

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE FIRST CHURCHES.

Scotic Christianity predominant in seventh century—Proof that 'civic' meant 'graveyard'—Scotic Monasteries: Chertsey, Medeshamstede, Thorney, Abingdon, Hartlepool—The three Churches of Paulinus—Further Proof that 'civic' meant 'graveyard'—The term 'Bedebus'—Churches as Residences—The 'civics' of Earls Puch and Addi—'Mynstre' signified the structural 'church'—Evidence of 'Saxon Chronicle'—Evidence of Early Saxon Codes—Place-names in '-minster'—The 'mynstre' at Kirkdale—Why the Latin Church disliked 'civic'—Origin of Parishes—The Saxons not Builders in Stone—The typical English Church a Scotic Type—Badness of early Saxon Masonry—Drythelm at Cuningham—Churches the chief force in creating Villages—Wilfrid's 'Loca Sancta'—'Civic' extended to denote 'Structural Church'—Ecgbert's Orders—The Four Classes of Churches.

It is not to be supposed that a Church which in other matters clung so obstinately to its own practices would abandon these in the matter of mission-work. Bede instances individuals who went about such work in England precisely as others had gone about it in Ireland, and these were but types of all. From north to south the England of the seventh and eighth centuries was filled with Scotic missionaries and strewn with Scotic monasteries, amongst whose multitude the Roman figures of Augustine and Paulinus were remarkable only because they were so exceptional. 'Not Augustine, but Aidan, was the true Apostle of the English.'

Whatever the truth of Nennius' emphatic assertion as to the presence of Celtic missionaries at York at the baptism of king Edwin,¹ it is a fact that Paulinus left Northumbria (633) within seven years, and that thenceforward for a generation Scotic Christianity had the field to itself. Even the decisions of the Synod of Whitby (664) did not put a stop to the close intercourse of the northern Saxons with

¹ Above, ch. xvi.

the Scoti. That 'noblest-born of Scots,' St. Fursey, who settled in his own *monasterium silvanum* within the deserted walls of Cnobheresburg, once the Roman Garianonum (Burgh castle) in Suffolk,¹ was not the only one to make his home in England; and conversely numbers of Saxons went to Ireland to study, and some at least returned to preach and teach.² Amongst them were Ethelwine, consecrated first Bishop of Lindsey in 680,³ his brother Ethelhun,⁴ and Chad.⁵ Another Saxon named Egbert lived all his life in exile amongst the Picts, and died abbat of Iona in 716.⁶ It is not recorded that Ethelwine built any 'churches,'⁷ but in 669 Chad, whose bishopric combined Mercia and Lindsey, founded a monastery at Ad Baruae,⁸ i.e. Barrow-on-Humber. Stukeley speculated upon the significance of the 'druidical mud-walled temple'⁹ at Barrow, and to this day the churchyard retains much of its circular figure.¹⁰ Celtic influence seems to have been strong in the part of Lincolnshire lying between Stow and the Humber, from the Roman Ermine Street on the east to the Trent and the Fens on the west. Genuine Saxon dedications—SS. Hygbeald, Alkmund, Radegund, Etheldreda, and Oswald—are frequent; and there is a little group of parishes—Scotter (St. Peter),¹¹ Scotton (St. Genewys)¹² and Scothern (St. Germanus)¹³—

¹ H.E. III, xix, §§ 202, 203.

² H.E. III, xxvii, § 240; III, viii, § 172; V, x, § 381.

³ His see was at a place called Sidnacester, obviously a Roman site. Freeman accepted the usual identification with Stow-in-Lindsey, but Roger of Hoveden (*circa* 1200) allowed that even in his time no one knew where it really was (*Flores*, i, 237).

⁴ H.E. III, xxvii, § 241.

⁵ H.E. IV, iii, § 264.

⁶ H.E. III, xxvii, § 242.

⁷ The building of the first church at Stow is attributed to bishop Eadnoth in the eleventh century (Camden, *Britannia*, i, 572).

⁸ i.e. *Ad Nemus* (Bede H.E. IV, iii, § 259). *Bearw* is a common Saxon word for a 'grove,' and there are at least four parishes of the name in England. It is the word used in the S.V. for the 'belt of trees' about John of Beverley's *mansio* (p. 223). See Taylor, *Names and their Histories*, p. 367.

⁹ *Abury* (1723), p. 92, and plate xxxix.

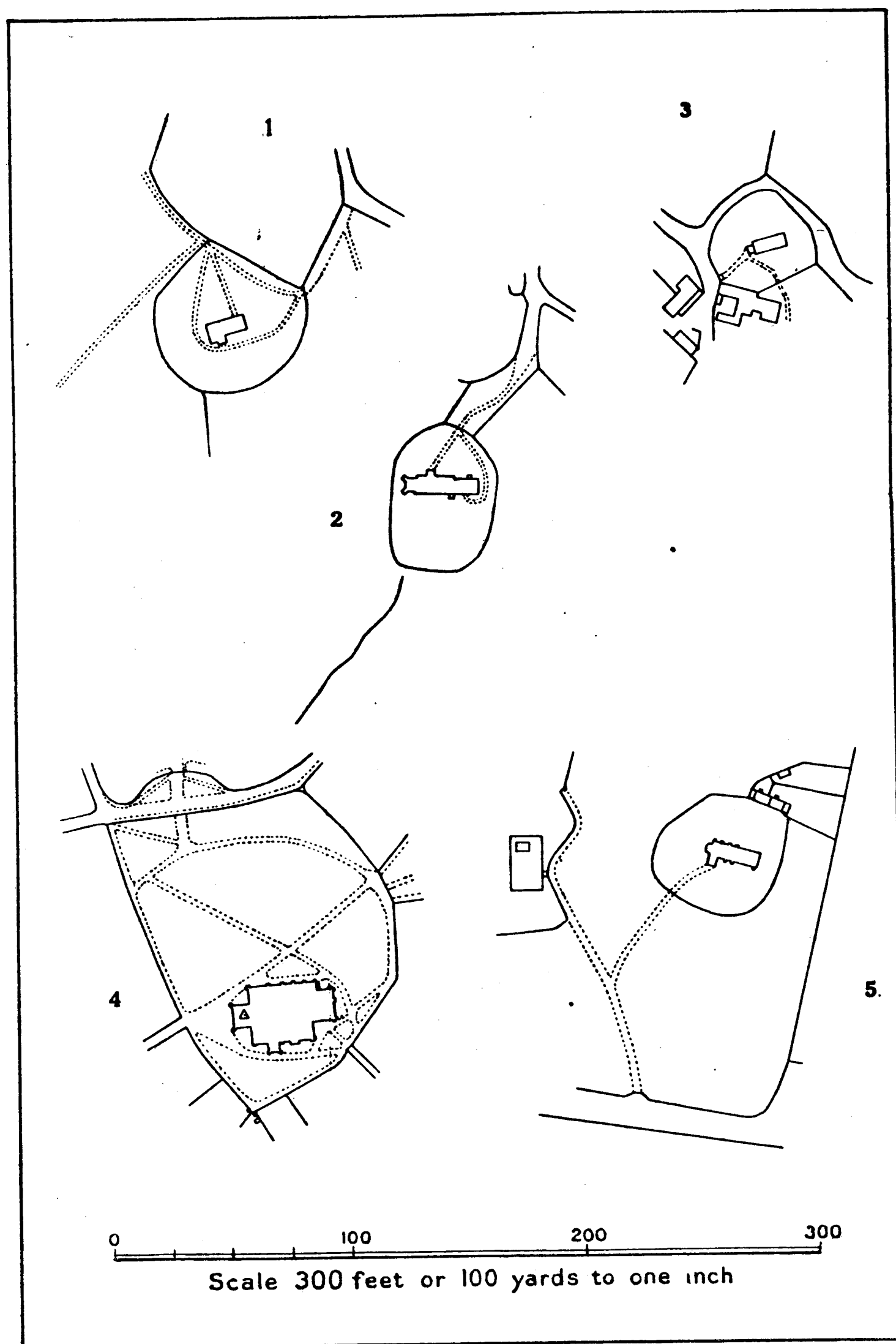
What he saw was a fine Norman mount-and-bailey castle. A better plan of it is to be found in Greenwood, *Picturesque Tour to Thornton Monastery* (Hull, 1835). In D.B. one Drogo de Beurere held lands at Barewe.

¹⁰ 'About the shape of a moon three-quarters full' (autograph of the Vicar). When Greenwood wrote his *Tour* 'a district of houses at the back of the church' was still called St. Chad's.

¹¹ D.B. Scotere.

¹² D.B. Scotone. The name of St. Genewys is otherwise unknown, and it has been thought that a St. Genesis is the person meant; see Miss Arnold-Forster, *Studies in Church Dedications*, i, 477. The name has a peculiarly Welsh look. There was a St. Gwynws (Guinnus or Wnws), eponym of Llanwnws, Card., and there is a Llangyniew 4 miles w. of Welshpool. In Cornwall is a St. Gennys.

¹³ D.B. Scotorne, Scoltorne, Scotstorne. There is mention of a church and a priest here in 1086.



CIRCULAR CHURCHYARDS.

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|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. East Hope, Salop. | 2. Stanton upon Hine Heath, Salop. |
| 3. Efenechtyd, Denbigh. | 4. Bromsgrove, Worc. |
| 5. Cranwich, Norfolk. | |

(From the Ordnance Map, by permission of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office).

of which the names have been thought to commemorate Scotie evangelizers.¹ On the other hand the district is noticeably poor in later Roman religious foundations, such as were thickly strewn over the rest of the country.

Every bishop of the northern sees until the days of Wilfrid was a Scot, or a Saxon trained in some Scotie school. 'From Iona came (635) Aidan, the Apostle of Northumbria, as well as Finan (651), Colman (661) and Tuda (664), who followed as bishops there. The first bishop of Mercia, Diuma (656), a Scot, was ordained by Finan. The second bishop was Cellach (658), also a Scot, who resigned his bishopric and retired to Iona. His successor, the third bishop of Mercia (Trumhere, 659), was indeed an Englishman, but educated and ordained by Scots. Bishop Finan baptised Peada the son of Penda, and so introduced Christianity into the province.'² Chad, and his brother Cedd, were as much Scotie in their Christianity as any of the others. So was Cuthbert. So was Saxulf, seventh bishop of Mercia (675-691), and the contemporary bishop of London itself, Erconwald (675-693).

The latter half of the seventh century saw the foundation of a great number of monasteries which became famous, and where we have any evidence at all it goes to show that they were of the Scotie type. Erconwald, bishop of London, built for himself (666) a monastery at Chertsey, and for his sister Ethelburga another at Barking (670). Bede³ has a good deal to say of certain happenings at Barking, and his account is worth examination. The date of its founding was but two years after the consecration of the Roman Theodore as primate, and therefore before he could bring to bear any Romanising influence.⁴ Erconwald's foundation would presumably reflect the Saxon way, and that way we should expect to be decidedly Scotie. Bede's account shows that it was entirely so.

¹ Similar names are Scottow in Norfolk, and Scotby near Carlisle. The present-day Scotland in Ingoldsby, Lincs., appears to be Coteland of *D.B.*

² Cited (with dates added from Bright's *Lectures*) from Miller's *Introduction* to the Saxon Version of Bede (E.E.T.S.). When Colman left Lindisfarne he made a joint Anglo-Irish settlement at Inisboffin, but presently withdrew with his Saxon disciples

to a new site at Mageo (Mayo), *quod monasterium usque hodie ab Anglis tenetur incolis . . . egregium examen continet monachorum* (*H.E.* IV, iv, § 266).

³ *H.E.* IV, vi-x.

