

H. M. CHADWICK MEMORIAL LECTURES . 1

D.A. BULLOUGH

Friends, Neighbours and Fellow-drinkers:  
Aspects of Community and Conflict in the  
Early Medieval West



DEPARTMENT OF ANGLO-SAXON, NORSE, AND CELTIC  
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Hector Munro Chadwick (1870-1947) was Elrington and Bosworth Professor of Anglo-Saxon in the University of Cambridge from 1912 to 1941. Through the immense range of his scholarly publications, and through the vigorous enthusiasm which he brought to all aspects of Anglo-Saxon studies — philological and literary, historical and archaeological — he helped to define the field and to give it the interdisciplinary orientation which characterises it still. The Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic, which owes its existence and its own interdisciplinary outlook to H.M. Chadwick, has wished to commemorate his enduring contribution to Anglo-Saxon studies by establishing an annual series of lectures in his name.

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# Friends, neighbours and fellow-drinkers: aspects of community and conflict in the early medieval west

D.A. BULLOUGH

The last of the miracle-stories appended to the *Vita vetustissima S. Galli* and repeated with small but significant re-phrasings by Walahfrid Strabo a generation later, is the tale of a poor little man who in 771 was living in the neighbourhood of the royal estate at Rottweil, on the upper Neckar.<sup>1</sup> Unlike others in that part of the country (as the St Gallen charters bear witness) he had nothing to offer to the saint and his church: so he broke into the local count's court, stole his bee-hive, killed the bees and took the wax. Then he set out with some of his neighbours and kinsfolk (*cum vicinis et cognatis*, changed by Walahfrid into *vicinos et amicos*)<sup>2</sup>, only to find when he tried to put the wax on the saint's tomb that it was like a very hard stone: when he confessed his crime to one of those with him, that person told the custodians of the church, who promptly gave wide publicity to what had happened.

In the summer of 828, a year before the young Walahfrid moved from Fulda to the Imperial Court, Einhard — on the point of leaving it — journeyed from the Aachen palace to his

[Note that the following abbreviations are used throughout this article: MGH = Monumenta Germaniae Historica; PLAC = Poetae Latini Aevi Carolini; SS = Scriptores; SS rer. Germ. = Scriptores rerum Germanicarum; SS rer. Merov. = Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum]

<sup>1</sup> MGH, SS rer. Merov. 3, 256 and 317-18. For Rottweil as a royal estate in the eighth and ninth centuries, see the contributions of L. Klappauf and H. Maurer in *Deutsche Königspfalzen. Beiträge zu ihrer historischen und archäologischen Erforschung III* (Göttingen, 1979), pp. 231-45 and 211-20 respectively; see also *Urkundenbuch der Abtei Sanct Gallen*, ed. H. Wartmann *et al.*, 6 vols. (Zürich, 1863-1917) I, no. 122, of ?789 (*actum in villa Rotunvilla puplici; sub Ratolfo comite*).

<sup>2</sup> Early grants of land and appurtenances in the area are recorded *Urkundenbuch*, ed. Wartmann I, nos. 108 (786), 122 and 135 (793). For *praeses*, 'count', cf. *ibid.* no. 49 (765 / 766 / 768); for the probable identification of the Rottweil *praeses* in 771 with Pirihtilo of the Bertoldsbaar, see M. Borgolte, *Die Grafen Alemanniens in merowingischer und karolingischer Zeit* (Sigmaringen, 1986), pp. 195-9. The terminology in the *vita vetustissima* (but not in Walahfrid) for 'neighbours and kinsfolk' is that of the Vulgate Luke 1.58: 'et audierunt vicini et cognati eius'.

estate at Mühlheim with relics of St Marcellinus. According to his minutely-detailed account it was excitement all the way. At the first stopping-point, where a crowd of people from Aachen was to turn back, one man forgave another a debt while another 'leading to the relics a fellow whom he had taken by the hand said "You killed my father and therefore we have been at enmity with one another; but now for love and honour of God and this saint, putting aside all hatred I wish to join and pledge faith with you that from this time onwards there shall be permanent friendship (*perpetua amicitia*) between us and may the Saint be witness of the love (*caritas*) agreed by us and take revenge against whoever first tries to break this peace"' <sup>3</sup>.

The St Gallen hagiographers do not record whether the miracle saved the Rottweil thief from the very heavy penalties prescribed in Frankish and other early law-codes for the destruction of bee-skips and the killing of bees, or whether his kinsfolk were subsequently compelled (or perhaps declined) to come to his support.<sup>4</sup> The historian is similarly not permitted to know in what kind of *rixa* or *contentio*, drunk or sober, the Aachen man's father had been killed; nor how long the friendship and love proclaimed before the relics subsisted, or whether in the end both parties discovered that their only true *amici* were their kinsfolk.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *Translatio et miracula SS Marcellini et Petri auctore Einhardi* II.8 (ed. G. Waitz, MGH, SS 15.1, 247).

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, *Lex Salica (Pactus legis Salicae)* tit. VIII, 1-4, and cf. *Lex Salica (100-Titel Text)* tit. IX, 1-2 (ed. K.A. Eckhardt, Germanenrechte N.F., Westgermanischer Recht (Weimar, 1953), p. 118); *Lex Visigothorum* tit. VIII, 6.2-3 (ed. K. Zeumer, MGH, Leges (Hannover, 1902), pp. 349-50). For the even more severe penalties prescribed in high and late medieval customary law, see C. Warnke, 'Bienen', *Lexikon des Mittelalters* 2 (1981-3), 128-36, esp. 130 and 132-3. Woodland (wild) bees came under different laws: e.g. *Lex Visigothorum* tit. VIII, 6.1 (ed. Zeumer, p. 349); *Edictus Rothari*, ch. 319 (ed. F. Beyerle, *Die Gesetze der Langobarden*, Germanenrechte 3 (Weimar, 1947), 126). See also the OHG Christianised bee-swarm spell, added at Lorsch in the early tenth century to Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. lat. 220, 58<sup>r</sup> (ed. E. von Steinmeyer, *Die kleineren althochdeutschen Sprachdenkmäler* (Berlin, 1916), pp. 396-7 (no. lxxviii), and its OE counterpart (ed. E.V.K. Dobbie, *The Anglo-Saxon Minor Poems*, ASPR 6 (New York, 1942), 125): and cf. the reported belief of the central African Bemba that 'to find one beehive with honey in the woods is luck, to find two is very good luck, to find three is witchcraft' (from A.I. Richards, *Land, Labour and Diet in Northern Rhodesia* (London, 1939), as cited by M. Gluckman, *Politics, Law and Ritual in Tribal Society* (Oxford, 1965), p. 59).

<sup>5</sup> D.A. Bullough, 'Early Medieval Social Groupings: the Terminology of Kinship', *Past and Present* 45 (1969), 3-18, here esp. 12 and n. 21. Surprisingly, the *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* reports no English example of *amicus* 'kinsman' before c. 1150.

*Amicitia* — a word virtually unknown to the Vulgate New Testament and to the liturgy, although familiar to Ambrose (who knew his Cicero) and made familiar to subsequent centuries by Cassian (who almost certainly did not) — and the status of *amicus* took more elevated if not necessarily more affective forms in the Carolingian and post-Carolingian centuries.<sup>6</sup> Writing to Archbishop Dunstan in 961, four years after his recall from exile at Ghent, Count Arnulf of Flanders declared that there was nothing he ‘wanted more than that our friendship should last for all time’: accordingly he was eager to know if there was anything the archbishop would like to have which would ensure that he would remain the friend that the count so much wished him to be. In fact there was something that Arnulf wanted at least as much: he needed the archbishop ‘to create the same kinds of friendship between me and your lord king as our predecessors once had when they were allied to each other’. A letter in the same collection — on the concluding folios of Cotton Tiberius A.xv (a part of the manuscript of which misdescription seems to have become the rule although I have not seen it stated) — written by Abbot Ælfric of Glastonbury to Archbishop Sigeric shortly after his appointment to Canterbury in 990 casts a somewhat chequered light on late Old English learning: it begins sonorously with Ecclesiasticus’s ‘A new friend is not like an old one’ linked with an adaptation and expansion of Jerome’s assertion that a friendship which wavers was never true. It develops this theme with rhetorical flourishes for several lines; and it then proceeds at much greater length and with some

<sup>6</sup> Apparently the only NT instance is in the Epistle of James IV.4. Ambrose used Cicero’s *De amicitia* as well as his *De officiis* in the concluding chapters of his own *De officiis ministrorum* (PL 16, 179-83); cf. M. Testard, ‘Recherches sur quelques méthodes de travail de saint Ambroise dans le *De officiis*’, *Recherches Augustiniennes* 24 (1989), 65-112, esp. 110-12, with a useful conspectus of the modern literature on Ambrose’s concept of *amicitia* in n. 148 (note that Testard’s new edition of this work by Ambrose has not got beyond bk I, which was published in Paris in 1984). Testimonies to its availability in England c. 950-1150 are seemingly no less numerous than those to the text of Cassian; for example, the lost Sæwold of Bath book formerly combined with Arras, Bibl. mun. 435 (326), fos. 65-122 (see M. Lapidge, ‘Surviving Booklists from Anglo-Saxon England’, in *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. M. Lapidge and H. Gneuss (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 33-89, at 60-1), the Rochester book now London, BL, Royal 6. A. IV (in the same hand as the *Textus Roffensis*), and Aelred of Rievaulx’s use of Ambrose in his own *De amicitia*.

