

A Cistercian Copy of Eadmer's "Life of Anselm" (BHL 0526) from Northern England and the Canonization of Anselm of Canterbury by Thomas Becket¹

Leland R. Grigoli
Harvard Divinity School

Upon his election to the see of Canterbury in 1162, one of Thomas Becket's first acts as archbishop was to seek a papal canonization for his predecessor Anselm from Alexander III. Responding to Becket's request, Alexander ordered Becket to convene a council of English prelates to decide the issue. Whatever this council determined, the pope would confirm. Shortly thereafter, however, Becket was forced to tend to more pressing concerns. The archbishop's relationship with King Henry II of England had quickly deteriorated, and he was forced to flee into exile. Contemporary accounts speak no more about Becket's council, and it has been presumed that it was never even called. Through an examination of the surviving twelfth-century copies of Anselm's hagiography, this paper will argue that Becket had indeed begun to take steps to call a council in accordance with the pope's command, behavior which not only sheds new light on Becket's relationship to Anselm, but also provides a case study for the political dimension of the developing process of papal canonization.

Thomas Becket has long been studied as an archetype for episcopal resistance to secular power. Hundreds of extant sermons from England and northern France demonstrate the important place Becket held in the ecclesiastical imagination as a model for appropriate conduct in defense of Church interests.² Becket's role as a defender of the Church in the face of hostile secular authority remained so ingrained in the popular consciousness that, some 400 years later during their break from Rome, the Tudors felt obliged to wage a deliberate campaign to discredit the martyred archbishop and suppress his cult to ensure their hold on the English throne.³ Yet Becket was not the first occupant of the Chair of St. Augustine to come into conflict with the Anglo-Norman crown. During the course of his episcopal tenure, Becket took his model for resisting secular interference in clerical affairs from his predecessor, Anselm of Canterbury. Richard Southern has argued that Becket deliberately modeled himself on Anselm: Becket adopted Anselm's prayers, took direct inspiration from his predecessor's two exiles, and one of his first acts

¹ I would like to thank Dr. Beverly Kienzle and Timothy Baker of Harvard Divinity School and Dr. William Stoneman of Harvard's Houghton Library for their comments and feedback on drafts of this article, and Harvard University's Houghton Library for the permission to access their collection and to reproduce images of its manuscripts. Additionally, I am deeply indebted to Dr. Tessa Webber of Trinity College, Cambridge for her observations on the repairs to Houghton MS Lat 27.

² For the distribution and use of sermons on Thomas Becket, see Phyllis B. Roberts, *Thomas Becket in the Medieval Latin Preaching Tradition: An Inventory of Sermons About St. Thomas Becket c.1170-c.1400*, *Instrumenta Patristica* 25 (The Hague: Martin Nijhoff International, 1992); Phyllis B. Roberts, "Archbishop Stephen Langton and His Preaching on Thomas Becket in 1220," in *De Ore Domini: Preacher and Word in the Middle Ages*, ed. Thomas Leslie Amos, Eugene Green, and Beverly Mayne Kienzle, SMC 27 (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1989).

³ The process by which the Tudors disassembled Becket's cult through propaganda is thoroughly examined in Phyllis B. Roberts, "Thomas Becket: the Construction and Deconstruction of a Saint from the Middle Ages to the Reformation," in *Models of Holiness in Medieval Sermons: Proceedings of the International Symposium (Kalamazoo, 4-7 May 1995)*, ed. Beverly Mayne Kienzle, *Textes et études du moyen âge* 5 (Louvain-la-Neuve: Fédération internationale des Instituts d'études médiévales, 1996), 1-22.

as archbishop was to request papal approbation of Anselm's sanctity.⁴ Details on this final point are, however, sparse, despite the important role Becket's attempt to canonize Anselm plays in understanding both contemporary events and the relationship between the two archbishops. The only surviving source of direct information about the canonization attempt is a short letter from Pope Alexander III to Becket, dated June 9, 1163.⁵ In this letter, Alexander acknowledges that he received Becket's request at the Council of Tours, and that if Becket should put the issue before a council of English prelates, he would ratify the result.⁶ Due to the rapid decline of Becket's relationship with King Henry II, the formal papal confirmation of Anselm's sanctity would wait for several centuries.⁷ The council almost certainly never occurred; traditional sources such as letters or chronicles do not mention that it was ever called. What actions, if any, Becket took in response to Alexander's letter has thus remained an open historical question.

