

Contested Consecrations and the Pursuit of Ecclesiastical Independence in Scotland and Ireland in the Early 1120s

Abstract

This article investigates two comparable crises of leadership in Gaelic Christendom which occurred around the same time, in 1120-1; these culminated in failed episcopal appointments for St. Andrews and Dublin. The article is based on accounts from Scotland and Ireland which shed light on the developments in both countries; and on *Historia Nouorum in Anglia* ('History of Recent Events in England') by Eadmer, biographer and confidant of Anselm (archbishop of Canterbury from 1093 until his death in 1109). Eadmer was the principal contemporary first-hand witness to events in this period, but his evidence is somewhat problematic. There are few substantial comparative discussions of Scottish and Irish ecclesiastical developments in the 1120s; in addition, the work of Eadmer needs fuller consideration regarding Canterbury's relationships with Gaelic churches. Eadmer's depiction of the St. Andrews situation is especially significant because he himself was the bishop-elect. I assess how these crises arose, and how they caused the relationships between Gaelic churches and Canterbury to become highly strained. I aim to show that leaders in Scotland and Ireland undertook the pursuit of ecclesiastical independence in very different ways; and that both failed appointments, though eventually prompting a degree of independence, resulted in short-term stagnation.

Keywords

Canterbury, Dublin, Eadmer, episcopal consecration, Gregorian reform, St Andrews

Two crises of leadership occurred on opposite sides of the Irish Sea in 1120-1; both culminated in failed episcopal appointments, and caused relations between Gaelic Christendom and Canterbury to become highly strained. These incidents illustrate that, in the early 1120s, Gaelic leaders were seeking independence for their churches: they strongly asserted their rights to establish their own governance without permission from Canterbury. Authorities in Scotland and Ireland undertook the pursuit of ecclesiastical independence in very different ways; both failed appointments, though eventually prompting a degree of independence, resulted in short-term stagnation.

There are few substantial comparative discussions of Scottish and Irish ecclesiastical developments at that time (Dumville 1997; Hudson 1991). The Gaelic evidence for the period ranges from chronicles to seventeenth-century records of synodal *acta*. Eadmer, biographer and confidant of Anselm (archbishop of Canterbury from 1093 until his death in 1109), was the principal contemporary first-hand witness to the significant events of this period. Analyses of his *Historia Nouorum in Anglia*, ‘History of Recent Events in England’ (*HNA*), have tended to focus on Anselm’s intellectual achievements and legacy, rather than on Canterbury’s relationships with the rest of the Insular Christian world or on the period after Anselm’s death. Along with discussion of evidence from Gaelic chronicles and the other Insular sources, I will assess Eadmer’s

treatment of the issues involving Scotland and Ireland: his *Historia Nouorum* needs fuller consideration in regard to Canterbury's dealings with Gaelic churches.

Eadmer's *Historia Nouorum* is one of the most important contemporary sources for the Anglo-Norman empire: it was 'the most ambitious historical work written in England since Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*' (Gullick 1998: 173). A thorough understanding of the Anglo-Norman Church, and its relations with other areas of Christendom, necessarily relies a great deal on his works, given his position over a long and crucial period: he lived until at least the mid-1120s (Southern 1966: 229-40). Eadmer later became an outstanding example of Canterbury's remarkable book-production (Webber 1995: 146-53), which helped to demonstrate its status, and therefore that of its archbishops, from Lanfranc's time onwards (Brooke 1989: 119-21). Regarding detailed studies of Eadmer's works. Martin Rule's edition of *Historia Nouorum* is of course a work of great substance (*HNA*); however, many aspects of the principal manuscript (MS. 452) and the textual history have been reassessed.¹ R.W. Southern, and more recently Sally N. Vaughn and Jay Rubenstein, have produced insightful debate on the historical and intellectual context of Eadmer's writings (Southern 1966; Vaughn 1987; Southern 1990; Rubenstein 1999; Vaughn 2012), as have G.R. Evans on Anselm and his influence, in an illuminating article (Evans 2004), and Martin Brett in his incisive treatment of the textual history of *Historia Nouorum* (Brett 1979).

Eadmer's perspective on contemporary events in Gaelic Christendom is crucial though occasionally problematic (Broun 2007: 106; Vaughn 1987: 261-5). A succession of Gaelic initiatives requesting episcopal consecrations served Eadmer's objective to

¹ I am currently preparing a new edition of *Historia Nouorum in Anglia*, with notes and English translation: the published translation (Bosanquet 1964) is incomplete and without detailed commentary: it includes only Books I-IV of the six books.

illustrate Canterbury's international profile, and its guidance for the churches it saw as within its remit, even if he was writing primarily for the Canterbury community (Vaughn 1987: 287; Southern 1990: 333-5). But as Eadmer had to acknowledge towards the end of his own career, Canterbury's relationships with both Scotland and Ireland had by that time become extremely difficult.

In the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, after the Norman Conquest of England, successive archbishops of Canterbury claimed jurisdiction over the churches of Britain (including Scotland) and Ireland. Their attempts to effect 'Gregorian reform' (Cowdrey 1998: 529-53; Cushing 2005: 29-38; Brooke 1989: 143-4) in the areas they perceived as their responsibility were an extension of the changes initiated by Pope Gregory VII in the 1070s (Cowdrey 1998: 586-96).² Eadmer witnessed and described many of the most significant events in the development of Canterbury's expansionist claims and ideals (Southern 1966: 298-301; Webber 1995: 148-52), which were characteristic of Anglo-Norman leadership (Davies 2000: 38-9; Davies 1990: 4-5; Davies 1996: 213; Sawyer 1998: 251-7; Sheehy 1975: 6-8). Lanfranc of Bec, archbishop of Canterbury from 1070 until his death in 1089 (Clover & Gibson 1979: 2), used his vast learning and considerable political enterprise (Gibson 1978: 116-31; Brooke 1989: 118-25; Philpott 1997) to assert Canterbury's supremacy over York and, more widely, Britain and her surrounding islands, including Ireland (Gibson 1978: 112-13; Bartlett 2000: 92-3; cf. Davies 1990: 5 and 68-70). This latter authority was, he claimed, inherited from Bede's idea of Canterbury's position: *a tempore beati Augustini ... usque ad ipsius Bedae*

² On Canterbury prelates, see Southern 1966: 127-37. In R.R. Davies' words, they exercised a 'remarkable, if spasmodic, tenacity in the pursuit of such claims' (Davies 2000: 38). John Reuben Davies has analyzed the Welsh context, in particular the attempted imposition of bishops (Davies 2007: 86-7). For discussion of variant notions of power, especially over minorities, see Nirenberg 2013: 25-6.

ultimam senectutem, quod fere centum et quadraginta annorum spatio terminatur, antecessores meos super Eboracensem aecclesiam totamque insulam quam Britanniam uocant necnon et Hiberniam primatum gessisse, ‘from the time of St Augustine ... until the last years of Bede himself, which is a period of almost 140 years, my predecessors exercised primacy over the church of York and the whole island which men call Britain and over Ireland as well’ (Clover & Gibson 1979: 50-1; Watt 1970: 221 and 222-3; Gibson 1978: 120; Dumville 1997: 35).

