut solitas funeris exequias.
Heraldus mater,³ nimio constricta dolore,
Misit ad usque ducem, postulat et precibus,
Orbate misere natis tribus, et uiduate,
Pro tribus, unius⁴ reddat ut ossa sibi,
Si placet aut corpus puro preponderet auro.
Set dux iratus prorsus utrumque negat,
Iurans quod pocius presentis littora portus
Illi committet, aggere sub lapidum.
Ergo uelut fuerat testatus, rupis in alto
Precepit claudi uertice corpus humi.
Eximpro quidam, partim Normannus et Anglus,
Compater Heraldus,⁴ iussa libenter agit.
Corpus enim regis cito sustulit et sepeliuit;
Imponens lapidem, scripsit et in titulo:
'Per mandata ducis rex hic Heraldus quiescis,
Vt custos maneat littoris et pelagi.'
Dux, cum gente sua, plangens super ossa sepulta,
Pauperibus Christi munera distribuit.
Nominis postposito ducis, et sic rege locato,
Hinc regale sibi nomen adeptus abiit.⁵

¹ unius *eds.*; unis *A*

² Cf. above, v. 537, where it is applied to Hugh, the noble heir of Pontieu. On each occasion he is awarded an approving epithet. M. & M., presumably influenced by *CG* ii.

defeated English. The conqueror spent the night resting among the dead, waiting for dawn to return. But Actor's scion, ever vigilant,¹ pursued and killed the fugitives. Mars bore his arms; death raged at his side. Until the true dawn, he spent the night in encounters of every kind, neither weighed down by sleep nor allowing himself to dream.

After the brilliant lamp of Phoebus had shone forth and cleansed the world of its gloomy shades, the duke surveyed the battlefield, and, removing his own dead, had them buried in the bosom of the earth. But the bodies of the English that strewed the ground he left to be eaten by worms and wolves, by birds and dogs.² He assembled Harold's mangled body, wrapped it in purple linen and took it with him when he returned to his seaside camp in order to perform the usual funeral rites. When Harold's mother,³ in the toils of overwhelming grief, sent to the duke and prayed him to surrender to her, an unhappy widow now bereft of three sons, the bones of the one in place of the three—or, if he preferred, he could weigh the body against pure gold—the duke, enraged, refused both requests on the spot, swearing he would sooner put him in charge of the shore of that very port—under a heap of stones. Therefore, just as he had sworn, he ordered the body to be buried on the summit of a cliff. In a short time a relation of Harold, a man part English, part Norman,⁴ gladly carried out the command. He quickly took and buried the king's body under a tombstone with the inscription, 'You rest here, King Harold, by order of the duke, so that you may still be guardian of the shore and sea.' The duke, sorrowing with his Normans over the buried bones, distributed alms to Christ's poor. And with the king thus entombed, he renounced the title of duke, assumed the royal style⁵ and left the place.

²⁴, where Eustace of Boulogne and the duke pursue the fugitives, and Eustace is cowardly, identifies him here as Eustace.

³ Cf. the revisions in *CG* ii. 26, which are entirely favourable to the duke.

⁴ Gytha, sister-in-law of King Canut and widow of Godwin earl of Wessex.

⁵ According to *CG* ii. 25, this was William Malet. Both his ancestry and his relationship to Harold are unknown. For the latest and most thorough investigation, see C. R. Hart, 'William Malet and his family', *MNS* xix (1997), 123–65. Katharine Keats-Rohan is another working on this family. The *caput* of the Malets' Norman honour was Graville-Sainte-Honore at the mouth of the Seine. William I was made sheriff of Yorkshire and castellan of York probably in Feb. 1069, but was captured at York by Danish invaders in the autumn. Besides his large Yorkshire honour, he (and/or his son Robert) were well endowed in East Anglia, with the *caput* at Eye in Suffolk. William died in 1070–1, not long after his release from captivity. Where King Harold was buried is uncertain. See above, pp. lxxxv f.

⁵ The change of title at this time is pointedly denied by *CG* ii. 26. And cf. below, v. 756. The matter is important, for once William became king the period of 'public war' ended and he could regard all those who continued to resist him as rebels. Dawson ended his translation here.

Hastinge portus castris ter quinque diebus
Mansit, et ad Doueram uertit abinde uiam.¹
Nec medium complerat⁴ iter cum territus illi
Occurrit populus, promptus⁶ in obsequio,
Obtulit et clauces castris,⁷ portasque reclusas
Testatur, simulans uelle subesse sibi.

600

Est ibi mons altus, strictum mare, litus opacum.²
Hinc hostes cicius Anglica regna petunt.