questionable syntax to exhort the new archbishop to the highest standards of personal life, to recognise and fulfil the responsibilities of his office and above all to be a model to others. On closer examination the text proves to be little more than a mosaic of four different letters of Alcuin's in a distinctive collection which had reached south-west England earlier in the century. But its first section is not therefore less valuable as a public statement of the bond of personal friendship which was forged in any well-balanced religious community — rather the reverse. The model here is one of Alcuin's cooler letters, not one of the many (to a fairly limited circle) in which his language is passionate, sensual, homoerotic.<sup>7</sup>

Equally, the episcopal virtues are not less desirable because they are Alcuin's prescription, nor the failings and vices to be avoided less authentic because that same earlier writer had written about them — several times. 'Your behaviour', say Alcuin and Ælfric, 'should display respectability and temperance, no showiness in dress, dining that is not marked by extravagance and drunkenness but by sobriety and appropriateness to the occasion and the people present'. The warning, although commonplace, may be both realistic and legitimate. From the pen of neither writer, however, is it a call to asceticism as normally understood or an anticipation of puritanism.

Masses may be offered *pro amico* while (later) benedictionals and pontificals intermittently include a 'blessing of wine', for the sick or merely for the hungry and thirsty: *hanc creaturam vini, quam ad sustentationem servorum tuorum tribuisti*. Among the more elaborately-reported miracles credited to St

<sup>7</sup> The letters are in *Memorials of St Dunstan*, ed. W. Stubbs, RS (London, 1874), pp. 359-61 (no. iv) and 400-3 (no. xxviii), ptd from London, BL, Cotton Tiberius A. xv, 114<sup>v</sup>-173<sup>r</sup> (current foliation), analysed — I hope more accurately — in my *Alcuin: Achievement and Reputation* (Oxford, forthcoming), ch. I. The main sources for no. xxviii are *Alcuini Epistolae* (ed. E. Dümmler, MGH, Epistolae 4 (Berlin, 1895), nos. 39 (from which derive the quotation of Ecclus. IX.14 and the adaptation of one or more of Jerome's letters, such as *Ep. 3 ad Rufinum* (ed. I. Hilberg, CSEL 54 (Vienna, 1910), 18), 17, 40 and 174. The latter allows us to reconstruct lines 3-4 in the concluding verses of Ælfric's letter (*Memorials*, ed. Stubbs, p. 403) as 'Nec <precor aspiciat clementi lu>mine / L<itterulas> scripsit quae pietatis amor'.

Marcellinus's relics is one relating to the provision of drink when Einhard was staying at the royal villa of Sinzig. Having retired to bed after a dinner which had 'taken up a certain part of the night', he and his companions were disturbed by the servant who was 'accustomed to proffering drink to us' with a startling report of what had occurred when he was in the cellar where beer was being distributed to other servants: a lad who had brought a flagon to be refilled asked to be allowed to taste it and found that it was not beer but wine, only to be accused of being a liar by the man who was tapping the cask, until he and several other servants tasted it and confirmed his story!<sup>8</sup> Alcuin would not have disapproved. Among the earliest of his extant letters is one complaining — with an ingenious misquotation from the First Book of Samuel — that back in York he has no supply of wine and only bitter ale to consume: so his pupil and friend Joseph is to drink in his name that which brings joy to man.<sup>9</sup>

Similarly in the decades in which Arnulf and Dunstan, Ælfræd and Sigeric were exchanging letters, and perhaps in the very milieu that prompted the first of them, an unknown copyist produced for an English readership a copy of the ninth-century version of the gospel story known as *Heliand*. There, feasting and drinking figure far more prominently and with no more obvious disapproval than in the gospel texts themselves. Thus the eleven verses of John's account of the marriage feast at Cana (which indeed in the Vulgate version admits the word *inebriari*) are expanded into over eighty lines: and although it is

<sup>8</sup> *Masses pro amico*: see *Le Sacramentaire grégorien II*, ed. J. Deshusses (Fribourg-en-Suisse, 1979), nos. 117-21, 124 and 128 (nos. 120 and 128 were almost certainly, and the others possibly, composed by Alcuin). Benedictions: the example in the text is quoted by I. Imberciadori, 'Vite e vigna nell'alto medio evo', *Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo* 13 (Spoleto, 1966), 307-42, at 320, n. 23, the source of which I have been unable to trace, although it belongs to a recognizable type. A quite different *Benedictio aque vel vini ad dandum febricantibus* is in the eleventh-century Cracow Pontifical (ed. Z. Obertynski, Henry Bradshaw Society 100 (London, 1977), 79 (no. 286)); equally unique is the *Benedictio novarum falcium vinearum* in the Mozarabic *Liber Ordinum* (ed. M. Ferotin (Paris, 1904), ch. 167 (no. lxi)). For the Sinzig miracle, see Einhard, *Translatio et miracula SS Marcellini et Petri III.11* (ed. Waitz, p. 251).

<sup>9</sup> *Alcuini Epistolae*, no. 8 (ed. Dümmler, pp. 33-4) of 790, where I Samuel IX.7 ('panis defecit in sitarchiis nostris') becomes 'vinum defecit in sitarchiis nostris' and is followed by 'et celia acerba furit in ventriculis nostris' (the OE glosses for *celeum* or *celia* in later Anglo-Saxon glossaries being *eala*, -u).

demonstrable that the poet was familiar with Alcuin's commentary on the gospel where the 'six jars of water' are allegorized as they had been since Augustine, here they are treated quite literally.<sup>10</sup> We should not be, we need not be, surprised. Drinking and drinks are, I suppose, like sex a relatively recent discovery of historians, without unfortunately any verses of Philip Larkin to commemorate the event: ('Annus mirabilis') *Sexual intercourse began / In nineteen sixty three*. True, there are a number of German-language studies of *Gastmahl*, *Gasttrink* etc. which assemble a range of texts without much reference to date or context and their varied implications — as indiscriminating, that is to say, as the drinkers themselves. But it was not until 1980 that a not-too-serious lecture, delivered characteristically by a Scot in a part of England where the beer is still brewed stronger than elsewhere, claimed that '*Beowulf* is, of course, a study in alcoholism'.<sup>11</sup> Yet throughout what I am tempted to call the '*Beowulf* centuries' — that is, any date between the sixth and the early eleventh — drinking and drinks are almost omnipresent in the sources, written and material (archaeological), and take no account of linguistic or cultural divides: only in the law-codes — unexpectedly but, I believe, explicably — are allusions rare and in some of them totally lacking.

There are few 'rich graves' of the pre-Christian and early-

<sup>10</sup> The manuscript is London, BL, Cotton Caligula A. vii; see R. Priebsch, *The Heliand Ms. Cotton Caligula A.VII in the British Museum* (Oxford, 1925). For the text, see *Heliand und Genesis*, ed. O. Behagel, rev. B. Taeger, *Altdeutsche Textbibliothek* 4 (Tübingen, 1984), lines 1994-2087 (= Fitt xxiv). Cf. H. Magennis, 'The Treatment of Feasting in the *Heliand*', *Neophilologus* 69 (1985), 126-33. For Alcuin's exposition, see his *Commentarius in Iohannem* I.3 (PL 100, 767-71), which is actually dependent on Bede, *Homiliae* I.14 (ed. D. Hurst, CCSL 122 (Turnhout, 1955), 98), and not on Augustine, although the latter's Commentary is apparently the direct source of one and perhaps two contemporary Irish commentaries: see D.A. Bullough, 'Alcuin and the Kingdom of Heaven', in *Carolingian Essays*, ed. U.-R. Blumenthal (Washington, 1983), pp. 1-69, at 60.