Despite the dearth of standard documentary sources, evidence of Becket's attempt—or at least his desire—to call a council in order to canonize Anselm does exist, albeit in a type of document not usually considered in affairs of state. Acquired by Harvard University in the late nineteenth century, Houghton Library MS Lat 27 was originally held by the Cistercian abbey of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Holm Cultram, a filiation of Clairvaux in the diocese of Carlisle.⁸

⁴ Southern notes that Becket is the first example we have of someone using Anselm's prayers outside of Anselm's immediate circle of friends; R. W. Southern, *Saint Anselm: A Portrait in a Landscape* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 439; and R. W. Southern, *Saint Anselm and His Biographer: A Study of Monastic Life and Thought 1059-c.1130* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 337–38. Marylou Rudd has persuasively argued that Becket willfully adopted Anselm's language of refusal and opposition in both his exile and the preceding events. Marylou Rudd, "'Unworthy Servants': The Rhetoric of Resignation at Canterbury 1070-1170.," *Journal of Religious History* 22, no. 1 (1998): 1–13, doi:10.1111/1467-9809.00047.

⁵ *Patrologiae cursus completus: series latina* (Paris, 1890), 200.235D–36B.

⁶ E. W. Kemp argues that Alexander's deferral is probably due to the large number of such requests the pope received at the Council of Tours; E. W. Kemp, "Pope Alexander III and the Canonization of Saints: The Alexander Prize Essay," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Fourth Series, 27 (1945): 17, doi:10.2307/3678572. Alain Nadeau, however, suggests Alexander put the issue off so as not to offend Henry II, whose support he needed; Alain Nadeau, "Notes on the Significance of John of Salisbury's *Vita Anselmi*," in *Twenty-Five Years (1969-1994) of Anselm Studies: Review and Critique of Recent Scholarly Views*, ed. Frederick van Fleteren and Joseph C. Schnaubelt, *Texts and Studies in Religion* 70 (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 1996), 69.

⁷ Kemp, "Pope Alexander III and the Canonization of Saints," 18. Despite the lack of papal approbation, there is nonetheless substantial evidence that a devotional cult was established around Anselm at Canterbury. At the very least, Becket's translation of Anselm is a clear indication that he was venerated locally. Southern has argued that Anselm's translation in the twelfth century meant that he was considered a saint, but Raymonde Foreville has pointed out that Becket was well aware of the important status distinction granted by a papal approbation; M. F. Hearn, "Canterbury Cathedral and the Cult of Becket," *The Art Bulletin* 76, no. 1 (1994): 19–52, doi:10.2307/3046001; Raymonde Foreville, "Regard neuf sur le culte de saint Anselme à Canterbury au XIIe siècle," in *Les Mutations socio-culturelles au tournant des XIe-XIIe siècles. Études anselmiennes (IVe section). Colloque organisé par le CNRS sous la présidence de Monsieur Jean Pouilloux, membre de l'Institut. Abbaye Notre Dame du Bec, Le Bec-Hellouin 11-16 Juillet 1982*, *Spicilegium beccense* 2 (Paris: CNRS éditions, 1984), 301–2; Southern, *Saint Anselm and His Biographer*, 339.

⁸ Holm Cultram was founded in 1151 by King David of Scotland with monks from Melrose Abbey. It was the only Cistercian foundation in the Diocese of Carlisle, with one daughter, Gray Abbey, which was established in northern Ireland. Holm Cultram was captured by the English in 1157, shortly after its founding, and for much of its existence it tried to balance both English and Scottish interests. The monastery has only received scholarly attentions relatively recently in Emilia Jamroziak's work on Cistercian border monasteries. See Emilia Jamroziak and Karen Stöber, eds., *Monasteries on the Borders of Medieval Europe Conflict and Cultural Interaction*. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013); Emilia Jamroziak, *Survival and Success on Medieval Borders: Cistercian Houses in Medieval Scotland and Pomerania from the Twelfth to Late Fourteenth Century*, *Medieval Texts and Cultures of Northern Europe* 24 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011); Emilia Jamroziak, "Holm Cultram Abbey: A Story of Success?," *Northern History* 45, no. 1 (2008): 27–36, doi:10.1179/174587008X256593. Although the *ex libris* assigning the volume to Holm Cultram is written in

