ANGLO-SAXON ICONOGRAPHY IN THE
YORK PSALTER VIRGIN CYCLE

by

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ABSTRACT

The miniatures of the York Psalter (MS.U.3.2, Univ. of Glasgow Library), an important manuscript from the north of England dating ca 1170, have an obvious relation in form, style and iconography to the pictorial cycles of 12th century English manuscripts as exemplified by the St. Albans Psalter, the Pembroke College MS.120 and the Four Psalter Leaves. However, the York Psalter is distinguished by the unique iconography of its Virgin cycle on the last three illustrated folios—six scenes depicting the Death, Burial and Assumption—which sets it apart from other representations of the subject in manuscripts from the south of England. This thesis is concerned with the literary and artistic sources for this distinct imagery.

Chapter II analyzes the Virgin cycle first against the common textual Latin source and then against one of its recensions in an Anglo-Saxon homily on the narrative. The Anglo-Saxon version is shown to explain some of the unusual iconographic features in the cycle. The final scene of Assumption, which does not accord with either of these texts, is analyzed from the point of view of its dramatic form, and the shrouded body motif is established as a characteristic trait of Anglo-Saxon and later English art. Chapter III discusses in general the tradition of Dormition-Assumption iconography in
Continental art and in particular the special tradition for the theme in art of the British Isles, where by comparison it occurs earlier and in more developed form. The recurrence of a Death and Assumption cycle in expanded form in the York Psalter can be seen as a logical development of a subject habitually present in English art. Chapter IV notes that throughout the iconography of the other miniatures, the artist of the York Psalter has followed in the main a variety of models from Byzantine art and contemporary English illumination. But, in some unusual and inventive features, very often the prototype turns out to be insular art. Anglo-Saxon iconography, which was the formative influence on the Virgin cycle, has also contributed an imaginative aspect to some of the other miniatures as well.

In an atmosphere of ever-increasing devotion to Mary, the artist of the York Psalter Virgin cycle has combined Anglo-Saxon literary sources and pictorial motifs. In so doing he has created a unique iconography, imbued with a new, highly original content.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**ABSTRACT**

**LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

**CHAPTER I**

   I. Introduction and description  
   II. Provenance  
   III. Historiography

**CHAPTER II**

   The Virgin Cycle  
   Analysis—Textual Sources  
   Analysis—Assumption miniature

**CHAPTER III**

   Assumption iconography—Continental traditions  
   Assumption iconography—insular traditions

**CHAPTER IV**

   The other miniatures  
   Conclusions

**NOTES to Chapter I**

   to Chapter II  
   to Chapter III  
   to Chapter IV
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrations</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources of Illustrations</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS


31. The Visitation. Full page miniature, *Copenhagen Psalter*. Copenhagen: Royal Library MS Thott 143 2o, folio


44. Entombment of Christ. Wall-painting. Sant'Angelo in Formis, nave, north wall.

45. Burial of St. Aemilius, Ivory panel from reliquary shrine, Abbey of San Millan de la Cogolla, Rioja (province of Logrono), Spain.


49. Burial of the King. Detail from miniature, *Romance of Alexander*. Cambridge: Trinity College MS 0.9.34, folio 34.


55. Reconstruction of Assumption miniature, *York Psalter*. see Fig. 26.


62. Detail of Fig. 61.


64. Koimesis. Icon. Saint Catharine's Monastery, Mount Sinai.


71. Death of the Virgin and Assumption. Tympanum of west portal, Cathedral of Senlis.


77. Death of the Virgin and Assumption. Stone slab from Church of Wirksworth, Derbyshire.


82. Sacrifice of Isaac. Ivory plaque. Cathedral of Salerno.


85. Sacrifice of Isaac. Detail from mosaic. Church of San Vitale, Ravenna. Lunette, Presbytery, left wall.


90. Ascension. Detail from Mosaic, Monreale.


94. Ascension. Full page miniature, Pembroke College MS 120 (Cambridge).


Figures used in Notes


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Chapter 1

Of the collection belonging to the University of Glasgow Library, pride of place must go to the illuminated manuscript dating ca 1170 which we know as the York Psalter (Glasgow, Univ.Libr. MS. Hunter U.3.2). Traditionally acclaimed an important work of the 12th century, it has featured in major exhibitions of English medieval art and it is known to us also by citation numerous times in scholarly literature.\(^1\) Its luxurious decoration has caught the attention of various art historians. Rickert describes the manuscript as a "... large and splendid psalter..." and Miller counts it as "... one of the most beautiful of the 12th century psalters to come down to us...":\(^2\) Young and Aitken in 1908 were the first to systematically describe its physical features in detail in their Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of the Hunterian Museum.\(^3\) More recently the style and iconography of the Psalter have been surveyed in T.S.R. Boase's short monograph and in Kauffmann's 1973 catalogue, Romanesque Manuscripts 1066-1190.\(^4\)

The first part of this Chapter will introduce the manuscript by presenting a summary of its chief characteristics in order to relate it to the mainstream of
English illumination during the 12th century. However, of greater interest I believe are the features less well known about the *York Psalter* and therefore the second part of the Chapter will outline its atypical aspects. These will form the focus of the following sections of this essay. As I will point out, the provenance of the *York Psalter* from the north of England and its Virgin iconography—two interrelated factors—suggest a new understanding of the manuscript and also evidence the nature of artistic activity north of the Humber at this time.

I.

To begin: a personal visit by me to Glasgow in 1977 confirms that the manuscript in its present condition contains 210 folios measuring 290 x 184 mm (11 1/2 x 7 1/2"), a large scale which together with its lavish use of gold and brilliant colouring throughout the decoration contributes to its sumptuous appearance. The text is written in one hand typical of the 1160's, as noted by Boase, except for prayers at the end which are in a late 14th century script. Originally written with feminine endings but la-
ter altered into the masculine plural, these prayers may be an indication of the original owner of the Psalter. The feminine gender as well as the emphasis on the Virgin in several of the miniatures suggest that the patron of such a deluxe work may well have been an abbess or lady of high standing from Yorkshire, the area of origin of the manuscript. Thus, the York Psalter would be associated with the tradition popular in England of illuminated psalters and other devotional books produced for women, as exampled by the St. Albans and Shaftesbury Psalters.

On opening the Psalter, one is greeted first by the decoration of the Calendar pages at the top in the initial $H$ with lively characters depicting the occupations of the months, and lower down the page with the signs of the zodiac in roundels (Figs. 2-14). While such illustration is customary in medieval psalters in England and the Continent by the 12th century, the use of groups in complex genre scenes as in the York Psalter instead of single figures engaged in the characteristic activity has been traced by Schapiro to specifically English influence by early 11th century manuscripts such as the British Museum MS. Tiberius B.v folio 3 (Fig.1). Consequently right from the beginning there are hints here in the opening
pages and in the indications of its owner that the York Psalter responds to local as opposed to imported fashion.

Overall, the style of the miniatures—thirteen full-page illustrations and an elaborate Beatus page—(Figs. 15-28), is within the main trend of English illumination from the mid-century as generated by the impact of the new Romanesque style in the St. Albans Psalter, ca 1119-1123 (Hildesheim, St. Godehard's Treasury, unnumbered ms.).

From this pictorial tradition which descended through the Bury Bible, ca 1135 (Cambridge, C.C.C. MS 2), the Pembroke College MS 120, ca 1140, the Lambeth Bible, ca 1140-1150 (London, Lambeth Palace Libr. MS 3), and the Winchester Psalter ca 1150 (British Museum MS Nero C.IV),

the characteristic features of style are: the use of broad areas of colour with shaded edges as a means to build volume; the grouping of figures in compositions kept within the boundaries of the frame; the type of filling ornament inside the double borders of the frame itself; and architectural settings subjugated to the requirements of the narrative.

The style of the initials—ten, large historiated initials at the liturgical sections of the Psalms and about 150 smaller gilt initials throughout the remaining text—(Figs. 34-40) conforms to mid-century type. They feature
thick stems, large blossoms and inhabited scrolls. Like the initials in the Winchester Psalter which they resemble, they are not overly lavish and include such secular motifs as the mermaid combing her hair and the harp-playing goat.

A large part of the Psalter's visual charm is due to its wide range of brilliant colour. The miniatures are painted in clear, bright colours of vermilion and lake red, pure orange, aquamarine green, a blue as rich as lapus lazuli and in blended tones of slatey gray, brown and beige. The effect of figures executed in these intense pigments and outlined in black, silhouetted singly or set in groups against tooled gold backgrounds, is nothing less than stunning. Such a palette of pure colour—almost garish in effect at times—in tandem with the gold ground is in keeping with the 12th century colour vocabulary in English illumination as developed from Ottonian and Byzantine sources. The drapery style also reflects contemporary developments. Of the later 12th century manuscripts in England, the York Psalter represents the climax of English Romanesque stylization. As Wormald notes: "... (it) is the reduction to its farthest limit of the attempts first begun in the Bury Bible to make a
compromise between certain aspects of Byzantine art, particularly in the damp-fold convention and the English love of pattern which of course had its true origins in barbaric art." A similar process of schematized patterns is also evident in the figural style of the York Psalter, with figures of elongated, tubular shape in rigid stances and with a metallic appearance (Fig. 15). Yet, in spite of the artist's tendency to conceive his figures as part of an ornamental design, there is an immense expressiveness in these characters as we see in the look of dawning despair on the face of Abraham when he is told to sacrifice his son (Fig. 17). Often isolated against their gold backgrounds, the figures of the York Psalter are capable of expressing real human pathos.

In its organization of the illustrations, the Psalter reveals its affinity to the English method of decoration in 12th-century psalters. The subjects of the miniatures represent events from the Bible and include six scenes from the final days of the life of the Virgin. In this the York Psalter (Figs. 15-26) belongs to the group of deluxe English psalters whose text pages were prefaced by a pictorial cycle of full-page scenes from the Old or New Testament, or both, emphasizing the Life of Christ and
occasionally from the Life of the Virgin. It is well known that this practice of prefatory illustration was not a Continental innovation, though it became a widespread system by the 13th century. In spite of a possible ultimate origin in Byzantine art which Pächt suggests, the earliest example of such a decorative scheme is attributed to an English manuscript of the 11th century, British Museum MS Tiberius C.vi. Here again the artist of the York Psalter adopts a native tradition and as I will show in the following chapters, it is this predilection for characteristically English traits which is the hallmark of his creative capacity.

One may conclude from this introduction that there is obvious relation in style, form and iconography between the miniatures of the York Psalter and other examples of English illumination between 1125 and 1175. I would agree with Professors Boase and Kauffmann that in overall appearance the manuscript is allied to the tradition established by the St. Albans Psalter line and two other pictorial cycles represented by the manuscripts dating ca 1140, viz: Pembroke College MS.120 and the set of leaves now in different collections known as the Four Psalter Leaves. However, in the remainder of this Chap-
ter, I wish to present the atypical features of the *York Psalter* which set it apart from the main line of manuscripts produced in the south of England.

II.