<sup>11</sup> See L. Hellmuth, *Gastfreundschaft und Gastrecht bei den Germanen*, *Sitzungsberichte der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Klasse* 440 (Vienna, 1984); see also P. Edwards, 'Art and Alcoholism in *Beowulf*', *Durham University Journal* 72 (1980), 127-31. Edward's intoxicating contribution to *Beowulf* criticism has already been solemnly cited on both sides of the Atlantic; but what, one wonders, will Münster and Munich (or Michigan) make of 'Was the name *Heorot* an early form of *The White Hart* or *The Antlers*? A colleague has made the plausible suggestion that the hanging of Grendel's arm on the wall of Heorot might reflect an indistinct memory of a change of name from *The White Hart* to *The Grendel Arms*'. For a study of high quality on one aspect of feasting, see the article of Oexle cited below, n. 19.



post-conversion centuries (except those of the Ostrogoths — for which an untypical sobriety is hardly the explanation)<sup>12</sup> which are without their drinking vessels. Moreover, there are no clear gender differences. An early-sixth century woman's grave at Schlotheim in Thuringia contained both a small and a large, multi-spout, pottery drinking vessel, the latter apparently added in the last stages of burial, as well as remains of a meal. A somewhat later female grave, from a place near Lake Constance where in the ninth century donations of land were enriching St Gallen, similarly has several types of drinking vessels, including a triple beaker. Two-thirds of the glass beakers from the extensive cemetery at Cologne-Mungersdorf are reportedly from female graves; while the greatest number of containers or vessels for drink in a single grave is in the so-called 'princess burial' of the third quarter of the sixth century, under the city's Cathedral.<sup>13</sup> For several such burials we even know the drink that the vessel last contained: one made from honey, perhaps with fermented grain (mead or, in the light of Professor Fell's linguistic study, *beor*) at Schlotheim, red wine in a male burial at south-west-German Gammertingen.<sup>14</sup> The function in life and death of the drinking-vessels and drink deposited with the deceased may well be a multiple and complex one. Necessarily, it has to be inferred from later and indirect evidence, with generous use of folkloric or anthropological analogy: for any kind of descriptive report we have to go to the middle Volga in the early tenth century in the company of the Moslem ambassador Ibn Fadlan. His

<sup>12</sup> 'Biberunt ut Gothi', says Pope Gregory I in connection with a miracle of an inexhaustible bottle of (Etrurian) wine: *Dialogi* I.9 (ed. U. Moricca (Rome, 1924), pp. 55-6).

<sup>13</sup> G. Behm-Blancke, 'Trinkgaben und Trinkzeremonien im Totenkult der Völkerwanderungszeit', *Alt-Thüringen* 16 (1979), 171-227, is more comprehensive than the title suggests. For the 'princess grave' at Cologne, see O. Doppelfeld, 'Das fränkische Frauengrab unter dem Chor des Kölner Doms', *Germania* 38 (1960), 89-113, and J. Werner, 'Frankish Royal Tombs of Cologne and Saint-Denis', *Antiquity* 38 (1964), 201-8. For England, see most recently V. Evison, *Dover: Buckland Anglo-Saxon Cemetery*, Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England, Archaeol. Report 3 (London, 1987), 94-9 with fig. 93, and H. Härke, 'The Anglo-Saxon Weapon Burial Rite', *Past and Present* 126 (1990), 22-43, esp. 38, n. 31.

<sup>14</sup> Behm-Blancke, 'Trinkgaben', pp. 182-90; see also C. Fell, 'Old English *beor*', *Leeds Stud. in English* ns 8 (1975), 76-95.

much-quoted account (usually for the section relating to the slave girl who agreed to be killed to go with her master) makes interestingly clear the use of a rich man's wealth partly to provide alcoholic drink 'with which they stupefy themselves by drinking night and day [so that] sometimes one of them dies cup in hand' until the day when the female slave is killed, and the quite separate depositing of food and drink with the body that is to be cremated.<sup>15</sup> But we shall see that the dual function here attributed to alcoholic drink has much in common with the reported funerary practices of ordinary western Christians in the same period; so that those scholars who suppose that the earlier Germanic grave-finds not merely bear witness to funerary drinking but even, possibly, to a ritual which recognises the difference between the immediate family and other kinsfolk or neighbours, plus a final libation, are surely within the acceptable limits of speculation.

It is inevitable, if inconvenient, that the archaeological evidence is overwhelmingly associated with death and burial. One recorded pagan drinking ritual associated with life and not death is — if we choose to believe it — documented by Jonas's account of the pagan Alamanni encountered by Columbanus who were about to 'sacrifice to Woden' with a great barrel containing 20 modia of ale, until the saint caused it to swell and burst. Yet drinking as an expression or assertion of a communal identity and the deliberate squandering of resources may even there — like the anthropologically-observed 'potlatch' — have counted for more than the deplored sacral or sacrificial function.<sup>16</sup> Both have their counterparts in the Carolingian and post-Carolingian centuries in very different settings.

These range from the monastic one of the *caritas quae in pleno potatur calice*, so designated in a letter of Alcuin's to the monks of Murbach, to the heavy drinking associated with

<sup>15</sup> H.M. Smyser, 'Ibn Fadlan's Account of the Rus with some Commentary and some Allusions to *Beowulf*', in *Medieval and Linguistic Studies in Honour of Francis Peabody Magoun*, ed. J.B. Bessinger and R.P. Creed (New York, 1965), pp. 92-119; see also G. Jones, *A History of the Vikings* (Oxford, 1968), pp. 425-30.

<sup>16</sup> Jonas, *Vita S. Columbani* I.27 (ed. B. Krusch, MGH, SS rer. Germ. (Hannover, 1905), pp. 213-14).

unseemly mirth and outrageous behaviour (according to the moralist and church reformer who is our only source) of the merchants of Tiel. The former was, we now know, only representative of a widespread practice for which appropriate verses or songs were composed and circulated: different in tone and content, it need hardly be said, from those of our own dear rugby and boat clubs, and indeed acceptable because of the constraints imposed by the nature of the community and the authority of abbot and prior. It has nothing in common except the alcohol with the drinking sessions ‘in the world’, although often organised by priests, at which the names of saints were invoked as an incitement to further consumption — the *minne* of later vernacular texts. Paradoxically, in their common concern with good fellowship and ‘warmth’, the truer parallels to the monastic *caritas* are the gatherings of the Tiel merchants and the earlier (Carolingian-period) guilds or *confraternitates* of layfolk which leave their mark on our texts only when there is concern about their behaviour.<sup>17</sup> It is equally distinct from the *convivia(e)* of religious communities (straightforward dinners or feasts, with both food and drink) referred to in Alcuin’s letters and other texts of the period. None of these is better known nor more misrepresented than the letter which deplores the performance there of tales of Ingeld: for it is demonstrably addressed not to Lindisfarne and its monastic community (as has so long been assumed) but to

<sup>17</sup> For *caritas*, see *Alcuini Epistolae*, no. 117 (MGH, Epist. 4, 172), one of the letters copied — from a lost continental manuscript very close to the northern French manuscript now London, BL, Royal 8. E. XV — into the mid-eleventh-century English manuscript Cotton Tiberius A. xv (see above, n. 7), with discussion by B. Bischoff, ‘*Caritas-Lieder*’, in his *Mittelalterliche Studien*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart, 1966-81) II, 56-77. For the monastic *caritas* in tenth- and eleventh-century England, see *Regularis Concordia*, ed. T. Symons (London and Edinburgh, 1953), p. 23 (c. 26, where it is distinguished from the regular *poculum*) and *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc*, ed. D. Knowles (London and Edinburgh, 1951) pp. 36 and 42. On the invocation of saints’ names, see Hrabanus Maurus, *Hom.* xli (PL 110, 78) and Hincmar, *Cap.* I.14 (PL 125, 776), from which derives Regino, *De synodalibus causis* I.216 (ed. F.G.A. Wasserschleben (Leipzig, 1840), p. 108), but note that the earliest examples of *minne* (‘remembrance’, ‘love’) for such occasions are seemingly MHG rather than OHG; cf. Bischoff, ‘*Caritas-Lieder*’, p. 65, and discussion below. Hincmar, *Cap.* I.16 (PL 125, 777-8)(= Regino, *De synodalibus causis* II.441 (ed. Wasserschleben, pp. 386-7), in part) is an unusually full critique of *collectae quas geldonias vel confratrias vocant*, referring to the provision of wine in *butticula vel canna* and to the turbulence to which such gatherings gave rise. On Tiel merchants, see Alpert of Metz, *De diversitate temporum* [al. *morum*] II.20 (ed. A. Hulsof (Utrecht, 1916), p. 50).

the bishop of a non-monastic cathedral church in Mercia — a correction which, I imagine, stands a good chance of rapidly doubling the last century's ample bibliography and may even encourage someone to revive Earle's view that *Beowulf* was composed by the bishop of Lichfield.<sup>18</sup>

Very little has survived of the correspondence of Alcuin's Court contemporaries but we do have the *capitula* of many of those who became bishops. What they consistently reveal (and in this they had been anticipated by a unique chapter in the laws of Wihtried of Kent) is a parallel concern with their rural priests drinking in the wrong circumstances or to excess: yet in doing so they are prepared to acknowledge the basic drive — not so much a physiological one (although that is not to be ignored) as the social one of friendly drinking with *vicini*. Two late-Carolingian moralists and canonists make this abundantly clear. Hincmar of Rheims insists that priests who are entertaining one another are not to go beyond the third *poculum*. If the exported Carolingian drinking-vessels found in the graves at Birka and elsewhere are typical — and the consistency of their liquid content suggests that they are — then three such *pocula* were, as a modern historian of pastoral care in the Trier diocese has expressed it, the precise equivalent of a bottle of good Mosel wine. After that the provision in the Welsh Laws (although in which stratum I leave others to decide) that when the chief huntsman has been on duty he receives 'a hornful of liquor from the king, another from the queen and a third from the steward' seems hardly over-indulgent. To this modest constraint and a shared disapproval of disorderly gatherings, Hincmar's younger contemporary Regino of Prüm adds a concern that priests are turning the churches into taverns and actually selling wine there (a