605

Set castrum Doutere, pendens a uertice montis,
Hostes reiciens, litora tuta facit.
Claubus acceptis, rex intrans menia castris
Precipit Angligenis euacuare domos.

610

Hos introduxit per quos sibi regna subegit,
Vnumquemque suum misit⁴ ad hospicium.
Illico peruasit terror uicina castris,
Urbes et burgos, oppida queque replens.
Nobilior reliquis urbs Cantorberia⁶ dicta,
Missis legatis, prima tributa tulit.³

615

Post, alie plures nimium sua iura tenentes⁴
Regi sponte sua munera grata ferunt.
Et ueluti musce stimulo fanus exagitare
Vlicera densatim plena cruore petunt,
Vndique sic Angli regi currunt famulari.

620

Pergit numeribus nec uacuata manus;
Omnes dona ferunt et sub iuga colla reponunt;
Flexis poplitibus, oscula dant pedibus.
Per spacium mensis cum gente perendinat illic;
Post, alio uadit castra locare sibi.⁵

625

Guinestram misit, mandat primatibus urbis,
Vt faciunt alii, ferre tributa sibi.⁶
Hanc regina tenet regis de dote prioris
Hetguardi, qua re dedecus esse putat
Sic sibi⁶ concessam si uadit tollere sedem.
Solum uectigal postulat atque fidem.
Vna primates regine consuluerunt,
Illaque, concedens, ferre petita iubet.

630

¹ complerat *eds.*; *comperat A*
² Orlandi¹ ³ castri *eds.*; castris *A*
⁴ 439 Cantorberia *eds.*; Cantorberia *A*
⁵ 543; timentes *A*, Orlandi¹; tuentes *Hall*
⁶ prom(p)us *Hall* (*cf. v. 538*); partus *A*; ? pronus
⁷ *corrected from* misit suum *A*; *cf. v.*
⁸ *tenentes M. & M.* (*cf. vv. 211,*
543); timentes *A*, Orlandi¹; tuentes *Hall*
⁹ sibi *eds.*; tibi *A*

He remained encamped at the port of Hastings for a fortnight, and then set off for Dover.¹ He had not got half way when his terrified inhabitants came to meet him, ready to surrender. They offer him the keys of the town, declare that the gates are open, and profess that they want to submit to him. There are there a high hill, narrow Straits, and a shaded beach.² From here enemies can most easily attack the English realm. But the town of Dover, hanging from the summit of the hill, repels enemies and protects the shore. After the king had accepted the keys, he entered the walled town, ordered the English out of their homes, brought in the men who had conquered the kingdom for him, and sent each to his own lodgings. Immediately terror spread out beyond the town to all neighbouring cities, boroughs, and places. Canterbury, a city considered the noblest of them all, sent envoys and was the first to pay tribute.³ Afterwards many more, holding firmly to their own rights,⁴ of their own accord and in gratitude made gifts to the king. And just as hungry flies attack in swarms wounds brimming with blood, so from all sides the English rush to dance attendance on the king. Nor do they come with hands empty of gifts. All bring presents, bow their necks to the yoke and, on bended knees, kiss his feet.

He and his army stayed there a month. Then he moved his camp elsewhere.⁵ He sent to Winchester and ordered the city fathers to pay him tribute just like other places.⁶ As the queen held this city in dower from the former King Edward, he thought it dishonourable to dispossess her of a residence thus obtained: he required only a rent and fealty. Together the elders took thought for the queen; and she, submissive, ordered that the demands should be met. So both sides

¹ According to *CG* ii. 27, he punished the port of Romney *en route*. For the events at Dover, *cf. ibid.*

² Cf. Matthew Arnold's poem, 'Dover Beach', *ad fin.*: 'And we are here as on a darkling plain'.

³ *CG* ii. 28, mentions the submission of Canterbury.

⁴ Several 'corrections' of *intra tenentes* have been suggested. But *cf. vv. 211, 543*. The sense here seems to be that cities paid to be left alone with their rights intact.

⁵ According to *CG* ii. 28, this was at *Fracta Turris* (broken tower), near Canterbury, which has not been identified. Chibnall, *CG* p. 145 n. 2, hazards Faversham. And there he suffered a grave illness but refused to rest.

⁶ This Winchester episode is unique. William of Poitiers, *CG* ii. 8, claimed that Edith was Harold's enemy and a supporter of William. She certainly made a profitable submission to the Conqueror. Cf. P. Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith* (Oxford, 1997), p. 275.

Taliter et regis precepto spirat uterque,
Nam domine pariter et sua dona ferunt.