Since most English Romanesque illumination centers in the southern schools, the *York Psalter* gains distinction first of all for being an important manuscript from a northern scriptorium. While we do have evidence of a northern revival in the 12th century in sculpture and in architecture, particularly in Yorkshire, examples of illumination from the north are less well known. In comparison to the numerous manuscripts from the southern schools at Winchester, Bury St. Edmonds, Canterbury *et al.*, only three other contemporary psalters are assigned to the north. These are: the *Copenhagen Psalter* (Copenhagen, Royal Libr. MS Thott 143 2°, ca 1170, which is similar to the *York Psalter* in style, script and Calendar entries; and two books now at Oxford, *Douce MS 293*, mid or third quarter 12th century, and *MS Gouch Liturg. 2 (S.C. 18343)*, late 12th century. Of this northern group moreover the *York Psalter* is the most significant on another count, an aspect which distinguishes it not only from its colleagues in the north but from other 12th century manuscripts in general, viz. its Virgin cycle. These
miniatures (Figs. 24-26) in the *York Psalter* in contrast to other representations of the subject, I believe rely heavily on Anglo-Saxon sources for their unusual imagery. It is this aspect—not suggested by earlier students of the manuscript—on which I wish to concentrate in this thesis. In the following chapters I shall claim that this revival of indigenous iconography stems from a separate northern tradition not reflected in the other 12th century examples from the south. Therefore the northern provenance of the *Psalter* assumes greater significance for my argument since in part it accounts for the special treatment of the Virgin cycle.

As noted by Boase and others, the primary evidence for a northern scriptorium is in the selection of saints in the Calendar which are associated with the north of England. Among others, these are: Oswald (5 August), Wilfrid (24 April), Cuthbert twice (24 April and again on his translation), John of Beverley (7 May) described as Archbishop though the primacy of York dates from after his death, and Botolph (17 June). Some of these are national saints such as Oswald and Cuthbert, as we see from their occurrence elsewhere in southern manuscripts, such as the Calendar from the *Winchester Psalter*. But John of
Beverley seldom occurs outside northern manuscripts and the rare mention of the Bishop of York, Paulinus (d. 644), famous for christening Edwin at York in 627, supports the theory that the Psalter in its northern connections originated in the diocese of York, if not the city of York itself. For St. Cuthbert both his feast and translation are given which led Boase in his original assessment of the manuscript to suggest possible patronage from Durham. But the absence of other Northumbrian saints such as Bede, Benedict Biscop, Carilef, Boisilus and Aidan seems to argue against Durham. However, St. Augustine is given greater emphasis for he is mentioned three times, a prominence usually associated with some special meaning for the owner of the manuscript. His feast on 28 August, its octave 4 September and his translation on 11 October are entries. Thus it is possible that there may be connection with an Augustinian house.

Since the 1920's most art historians have recognized York as the home of the Psalter, and in spite of the fact that there are no marks, colophons or inscriptions in its leaves, the manuscript is commonly referred to as the York Psalter. Reversing his earlier opinion,
Boase notes in his monograph, *The York Psalter*, that an attribution to York is certainly reasonable on the basis of the Calendar entries. Also, though he does not discuss it in detail, a provenance from York is possible because of the known artistic activity there. By the 12th century York was no longer the northern capital, though it was still the northern metropolis and maintained an active artistic community under its powerful prelate, Roger of Pont l'Evêque, Archbishop of York from 1154 to 1181. The excellence of artistic production from York is well documented from sculpture, as evidenced by the famous York *Virgin*, dated variously from the 10th to the 12th century, and also in the late 12th century series of over-life-sized *Prophets* from the Benedictine Abbey of St. Mary. There is also proof of an early 12th century stained glass atelier at York producing work of high quality. Two fragments are preserved at the Minster, one of which may reflect a figure from a *Tree of Jesse*, an early instance of this new 12th century theme. Sadly, there is no extant evidence of manuscripts illuminated at York at this time, though we do know of earlier ones and also of an important scriptorium known for its individual style in the 13th century. Moreover, since the time of Archbishop Egbert (729-737), and later under the administration of Alcuin
(from 780), the famed Library at the Minster School established a tradition of book-collecting at York. Although little remains, the extent of this tradition is testified by the 13th century catalogue of the Austin Friars at York which lists not less than 646 books.

While York is the accepted origin of the Psalter, the emphasis in the Calendar on St. Augustine indicates a more likely attribution to an Augustinian house. A provenance from the Augustinian Priory at Bridlington was first suggested by Zarnecki on the grounds of the connection between the manuscript and other works of art known to originate there. The case for Bridlington may be summarized as follows. Although by no means as numerous as Cistercian establishments in the north, there were by the second decade of the 12th century a number of well-endowed and prosperous Augustinian houses in Yorkshire. The Priory of Bridlington, founded for the Augustinian Canons by Walter de Gant ca 1114 in honour of the Holy Mary, was known as a center of learning of some repute. It was also one of the richest houses. Supposing the York Psalter to have indeed been commissioned for the use of Bridlington—since the Calendar suggests this—it can still be argued that we do not in fact know if that Priory
produced it. Although I have not found documentary evidence that Bridlington maintained an active scriptorium, there is record of Robert the Scribe who was active in 1159. The argument for Bridlington as an artistic center grows stronger however since an important fragment of sculpture dated to the late 12th century recently found there, suggests that Bridlington supported at least an important sculpture workshop.

This small statuette (Figs. 29-30) represents the lower half of a draped figure which would have measured originally about one foot in height. It is carved in the round—a first for Yorkshire sculpture—with the back left smooth indicating an original position in a niche or against a background. The pose of the figure leaning slightly forward has been compared by Zarnecki to the scene of the Visitation in the Copenhagen Psalter (folio 8v, Fig. 31) in expressive pose and rounded modelling. In their striking resemblance he concludes that the two works surely originated in the same artistic center, one which was capable of producing art of high quality.

In light of the known relationship between the Copenhagen Psalter and the York Psalter in style (compare
the Beatus initials, Figs. 28, 32) and in their near-
identical scripts and selection of feasts in the Calen-
dars (neither has an entry for Thomas Becket), a common
provenance for all three works is likely, viz. Bridling-
ton. However, a more direct connection between the York
Psalter and the Bridlington statuette can be shown. As
outlined by Zarnecki, a striking feature of the sculpture
is the decorative and illogical fold formed by its outer
garment (Fig. 29). This unusual and individual detail is
closely paralleled in numerous instances in the miniatures
of the York Psalter, e.g. The Sacrifice of Isaac (folio
9v, Fig. 17) and Pentecost (folio 15v, Fig. 22), where
the drapery has been treated almost identically to that
of the statuette. Such coincidence of style together
with the same high artistic standard in both the sculp-
ture and the manuscript in Zarnecki's opinion point very
strongly to Bridlington as origin.42

I have summarized here the most obvious aspects
of the relationship between the two psalters and their re-
spective connections to the sculpture fragment. From this
evidence one may reasonably conclude that they all origi-
nated in a northern atelier associated with the Priory of
Bridlington. This atelier must have been large enough to require several artists working in different media and it must have been in existence at least by 1170 to continue for thirty years to the end of the century when the sculpture was produced. Alternatively the atelier could have been in production a decade earlier than 1170 since the script of the York Psalter has been dated to the 1160's. Thus, a possible sequence of production by the atelier might have been: first the text of the York Psalter written under Robert the Scribe by 1159, or by his pupils; the illuminations completed by the early years of the 1170's; and the Copenhagen Psalter because of its more classical style would have followed somewhat later, ca 1175.

To summarize the evidence with regard to provenance: a northern origin is virtually certain because of the appearance in the Calendar of exclusively northern saints such as Paulinus. Although York itself is a reasonable attribution and many scholars have accepted it, the emphasis in the Calendar on St. Augustine points to an Augustinian establishment for the manuscript's origin. Accordingly, Bridlington Priory, a wealthy and intellec-
tual center, should be considered. There are stylistic links between the *York Psalter* and an important statuette found at Bridlington, noteworthy for being the earliest sculpture in the round in Yorkshire and evidence also of Bridlington's importance as an artistic center. That Bridlington is the common source is further attested by another close comparison between the sculpture and the *Copenhagen Psalter*, and the similarities of this manuscript in style and Calendar to the *York Psalter* interconnect all three works to one *atelier*.

As I have stated earlier, the northern provenance of the *York Psalter* is a significant factor in explaining its unusual Virgin cycle, since I shall prove how the iconographic tradition to which it belongs can ultimately be traced to northern interests. This discussion will occupy the remaining Chapters of my thesis. However, before proceeding it is necessary to record here the contribution by other art historians on the problems connected with this cycle.

*The Death, Burial and Assumption of the Virgin* are depicted in six scenes on the last three folios of
the full-page illustrations of the York Psalter (Figs. 24-26). Although the subject occurs in at least two other important 12th century psalters, that of the York Psalter is unique. Not only is it unusual in being set out so fully at this time but its representations in many details are different from its southern contemporaries (Fig. 33). Although this variation presents considerable area for research, I have found that little previous scholarship on the Virgin iconography of the York Psalter has been published. Most early art historians have commented only on its lavish style and decoration, such as Millar (noted above), though he records that according to its Calendar it was executed in the diocese of York. He refers also to the close stylistic relationship of the initials and script to that of the Copenhagen Psalter. However, the unusual iconography of the Virgin miniatures must not have missed his eye since he includes several illustrations of the cycle, though there is no mention of it in his text. In this same genre of art historical writing, Saunders in 1933 acknowledges that York was capable of producing first-rate illumination as seen in its Psalter (which she calls the Glasgow Psalter), which she dates ca 1170. Her only record of its distinctive iconography is her mention of the increasing worship of the Virgin, reflected through the introduction of representations of
her Death and Assumption into certain psalters, e.g. the
York Psalter, ca 1170, the Winchester Psalter, ca 1150, and
the Westminster Psalter, ca 1200. While Saunders’ des-
criptions are of interest from the viewpoint of historiog-
raphy, of greater interest to this thesis in an earlier
work of her authorship, is her unwitting mention of ano-
ther extensive Virgin cycle dating from the 12th century.
This is found in "... the incomplete psalter from Bury
belonging to Mr. Dyson Perrins, depicting the birth, early
life and death of the Virgin. ...". Walter Oakeshott
also refers to this psalter from Bury as depicting a
Koimesis which would make it the second instance in the
12th century (see Fig.33 mentioned above) of the subject
under Byzantine influence in a manuscript from a major
southern scriptorium. If we accept Oakeshott's des-
scription of this miniature--and there is no reason not
to--then it supports my thesis that the Anglo-Saxon icono-
graphy in the York Psalter Virgin cycle remains distinct
from southern versions.

German art historians have also expressed in-
terest in the Virgin imagery as an example of unusual
Assumption iconography and their extensive and thorough
lists have been invaluable for my own investigation. But the later English scholars have contributed the most in analytical studies. Of these, Boase has examined the Virgin cycle against some other types of Assumption and traces the theme briefly in the writings of several theologians. In seeking possible textual sources for its unusual pictorial form, he notes in particular that the mystic visions of Elisabeth of Schöna, which circulated in England after 1165, seemed to express most clearly the corporeal nature of the Assumption in the York Psalter.

Although more recent scholarship continues to support this connection, Deshman in 1970 criticized Boase's theory that several of the miniatures were simply inventions on the grounds that other recensions of the subject's textual source were known in the West. He concluded that the Psalter's relationship to the narrative text deserves a more thorough study and this in fact has become one of the methods of this thesis.