⁴ A *capitulus* of Theodore (Thorpe, p. 307) runs: *Non licet viris feminas habere monachas, neque feminis viros. Tamen non destruamus illud quod consuetudo est in hac terra.*

The monastery at Barking was in the first place, as were so many Scotie foundations, a mixed one, like Whitby, Repton, and others. Bede's language suggests that it was divided into two parts by some sort of cross-wall.¹ The western portion was reserved for the sisters, who had an *oratorium*. The eastern portion therefore belonged to the brothers, who may have had a second *oratorium* of their own.² There was, however, communication between the two parts, for the sisters used to pass from the oratory to the graves of the departed brothers (*fratrum*) 'to sing the accustomed praises of God.' It would rather seem that there was but one oratory, that it stood on the line of the dividing-wall, and that both sexes used it alike.

In the second place, though the sisters and the brothers buried their dead each within their own particular part of the precincts, there was at first no fixed place of burial; for Æthelburga made it a practice to ask each of her flock of nuns where she would desire to be buried, until the question was miraculously answered for them collectively by a light from heaven, which pointed out a spot 'on the south side of the monastery and west of the oratory.' This again implies that the oratory in question was not in the centre of the precincts, but to the south. It appears to have been placed just as was that of Cuthbert at Farne, and perhaps for the same reason, namely, to leave the central space free for some notable interment.

Thirdly, the area of the monastery was very small, for the second abbess, Hildelid, already found it needful to get rid of this diversity of burial-places 'because of the small area whereon the monastery was built.' She decided 'to take up the bones of all the servants of God there buried, and to translate them, male and female alike, to one place (*in unum locum*; S.V., *in anre stowe*)'; and this

¹ See above, ch. xviii, on Inismurray.

² This is not at all certain, *pace* Bright (*Lectures*, p. 258), for in Irish monasticism it was sometimes the practice to divide one and the same building between the two sexes. The classical instance is that of the monastery of St. Bridget at Kildare. See Champneys, *Irish Eccles. Architecture*, p. 27. [The description is supposed to belong to the ninth century, 200 years later than Barking.] At the present day it is not unusual for the sexes to occupy different

sides of the church in Brittany, and traces of the same thing yet remain in Wales (Hughes and North, *Old Churches of Snowdonia*, p. 84). The monastery 'not far from Partney,' of which Ethelild, sister of bishop Ethelwine of Lindsey, was abbess (*circa* 680) was a double one: Bede *H.E.* III, xi, § 182. So was that which Osric founded about the same time at Bath. So also that of St. Etheldreda at Ely, founded in 673; *coetum utriusque sexus congregavit* (*Liber Eliensis*, i, 43).

place was 'in the church (*ecclesiam*; S.V., *cirican*) of the blessed Mother of God.'

It might be inferred that therefore some sort of 'church' had been built since Ethelburga's time. The sequel will raise a doubt whether Bede is not again reading into the story of a Scotie monastery the practice and procedure of a Roman foundation like his own at the other end of England.

The wife of a neighbouring *gesith*, being stricken with blindness, resolved to seek healing by prayer before the relics of those whose bones had been translated 'to one spot.' She was brought to the monastery and admitted to the burial-place (*coemeterium*; S.V., *liictune*), and praying there was at once cured. So according to the one writer the *anre stowe* was in the *liictune*, and also it was in the *ciric*; according to the other it was in the *coemeterium*, but also in the *ecclesia*.

Now it is not conceivable that Bede could write of a *coemeterium* as being within a church; and it is certain that the Saxon Translator could not mean to suggest that a *liictun* could be within a church. That being so, it is clear that to the latter *ciric* did not here mean a 'church' at all, but rather a 'burial-ground.' The *anre stowe*, it would appear, was some sort of joint vault or shrine within the burial-ground; and *ecclesia* here means the same thing, and not a structural church at all.

Here then in the latter half of the seventh century was founded an exact replica of the typical Scotie monastery, at the very gates of London and in that part of England which might be supposed to have most effectively felt the Roman influence of the Augustinian mission. Probably Erconwald's earlier foundation at Chertsey was just such another. Saxulf was the original *constructor*¹ of a monastery at Medeshamstede (*c.* 655) which, after experiencing the usual ravage of the Danes, was rebuilt (963) and fortified in such sort as thenceforward to be known as Petri Burgus, now Peterborough. As Saxulf had also founded a monastery provided with cells² for solitaries on a spot known for that reason as Ancarig, the 'Isle of Anchorites' (now Thorney),

¹ Bede *H.E.* IV, vi, § 272. The S.V. renders it by *timbrend*, 'carpenter.'

² *Cum cellis eremiticis*. See Bright, *Lectures*, p. 257, and the references there given. Lewis says the date was 662.

it is to be inferred that the original Medeshamstede was also of thoroughly Scotie type. Yet the Romanising Theodore, so far from finding anything to disapprove in these Celtic activities, preferred Saxulf to the bishopric of Mercia in 675, and Erconwald to that of the East Saxons (London) in the same year.

The *Abingdon Chronicle* tells us¹ the plan and something of the arrangements of that famous monastery in the days of its first abbat Hean, at the close of the seventh century, i.e. when Bede was at middle life. It was circular, with a diameter of 120 ft. only, surrounded by a high wall. Round the area were twelve cells and the same number of oratories, accommodating as many monks, who in the ordinary course of things ate and slept in their several cells. On Sundays and great festivals, however, they assembled for common service in the church (*ecclesia*), and also took their meals together.

This, so far as it goes, is a correct description of a monastery of the Scotie type. The circular wall, the exiguous area, the separate cells each with its own oratory, are all Scotie features. There was a 'great house' or refectory also, as in St. Patrick's standard plan. The *Chronicle* avers that there was also an *ecclesia*, but there is no proving that this signifies a structural church; and in view of the date and the evidence one may doubt whether the writer of the account, who clearly belonged to an age when the Scotie plan was no longer familiar in England,² did not, like Bede, read a false meaning into *ciric*, and substitute *ecclesia* where he should rather have written *coemeterium*.

Tradition derived the name of Abingdon from one

¹ *Habebat (monasterium) in longitudine C et XX pedes, et erat rotundum, tam in parte occidentali quam in parte orientali* [clearly the description was written by some one to whom such a circular plan was anomalous, and he is at pains to emphasise its complete circularity] . . . *In circuitu huius monasterii erant habitacula xii et totidem capellae, et in habitaculis xii monachi ibidem manducantes et bibentes et dormientes, nec habebant claustrum sicut nunc habent, sed erant circumdati muro alto qui erat eis pro claustro . . . Habebant iuxta portam domum pro locutorio . . . Diebus dominicis et praecipuis festivitibus conveniebant et in ecclesia*

missam celebrabant et simul manducabant. *Chron. Monast. de Abingdon*, Rolls Series (1858), ii, 272.

² This is borne out by his remark upon the lack of any cloister 'such as now we have.' For the meaning of *claustrum*, see Baldwin Brown, *Arts*, i, p. 184. He cites Julius Schlosser (1889) as showing that the cloister-court was not a feature of the earliest monastic houses; 'the date of its introduction into general use, especially in our own country, is a matter for enquiry.' Presumably it was introduced when at last the Roman monastic *regula* supplanted the Scotie.

Aben or Abben, alleged to have been an Irishman and a Christian, to have escaped from the massacre at Stonehenge, and at the close of his life to have withdrawn to his native country. The truer derivation is probably from the Saxon personal name Abba. The monastery is believed to have been founded by Cissa, a viceroy of Kentwine (c. 675).¹ Its first abbat was his nephew Hean, and its next benefactor was Ceadwalla (ob. 688). Cissa's foundation was at Bayworth, half a mile outside Abingdon town. Burnt in 871 by the Danes, the monastery was rebuilt upon another site and reconsecrated by Dunstan. This new foundation—'St. Mary's minster which is at Abingdon'²—was non-Celtic, and has been styled 'the first regular monastery of England.' The *Chronicle* asserts that Abingdon had been a centre of religion in pagan times,³ which, if it is to be believed, may explain any pretended connexion of its alleged founder Aben with Stonehenge.

At Hartlepool, not 25 miles away from Bede's home in Benedict Biscop's Latin monastery of Jarrow, a woman named Heiu was (650) abbess of another monastery.⁴ Many of the grave-slabs of its earlier inmates have been discovered, and their peculiar decoration illustrates in another way the universal Celtism of the time. 'The similarity of the characters employed on these stones to those of Irish manuscripts of the sixth and seventh centuries, the well-known *Gospels* of St. Columba and St. Ceadda, and the *Books* of Kells and Armagh,'⁵ was recognised from the first. Even in 1889 Romilly Allen could compile a list of 229 places, distributed over 29 English counties, in which had been found stones with Hiberno-Saxon decoration.⁶ The number has been greatly increased since that date.

The Roman Paulinus, in his seven years' mission in

¹ But it is in no wise unlikely that there had lived upon the spot some recluse—Abben or another—before Cissa gave it his attention.

² *A.-S. Chronicle*, 977.

³ *Chron. de Abingdon*, i, 9: *Ubi etiam a primis Britonum temporibus locus fuit religionis, tam tempore religionis fanaticae quam tempore religionis Christianae.* Recent discoveries have shown that it was the site of a considerable Romano-British town.

⁴ *H. E. IV*, xxiii, § 324. Heiu, consecrated by Aidan, was the first female to control a

monastery in Northumbria. Later she moved to another monastery at Tadcaster, and at Healaugh, 3 miles therefrom, has been found a sepulchral slab bearing her name (Romilly Allen, *Mont. Hist.* p. 222). She left Hartlepool to St. Hilda, who presently made (658) a new foundation at Whitby; and Whitby, as Scotie as any, gave to England five bishops before Bede was dead (*H. E. IV*, xxiii, § 326).

⁵ Pettigrew, *Chronicles of the Tombs* (1857).

⁶ *Mont. Hist.* p. 22.

Northumbria, built but three churches.¹ Of these the first was the *basilica* at York (p. 201)²; the second, also a *basilica*, but a wooden one,³ at Campodonum, probably Doncaster⁴; while the third was an *ecclesia* at Lincoln, which in Bede's time was already roofless.⁵ In spite then of his Roman leanings Paulinus was fain to build very seldom, and even so to build with wood as well as with stone. Nay, as Bede does not style the church at Lincoln⁶ a *basilica*, Paulinus may have had to waive at last even the basilican plan. We know that he baptised *sub divo*, in the Swale near Catterick and in the Trent at a spot unidentified. But so far was he from establishing a patent and powerful Roman Christianity that there was in all Bernicia 'neither cross, nor church, nor even altar,'⁷ until Oswald raised a wooden⁸ cross in memory of his triumph over heathendom at Heavenfield in 635.⁹ The church at Hexham was built by Wilfrid about 673, but when Bede¹⁰ was writing (*ante* 731) he could only say that at Heaven-

¹ Bede mentions three only, but it is certain that, if the facts had allowed it, he would have mentioned more. In *H.E.* II, xiv, § 133, he explicitly says that the facts did not allow it: *Nondum enim oratoria vel baptisteria in ipso exordio nascentis ibi ecclesiae poterant aedificari.* He is speaking of Paulinus in Northumbria, and apologising for his administering baptism in the open air.

² On the site of the present cathedral. It was built so as to enclose the circular wooden *oratorium* in which king Edwin had been baptised; and the latter evidently owed its peculiar form to that of the well at which the baptism was administered. There is a well to this day beneath the Cathedral, probably that in which the king was baptised.

³ For it was burnt down (*mid ealle py boðle*, adds the Saxon Version, meaning 'with all the cells' of the accompanying monastery) very soon after, the only thing to escape being the altar, *quia lapideum erat.*

⁴ Others identify it with Slack near Huddersfield, or with Tanfield near Ripon. The Saxon Version has Donafelda. There was a royal residence there, transferred after the fire to Loidis (Bede, *H.E.* II, xiv, § 133).

⁵ Wilfrid found it necessary to repair the roof of the *basilica* at York about 50 years later.

⁶ Represented by the present church of St. Paul (i.e. Paulinus) at Lincoln.