<sup>18</sup> *Alcuini Epistolae*, nos. 114 and 124 (the evidence for the re-interpretation of which will be presented in full elsewhere); see also W. de G. Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum*, 3 vols. and index (London, 1885-99)[hereafter BCS], no. 342, listed P.H. Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters: an Annotated List and Bibliography* (London, 1968)[hereafter S], no. 1265. For exhortations by Alcuin to avoid drunkenness, not linked with *convivia*, see *Epist.* nos. 20, 21, 38 and 42. For the circumstances in which being sick at feasts was not to be regarded as a sin requiring penance, see Theodore's *Penitential* (in the version of the *discipulus Umbrensius* or U) I.1 (with the rubric *De crapula et ebrietate*, from Vulgate Luke XXI.34), c. 4 (ed. P. Finsterwalder (Weimar, 1929), p. 289).

reminder that in that in that region, as in the south, it was the customary drink of all social classes). Regino is no less concerned about the behaviour of the lay inhabitants of ordinary rural communities in the diocese of Trier: 'has anyone', he wants to know, 'spent the night awake round the corpse singing devilish songs, drinking and eating and almost rejoicing at the death?' The post-burial celebrations are another matter: they are accepted and regulated, bearing in mind they involve the local priest and perhaps other clergy, as well as family and neighbours. Here at least the attitudes and practices of a pre-Christian or secular world seem indeed to have invaded the Church: but to those taking part they were the natural expression of community and solidarity, the extracting of a measure of joy from an occasion of loss and grief.<sup>19</sup>

What, however, of drinking where there was no element of valediction or commemoration, particularly at the higher social levels with ample disposable resources? and what is the relationship between imaginative literature, which is the main source, and historical reality? Should the feasts in *Beowulf* and *Heliand* be read as an evocation of good feeling, the creation of a deeper sense of fellowship and community, the strengthening of the ties of man to man and of the values they have in common? and then translated wholesale to the courts of Ine and Offa, of Charlemagne and Charles the Bald or to the households of their *gesiths*, *thegns*, *comites* and *vassi*?

With the qualified exception of Paul the Deacon's *Historia Langobardorum* — which seems to me to belong to the very margins of historical narrative<sup>20</sup> — no Latin 'chronicle' or other

<sup>19</sup> The Laws of Wiltred (695), c. 6 (ed. F. Liebermann, *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen*, 3 vols, (Halle, 1903-16) I, 12; also ed. F.L. Attenborough, *The Laws of the Earliest English Kings* (Cambridge, 1922), p. 26): 'Gif priost . . . to þon druncen þæt he ne mæge . . .' (which seems to have no parallel in Merovingian conciliar decrees); see MGH, *Capitula episcoporum* 1, 20 (c. 14), 21, 38 (cc. 4 and 6), 112, 191 (cc. 16 and 17), etc. See also Hincmar, *Cap. I.15* (PL 125, 777), and cf. N. Kyll, *Tod, Grab, Begräbnisplatz, Totenfeier*, *Rheinisches Archiv* 81 (Bonn, 1972), 164-6; and Regino, *De synodalibus causis* I.58 and II.5 *interrogatio* 55 (ed. Wasserschleben, pp. 50-1 and 213 respectively), and cf. Kyll, *ibid.* pp. 167-8 and O.G. Oexle, 'Mahl und Spende im mittelalterlichen Totenkult', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 18 (1984), 401-20. For Welsh laws, see *The Laws of Hywel Dda*, trans. M. Richards (Liverpool, 1954), pp. 36-7, with L. Alcock, *Economy, Society and Warfare among the Britons and Saxons* (Cardiff, 1987), p. 74.

<sup>20</sup> D.A. Bullough, 'Ethnic History and the Carolingians: an Alternative Reading of Paul the Deacon's *Historia Langobardorum*', in *The Inheritance of Historiography 350-900*, ed. C. Holdsworth and T.P. Wiseman (Exeter, 1986), pp. 85-105.

prose text for some centuries after Gregory of Tours records in any detail feasts, drinking-rituals or the consequences of over-indulgence. Even without the hints (and suppressions) of Einhard as biographer and idealizer, it would hardly be doubted that all three figured largely in the life of Charlemagne's court — whether in the period in which his typical companions were hard-living young men close to him in age, or in the later decades when he enjoyed (we are led to believe) the company of mature scholars and other clerics: but the army tents in summer and autumn, the royal *villae* in winter remain largely unpeopled; and the flavour of their drinking-songs are as unrecoverable as the drinks themselves. Arguably, the most authentic picture of early Carolingian feasts is indeed in Paul the Deacon's account of the sixth- and seventh-century Lombards! In 796, however, we are briefly able to join the court at the Aachen palace through a group of poems, and especially Theodulf's, that were prompted by a banquet or banquets at which victory over the Avars was celebrated. Drunk or sober (*vina bibant stansque sedensque simul*), its scholarly participants reveal jealousies and trade insults without recourse to physical violence (no different in this respect, perhaps, than cathedral chapters and colleges): Alcuin is porridge among the *pocula*, an Irishman is odious as well as stupid, and Theodulf shamelessly directs his Latin barbs against a Latinless veteran warrior (perhaps a lone survivor from Charles' own 'heroic age') who shuffles out knowing only that he is the butt of the scholar's jests.<sup>21</sup> If he was later appeased with a gift of

<sup>21</sup> Theodulf, *Carm.* xxv and xxvii; Angilbert, *Carm.* ii; and Alcuin, *Carm.* xxvi (all ed. E. Dümmler, MGH, PLAC 1, 483-93, 360-3 and 245-6 respectively): brilliantly expounded by D. Schaller, 'Vortrags- und Zirkulardichtung am Hof Karls des Grossen', *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* 6 (1970), 14-36; see also P. Godman, *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance* (London, 1985), pp. 11-14, with translations at pp. 151-63 and 113-19 respectively (note that *vina bibant* in line 200 of *Carm.* xxv could, however, be an allusion to differences of status; cf. below, p. 14). An 'early Carolingian — and not impossibly Court-connected — drinking-song is the one inc. 'Dulcis amice, bibe gratanter munera Bacchi' (ed. Dümmler, MGH, PLAC 1, 65-6 (no. xxxi) and K. Neff, *Die Gedichte des Paulus Diaconus* (Munich, 1908), pp. 199-210, from St Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek 184 (s. ix<sup>2</sup>: Grimalt-period or shortly afterwards) and 573 (s. ix/x), and a sixteenth-century printed book; but lines 1-2 (with *vinum* for *totum*) and 17-18 are the last of the miscellaneous items with which the Verona antiphony-hymnary (Biblioteca capitolare, 83 [LXXXVIII]) concludes; and (an incomplete text of?) the poem surfaces again in the intriguing florilegium in Cambridge, Pembroke College 103 (English, s. xii), fol. 66, where the immediately preceding text, Martial, *Epigr.* XIII.94, shows that the florilegist had recognized the source of the poem's line 5, 'Dente timendus aper' etc.). The context alone would suggest that those who read sinister implications into the title 'Coniurationes convivarum pro potu' in the St Gallen manuscript are mistaken.

gold from the Avar treasure, we are not told.

This is mild stuff compared with the evidence of the vernacular poems, or indeed of Paul. ‘The real atmosphere of the mead-hall, as opposed to its sanitized idealization,’ it has recently been suggested, ‘often rippled with currents of bitterness and jealousy which gave rise to polemic, vindictiveness and bloodshed’. Contention at the (secular) feast even before the drinking — or at least the official drinking — started is a literary theme: the reason customarily given is a dispute over the seating-plan.<sup>22</sup> Connaughtmen and Ulstermen have not always been prepared to sit down peacefully on opposite sides of a hall, as they did when invited to share Mac Dathó’s pig: yet ‘they were not the faces of friends at a feast . . . One party was at feud with another’.<sup>23</sup> Even among friends precedence may be a source of tension. The precise and rigid order laid down for Court banquets in Byzantium c. 900<sup>24</sup> is, not surprisingly, without its counterpart in the West until a very much later date. (Its most exact parallel is probably the bulky Indian Civil Service *Warrant* regulating precedence at Viceregal functions during the last half-century before Independence.) The hierarchy and grouping in the hall implicit — and at some points explicit — in the accounts of feasts in *Beowulf*, which have been analysed in several recent studies, can indeed be dimly perceived in the Latin-language sources, whether of the eighth, ninth or tenth centuries. Paul the Deacon has a (unique?) reference to one aspect of precedence when he reports that the king’s son Alboin (late-sixth century) even after his success in combat, could not be immediately allowed to join his father at the top of the table *ne ritum gentis infringeret*. The implication is that his proper place

<sup>22</sup> M.J. Enright, ‘Lady with a Mead-cup: Ritual, Group Cohesion and Hierarchy in the Germanic Warband’, *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 22 (1988), 170-203 (to which the present lecture owes more than its first citation here would suggest); the quotation is from p. 188. For disputes over seating arrangements, see *ibid.* pp. 181-2.