Rex sic pacatus tentoria fixa resolvit;

Quo populo nitet Londona^a ierit iter.¹

Urbs est ampla nimis, perversis plena colonis,
Et regni reliquis dicior est opibus.

A leua muris, a dextra^b flumine tuta,²

Hostes nec metuit nec pauet arte capi.

Hanc bello superata petit gens improba, sperans

Viueri per longum libera tempus in hac.

Set quia pernimius terror uallauerat omnes,

Vndique plancius erat meror et impaciens,

Vna postremum rectores atque potentes³

Vna consilio consulere sibi:

Scilicet ut puerum natum de traduce regis⁴

In regem sacrent, ne sine rege forent.

Autumat insipiens vulgus se posse tueri

Regali solo nomine, non opere.

In statum regis puer est electus ab illis,

Cuius presidium contulit exitium.

Sparsit fama uolans quod habet Londonia^d regem,

Gaudet et Anglorum qui superest populus.

Interea, regni totum qui querit habere,

Et, uotis compos⁵ cui fauet omnipotens,

Hostili gladio, que nec uastauerat igne,

Vi^f non ingenio uindicat imperio.

Comperit ut factum fatuis quod non erat equum,

Prescripte muros urbis adire iubet.

Paruit extemplo celeri uelocius aura

Agmen belligerum castra locare sibi.

Densatis castris a leua menia cinxit,

Et bellis hostes esse dedit uigiles.

Dimidie^g leuge spacio distabat ab urbe

Regia regalis, aula decora nimis,

assented to the king's order; and both the queen's and their own gifts were conveyed to him.

Satisfied, the king struck camp and directed his steps to where teeming London shines bright.¹ It is a most spacious city, full of evil inhabitants, and richer than anywhere else in the kingdom. Protected on the left by walls and on the right by the river,² it fears neither armies nor capture by guile. The obstinate men who had been defeated in battle had made their way to London in the hope of being able to live there in freedom for a long time. But, because they were surrounded by so much terror, with everywhere lamentation and unbearable sorrow, finally the governors and magnates³ in consultation thought it advisable to consecrate as king a boy of the royal lineage⁴ lest they remain without a ruler. For the foolish mob thought that they could be protected solely by the name, not by the power, of a king. The boy is elected by them to be the image of a king; and his protection produced ruin. But the report flew around that London had a king and the English survivors rejoiced.

Meanwhile the man who sought possession of the whole realm and, for the Almighty looked favourably upon him, had had his wishes granted,⁵ brought under his rule, not by his wits but by main force, all those parts which he had not devastated by his destructive sword and fire. When he learnt what had been done in London contrary to justice and by fools, he ordered his troops to approach the walls of the city. And immediately, swifter than the wind, a column of soldiers arrived to take up position. He then surrounded the walls on the left side with encampments, set close together, and ordered his men to be ready for battle.

Half a league away from the royal city is the royal palace, a most handsome building, said to have been called by its ancient inhabitants

² Viewing the city with William and his army from the west.

³ A writ of King Edward is addressed to bishop Ælfric (1035-44), Wulfgar 'my portreeve' (? sheriff), and all the citizens of London, in order to protect the privileges of 'my men in the guild of English *cuthlas*'. Here is, presumably, the urban patriciate of the previous generation. Cf. C. Brooke and G. Keir, *The History of London* (London, 1975), pp. 96-8, 191-3.

⁴ Edgar Ætheling, the son of Edward 'the Exile' and great-grandson of King Æthelred. For him see Barlow, *Edward the Confessor*, pp. 217-18, 241, 351; *William Rufus*, pp. 264-6 and *passim*. According to ASC 'D', the election of Edgar *Child* was supported by Archbishop Ealdred of York, who was in the city, and by Earls Edwin and Morkere.

⁵ *Compos uotis*—'having obtained his vows' or 'having gratified his wishes', probably goes with the main subject, the Conqueror, and not with God: cf. above, vv. 70-1. Michel would emend to *uot*.

^a Londona for Londonia (v. 653) because of the metre
^b dextra Orlandaⁱ (cf. vv. 413, 777, 803-4); dextris *A*
^c eds; Landonia *A*
^d Vi Hall, Orlandaⁱ (cf. v. 695); Vi *A*
^e dimidiag corrected by expunction *A*

^f The account of the duke's dealings with London in CG ii. 28, is both shorter and rather different. See also above, pp. lxxxvi f.

Fertur ab antiquis que Guest uociata colonis;
Post, Petri nomen auxit ab ecclesia.¹

Providus hanc sedem sibi rex elegit ad edem,

Que sibi complacuit iure nec immerito:

Nam ueluti patrum testantur gesta priorum,²

Ex solito reges hic diadema ferunt.³

Edificat moles,³ ueruecis cornua ferro

Fabricat et talpas, urbis ad excidium.