Dated to the second half of the twelfth century,⁹ Houghton MS Lat 27 contains Eadmer's *Life of Anselm of Canterbury* and lives of four of Cluny's abbots: Odo, Odilo, Majolus, and Hugh.¹⁰ Anselm's *Life* forms the central text of the volume; it is far longer than the other *Lives*, and it is the only section of the volume that shows signs of heavy use. The parchment of Anselm's *Life* shows wear, the text itself is punctuated and accented for word stress to facilitate oral reading,¹¹ and the margins are filled with cross-reference symbols and *nota* marks. Moreover, Anselm's *Life* contains many irregularities in the script and several unusual repairs, not found as frequently (or at all) in the other *Lives*, which indicate that it was written in haste. A monastic scribe seldom had cause to write quickly, and a saint's life had little direct importance to everyday life in a monastery. The codicological features of Houghton MS Lat 27 thus not only suggest that the text of Anselm's *Life* was important to the monks of Holm Cultram, but also that it was important that the copy of the *Life* exist at the monastery. It is therefore probable that the copy of Anselm's *Life* in Houghton MS Lat 27 was made sometime around 1163 in support of Thomas Becket's attempt to canonize Anselm. In other words, the manuscript offers evidence that Becket, following Alexander's instructions, had indeed begun to organize a council of the English church to affirm Anselm's status as a saint.

All five *Lives* in Houghton MS Lat 27 were written by a single scribe, and that scribe was a master of his art. The precision and regularity of the script, the lack of copying errors, and the detail of many of the versals (colored initials) all indicate a well-trained hand.¹² However, there are certain irregularities. First, in addition to the standard practice of using ligatures such as 'N-T' at the end of a line, the scribe also uses several more unusual ligatures such as 'O-N' or 'P-N'. Second, the scribe occasionally—and apparently randomly—inserts majuscule letter-forms such as 'R' or 'N' within words. These irregularities are noticeably more frequent in Anselm's *Life*, although they occur infrequently in other parts of the volume. Third, while the scribe generally uses the standard insular abbreviations for 'et' and 'est' ('&' and 'ē', respectively), two examples

a fourteenth century hand, the manuscript shows distinctly insular production features and there is no sign of a previous owner. Accordingly, there is no reason to suspect that Houghton MS Lat 27 was produced elsewhere. See Laura Light, *Catalogue of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the Houghton Library, Harvard University*, Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies 145 (Binghamton: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1995), 36. Houghton MS Lat 27 is marked as volume 199 on the top of f. 1r, and 12 other surviving books from Holm Cultram have been located. See N. R. Ker, *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain: A List of Surviving Books*, ed. Andrew G. Watson, 2nd ed., Guides and Handbooks 15 (London: Offices of the Royal Historical Society, 1987), 192.

⁹ The rough dating of the manuscript is based on three factors. First, the script is an insular proto-Gothic which is typical of the mid to late twelfth century. Second, the first line of text on each page is written above the top ruling line, a practice which ends ca. 1200. The third factor is the foundation of Holm Cultram in 1151.

¹⁰ *The Life of Anselm of Canterbury* by Eadmer (BHL 0526), f. 1r–37v; *The Life of Odo of Cluny* by John of Cluny (BHL 6292–6), f. 39r–65v; *The Life of Majolus of Cluny* by Odilo of Cluny (BHL 5182–3), f. 66r–73r; *The Life of Odilo of Cluny* by Peter Damien (BHL 6282), f. 73r–81v; *The Life of Hugh of Cluny* by Hugh, monk of Cluny (BHL 4012), f. 82r–84v. For a full description of Houghton MS Lat 27, see Light, *Catalogue of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the Houghton Library, Harvard University*, 36–40.

¹¹ For more on twelfth-century Cistercian punctuation and oral reading, see Nigel Palmer, "Simul cantemus, simul pausemus: Zur mittelalterlichen Zisterzienserinterpunktion," in *Lesevorgänge: Prozesse des Erkennens in mittelalterlichen Texten, Bildern und Handschriften*, ed. Eckart Conrad Lutz, Martina Backes, and Stefan Matter, Medienwandel, Medienwechsel, Medienwissen 11 (Zürich: Chronos, 2010), 483–569.

¹² In his critical edition and translation of *The Life of Anselm of Canterbury*, Southern notes only two places where Houghton MS Lat 27, which he refers to as manuscript J, deviates from the second recension of Eadmer's autograph; Southern, *The Life of St. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury*, 1–4. Given the relatively late date of its composition, it is somewhat unusual that the copy of Anselm's *Life* in Houghton MS Lat 27 follows the second recension of Eadmer's text and not the fourth and final recension which was completed sometime before 1124.