⁷ *Nullum, ut comperimus, fidei Christianae signum, nulla ecclesia, nullum altare* (Bede, *H.E.* III, ii, § 153). The order of the words is noticeable: Bede was evidently familiar with the Scotie practice of erecting open-air altars before any churches were built: and he spoke literally (*ut comperimus*), not figuratively. This assertion is omitted by the S.V., as is also the further passage which tells us that 'the monks of Hexham for many years regularly kept vigil on the battlefield at Heavenfield, and on the anniversary of the fight celebrated the Eucharist,' *although there was as yet no church there.*

⁸ See Bede's anecdote (*H.E.* III, ii, § 154) of the monk whose injured arm was healed by help of a morsel of moss gathered *de venerabili ligno.* He says the cross was yet standing when he was writing (*ibid.* § 152).

⁹ So Eddius and Richard of Hexham.

¹⁰ A.-S. Hefenfelth, 'the high field.' Bede naturally seized upon the chance of connecting the name *ominis causa* with that of Heaven, and rendered it *Coelestis Campus.* According to the traditional view it was near the hamlet of Wall and on the Roman Wall. Camden says that in the eighth century the chapel on the site was dedicated to SS. Cuthbert and Oswald. Perhaps Cuthbert had something to do with getting the first 'church' hallowed. Other authorities would have the site of Hefenfelth to be in Hallington, about 5 miles away.

field a church had been built 'recently.'¹ Benedict Biscop's church at Jarrow was built fifty years after the fight (684),² but even at that date, when Cuthbert was young, the remoter parts of the diocese of Lindisfarne were entirely without churches or other spiritual provision whatever.³ In view of these definite statements the vague assertion that as early as Aidan's time (*circa* 635) 'churches were built *per loca*'⁴ must not be pressed. Perhaps it means 'here and there' rather than 'here, there, and everywhere,' as it is usually made to mean. Aidan was a Scot, a disciple of St. Columba, and it is not in the least likely that he would build many 'churches.' He had a 'church' of some kind at Lindisfarne, the seat of his bishopric,⁵ but it was of wood only and so small that his next successor Finan felt constrained to build another 'more accordant with the dignity of a bishop's see.' Even this, one learns, was still made of timber and roofed with thatch⁶; so that its precursor may well have been nothing more ambitious than was that other building near Bamborough, beside which Aidan died in 651.⁷ We have a hint of the rapidity with which such rude structures would decay in the fact that Bishop Eadberct,⁸ only some 45 years

¹ It is odd that Bede makes no mention of the extraordinary church of St. Mary, alleged to have been built by Wilfrid at Hexham, if it was indeed there in his time. It was, says Eddius, the finest church on this side of the Alps, and Richard of Hexham (twelfth century) describes it as 'rising up like a tower, almost circular, and having four *porticus* on the four sides.' Judged from the descriptions it would have been remarkable anywhere, and especially so in an England which at that date had so few churches of any kind, and most of these mere Celtic oratories. Possibly Richard has attributed to Wilfrid (*ob.* 709) some later work of the monks of Hexham. Even so it is still odd that Bede has no mention of Wilfrid's authentic work, which was assuredly in complete accord with the *regula Romana.* But Bede had excuse for disliking Hexham; see the tale told in Bright, *Lectures*, pp. 428-9.

² It was a *basilica*, and is so styled in the contemporary inscription (dated 23rd April, 684) there preserved. But Biscop was at pains to make it as strictly Roman as he could (*H.E.* IV, xviii).

³ cf. *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 9.

⁴ *H.E.* III, iii, § 156. The Saxon Version

however, has *on monigum stowum*, 'in many places.' The same phrases, Latin and Saxon, recur in III, xxii, § 214, of Cedd's missionary work in East Anglia. Very likely both passages are instances of Bede's proleptic use of *ecclesia* = *circ* = 'Burial ground,' which appears also (below, p. 266) to be the specific meaning of *stow*.

⁵ *H.E.* III, iii, § 156.

⁶ *ibid.* III, xxv, § 225.

⁷ *ibid.* III, xvii, § 195. It was a *mansio* (p. 205), though not so called by Bede, who says merely that Aidan had there an *ecclesia* and a *cubiculum* (S.V., *cirican* and *cytan*), a few *agelli* (S.V., *feower aeceras*), and nothing else. When he fell ill they made for him a tent: 'they' would be the monks who shared the *mansio* with him, and the tent was a lean-to against the west end of the 'church.' As he was not carried into his *cubiculum*, one suspects that this was actually also his 'church'—that *cubiculum* and *ecclesia* were identical, as with the earliest Celtic Christians—and that the *circ* of S.V. was veritably a *coemeterium*, as in the case of John of Beverley at Hexham (ch. xxii). Living alone, Aidan could have no use for four acres.

⁸ He was bishop from 688 to 698, Finan

later, replaced Finan's thatched roof with lead and covered the whole building with sheets of the same metal; and one further infers that the building must have been extremely small to allow of such costly treatment. Cedd, who died in 664, built his monastery at Lastingham² of timber. It contained therefore no other 'church' than the customary Celtic oratory of wood, and it was still nothing more than an oratory when rebuilt in stone before Bede's death.¹ Only in 710 did the Picts, albeit nominally converted by Columba on his first arrival in Caledonia, send through their king Nectan (Naiton) to ask bishop Ceolfrid of Lindisfarne for masons to teach them how to build churches of the Roman kind.³

If these statements—and they are all drawn from Bede—represent what really contented a Paulinus and an Aidan, a Cuthbert and a Cedd; if the greatest monasteries and the leading episcopal sees of the seventh century's last years were provided only with 'churches' so humble; it is impossible to believe that rural England at the same date could show many churches as we understand the term, or indeed many churches of any sort at all. It is much more probable that there were none outside the monastic settlements. This view is confirmed by the statement that Willibald was baptised at the cross in his native village in Hampshire, 'for at that date (*circa* 700) there were few or no churches in the Saxon villages.'⁴ Even the crosses would not commonly be of more lasting material than wood, as was that at Heavenfield.

from 651 to 661. If this work upon the 'church' was Finan's first concern and Eadbert's last, the extreme interval of time was only 47 years. It may have been as little as 27 years. The building was destroyed by the Danes in 793 (*A.-S. Chronicle*).

¹ Bede, *H.E.* III, xxiii, § 218.

² *ibid.* III, xxiii, § 219. The body of Cedd, which had originally been buried out-of-doors (*foris*), as Cuthbert had purposed to be buried and as Chad was buried at Lichfield, was re-interred beside the altar of the rebuilt church, and Lastingham continues to be a church to this day. Contrast again the fate of Farne (above, p. 207). The famous crypt of Lastingham is declared to be Early Norman only (Romilly Allen, *Mont. Hist.* p. 199).

³ Bede, *H.E.* V, xxi, § 427. We are not told what was the answer to his request, and there is no reason to suppose that 'churches of the Roman style' thenceforward abounded in Pictland. Nectan's innovation may have been little more successful than was Ninian's (p. 176). And of what kind had been the Pictish 'churches' before this time? How were they related, if at all, to those Scottish stone circles, to so many of which still clings the name of Kirk?

⁴ Cited by Baldwin Brown, *Arts*, i, 256, from *Acta Sanctorum*, Jul. ii, 502. St. Willibald was born in 699. In the middle of the ninth century Walafrid Strabo is found protesting against the craze for building on too magnificent a scale, and St. Bernard yet later (*circa* 1150) deprecates 'the vast height, inordinate length, and needless

The passage in which Bede describes the *mansio* of John of Beverley on the Tyne reappears in his Saxon Translator, and the two versions are here printed side by side with an English rendering of the Saxon:—

BEDE.	SAXON TRANSLATOR.	ENGLISH.
Est mansio quaedam secretior nemore raro et vallo circumdata . . . habens coemeterium sancti Michaelis arch- angeli . . .	Sindon sumu deagol wiic mid walle 7 mid barwe ymbsealde . . . Habbað ða wiic gebaed- hus 7 ciricean S ^{te} Michales ðaes heahen- gles . . .	There are ¹ some seclud- ed dwellings surrounded with a wall and a grove . . . These dwell- ings have ¹ a bede- house and a <i>ciric</i> of St. Michael the Arch- angel . . .

Hist. Eccles. V, ii, § 362.

The Latin of Bede says that the *mansio* included a *coemeterium*, but says nothing about any church or oratory. The Saxon Translator says it contained a *gebaedhus* and a *ciric*. As *gebaedhus* cannot possibly render *coemeterium*, the equivalent of the latter word must be *ciricean*. Here then is a patent example of the use of *ciric* in the sense of *coemeterium*, 'burial-ground.' And evidence has been brought to show that at that period all burial-grounds were necessarily circular. So *ciric* meant a 'circular burial-ground.'

Cadoc in Wales built a 'church' to serve him for a resting place upon his journeys to and fro.² Ecgfrid of Northumbria gave to Cuthbert, who had just been consecrated bishop of Lindisfarne (685), the village of Creca (Crayke in Galtres) and the lands around it, 'as a halting place in his journeys to and from York.' Cuthbert is said to have founded a monastery there,³ probably some small

breadth' of the buildings (*oratoria*), 'their costly polished stonework and their elaborate painting.' If Bernard wrote as a reformer, this can scarcely be asserted of Walafrid. [Hospinianus, citing St. Bernard's *Apologia ad Gulielmum Abbatem S. Theodorigi*.] It would seem that when at last the Saxons began to build on a more ambitious scale, their efforts were occasionally somewhat freakish, as e.g. in the case of the church which Alfred is said (William of Malmesbury, *Gest. Pontif.* ii, § 92) to have reared at Athelney, *situ quidem pro angustia modicam, sed novo aedificandi modo compactam. Quattuor enim postes solo infixi totam suspen-*

dunt machinam, quattuor cancellis opere sphaerico in circuitu ductis. This appears to be the earliest authentic record of any circular structural church in this country; cf. however Richard of Hexham's account of the church at that place, above, p. 233, note 1. There is evidence that early Saxon buildings were commonly rather lofty than wide.

¹ The tense shows that the *mansio* was still in existence when the Translator was writing (? *circa* 975).

² Chap. xix.

³ *Decem Script.*, 69: Bede, *Op.* vi, 392.

thing of the Scotie plan. Crayke came to be a parish, its church dedicated to St. Cuthbert still, and until the last century belonged to the see of Durham. It was long remarkable as the scene of a race-meeting, and odd as it may appear, the saint and the racing were probably very intimately connected.¹

Where kings and queens led the way lesser men soon followed, and one 'earl' after another made a *ciric* and called in a bishop to hallow it. Naturally these would in the first instances be close to one or other monastic foundation, the new faith gradually spreading further and further from these centres. Bede's narrative enables us to see the process at work: John of Beverley is staying at a convent (supposed to be at Watton, E.R.) and earl Puch invites him to come and hallow the earl's *ciric*.² It is 'about two miles' from the convent. The next chapter tells how earl Addi did likewise.³ Addi's *tun* was, it is thought, at North Burton (Cherry Burton),⁴ some seven miles away from Watton. The date was about 686.⁵

In both these cases Bede says the saint is called in *ad dedicandam ecclesiam*, and in both cases the S.V. has *circan to haliganne*. There is no reason to doubt that the word *circe* is here used in its original sense of a burial-ground only; for the time had not yet come for building any structural churches outside the protecting walls of a monastery. The two earls provide the land and the united labour of their men builds the barrow. It is precisely like any other barrow, but its consecration is new. It is hallowed by the bishop and constituted a Christian *ciric*. Whether or no there was at once provided an oratory, a tiny wooden bede-house, is of no particular moment. That would come in time.

The account of John of Beverley's *mansio* further tells what was the common name for the tiny oratories which in every *ciric* preceded any structural church. They were

¹ Below, ch. xxvi. Crayke was one of the places where the saint's relics found shelter when the Danes ravaged Northumbria.

² H.E. V, iv, § 366. Watton is 5½ miles south of Great Driffeld, and Puch's *ciric* is thought to have been in South Burton.