Inonat inde minas, penas et bella minatur,

Iurans quod, ilitum si sibi sit spacium,

Menia dissoluet, turres equabit harenis,⁴

Elatam turrem⁵ destruet aggerie.⁶

Talibus auditis, ciues pauor atterit urbis,

Occupat, exagitat, torquet et excruciat.

Intus erat quidam contractus debilitate

Renum sicque pedum segnis, ab officio

Vulnera pro patria quoniam⁷ numerosa recepit.⁵

Lectica uehitur, mobilitate carens;

Omnibus ille tamen primatibus imperat urbis,

Eius et auxilio publica res⁶ agitur.

Huic per legatum clam rex potiora reuelat,

Secretum⁷ poscens quatinus his faueat:

Solum rex uocetur, ait, set commoda regni

Vt iubet Ansgardus subdita cuncta regat.

Ille quidem cautus caute legata recepit,

Cordis et occulto condidit in thalamo.

Natu maiores, omni leuitate repulsa,⁷

Aggregat, et uerbis talibus alloquitur:

Egregii fratres, tum ui, tum sepius arte⁸—

Est ubi nunc sensus uester? Et actus ubi?

'West', a name afterwards extended from the 'minster' of St Peter's.¹ The king, with an eye to the future, chose this as his residence. It attracted him not without justification for, as is proved by the deeds of earlier rulers, kings were accustomed to wear their crown there.² To overthrow the city he built siege-engines³ and made battering-rams with horns of iron as well as machines for mining. Then he thundered forth menaces and threatened punishment and war. He vowed that, given the chance, he would raze the walls, level the bastions to the ground, and reduce the proud tower to rubble.⁴ At these words fear invades and grips the citizens, disturbing, tormenting and excruciating them.

In the city was a man, crippled by kidney trouble and hampered in his walk because he had suffered many wounds while serving his country.⁵ As he lacked mobility he was carried in a litter, but it was he who ruled over the city fathers and it was with his help that the city's business⁶ was done. To this man the king, through an envoy, covertly unvelled another way out, and secretly asked him to view it with favour. He said he wanted only the title of king: all the affairs of the kingdom he would direct just as Ansgar ordered them to be done. But Ansgar, a prudent man, received the offer cautiously and kept it concealed in the secret chamber of his heart. He assembled the city fathers, men past the giddiness of youth,⁷ and addressed them in words such as these.

'Worshipful brethren, sometimes we have to act with force, but more often by diplomacy.⁸ To which do you incline now? What should

² Cf. M. Biddle, 'Seasonal festivals and residence: Winchester, Westminster and Gloucester in the tenth to twelfth centuries', *ANS* viii (1986), 51-72, at pp. 51-2; E. Mason, 'The site of king-making and consecration', *The Church and Society* c.590-1918, *Essays in Honour of Michael Wilks*, ed. D. Wood, Studies in Church History, subsidia ix (Oxford, 1991), 57-76.

³ *Moles* (and cf. v. 699) must represent an artillery-piece such as a mangonel, a giant catapult.

⁴ The high tower threatened with destruction has worried M. & M., Orlandi, and Hall. The last suggested, hesitantly, correcting to 'claram terre destruet aggeriem', i.e. the destruction of an earth rampart. Orlandi, 'Some afterthoughts', p. 124, thinks that the last word must be left to London archaeologists. But surely it is no more than a rhetorical exercise: a picture of a walled and turreted city under siege.

⁵ Called Ansgard in v. 690 and subsequently, presumably Esgar (or Eset) the staller. This man with a Scandinavian name was one of Edward's court officials, termed steward (*procurator*) of the king's hall in a suspect royal charter for Waltham abbey dated 1062. See Barlow, *Edward the Confessor*, index, s.v.; Williams, *The English*, p. 87.

⁶ *Commoda iustitiae* appears in v. 784.

⁷ The levity of youth is a topos in the poem. Cf. above, v. 183 and n.

⁸ Cf. above, v. 658.