He did not, however, demonstrate this assertion by alluding to specific passages in Bede’s work (Watt 1970: 221-2). For instance, Bede had praised the Canterbury founder Augustine’s successor Laurence, whose innovation was as follows: *et ueterum Britanniae incolarum nec non et Scottorum, qui Hiberniam insulam Britanniae proximam incolunt, populis pastorem impendere sollicitudinem curabat*, ‘he also endeavoured to bestow his pastoral care upon the older inhabitants of Britain, as well as upon those Irish who live in Ireland, which is an island close to Britain’ (*HE* II.iv: 144-5 and 145 n. 3; Bethell 1971: 129; cf. Broun 2007: 129). Archbishop Ralph d’Escures later cited Bede specifically in his effort to reassert Canterbury’s claim (Watt 1970: 222-4; Holland 2000: 146).

The idea of reforming Insular churches gave rise to a long-term attempt to include in mainstream Western Christendom areas which had been seen as ‘fringe’ territories: Scotland and Ireland, and their surrounding islands (Ó Corráin 2015: 58-60; Southern 1966: 132-5; Southern 1990: 333-5; Cowdrey 1998: 467-8).³ There is much correspondence to demonstrate Rome and Canterbury’s efforts to instruct Irish leaders in

³ On outsiders’ perceptions of Ireland from Antiquity to c. AD 1200, and the supposed peripherality of Irish Christians, see O’Leary 2013. Bede in particular praised the many Irish contributions to the development of English Christianity in the early Middle Ages, despite many Irishmen’s grievous error in their method of dating Easter: for example, Aidan, bishop of Lindisfarne -- *HE* III.18: 266–7.

particular on what they saw as proper, specific teachings and practices. Pope Gregory VII wrote a general letter to a prominent Irish king in the mid-1070s, urging devotion (Sheehy 1962: 7-8; Cowdrey 1998: 467-8; Gwynn 1992: 84-98; Gwynn 1968: 2; Kinsella 2000: 33-4). Lanfranc also defended Canterbury's leadership of Insular Christianity, and therefore its attempts to instigate Insular ecclesiastical reform, despite his possibly unscrupulous character (Clover & Gibson 1979: 3-10; Brooke 1989: 118-25; cf. Flanagan 1979: 14-19). He addressed a letter to the same King Toirrdelbach of Munster, in severe terms in 1073/4, urging wholesale change in marriage-laws and ecclesiastical succession, among other allegedly deviant practices (Clover & Gibson 1979: 70-3; Gibson 1978: 123-5; Ó Corráin 2015: 61-2; Gwynn 1968: 2-5); and he claimed that there were serious irregularities in the baptism of children and in episcopal consecration.⁴

For evidence of reform in Scotland we rely greatly on the Life of St. Margaret (d. 1093), wife of King Mael Coluim (Anderson 1990: II.59-88; Honeycutt 1989; Dumville 1997: 47-8); and on the St. Andrews foundation-legends, involving the apostle Andrew, which would form the basis for St. Andrews' metropolitan claims (Broun 2000; Taylor 2000; Anderson 1974; Shead 2015: 134-9; Gougaud 1992: 410-11). Regarding Canterbury's influence on Scottish churches in the 1120s, we must especially consider Eadmer's work, given his personal involvement; and assess the extent to which other Insular evidence supports his account.

A major issue arose in regard to the leading episcopate of the Scots, St. Andrews (Broun 2007: 103-5 and 113-16; Southern 1966: 135 and 235-7; Southern 1990: 417-18),

⁴ Cf. Aubrey Gwynn's discussion on whether this information had come directly from Ireland: Gwynn 1941. David Dumville has commented on Lanfranc's irritability in response to Irish literary questions (Dumville 2012: 57). Cf. Bernard of Clairvaux who, in similar language to that of Lanfranc, later deplored Ireland's non-conformity with Western ecclesiastical custom (Gwynn 1968: 39-42; Scully 2006; O'Leary 2013: 42).

in Symeon of Durham's words *sedes primatis totius gentis Scottorum* (Arnold II.204), 'the seat of the primate of the whole Scottish nation' (Anderson 1991: 129). Eadmer is the main witness for this: he provides the only evidence for the principal letter involved, in *Historia Nouorum* Book V (*HNA*: 279-80). This and Book VI were later additions to the work (*HNA*: 217-302).⁵ In 1120, in the letter from King Alexander I of Scotland (Duncan 2012: 59-62) which Eadmer quoted, Eadmer himself was nominated to this bishopric. The king wrote to Ralph d'Excures, Anselm's successor and archbishop of Canterbury until his death in 1122 (*HNA*: 279-80; Southern 1990: 417-18), not regaling in detail Eadmer's personal attributes (as the letter to Anselm in 1096 for Bishop-elect Malchus of Waterford had appeared to do⁶) but simply describing him as *quandam personam a plerisque mihi laudatam* (*HNA*: 279), 'a certain person recommended to me by very many people' (my translation).⁷ Alexander pleaded for Ralph's help to effect this appointment, due to serious difficulties arising from the lack of a bishop at St. Andrews. He appeared to blame himself, and wished to take responsibility for the resulting crisis: *Verens enim summum Pastorem me grauiter offendisse cum gregem suum, negligentia mea aliisque forsitan criminibus impredientibus, pastoris penuria desolatum et a tramite ueritatis in pluribus exorbitatum diu permiserim* (*HNA*: 279), 'For I tremble that I have grievously offended the highest Shepherd, that I have allowed his flock, through my negligence, and perhaps held back by other judgments, to be abandoned for so long for

⁵ R.W. Southern noted a change in the character of *Historia Nouorum* after 1100, when Eadmer ceased to be in Anselm's confidence following Anselm's displeasure at discovering Eadmer's notes (Southern 1990: 413-14). Southern also remarked on the relative stagnation of Eadmer's last two books, V and VI: specifically, he thought that these focused increasingly on Canterbury's dispute with York (Southern 1966: 236-40); and that they 'descend from high questions of principle to the bickerings of bodies of men with too little to occupy their minds, and contract from the wide circle of European society to the narrow bounds of a humdrum province' (Southern 1966: 237).

⁶ See 000-00 (15), below.

⁷ In MS. 452, the name *Edmerum* is underscored (MS. 452: 330; *HNA*: 279).

lack of a pastor, and in many ways to be turned from the path of truth' (my translation). Alexander's self-deprecation here is not surprising, given the dire need for direction. He appealed to Canterbury to provide a new bishop, since he seemed to have no suitable nominee at closer distance.

Archbishop Ralph was taken by surprise (*miratus est*) at this request, according to Eadmer, and considered it a decree from God himself (*HNA*: 280). Ralph had renewed Canterbury's claim to authority over all Insular churches, referring more explicitly to Bede's description of Laurence than had Lanfranc in his assertions of the 1070s (Watt 1970: 221-3; Broun 2007: 129).