³ H.E. V, v, § 367.

⁴ Dugdale, *Monasticon*, i, 170.

⁵ As this was more than 60 years before the first provision of a *ciric* within the *tun* (see below, ch. xxv), neither the *ciric* of Puch nor that of Addi can be identical with the present-day churchyards of their respective *tuns*, unless indeed each village was subsequently moved to the immediate vicinity of its *ciric*.

'bede-houses,' which is a sufficiently close rendering of *oratoria*, and is also the word used in the Saxon rendering of the words 'My house shall be called the house of prayer.'¹ Throughout England this use of the word died out, the *kirk-word*, transferred from the burial-ground to the building, coming to be used by the laity for churches of all classes, larger or smaller; and with the completion of the parochial division of the country very many of even the smaller buildings came to attain the dignity of 'churches.' Only the clergy troubled to maintain the distinction between the one and the other, and inevitably the clergy substituted for *bedebus* the Latin *capella*, 'chapel,' the Saxon word surviving only in the sense of 'almshouse.'

The word appears in Welsh as *bettws*, introduced at the close of the thirteenth century and occurring first in the *Taxatio* of Nicholas IV. At this period Roman Christianity was at last forcing itself upon the Welsh, and one of its first and least popular steps was to introduce the Roman system of small homogeneous parishes. For this purpose structural churches had to be multiplied, for many of the wilder districts were ill provided. The new buildings thus erected were 'bede-houses,' which term naturally passed into *bettws*; and to this day there are some twenty which still keep the name. Not one of them was a church-in-chief, though several have since become so. Their intrusive origin is confirmed by the fact that in several cases they are spoken of as *capel bettws*, the Welsh having, without understanding, adopted and used together both the lay and the ecclesiastical terms for such chapels-of-ease. Even so they held toughly by their Celtic traditions. They declined to misuse the term *llan* by applying it to a *bettws*, and as stubbornly they declined to call it an *eglwys*; for there had been no monasteries in these places, nor any burial-grounds wherein men had met for worship. Before there could be an *eglwys*, i.e. a structural church, there must have been a burial-ground; but the *bettws* was as it were a church without a foundation, an offence against the fitness of things. Their manner of regarding it is illustrated

¹ Hutton Gospel, Matt. xxi, 13, *Myn bus ys gebedbus*; cf. Matt. vi, 6, *Gang into pinum bedclyfan*, 'Enter into thy closet.' There has possibly been some confusion between *bede* and *bed*, natural enough at a

time when the same small hut was at once *oratorium* and *dormitorium*. In the *Will of Ceolwin* (ante 905) Thorpe (*Diplomatarium*, p. 493) renders *beddarn* by 'refectory.'

by the curious fact that, having once learnt the word, they used it also in the purely secular sense of a 'harbourage, place of shelter,'¹ and again we are reminded that when Giraldus Cambrensis was writing the Welsh at large knew little of permanent houses, but commonly dwelt in makeshifts of boughs and turves.² By contrast the smallest of chapels was almost palatial. It will be remembered also that in the Scotie use the 'church' was actually the dwelling-place of its priest. At the one end of time is Cadoc building a 'church' to serve him as a *hospitium* upon his journeys³; at the other is Layamon (*circa* 1200) telling us in his own words that he 'dwelt at Areley, in a noble church on Severn's bank.'⁴

There is no ground for questioning the literal truth of this *ipse dixit* of Layamon. The original Scotie 'church' had always been as much *habitaculum* as *oratorium*, and long after Layamon's time English people were perfectly familiar with anchorites who made their dwellings in the churches. Unquestionably priests did the same, and the wording of some of the early canons might even be taken to mean that this was expected of them. But many forces co-operated to break down the practice, in particular the obstinate refusal of the English priesthood at large to adopt a celibate life, and the great extent of the early parishes, which must have made it always more and more usual for the priest to lodge wherever was convenient. Gradually also the Roman Church forced upon the people the view that God's House should not be treated as man's house. The accommodation for the priest, once the entire building and later the half of it, came to be more and more

¹ cp. the phrases *O fryn i fettws*, 'from hill to dale,' and *Y byd a'r bettws*, 'the world and the church.' In both is present the sense of a *mansio secretior* (Bede, *H.E.* V, ii, § 362), and the desired seclusion was to be found only in the valleys. Hence *bettws* came to mean (1) a 'place in a sheltered hollow,' and (2) the 'sheltered hollow' itself.

² Above, ch. xix. For *bettws*, see Silvan Evans, *Welsh Dictionary*, and the references there given. When he wrote the derivation was still disputed: the *N.E.D.* adopts without comment the identification with 'bede-house.' *Bedhus* occurs also in Scotland, e.g. at Rathven.

³ In Iceland so late as 40 years ago the

village churches were the only substitute for inns. Apparently they were also used as a kind of communal store-house: 'Wherever I came the church was placed at my disposal for the night, and everywhere I found a store of fish, tallow, and other equally odoriferous substances' (J. Pfeiffer, *Visit to Iceland*, London, 1852, p. 108).

⁴ Opening lines of Layamon's *Brut*: *wonede at Ernleye at aeðelen are chirechen uppen Seuarne stathe*. Ernleye is now Areley, on the Severn opposite to Stourport. One half of the churchyard is still circular. The church, previously a small rectangular building of the Celtic type, was 'restored,' enlarged, and entirely altered in 1885-6.

circumscribed. Sometimes it seems to have been found in an upper chamber above the chancel, as at Darenth in Kent and at Leckhampton, Glouces., and later in a room in the tower or over the porch. In the end the priest found a home outside the building in a 'church house' or parsonage, which to-day we call rectory or vicarage.¹ But custom long insisted that this should be as near the church as might be; indeed it not seldom led to the secularisation of a large part of the churchyard to make room for the house and its adjuncts. The change was probably in a general way synchronous with the disappearance of the older wooden churches and the erection of others in stone, i.e. in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, but there was no uniformity in this, or indeed in any single matter concerning the Church in England prior to the Reformation.

In the small importance with which Scotie Christianity so long regarded the structural church may lie the explanation of the much-debated case of Fairfield in Kent, of which the commissary of the chapter of Canterbury reported in 1294 that, although the churchyard had been consecrated, the church had never been dedicated 'because it was of wood.'² Growing up, as it commonly did, from the most rudimentary provision of a roof for the priest, the building might easily pass at long last into the dignity of a 'church' without any special act of consecration; for, as the *Lives* of the saints sufficiently prove, every Christian graveyard had *ab initio* its own specific dedication, and this might well be held to embrace any 'church' which later arose within it.

The Saxon Version of Bede proves that even in the latter half of the tenth century *ciric*, although now beginning to assume the meaning of 'structural church,' might still mean nothing more than 'burial-ground.' Archaeology further shows that throughout Celtic Christendom the burial-ground preceded the church. England was part of Celtic Christendom, and in England therefore

¹ See many examples collected in Addy, *Church and Manor*, ch. 1 and 3, and *passim*. For anchorites and their dwellings, see Miss Clay, *English Hermits and Anchorites*. For church-houses, etc., see E. L. Cutts, *Parish Priests and their People in the Middle Ages*, pp. 149-163.

² Grayling, *Churches of Kent*, i, p. 146. The present church is restoration work of 1912; the earlier building was of 'pane and plaster.' The dedication is to St. Thomas Becket, but it is likely that the graveyard is of much earlier date and quite another dedication.

there must have been burial-grounds before there were churches. It is to these that the word *ciric* refers in documents prior to the tenth century, the scattered Christian barrows of the countryside, in which had as yet risen no churches, perhaps in many cases not even a bedehouse.

The first occurrence of the word is in the *Laws* of king Ethelbert of Kent, who died in 616. It is there coupled with the word *mynstre*, and the two words recur thus conjoined repeatedly thereafter. English translators render them by 'church' and 'monastery' respectively, but there were no churches outside the walls of the monasteries before the ninth century, and *ciric* has been shown to have meant a burial-ground before it meant a building. What did *mynstre* mean?

Mynstre is a Saxon transcript of the Latin *monasterium* and probably dates no earlier than the coming of Augustine; and even so it meant only a monastery as the Scotie missionaries understood such things, the circular *rath* or *cashel* with its contained cells. In course of time—but hardly before the eighth century, as the case of Abingdon shows—there grew up in these monastic settlements something which we may properly denominate a 'church.' To this, as being the most important and the most conspicuous feature of the whole, the word *mynstre* came to be applied in a special sense. It thus came to be the earliest general Saxon term for a structural church, and this accounts for the constant use of *monasterium* in the sense of *ecclesia*¹: the Saxon *mynstre*, 'a church,' re-translated into Latin, naturally became *monasterium*, 'a church.'

The change of meaning in *mynstre* finds an exact parallel in *ciric*: this too meant originally a circular precinct only, but presently came to mean the dominating feature of that precinct, the structural 'church' which was later built upon it; and the change in both cases was due to the growing influence of the Latin *regula*. Thus there came to be a period—certainly not before 900—at which *ciric* and *mynstre* might both denote a 'church,' but, the efforts of the Latin Church, notwithstanding, the elder word *ciric* prevailed.

¹ See Ducange, *Lexicon*.

Now as every Scotie monastery was necessarily a burial-ground, every *mynstre* was also a *ciric*; but as not every burial-ground was a monastery, not every *ciric* was a *mynstre*.

A very brief study of the early Saxon texts will confirm these statements. In the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* up to the year 890 the term *mynstre* occurs again and again, and always of places famous for the 'churches' they had built—York, Winchester, Hexham, Lindisfarne, Peterborough, Glastonbury, Wimborne, and Monkwearmouth. At every one of these places the structural church was then, as mostly it now is, the chief glory of the spot. But of anything which can be construed as a structural church outside a monastery there is no mention, even so late as the year 870 when the Danes 'destroyed all the minsters they came to in East Anglia.'¹

The opening clause of the surviving fragments of the *Laws* of Ethelbert of Kent, the oldest of the Saxon codes, has reference to the amount of the fine to be levied for outrage done to the Church or to its representatives, and specifically for any breach of the right of sanctuary.² The fragment runs thus:—

'(for such outrage done) to the property of God and the Church (*the fine shall be*) twelve-fold; to the property of a bishop, eleven-fold; to that of a priest, nine-fold; to that of a deacon, six-fold; to that of a clerk, three-fold; to *ciric-frið*, two-fold; to *m -frið*, two-fold.'

The mutilated word in the last line must have been *mynstre*.³ Graveyard (*ciric*) and church (*mynstre*) were alike sanctuaries, and the penalty for violating either was the same.

In the same code occurs the phrase *Godes feoh and ciricean*, 'the property and the *cirics* of God.' Either 'graveyards' or 'congregations' will suit the sense here. There is no reason whatever to translate it 'structural churches.'

¹ To this day the term is extremely rare in East Anglia. It occurs in Southminster (Essex) and in 'The Old Minster' in South Elmham (Suffolk).

² *Frið*, 'liberty.' Later the word used was *grið*.

³ Thorpe, *Ancient Laws*, p. 1, who remarks, 'Wilkins reads *mynsteres-frið*, but in the MS. there is not space for so long a word.' Haddan and Stubbs (iii, 42) print *mynsteres-frið* without comment, and there can be no doubt whatever that the antithesis was the usual one between *ciric* and *mynstre*.