^a *h* inserted by same hand *A* ^b turrem *ed.*; turre *A*; clara turre *Orlandi*; elatam terre *Hall*, ? *Orlandi* ^c aggerie *A*; ? *emend* to aggeries *Orlandi*; aggeriem *Hall*, ? *Orlandi* ^d quoniam *ed.*; quia non *A* ^e secretum *ed.*; secreta *Mitchel*, secreti *A*

¹ St Peter's Westminster is about $\frac{1}{2}$ miles from St Paul's cathedral. For Edward's church at Westminster, see Barlow, ed., *The Life of King Edward*, pp. 60-70. Edward died in his palace or hall at Westminster: *ibid.*, pp. 116-24, and it is featured in several of his legends, *ibid.*, pp. xxxviii n. 107, 100, 102-6. The hall was rebuilt by William Rufus, Barlow, *William Rufus*, pp. 371-2, and still exists. For a map of Westminster Abbey, the palace, and the environs in the later Middle Ages, see B. F. Harvey, *Living and Dying in England 1100-1540: The Monastic Experience* (Oxford, 1993), p. xvii. The map shows that the palace was a late arrival in comparison to the church.

Cernitis oppressos ualido certamine muros
 Et circumseptos cladibus innumeris.
 Molis et erecte transcendit machina turres,
 Ictibus et lapidum^a menia scissa ruunt.
 Casibus a multis, ex omni parte ruina
 Eminet,^b et nostra corda timore labant;
 Atque manus populi, nimio percussa^c pauore,
 Urbis ad auxilium segnitèr arma mouet.
 Nosque fortis uasat gladius, pauor angit et intus,
 Et nullum nobis presidium superest.
 Ergo, precor, uobis si spes est ulla salutis,
 Quatinus addatis uiribus ingenium;
 Est quia precipuum, si uis succumbat in actum,^d
 Quod uirtute nequit, fiat ut ingenio.
 Est igitur nobis super hoc prudenter agendum;
 Et pariter sanum querere consilium.
 Censeo quapropter, si uobis constat honestum,
 Hostes dum lateant omnia que patimur,
 Actutum^e docilis noster legatus ut hosti
 Mittatur, uerbis fallere qui satagat:
 Seruicium simul et nec non et federa pacis;
 Et dexteras dextre subdere, si iubeat.^f

700

705

710

715

Omnibus hoc placuit; dicto uelocius implent.

Mittitur ad regem uir ratione capax

720

Ordine qui retulit, decorans sermone faceto,
 Vile fratrum, non secus ac proprium.

Set quia uix patula teneatur compede uulpes,
 Fallitur a rege fallere quem uoluit;

Namque palam laudat rex, atque latenter ineptat
 Quicquid ab Ansgardo nunciis attulerat.

725

Obcecat donis stolidum, uerbisque fefellit,
 Premia promittens innumerosa sibi.

Ille, retro rutilo gradiens honoratus ab auro,
 A quibus est missus talia dicta refert:

Rex uobis pacem dicit profertque salutem;
 Vestris mandatis parer et absque dolis.

730

Set Dominum testor, cui rerum seruit imago,¹
 Post David regem nescit habere parem.

we do? You see the walls assailed by powerful assaults and encompassed by countless disasters. The siege-engine that has been erected overtops the bastions. The walls, split by the blows of its rocks, are falling down. From the many breaches ruin threatens on every side. Our hearts quake with fear. The military forces of the country, panic-stricken, are slow to take up arms in aid of the city. And so, destroyed by the sword without and corroded by fear within, no help is left to us. Therefore, if you still have any hope of deliverance, I pray you add ingenuity to violence. For it is best, if force fails in its action, that what cannot be done by force should be done by ingenuity. We should, therefore, act in this matter with prudence and likewise look for a sensible plan. Accordingly I think, if it seems proper to you, that while all we suffer is hidden from the enemy, we should send immediately to him a persuasive envoy who will try to trick him with words. Let him make a feigned offer of subjection and also of a peace-treaty and even put hand in hand if the enemy should so require.¹

This suggestion pleased them all, and they immediately carried it out. A skilful pleader was sent to the king. Adorning his speech with many a fine word, he expressed in orderly manner what would be advantageous both to his brethren and himself. But because a fox cannot be trapped by an obvious snare, the king whom he had sought to deceive, deceived him. For while the king approved in public the proposals the envoy had brought from Ansgar, in private he ridiculed them. He blinded the fool with gifts, and, promising him immense rewards, deceived him with words. The envoy returned laden with red gold and reported to those who had sent him in words such as these.

'The king sends you a message of peace and wishes you well. He agrees to your demands, and this without guile. For, and I call on the Lord as witness, the Lord to whom the very image of things¹ is subject: he has not seen the equal of such a king since David. King William is

^a lapidum *eds.*; palidum *A*
 perculsa *Orlando*² (*cf.* v. 192)

^b ? for imminet *Hall* (*cf.* v. 390)
^d ? intend to actu *Hall*; actum *A*

^e ? for
 Actutum

¹ Cf. Hebr. 10: 1.