From my own examination as presented in the following Chapters of the literary sources and pictorial traditions for the Dormition-Assumption, I propose that the artist of the York Psalter has created a new icono-
graphy based on his insular heritage. In combining different elements of Anglo-Saxon ancestry, his imagery becomes unique and is imbued with a new, highly original content.
Chapter II

The principal iconographic novelty of the miniatures of the York Psalter centers in the three folios of full-page illustrations of the Death, Burial and Assumption of the Virgin (Figs. 24-26). The subject appears elsewhere in contemporary English art and on the Continent, but these six scenes arranged in two registers per page are unparalleled at this time for being set out so fully, more so if the blank pages in the same gathering were intended also for illumination. However, copiousness aside, what interests here is the fact that the iconography of the Virgin cycle is noteworthy in two ways: in its relationship to the textual basis and in the new pictorial form of the Assumption image. In discussing these two aspects in this Chapter, I will propose that Anglo-Saxon sources lie behind these unusual images.

The cycle in the York Psalter does not agree in several important details with the usual apocryphal Latin text for the subject, the Pseudo-Melito translation, De Transitu Beatae Mariae or Transitus. In fact the cycle contradicts the text in places as I will point out below. This was noticed first by Boase in his brief discussion of these scenes as illustrations of the Transitus narrative, but his only explanations for the variations are: i) because they are
inventions by the artist; and ii) that the 12th century 
*Visions* of Elisabeth of Schönau (d.1165) who described 
another version of the Virgin's death, influenced the 
scene of the Assumption. Boase's suggestions will be as­
essed in the second part of this Chapter. No one else, 
as far as I have found, has worked on the problem or exam­
ined the relationship of the *Psalter* 's Virgin iconography 
to other versions of the apocryphal story, though Deshman 
has noted that there were different recensions of the nar­
rative current in the West by this time.

In order to isolate the deviations between text 
and miniature, I will first describe the six scenes of the 
Virgin cycle in the *York Psalter* and analyze them against 
the traditional *Transitus* text. I will then compare an­
other account of the narrative in an insular recension in 
the Anglo-Saxon *Blickling Homilies ca 971.* In my opinion, 
this text is the probable solution to the puzzle for it 
explains many of the cycle's deviations and anachronistic 
features.

The three folios are arranged as follows:
The Angel Announcing the Death to the Virgin

(upper register folio 17v Fig. 24)

Beneath twin, rounded arches resting on three columns of simulated porphyry marble, the angel in the right arcade is shown behind an altar covered by a white cloth. He holds a blank scroll with his left hand and with the other gives the palm to the Virgin on the left. She wears a narrowly cut dress with a long white undershift, and a cloak drawn up over her head. This attire differs from what she wears in the earlier miniatures (e.g. Figs. 21, 22); moreover, the proportions of her body have now changed so that the head is smaller and her hands overly large in comparison to her previous appearances. Her right hand is raised in greeting or possibly is a gesture of acceptance of her fate to come. In an attempt to render movement, the angel's wing passes behind the pillar on the right, and his drapery curves back illogically as he strides forward into the room.

The Virgin Announces her Impending Death to the Apostles

(lower register folio 17v Fig. 24)

Standing on the right, the Virgin tells of the forthcoming event and points to John in the center. She
is about to hand the palm to John who is nimbed and beardless according to Western fashion. To the left stands Peter, also nimbed and clasping a closed book to his chest. Behind him and seemingly at the back, are three Jews in round caps, one of whom points uneasily toward Peter. The other arm of the pointing Jew seems to pass behind Peter's back as if to touch him. In addition, the Jews partially behind Peter, at the same time are trodding on his toes, a misunderstanding of the overlapping figures and an error which does not occur in the other, more complex arrangements in the following scenes.

The Death of the Virgin (upper register folio 18r Fig.25)

The Virgin lies in her bed, her head to the right resting on a pillow which is depicted awkwardly at right angles to the counterpane. She is represented as still living, with eyes open as she watches Christ who stands behind the bed. Christ is at the center of the composition; his left arm clutching his outstretched drapery and right arm in benediction toward Mary. At the foot of the bed and behind it are the kneeling apostles, six in all, headed by Peter who now holds in addition to his keys the Palm which was handed to John in the preceding scene. Behind them stand five Jews again depicted
in round caps. In the upper right corner, the heads of eight witnessing angels appear. The scene is enacted beneath double arches resting on two lateral columns which frame the composition. The central column we would expect to see has been omitted in lieu of the standing Christ who divides the composition into an earthly zone on the left, which contains the apostles and the Jews, and a divine zone on the right with the angels and the Virgin.

The Funeral Procession (lower register folio 18r Fig. 25)

The apostles carry the body of the Virgin on the bier which is covered by a mantle, while two accompanying angels beneath stretch forward their veiled hands in the ancient gesture of lamentation. The procession is led by Peter with a closed book and the keys in his right hand, and the palm in his left. He is shown in three-quarter view and is about to walk out of our range of vision as well as the composition which has no frame. Of all the scenes in the Virgin cycle, this miniature is the only one not to have a border. Peter turns his head back over his shoulder. One of the Jews on the left side in front of the cortege stretches his arms outward as if he were appealing to Peter. They direct their gazes at each other. Other Jews are in the background and wear round hats. The group, shown apparently
out of doors, proceeds on a scalloped surface consisting of overlapping, stylized elliptical shapes which may represent rocky ground. However these forms do not resemble the other depictions of groundlines elsewhere in the manuscript, as in folios 7v, 8r and 9v (Figs. 15-17).

*The Burial of the Virgin* (folio 19v upper register Fig. 26)

The apostles lower the Virgin's body, completely wrapped in grave linen, into her coffin which rests on a base of simple design. Peter is recognisable on the right, the palm and keys held out in one hand, the closed book clamped against his chest by the other arm beneath the drapery. It is an awkward arrangement, since his upper torso appears to be in front of the apostle who assists in the burial while the lower part of his body is at the back. Above center, four angels cense the body, their red wings spreading over the frame at the top. This gives the illusion of distance between them and the apostles, for the angels appear to hover on a pictorial plane parallel to and in front of the one containing the mourners. In all, fifteen mourners are present.

*Assumption of the Virgin* (folio 19v lower register Fig. 26)

Occupying two thirds of the page, this dramatic
scene shows the totally swathed figure, her feet molded and a band around the head, being carried aloft on a tightly stretched sheet, with deeply indented edges held by nimbed angels. The seven angels on each side hold the sheet at equidistant points, which form a pattern of rib-like sections resembling those of a rib-vaulted ceiling. 3 Two additional angels below cense the empty sarcophagus. Christ stands on the left, his right arm pointing to the miracle he has just created. The presence here of the divinity in the Assumption scene contrasts with his absence in the episode above where mortals perform the burial of the Virgin. There the appearance of censing angels may refer to her immortality. 4

Analysis - Textual Sources

In representations from Eastern art, the death of the Virgin is termed a Koimesis. Alternatively, the title of the theme in Western illustrations is known as the Dormition (from dormitio: to sleep) or sometimes, simply as the Assumption. The subject may be expressed various ways: a cycle of scenes may refer to the different episodes connected with Mary's death, as in the York Psalter, or a single scene may emphasize one speci-
fic aspect, e.g. in the Winchester Psalter, folio 29 (Fig. 33). The account of the Virgin's death is not in the Scriptural Gospels, but occurs in a series of apocryphal narratives of the 5th century or earlier, the oldest account of it written in Greek or Syriac, and soon afterwards appearing in Latin, Gaelic, Coptic and Arabic versions. These texts, whose stated purpose was to trace the history of Mary's life and the manner of her death, were based on the premise that her death like her predes­ tination must have been unique. As she was exempt from original sin at the moment of her conception, so she was exempt also from death in the normal sense of the word. Not only did Christ intervene personally to receive Mary's soul at the moment of her dying, but also she was permitted a bodily assumption when her two elements were reuni­ ted.  

The oldest and basic form of the legend in the West was the De Transitu Beatae Mariae, a Latin text based on earlier Coptic and Greek versions, attributed to Meli­ to, Bishop of Sardis in the later 2nd century, but in fact at the earliest a 4th-century work. Gregory of Tours in the 6th century used this Pseudo-Melito version in an abbreviated form in his treatise De Gloria Martyrum (590) and this promoted the circulation and acceptance of the
account in the West at an early date. Because the assumption doctrine was based on legendary or apocryphal accounts, opposition from orthodox theologians arose in the 8th century. However by the 10th century various recensions of the Pseudo-Melito text were current and widely used in England. 

The story as it appears in the Transitus relates that the angel enters Mary's home to announce her forthcoming death and presents her with a palm. At her request, the apostles who had scattered throughout the world following Pentecost, miraculously reappear in Jerusalem where the obsequies were to take place. Mary gives John the palm, warning him that the Jews will attempt to destroy her body. On the third day while the apostles performed the last rites, Christ appears, receives her soul and delivers it to the archangels Gabriel and Michael. Three virgins prepare the body for burial; the apostles carry her bier to the tomb, accompanied by angels. The Jews attempt to seize the bier and the hands of their leader are fixed to it so that he cannot move them; Peter releases his hands when he confesses belief in Christ. Peter sends the converted Jew into the city to cure the blindness of the people by laying the palm on the eyes of believers. Mary is brought to the valley of Jehoshaphat (from her house on
Mount Zion) and laid in a new tomb near the Mount of Olives; Christ appears again and the apostles beseech him to take the body of his mother up into heaven. Michael returns the soul of the Virgin to her body, the grave is opened, and the Lord greets her with the words: "... Thou that didst not suffer corruption by union of the flesh, shalt not suffer dissolution of the body in the sepulchre...". Mary rises up from the grave, worships Christ, and is borne by angels into Paradise.

This summary of Mary's death, burial and assumption into heaven as it is related in the Transitus is the most familiar textual source for the subject. In the following analysis of the Marian cycle in the York Psalter, I have used this version initially as a standard of comparison.

The first scene in the York Psalter cycle (Fig. 24) The Angel Announcing the Death to the Virgin, is a typical representation of the event—see by comparison the wall-paintings in the Church of All Saints, Chalgrove—and it illustrates the passage "... Behold, said he, this palm branch. I have brought it to thee from the paradise of the Lord, and thou shalt cause it to be carried before thy bier on the third day when thou shalt be taken up out of the body.". The Virgin's unusual close-
fitting and absolutely straight shift does not articulate her body as do her other different draperies in her earlier appearances. This change is not necessarily a meaningless alteration by the artist as Boase implies, but I believe it indicates, as does the change in proportion, that a different model was used here. The artist in my opinion has shown Mary preparing herself for death in her funeral garb, for he has interpreted literally the lines in the narrative, "... Then Mary put off her garments and clothed herself in her best raiment. . . .". There may be thematic reasons also in his using the same pattern here on the Virgin's shift and in the Death scenes following. By connecting these episodes visually, the artist may have wished to suggest her forthcoming death. Also, as Heimann has suggested, he would have avoided any confusion with the Annunciation of the birth of Christ. If

While the first register in this folio (17v) adheres closely to the Transitus narrative, the lower scene does not follow the text so closely and disagrees with the Pseudo-Melito version. According to this there is no mention of Peter; nor should the Jews appear at this time and yet the artist has shown both. The Transitus plainly states that the Virgin gives the palm to John alone. Con-
sequently we may suspect that here the artist has added the extra figures out of order himself, as his own invention—as Boase believes—though there seems to be no formalistic reason why he would alter the composition in this way. More likely he used a different text or pictorial models reflecting a different apocryphal account of the cycle which would account for the anachronistic elements.