The background to these events extended at least to 1072, when an agreement was struck between the king of England and the archbishops of Canterbury and York, that Scottish bishoprics would be under York's authority; in this way Scots were an unconsulted party directly affected by a decision clarifying the York-Canterbury relationship (Broun 2007: 103-4; Gougaud 1992: 410-11; Bartlett 2000: 94-5).⁸ The difficulty of Scotland's position had come to a head in 1107, when the new bishop-elect of St. Andrews, Turgot prior of Durham, saw his consecration delayed for over a year, amid heated correspondence, until the archbishop of York had himself been consecrated and could canonically perform this consecration which was his responsibility (Broun 2007: 109-10). Eadmer naturally cited a great deal of correspondence around these events, as Anselm had become involved (Anderson 1991: 130-1), but he chose not to dwell on the fundamental difficulties of St. Andrews' relationship with England which lay behind the postponement: *tum propter quaedam alia quae longum est enarrare* (*HNA*:

⁸ See Broun 2007 and Broun 2002 for full discussion of these events and their consequences for St. Andrews and for the kingdom of the Scots. For comparison with the origins of the Dublin crisis in 1121, see 000-00 (27), below.

198), ‘because of certain other matters which it is tedious to explain fully’ (my translation). Clearly this was less significant to Eadmer than Canterbury’s immediate issue in 1107-8 regarding the position of York, and his consequent need to quote Anselm’s stern rebuke of Thomas, archbishop of York, for allegedly offering to assist in consecrating Turgot at York, prior to his own consecration, and therefore uncanonically (*HNA*: 199; Anderson 1991: 130-2). Anselm also rebuked the bishop of Durham who had alerted him to this uncanonical plan and offered to preside at the ceremony (*HNA*: 198-9; Anderson 1991: 131-2). Turgot was eventually consecrated at York immediately after Thomas’s own consecration, according to Symeon of Durham; but, following disputes with the king, he decided to leave for Rome. However, he died at Durham in 1115 (Arnold 1882: II.204; Anderson 1991: 135-6).

Fortunately the other, ‘tedious’ matters are explained by other evidence: namely a long and fraught correspondence about the unwillingness of St. Andrews, and kings of the Scots, to accept York as their metropolitan (Broun 2007: 108-10; Dumville 1997: 48-9). Indeed even popes unsuccessfully demanded this compliance from at least 1100 until 1122 (Anderson 1991: 148-9); Somerville 1982: 4-8 and 19-28; Broun 2007: 109-10), that is, before and after Eadmer’s ‘wretched time’ (Broun 2007: 105) as bishop-elect of St. Andrews.

King Alexander’s request in 1120 was granted; Eadmer attested that his appointment was approved by Canterbury and by King Henry I of England. However, in the discussions following his arrival at St. Andrews, it became clear that Eadmer wished his consecration to take place at Canterbury (*HNA*: 282-3). To him this would have been the obvious procedure, although presumably the subject had not been broached prior to

his arrival in Scotland. The ceremony did not take place; this dispute was not resolved, and in 1121 Eadmer returned home to Canterbury (*HNA*: 286; Broun 2007: 105), though without resigning his appointment, as he insisted in his later correspondence (*HNA*: 299).

In this way St. Andrews provides a telling example of the extent of the Anglo-Norman ecclesiastical empire's attempted influence, and of Insular insistence on a greater degree of independent decision-making. Evidently Eadmer and King Alexander I were unaware of each other's requirements, and each man's stance turned out to be inflexible (Broun 2007: 105). Alexander's request for Eadmer's appointment may have been intended not only to provide the leadership needed following instability and a long vacancy at St. Andrews but, perhaps more importantly, to protect that see, and thereby Scotland as a whole, from the unwelcome influence of York. In addition, the king's initiative in approaching Archbishop Ralph of Canterbury could have been prompted by knowledge of an aside Anselm had made in concluding his admonition of the bishop of Durham in 1108, that he himself would take over from York if needed, by performing the consecration for St. Andrews: *immo interdico ne fiat ante consecrationem eiusdem electi archiepiscopi, nisi a me, si forte hoc necessitas exegerit* (*HNA*: 199), 'indeed I forbid that it be done before the consecration of that archbishop-elect; except by me, if by chance necessity should demand this' (my translation). It is likely that Alexander knew of and took up this idea, since in 1115 following Turgot's death, he had not only appealed to the *paternitas*⁹ of Archbishop Ralph to help find a new bishop (without suggesting a nominee), but petitioned him that bishops of St. Andrews never again be consecrated by archbishops of York but only by the pope or the archbishop of Canterbury, as had been

⁹ As did Irish leaders to Anselm in 1096 and implicitly to Ralph in 1121: 000-00 (15 and 19-21), below.

customary before Lanfranc's time (*HNA*: 236; Anderson 1991: 136).¹⁰ In 1120, in his eyes such a plan might have worked, especially had St. Andrews itself hosted the consecration, and been left to conduct its own affairs thereafter. This idea, however unrealistic, was more appealing than York's permanent supremacy; his options were limited given popes' long-standing refusal to grant St. Andrews its own metropolitan status for Scotland (Broun 2007: 110-11; Dumville 1997: 48-9). However, Alexander's advisers, who were almost certainly senior churchmen and/or people with Canterbury connections, could have offered useful cautionary advice, had they experienced or known of fairly recent episcopal appointments in Ireland, particularly the knowledgeably detailed recommendation for Malchus, bishop-elect of Waterford.¹¹ The Scots leadership clearly misjudged Eadmer's level of engagement with their views; and King Alexander had at first given insufficient consideration to selecting a nominee who would be a familiar and appropriate choice for both parties.

Eadmer at that time obviously rejected any degree of independence for a Scottish Church, and indeed assumed that Canterbury instead of York would henceforth take full metropolitan authority over St. Andrews and the Scottish Church as a whole. In his view this would resolve a long-standing dispute which, from his later correspondence¹² he implicitly now understood more clearly, but did not discuss in any detail. As Dauvit Broun has shown, Eadmer by then (i.e. after leaving St Andrews) had also grasped that not only the independence of Scotland's Church, but that of the kingdom of the Scots itself, was at stake (Broun 2007: 114).

¹⁰ This letter Eadmer quoted without explanation, between passages on the bishoprics of St. David's and Rochester (*HNA*: 236).

¹¹ See 000-00 (15), below. For brief discussion of Irish contacts with, and clerics in, Scotland in this period, see Candon 1988: 407-8 and 413-14; cf. Hughes 1980: 3-16.

¹² See 000-00 (29), below.

An equally important recorder of Anglo-Norman history (Rollason 1998: 12), Symeon of Durham, who was an almost exact contemporary of Eadmer (Gullick 1998: 187) and no doubt an interested observer, in his *Historia Regum* neatly summed up the root of St. Andrews' difficulty in 1107, as he noted his former prior Turgot's delayed consecration:

Sed per annum et eo amplius dilata est eius ordinatio propter dissensiones Eboracensis ecclesiae atque ecclesiae Sancti Andreae Scotiae. Illa namque ordinationem et subiectionem primatis Scottorum sibi ex quodam quasi iure exigit; ista uero e diuerso affirmat ex nullo antiquitatis uel consuetudinis iure aliquid se debere (Arnold 1882: II.204),

But for a year and more his ordination was postponed, because of dissensions between the church of York and the church of St Andrew of Scotland. For the former demands for herself as by a certain right the ordination and subjection of the primate of the Scots; but on the contrary the latter asserts that she owes nothing by any right of antiquity or custom (Anderson 1991: 129-30).