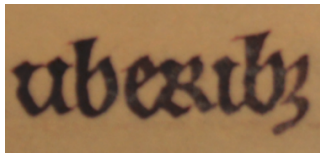
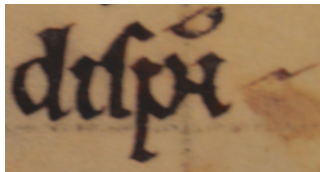


Figure 1: A detail of the script from Houghton MS Lat 27 showing the unusual P-N ligature (top) as well as the use of a majuscule 'R' within a word (bottom).



Figure 2: One of the repairs to the parchment of Anselm's *Life*. The glue has disintegrated, allowing the examination of the repair's construction.

of their Tyronian equivalents ('7' and '÷') appear in Anselm's *Life*.¹³ These scribal variations appear arbitrary, and thus are most likely signs of the scribe's distraction and haste. Finally, three of the *Lives*—those of Anselm, Odilo, and Hugh—are decorated with colored versals which mark the beginning of chapter divisions within each text. Although the versals are uniformly restricted to geometric patterns in accordance with the early Cistercian manuscript aesthetic, those which decorate the *Lives* of Odilo and Hugh are larger and much more elaborate. The versals in the other *Lives* are much larger, averaging 4 to 8 lines as opposed to 1 to 2, possess greater detail, and incorporate yellow in addition to the red, green, and blue found in Anselm's *Life*. Moreover, one of the versals in Anselm's *Life* has not been colored or inked and only is sketched in medieval pencil,¹⁴ while another is missing altogether.¹⁵ As with the irregularities in the script, the less ornate or incomplete decoration of Anselm's *Life* is evidence of the scribe's haste.

The most noticeable signs of haste appear in the parchment on which Anselm's *Life* is written. The *Lives* of Odo, Majolus, Odilo, and Hugh are copied on high-quality parchment, uniform in thickness and size with very few holes or defects and a soft, velvety texture.¹⁶ On the other hand, the parchment used for Anselm's *Life* is smoother and waxier to the touch, and it varies in thickness and shape. Its lesser quality is evident in the number of holes present both in the gutter and in the writing area, and it shows signs of inexperienced preparation. Several folia have spots where the membrane has been scraped too thin, and others are marked with striations caused by the stuttering of a poorly-wielded scraping knife (*lunellum*) over the surface. To compensate for its relatively poor quality, the parchment on which Anselm's *Life* was written has undergone a series of meticulous and skillful repairs. All of these repairs were performed before writing but after the parchment was initially ruled, although the parchment has been re-ruled after the repairs.¹⁷ Instead of the more usual method of sewing a patch into a hole, each hole in the parchment of Houghton MS Lat 27 has been repaired by the insertion of a patch, which has been slit on each side, and then glued it down with egg wash, half on the recto and half on the verso. Both the edges of the patches and the edges of the holes show signs of scarfing (a rough or tattered edge), indicating that they have been

¹³ f. 11v.

¹⁴ f. 29v.

¹⁵ f. 36r, the versal for book 2, chapter 65.

¹⁶ The difference in texture suggests that the membrane used in Anselm's *Life* was of continental origin while that used for the remaining *Lives* was produced closer to home, but without a genomic analysis it is impossible to be certain.

¹⁷ There are some small discrepancies between the ruling of Anselm's *Life* and the other *Lives* in the volume, which may suggest that the parchment used for Anselm's *Life* was repurposed from some other task for the volume, and this may in turn explain why the parchment was ruled before the repairs were made.

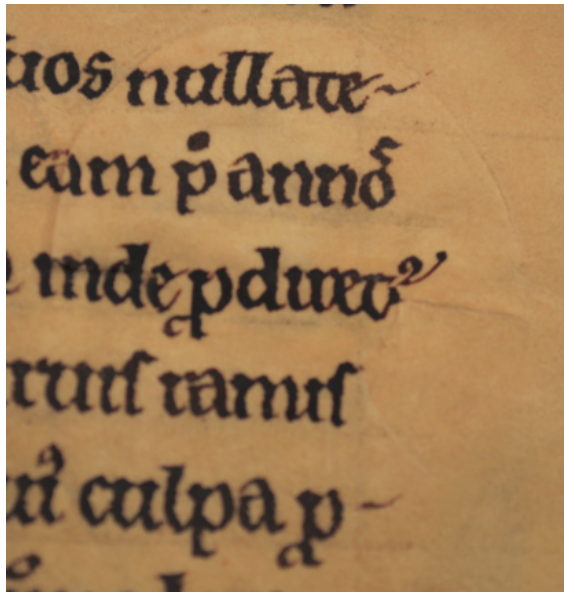


Figure 3: A close-up of an intact repair to the parchment of Anselm's *Life*. Note that the ruling continues over the patch.