Folio 18r (Fig. 25) also reveals significant deviations from the Transitus. In the upper register The Death of the Virgin follows in the main the normal Eastern formula for the Koimesis, but unlike it, Christ does not hold the soul of the Virgin as he would in the Byzantine manner. Also in contradiction to the text and to representations under Byzantine influence, the Virgin here is still living. We may compare an almost contemporary English miniature in the Winchester Psalter, (folio 29, Fig.33), which is depicted in accordance with the scene as described by John of Warzburg (ca 1130), represented on a painting in the Church of Mount Zion. The Virgin lies dead on a couch, surrounded by the grieving apostles. A bearded apostle leans over the foot of the bed in an attitude of grief; another bearded apostle is shown behind the bed near the top and gently touches the
the Virgin's breast as if to determine whether the heart-beat truly has stopped. Peter in front is censing and above, two angels with arms and hands veiled prepare to receive the soul. Christ in the center holds up the soul of the dead Virgin, which is shown as a small, swaddled child-like figure. In its acute feeling for hieratic form, the *Winchester Psalter* miniature like its Byzantine prototypes reproduces the static, solemnized episode from the Eastern tradition. In the *York Psalter* scene, almost everything has changed. Now the narrative element instead is stressed. The Virgin lies wakeful on her bed and the apostles, instead of lamenting their loss, stand or kneel behind her bed with expectant, not mournful, expressions. The artist depicts the earlier moment of Christ's arrival when "... suddenly the Lord Jesus came with a great multitude of angels, and a great light came down upon that place...". This change of time increases the tension of the scene for instead of ritualizing the event, he emphasizes the dramatic expectation of the Virgin's death. As in the preceding miniature, he again introduces anachronistic features in the presence of the five Jews in the background. Here they appear too early since the *Transitus* connects them to the following scene. Also, he displays Peter prominently holding the palm, and this arrangement contradicts the text
which explicitly states that "... John carried the palm. ...".

The bottom register (folio 18r, Fig. 25) depicts The Funeral Procession interrupted by the impious Jew in, surprisingly, a subdued, almost formal manner with restrained gestures and calm expressions. The event itself calls for a sober atmosphere but the treatment of the act of sacrilege is not at all in keeping with the dramatic incident described in the Transitus text which is normally represented when the leader of the Jews cries out in his agony for Peter to help him. The text describes:

And behold, one of them who was a prince of the priests of the Jews in his degree was filled with fury and wrath and... he came near and would have overthrown the bier and cast the body on the earth. And forthwith his hands dried up from his elbows and clave to the bier. And when the apostles lifted the bier, part of him was hanging and part clave to the bier, and he was wrung with extreme torment as the apostles went on and sang... Then that prince cried out, saying: I beseech thee holy Peter... for I am sore tormented with great pains. Remember that when the damsel that kept the door knew thee in the judgement hall and told the rest, that they might challenge thee, then I spake on thy behalf.

In contrast to the restraint of the Glasgow miniature, other English versions of this scene, for instance the representations at Croughton and in the Luttrell Psalter, (ca 1300 and ca 1320 resp.), stress the agonizing moment
when the prince hangs by his hands from the bier. The artist of the York Psalter does not illustrate this moment describing the dreadful consequences which befall those who dare defile the bier of the Mother of Christ, but depicts instead the moment afterwards, that is following the miracle accomplished through faith. ". . . Peter . . . made the bier stand still . . . and he [the prince of the Jews] came near and kissed the bed, and forthwith all pain left him and his hands were made whole . . . even the apostles themselves marvelled and wept for gladness.".¹⁹ In the miniature, the apostles who carry the bier look back over their shoulders in surprise, which they could do only once Peter had stopped the procession and the prince had confessed his belief. The Pseudo-Melito Transitus does recount this incident of the restoration of the withered hands, but it does not provide for the gesture of the Jew stretching forth his hands. Is this posture an expressive invention of the artist, or once again can we detect another detail that derives from a different recension of the narrative?

One more feature in this scene deserves mention here: the distinctively scalloped baseline on which the procession is shown. While there is no description in the Transitus of the locale where the event takes place, one
would expect an indication of the scene in open air, such as the one in the Sacrifice of Isaac miniature (folio 9v, Fig. 17), or an independent setting such as the neutral space depicted in The Virgin Announces her Impending Death (folio 17v, Fig. 24). Here however in the Funeral Procession, the unique shapes beneath the feet of the apostles attract our attention for they are an essential part of the composition. They extend beyond the figural group to the edges of the vellum, a device not occurring in the other representations of groundline.

It remains to examine the final miniature of the Virgin cycle, the Burial and Assumption, in the York Psalter, as it relates to the Transitus. In contrast to the straightforward compositions of the preceding scenes in the cycle, folio 19v (Fig. 26) is a striking and highly imaginative design. The earlier mood of restraint has changed to a dramatic, highly charged atmosphere befitting the miracle. Beneath the scene of her burial, the Virgin's body, wrapped like a mummy, is lifted to heaven on an outer shroud which has been drawn back in a kind of glory by angels. Their prominent red and orange wings create an effect "... as though the whole picture were aglow with the flicker of flames." 20 In Western depictions of this scene,
the Virgin sometimes is shown carried up in a cloth as she is in the York Psalter, e.g. in the 12th century missal from Tours (Fig. 41), or she is represented partially shrouded as a mid-12th century illumination from the Cologne school which shows similar folds winding across the body (Fig. 42).\(^{21}\) But according to Boase, who discusses the scene in detail, the totally swathed body has no parallels in Assumption iconography earlier or later. This motif in the York Psalter makes a dramatic statement of the corporeal nature of the miracle, for there is no doubt that here the body, still wound in its grave linen, is being physically raised from the tomb to heaven.\(^{22}\) The scene does not correspond with the account in the Transitus and is incompatible with it, for there the Virgin rises and kneels before Christ:

... the apostles carrying Mary came into the place of the Valley of Jehoshaphat... and laid her in a new tomb and shut the sepulchre... and lo, suddenly the Lord Jesus came with a great multitude of angels and light flashing with great brightness. ... And he commanded Michael the archangel to bring the soul of the holy Mary. And Behold Michael... rolled away the stone from the sepulchre and the Lord said: Rise up, thou that didst not suffer corruption by union of the flesh, shalt not suffer dissolution of the body in the sepulchre. And immediately Mary rose up from the grave and blessed the Lord... and the Lord kissed her and departed, and delivered her to the angels to bear her into Paradise.\(^{23}\)

Boase concludes that the pictorial form of the Assumption must have been invented by the artist, since there is for this particular treatment of the scene "... neither a prototype
nor any successors."\textsuperscript{24}

Though Boase rejects the \textit{Transitus} as the textual basis for the \textit{York Psalter Assumption}, he does however suggest that the artist's imagination may have been stimulated by a different text. Another description of this episode occurs in the popular \textit{Visions of Elisabeth of Schönau, ca 1165},\textsuperscript{25} and Boase has associated this text with the highly unusual form of the \textit{Assumption} in the manuscript, since both expressions stress the corporeal nature of the event. This particular relationship will be assessed in greater detail in the second part of this Chapter, but I mention it here briefly in connection to the cycle as a whole in order to note that Elisabeth's \textit{Visions} deal only with the \textit{Assumption}. They do not include the earlier episodes described by the \textit{Transitus}. Consequently the \textit{Visions} cannot be used to explain the anachronistic features and unusual details in the other miniatures which Boase attributes to the originality of the artist.

What needs to be analyzed now is whether the first two miniatures in the Virgin cycle of the \textit{York Psalter} (folios 17v, 18r) can be related to another version of the \textit{Transitus}, as Deshman hinted. Based on my own examination, I have found that the account of the death and assumption
of the Virgin in the Blickling Homilies, an Anglo-Saxon vernacular text written ca 971, is associated in several significant details to the scenes in the York Psalter. For the main flow of events the author of this commentary has followed the Latin authority (Transitus) fairly closely. Accordingly, he includes the arrival of the angel and presentation to the Virgin of the palm, the arrival of Christ with angels and a great light at the bedside of Mary, the attempted desecration of the bier in the funeral procession by the leader of the Jews and his subsequent conversion, the burial of Mary and raising of her soul to Michael, and finally her resurrection from the tomb and eventual assumption to Paradise.

Similarity of the main episodes aside, there are several differences however between the vernacular and Latin versions of the narrative. These additions in the derivative text in the homilies seem to me to supply the explanation for some of the anomalies in the Psalter's iconography. In my opinion the Blickling text could have been one of the sources behind the pictorial cycle, though not the exclusive model, for at times the artist of the York Psalter Virgin miniatures seems to follow also the traditional Transitus narrative. On the basis of the close connection to both these sources, I believe the artist had before him an illustrated manuscript
of the *Transitus*—supposing such a model would have existed, a possibility to be suggested later—on which he based his cycle of miniatures. At the same time he introduced elements also from the other literary example at his disposal, the account in the *Blickling Homilies*, which he knew in the text only and transformed in his visual imagery in the *Psalter*.

Initially the *Blickling* account agrees with the Pseudo-Melito *Transitus* when, following the receipt of the palm from the angel who announced her forthcoming death, Mary "... again returned to her house and put aside, with all humility, the palm-twig that she had previously received... and invested herself with the finest garment." 28

But then the vernacular text (*Blickling*) differs for instead of continuing with the description of John's spectacular arrival on a cloud, the following scenes witness her announcement to her kinsfolk and the apostles (first Peter and Paul, then the others), that she would "... depart from the body... Then the holy Mary called all the apostles into her closet, and showed them all her garments, which she desired to have on at her burial and Peter said... that the third day was come in which she would depart from us." 29 This contradicts the *Transitus* version which
specifically describes the Virgin showing John alone her
ground-clothes in ". . . the secret part of the house. . . ."
and charging him with the palm of light to be carried be­
fore her bed borne to the tomb.30

In addition to this change of circumstance, the
Blickling sermonist has altered the emphasis in the roles of
the characters attending Mary's last rites. Peter, instead
of John, holds the privileged position as the active leader
of the apostles and of all the mourners present. In con­
trast to the Latin text where Mary invites all to keep watch
together without ceasing until ". . . the hour when the Lord
shall come and I shall depart out of the body . . . .", in the
Anglo-Saxon version it is the blessed Peter who entreats
them all, with the time of death arrived, to keep watch with
him.31 This text continues that there suddenly shone a great
light ". . . so that all the fiends who were there, and those
who saw the light, were overpowered." [italics mine].32 The
Transitus also recounts the moment just before Christ's arri­
val but describes it as the hour when all in the house were
asleep, saving the apostles and the three virgins who were
there.33 Peter continues to receive additional distinction
several times as the guardian of the deathwatch in the Blick­
líng version, for when Mary rested upon her bed ". . . at the
head sat the blessed Peter."34 Later he is the one who ad­
dresses the Lord concerning the whiteness of Mary's soul and
he also leads the apostles in placing her upon the bier, an emphasis that is lacking in the general descriptions in the Transitus.