<sup>23</sup> ‘The Story of Mac Dathó’s Pig’: ed. N.K. Chadwick, *An Early Irish Reader* (Cambridge, 1927); ed. R. Thurneysen (Dublin, 1935). The quotation is taken from the edition of Chadwick, p. 18; see also N.K. Chadwick, ‘The Lost Literature of Celtic Scotland’, *Scottish Gaelic Studies* 8 (1958), 115-83, at 130-45.

<sup>24</sup> The *Kleterologion* of Philotheos is ed. N. Oikonomidès, *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IX<sup>e</sup> et X<sup>e</sup> siècles* (Paris, 1972).

is still among what the *Beowulf*-poet calls the *geoguth* where, as we learn from the account of Beowulf's arrival, Hrothgar's sons and then Beowulf himself, occupied the places of honour; and it is only when the prince has demonstrated his boldness and fighting-spirit by going with a mere forty *iuvenes* to the court of the Lombards' fiercest enemies that he moves up. Theodulf is aware of rank and precedence (*quos sursum quilibet ordo tulit*) even among the few who are actually admitted to the banquet, and some will withdraw after the food is finished, 'leaving joy behind': but he does not make anything of it. The hierarchy familiar to the *Beowulf*-poet is, however, at least summarily represented in the younger poet Ermoldus's description of the banquet that followed the baptism of an historical Danish king in 826: it duly descends from Emperor and Empress (she on her knees) through family and honoured guests to *puerile decus*.<sup>25</sup>

The Latin poets imply that rank and precedence are undisputed, joy is unconfined, and friendship and neighbourliness undisturbed. The vernacular poets — and Paul — do not. The *Beowulf*-poet declares that one of his hero's outstanding qualities was that he never killed his drunken hearth-companions, which presupposes that this was a familiar outcome of feasts. Distribution of rewards and resources must commonly have lead to contention: a mock-heroic example is the 'champion's portion' of 'Mac Dathó's pig' but gold, weapons and land were the normal provocation. Challenges and boasts, often ritualised — part of the confirmation of or challenge to established precedence — were (it would appear) a normal part of a 'lordly' feast and might confirm the group-solidarity or endanger it. Once again Paul the Deacon has a

<sup>25</sup> *Beowulf* 607-30; see C. Brady, "'Warriors" in *Beowulf: An Analysis of the Nominal Compounds and an Evaluation of the Poet's Use of Them*, *Anglo-Saxon England* 11 (1983), 199-246, esp. 207-11 and 219-20; J.A. Burrow, *The Ages of Man. A Study in Medieval Writing and Thought* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 123-34; Enright, 'Lady with the Mead-cup', esp. pp. 179-80, and the other literature cited there. Paul the Deacon: *Historia Langobardorum* I.23 (ed. G. Waitz, MGH, *Scriptores rerum Langobardicarum et Italicarum* (Hannover, 1878), p. 61) and my comments in 'Ethnic History and the Carolingians', p. 100 (although the suggestion there that the *ritus* referred to 'belongs rather to the period of an established royal line in Italy' is perhaps superfluous). Theodulf: *Carm.* xxv.65-6 and 201-3 (MGH, PLAC 1, 485 and 488). Ermoldus: lines 2352-9 (MGH, PLAC 2, 71; also ed. E. Faral (Paris, 1932), p. 180).



characteristic instance. When Alboin and his young men presented themselves at the court of the Gepids with whom the Lombards had recently been at war, they were invited to a feast at which the prince was placed in the seat of honour; the Gepid king's eldest son was consumed with anger, and a younger son was provoked to make an insulting gibe: the Lombard *iuvenes* already had their hands on their sword-hilts and open fighting was about to begin when the Gepid king literally stepped in to intervene and reminded his men of their obligation to guests, so that 'they all continued with the feast in a joyous mood'. (A feast with less happy outcome was that at which Alboin, now king and having overthrown the Gepids, tried to get his Gepid wife Rosamunda to drink joyfully from a goblet made from her father's skull, as a consequence of which she conspired with a courtier to get her husband assassinated.)<sup>26</sup>

A similar but generalised picture is given by one of the poems in the Exeter Book, *Vainglory*:

There are many men holding a meeting, proud war-makers in the wine-halls. They sit at the feast, composing true songs, exchanging words . . . Noise increases, the hubbub of the company and voices ring out competing with each other . . . One sort of man presses on violently in his pride, an immoderate spirit swells within him: of these there are too many . . . He bawls and shouts, boasts about himself far more than the better man . . . Sitting proudly at the feast, overcome by wine, he lets his words stream out maliciously, pushing for a quarrel, swollen with violence, inflamed by spite and hostility and tricks to cause trouble, full of pride . . .<sup>27</sup>

Boasts made on such occasions, however, were not always ritual challenges to fellow-drinkers, provoking counter-challenges and the ever-present threat of violence, nor an attempt to re-order established hierarchies. In a particular setting, in appropriate company, they were rather challenges to

<sup>26</sup> *Beowulf* 2179-80. For the translation (*druncne* as the epithet — plural! — of the hearth-companions), see H. Magennis, 'The "Beowulf" Poet and his "druncne dryhtguman"', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 86 (1985), 159-64; and Enright, 'Lady with the Mead-cup', p. 187. For 'Mac Dathó's Pig', see above, n. 22. Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum* I.24 and II.28; cf. Bullough, 'Ethnic History and the Carolingians', p. 92.

<sup>27</sup> *The Exeter Book*, ed. G.P. Krapp and E. Van Kirk Dobbie, ASPR 3 (New York, 1936), 147-9 (lines 13 ff.).

oneself and binding commitments to future action, particularly in support of those whom the author of *Heliand* calls *mâgwine* and the *Beowulf*-poet and other OE writers *winemægas*, ‘friend-kin’.

The rallying-cry put into the mouth of Ælfwine — the son, grandson and nephew of aldermen but not himself more than a thegn — in the last phase of the battle of Maldon is ‘Remember the words that we uttered many a time over the mead, when on the bench, heroes in hall, we made our boast about hard strife. Now it may be proved which of us is bold . . .’.<sup>28</sup> If the precise wording is fiction, the sentiment surely is not; and the relationship here between life and literature is not so very different from Newbolt’s ‘And falling fling to the host behind — / “Play up, play up and play the game”’.

Literary scholars and critics, feminists and non-feminists, have for several decades stressed the evidence for the lord’s wife as peace-weaver, the reconciler at the feast. A new twist to this approach has latterly been given by a reconsideration of the Wealhtheow episode in *Beowulf*. The queen’s ritual offering of drink — with which the drinking-vessels in graves may (or may not) be connected — is not merely a gesture of hospitality, establishing her own status: it also establishes precedence in the hall and emphasises that the real and fictive kin who form the warrior-band are none the less their lord’s subordinates, with a hierarchy among themselves based on birth, age and achievement. Paul, as in other instances, provides a nominally sixth-century Bavarian and Lombard parallel.<sup>29</sup> Was this also idealisation, perhaps seen as a counterbalance to the tale of Rosamunda? For if the peace-weaving lord’s wife of literature had had her historic counterparts in eighth- and ninth-century royal and noble households, at the highest level, i.e. the

<sup>28</sup> *The Battle of Maldon*, ed. D.G. Scragg (Manchester, 1981), lines 211-15. For Ælfwine’s family connections, see M.A.L. Locherbie-Cameron, ‘Ælfwine’s kinsmen and ‘The Battle of Maldon’’, *Notes and Queries* 223 (1978), 486-7, and A. Williams, ‘*Princeps Merciorum gentis*: the Family, Career and Connections of Ælfhere, Ealdorman of Mercia 956-83’, *Anglo-Saxon England* 10 (1982), 143-72, esp. 144-5. For a cautionary note, see Scragg, *ibid.* p. 14.

<sup>29</sup> Enright, ‘Lady with the Mead-cup’, pp. 171-82; Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum* III.30 (quoted and discussed by Enright, *ibid.* pp. 180-1).