Figure 4: A repair to a folio without a hole. The ruling under the patch is clearly visible.

carefully shaved in order to allow the patches to lie flush with the page, a technique that required a high degree of skill on the part of the scribe. In the places where the glue still holds, these repairs are almost unnoticeable. Additionally, in two places where the parchment had been scraped too thin in the writing area, the scribe went out of his way to repair them in a similar fashion. Since there was no hole to repair, the scribe slit the parchment the exact width of the column and inserted a rectangular patch, again gluing it down half on the recto and half on the verso. For such a standard and relatively unadorned volume, intended to be functional and not for display, such repairs show an almost unprecedented level of concern for the appearance of the page. The degree of attention and the repairs to the parchment of Anselm's *Life* thus suggest that the scribe was forced to work with parchment below the quality he considered suitable for his undertaking.

Under ordinary circumstances, producing a copy of a saint's life did not call for a rush job, and there is no apparent local cause for the hasty production. The text was not vital to the daily business of the abbey; neither Anselm's *Life* nor his theological writings generally appear in Cistercian lectionaries, so it is unlikely that the text was needed for any liturgical purpose.¹⁸ Moreover, Holm Cultram was a royal foundation, well-endowed and possessing a great deal of livestock from its establishment and thus able to purchase or

make what it required. It is unlikely that the scribe would have been forced to repair poor quality parchment due to lack of funds.¹⁹ Instead, the unusual features in Anselm's *Life* suggest a lack of

¹⁸ No edition of the full Cistercian liturgy from the second half of the twelfth century currently exists, but the full pre-1150 liturgy and the Proper of the Saints after 1150 have been edited by Chrysogonus Waddell. in *The Primitive Cistercian Breviary: Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. Lat. Oct. 402, with variants from the "Bernardine" Cistercian breviary* (Fribourg: Academic Press, 2007); Chrysogonus Waddell, ed., *The Summer-Season Molesme Breviary: Troyes, Bibliothèque municipale Manuscript 807* (Trappist: Gethsemani Abbey, 1984). In the latter half of the twelfth century, the Cistercians created standard liturgical manuscripts in order to ensure orthopraxy throughout the order. One of these, a manuscript from Cîteaux, now Dijon MS 114, has been singled out by Nicholas Bell as a representative exemplar. It is digitized and available online at <http://patrimoine.bm-dijon.fr>. See Nicholas Bell, "The Liturgy," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Cistercian Order*, ed. Mette Birkedal Bruun (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 258–67.

¹⁹ Although little of the foundation's patrimony remains intact, Holm Cultram's register, listing many of its charters, has managed to survive. The material wealth of the monastery is readily evident from the register, which shows at least seven granges under the monastery's control within the first decade of its existence. Moreover, as the sole Cistercian foundation in the region, Holm Cultram had little difficulty finding patrons. The register has been integrated into the People of Medieval Scotland project and is available online. See "Holm Cultram Abbey (fd. 1150)," People

time and the immediate need for the volume's production. The most plausible explanation for such a need lies with Thomas Becket. If Becket's campaign to canonize Anselm was more widely known—that is, if, having received Alexander III's reply, Becket had begun to raise the necessary support so that Anselm could be canonized by an English council—the promulgation of the incipient saint's *Life* would be a primary means of increasing the profile of his cult.²⁰ Even a relatively obscure and remote foundation on the Scottish border would be called on to play its part. Alexander's letter to Becket states that in addition to bishops, abbots and other religious should be called to the council to decide on Anselm's sanctity,²¹ and there is strong circumstantial evidence that Holm Cultram's abbot would not only attend such a gathering, but also actively aid in the canonization effort. Anselm and Becket had strong ties to the Cistercian order. Anselm's writings constituted an important theological influence on twelfth-century Cistercians,²² when Becket went into exile in 1164, he found refuge with the Cistercians at Pontigny in northern France. After Becket's martyrdom, his cult quickly became popular within parts of the Order in England and northern France.²³ There was also a substantial political incentive. In the twelfth century, the abbey of Holm Cultram sought secular support from the Scottish crown. Although it stood in English territory after 1157, the majority of Holm Cultram's charters before 1215 are endorsed by the Scottish crown. Only a handful received approbation from one of the English kings.²⁴ However, the abbey's primary ecclesiastical ties were to the English church. Its episcopal patron in this period was Christian, the bishop of Whithorn, a strong supporter of the Cistercian order who was eventually buried at Holm Cultram. From Whithorn's reestablishment circa 1128, was subordinate to the see of York and Christian himself was almost certainly of English extraction.²⁵ Both of these parties had an interest in seeing Anselm's canonization succeed. The

of Medieval Scotland, Accessed November 1, 2014, <http://db.poms.ac.uk/record/person/1194/>. The register has also been translated into English and published. See Francis Grainger and W.G. Collingwood, eds., *The Register and Records of Holm Cultram* (Kendal: T. Wilson & Son, 1929).