Symeon also corroborated Eadmer's account of his own failed appointment: in a brief summary of events, he stated that Eadmer, *deposita intentione regendi episcopatum, reuertitur ad locum suum* (Arnold 1882: II.259), 'gave up his purpose of ruling the bishopric, and returned to his own place' (Anderson 1991: 145).

Canterbury's unanticipated, expansionist objectives for Scotland were resisted throughout this period by the king, on behalf of the prestigious see of *episcopus Scottorum*, 'the bishop of the Scots' (Dowden 1910: 18-19), especially in 1120-1 despite the expressed dire need for a new appointment. There had been no leadership at St. Andrews since Turgot's death in 1115, and indeed his appointment had clearly already failed following his consecration at York in 1108. The débacle of 1120-1 resulted in

continued stagnation at St. Andrews, and even more strained relations between Scotland and Canterbury.

Anselm could not resolve the ongoing tensions between St. Andrews and the leading English archbishoprics of York and Canterbury. His successor Ralph, along with Eadmer himself, failed to comprehend the breadth of the issues involved, or the reasons for King Alexander's controlling intransigence as Eadmer saw it (*HNA*: 285; Broun 2007: 105); that deeper understanding, and council(s) involving all parties including York, might have helped to establish cordial relations with Scotland. Eadmer declared, in his final letter to King Alexander, that he had meant no threat to the autonomy of the kingdom of the Scots: *[n]e putetis tamen me in aliquo uelle quicquam derogare libertati uel dignati regni Scottorum* (*HNA*: 300), 'lest, however, you think that I wish in any way to detract from the freedom and dignity of the kingdom of the Scots' (my translation; cf. Broun 2007: 114).¹³ In the longer term, Scotland attained a degree of ecclesiastical independence, at least from archbishops in England: by the end of the twelfth century its bishops were accountable only to Rome (Broun 2007: 124-30; Broun 2002: 27-9 and 34-5; Davies 2000: 38-9). Because Scottish kings and bishops continued to assert and exercise their autonomy in the face of interventions by York, Canterbury, and Rome (Hammond 2013: 2; Somerville 1982: 5-8), it took a long and complicated process for reformers to finalize ecclesiastical change in Scotland. These complications were also due to Scotland's position (unlike that of Ireland) within the direct influence of Anglo-Norman kings (Dumville 1997: 49-52).

¹³ The failure of Eadmer's appointment to St. Andrews has been described as disastrous (Vaughn 1987: 288; Southern 1990: 418); this in effect marked the end of his career (Southern 1990: 418). John Gillingham has claimed that the experience made Eadmer 'more hostile' towards the Scots (Gillingham 2000: 43).

Comparable events culminated in an immense power-struggle in Ireland in October 1121, the roots of which lay in Dublin's existing relationship with Canterbury. By this time Irish bishops and kings were in the midst of a gradual process of ecclesiastical restructuring on a national scale, but the degree of dioceses' participation varied. The particular difficulty in October emerged against a background of intense change which had lasted for at least a quarter of a century. We will focus here on the main events of nationwide significance and which carried implications for Ireland's links with Canterbury.

Studies of Irish ecclesiastical reform have emphasized the new structures of the early and mid-twelfth century (Hughes 1966: 263-9; Flanagan 2010: 34-8). A series of councils was held to restructure the Irish Church (Holland 2000) in regard to, for instance, the number of archbishops and the procedures for episcopal succession; this occurred under close supervision of papal legates (Dumville 1997: 37-42; Hughes 1966: 263-74; Davies 2000: 38-9; Gwynn 1992: 125-34; Holdsworth 1996: 9-11; Philpott 1997).

Discussions of Anselm's achievements as archbishop of Canterbury have only briefly touched on his relationships with the outer areas of Christendom, focusing instead on his qualities as brilliant pastor and somewhat reluctant administrator (Evans 2004: 5-20; Southern 1962; Vaughn 2012). He, like Lanfranc, assumed that Scotland and Ireland were under his supervision (Southern 1966: 133-5). Clearly Eadmer chose to quote correspondence from Gaelic churches as part of his wider narrative on Anselm's overall management of Insular churches, including consecration of their bishops; in the Irish cases apparently with eager acceptance of, even enthusiasm for, Anselm's authority

(*paternitas*) in the late eleventh century.¹⁴ He highlighted two letters to Anselm in 1096, when the king of England, William Rufus, was attempting an expansion into Normandy. First he discussed a letter from April 1096 requesting that Anselm consecrate Samuel ua hAingli bishop of the established see of Dublin (*HNA*: 73-4; Holland 2000: 123-5; Hughes 1966: 257-8; Gwynn 1955: 17-18). Lanfranc had in 1074 consecrated a bishop for Dublin (Southern 1966: 133-4; Gwynn 1955: 8-9; Holland 2000: 111-17; Flanagan 2010: 6-7).¹⁵ Another request came to Anselm in late 1096, that he consecrate Malchus as the first bishop for the growing Christian community of Waterford (*HNA*: 76-7);¹⁶ its Hiberno-Scandinavian background was probably a factor in its lack of affinity with the long-standing Irish primatial see of Armagh (Ó Corráin 1983: 47-9; Gibson 1978: 122-5; Ó Néill 1984: 280-90; O’Leary 1996; cf. Holland 2010: 233-4). It is likely that Malchus was chosen in a synod (Ó Corráin 1983: 47; Candon 1991: 6-8). In his discussion of this issue in Scotland, John Dowden dismissed the possibility of the people having any real say in episcopal nominations (Dowden 1910: 20). Anselm consecrated these two new bishops in 1096, and both professed obedience to Canterbury (Elrington 1847-64: IV.565; Richter 1973: 34-5).¹⁷ Bishop Malchus remained a trusted friend and correspondent to Anselm (O’Connor 2005: 128-30; O’Connor 2006: 50; Flanagan 2010:

¹⁴ J.A. Watt conceded, in his Appendix summarising Canterbury’s claim to primacy over Ireland, that this part of Eadmer’s account of Anselm was genuine, although on the whole he dismissed the account as suspicious propaganda (Watt 1970: 218 n. 2 and 224-5); cf. Holland 2000: 115-18, and MacDonald 1931: 52-5.

¹⁵ On the early bishops of Dublin see Gwynn 1946: 313-15; Gwynn 1955. See Gwynn 1955: 8-10; Clarke 2000: 40-4, and Holland 2003: 29-32 and 45-52, for Dublin’s original establishment of the Canterbury connection, and Holland 2002 on a synod in 1080 which further developed that relationship.

¹⁶ For general background on Waterford’s history see Power 1990; McEaney 1995; and Smith 2008; see Hurley 2006: 37-42 and 47-51 for the medieval architectural evidence.