Carolingian royal and Imperial family, they would seem to be conspicuously lacking: Charlemagne's first wife, quickly sent back to her native Lombard kingdom; Hildegard, almost permanently pregnant from 14 to an unsurprisingly early death at 24; Fastrada, openly described as cruel and responsible either for failing to prevent a 'revenge-killing' at Court in 794 or from a grisly 'real-life' counterpart to the gospel-writer's and *Heliant's* account of the beheading of John the Baptist at a feast; Louis the Pious's Judith; Louis II's Angilberga, using her position to influence judicial proceedings in order to increase her own landed wealth.<sup>30</sup> *Comites* and *vassi*, eorls and thegns may well have preferred their dining and drinking to be more like that of the early-tenth century officials of the hundred-groups in London and its region who were to assemble monthly, preferably when the butts were being filled, and dine a dozen at a time, evidently with no ladies present.<sup>31</sup>

The latter, however, like the drinking-sessions of the Tiel merchants, was an association of (nominal) equals. The descriptions of feasts in the *Beowulf*-poem and in Paul the Deacon (which I shall persist in regarding as near-contemporary) do at least make explicit the simultaneous existence of vertical and horizontal relationships — an unfortunate metaphor in the context perhaps! — in an early-medieval royal or noble household. How these relationships, whether expressed in the language of friendship or not, might be created and maintained has still to be explored. Literature with its emphasis on 'gold-giving' is not false even in the later

<sup>30</sup> Fastrada: Einhard, *Vita Karoli*, c. 20; MGH, *Formulae Merowingici et Karolini Aevi*, ed. K. Zeumer (Hannover, 1886), pp. 323-4; *Die Regesten des Kaiserreichs unter den Karolingern 751-918*, ed. J.F. Böhrner and E. Mühlbacher, 2nd ed. (Innsbruck, 1908), no. 813 (where *casu accidente* before *in praesentia eius interfectus quia . . .* may point to the more favourable interpretation). Angilberga: *Le carte più antiche di San Antonino di Piacenza*, ed. E. Falconi (Parma, 1959), no. 32; C. Manaresi, *I Placiti del "Regnum Italiae"*, 3 vols. in 5 (Rome, 1955-60) I, 277-83 (no. 77). For the preceding centuries, see, for example, J. Nelson, 'Queens as Jezebels: the Careers of Brunhild and Balhild in Merovingian History', published originally in 1978 and repr. in her *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (London and Ronceverte, 1986), pp. 1-48.

<sup>31</sup> Leg. VI Æthelstan 8, 1: *Gesetze*, ed. Liebermann I, 178; Attenborough, *Laws*, p. 162. Hugh MacDiarmid's 'Like a high proportion of my country's regular and purposive drinkers, I greatly prefer a complete absence of women on occasions of libation' (*The Dour Drinkers of Glasgow*, 1952) would surely have been fully appreciated one thousand years earlier.

centuries: the distribution that followed the defeat of the Avars and the capture of its treasure seems to have fully matched the poetic testimonies; while Einhard records that when the Emperor Louis granted a particularly valuable estate (then as now producing Ahr wine) to 'SS Marcellinus and Petrus' the Empress matched it with a gift of her gold and jewelled girdle weighing three pounds. (Without prejudice to the 'real value' of the ninth-century pound, it is sufficient to note that the great gold buckle at Sutton Hoo weighs  $14\frac{3}{4}$  ozs.) It is merely the perspective that has to be adjusted.<sup>32</sup>

For many, clearly, the normal 'consideration' was a different one. It is here that the evidence of land-grants must move to centre-stage: but not, happily, early English royal grants or the problems of 'book-land'. The eleventh-century Worcester Cathedral Cartulary is, by Insular standards, a rich and extensive one. Compared, say, with the somewhat earlier cartulary from Fulda and the later one (but particularly rich on the late-eighth and ninth centuries) from Lorsch it is pathetically inadequate. We cannot construct from its component texts the account of innumerable kin-groups and their rural and urban land-holdings which the Frankish examples make possible.<sup>33</sup> They are not even a modest equivalent of the tenth/eleventh century Cluny charters, with their multiple documentation of the granting, exchanging, leasing and re-granting of the same or adjacent properties — a corpus of texts which has recently allowed a North American scholar to consider 'the social meaning of Cluny's property' under the significant title of *To be the Neighbour of St Peter*,

<sup>32</sup> Avar treasures: cf. Theodulf, *Carm.* xxv.33-4, and Alcuin's and Charlemagne's letters (*Alcuini Epistolae*, nos. 96 and 100), and the lamented Hayo Vierck's 'Ein westfälisches "Adelsgrab" des 8. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.', *Studien zur Sachsenforschung*, ed. H.-J. Hässler (Hildesheim, 1980), pp. 457-88, esp. 485-8. Einhard: *Translatio et miracula SS Marcellini et Petri*, c. 6 (ed. Waitz, p. 247).

<sup>33</sup> See, among an extensive literature from the sixties, seventies and eighties, K. Bosl, *Franken um 800: Strukturanalyse einer fränkische Königsprovinz*, 2nd ed. (Munich, 1969); F. Staab, *Untersuchungen zur Gesellschaft am Mittelrhein in der Karolingerzeit* (Wiesbaden, 1975); and, for the methodology, K. Schmid, *Gebetsgedenken und adliges Selbstverständnis im Mittelalter: ausgewählte Beiträge* (Sigmaringen, 1983).

nor of the earlier St Gallen charters to which a similar approach might be possible.<sup>34</sup>

The nearly eighty leases from the second half of the tenth century which occupy a substantial part of pt I of the Worcester Cartulary (written not later than the second decade of the next century) plus others which survive — or survived — independently have been studied particularly for their witness-lists and for the tenorial arrangements they presuppose.<sup>35</sup> Collectively, however, they are also testimony to aspects of 'neighbourhood' on the estate of one late Anglo-Saxon church. We can find a starting-point in three land-leases by Bishop Oswald in the same year, 967, to different beneficees. The first of these (not in the Cartulary) is of two *mansae* (hides of land) at Holdfast in Ripple (Worcs.) and an unidentified place not far away to 'my brother Osulf' and two other lives, unusually in exchange for other land which was then used for the maintenance of the cathedral *clerici*. It was superseded in 988 by a new lease to 'my nephew' Ælfwine which is in the Cartulary with a note saying that the second and third lives were his wife Æfæd and their son. Osulf was also the beneficee of two other leases of property in Worcestershire, one at an unknown date before 972 and the second after that year. The first of these passed *c.* 988 to an Æthelstan, who is probably the grantee (as *fidelis* and as *miles*) of other property in Worcestershire and Gloucestershire in 977 and 981 respectively, and subsequently to an otherwise unrecorded

<sup>34</sup> B.H. Rosenwein, *To be the Neighbor of St Peter: the Social Meaning of Cluny's Property, 909-1049* (Ithaca, NY, 1989). For St Gallen, see *Subsidia Sangallensia I*, ed. M. Borgolte, D. Geuenich and K. Schmid (St Gallen, 1986), esp. pp. 285-322.

<sup>35</sup> London, BL, Cotton Tiberius A. xiii: ed. T. Hearne, *Hemingi Chartularium Ecclesiae Wigorniensis* (Oxford 1723)[henceforth *Heming*]; for the distinction between the two parts and their datings, see N.R. Ker, 'Hemming's Cartulary: a Description of the two Worcester Cartularies in Cotton Tiberius A.XIII', in his *Books, Collectors and Libraries: Studies in the Medieval Heritage*, ed. A.G. Watson (London and Ronceverte, 1985), pp. 31-59. Most of the non-cartulary leases were in the Somers collection, burnt in the eighteenth century but fortunately previously published by J. Smith in his *Bedae Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* (Cambridge, 1722). Interpretative studies are: F.W. Maitland, *Domesday Book and Beyond* (Cambridge, 1897), pp. 267-318; D.A. Bullough, *St. Oswald, Bishop of Worcester and Archbishop of York 961/972-992*, Cathedral Commemorative Lecture (Worcester and York, 1972 [unpublished]); P.H. Sawyer, 'Charters of the Reform Movement: the Worcester Archive', in *Tenth-Century Studies*, ed. D. Parsons (Chichester, 1975), pp. 84-93; C. Dyer, *Lords and Peasants in a Changing Society* (Cambridge, 1980), pp. 39-45 and cf. 34-6.

*Ufede*. It is probably the same Osulf, although if so apparently after a second marriage, who in 969 was leased property at two other places in Worcestershire, Teddington and Alstone — transferred to Gloucestershire in the present century by presumably-sober legislators but to the confusion of historians.<sup>36</sup> The second and third of the 967 leases were respectively of one hide and two hides at Itchington (Glos.) to the bishop's *ministri* (thegns) Æthelweard and Wulfgar. The latter is not mentioned again. Æthelweard, by contrast, is well documented. In 969 as *minister* and *fidelis* he leased land at Stoke Bishop (Glos.) and Tiddington in Alveston (Warw.), in 984 as *miles* again at Stoke Bishop, in 988 as *minister* and as *fidelis* at Clifford Chambers (Warw.) and Upton in Tetbury (Glos.). Moreover, a marginal heading in the Cartulary for three of the four Glos. leases (successively on 57r-60v) says 'Æthelweard and Æthelmær', the latter plausibly identified as a son of the former as well as his successor. As *minan holdan getriowan men*, Æthelmær was the recipient of an entirely new grant from one of the church's Gloucestershire properties in 990, for which he handed over 'two pounds of pure white silver'; and he is therefore plausibly to be identified with the bishop's *artifex* (master-craftsman?) of the same name who was granted land in (?)Worcestershire in 991.<sup>37</sup> The subject of the fourth of the 967 leases, the hide at Itchington, was re-granted in that same year (991) to Ælfstan 'my man'. Another grantee as well documented as Æthelweard, Eadric, first figures in 966 as Oswald's *compater* (fellow-sponsor in baptism? or simply

<sup>36</sup> Osulf: BCS, nos. 1204 and 1139 (listed S, nos. 1315 and 1370); *Chronica Abbatiae Ramesiensis*, ed. W.D. Macray, RS (London, 1886), pp. 82-3 (listed S, no. 1371); A.J. Robertson, *Anglo-Saxon Charters* (Cambridge, 1939), no. 46, the commentary (on p. 343) still referring to Worcestershire, although the transfer took place in 931 (S, no. 1326). Ælfwine: BCS, no. 1205 (S, no. 1355). Æthelstan (and *Ufede*): *Heming*, p. 147, and Ker, 'Hemming's Cartulary', p. 54, n. 1; J.M. Kemble, *Codex Diplomaticus Aevi Saxonici*, 6 vols. (London, 1839-48)[hereafter KCD], nos. 613 and 631 (S, nos. 1331 and 1343).