²⁰ In addition to the important role the promulgation of a saint's life played in the increasingly rigorous papal canonization process, it is worth noting that Alexander ordered Anselm's *Life* to be read to the assembled council as part of the case for his sanctity, saying: . . . *et coram eius omnibus praedicti viri sancti vita perlecta et miraculorum serie publice declarata*. . . . PL 200.236A. Clearly, familiarity with the text of Anselm's *Life* would be of great benefit to anyone arguing in support of the canonization at the council.

²¹ . . . *quatenus fratres episcopos nostros suffraganeos tuos et abbates atque alias religiosas personas in tua provincia constitutas ante tuam praesentiam convokes*. . . . PL 200.236A

²² For an in-depth look at Anselm's influence on Cistercian thought, see J. Lewicki, "Anselme et les doctrines des Cisterciens du XIIe siècle," *Analecta Anselmiana* 2 (1970): 209–16; S. Vanni Rovighi, "Notes sur l'influence de saint Anselme au XIIe siècle (suite et fin)," *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 8, no. 29 (1965): 43–58; S. Vanni Rovighi, "Notes sur l'influence de saint Anselme au XIIe siècle," *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 7, no. 28 (1964): 423–37.

²³ The Cistercian enthusiasm for Becket's cult is evident in the numerous sermons composed for him in the decades after his death. Phyllis Roberts lists the Cistercians Gilbert of Hoyland, Caesarius of Hesterbach, Leo, and six anonymous Cistercian monks as the authors of sermons on Becket in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; see Roberts, *Thomas Becket in the Medieval Latin Preaching Tradition*, 247–48. An additional sermon on Becket by the otherwise-unknown monk Bartholomew of Laudun, not listed in Roberts' *Inventory*, is extant in a mid-thirteenth century sermon collection from the Cistercian monastery of Foigny, located in northern France. The pericope for this sermon, Ps. 1:3, is unusual; no other extant sermons on Becket utilize it. Jean-Baptiste de Lancy, *Historia Fusniacensi coenobii: Collationes quorundam monachorum Fusniacensium ex veteri codice manuscripto ipsius coenobii Fusniacensis deprompta*, 1671, 45–9.

²⁴ "Holm Cultram Abbey (fd. 1150)," <http://db.poms.ac.uk/record/person/1194/>.

²⁵ Christian was consecrated at Bermondsey Abbey in London in 1154 on the same day that Henry was crowned king of England. Christian had many other friends in the Cistercian order as well, among them Aelred of Rievaulx; Richard D. Oram, *The Lordship of Galloway* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2000), 178. Richard D. Oram, "In Obedi-

success of the effort would lend a great deal of prestige to Becket,²⁶ and the Scots might have hoped that strong archbishop in Canterbury and political infighting would distract Henry from his northern borders. Similarly, a successful canonization, independent of royal approbation, would strengthen the English Church's power and demonstrate its autonomy from the English crown.

An examination of the surviving twelfth century copies of Anselm's *Life* provides further evidence that Becket had taken the preliminary steps in calling a council of the English Church in order to canonize Anselm. Of the twenty-three manuscripts Southern consulted for his edition of Eadmer's text, fourteen were produced in the twelfth century.²⁷ Although none of these fourteen manuscripts shows the rather unusual signs of haste present in Houghton MS Lat 27 and most of the manuscripts are only dated very roughly,²⁸ the circumstances of their production—particularly the locations in which they were produced—suggest that some were copied in order to aid Becket's effort. Four of the manuscripts were produced by the Cistercians, who, as we have seen, had strong ties to Anselm and Becket.²⁹ Moreover, out of the ten manuscripts whose provenance is known, five³⁰ are from Picardy or what is now Belgium, the region to which Becket fled following his break with Henry in 1164. It was a region where Becket found a great deal of support among the local monasteries,³¹ suggesting that some of the manuscripts from the region were produced at Becket's behest. Two more manuscripts³² are of uncertain Continental origins, and one, Rouen MS 1393, is clearly associated with the friendship network of Anselm's old monastery of Bec. This relative abundance of Continental copies contrasts sharply with the

ence and Reverence: Whithorn and York c.1128-c.1250," *The Innes Review* 42, no. 2 (December 1, 1991): 86–95, doi:10.3366/inr.1991.42.2.83.