¹⁷ Irish episcopal appointees’ professions of obedience expressed submission not to Canterbury’s archbishop but to its institution (Watt 1970: 218; Richter 1973: 34-5 and 39; Ó Corráin 2015: 59; Clarke 2000: 41-2; Gwynn 1968: 5-7). On the adaptation of their Continental source-materials see Holland 2010, and Holland 2000: 126-8.

50-1; Candon 1991: 6-7); he became archbishop of Cashel following the Synod of Rath Bresail in 1111.

King Muirchertach Ua Briain was a signatory to both the 1096 letters of episcopal nomination. Seeking guidance from Canterbury in the final decade of the eleventh century (Ó Corráin 1983: 47; Southern 1990: 338-9; Bethell 1971: 121-2; Duffy 2006: 67-8; Flanagan 1979: 20-1) was a significant element in his ambitious strategy (attested across Gaelic chronicles) to attain overall kingship of Ireland (Holland 2003: 258-67; Ó Corráin 1983: 47-8; Ó Corráin 1978: 21; Kinsella 2000: 40; Ó Corráin 2015: 62-4; Duffy 2006: 56 and 68-9; Candon 1988: 398-9; Candon 1991: 4-6 and 12-16; Wadden 2013: 31-3).¹⁸ Though king of Munster and of Dublin at that time, he was not in reality king of all Ireland even if he signed himself thus (Holland 2000: 128-32; Hudson 2000: 67; Candon 1991: 4).¹⁹

1096 was a significant year for Irish ecclesiastical reform on a national scale.²⁰ Gaelic chronicles tell of an apocalyptic crisis which destabilized Ireland in August of that year, when the feast of the Decollation of John the Baptist (29 August) fell on a Friday, echoing the horror of Good Friday (O'Donovan 1856: II.952-3; McNamara 1975: 64; O'Leary 2001). This calendrical conjunction caused major consternation, based on the Gaelic legend (and consequent guilt-complex) that John the Baptist's executioner was an Irish druid called Mog Ruith ('Slave of Wheel'), and that God would destroy Ireland on

¹⁸ See, for example, the 'Annals of Ulster' for the period 1086 (the death of Toirrdelbach) to 1119 (the death of Muirchertach) (Mac Airt & Mac Niocail 1983: 520-63).

¹⁹ Cf. Fröhlich 1990-4: I.137-8 n. 1, who referred to him as 'High-King of Ireland'. Aubrey Gwynn suggested that *rex Hiberniae* might have been deliberately misleading on Muirchertach's part (Gwynn 1942: 13-14).

²⁰ See 000-00, below.

that day.²¹ Ireland, already at a low ebb following a succession of natural disasters, was saved from this feared druidic apocalypse: events culminated in a national council, with the coarb of St. Patrick from Armagh presiding, which instigated extreme fasting-measures and grants of land from kings to churches (O'Donovan 1856: II.952-3; Ó Corráin 1978: 24; Dumville 1997: 37-42; O'Leary 2001). This practical solution, taken together with the extent of the terror, the nationwide significance of the crisis-council, and probably the Waterford letter to Anselm at the end of 1096, demonstrates ecclesiastical change on a national scale, rather than the resolution of a merely local issue. It is possible that Irish leaders made Anselm aware of the national apocalyptic event which had occurred earlier in the year, and that this increased his concern when he consecrated Malchus. In this way that consecration may have been part of the national solution to God's wrath.²²

The willingness of Irish churches to accept Canterbury's primacy in 1096 has been described as 'remarkable' (Southern 1966: 134) and 'an attractive option for Ireland' (Brett 2006: 24; cf. Bartlett 2000: 92-3). Their eagerness is of course partly explained by the facts that the two bishops consecrated by Anselm in that year came from what had begun as Hiberno-Scandinavian Christian communities; and that both Samuel and Malchus were Irish-born but had been educated in England (Clarke 2000: 41-2; Gwynn 1942a: 85).

²¹ I am currently completing a monograph in which I analyze the origins and significance of the druidic legend, and its consequences for 'Gregorian reform' in Ireland. The 1096 crisis, along with the natural disasters and famine which had occurred throughout Ireland in the two years preceding it, was recorded in some form in almost all Gaelic chronicles; I will discuss these references in detail in my forthcoming work.

²² Eadmer quoted none of Anselm's replies to Ireland in this period: he may have considered them relatively insignificant, and/or assumed that they were among Anselm's own collected letters (Schmitt 1946-61; Fröhlich 1990-4; Niskanen 2011).

In 1101 the first Synod of Cashel took place, which included large donations of land to churches, particularly from Muirchertach Ua Briain (Ó Corráin 2015: 65-71; Gwynn 1968: 9-20; Holland 2003: 246-61; Holland 2000: 132-3; Watt 1970: 9). This is seen as a major turning-point in Irish ecclesiastical restructuring (Hughes 1966: 263-7; Flanagan 2010: 47-8). Possibly by then Bishop Samuel of Dublin was already displaying a tendency to rule his diocese without reference to the customary authority of Canterbury, or even views from Armagh;²³ contrast the diplomatic skills of Domnall mac Amalgada the peacemaker at that time (Ó Corráin 2015: 69; Gwynn 1968: 23). Rather he appeared to assume autonomy and more or less complete separation.

From the evidence of 1101, perhaps due, from his perspective, to the successful (i.e. reforming) outcome of the national crisis of 1096 (which he himself may have helped to create), Muirchertach's attitude towards Canterbury can be seen to have changed: he appeared no longer to recognize its authority over Irish churches, and to begin actively to assert independence (Ó Corráin 2015: 63-9; MacShamhráin 2000: 53-4; Holland 2003: 258-67; Holland 2000: 140-4; Flanagan 1979: 21-2).

The immediate context for the controversy of 1121 lay in the *acta* of the Synod of Rath Bresail, probably in 1111,²⁴ which had brought an attempt to formalize a new national framework under the leadership of two archdioceses, Armagh in the north and Cashel in the south (Ó Corráin 2015: 73; Gwynn 1968: 28-39 at 29; MacShamhráin 2000: 51-2), but without the participation of Dublin which had chosen to remain independent of

²³ See 000-00 (22-4), below.

²⁴ 1111 is the generally accepted date, although it may have taken place slightly later (Dumville 1997: 43-4. Bishop Gilbert (Gille Easpuig) of Limerick presided over this meeting as papal legate (Ó Corráin 2015: 72; MacShamhráin 2000: 52-3; Dumville 1997: 43; Gwynn 1968: 30; Gwynn 1992: 125-9; Watt 1970: 12-13). For a survey of his episcopate see Fleming 2001; cf. Holland 2003: 267-308; Holland 2000: 143; and Wadden 2013: 16-18.