The Anglo-Saxon account matches the Latin version in the command of the Lord to Peter to find a new tomb and to deposit the body there, but their accounts of the funeral procession are different. The latter describes Peter as lifting up the head of the body and with the other apostles carrying the blessed Mary, with John bearing the palm of light before the bier. The former does not specifically mention Peter as holding the palm in front of the cortege, but neither is John described with this honour. Instead John says, "Thou art the purest virgin, and it is fitting for thee to depart on thy bier, and for us to bear this palm-twig . . ." (italics mine). 35 This passage in the Blickling does nothing to single John out as the apostle especially chosen to carry the palm, as specified in the Transitus. Instead the Anglo-Saxon version would allow the artist to show Peter rather than John in the miniature bearing the palm in front of the procession.

Distinguishing Peter once more, the Blickling continues that after the apostles arose and lifted up the bier, supporting it with their hands, Peter, again in the
role of spokesman and leader, says: "Israel went out of Egypt, and sang Hallelujah; and the Lord is truly supporting this bier.". Unlike the account in the Latin authority, the Anglo-Saxon homilist considered it important to stress divine assistance in his additional phrase about the Lord's support.

The remainder of the vernacular account parallels the Transitus in most respects through the incident of the sacriligious Jew and the final burial and assumption of the Virgin. But the latter part of the account of the assumption reflects confusion in the translation of more than one Transitus manuscript, according to the analysis and comparison of the two texts by Willard. Thus, Michael takes charge of Mary's soul twice, once at her deathbed and again at the sepulchre, whence he "... lifted her up in the clouds before the presence of the Lord.". The apostles too, having gone to the Lord in the clouds, supplant the role of the angels in the Transitus and with all their power, themselves raise the body of Mary up in the clouds to the "... bliss of Paradise.".

To summarize so far: the account of the Assumption in the Blickling Homilies appears to depend on the Latin version Transitus for the principal elements of the narrative.
However, the Anglo-Saxon account presents several variations in detail which differ from the Latin authority, particularly in its emphasis on Peter who is singled out over the other apostles. When both versions are considered as textual sources for the Virgin cycle in the York Psalter, many of the unusual iconographic features in these miniatures become clear as I will illustrate below. In other words, it seems to me that the Anglo-Saxon text provides the answers—where the Transitus cannot—in explaining the iconography. Consequently I feel that the artist probably used the Blickling version as an additional literary model for his imagery.

In the first two scenes of the Virgin cycle (folio 17v, Fig.24), the artist must have combined the Anglo-Saxon and Latin versions of the narrative for the miniature contains aspects from both accounts. From the Transitus he illustrates the episodes of the presentation of the palm in the upper register, and the meeting between the Virgin and John in the lower. But at the same time, he introduces new characters in the figures of Peter and the Jews in accordance with the Blickling version. The additional group is fitted in awkwardly to the left of the central action, and the confusion evident in the overlapping figures as I described earlier shows that the artist
was hesitant about squeezing them into the miniature. It seems reasonable to infer from this unusual arrangement that the artist had introduced Peter, thereby stressing his importance, from his knowledge of the Blickling description. The appearance here of the Jews is hard to explain but their inclusion in the next set of scenes is less difficult. In the upper register of the Death of the Virgin (folio 18r Fig. 25), the artist may have interpreted the Blickling lines referring to the "fiends" present at the activities preceding Mary's death, an anti-semitic reference which would be in keeping with the sentiment of the time, particularly at York. An illustrated Transitus of the Pseudo-Melito version would naturally depict the Jews in the following episode of the Funeral Procession, but while following this model for the general layout, the artist has again included the Jews anachronistically in the Death as well. As he did before, he blends his sources to produce a distinct iconography.

The unusual emphasis on Peter throughout these miniatures could reflect the similar stress in the Anglo-Saxon narrative which repeatedly brings Peter to our attention in all the episodes. For example, in the scene of the Death, while the artist does not show Peter at the actual head of the bed as stated in the text (perhaps for lack of
space in his composition), he does stress Peter by showing him in slightly larger scale and at the head of the apostles, adjacent to Christ. The Blickling text names him as the one who brings in the palm-twig at Mary's death and surely this is the privileged circumstance which the artist had in mind in his depiction of Peter holding the palm here and in the next episode.

In the Funeral scene, John does not lead the procession as it is explicitly stated in the Transitus but Peter is depicted at the head of the group carrying the palm. This emphasis on Peter's position of honour and as leader tacitly agrees with his principal importance in the Anglo-Saxon version. As I have noted above, the Blickling sermonist added to Peter's praises for this moment the statement that the Lord was truly supporting the bier. The following line in this text "... and then the apostles went into the clouds, and they then carried the bier, and sang God's praise. . ." seems also to associate the procession with a celestial atmosphere. With this is mind, the peculiar shapes supporting the figures in the miniature are now evident: a clear statement of clouds they must be. They do not resemble the representations of ground or natural setting as shown in the other miniatures and since no locale is specified in the Transitus for this scene, I suggest that
the artist has painted clouds as the visible sign of divine support. This supposition explains too why this particular register is the only one in all the illuminations to be shown without a painted frame or architectural framework. In the other miniatures the frame or use of an architectural setting limits the composition spatially, in spite of an occasional hand or foot straying over the edge, as in folios 8r, 13v, 15v (Figs. 16, 20, 22). Here he has removed such restrictions not because his composition was overly crowded as one might expect but in consideration of the theme and its source. In a heavenly, cloud-filled zone as depicted by the artist of the York Psalter, space is limitless, cannot be contained, and continues beyond any boundary. As far as I have ascertained, the Blickling version of the Funeral Procession is the only text to describe clouds as the location of the scene and the Lord's support as the underlying means of transport. Therefore it seems reasonable to conclude that the Blickling account was used by the artist as the source for his unusual and imaginative depiction of an aerial procession.

The artist has included one other original detail in this scene that betrays his familiarity with the vernacular, Anglo-Saxon account. As I pointed out earlier, the
artist has chosen not to illustrate the moment of greatest drama in the incident of sacrilege, as is normally represented, that of the Jew's agony. Instead he emphasizes the miraculous salvation which shows the Jew, his bland expression obviously denoting all pain departed, with his hands not hanging but made whole once again. Boase too comments on this change of circumstance, writing that "... the later versions of this scene show the prince hanging by his hands from the bier, as it is described in the De Transitu...", though he offers no explanation for this alteration. With the Blickling version of the scene however, the reason for the change is accounted for. The artist has illustrated the lines following the Jew's appeal to Peter who tells him: "Stretch forth thy hand, and say that thou believest... then shall thy hands become restored and be as they were before...", the exact gesture in the miniature of the man reaching forward with his arms as described by this text. Once again the Blickling account clarifies the iconography and reveals the artist's dependence on Anglo-Saxon material.

This Chapter so far has discussed the close relation between the Virgin cycle in the York Psalter and the vernacular account in the Blickling Homilies as the basis for its novel features. The Anglo-Saxon version in con-
junction with the Transitus was the literary source for the iconography of the first four scenes—the Angel Announcing, the Virgin Announces her Death, the Death of the Virgin, the Funeral Procession. However, the Anglo-Saxon text does not account for the unusual pictorial form of the last folio in the Virgin cycle—the Burial and Assumption—any more than does the Latin text. Both versions, as noted earlier, describe Mary rising from the grave, worshipping before Christ, and subsequently delivered to heaven by angels in the Latin text and, strangely, by the apostles in the Anglo-Saxon text. Consequently this seemingly original image, unconnected to either of the proven textual sources, needs to be explained another way. This aspect of the iconography of the Virgin cycle is the next concern of this Chapter.

Analysis - Assumption

In his analysis of the Assumption scene in the York Psalter, (folio 19v, Fig. 26), Boase suggested that another literary source might lie behind the inspiration of the new pictorial form. According to his argument, the artist could have known of the Visions of Elisabeth of Schönau, a German Benedictine nun who received about 1156 a revelation
of the Virgin's bodily assumption. Elisabeth's vision described "... in a very remote place a sepulchre bathed with light and the form of a woman in it, and a great multitude of angels standing about it. And she was raised from the sepulchre and with the multitude of angels she was carried up on high.". The vision continues that Christ came to meet her, carrying in his right hand the sign of the cross and they entered the portals of light. Elisabeth, further assured by an angel of the truth of her vision, records that "... Mary was carried into heaven both in the spirit and the flesh...".

This popular account offering proof of the bodily assumption—a controversial issue in 12th century mariology both English and Continental—was current in England during the last half of the 12th century, where it is thought to have circulated first by word of mouth and later by the end of the 1170's in manuscript. Boase has traced the route taken by the Visions between the Continent and England and my own research verifies his account. A redaction of Elisabeth's work apparently was sent first to the Cistercian House of Ford in Devonshire shortly after Elisabeth's death in 1164 by Roger Gustum, a monk of Ford temporarily in a Continental monastery where the Visions were popular. Along
with the *Visions* Roger included an undated prefatory letter and on the basis of its contents, the time of transmission can be assigned to the period between 1171 and 1178. In a detailed analysis of this accompanying letter, Boase deduces that the *Visions* could have reached England most likely in 1172 or 1173.  

That Elisabeth's *Visions* spread rapidly from Ford to different parts of the country is seen in the number of extant 12th century manuscripts containing her story. Of these, two originated in the north of England: Durham Chapter Library *MS B.IV* and Oxford, St. John's College *MS. 149*, both written in a late 12th century northern English script. On this evidence it is probable that Elisabeth's narrative was current in the north country when the *York Psalter Assumption* was being painted, and it is therefore feasible, in Boase's opinion, that the artist based his imagery on her description. The miniature of the *Assumption*, he argues, is "... the clearest statement possible in visual terms of the incorruptible body being carried from the grave direct to heaven, the event as confirmed by Elisabeth of Schönau's vision. ... " Boase suggests that the artist found inspiration in the *Visions* but does not say whether the text alone was the direct stimulus, or whether an illustrated version of Elisabeth's work might have been a model. Though I have found no indication that such an illus-
trated manuscript has survived, it is a compelling connection in any event, for her description of the physical assumption directly from the sepulchre in a place bathed with light does indeed evoke the image of a female form ascending in a kind of glory. Still, Boase's argument does not convince me.

For the earlier scenes in the Virgin cycle, I have suggested that the artist has resourcefully combined elements plainly described in a different recension of the narrative, together with a model of the traditional Latin text. Given that the artist has depicted a highly unusual form in the York Psalter Assumption, distinct from conventional iconography (as seen for example in the Winchester Psalter, Fig. 33), it is not unreasonable to seek another source also for this episode, the most significant of the Virgin's story. But the comparison Boase makes between this scene and the Visions seems to me to be valid only in a general sense. Though it omits Mary worshipping before Christ as stated in the other versions, and describes her being carried up on high by angels, the account by Elisabeth provides for the rising body only as "... the form of a woman...". Nowhere in her text does Elisabeth record specifically the ascent
of the figure totally wrapped in a shroud which seems to me is the greatest single dramatic feature of the Assumption. In the earlier scenes of the Virgin cycle, the artist had directly interpreted his textual sources; thus one could expect also for the Assumption miniature to find a similar direct relationship between the visual and verbal image. Yet the Visions do not provide detailed descriptions. Elisabeth does not make any reference to such a unique form and it is this lack of specific mention which in my opinion discounts her text as a probable source for the Assumption.