<sup>37</sup> Wulfgar: BCS, no. 1207 (S, no. 1316); hardly to be identified with the *clericus* Wulfgar who is the grantee of leases from at latest 969, but also a regular (ecclesiastical) witness from well before 967. Æthelweard: BCS, nos. 1206, 1236, and 1232 (S, nos. 1312, 1317 and 1318); KCD, nos. 646, 667, 668 (S, nos. 1346, 1356 and 1357); Robertson, *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, pp. 378-9. Æthelmær: Robertson, *ibid.* no. 65 (S, no. 1362); KCD, no. 678 (S, no. 1365). For an earlier lease to a Worcester *artifex*, see KCD, no. 634 (S, no. 1344) of 982; for the translation 'master-craftsman', see *Mittelateinisches Wörterbuch I* (1967), 995-7, at 996 (s.v. 'artifex').

‘companion’?) leasing property at Alveston; three years later, as *minister*, he was granted land in Gloucestershire, and subsequently twice (in 977 and 985) benefitted from new leases of property at Tiddington and Alveston. In the Worcester properties his successor was a certain *Wulfrune*.<sup>38</sup>

The lands thus obtained from the bishop of Worcester, usually for three lives, are clearly not the principal properties of their first lessees, who are often demonstrably men and women of substance and wealth, even persons of prominence in the kingdom at large. They are invariably modest in size and, where identifiable topographically, are on the margins of larger land units, often on poorer soils more suitable for stock-raising than arable cultivation.<sup>39</sup> What these grants do, together with the scores of others to different beneficees in the same collection, is, firstly, to make their recipients ‘neighbours of SS Mary, Michael and Peter’ at Worcester: an association, incidentally, that would fail to be registered in Professor Herlihy’s quantification of the extent of church property in these centuries, based as it is on named topographical boundaries, in which the successive leases of the same property would be aggregated as losses — although the Worcester monk Hemming would not entirely have disagreed. What they also do, and (I suggest) more importantly, is to create a network, an inter-meshing, of high-status ‘neighbours’ on properties extending through three counties, with its central knot in Worcester and the *domus* of its bishop. The inclusion in Bishop Heahberht’s ‘gift’ to the Mercian king and queen in 840 of two ‘white’ horns, two goblets and a gilded cup is unlikely to have been a permanent clearing-out of the episcopal buttery: and it is a reasonable inference that on appropriate occasions the grantees participated in episcopal or their own *conviviae*, as

<sup>38</sup> Ælfstan: KCD, no. 677 (S, no. 1364). Eadric: Robertson, *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, no. 43 (S, no. 1310); KCD, nos. 558, 617 (with erroneously-added bounds) and 651 (S, nos. 1324, 1334 and 1350). ‘Co-sponsor’ is the normal early-medieval meaning of *compater*, and it is not impossible that the bishop had in fact (recently?) baptized a child of Eadric’s: but an OE portion of Robertson no. 43 says (dat.) *Eadrice his ðegn*; and the wider meaning of ‘(good) companion’ is recorded on the Continent from the late ninth century, although in England not apparently until after 1066 (see *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*, s.v.).

<sup>39</sup> Dyer, *Lords and Peasants*, pp. 17-19 and 36-7.

their early Norman successors are recorded as doing.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, Oswald's and his successors' thegns (or at least some of them) would when required — as we know from the letter to King Edgar which Hemming copied — serve in the royal host under the (nominal) command of the bishop in his distinctive capacity of *archiductor*; and they would be doing so in the company of men who on the land and in hall were their 'friends and neighbours'. This is not, perhaps, the *comitatus* of the Heroic Age but it seems to me very much the later *comitatus* which supported Byrhtnoth at Maldon.<sup>41</sup>

Oswald, however, would surely not have seen the creation of a warrior-band or -bands as the primary purpose: and not merely because the values which he professed as bishop were different, however impregnated they might be by those of the wider secular world to which he also belonged. The material resources of his bishopric had to be protected and sustained — as indeed they very largely were. This was not achieved without effort: and the effort inevitably included the manipulation of, as well as regular recourse to, the procedures of justice. Oswaldslaw, whenever formally constituted, was to all intents and purposes an immunity controlled by a private court: since the same social groups or individuals would both deliver and sustain its decisions, this could help to explain why, in spite of

<sup>40</sup> BCS, no. 430 (S, no. 192); D. Whitelock, *English Historical Documents I: c. 500-1042*, 2nd ed. (London, 1979), pp. 520-1 (translating *albas* as 'silver'); William of Malmesbury, *Vita S. Wulfstani* III.2 and 16 (ed. R.R. Darlington (London, 1928), pp. 46-7 and 55-6). William's 'et primo quidem crebrioribus poculis adducta hilaritas; varios ut in conviviis solet sermones invenit; a sermonibus processum in iurgia; et pene in arma, quibus sanctus offensus pauloque commotior' etc. (p. 56) as the almost inevitable consequences of such gatherings is strikingly similar to the passage previously cited from *Vainglory* (above, p. 15).

<sup>41</sup> Oswald letter (*Indiculum libertatis de Oswaldeslawes hundred*: Cotton Tiberius A. xiii, 135<sup>v</sup>-136<sup>v</sup>): BCS, no. 1136. For a mid-eleventh-century lay *ductor exercitus episcopi ad servitium regis*, see the cartulary copy of the Worcester-Evesham 'trial' (Heming, p. 81), although to complicate the matter the holder of that office, Eadric, is also *stirmann*. (The Hemming 'place' is not included in the *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*, s.v. 'ductor' (2), and the entry *archiductor* is seriously misleading: the first citation is from the twelfth-century 'Altitonantis' charter (BCS, no. 1135), here certainly based on the *Indiculum*, while the second citation, with the date *a. 1000*, is Kemble's earlier and inferior edition of the latter!). The possibility of a contemporary continental source for this unique title is suggested by the use of the epithet *archidux* for Archbishop Bruno of Cologne (953-65), who even more conspicuously combined ecclesiastical and secular authority, in Ruotger's *Vita Brunonis*, c. 20 (ed. I. Ott, MGH, SS rer. Germ. (Weimar, 1951), p. 19).



the unusually extensive Worcester records, apparently only a single reference to its proceedings is to be found in Mr Wormald's impressive listing of 'Anglo-Saxon lawsuits'.<sup>42</sup> Among the more fully recorded eleventh-century *placita* are ones involving the Worcester and Gloucester shire courts (*scirgemot*) where the bishop clearly needed all the friends he could muster, and where he would expect his own *ministri* to be among the most influential. The point is neatly underlined by the documentation of another such court just after Oswald's time, that of Kent, where a crucial role in the rendering of judgement is specifically attributed to the *duguð* — in 'Heroic Age' literature 'tested warriors', here (apparently) the leading men of the shire.<sup>43</sup>

Providing accommodation in the city for 'thegnly' and other members of the episcopal *familia* — *artifices*, steward, etc. — was surely the primary purpose of the 90 (or 89) houses in Worcester which were the bishop's property and from 45 of which in 1086 the only service (*opus*) due was *in curia episcopi*. The language used, which seemingly occurs in only two other places in Domesday Book, fits ill with an earlier view that the householders' service would have been of a servile or semi-servile, even agrarian, kind (reflecting different views of the pre-history of 'burgess tenure'): and there is in fact support in the

<sup>42</sup> E. John, 'English Feudalism and the Structure of Anglo-Saxon Society', *Bull. of the John Rylands Lib.* 46 (1963), 14-41, at 36-7; D.A. Bullough, 'Anglo-Saxon Institutions and Early English Society', *Annali della Fondazione italiana per la storia amministrativa* 2 (1965), 647-59 (a 'review' of the re-issue of Chadwick's *Studies on Anglo-Saxon Institutions*), esp. 657; P. Wormald, 'A Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Lawsuits', *Anglo-Saxon England* 17 (1989), 247-81. According to *Heming*, pp. 267-8 (listed Wormald, *ibid.* no. 105), Elmley Castle in Oswaldslaw had been recovered by Bishop Lyfing c. 1038/48, *placitando*.