Irish ecclesiastical structures (MacErlean 1914: 3; Holland 2003: 321-2; Ó Corráin 2015: 72-5; Bartlett 2000: 95-6; Kinsella 2000: 40-2; Gwynn 1968: 35). Apparently it was no longer under Canterbury's authority and influence either (Gwynn 1968: 35), and so had become 'curiously isolated' (Gwynn 1955: 19-20). This gathering, which is rather vaguely attested in chronicles (Gwynn 1968: 28-9), marked a proposal for the complete restructuring of the Irish Church, based on Gregory the Great's model for a new English Church in the sixth century (MacErlean 1914: 2; Ó Corráin 2015: 73-4; Gwynn 1992: 181). Bishop Samuel either declined to take part or was not invited to begin with, nor was Dublin mentioned by name in the *acta*. Nonetheless, according to a deliberate structural asymmetry in the synodal record preserved in Geoffrey Keating's *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn* from c. 1635, edited and translated by MacErlean (MacErlean 1914: 6-16; cf. Gwynn 1968: 29-35), there was a place for the Dublin diocese in the new scheme (MacErlean 1914: 3-4 and 9-12; Holland 2003: 323-5; Holland 2000: 144-6; Ó Corráin 2015: 74; Gwynn 1992: 181-2). Presumably Cellach of Armagh and the other leaders, aware of Samuel's intransigence, hoped that he, or in time a successor, would accept the place set out for Dublin; this did not happen in Samuel's lifetime. Muirchertach Ua Briain also played a crucial role at this gathering (Holland 2000: 143-6; MacShamhráin 2000: 52-3).

Another destabilizing event occurred in 1119: the death of Muirchertach Ua Briain. This left a considerable gap in leadership for the 'southern half' of Ireland and particularly for Dublin (MacShamhráin 2000: 52-5; Duffy 1992: 116-17; Gwynn 1992: 184). A serious illness had somewhat hindered his activities since 1114 (Mac Airt & Mac Niocail 1983: 556-7: 1114.2; Holland 2003: 328; Candon 1988: 401; Duffy 1992: 115).

In the early 1120s, at around the same time as the St Andrews débacle, ‘a remarkable episode’ (Gwynn 1942a: 87) occurred in Ireland, demonstrating clearly that episcopal appointment was a contentious issue there also. In summary, two rival claims emerged to succeed Bishop Samuel of Dublin following his death in 1121 (Ó Corráin 2015: 74-5; Gwynn 1942a: 87-8; Holland 2003: 326-39; Holland 2000: 147-51; Kinsella 2000: 40). Again Eadmer is one of the principal contemporary witnesses. According to his narrative (*HNA*: 297-8), a subdeacon named Gregorius arrived at Canterbury with a letter to Archbishop Ralph d’Escures (quoted after Eadmer’s short preface) confirming his nomination to the Dublin see *a rege, clero et populo Hiberniae* (*HNA*: 297), ‘by the king, the clergy and the people of Ireland’ (my translation), and sought his consecration by Ralph. Another cleric and a layman, however, preceding him, attempted to stop any such consecration by alleging that Gregorius’s election had been invalid. From a Canterbury standpoint, the accompanying letter proved that claim to be *frivola et nullius ponderis* (*HNA*: 297), ‘empty and of no substance’ (my translation), since it bore the seal of the church of Dublin and was corroborated by trustworthy men (*HNA*: 297).

Eadmer did not explain immediately the specific purpose of the two objectors to Gregorius’s consecration. He followed this by quoting the letter itself, apparently complete (*HNA*: 297), which comprised a tense, explicit and even desperate plea to remain under Canterbury’s governance in the face of jealous threats from Armagh (Ó Corráin 2015: 59; Holland 2000: 148; Watt 1998: 14; Watt 1970: 18-19), rather than a personal recommendation for Gregorius as an outstanding candidate, like the glowing nomination of Malchus in 1096 (*HNA*: 76-7), or the high regard for Eadmer which King Alexander I had expressed in 1120 (*HNA*: 279). The haste which characterized these

events was evident again in Eadmer's description of Gregorius's consecration at Lambeth on 2 October 1121, and his oath of obedience to Archbishop Ralph at Canterbury, and to Canterbury's authority, three days later (*HNA*: 298; Gwynn 1942a: 88; Richter 1973: 39), in the same terms as Samuel and Malchus in 1096 (Richter 1973: 34-5; Holland 2010: 245-9). This is corroborated and slightly expanded in the Chronicle of John of Worcester (McGurk 1998: 150-1; Holland 2003: 334 n. 51; Holland 2000: 150 n. 176). But on his immediate return to Dublin, the see was already occupied (Ó Corráin 2015: 75; Holland 2003: 334-5; Holland 2000: 150; Gwynn 1942a: 88; Kinsella 2000: 40-2; Watt 1998: 14). Here Eadmer finally revealed what was at stake, i.e. the precise difficulty which Gregorius and his supporters had been attempting to obviate: *pontificem Armachiae, Celestinum nomine, in loco suo substitutum invenit* (*HNA*: 298), 'he found the archbishop of Armagh, called Celestinus, inserted in his place' (my translation). Cellach had already moved to control the see.

We have clear corroborating evidence in several Gaelic chronicles for some of the events of 1121 in Dublin, notwithstanding the unevenly-attested history of the diocese, and the many historiographical difficulties (Kelly 2000: 1-3 and 12-13; Holland 2000: 148-9). For example, in the 'Annals of Ulster', following Samuel's death, *Cellach comarba Patraic do ghabáil epscopoiti Atha Cliath a togha Gall ocus Gaeidhel*, 'Cellach, successor of Patrick, assumed the bishopric of Áth Cliath by the choice of foreigners and Irish' (Mac Airt & Mac Niocail 1983: 566-7: 1121.7). His apparently unanimous choice was asserted very similarly in the 'Annals of the Four Masters'

(O'Donovan 1856: II.1010-13).²⁵ However, chroniclers who recorded these events emphasized Cellach's status as coarb of Patrick (cf. Barry 1957), but said nothing of Gregorius's attempted succession, or even any difficulty, still less the serious implications or prolonged aftermath of the crisis. The 'Annals of Christ Church' mentioned concisely that Celestinus (Cellach) took governance of the episcopate prior to Samuel's death: this was of course an inaccurate sequence of events (Gwynn 1946: 317). An attempt to correct this in the 'Annals of St. Mary's' was also flawed (Gwynn 1946: 317).

Cellach did not appoint himself bishop; rather (in a canonically permissible measure) he took over on a temporary basis (Ó Corráin 2015: 74-5), presumably with the intent to protect the see of Dublin from the anticipated influence, even direct intervention, of Canterbury. He stayed in Dublin for some time to effect this, entrusting the young Malachy to look after Armagh (Ó Corráin 2015: 76; Gwynn 1942a: 88 n. 2; Kinsella 2000: 40; Holland 2003: 338; Holland 2000: 152). Perhaps in an effort to calm the situation, no alternative nomination ensued for the Dublin episcopate (Gwynn 1955: 22-3). For several years thereafter, possibly until Cellach's death in 1129 (Gwynn 1955: 23-4), the diocese went without a canonically-endorsed incumbent *in situ*,²⁶ as St. Andrews had done since the failure in 1108 of Turgot's appointment, a situation which obviously persisted there from 1121 due to the dispute with Eadmer.²⁷

²⁵ The editor made the following wry comment: 'the Danes did not submit to Cellach on this occasion' (O'Donovan 1856: II.1011, n. 2), assuming a clear division of opinion, and therefore of episcopal direction, between Irish and 'foreigners'.