In the *Laws* of Wihtraed of Kent (*ob.* 725) the word *ciric* occurs seven times,¹ never in the sense of 'structural church.' The only word used in that sense is *mynstre*: 'Let the ealdor of a *mynstre* clear himself with the same form of defence as a priest.' So again in the same king's address to the Council 'at the place which is called Baccancelde,' he declares the liberty in perpetuity of 'all the minsters and the *cirics* that were given and bequeathed to the glory of God' from the days of king Ethelbert onward.²

The word *ciric* does not occur unmistakably in the sense of a structural church in any code of Saxon laws before the very close of the ninth century. A clause (no. 5) in the *Laws* of Ine, where it might seem to bear that meaning, really refers to the taking of sanctuary in the churchyard: 'If a culprit flee to a church (*cirican*), then let the fine be in accordance with the sanctity of that church (*cirican*).'³ The *Laws* of Alfred, while repeating this, also speak of the sanctuary of *mynstrehamas*,⁴ i.e. the precincts of monasteries and structural churches; and another law of the same king (no. 8) refers to the crime of abducting a nun from a *mynstre*, obviously a building and probably a monastery, amends for which offence must be made 'to the *cirican-blaforð*⁵ to whom the nun belongs.' *Ciric* and *mynstre* meaning different things, the *cirican-blaforð* cannot well be the same as the *ealdor-mynstres* of Wihtraed's laws (above), and the implication that, while every *mynstre* presupposes a *ciric*, the latter is of a dignity superior to the *mynstre*,⁶ is of value. In the *Preface* to his translation of pope Gregory's *Pastoral Letter* Alfred writes,⁷ 'I will send a copy to every bishop in my kingdom. Let no man dare to take the book from the *mynstre*.' Here

¹ E.g. *Praef.*, *aelc had ciricean*, 'every degree of church': cap. 1, *ciricean*, 'congregation': cap. 2, 3, the same: cap. 24, *cirican manner*, 'of a churchman' (Thorpe, loc. cit.).

² *A.S. Chron.* 694.

³ Thorpe, *Ancient Laws*, p. 46. 'Sanctuary' and 'churchyard' presently came to be convertible terms (below, ch. xxv).

⁴ Thorpe, op. cit. p. 27. He cites also (p. 1) a passage when Alfred uses *ham* to translate *monasterium*: *Of Peortanea ibam ham, de monasterio Peortanea* (Partney in

Lincoln). It is so used again in *Diplomatarium*, p. 126 (*anno* 864), *aet ham aet Scireburnam*. In the *Will* of Ealdorman Aelfrid, ante 889 (*Diplomatarium*, p. 482), we have: 'Let the surplus be divided amongst the monasteries for the benefit of God's graveyards in Kent and Surrey (*gind mynsterhamas to Godes ciricum*).'

⁵ Thorpe, p. 30.

⁶ For it is impossible to suppose that such a matter would be referred to any inferior authority.

⁷ *E.E.T.S.* no. xlv, p. 8.

again *mynstre* must obviously mean a building, but Alfred does not call it a *ciric*. On the other hand in his *Will*¹ he leaves fifty pounds 'to the *cyrice* in which I shall rest.'

Half a century later, in the *Laws* of Edmund (940-947) occurs the following:—

'We have also ordained that every bishop repair the houses of God (*Godes hus*) in his own [district], and also advise the King that all God's churches (*Godes cyrcan*) be well ordered.'²

Clearly *Godes hus* and *Godes cyrcan* are not the same; and as *Godes hus* can only mean '(structural) churches,' *Godes cyrcan* must mean something else. The distinction is the same as that between *mynstre* and *ciric*, and *Godes cyrcan* means 'burial-places,' where as yet there was frequently no *Godes hus* at all.

Later still a canon (no. 26) of Edgar (958-975) decrees that no dog, nor pigs in greater number than can be controlled, shall come *binnan cirictune* (*intra sepem ecclesiae*),³ and a good deal of discussion has been lavished upon the matter. There is nothing to discuss. *Cirictune* is the 'church-haye,' the fence of the churchyard, and *ecclesia* is the usual proleptic mis-rendering of *ciric*; and there is no question at all about bringing pigs into the structural church.⁴ It is clear that in the latter half of the tenth century *ciric* was still the normal word for the burial-ground and was not commonly used of any building therein.

Not until the time of Alfred, at the very close of the ninth century, does there occur a passage in which *ciric* possibly—not necessarily—bears the sense of 'structural church.'⁵ Thence onward the change of meaning becomes more and more definite. A charter of Edward

¹ *Diplomatarium*, p. 490.

² Thorpe, p. 105.

³ *Ne binnan cirictune aenig bund ne cume, ne swin the ma thaes the man wealdan maege*: Thorpe, p. 397.

⁴ In another Canon (no. 29) of the same it is enjoined 'that no man be buried within a *ciric* (*innan cirican*)' unless his life have been such as to deserve such burial. Here again *ciric* must mean the churchyard, for burial within the church had long been forbidden.

⁵ *Laws*, no. 5 (of a man's seeking

sanctuary in a *ciric*), 'if the brethren have further need of their *ciric*, let them keep him in another house—*on oðrum aerne*—and let not this have more doors than the *ciric*.' Thorpe, p. 29. In passages such as that in *Vespasian Psalter* (circa 825) xxi, 23, *in midle cirican ic berzoðe*, the word merely means 'congregation.' *N.E.D.* cites, from *O.-E. Chronicle* 874, *on Sca Marian ciricean* (*cirican*), '(his body lies) in St. Mary's church'; but it is impossible to be sure that 'church' here means the building rather than the churchyard.

the Elder (901-925) makes a distinction between the *ciric* of St. Gregory in Winchester and its burial-ground (*lictun*).¹ Here the word clearly means 'church.' But *ciric* certainly did not altogether cease thereafter to mean a burial-ground. It actually retained that sense in the dialect of Whitby so late as 1850.²

Speaking of the raid of Ecgrith of Northumbria upon Ireland in 684, Bede says³ that he spared 'neither churches nor monasteries': his Latin reads *ne ecclesiis quidem aut monasteriis*, but the Saxon Translator writes *ne cyricum ne mynstrum*. Each authority illustrates the other, and we have the same distinction drawn 500 years later by so capital a writer as Giraldus Cambrensis,⁴ who says that in 1165 the English, raiding into Wales, 'burnt many of the churches together with the villages and the graveyards.' The explanation of this seemingly purposeless savagery is provided by the *Roman de Rou*, where it is said that, upon the landing of the Normans at Pevensey, the English peasantry hurried with their cattle to the graveyards.⁵ They were seeking sanctuary, and it was just because the *cirics* were so used that they were so prominent an object of attack by any invader, were he Norman in England or Englishman in Wales or Ireland.

Names in which the word *mynstre* survives are few, possibly because so many of the early minsters speedily went to ruin: Tetbury, for example, was at one period called Tettanmynstre,⁶ but has long since reverted to the older form. In three cases the name is absolute.⁷ Most

¹ *Diplomatarium*, p. 157. Latin Charters of Edward the Confessor explicitly distinguish between *ecclesiae* and *coemeteria*, i.e. between burial-grounds which had structural churches and those which had not (*ibid.* pp. 358, 404).

² *Dialect of Whitby* (Anon. 1851).

³ *H.E.* IV, xxvi, § 340. The entry in *A.-S. Chron.* says merely that 'miserably they plundered and burned the *cirics* of God.'

⁴ *Itin. Wales*, ii, 12: *ecclesias aliquot cum villis et coemeteriis igni appposito combusserunt*. The Welsh leader Owen refused to render like for like: *nos ecclesiis locisque sacris maiorem solito reverentiam exhibituros et honorem*. The expression *loca sacra*, like *loca sancta*, seems to be the equivalent of *coemeteria*; see below, p. 258. If *combusserunt* as applied to *coemeteria* means any-

thing more than 'destroyed,' it must have reference either to the fences enclosing them, or to the wooden crosses or other memorials which marked the graves.

⁵ *Donc véissiez Engleiz foïr, Bestes chacier, mezonz guerpir : As cemetières tot atraient, Et encor là forment s'esmaient* (ii, 751-755).

E. A. Freeman, quoting the passage (*Norman Conquest*, iii, 412), paraphrases 'men fled everywhere . . . and sought for shelter in the churches and churchyards.' But Wace says nothing about churches. For the graveyard as sanctuary in England see *Laws of Ine*, no. 5 (p. 242, above), and for the same thing in Wales, above, ch. xix.

⁶ W. of Malmesbury (*Gest. Pont.* v, 235).

⁷ Minster in Thanet, Minister in Sheppey, and a third in Cornwall, near Camelford.

frequently it is qualified by the addition of a personal name, presumably that of the donor, e.g. Lyminster,¹ Kidderminster,² Beaminster, Bedminster, and Buckminster.³ Otherwise the qualification is usually topographical, e.g. Westminster, Southminster, Porthminster, and Upminster; and in a large proportion of these cases the determinant is a river-name, e.g. Axminster, Exminster, Charminster, Ilminster, Sturminster, and Warminster. With the doubtful exceptions of Leominster⁴ and Yetminster,⁵ not one has reference to a dedication or to any other religious matter.⁶ Aymestry, near Leominster, is 'Island-minster.'⁷ Whitminster requires no explanation.⁸ Alderminster⁹ (in Warwickshire) and Worminster¹⁰ (Som.) have no connexion with the matter.

The *A.-S. Chronicle* records (*anno* 1020) that Canute built 'a minster of stone and lime' for the souls of those slain at Assandun¹¹ in 1016. So late then a church of stone was still something to be remarked, even though its builder were a king.¹² It is called a minster, but it was nothing more than a church,¹³ for Canute 'gave it to one of his priests,' i.e. Stigand, subsequently archbishop of Canterbury.

Built into the wall above the porch of the church of

¹ *D.B.* Lollinminstre: Alfred's *Will*, Lullyngmynstre ('Lulling's church').

² *D.B.* Chideminstre, 'Cydda's church.'

³ Respectively the churches of Baega, Baeda, and Bucca. So Pitminster is 'church of Pipping.'

⁴ As the form Leomynstre goes back to the tenth century, any reference to Leofric earl of Mercia, who refounded it T.E.R., is out of the question. It was early Latinised as Leonis Monasterium, with reference to a dubious St. Leo. The earlier name was Llanllieni (Leland).

⁵ *D.B.* Etiminstre; later Yatesminstre, Iatmynstre. The name may possibly refer to Eata, abbat of Melrose and bishop of Lindisfarne (Bede *H.E.* III, xxvi, § 237), who has left his name also in Atcham, Salop. But the church of Atcham is dedicated to St. Eata, whereas that of Yetminster is St. Andrew; and Yetminster (near Sherborne, Dorset) is a long way from Lindisfarne.

⁶ Nonneminstre of *D.B. Sussex*, usually identified on no adequate grounds with Lyminster, is 'church of Nunna.'

⁷ *D.B.* Eiminstre. It is on the river Lug.

⁸ It is merely the Saxon equivalent of such names as Ty Gwyn, Casa Candida, and Blancmoustier.

⁹ A corruption of Aldermaneston (Johnston).

¹⁰ Originally Worme's Tor.

¹¹ Usually, but doubtfully, identified with Ashington in Essex. J. H. Parker believed the tower of the present church to show traces of Saxon work. It has lately been suggested that the site was rather Hadstock in the same county.

¹² He is credited with the pious resolve to rebuild in stone *all* the churches which the Danes had burnt, and it is no marvel that he did not live to fulfil so large a vow.

¹³ Hospinianus pointed out (*Opera*, i, 49) that the German Münster does not necessarily imply 'monastery,' but is used of *ecclesiae maiores, quae collegia et scholas habent adiunctas, unde et Collegiatae Ecclesiae dicuntur*. The persistence of the style of minster in the cases of the great churches of York, Southwell, Lincoln, Beverley and Ripon, illustrates his remark.

Kirkdale (Yorks.) is an inscription of the eleventh century recording the rebuilding of the 'minster of St. Gregory' by one Orm.¹ How came the house of God in Kirkdale to be called a minster rather than a *ciric*? for Kirkdale itself is confessedly *ciric-dale*, 'church-dell'.² The case is one of many that go to prove that Latin Christianity disliked and discouraged the use of the word *ciric* and tried to supplant it by the term *mynstre*. But the obstinate Saxon declined to be persuaded. Kirkdale had acquired that name because it possessed a *ciric*, and to this day it calls its place of worship a 'church' and not a 'minster.' The latter word is to-day rarely found north of the Humber, whereas south of that river it established itself, if sporadically only.³ That other something which king Ethelbert had already discriminated from a *mynstre* and termed a *ciric*, is with us still in every English churchyard.