²⁶ The political nature of the canonization request cannot be understated. Several scholars have suggested that Alexander's deferral of Becket's request to canonize Anselm to an English council was made in part out of the pope's desire not to antagonize King Henry. Moreover, Becket's desire for papal approbation of Anselm's cult may have been in response to Alexander's canonization of Edward the Confessor at Henry's request in 1161; Nadeau, "Notes on the Significance of John of Salisbury's *Vita Anselmi*," 69–70; and Kemp, "Pope Alexander III and the Canonization of Saints," 17–20.

²⁷ Eadmer of Canterbury, *The Life of St. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury*, xiii–xxv.

²⁸ I have had the opportunity to consult facsimiles of Rouen BM MS 1393 (Southern's MS R, formerly Rouen MS U 102), St-Omer BM MS 716 (MS O), and Paris BN MS lat 5348 (MS B). I have also been able to consult incomplete reproductions of Douai BM MS 840 (MS W) and 878 (MS Z), Troyes BM MS 6 (MS X), and Getty Museum MS Ludwig XI.6 (MS T, formerly in the private collection of Comte Guillaume de Hemricourt de Grunne). For the remaining manuscripts, I have been forced to rely on catalog descriptions. Only two of the twelfth-century manuscripts of Anselm's *Life* can be assigned a precise date. The first of these, the British Museum's MS Harleian 315 (MS D), was copied in 1125. The second, Getty MS Ludwig XI.6, has been dated to either 1142–1147 or 1150–1175. Southern favored the latter dates, although most scholarship still lists the former. See Anton von Euw, *Die Handschriften der Sammlung Ludwig*, vol. 3 (Köln: Schnütgen-Museum der Köln, 1982), 72; Eadmer of Canterbury, *The Life of St. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury*, xvii.

²⁹ In addition to Houghton MS Lat 27, the Cistercian manuscripts of Anselm's *Life* are: Copenhagen Royal Library Gl. kgl. S 182 (MS U), of an unknown Cistercian provenance, Troyes BM MS 6, produced at Clairvaux, and St-Omer BM MS 716, copied at Clairmarais.

³⁰ Getty MS Ludwig XI.6, St-Omer BM MS 716, and Douai BM MS 352 (MS S), 840, and 878 (MS W).

³¹ Leaving England, Becket first landed in Flanders near Gravelines. Fearing the local lords, Becket sought refuge at the nearby abbey of Clairmarais, the same foundation which produced St-Omer BM MS 716, before proceeding on to the abbey St-Bertin and then Pontigny, where he spent the majority of his exile; David Knowles, *Thomas Becket* (London: A. & C. Black, 1970), 100. Southern suspected that a lost manuscript of St-Bertin was the source of the β branch of the manuscripts of Anselm's *Life*; Southern, *Saint Anselm and His Biographer*, viii. As Roberts' inventory shows, any of the extant sermons preached about Becket following his death also come from this region; Roberts, *Thomas Becket in the Medieval Latin Preaching Tradition*.

³² Paris BN lat. 2475 (MS A), 5348.

fact that only four of the extant copies of Anselm's *Life* were produced in England. Of these four, British Museum MS Harleian 315 has been definitively dated to 1125, well before Becket's tenure as archbishop, while Houghton MS Lat 27 was from a foundation which was closely affiliated with the Scottish crown, despite being located in English territory. In other words, although at least seven twelfth-century manuscripts of Anselm's *Life*—three from the Low Countries, three from the Cistercian Order, and one from both—come from areas or foundations which are associated with Becket, only Corpus Christi College MS 318, created at Rochester cathedral, and British Museum MS Cotton Tiberius Diii could have been produced in areas firmly associated with King Henry during the period in question. This stark disparity strongly suggests that for many foundations, the decision to produce a copy of Anselm's *Life* in the twelfth century was a political one, dependent on the individual foundation's relationship to Becket and Henry.