On another count too the probability of Elisabeth's Visions as direct inspiration is diminished since northern insular literature describes a more vivid physical assumption, though not of the Virgin. In fact, the image of the shroud-wrapped body rising from the grave in a kind of glory was not new to Elisabeth of Schönau nor was it invented by the artist of the York Psalter, for it existed in written form at an early date in the north of England. As early as the 8th century Bede apparently had in mind similar imagery. In connection with the death of the English saint Ethelburga, he records the vision of one of her sister nuns, thus: "Leaving her cell one night at first light of dawn, this sister saw distinctly what ap-
peared to be a human body wrapped in a shroud and shining more brightly than the sun. This was raised up... until it entered the open heavens... "51 Such vivid imagery of the miracle over corruption brings us closer than Elizabeth's description to the imagination that invests the pictorial form of the York Psalter Assumption.

As noted above, what chiefly establishes the uniqueness for the Assumption is the dramatic emphasis on the totally swathed body of the Virgin vertically posed in the center of the scene. Although I agree with Boase's assertion that the form is without visual comparison elsewhere, at least for Assumption iconography, the motif of the mummy-like form as connected to burials is common enough. The shrouded body is usually associated with another subject, the Entombment of Christ, such as we see in the St. Albans Psalter, p.43, ca 1119-1123 (Fig. 43) for which Otto Pächt has linked the form of the shroud drawn over Christ's head, but not face, to the shrouding of the corpse in mummy fashion in Sant'Angelo in Formis (wall-painting, ca 1072-1100, Fig. 44).52 Representations of totally en-shrouded bodies including the head and face as seen in the York Psalter are indeed rare in Western Continental art, though not unknown. The motif occurs in Spain as I have found for instance on an ivory panel depicting scenes from
the *Life of St. Aemilius* from the reliquary shrine (1053-1067) at the Abbey of San Millán de la Cogolla, Rioja (Fig. 45). But the motif, rare as it is in Continental examples, must have been of special interest to English artists since, in addition to its dramatic use in the Glasgow miniature, the form appears in numerous other instances of English art in the 12th century and earlier. For example, the Malmesbury sculpture of the *Entombment of Christ*, ca 1170 (Fig. 46) depicts the body enshrouded from head to foot. The same subject is similarly treated, again as a corpse, totally wrapped, in the Leaf in London, *MS.661* (Fig. 47). In different contexts we find it over and over in contemporary examples: e.g. in the initial of the *Burial of Judas Maccabeus* from the *Winchester Bible*, ca 1150-1180 (folio 350v, Fig. 48), in a late 12th century *Romance of Alexander* (Fig. 49), and a second time in the *York Psalter Raising of Lazarus*, where the totally shrouded form appears to be also a unique representation in Lazarus iconography (Fig. 18). The motif continues in use late in the century when it appears in the *Paris Psalter*, ca 1170-1200 from Christ Church, Canterbury (Paris, Bibl. nat. *MS.lat.8846* folio 156v Fig. 50). That the motif is a characteristic English trait is seen from its appearance not only in numerous 12th century examples but also in earlier Anglo-Saxon art as well, for instance in the burial scenes of
patriarchs in the 11th century *Aelfric Pentateuch* (British Museum *Cotton Claudius B.iv* folio 72v, Fig. 51)\(^5\).

The evidence so far shows that the image of the shrouded body rising from the grave to glory existed in the insular imagination in the north from the time of Bede. As associated with entombment, the motif persisted generally in English art from the 11th century onward. Given the English preference for this motif, its recurrence in the *York Psalter* becomes less surprising. Though the connection of the shrouded body to Assumption iconography may be original, the artist of the *York Psalter* could have derived his unique pictorial form from the well-stocked bank of indigenous imagery. Consequently one may consider Boase's argument—that Elisabeth's *Visions* lie behind the form of the *Assumption*—as weakened since the artist could equally have relied on this persistent native tradition.

Another possibility for the source of the *Assumption* might be that the artist adapted his composition from a different subject such as a Tree of Jesse, itself a new expression of the ever-increasing devotion to the Virgin in the 12th century.\(^5\) Similar prototypes predating the *York Psalter* which may have been known to the artist occurred in the *Shaftesbury Psalter* ca 1130–1140 (British Library *MS*
Lansdowne 383 folio 15, Fig. 52), the Lambeth Bible ca 1140-1150 (folio 130, Fig. 53) and in the Winchester Psalter ca 1150 (folio 9, Fig. 54). In the Lambeth Bible miniature the vertical, elongated form of the Virgin functions as the central column of the design, with the horizontal recumbent Jesse lying across the bottom. These compositional elements have been replaced in the York Psalter Assumption by the empty coffin beneath the suspended body of Mary. The nimbed angels on the sides could substitute for the roundels containing the busts of prophets in the Bible and as Turner notes, the figure of Christ pointing to his Mother in the York Psalter could perhaps have similarly evolved from such a figure as one of the prophets pointing to the Virgin in the miniature of the Tree of Jesse in the Winchester Psalter (Fig. 54). Another representation of the Tree of Jesse closer to home may have been at York itself. In the glass of the south wall at York Minster are depicted prophets in roundels dating from the mid-12th century and Lethaby suggests that the missing portions may have contained the other figures necessary to complete a Tree of Jesse.

In a review of Boase's monograph, Adelheid Heimann describes the York Psalter Assumption as a new and experimental composition, an awkward arrangement which might have been improved had the artist shifted the burial
episode to the bottom register. Such a switch, he comments, would result in a more effective sense of upward motion since the Assumption motif would gain additional impetus from being at the top of the page (Fig. 55). But in my opinion such a reconstruction would not be feasible because it would alter the sequence of action from top to bottom used in the other miniatures of the Virgin cycle. Moreover, an arrangement of the burial in the upper register and resurrection in the lower is not unusual and has occurred before, for example in the 11th century Bamberg Gospels (Bamberg, Staatbiblio. MS 94.A.11.18 folio 155, Fig. 56) which shows on the left side of the miniature a similar composition for the scene of the Incarnation.

Whatever the source for the York Psalter Assumption, the unique design of the Virgin ascending against the shroud must have enjoyed certain currency for I have found one descendant in a later English alabaster, dating ca 1400 (Fig. 57) now owned by the Metropolitan Museum of New York. In this lovely small work we again see the grave sheet tautly stretched by lateral angels, holding the central figure of the Virgin in strict, vertical ascent, though here her form is not shrouded; instead beautifully draped folds bend softly over the base. 59
To summarize: although the artist of the York Psalter may have devised an experimental composition for the Assumption, he also created a distinct iconography by combining different sources. He did so by transforming in highly imaginative fashion a motif and idea already in existence in the Anglo-Saxon repertory, with which he would be well familiar, into a cycle of the Virgin. This Chapter has described his nearest sources as primarily Anglo-Saxon ones: the vernacular account of the Assumption in the Blickling Homilies for the first two miniatures, and Anglo-Saxon and later English art for the pictorial form in the last miniature of the cycle.

What remains to be considered now is the relationship of this imagery to the larger bank of Dormition-Assumption iconography in Eastern and Western art in general, and specifically its tradition in the art of the British Isles. The next Chapter will focus on these two aspects, concluding that the insular pictorial tradition—just as its literary heritage—is the formative influence on the Virgin cycle in the York Psalter.
Chapter III

In presenting the immediate sources for the Virgin cycle in the *York Psalter*, the preceding Chapter has analyzed an Anglo-Saxon commentary on the Assumption narrative as the textual basis for the iconography. It has related also the motif of the shrouded body—the chief novelty of the *Assumption* miniature in the *Psalter*—as a characteristic trait of Anglo-Saxon and later English art.

This Chapter will now consider first: the theme of the Death and Assumption of the Virgin viewed in the wider setting in order to evaluate the artist's originality on a larger scale; and second: the pictorial tradition for the theme in English art. To my knowledge this is an area which has not been dealt with in any detail. I will show how an early cult of the Virgin was expressed in the north of England by the end of the 7th century. I will propose further that the cycle in the *York Psalter* does not relate either to earlier or contemporary representations of the Assumption in Continental art except in general resemblance. Instead the uniqueness of the Glasgow Virgin cycle should be seen as stemming from an early insular pictorial and literary tradition of Mary worship.

To substantiate this claim, I have found that in comparison to Continental examples, the theme of the Death
and Assumption occurs earlier and in more developed form in English art. From an early date in Northumbria, an indigenous tradition of Mary worship expresses itself apparently in terms of a concentration on that theme. All told, the emphasis on the Virgin cycle in the York Psalter is consistent with this extended lineage of native interest. More than any other imported influence, this heritage was the generative force on the Virgin iconography in the manuscript.

A brief overall view of the development of the subject in Continental art follows. In general, the early representations of the Assumption in art under Eastern influence are variants of the Virgin orans, as in the relief on the 4th century sarcophagus from Sant'Engracia, Saragossa, (Fig. 58) which depicts the Virgin standing between apostles, the hand of God raising her by the wrist. Another early example of this type recurs in the 8th century Byzantine fabric now preserved at Sens with the Virgin in prayer between two angels while two other angels prostrate themselves at her feet. Here the lack of a mandorla might result in a mistaken identification of the subject as an Ascension were it not for the inscription which states: "cum transisset Maria Mater Domina de Apostolis", proof
that this is indeed an Assumption of early date (Fig. 59) and probably our earliest depiction of certain attribution.

The hieratic type of Assumption, expressed by the orant Virgin, continued in use into the 10th and 11th centuries as exampled by the famous ivory bookcover of Tuotillo, (10th century, St. Gall Monastery Library, Fig. 60). However, an alternative dramatic narrative version of the theme has been identified in the 9th century frescoes at the Temple of Fortuna Virilis in Rome as an illustrated cycle of the Transitus. In her analysis of the three scenes in question, Lafontaine argues that a close relationship exists between the frescos and a Coptic recension of the text. Likely the artist had copied from a Transitus manuscript illustrated with an extensive Dormition cycle. Given the reputation of the apocryphal text at this time as an unreliable theological proof, such extensive narrative cycles seem unusual. But as I shall demonstrate below this occurrence was not unique to Italy since a narrative cycle is found in English art of even earlier date. Thus we can conclude that illustrated manuscripts of the Transitus could have circulated in the West before the 9th century.

To return to Continental developments: in addition to the 9th century narrative cycle in Italy, by the end of
the 10th century the Byzantine formula for the Koimesis had come into general usage. Its standard structure according to the Greek versions of the text was the division of the apostles into two groups, the one at the left headed by Peter censing and the one at the right headed by Paul bending over to kiss Mary's feet. John, always bearded in this scene, is shown behind the bier and leans over the Virgin. Christ is habitually included at the death scene to hand the soul of the Virgin to the flying angels. The number of mourners may vary from the twelve apostles proper to as many as sixteen, including bishops who were present at the Dormition, and additional mourners may also appear as anonymous members of the crowd. This standardized iconography occurs extensively over several centuries, e.g. the late 10th century ivory in the gold cover of the Gospel Book of Otto III (Munich, Staat.Bibl.Clm.4453 Fig.61-62); the central panel of an ivory triptych of similar date from Constantinople (Fig. 63); in icons from Saint Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai, 12th century (Fig.64); the mid-12th century mosaics from the Martorana, Palermo (Fig. 65); and a late 13th century wall-painting in the Church of the Peribleptos, St. Clement (Fig.66).