The Saxons' refusal to substitute *mynstre* for *ciric* proves two things: firstly, that there were Christian places of worship scattered up and down the country, which were not, and never had been, monasteries or structural churches; and secondly, that these had been here, and had acquired their specific name of *ciric*, before the Latin term *mynstre* was borrowed. In declining to confuse *ciric* with *mynstre* the Saxon was doing exactly as did the Welshman who refused to substitute *llan* for *eglwys* in such a name as Eglwys Cymmin (ch. xix). And this proves that, just as Wales had had her *ecclesiae* before ever she had a monastic *llan*, so England had her *ciric* before ever she had any structural church. There was necessarily an *eglwys* to every *llan*, as there was a *ciric* to every *mynstre*; but not every *eglwys* was a *llan*, nor was every *ciric* a *mynstre*.

This view of the matter is confirmed by the account of king Wihtraed's council at Baccancelde. His pronouncement, as summed in the *A.-S. Chronicle* (anno 694) runs thus: 'All Christian *mynstres* and *cirics* ought to be free in perpetuity, for no layman has any right to the possession of a *ciric*, or of anything belonging to a *ciric*. Therefore

¹ Figured and discussed in Baldwin Brown, *Arts*, i, 355-7.

² Another Kirkdale in Lancs. is the *D.B.* manor of Chirchedale.

³ Sometimes concealed in the form of Misterton, as in Lincs. and Leic. (*D.B.*

Menstretone, Minstretone). There was a late (Cistercian, 1137) abbey of Newminster near Morpeth, Northumberland. It was the first daughter of the older foundation of Fountains, and was called *Novum Monasterium* for difference.

such possession of *cirics*, and of all thereto belonging, is hereby forbidden for ever.' As there is no second mention of the term *mynstre* (though particular injunctions are given for the proper selection of bishops, abbats and abbesses, i.e. the person to hold authority in *mynstres*), it is clearly implied that the *ciric* takes precedence of the *mynstre*—that the *mynstre* is included amongst 'things belonging to a *ciric*.'

Seeing that the Anglo-Saxon word *ciric* refused to be supplanted, one would have expected the Latin Church to have given it a Latin form and so adopted it, as when it transformed the Irish *kil* into *cella*; and if the learned men of the Church really believed the word *ciric* to represent an original Greek word signifying 'the Lord's House'—a derivation which came in the twelfth century to be insisted upon as an article of faith¹—the question why it was not Latinised forthwith becomes insistent. The answer is, that in a Latin guise the word would have been too much suggestive of another Latin word of evil savour to those who took their opinions from tradition: it looked too much like *circus*—no wonder, for it actually was that word—and the Fathers had long ago banned the *circus* and all thereto belonging.

The evidence uniformly bears out the view that, excepting the very few buildings reared by Paulinus in the north and by Augustine and his immediate successors in the south, the England of Bede's time was still entirely Scotie in its Christianity. It was dotted over with Scotie monasteries of which the plan certainly, the construction probably, was precisely that of such monasteries in the contemporary Ireland and Wales. Parish churches, as we understand them, did not exist, and the most that one might reasonably expect to find in any district a few miles removed from a monastery was such an oratory as Bede speaks of in Drythelm's *villula* (p. 255). The view that archbishop Theodore divided the whole country into parishes much as it is to-day divided is quite untenable. If he did anything in that direction it can only have been to divide it into *dioceses*,² each served by one or another of

¹ Below, ch. xxviii.

² The *diocese* of the Scotie church corresponded to what is now called a parish,

and the terms were convertible even so late as Aelfric's time. See his *Vocabulary*: '*Diocesis vel parochia, bisceopscir vel*

the monastic foundations—its *eald-mynstre* or mother-church—and possibly to do something by way of breaking up the larger of such ‘dioceses’ into more manageable parts by encouraging new foundations where they were most needed.

Such is the only conclusion warranted by the scanty evidence, and it is startling only because of the inherited preconceptions of centuries. The modern missionary makes it his first concern to build some sort of church for his congregation: it was not so in earlier times, and for a variety of reasons, prominent among which were the poverty of both missionary and people, the lack in most cases of any adequate temporal support,¹ and the strong objection of the Anglo-Saxons to assembling under any roof for fear of witchcraft.² More effective than any of these was the inability of the missionaries themselves, if Scotie, to conceive of any sanctity other than that of the grave. They required no structural place of worship, and on that point their congregations, Celtic and Saxon alike, were quite at one with them. They needed no meeting-house, but a meeting-place only, and their immemorial place of meeting had been a grave or the symbol of a grave. Every part of the ritual of early Celtic Christianity was performed ‘in the eye of light,’ and the first missionaries concerned themselves with no buildings other than the tiny huts which gave them house-room when required. Church furniture scarcely existed. The eucharist would be offered, as in early Ireland, within the sacred *limes* indeed, but under no roof. So with baptism: the absence of any font is a recognised feature of early Scotie churches, and its place was supplied by the well or spring which is invariably close at hand. Weddings took place outside the church so late as Chaucer’s time, and even confessions and confirmations took place in the open air as in Ireland.³

biscopric’ (Wright’s *Anglo-Saxon Vocabularies*). Be it remembered that almost every Scotie monastery had its own ‘bishop.’ The native term for what is now called a parish was *kirkshire* (*circ-scyr*), which is proof that the parish was originally determined by the *ciric*. It was the whole extent of land occupied by any group of people who used one common burial-ground.

¹ Augustine owed his measure of success in Kent to the fact that he was *regio*

fultus adminiculo (H.E. I, xxxiii, § 79), and similarly Paulinus owed his to the support of Edwin, Columba his to that of Brude.

² H.E. I, xxv, § 55; cp. the meeting of Augustine with the Welsh bishops at Augustine’s Oak, *ibid.* II, ii, § 91.

³ Theodore’s *Penitential* II, ii, §§ 1, 2:—‘It is lawful for a bishop to confirm in the open (*in campo*), if need be . . . A priest may say mass out of doors, if a deacon or the priest himself hold the chalice and oblation.’

Thus, when there had at last arisen something which might by courtesy be called a church, it would need to be but very small. A people whose every moot had for centuries been held *sub divo*¹ would be slow to make any difference in that especial form of moot which we call worship; and only when at last the congregation had come to ask for a roof over their heads would there be built what we call a nave.² It will be recalled that when Gregory, counselling compromise with paganism, directed Mellitus to convert the Saxon *fana* into *ecclesiae*, he advised that the congregation should still build for themselves the accustomed *tabernacula* of boughs.³ Clearly he did not think of an *ecclesia* as necessarily a building capable of containing a large congregation. And so long as seats were not provided in the church, a very small building would accommodate quite a considerable congregation.⁴

If anything which we could call a structural church was built in those early days, it was assuredly in almost every case of timber, wattles, and clay only, except where timber was not procurable; for the Saxons of those times knew nothing of mason-work or of any sort of building in stone. Every church of stone that was built in the north of England in or before his own days, is dwelt upon by Bede as a notable thing. Benedict Biscop⁵ is singled out by Bede, as Wilfrid by Eddius,⁶ for particular mention in

¹ Not until Charlemagne’s time does Frankish law commence to insist upon roofed moots. In England the roofed moot came much later. See below, ch. xxvii.

² Hence the peculiar distinction between the ‘church of the priest’ and that ‘of the people,’ i.e. between chancel and nave.

³ H.E. I, xxx, § 74.

⁴ With the introduction of seating came the idea of individual ownership of such seats, and with this again the fiction that owners of such seats were entitled to be buried within the building, and in the first instance as close as might be to their seats: cp. *York Wills*, 1512 (Surtees Soc.), v, 37: ‘my body to be buried in the midel alye (aisle) at my stale end.’ Out of this practice grew that of placing seats over the graves of the dead laity, exactly as altars had been first erected over those of other dead: cp. *Cartulary of St. Nicholas of Aberdeen*, i, 155: ‘our collectour . . . shall yeirly sett ane honest stuill apoun ye said Jhonis sepultur, decorit with bakin and arress

(back and arress-pieces) as wss is.’ Hence inevitably a good deal of very unchristian snobbery and rivalry among ‘such persons as loven the first sittings at feestes, the highest stoles in churches and in hal’ (Usk, *Test. Love*, I, v; anno 1387-8). Humbler folk who could not afford seats in church, could not claim to be buried in church.

⁵ Bede, *Vita Benedicti*. But even at Monkwearmouth the original buildings (671) were of wood, for Benedict sent to Gaul for men competent to build him a ‘church of stone in the Roman style.’ Bede adds that he was the first person to introduce into England workers in glass (for windows). He founded the monastery at Jarrow in 682, and built its church upon the Roman plan. An inscription recording its dedication in 685 is still extant, and correctly styles it *basilica*. See *Surtees Society*, vol. xxix, p. xxvi.

⁶ *Vita Wilfredi*, c. xiv. Wilfrid built at Ripon, circa 661, a *basilica* of wrought stone.

this regard; which is proof that buildings of stone were still exceptional. The new church (St. Peter's) at Lichfield, which was built soon after Chad's death in 672, was probably of wood; the saint's shrine within it certainly was, though possibly from a desire to employ for that 'little house'¹ the same material as that of the oratory it imitated. The Saxon, like the Welshman, had no native words for a mason and masonry, of which he knew nothing nor invented anything. The Saxon word for 'building' a church is *timbran*, 'to carpenter,'² and the so-called Saxon style is merely an attempt to reproduce in stone the traditional features of timber-building, with the addition of a few details borrowed from Roman models. The Celtic way was to build the oratory of wood, and the Saxon naturally followed his teachers in this as in other matters connected with religion. Such churches as existed were almost exclusively monastic. 'So far,' writes Dr. Gee of Northumbria prior to 867, 'the Church had been planted in monasteries, and with the exception of Gainford there is no proof of the existence of church buildings in any other specific centres.'³ Things were much the same in Wessex. Alfred contrived a means of measuring the hours by the wastage of standardised candles: he was obliged to have the candles enclosed in horn lanterns to protect them from the draughts which blew 'through the doors of the churches and the many chinks in the windows, walls, and planking.'⁴ So the usual church of his time was built of timber, or

¹ *Tumba lignea in modum domunculi facta* (H.E. IV, iii, § 265).

² Cf. H.E. IV, iii, § 260, *vivos ecclesiae lapides de terrenis sedibus ad aedificium coeleste transferret*, rendered in S.V. *tha lifigendan stanas thaere cirican of eorðlicum setblum to thaem beofonlican timbre gebaer*; i.e. the 'building reared of living stones' is termed *timbre*. Similarly where Bede (H.E. IV, vi, § 272) has *constructor* for one who builds a monastery, the S.V. has *timbrend*.

³ V.C.H. Durham, ii, p. 5.