- Pulchrior est sole, sapientior et Salomone;
 Promptior est Magno, largior et Carolo.¹
 735 Contulit Egnardus quod rex donum sibi regni
 Monstrat et adfirmat, usque probasse refert.
 Hoc igitur superest, ultra si vivere uultis,
 740 Debita cum manibus reddere iura sibi.²
 Annuit hoc uulgus, iustum probat esse senatus,³
 Et puertum regem cetus uterque negat.
 Vultibus in terra deflexis, regis ad aulam
 Cum puero pergunt agmine composito.
 745 Reddere per clauis urbem, sedare furorem
 Oblato querunt munere cum manibus.
 Nouit ut aduentum, factus rex obuius illis
 Cum puero reliquis oscula grata dedit.
 Culpas indulsit, gratanter dona recepit,
 750 Et sic suscepto tractat honorifice.
 Per fidei⁴ speciem proprium commendat honorem,
 Et iuramentis perfida corda ligat.⁴

- Cristi natalis, nostre spes una salutis,
 Quam mundus celebrat, proxima lux aderat;
 755 In qua promeritam disponit ferre coronam,
 Et ducis abiecto nomine, rex fieri.⁵
 Auro uel gemmis iubet ut sibi nobile stemma
 Illud quod deceat, fiat ab artifice.
 Misit Arabs aurum, gemmas a flumine Nilus;
 760 Grecia prudentem dirigit arte fabrum
 Qui Salomoniacum, uix deterior Salomone,
 Mirificum fecit et diadema decens.⁶
 Principio, frontis medium carbunculus ornat;
 765 Post hinc,⁶ iacinctus lucifer insequitur,
 Tercius aurifco resplendet in orbe topazon;
 Saphirus quartum ditat honore gradum;
 Sardonicus quintus regales obsidet aures;
 Cui calcedoniis ordine sextus adit,⁶

^a *ad i A, M, S, M, corr. to fidi: either makes sense*
^b *? emend to huic Engeli (cf. v. 774)*
^c *ad i eds; ab i A*

¹ Gnaeus Pompeius, 106–48 BC, called Magnus after 81; Charles the Great, Charlemagne, king of the French, Roman Emperor, 800–14
² i.e. by doing homage; cf. v. 718.

more beautiful than the sun, wiser than Solomon, readier than Pompey, and more bountiful than Charles.¹ He points out and affirms that King Edward granted him the kingdom and alleges that you approved. Therefore, if you wish to survive, only one course is open to you: restore to him by your hands his lawful rights.²

The people agree to this, the council³ approves it as just, and both renounce the boy king. With heads bowed to the ground, they proceed with the boy in an orderly procession to the royal hall, seeking to surrender the city by its keys and to appease wrath by making a gift with their hands. When the king heard of their coming he went to meet them and bestowed joyful kisses on the boy and the others. He pardoned their crimes, gratefully accepted their gifts, and thus treated with honour those whom he had taken under his protection. By a show of good faith he boosts his own reputation, and binds treacherous hearts by oaths.⁴

The day was approaching on which the world celebrates the nativity of Christ [25 Dec.], our only hope of salvation, the festival on which he intended to wear the crown he deserved, and, discarding the title of duke, to be made king.⁵ He ordered that a noble crown, one that was fitting, should be fashioned out of gold and precious stones by a craftsman. Arabia sent gold, the Nile gems from the river, and Greece dispatched a skilled artificer, one scarcely inferior to Solomon, who made a marvellous and befitting crown, similar to Solomon's.⁶

First a central ruby adorns the forehead. A shining jacinth follows. Third, a topaz is resplendent in the golden crown. A sapphire richly embellishes the fourth place. A sardonyx is fifth and rests above the royal ear, followed, sixth in order, by a chalcedony.

³ By *senatus* (cf. below, vv. 789, 815). Guy simply means a governing body (e.g. a council or the witan).

⁴ This harks back to v. 724: there is mutual deceit. Note the word-play: *Per fidei/ perfida*.

⁵ This is discordant with vv. 595–6, and is accepted by *GG* ii. 29, where the duke's reluctance is stressed and a debate on the subject reported. Cf. further, J. C. Nelson, 'The rites of the Conqueror', *JNS* iv (1982), 117–32, at pp. 117–18.