Besides the Koimesis, other iconographic types for the Death and Assumption appeared. Generally the treatment of the theme in the West is more variable and in some instances
combines exclusively Western features—such as the Coronation—with or without other elements from the conventional Koimesis. These 10th and 11th century representations can be grouped into two basic types. One depicts the Virgin orans in a mandorla mounting on a cloth such as the Sacramentary from Augsbert folio 123v (British Museum MS Harley 2908 10th century, Fig. 67). The other type maintains the presence of Christ following Byzantine iconography but may add other details such as the hand of God or the crown, and may vary also the depiction of the Virgin's soul as a diminutive nimbed figure of Mary (though her body is shown dead on the couch beneath), or the more usual, small swaddled child-like form. For example Ottonian versions blend the tradition of Christ present to receive the soul with the tradition of the orant Virgin in several different ways. The late 10th century Prüm Gradual (Paris, Bibl.Nat. MS.lat. 9448 folio 60v Fig. 68) adds a coronation to the Koimesis setting. The Pericope Book of Henry II, also 10th century, (Munich, Bayr.Staatsbibl.Clm.4452 folio 119 Fig.69 ), uses a half-length Virgins orans in a medallion which is poised over the deathbed scene. Different other combinations outlined by J.J.G.Alexander continue in the 11th century, sometimes with the hand of God, or the Virgin crowned, and at times with Mary carrying the palm. The North French type exampled by 11th century Morgan MS 641 (New York, Pierpont Morgan Library
MS.641 folio 142v Fig. 70 shows a crowned, full-length orans, carrying the palm with the right hand, ascending in a mandorla assisted by angels with the hand of God. Here, as in the manuscript from Augsbert, the death of Mary is not shown and has been substituted by the rising mandorla. Consequently it remains ambiguous, according to Alexander, as to the question of her bodily assumption for these representations are really of a Virgin in Glory in the tradition of the Tuotillo ivory.

I have drawn these distinctions to make the point that in almost all of the early images there is reluctance to depict the actual raising of the Virgin's body, which reflects the controversy on the question of her bodily assumption. A brief history of the controversy is included here to show how religious distrust restricted representation of the subject in most instances to one emphasizing her spiritual ascent, or one which glorified a symbolic Virgin as in the orans.

The Assumption had been celebrated at least since the 6th century as a festival on August 15th and it was one of the twelve principal feasts in the liturgical calendar. During Charlemagne's time the feast came close to being suppressed in the West altogether on the grounds of its assoc-
iation with the apocryphal narratives and their dubious theological value. The Abbot of Corbie, Paschasius Radbert (d. 860), condemned the Transitus in a famous letter, Cogitus me (wrongly attributed to St. Jerome), in which he repudiated the text of the narrative as a work not to be accepted. The letter acknowledges that there is an empty church in the valley of Jehoshaphat at the foot of the Mount of Olives where there is an empty tomb, but how or why the most holy body was removed is not known, nor whether it was taken away or resurrected. This letter states the central issue of the controversy, i.e.: whether the Assumption was to be interpreted as the spiritual entry of the Virgin into heaven, or whether the body was actually taken up. Paschasius Radbert's letter, incorporated in a sermon, enjoyed tremendous prestige in the Carolingian period and it was widely used in the Breviary lessons for the Office of the Assumption. 7 Owing to its influence, Western theologians divided into two schools over the question: the agnostic view featured in the work of Odilo of Cluny (d.1049), whose conservative sermon on the Assumption states that ". . . we should trust the position taken by Jerome [meaning Paschasius Radbert] . . . ." and on the other hand Notker the Stammerer of St. Gall (d.912) adopted the opposite view with his firm belief in the bodily assumption, an idea he had found in Gregory of Tours. As a result of this division, the
Transitus retained uncertain status and belief in the bodily assumption was retarded in the West until the early 12th century when another sermon opened up a new line of approach. This treatise, wrongly attributed to St. Augustine but possibly of English authorship, gradually ousted the influence of the Pseudo-Jerome (Paschasius Radbert) and has been connected to the milieu of St. Anselm of Canterbury (d.1109). Promoting the general acceptance of a corporeal assumption, it is reflected in the writings of other theologians working in England, e.g. Honorious of Autun (d.1136) who was at one time at Canterbury, Ailred of Rievaulx, (d.1167) who affirmed the bodily assumption using the arguments of the Pseudo-Augustine, and in William of Newburgh's Commentary on the Canticle which was written on the request of Abbot Roger of Byland, 1142-1196.8

Representations of the physical assumption thus begin to appear from the 12th century in England and the Continent. The 12th century missal from Tours (Fig. 41), depicts the empty tomb, the body gone, while the Virgin mounts in a cloth held by angels. French portal sculpture particularly expressed the new interpretation in various experiments; for instance the bas-relief from Autun, ca 1130, shows Mary rising with the help of angels. A tympanum from La Charité-sur-Loire, ca 1150, shows Christ in Majesty stretching out his hand to the Virgin who is being drawn into the mandorla.9 On the tympanum from St.Pierre-le-Puellier, Bourges (now in the Musée
de Berry), the whole story of the Transitus is depicted: the angel's message followed by a damaged section which may have shown the Dormition, the funeral procession and in the upper register the Virgin is laid in the tomb and then carried aloft by two angels. At Senlis, ca 1180-1190, two lintel reliefs depict the Death and Assumption. The first relief is carved without Christ (though the work is much damaged); the second shows a bodily resurrection. Angels lift the body from the tomb in its shroud, while one of them holds a crown over the Virgin's head (Fig. 71). At Clermont-Ferrand, the shrouded body of Mary, eyes open, is lifted by Christ from the coffin which is shown as solid stone saving the impression made by her departed body (Fig. 72).

The Virgin cycle in the York Psalter matches certain features with these pictorial traditions in Continental art. It displays the same narrative aspects of the story and dramatizes the corporeal nature of the Assumption, features of Western iconography for the subject in the 12th century. Also it follows in part the dicta of Koimesis iconography in the presence of Christ at the deathbed. But this is relationship only in a general sense and such common characteristics ultimately stem from the same source behind the subject. On the other hand, the artist of the York Psalter departed from these visual formulae when he introduced the many unique elements outlined in Chapter II, such as the new emphasis on Peter over the other apostles, the anachronistic presence of the Jews, the different moments of the narrative
which he has opted to illustrate, the extent of the cycle itself and above all, the dramatic presentation of the Assumption as a shrouded body dominating the scene. This combination of features is not found in the wider stream of Dormition-Assumption representations which makes it all the more likely that the artist depended on the Anglo-Saxon recension of the narrative in the Blickling Homilies, so far the best explanation of the artist's exceptional iconography.

Boase (1962) first pointed out the originality of the totally shrouded Virgin, though he has not substantiated his statement with many comparisons. My own findings concur with his statement however and on the basis of the research presented here, it does appear that the form of the York Psalter Assumption does not occur elsewhere in Western or Eastern representations. The illustration of a physical Assumption as a rising shrouded corpse in such graphic manner is apparently unique to this manuscript. Consequently the argument of its origin as a specifically English motif with Anglo-Saxon ancestry, as traced in Chapter II, now assumes ever greater weight.

In his monograph on the Psalter, Boase does not thoroughly explore the frequency of the theme of the Death
and Assumption in English art. He mentions in passing the unenterprising examples (as compared to the French experiments in portal sculpture) in the contemporary Winchester Psalter and two earlier miniatures: the Benedictional of Ethelwold ca 980 (British Museum MS. Add. 49598 folio 102v Fig. 73) and the slightly later Benedictional of Archbishop Robert (Rouen, Bibl.Mun. MS.Y.7 folio 4 Fig. 74) which he cites merely as unusual 10th century types. But as I have found there are indeed other English representations of the Death and Assumption of the Virgin and their significance should be considered.

The Virgin cycle in the York Psalter need not represent simply another, more original variation of the many different types developed for the iconography of the Death and Assumption. I believe it is more likely that the Glasgow miniatures stem from a different tradition not reflected in the Continental representations or for that matter in contemporary English work of southern provenance, which would have been the first to absorb the mainstream of outside influence. Manuscripts of the 12th century from the southern schools at Winchester, Canterbury and Bury St. Edmunds follow middle-Byzantine and later Eastern iconography and depict the subject as a faithful Koimesis. We may compare examples in the Winchester Psalter (Fig. 33) of the Death of the Virgin pendant to an adjacent miniature of the
Virgin Enthroned, the pair often described as copies of a Byzantine diptych. These representations have been compared to the Sicilian mosaics and to work from Mount Sinai and have even been likened to Crusader art such as the Virgin Enthroned in the mid-12th century Jerusalem manuscript known as Queen Melisende's Psalter (British Museum MS. Egerton 1139). In any event, the miniatures are thoroughly Byzantinized and strictly adhere to Eastern iconography. The other English psalter of the second half of the 12th century sometimes called the Bury Psalter (as it is thought to be from Bury St. Edmonds), has a conventional Koimesis and an extensive cycle in the 13th century Luttrell Psalter also follows the prescribed Byzantine formula.

There are numerous instances of the Death and Assumption in later English work from the 13th century, again from the south, for example: wall-paintings from Burgh St. Peter, Norfolk; Chalgrove; Wimborne, Dorset; and the cycle from Brook, Kent, all reflect the Eastern pictorial tradition. Another important cycle allied to the East Anglian school of illuminators and dated by M. R. James between 1280 and 1300 is the wall-painting at the Church of All Saints, Croughton, Northamptonshire. This extensive treatment under strong Byzantine influence
contained originally 25 episodes which formed an almost complete Life of the Virgin, including scenes introducing her parents. English representations from the 14th century have been listed by James, such as the *Braile Horae* formerly in the Perrins Collection; the Lady Chapel at Ely and the one at Dorchester: I mention them here as illustrations of the continuing popularity of the Death and Assumption in English art. What is especially noteworthy in these examples is the fact that they all originate in schools south of the Humber and they all reflect the influence of the Byzantine tradition. Their Virgin imagery, as far as I can ascertain, contrasts sharply to that of the *York Psalter* which remains a unique example of northern iconography in English art.