⁴ *Per ecclesiarum ostia et fenestrarum, maceriarum quoque atque tabularum, vel frequentes parietum rimulas*; Asser, *Life of Alfred* (Ed. F. Wise, Oxon. 1722), p. 68. The account does not justify the assertion that the window were mere uncovered openings in the walls. If that had been the

only trouble, the king could have remedied it by covering them with horn or with glass, and the draught from the doors he could have obviated by means of a curtain, as did the hermit Ethelwald at Farne. The draughts came from all quarters, as was inevitable in a building of rough boards and unmortared stone. *Maceria* is correctly used of dry-building (*maceriam sine calce ex caementis et silice . . . facito*, 'build a mortarless wall of rubble and flint'; Cato *de Re Rust.* xv), and Asser is speaking of churches built either of timber, of dry stone, or of both. He tells us a good deal about Alfred's achievements in timber-building, nothing of his work in masonry. There may have been mortar-built churches in his England, but clearly they were the exceptions to the rule. And this was towards 900.

of unmortared stone. Dunstan, one of the most progressive churchmen of the tenth century, built wooden churches in many of the *hospitia* belonging to his see of Canterbury.¹ He built also a new church beside the famous older one at Glastonbury² reputed to have been founded by Joseph of Arimathea. That older church was of wattles, and there is nothing to show that the new one was of stone. 'Paul's minster' in London, says the *A.-S. Chronicle* (*anno* 962) 'was burnt, and in that same year was again built up.' Probably it was of wood, and certainly of no great size. A church was built, between 959-975, over the relics of St. Wigstan, which had been laid in the 'mausoleum' of the Mercian kings at Repton: 'according to several writers it was built of stout oak beams and planks on a foundation of stone, and its sides were made of wattles composed of withy twigs interlaced between the oak beams, daubed within and without with mud or clay.'³ Professor Baldwin Brown believes⁴ that there are still 200 churches showing traces of Saxon work, but even if we admit that this work is in every case of pre-Conquest date—and this is very doubtful—the number is not large. It has been said that 'few elaborate churches were built so long as men feared the end of the world in 1000,'⁵ but there is also plenty of evidence that after that date the Saxons were not particularly quick to build in more ambitious style. William of Malmesbury calls the Norman fashion of church-building *novum aedificandi genus*, probably because the Normans used stone only. When William de Warrenne built (1066) his castle of Laques outside Lewes,⁶ he adopted an 'ancient wooden church of St. Pancras' thereby, and at once rebuilt it in stone.⁷ To this day there are ancient churches in England of which large parts were timber built,⁸ and one—that of East Grinstead in Essex,

¹ Lingard, *Hist. A.-S. Church*, ii, 370, citing *Ang. Sacra*, ii, 207. One was at Mayfield, Sussex, the traditional scene of Dunstan's encounter with the Devil.

² Mentioned in a grant of 744, *Cart. Sax.*, i, 242. It was still in existence in 1032. William of Malmesbury says it was built of wattles (*virgea*) and was called the *ealde-chirche*, i.e. *vetusta ecclesia*. It was burnt in 1184. According to Malmesbury there were four churches within the one monastic enclosure at Glastonbury, a Scotie feature.

³ *Memorials of Old Derbysbire*, p. 117.

⁴ *Arts in Early England*, i, p. 116. Other estimates are much more cautious. A. C. Hill, for example, puts the total at 'about 70' (*Architect. Hist. of the Church*, p. 129).

⁵ P. H. Ditchfield, *English Village* (1901) p. 109.

⁶ *Arch. Journ.* 1917, pp. 36-78.

⁷ *Carta Foundationis* of the Priory of St. Pancras, in Dugdale's *Monasticon*.

⁸ Surrey alone has about thirty churches with towers or turrets of timber, some

thought to date from about 1013—which is entirely so. P. M. Johnston has pointed out that so late as the close of the eleventh century the Ramsey Pontifical made special provision for the form of service to be used in consecrating timber-built churches.

Churches of timber would commonly have footings of stone, and these would frequently remain in the soil when every trace of the superstructure had disappeared. Brought to light at a far later date they have frequently passed for the remains of a church of stone, and so encouraged the belief that such buildings were far older and far more numerous than was actually the case.

The typical Celtic church is merely the original Celtic oratory reproduced upon a somewhat more pretentious scale—a rectangular building without aisles, and indeed without architectural features of any kind. Latin Christianity presently obtruded the basilican church with apse, aisles and crypt, as elaborate a structure as the other was simple. No one who has the most perfunctory acquaintance with English village churches can doubt from which of the two types they are more directly descended. In scores of English villages stands a Celtic church to this day. Its original simplicity has been disguised, more often than not, by the addition of aisles and chapels, vestry, porch and tower; but the nucleus, often still unaltered, is the diminutive rectangular building, the single-chambered Celtic oratory, and nothing else. The church at Bradford-on-Avon, once thought to have been built by Aldhelm, who died bishop of Malmesbury in 709, may be, as Professor Freeman believed, the oldest unaltered Saxon church in England, but it is very far from being the best example of an early Saxon church.¹ It had already de-

veloped the cruciform plan, with north and south transeptal chapels or porches,¹ the whole building is unusually lofty for its area, nave and chancel are separate chambers, and the roof-lines of nave, chancel and transepts are all different. The true type has still the straight roof-line, broken only by the tiny bell-turret, which is commonly upon the western gable; it has neither transepts nor porch; and nave and chancel are often of one equal width, with no chancel-arch of any sort. There are such almost original 'bedehouses' to be seen in nearly every English county. The type is not pretty and it makes small appeal to the architect, who, when called in, too frequently sweeps it wholly away and begins afresh. So 'the old order changes, giving place to new.' But the Celtic type of church 'was until the end of the twelfth century the normal type of our smaller parish churches,'² and bespeaks the influence of the Scotie missionaries.

Hugh of Peterborough (late twelfth century) asserts that Saxulf, bishop of Mercia 675-691, founded a monastery at Brixworth in Northamptonshire, and that a 'church' at this place was attached *anno* 690 to Saxulf's greater monastery of St. Peter at Medeshamstede (Peterborough). Therefore the remarkable basilican church of All Saints, Brixworth, is alleged to date from 690 at latest. The original structure, largely built of Roman materials, consisted of a nave 60 ft. by 30 ft., with an apsidal chancel 30 ft. by 30 ft., overlying a very large crypt. Now Saxulf was entirely Scotie in training and in practice.³ If he built a monastery at all at Brixworth, that can have been merely the customary Scotie thing with no structural 'church' worth the name. That he should have built a church so large and of such peculiarly Latin plan as was this, is entirely unlikely. Dr. Haverfield denied that the church itself is a Roman building,⁴ and Professor Hamilton Thompson agrees.⁵ The facts would seem to be thus:

which must accentuate one's doubts. See Taylor, *Names and Their Histories*, p. 185. Fragments of crosses, etc. of Celtic type are preserved in the church. The church at Doulting, in which Aldhelm died, was of wood.

¹ The south transept has disappeared, but its foundations have been traced (Romilly Allen, *Mont. Hist. Brit. Church*, p. 184).

² J. T. Micklethwaite in *Arch. Journ.* xxxvii, 364.

³ Above, p. 215.

⁴ *V. C. H. Northants.* i, 194.

⁵ *Ground Plan of the English Parish Church* (Cambridge, 1911), p. 21. 'The Roman brickwork,' he writes, 'has been re-used in obvious ignorance of Roman methods.'

carrying spires. The oldest of them, e.g. those of Burstow, Horne and Newdigate, are thought to date as late as the thirteenth and fourteenth century (*V. C. H. Surrey*, ii, 437). The tower of the church of Itchingfield near Horsham, Sussex, is built of wood from the foundations upwards, and so is that of the little church of Perivale, Middlesex, almost within sight of St. Paul's. At Raskelf (Yorks.) tower and piers of the chancel are alike of wood; so are the piers of the one-aisled church of Selmeston, Sussex, and of the magnificent half-timbered church of Lower Peover, Cheshire. Half-timbered churches are numerous in the last-named county, and that too in districts where red sandstone was abundant. The half-timbered chapel of Mattingley, Hants, is dated about 1500.

¹ Proof is lacking that this is the work of Aldhelm, and both in plan and in technique it is more than suspect. The mason-work may easily be 300 years later than the date claimed. Malmesbury (Maidulf's Hill) was moreover a Scotie monastery, said to date as far back as 642,

there was a *ciric*, i.e. a Christian grave-yard on the spot, where Saxulf founded a little Scotie cell in dependence upon his greater foundation. The *ciric* may have dated from the days of the first evangelisation of Mercia, and it may have become neglected and forgotten during the time of Penda's lapse; in which case Saxulf was merely recovering a *locus sanctus* to Christianity. The *ciric* was probably nameless when that occurred, and that may explain why it was consecrated in the name of All Saints. According to Miss Arnold Forster there are no less than 1,044 ancient churches of this dedication in England, besides 28 of the equivalent All Hallows; and there could be none more appropriate for a *ciric* which was felt indeed to be Christian, but of which the original dedication and the founder's name were for whatever reason lost.

When at last, towards the very end of the tenth century, the Saxons began more systematically to build in masonry, their efforts were far in advance of their abilities, and a large number of their more ambitious buildings collapsed within a very few years from weaknesses in the structure or in the foundations. Such as endured owed their safety for the most part to the exaggerated thickness of the fabric, as in the great church of Stow, Lincs., but even the builders of the oldest Norman part of the Abbey of St. Albans—the work of Paul de Caen (1077-1088) seem to have been unable to use a plumb-line or to turn an arch correctly. Milo Crispinus of Bec, in his *Life of Lanfranc* calls 'wonderful indeed' that archbishop's enterprise in bringing from Caen by sea 'squared stone for building.' The traditions of the Saxon carpenter-architects lingered on long after the Conquest, betraying themselves in the crowded pilaster-strips and transverse string-courses which cover the walls of churches otherwise entirely Norman in design.

There can be no doubt that by far the greater number of structural churches existing in England even in the twelfth century were still built of wood only, and this explains the remarkable activity of the church-architects of that and the next century: they were replacing in stone the earlier wooden churches, and rebuilding on a larger scale some of the few mason-built churches already in

existence.¹ Also in many cases they were building churches where there had hitherto been none, for England before the Conquest was dotted over with churchyards where there was not, and never had been, any structural church at all. In Ireland and in the remoter parts of Scotland there are to this day many such Christian burial-grounds, not a few of them still used upon occasion, which possess no 'church' of any kind, nor apparently ever have possessed one. Even in England there are graveyards which are still used as such, though the churches which once stood there have wholly disappeared.²

The story of Drythelm³ gives us a hint of the real state of things in the remoter parts of Northumbria and Deira about the year 700, when John of Beverley was bishop of Hexham, Bede was at middle life and Wilfrid an old man, and Northumbria was in the van of Saxon prosperity and progress. Drythelm, a householder 'in the land called Incuneningum,'⁴ being sick unto death, fell into a swoon so deep that he was believed to be verily dead; so that his present recovery was regarded by himself and others as a miracle. He went at once to pray at what Bede calls *oratorium villulae*, but which his Saxon Translator renders 'the church of the village' (*to thaere cirican thaes tunes*), and subsequently made his way to the monastery of Old Melrose, where he received the tonsure and 'entered the retreat'⁵ which the abbat had provided for him.

The Saxon Translator is a much safer guide than is Bede in matters concerning the native Church, for his

¹ J. H. Parker (*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1862-3) maintained much the same view, if he did not go quite so far. The arguments *pro* and *con* may be found reprinted in Gomme's *Gents. Mag. Library, Ecclesiology*, pp. 1-60. 'So far as I know,' writes the editor, 'there is not much additional light thrown on the subject by recent research.' This was in 1894.

² The circular mound, 5 ft. in height and 75 ft. in diameter, which was the churchyard and the site of the church of Horsington (All Hallows), near Woodhall Spa, Lincs., has headstones bearing dates as late as 1882; yet the church was in ruins in 1540, and the graveyard has for long years been part of a grass pasture.

³ Bede, *H.E.* V, xii, § 389.

⁴ So Bede. The S.V. has *In Cununingum*. The place is usually identified with Cuning-

ham, still surviving as the name of the northern portion of Ayrshire, where the Abbey of Melrose certainly owned lands (*Liber de Melrose*, i, 72-74).

⁵ *Locum secretae mansionis; dygle aancor-stowe*. The monastery of Old Melrose stood upon a 'ness' of the river Tweed, almost surrounded by water, close to the site of the Roman Trimontium and to the old Roman Deer-street (i.e. Deira-street) leading thereto. See Curle, *A Roman Frontier Fortress*. Its founder was St. Aidan of Lindisfarne, its first abbat his disciple Eata. It was therefore entirely Scotie, and the 'retreat' was probably one cell (*clochaun*) the more built expressly for the new inmate. The site was deserted by the twelfth century, and the more famous Abbey of Melrose was founded (1136) upon a different spot some three miles to the west.

sympathies were wholly with that Church, and he prized those peculiarities which the Latin Bede was fain to ignore. Therefore if Bede says the village had an oratory, and the Translator says merely that it had a *ciric*, we may safely believe the latter to be right. Had he meant to say 'oratory' he would have written *gebaedhus*¹; he actually wrote *cirican*, and, as has been shown above, by that term was usually meant a burial-ground and nothing else.