²⁶ Shortly afterwards, on 5 December of that year, a great gust of wind arose which took off Armagh's bell-tower (Mac Airt & Mac Niocaill 1983: 566-7).

²⁷ David Dumville has referred to 'the far from happy employment of English monks ... as bishops at St Andrews' regarding Turgot and Eadmer (Dumville 2012: 56 and n. 36).

That this developed into a major crisis, and a stumbling-block in the ongoing attempts to restructure the Irish Church as a whole, can be attributed to two related factors: the established custom of archbishops of Canterbury consecrating bishops for Irish churches; and the perceived insubordination of one of these incumbents, Samuel ua hAingli, whom Anselm had consecrated as bishop of Dublin in April 1096. Anselm had even then probably anticipated difficulties in Canterbury's longer-term relationship with Dublin, since he had gone to great lengths to instruct and mentor Samuel prior to approving him as fit for consecration (Gwynn 1942b: 11-12). Anselm may also have held concerns about Irish ecclesiastical succession: Samuel's uncle had immediately preceded him as bishop of Dublin (Gwynn 1942b: 11). By the early twelfth century, correspondence from Anselm illustrates Bishop Samuel incurring the displeasure of Canterbury (Elrington 1847-64: IV.528 and IV.530; Gwynn 1942a: 82). He appeared, in Anselm's view at least, to strive towards his own personal gain (of ecclesiastical property) and the deliberate scattering of an established community; and he was showing off by processing with his cross carried before him, a privilege granted only to archbishops who had been confirmed by the pope himself (Gwynn 1942a: 82; Gwynn 1955: 18-20; Holland 2003: 262-3; Holland 2000: 134). A lacuna in the early 'Annals of Christ Church' which spans Samuel's episcopate may implicitly back up the idea of his hostility towards the monks of the Christ Church community (Gwynn 1946: 314; Gwynn 1942a: 85), who may have originated from Canterbury (Holland 2000: 120-1). His death was recorded there, though for 1122 (Gwynn 1946: 317). Samuel seemed to ignore Anselm's warning (Elrington 1847-64: IV.530), and we know of no response from Bishop Malchus to Anselm's similar, covering letter to him at Waterford (Elrington

1847-64: IV.528; Gwynn 1942a: 82-3; Gwynn 1955: 18-19). Dublin in effect declined to remain suffragan to Canterbury in the first decade of the twelfth century, by ignoring its communications; contrast St Andrews' direct and long-term refusal to submit to York, in open responses even to several papal letters of rebuke. Bishop Samuel's disregard appeared to originate (in Anselm's words) from *praesumptio insolita* (Elrington 1847-64: IV.530), 'unusual presumption' (Gwynn 1942a: 82), which Anselm's exile from Canterbury at the time may have encouraged (Gwynn 1942a: 85-6; Gwynn 1955: 19; Clarke 2000: 41). His defiance, as perceived among other Irish churches as well as at Canterbury (Flanagan 1979: 22-3), created serious ecclesiastical tension, and an impasse which had in no way been resolved by 1121. Indeed Samuel's death served only to exacerbate it into diplomatic conflict.

The contested episcopal consecration was in this way the result of long-standing internal disunity regarding the place of Dublin in Insular ecclesiastical politics. The shifting divisions among the parties involved (even those within the Dublin diocese itself) make analysing that situation even more complicated than attempting to understand the predicament of St Andrews, where at least we can be more or less certain that King Alexander's views represented those of the episcopate, and by extension the kingdom, of the Scots in the early 1120s (Broun 2007: 104-6). As St. Andrews had been doing over a longer period, Dublin in the early twelfth century clearly began to campaign for metropolitan status (Clarke 2000: 40-1; Holland 2000: 134), as we have seen from Bishop Samuel's showmanship and presumptuous activities. The issue was how to effect a real plan to achieve this, and it was Cellach and Armagh's concrete strategy of Dublin's

inclusion in a national restructuring which eventually won that dispute, at least in the shorter term.

As several perspectives need consideration here, let us examine in turn the viewpoints of the three main (internal and external) ‘stakeholders’ in Dublin at the time of the rival successors to Samuel. Canterbury’s was of course the most straightforward: as the existing authority over Dublin (and in theory over all Irish and other Insular churches) its intention was to maintain the status quo. Unsurprisingly, Archbishop Ralph’s objective in 1121, as reflected in Eadmer’s version of events, was the continued consecration of bishops for many Irish and other ‘peripheral’ sees, and the expectation of their ongoing deference. However, when the tension escalated into the immediate crisis of two rival claimants, Canterbury’s response was to accept Cellach’s superiority as a candidate and his popular acclaim at home (*HNA*: 298). Ralph, or the king of England, did not attempt to intervene directly or to challenge Cellach’s seizure of the Dublin diocese, despite the assertion Eadmer quoted, that Gregorius had been Ireland’s prior choice for the episcopate.²⁸

I turn now to the two parallel, competing ambitions within the Irish Church. Gregorius (Gréine) and his supporters clearly turned out to be in the minority regarding Dublin’s episcopal succession, and therefore its overall strategic direction, even though it was he who had been canonically consecrated to assume the position. From the records we can see that, as a young subdeacon, he had been an unusually inexperienced episcopal nominee to begin with; this would have been noticed at Armagh, and may have contributed to Cellach’s move to pre-empt his assumption of the episcopate. We know of

²⁸ R.R. Davies has described Anglo-Norman kings’ approach to the Insular world as ‘reactive’ in that they did not initiate a policy of conquest (Davies 1990: 69).

his death in 1161 or 1162 from chronicles, for instance, the ‘Annals of the Four Masters’ (O’Donovan 1856: II.1144-5: 1162), and a little of his archbishopric (Gwynn 1955: 24-5; Flanagan 2010: 184; Holland 2000: 156-7). Presumably he was trusted by many and seen as one of their own, as Malchus had been at Waterford. Eadmer did not name the king of Ireland who had helped to secure the nomination; according to other records, this was Toirrdelbach Ua Conchubair, king of Connacht and Dublin in 1121 (Ó Corráin 2015: 75; MacShamhráin 2000: 54-6; Holland 2003: 335-8; Holland 2000: 1151-2; Duffy 1992: 117-18).