⁶ Solomon's crown is mentioned in S. of S. 3: 11, but is not specially featured in Matt. 6: 29, Luke 12: 27, where he is arrayed in all his glory. The twelve gemstones are based ultimately on Exod. 28: 17–21; 39: 10–13; Ezek. 28: 13; and Rev. 21: 19–20. Cf. also, Marbod, *De duodecim lapidibus* (*PL* clxxi. 1772). See further F. de Mély, *Les Lapidaires de l'Antiquité et du Moyen Âge*, 3 vols (Paris, 1896, 1902); P. Studer and Joan Evans, *Anglo-Norman Lapidaries* (Paris, 1924); Evans and Mary Sargenson, *English Medieval Lapidaries* (LETS, OS, no. 100, London, 1933); K. Leyser, 'England and the Empire in the twelfth century', *Trans. R. Hist. Soc.*, 5th ser., x (1960), 61–83, at p. 65, thought that this crown, 'made by a Greek, with its arc and twelve pearls, resembled that of Otto the Great, the crown of the empire *par excellence*'.

- Septimus est iaspis, procul a quo pellitur hostis;
 Sardi octauus igniuomus rutilat.
 770
 Figitur in nona sella lux crisolitana;^a
 Tuque, berille, locum clarificas decimum;
 Vndecimum uiridis numerum smaragdus adimplet;
 Huic quoque crisoprassus fert duodenus^b opem.
 775
 Verticis in summo stat margarita suprema,
 Que sibi subpositos^c luce replet lapides,
 In cuius dextra leua quoque parte locata
 Est ametisti lux, cui color est geminus.
 Ethereus uelut propulsis nubibus axis
 780
 Insitus ignitus syderibus rutilat,
 Aurea lucifluis distincta corona lapillis.
 Vndique sic renitet^d lumine clarifico.
 Sceptum cum uirga componit post diadema,
 785
 Commoda que pariter significant patrie;
 Nam sceptro tumide regni moderantur habene,
 Dispertos uirga colligit ac renocat.
 Tempore disposito quo rex sacrandus habetur,^e
 790
 Terre magnates et populosa manus,
 Pontificale decus, uenerabilis atque senatus
 Vndique conueniunt regis ad officium.
 Ex his eligitur presul celeberrimus unus,^f
 795
 Moribus insignis et probitate cliens,
 Qui regem sacret, simul et sacrando coronet,
 Et regale caput stemmate nobilitet.^g
 Illius imperio, solito de more priorum,
 Bini ponuntur magnificare Deum.^h
 Ordo cucullatus, clerus cum pontificali
 Nobilitate, petunt templa beata Petri:
 800
 Anteferendo cruces sequitur processio cleri;
 Post clerum pergit pontificale decus.
 Rex, multa comitumque ducum uallante caterua,
 Vltimus incedit cum strepitu populi.
 Illius et dextram sustentat metropolita;
 805
 Ad leuam graditur alter honore pari.ⁱ
 Taliter ecclesiam laudes modulando^j requirit
 Rex, et regalem ducitur ad cathedram.

^a crisolitana *eds.*; crisomana or crisontana *A*^b duodenus *eds.*; dudenus *A*

Seventh is a jasper, from which the devil is driven far. Eighth, a red sard spews out flames. In the ninth place sits a radiant chrysolite. And you, beryl, illuminate the tenth. A green emerald fills the eleventh. And the twelfth, a chrysoprass, also adds to the vert. Above them all, at the apex, is placed a pearl which sets the lower gems ablaze. And on its right and left gleam two amethysts of matching hue. Just as, with clouds dispersed, the sky is aglow, studded with brilliant stars, so the golden crown, picked out with sparkling gems, glitters on every side with dazzling rays. After the crown, the smith created a sceptre and rod, which alike portend the well-being of the realm. For by the sceptre uprisings in the kingdom are controlled and the rod gathers and confines those men that stray.

At the time appointed for the king's coronation,¹ the magnates of the realm, the people, the dignitaries of the church, and the venerable witan assemble from all sides for the royal ceremony. From these, to consecrate and at the same time to crown the king, by ennobling the king's head with a coronet, was chosen the most celebrated of the bishops, a man of distinction, renowned for his goodness.² By his order the procession to magnify the Lord³ was organized, according to the usual and ancient custom, in double file. The monastic order and the clergy with their prelates make for the church of St Peter. Crosses are borne before the procession of the clergy; and after the clergy follows the episcopal order. The king, escorted by a great concourse of counts and dukes and the applause of the people, comes last. A metropolitan bishop holds his right hand and another of the same rank walks on his left.⁴ In this manner, to the chanting of the *Laudes*,⁵ the king seeks the church and is conducted to the royal throne. When the *Laudes* were