Wherever Drythelm's home may have been, Christianity, probably in the persons of the monks of Old Melrose, had evidently come so far, and had left its usual mark in the form of a *ciric*,² i.e. a Christian burial-ground. Very possibly there stood within it, *more Scotico*, a tiny wooden cell. If so, Bede and his Saxon Translator do not contradict, but rather supplement, each other, and each specifies the factor which to his own mind was the more important. To the Latin Bede it was the building, to his Scotie-taught Translator it was the barrow. But assuredly there was nothing there which either Bede could style *ecclesia* or we could denominate a church.

Paganism, whether Greek, Roman, Celtic, or Saxon, had made the burial-places of the general dead at some considerable distance from the abodes of the living.³ It had paid regular honours to them, visiting their graves at stated seasons, and celebrating their memories with games and feasting; but it had otherwise, from whatever motive, kept aloof from their places of burial. The novelty in Christianity was that it made friends with all its dead; recognised their presence and celebrated their memory not alone by special and recurring saints' days, but by daily ritual; and so far from avoiding them, made its habitations and its temples actually amongst the tombs and upon them. There could be no immediate supersession of the older traditional attitude by the new. Rather there would need to pass some length of time before the new attitude could become established. It was not

¹ As in *H.E.* V, ii, in the description of John of Beverley's *mansio* (above, p. 221).

² Bede *H.E.* III, iii, § 156, *construebantur ecclesiae per loca*. He is speaking of the early days of the Scotie activities, when Aidan first came to Lindisfarne (635). Possibly this was one of the *ecclesiae* then founded,

perhaps by Cuthbert himself, who was at one time Prior of Old Melrose and always very active as a missionary.

³ The consecration - grave and the founder's tomb were amongst the rare exceptions which prove the rule.

established until the days of archbishop Cuthbert (742-758), who, when Christianity was now a century old in the greater part of England, felt himself strong enough to order that burial-places should be provided within the villages.¹ Here is the sufficient explanation of the peculiarly central position usually occupied by the village church, which probably did more than any single other institution to consolidate and conserve English communal life. In the typical English village the parish church is, not less by its position than by its activities, the nucleus of the whole²; so much so that when one finds a church remote from its village, one generally feels a vague sense of surprise, and finds the explanation in some deflection of old roads, some shifting of economic centres. These are modern influences, and in earlier days, if they existed at all, they were powerless against the centripetal attraction exercised by the church and by the common burial-ground of the community. So long as the grave-yard was there it was no more possible to over-ride its attraction than to sever an Irish *aenach* from the cemetery which had brought it into being. To-day there is little village life. The population shifts too easily, and the thread of continuity is broken, for the dead are commonly laid where they die. They do not come home to die, as once they tried to do, and only seldom are they brought back to be buried with their kindred. So the 'root' is lost, and the village life is dead, and in place of it we boast empire and turn our eyes, not to some ancient little village church, but to

'The Abbey that makes us We,'

or think of

'some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England.'

If, as Bede declares, there was 'neither church nor altar nor other outward symbol of Christianity' in all Northumbria before the year 635, it follows that, outside the

¹ Below, ch. xxv.

² 'The one and only discoverable feature which imposed unity upon the area was the "parish-" or "mother-" church. . . . As the Church on a great scale is said to have given unity to the kingdom, so on a smaller one, it seems to me, the church gave to the parish

its unity and its form. . . . The church is the decisive factor in the local division of the county' (Dr. J. H. Round in *V.C.H.* Essex, i, 404). There is nothing to alter in the phrasing of the passage, but the 'church' which moulded the parish was not the building, but the graveyard about it: cp. Green, *Conquest of England*, pp. 14-15.

permanent monastic settlements, the only sign of the new faith must have been its burial-grounds, the circular barrows to which were brought the bodies of the faithful for burial. Whatever the monasteries may have possessed in the way of 'churches,' it is clear that the country-side had none at all. It had its *cirics* only, its circular burial-places, each a *locus consecratus*.

In Eddius' *Life of Wilfrid* we are told that he claimed as Church-property certain *loca sancta* which had been usurped by various temporal powers.¹ Much argument has centred about this phrase, and Professor Baldwin Brown² endorses the opinion that burial-places were meant. The evidence here advanced makes it certain that such is the meaning, and it explains further why Wilfrid did not speak of them as *ecclesiae*, for the *ecclesiae*, as Wilfrid understood that term, had not yet been built. So when Kentigern came to Glasgow (p. 177) and recovered a cemetery formerly consecrated by Ninian, there is no mention of any 'church.'³ John of Beverley's *mansio* is a cemetery of St. Michael, but again there is no mention of a church by Bede. It is from his Saxon Translator that we learn that it contained a little Celtic oratory (*bedebus*).⁴

It is impossible to fix any precise date at which the structural church at last took precedence of the burial-ground. All that can be said is that it was a *fait accompli*

¹ 'Holy places in various regions, which the British clergy had abandoned when they fled from the swords of their Saxon foes.' Wilfrid would be primarily concerned with such Christian burial-grounds as had been consecrated by the Scotie missionaries and subsequently desecrated in one or other of the Saxon lapses to heathenism, but he astutely used language which would include also all alleged sites of 'churches' of the Roman period. To have advanced a claim to these only, some 250 years after their profanation, would have been ridiculous. His immediate grievance was something very much more actual. In *Calendar of Documents Preserved in France* (Rolls Office), p. 440, occurs a case illustrative of such secularisation in the twelfth century, when one Jordan, son of Alan, grants 'to the Abbey of Marmoutier' the churchyard of the church of Fraxinaria (de Fresnais) 'which he possessed as if his own by hereditary right,' he having come to understand that he held it 'unjustly.' There are known

cases in which the parishioners have been constrained to repurchase the site of their sometime grave-yard, when by their neglecting to keep it properly fenced it had passed into private ownership. This happened, for example, with the churchyard of All Hallows of Horsington, Lincs. mentioned above, p. 255, note 2 (Conway Walter, *Records of Woodball Spa*, p. 155).

² *Arts*, i, 253.

³ *Life of St. Kentigern*, 9.

⁴ Above, p. 221. Baldwin Brown (*Arts*, i, 253) cites from Orelli an inscription (no. 4499) in which *locus sacer* is used for 'cemetery.' The same expression is used by Girald Cambr. (II, 12), and we may compare the A.-S. expressions *balga stow*, *balga legerstow*. The name of Hallows, Old Hallows, or All Hallows, attaching to any spot is a pretty sure clue to the site of an ancient cemetery. Chaucer's pilgrims were wont to ride 'to ferne halwes,' i.e. 'to the far-away burial-places' of departed saints.

by the year 1000, at least in theory. It does not follow that the theory was also the fact over the whole of England, and it is not at all likely. It is more than probable that many *cirics* remained without any sort of structural church until after the Conquest, and it is quite certain that the greater number of such churches as then existed were timber-built and very small.

The difficulty of determining the date of the change is increased by the fact that the Saxon term *ciric* was for long years used indifferently of the burial-ground and of the structural church, and the Latin *ecclesia* was used to render *ciric* in either sense. Ecgbert, archbishop of York, apparently made the first systematic attempt to promote church-building: 'Let every priest use all diligence in building his church.'¹ There has been mentioned in the *Laws of Alfred*² one of the earliest instances of the possible use of *ciric* to denote a building, but that was certainly not the customary usage in his time, for as late as the *Laws of King Edmund* (p. 229) there is still a firm distinction between *Godes hus* and *Godes cyrc*. In the *Laws of King Edgar* (959-975) there appears a novelty: a distinction is made between churches (*cyricean*) which have burial-grounds (*leger-stow*) and those which have none.³ By this date then *ciric* had lost any necessary connotation of sepulture, but the relative dignity of the two classes of churches is illustrated by the injunction that the thane shall pay $\frac{1}{3}$ of his tithe to the support of any church upon his *bocland* if it has a burial-ground, whereas, if it has none, he may pay to it anything or nothing, the balance of the tithe going to the mother-church (*ealdan mynstre*). The same injunction is repeated in the same terms in the *Laws of King Canute*,⁴ which further distinguish four degrees of

¹ *Ut unusquisque sacerdos ecclesiam suam omni diligentia aedificet* (*Excerpta Ecgberti*, in Thorpe, p. 326). The word *aedificet* is noteworthy. It is not the same as *renovet*. Ecgbert was Archbishop 731-766 (Le Neve, *Fasti Eccles. Angl.*, p. 306), so that his order for the building of structural churches follows, as it should do, upon Abp. Cuthbert's order that burial-grounds should be provided in all *tuns*; and this is borne out by the wording of canon xxiv of the same Ecgbert, which rules that no tithes or other possessions shall be taken away from any

ecclesia antiquitus constituta and made over to an *oratorium novum*. The little wooden *bedebus* of the new burial ground would be *oratorium novum*; the 'churches of ancient foundation' would include the old extra-mural *mynstres*. Unfortunately we have the canons only in Latin, but even so the distinction drawn between the old *ecclesia* and the new *oratorium* is significant.

² Above, p. 229.

³ Thorpe, p. 3.

⁴ Thorpe, p. 157.

churches, all alike in respect of their hallowing, but differing in dignity. These are the church-in-chief (*heafod mynstre*), the medial church (*medemran mynstre*), the church 'where there is a burial-ground, but the service is little,' and lastly the field-church (*feld-cirice*) without a burial ground. The difference in dignity is reflected in the monetary value of the fine exacted for the same offence in each of the four cases, namely 5 pounds,¹ 120 shillings, 60 shillings and 30 shillings.² The *heafod mynstre* is evidently the same as the *ealdan mynstre* of Edgar's law, the original monastic foundation, or the representative thereof, from which the district was understood to have been evangelised; and the third and fourth classes correspond to the privately owned churches of the thanes in the same laws. The 'medial churches' must therefore denote the great mass of the rural churches which had been created by the activities of the churches-in-chief and were their direct offspring—the *loca sancta* of the *tuns*, which were now by way of providing themselves with structural churches, commonly of timber only. It will be noticed that the Saxon term applied to them is *mynstre*, not *ciric*, whereas the latter term is applied to the inferior churches of the third and fourth classes.

There was in the latter half of the tenth century a great increase in the number of churches of various degree, and a considerable advance towards the later and Latin view that the building was the important matter.³ None the less the different meed of dignity accorded to any church without a burial-ground is significant. As compared with any other class of church whatever, it was entitled to only half as much veneration. Evidently the old feeling that there could be no church where there was no burial ground died very hard. The England of the eleventh to fifteenth centuries was covered with such pseudo-churches; they occupied every attractive hill, flanked every high road, stood beside every ford and ferry, and even upon the bridges. A few of them have lived to become parish churches; others survive as chapelries to parish churches;

¹ i.e. 360 shillings, the Saxon pound counting 72 shillings.

² Thorpe, p. 154.

³ Cf. *Laws of Edward the Confessor* (no. 8): 'There are now three or four churches, where lately there was but one.' (Thorpe, p. 191).

but by far the greater number have perished. They lacked the one thing which might have safeguarded them—the consecration of the grave-yard. The priority of the *ciric*, alike in time as in dignity, is betrayed further by the fact that fees due to Holy Church were always styled 'kirk-shot.' One never hears of 'mynstre-shot.' Of such dues the chief was the 'soul-shot' paid for burial in a *ciric*; and this, by the *Laws* of Edgar, must be paid to the *mynstre* to which it belongs, i.e. to the parish church of the township wherein the deceased had lived, no matter where he was interred.¹