<sup>43</sup> Robertson, *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, no. 83 (S, no. 1460; Wormald, no. 77); KCD, no. 805 (S, no. 1408; Wormald, 'Handlist', no. 90). For other connections that might be exploited in such circumstances, see the recent suggestion that the last pre-Conquest sheriff of Worcestershire, Cyneweard 'of Laughern', who was also the last pre-1066 lessee of Elmley Castle and of other episcopal property, was a kinsman of (arch)bishop Wulfstan and his successor Beorhtheah: see A. Williams, 'An Introduction to the Worcestershire Domesday', *County Edition of Great Domesday Book* 17 (London, 1988), 24-6. Kent: Robertson, *ibid.* no. 69 (S, no. 1456; Wormald, no. 69); 'the thegns both of East Kent and West Kent, *eal seo duguð*'; cf. the witnesses to the settlement of an earlier dispute in the same area which include Oswald himself and *duguð folces on westan Cant*: Robertson, *ibid.* no. 59 (S, no. 1457; Wormald, nos. 45-6). When Bishop Heahberht brought a case before the Mercian king in 840 (above, n. 40), it was the *Merciorum optimates* who gave judgement in his favour.

texts for a link between the leases of rural lands to men and women of standing and the town houses. A lease for three lives of a *curta* and croft in Worcester was made to Oswald's *cliens* Ælfsige; in the 1050s the Gloucestershire property which had been leased to Osulf and his wife in 969 was re-granted, with the addition of a *curta* in the city, to the Worcester monks. In 1086 at least seventeen of the rural properties which in the tenth and early eleventh centuries had been leased and re-leased to *ministri* and *milites* were held by the extremely acquisitive Norman sheriff Urse d'Abetot and his brother held others: of the houses not *in dominio* of the bishop, twenty-four or twenty-five (described in a supplementary entry in Domesday Book as *in foro*) were also in Urse's hands, while one was his brother's.<sup>44</sup> The pattern and purpose would have been immediately recognisable to Einhard and other courtiers at Louis the Pious's Aachen, and to the *milites* and *ministeriales* of the mid-eleventh century bishop of Bamberg whose *conviviae* were particularly sumptuous.<sup>45</sup>

In an episcopal *familia* or *curia* there is no wife (at least not in most such households) to act as peace-weaver. Pressures for order rather than disorder, to replace enmity with friendship, came from elsewhere. There is now widespread recognition that

<sup>44</sup> Leases (from *Heming*): KCD, nos. 679 and 805 (S, nos. 1367 and 1408). Worcester houses in 1086: DB, 173<sup>v</sup>, under the episcopal manor of Northwick (*Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*, s.v. 'curia', unfortunately does not record the distinctive Domesday usage, common enough on the other side of the Channel in the same period). Williams, 'Introduction', p. 18, revives the older view, which has implications for the topographical history of the city, that the 25 houses 'in the market-place' are additional to those previously specified; but this entry is surely an 'afterthought', glossing the preceding text (as noted already by H.B. Clarke and C. Dyer, 'Anglo-Saxon and Early Norman Worcester: the Documentary Evidence', *Trans. of the Worcestershire Archaeol. Soc.* 3rd ser. 2 (1968-9), 27-33, at 32 with n. 92); and note that the most recent printed texts ignore the otherwise inappropriate manuscript paragraph mark between *solid[os]* and *In foro*. The next entry records Urse's current possession of five hides previously held by *Edricus stirman*. For Urse's other rural holdings, see the index to the Worcestershire Domesday in VCH *Worcester* 1 (1901), 335 (and less fully in *County Edition of Great Domesday* 17, 51).

<sup>45</sup> *Briefsammlungen der Zeit Heinrichs IV*, ed. C. Erdmann and N. Fickermann, MGH, Epist. select. (Weimar, 1950), pp. 120-1; D.A. Bullough, 'Games People Played: Drama and Ritual as Propaganda in Medieval Europe', *Trans. of the Royal Hist. Soc.* 5th ser. 24 (1974), 97-122, at 107. For the Bamberg *ministeriales*, see K. Bosl, *Die Reichsministerialität der Salier und Staufer*, 2 vols, MGH, Schriften 10 (Stuttgart, 1950-1) I, 42-4, and passim; and *Die Grundlagen der modernen Gesellschaft im Mittelalter* (Stuttgart, 1972), pp. 183-4.

disputes on both sides of the English Channel and North Sea in the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries were commonly resolved by arbitration or compromise for which the law-codes make almost no provision, although local 'custom' clearly did.<sup>46</sup> The process and/or the result are typically referred to (as we saw) as *amicitia*, the OE word being perhaps *lufu*. Without suitable *amici* the two (or more) opposing parties would never have reached that stage, which must often still have lacked the warmth of good feeling. Even they could fail to bring about the desired result as we learn from another Worcester episode. Bishop Wulfstan II (according to William of Malmesbury) was visiting Gloucester shortly after the Norman Conquest to consecrate a church. He preached, as was his wont, on the theme of peace and to considerable effect. Among the recalcitrants, however, were five brothers of a man who had been killed 'not deliberately but by chance' and were determined on revenge; they had refused to let the killer 'buy friendship on any terms' and the conciliatory efforts of the abbot of Gloucester had equally been in vain; nor were the bishop's blandishments and the vocally-expressed criticisms of the *populus* of any more effect until the most violent of the brothers suddenly went mad and needed the bishop's healing gifts. Precisely as two centuries earlier, that which social pressure had failed to achieve, even when it came from the wider community rather than the immediate kinsfolk of those at enmity, Divine intervention did.<sup>47</sup>

We can well believe, although we can rarely demonstrate, that the *pacta et amicitia* which marked the end of feuding, with or without divine intervention, were further sealed with ceremonial and indulgent drinking: and we can equally believe that the result of many such occasions was 'vainglory', the

<sup>46</sup> *The Settlement of Disputes in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. W. Davies and P. Fouracre (Cambridge, 1986); and the two notable studies by S.D. White, "'Pactum . . . Legem Vincit et Amor Judicium": the Settlement of Disputes by Compromise in Eleventh-century Western France', *American Journal of Legal History* 22 (1978), 281-308, and 'Feuding and Peace-making in the Touraine around the year 1100', *Traditio* 42 (1986), 195-263 (knowledge of which I owe to my colleague John Hudson).

<sup>47</sup> *Vita S. Wulfstani* II.15 (ed. Darlington, pp. 38-9); Bullough, 'Early Medieval Social Groupings', pp. 14-15.

trading of insults, and a new outburst of violence and enmity, as it had been and was at other social levels.

Even in early medieval studies, however, where the sources so often fail just when we feel that they could tell us what we want to know, aphorism — like patriotism — is not enough: while sociological postulates and technological analogies are merely methodological tools, not (in themselves) examples of inter-disciplinary historical inquiry. Acceptable and unacceptable drinking exist side by side in almost all past and present societies; but the limits of acceptability, the language of approval and criticism, the consequences of transgressing the accepted norms, written or customary, will illuminate social structures and social changes which are the proper preoccupation of the historian. The later Anglo-Saxon (and earlier) law-codes, no less than other types of evidence, have still to be exploited and explained, however awkward they sometimes seem: at the very least, in such seemingly trivial matters as the progressively harsher penalties for the destruction of bee-skips and bees, they provide a window to the value-system of their age at least as clear as (perhaps clearer than) the now more commonly-quoted heroic verse, which is anachronistic if it is not archaic. Even their silences may have something to teach us. That the only reference to a drink-related offence in the English laws is a late-tenth century one to breach of the peace in an ale-house may tell us something about the pre-1066 Danelaw town: but it is also a reminder that the ‘intention’ or personal context of acts of violence is not, except momentarily among the Lombards, a concern of early law-makers.<sup>48</sup> The references to ‘archaic’ procedures — not in fact very numerous, although the existence of a text (or texts) like *Swerian* suggests that they are not mere form<sup>49</sup> — in what are codes of ‘king’s law’ can be understood as a deliberate attempt to emphasise or recognise the continuing importance

<sup>48</sup> Leg. III Æthelred 1, 2 (on the ‘Scandinavian’ character of this code, see P. Wormald, ‘Æthelred the Lawmaker’, in *Æthelred the Unready*, ed. D. Hill, BAR Brit. ser. 59 (Oxford, 1978), 47-80, at 61-3); cf. *Liutprandi Leges an. XXI*, cc. 135-6 (ed. F. Beyerle (Weimar, 1947), pp. 302-4).

<sup>49</sup> *Gesetze*, ed. Liebermann I, 396-9, and the comment of P. Wormald in *The Settlement of Disputes*, ed. Davies and Fouracre, p. 161.

of the community as enforcers of law or dispensers of justice.

H.M. Chadwick's distinctive and autonomous approach to the evidence of legal texts (which he none the less saw as a contribution to 'ancient English sociology'), in comparison with that of the narrative and literary sources and of archaeology, should likewise not be dismissed as 'archaic'. It indicates paths that have still to be followed, even as it invites caution and humility in all who are endeavouring, individually or collectively, with or without the stimulus of that which brings joy, to construct a total picture of early medieval society. To adapt only slightly the penultimate clauses of the poem whose real title is 'of course', *Friends, Monsters and Fellow-Drinkers*: 'It is right that men should pay homage to Hector with words, and cherish him in their hearts, when he has taken leave of the body'.\*

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