^c subpositos *eds.*; subposito *corr.* to ? subposito *A* ^d renitet *eds.*; reitnet *A*
^e nobilitet *eds.*; nobilitate *A*¹ For the coronation, see above, pp. lxxxix f. For *senatus*, cf. above, v. 741 and n.² Ealdred, archbishop of York, according to *GG* ii. 30. For the consecrator, see above, p. xxxvii.³ Or, as Hall, p. 907, suggests, more specifically, to chant the *Magnificat*.⁴ For the implied presence of Sigand, archbishop of Canterbury, and their equal status, see above, pp. xxxvii f., lxxxix f.⁵ For *Carmen's* coronation *orda*, see above, pp. xxxvi f. H. E. J. Cowdrey, 'The Anglo-Norman *Laudes regiae*', *Vision*, xii (1981), 37-78, at 50 ff., doubts the inclusion of *laudes*, which, he believes, were first used in England at Queen Matilda's coronation in 1068 (probably attended by Guy).

Laudibus expletis, turba reticente canora,
Indixit pacem¹ cantor et ut sileant.

Conticuit clerus; compescuit ora senatus;

Non est auditus ullus ab ore sonus.

810

Normannus quidam presul² mox pulpita scandens,
Famosis Gallis talia verba dedit:

'Oblatus vobis si rex placet, edite nobis,
Arbitrio uestri nam decet hoc fieri.'

Concessit populus, clerus fauet atque senatus;

815

Quod sermone nequit, innuit et manibus.

Sermo peroratur post illum metropolitae;

820

Hec eadem lingua protulit Angli gena.

Spirat utraque³ manus;³ laudat; spondet famulari;

820

Annuit ex toto corde subesse sibi.

Conuertens sanctam se summus presul ad aram,

Ante suam regem constituit faciem;

Ad se pontifices accitos congregat omnes,

Et cum rege simul membra dedere solo.

825

Inchoat incensor stans rectus Kyrieleison;

Sanctorum pariter poscit habere preces.⁴

Postquam Sanctorum sir⁵ Letania peracta,

Presule cum summo pontificalis honor

Erigitur, solo prostrato rege relicto.

830

Incensor siluit; omnis et ordo tacet.

Summus et antistes populo precepit ut ore;

Incipit et proprium⁵ protinus officium.

Collectam dixit; regem de pulvere tollit;

Crisimate diffuso regis et ipse caput

835

Vnixit, et in regem regali more sacrauit.

(* * * * *)⁶

¹ utroque M. & M.; utraque A (cf. above n. 633) ² (Sed) postquam M. & M., to remedy the verse because of their scansion of letania; Orlandi³ considers the insertion unnecessary ³ sit eds.; fit A

finished and the melodious throng was still, the precentor declared peace¹ and ordered that all should be silent. The clergy was quiet, the witan uttered no word. Not a sound came from any mouth.

A Norman bishop² then mounted the pulpit and spoke thus to the famous men of France. 'If the king now presented to you meets with your approval, declare it to us, for this matter should be done according to your will.' The people allow it, and the clergy and witan approve, showing by their hands what they could not express in words. The metropolitan follows with an identical speech in English. The congregation gives assent to both,³ hails the king and pledges service. It promises subjection with all its heart. The archbishop then turned towards the holy altar and set the king to face him. He summoned all the prelates to join him and, together with the king, they all prostrate themselves. The precentor, standing, starts the *Kyrie eleison* and also invokes the intercession of the saints.⁴ After the Litany of Saints, the bishops, together with the archbishop, stand up, leaving only the king lying prone. When the precentor ceased chanting, the whole congregation falls silent. The archbishop tells the people to pray and starts the office proper to the occasion.⁵ He recites the Collect, raises the king from the dust, anoints the king's head with the chrism he pours out, and consecrates him king according to the royal rites. ⁶

¹ Cf. above, v. 731. It is probably too early in the service for this to be the occasion for the kiss of peace (*pax*).

² According to GG ii. 30, the bishop of Coutances, i.e. Geoffrey de Mowbray (1049-93), for whom see R. Foreville, *GG* p. 182, n. 2.

³ Or, leaving the text unchanged, 'Both components (of the congregation) gave assent . . .'; cf. Jäschke, *Wilhelm*, p. 36, n. 231. This was the 'acclamation', which, according to GG ii. 30, caused the nervous Norman guards on the abbey to set fire to the environs. For the 'acclamation', see Janet L. Nelson, 'The rites of the Conqueror', *JNS* iv (1982), 117-32, at pp. 122-3.

⁴ For the litany, see Cowdrey, 'The Anglo-Norman *Laudes regiae*', p. 44 n. 22.

⁵ The 'proper' is the part of the Eucharist and Office which changes according to the festival or ecclesiastical season: hence here the proper for Christmas Day.

⁶ At least a pentameter is missing. For a discussion of how the original ended, see above, pp. xx, xc.