Cellach’s claim received support of the majority in Dublin, demonstrating that Dublin was opting to side henceforth with Armagh rather than Canterbury. He had made a fast move, physically outstripping and tactically outsmarting Gregorius and his followers. This may have been simply an opportunistic decision following Samuel’s death (Hughes 1966: 268-9), although his swift arrival in Dublin could equally have resulted from the long-planned, meticulous strategy of a shrewd and experienced ecclesiastical operator (Holland 2003: 324-9; Holland 2000: 147-8). The gaps in Irish political governance which followed the deaths of Muirchertach Ua Briain in 1119 and his northern rival Domnall Ua Lochlainn in 1121 may also have been factors in his decision: these kings had long battled to achieve overall rule of the island. Around the time of his consecration as bishop of Armagh (Gwynn 1968: 19-24; Ó Corráin 2015: 69; Holland 2003: 260-1), Cellach had begun to consolidate his authority around Ireland, by going on circuits in various parts of the island to collect his tribute (Mac Airt & Mac Niocail 1983: 544-7: 1106.4, 1106.6, and 1108.3; Holland 2003: 363-4; cf. Hughes 1966: 266). Indeed his consecration took place in Munster in 1106 (Mac Airt & Mac

Niocaill 1983: 546-7: 1106.6; Holland 2003: 260-1; cf. Candon 1991: 20-22). Although Cellach had not been openly or directly antagonistic towards Canterbury (Ó Corráin 2015: 69), his swift move came with predatory zeal (as implied in Eadmer's work) in the eyes of his opponents, i.e. Gregorius's supporters, who (though not named there) included Toirrdelbach Ua Conchubair, overlord of Dublin (Ó Corráin 2015: 75; Holland 2003: 335-8; Holland 2000: 147-8). His outwitting of Archbishop Ralph, and his acclaim in Dublin itself in 1121, marked the official beginning of the end of Dublin's link with Canterbury (Holland 2000: 151-3; Watt 1998: 14).

Having discovered that Cellach was already *in situ*, the rejected Gregorius returned to the safety of Canterbury (*HNA*: 298), where he stayed presumably under obligation to Archbishop Ralph's care until the latter's death in October 1122. This long refuge may have helped to establish his career. The date and circumstances of his eventual accession to the new archbishopric of Dublin are very unclear but may have occurred sometime before Cellach's death in 1129 (Ó Corráin 2015: 75; Gwynn 1942a: 88; Gwynn 1992: 128 and 186; Kinsella 2000: 41-3; Holland 2000: 154-6). He remained there until his death in 1161 or 1162 (O'Donovan 1856: II.1144-15: 1162). It was this appointment which formally severed the connection between Dublin and Canterbury. Scholars have remarked on the possible Scandinavian heritage of Gregorius (Gréine) (Gwynn 1955: 20; O'Donovan 1856: II.1145 n. k).

Two contemporary nominated Insular bishops, as they no doubt saw it, had no option but to turn back from their sees and retreat to Canterbury. Unlike St. Andrews, for Dublin the root of the diplomatic struggle was not just the thorny question of where an agreed bishop-elect should be consecrated, but where authority lay both to choose and to

ratify a new bishop. In the longer term, the stagnation (or suspended animation) resulting from Gregorius's failed appointment was similar to St. Andrews' predicament following Turgot's delayed consecration as its bishop, and his swift departure thereafter. From the evidence on the circumstances of both St. Andrews and Dublin in the early 1120s, to have no bishop in place became preferable to the imposed authority of Canterbury over either diocese, or that of York over St. Andrews.

These more or less simultaneous *déba*cles in Scotland and Ireland formed part of the major shifts which occurred across Gaelic Christianity in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries (Dumville 1997: 51-6). Canterbury prelates were pleased to exercise pastoral and procedural supervision, especially over those churches which requested it.²⁹ Of course we have only Eadmer's quoted texts of the two requests discussed here, along with many other letters, in a work we know to be favorable to Canterbury and its archbishops (Vaughn 1987: 269-77; Davies 2000: 52; Flanagan 2010: 6). In addition, Eadmer had experience in copying requests for episcopal consecrations, and new bishops' professions, from an early stage in his scribal career (Gullick 1998: 183-4 and 186); he may have been capable of adapting such documents to conform (further) to the established formulae.³⁰ Books V and VI, his later additions to *Historia Nouorum*, may have been Eadmer's attempt to combat the waning of Canterbury's influence over 'peripheral' churches which it claimed to oversee.

²⁹ Dónal O'Connor has aptly referred to 'the superior attitude of the Norman prelates towards the Irish Church' (O'Connor 2006: 50).

³⁰ For discussion of letters of request see Holland 2010: 246-7 and 249-51, and Holland 2000: 123-8. Cf. Brett 2006: 25, who has found the Waterford letter 'puzzling' as (*inter alia*) it displayed the conventional linguistic elements of a request to Canterbury even though it was supposedly written in Ireland. Presumably this could also have been achieved in Ireland, especially if Malchus himself or an associate participated in its composition (cf. Holland 2000: 126-8).

The failure of the St. Andrews appointment originated from a personal dispute, which in turn was rooted in Canterbury's assumption of supremacy, and its inability and/or refusal to address St. Andrews' difficulties with York. Eadmer's belated attempt to set the terms for his own consecration, his perception of King Alexander of Scots as a controlling person, and Alexander's own reluctance to continue to negotiate in either place, show that it was not just a matter of where leadership and guidance should come from, but the choice of individual in whom such authority should be invested. We have from Eadmer's work at least a first-hand account, however exaggerated, of these events, with a reasonably balanced effort to convey the St. Andrews point of view also.

Canterbury's oversight over churches in Ireland, in the form of successive episcopal consecrations, came with certain expectations which, in Anselm's view probably in the period 1100-1103 (Gwynn 1942a: 81-2), Samuel had conspicuously failed to meet, indicating open defiance of Canterbury's authority, possibly even in effect asserting independence from Canterbury, though apparently without attempting to cooperate with his fellow-bishops or churches in Ireland. Gregorius's consecration, and its effective obstruction by Cellach, signified tactics different from those of St. Andrews for repelling the over-reaching of an unwanted authority: in Dublin's divided scenario, that of either Canterbury or Armagh. A range of Insular evidence offers many insights into the acrimony of 1121 and (to a lesser extent) its aftermath; that conflict was pivotal in the transfer of reforming governance from Munster to Armagh (Gwynn 1968: 35-6; Holland 2003: 328-43; cf. Dumville 2016: 121).

Despite the issues regarding Eadmer's *Historia Nouorum*, especially Books V and VI, our knowledge of this period, especially the crises in 1120-1, would be the poorer,

and certainly far less interesting, were it not for this work. Many opportunities remain for research on Eadmer's writings, not only on account of their chronological range but particularly given this work's level of detail and broad international scope.³¹ Eadmer's final letter to King Alexander I was intended to effect calm diplomacy, and displayed more profound and considerate reflection than had his previous correspondence. It is likely that his own difficult, unresolved experience in Scotland influenced his thought and writing on the Dublin episcopate, and informed in particular his treatment of the young Gregorius, who himself had (in contrast to Eadmer's predicament) been formally consecrated but, like Eadmer, had found himself unable to take up his agreed position leading a significant Insular church, and returning therefore to the welcome refuge of Canterbury.

³¹ For collected papers on East Central European and Nordic 'peripheries' in the late middle ages, see Jaritz, Jørgensen & Salonen 2005; for some possible future directions in this broad area of research, see especially Gerhard Jaritz's essay in that volume (Jaritz 2005).

Abbreviations

HE = Colgrave & Mynors 1969.

HNA = Rule 1884.

MS. 452 = Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, The Parker Library, MS. 452.

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