Given the political and intellectual interests of both Holm Cultram and the Cistercian order more generally, the signs that the monastery's copy of Anselm's *Life* was composed in haste constitute tangible evidence that Thomas Becket had called a council of the English Church in

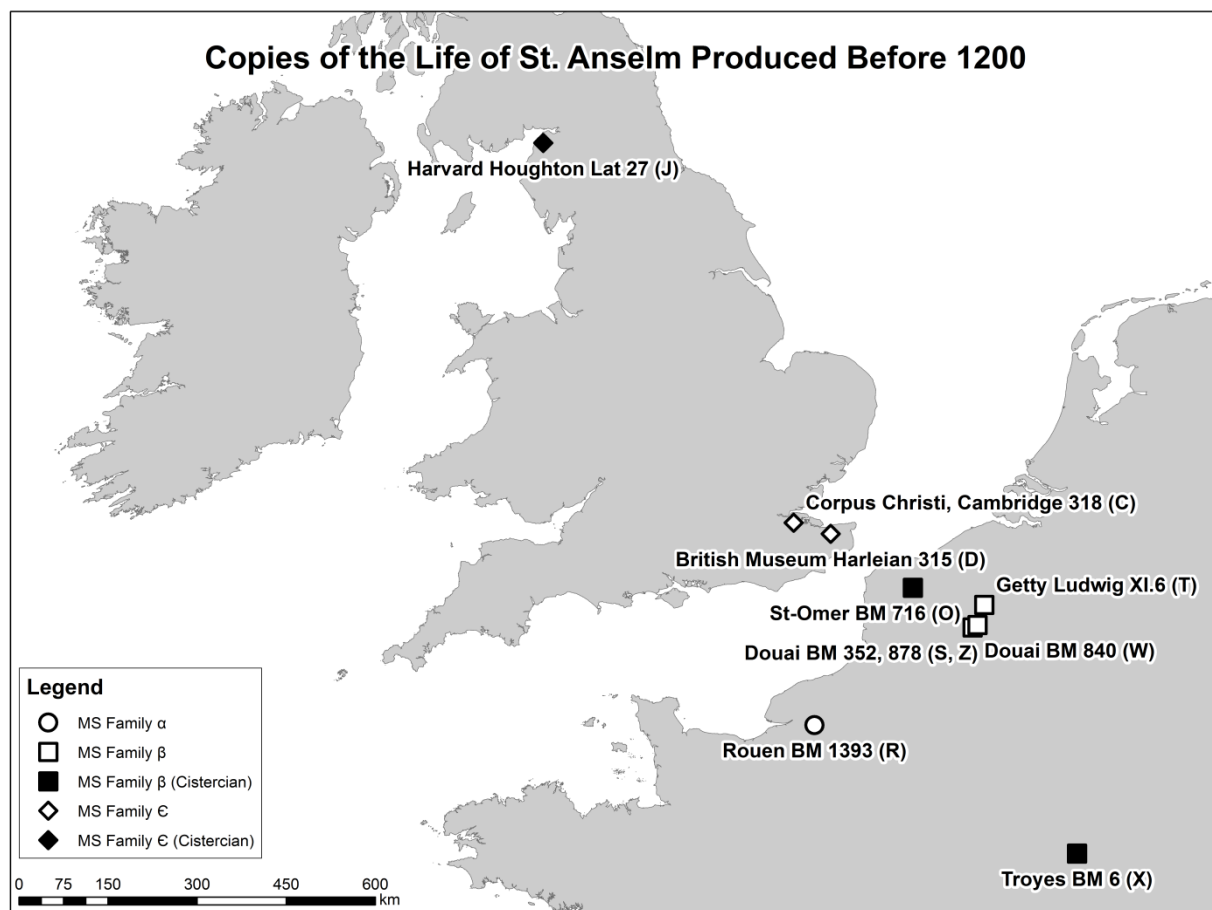


Fig 5: The production sites of all twelfth-century copies of Anselm's *Life* whose provenance has been identified. Five of the manuscripts were produced in the Low Countries or Picardy, areas friendly to Thomas Becket, and three were made by Cistercian houses. The letters in brackets refer to Southern's edition. The precise provenances of British Museum MS Cotton Tiberius Diii (probably Insular), Paris BN MS lat 2575 and 5348 (both probably Continental), and Copenhagen Royal Library Gl. kgl. S 182 (Cistercian) are unknown, and they do not appear on this map.

order to canonize his predecessor. An examination of the provenances of the other extant twelfth

century copies of the *Life* provide further evidence that Becket was rallying his supporters to Anselm's cause. Having received Pope Alexander's letter, Becket had begun notify his ecclesiastical allies before his plans were unexpectedly interrupted as his conflict with the English crown came to a head. Becket's persistence in seeking Anselm's canonization reflects his admiration for Anselm, the political importance of the attempt, and the intertwined relationship of ecclesiastical and royal power to the developing process of papal canonization in the late twelfth century.