Since contemporary parallels are unsatisfactory in supplying an explanation for the Virgin cycle in our northern manuscript, one is tempted to examine earlier Insular art for representations of the Death and Assumption. The Anglo-Saxon repertory had already provided a textual source which clarified many of the cycle's unusual features. Therefore we might expect also to find artistic models to support the theory of an Anglo-Saxon tradition for the theme. Fortunately, the likelihood of such ancestry is increased since there is reference by Olav Sinding in his pioneering iconographical study, *Mariae Tod und Himmelfahrt* (1903), to a late 7th-early
8th century manuscript of Bede known as the *Pilgrim's Travel Report (De Liber Locis Sanctis)* which includes what may be the earliest extant illustration of the Death of the Virgin in a work of English provenance (Fig. 75). While it was impossible to trace the present whereabouts of the manuscript with the drawing in time for this essay (the work in question may well be lost), Sinding's authority appears to be reliable since he is continuously cited by modern art historians for his accurate analysis of Dormition iconography. Sinding claims Bede's illustration (if indeed Bede is the draughtsman) is the oldest surviving picture we have of a Death of the Virgin: it includes the column of the Flagellation, Mary's deathbed and two figures. Mary lies on the stone bench and for the first time in known examples which I have been able to trace, her body is shown wrapped in a heavy linensheet prepared for the grave. Like Mary in the death scene of the *York Psalter*, she is awake and watchful. On the bed is the inscription: "Hic Sancta Maria Obiit". Behind the bed stands an angel in accordance with Early Christian tradition--still retained in Byzantium as well as in Britain and Ireland at this time--that Christ after his ascension should not be represented as he had been on earth. The angel, presumably signifying victory over death, holds the palm branch, evidence that the artist knew the apocryphal story in detail. At a time when Continental art expressed the Assumption as a
hieratic orans, it seems astonishing to see a picture of the Death of the Virgin shown in her shroud and accompanied by the angel with the palm in an 8th century work from the north of England. If Sinding's identification is correct (and there is no counter-evidence to refute it), this illustration could be the genesis of the pictorial tradition of the Death and Assumption in English art. Sinding justifies the early appearance of the narrative elements by the explanation that Bede was not painting a decoration or cult picture, but merely wanted to illustrate the inscription and may possibly have transformed a representation of the dying Virgin for this purpose. However, Bede could have been interested in the subject also because of the prevalence in the north of an early cult of the Virgin and this worship is borne out by written evidence, other 8th century expressions of the Death, as well as important Celtic and Northumbrian representations of the Virgin as Hodegetria.

The immediate source of Bede's drawing is one of the earliest written references in England to the theme of the Death of the Virgin and the site of her passing, viz.: Adamnan's late 7th-early 8th century travelogue of the Holy Land, De Locis Sanctis. This treatise summarized his interview of the pilgrim Arculf who had recently returned from a journey to the Near East which he had made about the years 679-682. Adamnan reported the traveller's description of the
Church of the Holy Virgin Mary adjoining the Round Church (the Holy Sepulchre) as a quadrangular building. Arculf presented Adamnan also with a plan drawn on a wax tablet of four of the Jerusalem churches under discussion, including the church where Mary died. The plan, obviously too fragile to exist for long in wax and evidently transferred to parchment, exists today in a 9th century copy where Mary's church is indicated in the center bottom (Vienna, Staat. Bibl. Cod. 458, folio 4v, Fig. 76). Adamnan presented a copy of his book at York to the Northumbrian King Aldfrith (685-705) and from the king the book came into the hands of Bede, who quoted it in his History and used it as the basis of his own De Liber Locis Sanctis.

Since illustrated Transitus manuscripts were not copied in Continental art until the 9th century (as in the frescos from the Temple of Fortuna Virilis, Rome), Bede's little drawing with elements culled from the apocryphal story evidences that a recension of the Transitus, perhaps an illustrated one, could have been available in Northumbria over a century earlier. Possibly a tradition of Transitus painting in manuscript or wall panel was already in existence. Certainly by the second half of the 7th century we know that Benedict Biscop (628-689), founder of Wearmouth and Jarrow, had made several trips to Rome and returned "... loaded with more abundant spiritual merchandise than before."
including "... a large quantity of books of all kinds and pictures of sacred representations to adorn the central nave from one wall to the other...". Of these pictures "... a likeness of the Virgin Mary and of the twelve apostles..." were to be installed on boarding in Biscop's Church of St. Peter and it is tempting to speculate that such representations could have included a cycle of the Virgin's Death. It is at least possible that the library established by Biscop had a copy, illustrated or not, of the Transitus story in some form, since different recensions have been identified from the later Anglo-Saxon period in England and Ireland. Knowledge of the apocryphal story could have been familiar also from copies of the work by Gregory of Tours, known to have existed in Northumbrian libraries.

While the drawing from Northumbria may be the earliest artistic indication of Dormition iconography in England, we have other more complete evidence that the theme was especially popular in insular devotions from another 8th century work. A developed cycle of the Death and Funeral Procession and a possible Assumption is carved on a stone slab from the Church of Wirksworth, Derbyshire, described first by Betty Kurth in 1945 (Fig. 77). It depicts the Virgin borne to her burial with John at the head of the procession bearing the palm and a man shown
with his arms outstretched and touching the bier. All the characteristic features of the apocryphal story are present including the circular cloud with the angels and the Jewish priest who loses a hand. Adjacent to the group is another depiction of a figure in a mandorla surrounded by angels. Kurth identifies this scene as an Ascension but it could as well be an Assumption, thus rounding out the narrative. That such an early rendering of a fully developed Dormition iconography based on the Transitus narrative should occur in England when, Kurth comments, "... up to now no examples of early Christian or Carolingian times were known...", documents the uniqueness of this subject for Anglo-Saxon art.27

Contemporary to the Wirksworth slab is the 8th century English ivory Assumption now at Munich which is depicted as the Virgin orans (Bayer Nat.Mus. no MA 164 Fig.78). However more interesting to the theory that a Transitus pictorial tradition continued to the Anglo-Saxon period is the Dormition in the Benedictional of Ethelwold, ca 980 (Fig.73). This miniature presents the subject on a full page with the Virgin reclining on a bed tended by three weeping women. At the bottom in the lower register is a group of apostles and at the top four angels descend with clothes and a sceptre. The divine Hand holds a crown. From his analysis of the iconography, Robert Deshman concludes that the core of
this miniature was copied intact from a cycle of miniatures illustrating an apocryphal narrative of the Virgin's death and assumption. He points out further that the iconography is important since it is the first actual Coronation of the Virgin in Western art, predating by some 150 years another English Coronation on the capital from Reading, ca 1130. The *Benedictional of Archbishop Robert* of slightly later date (Fig. 74), also contains a miniature of the Death of the Virgin. Here however the narrative elements have been suppressed and the subject is in more simplified form without the apostles and hovering angels seen in the earlier Benedictional. Surrounded by mourners and about to receive her crown, Mary is shown orant in the "... traditional position of assumption in most Continental representations."  

The entrance of the Coronation into Dormition iconography in English art does not directly relate to the cycle in the *York Psalter*. I have included it here as demonstration of the inventive capacity of English medieval art (to borrow a phrase of Adolph Goldschmidt) which is the reason why England "... shows herself more independent of convention than the Continent in the iconographic sphere.". The artist of the *York Psalter* miniatures inherited a tradition of Virgin iconography not only emphasizing the Death
and Assumption but a tradition notable also for its creative innovations.

That these last examples are of southern provenance does not diminish the argument that the pictorial tradition for the Death and Assumption was generated by northern interests. It is well known that the north of England lost its artistic importance during the 8th century following the inroads made by the Danish invasions, and it is consistent with this shift to the south that representations of the Death should appear in southern artistic centers. Other important representations from the north may simply have disappeared as a result of the inestimable damage and loss suffered by the northern provinces also during the Viking raids when, for example, we know that in 867 York was burned extensively and the Minster school destroyed. The vast devastation by William the Conqueror in 1069 must also account for great artistic losses from the Humber to the Forth.

To conclude: first, the oldest surviving representation of the Death of the Virgin, illustrating a recension of the Transitus manuscript, can be attributed to a Northumbrian provenance. Second, the theme of the Death and Assumption recurs as a pictorial tradition in signi-
significant later examples from the Anglo-Saxon period. Therefore, evidence suggests that from the end of the 7th century the Death and Assumption as it is related in the apocryphal narrative existed in artistic form in England, moving from the north to the southern centers in accordance with the political history of the country. The recurrence of the cycle in expanded form in the York Psalter can be seen as a logical development of a subject habitually present in English art from the Northumbrian period.

My main purpose in this section has been to examine the insular antecedents for the iconography of the Death and Assumption of the Virgin. I wish to point out further that the early practice of Mary worship expressed itself visually also in images of the Virgin and Child. This subject is represented in Northumbrian art in important iconic works of hieratic style. Derived from the seated Hodegetria of Eastern iconography, two closely related representations, the late 7th century carving on Cuthbert's coffin reliquary at Durham and the early 9th century miniature in the Book of Kells, grant additional distinction to the north of providing the earliest examples in the West also of this variant of Marian iconography. They evidence the availability of imported prototypes in northern artistic centers for these two works are thought to have been modelled after a work of art
in Northumbria received as part of Biscop's stock of treasures in the second half of the 7th century. That this prototype enjoyed the status of a revered icon is witnessed by the frequent representations of the theme in Northumbria and Scotland and, according to Kitzinger "... in several instances we find at least traces of the St. Cuthbert-Kells type.".34

There are other representations of the Virgin and Child through the later Anglo-Saxon period, notably the 10th century York Virgin (Fig. 79), which copies a Byzantine iconography, but most are small portable ivories of iconic type.35 Compared to the imaginative and developed cycles in the Wirksworth slab or the miniatures of the Benedictionals, these icons lack the expressive content and inventive use of their prototypes. One might say that devotion to the Virgin was expressed in English art in two ways: first by the dual themes in Northumbrian representations—the Death of the Virgin and the Virgin and Child—and: second, by a concentration in later Anglo-Saxon representations on the single theme, the Death and Assumption.

Besides the evidence of artistic examples, the worship of Mary is documented in written form by the earl-
iest Christian writers in England. In addition to his interest in the circumstances of Mary's death recorded in his Pilgrim's Travel Report, Bede's sermon delivered on the Feast of the Assumption extols her role as Intercessor. Elsewhere he refers to her "... immaculate purity and perfect sanctity..." and from him too we have recorded the words of the 7th century Irish poet Sedulius praising Mary's peerless position in the human race as well as her stainless virginity. Bede expresses also a concern indirectly related to the Virgin's incorruptibility. In his Hymn for the Subject of Virginity in honour of the 7th century English nun, Etheldreda, he praises her since

To heaven devoted, there she won new fame
And breathed her last, to heaven devoted there.
Veiled in the tomb sixteen Novembers lay
Nor rots her virgin flesh in the tomb
XT, thine the power. even in the sepulchre
Her vesture spotless gleams. XT, thine the power.

A poem by Aldhelm who was known to have maintained close contact with the Northumbrian King Aldfrith, (d.705), shows how quickly the observance of Mary's festivals, introduced into Roman liturgy by Pope Syrius (687-701), were taken up by the Anglo-Saxons. By the 8th century four of her festivals, including the Feast of the Assumption, appear in the Calendar of the Lindisfarne dependency. A record of early devotion is preserved also
in the early 9th century Book of Cerne (Cambridge, Univ. Library Ll. I.10) which contains prayers of earlier date venerating Mary. Celtic literature documents worship of the Virgin too: Nordenfalk notes that an early Marian cult within the Columban order is attested by the hymn De Beata Maria Virgini ascribed to Saint Cuchuimnei who lived around 700.40

To continue an analysis of Marian literature in England through the later periods is beyond my intent in this essay, though I will refer in the last Chapter to some important expressions of the Cult of the Virgin in the 12th century. The examples cited here witness the early existence of devotion to Mary in Northumbria and document in written form what is expressed also in visual images from the 7th century onward. In summary: this Chapter has analyzed the pictorial traditions of Death and Assumption iconography in Continental art in the Carolingian, Ottonian and Romanesque periods. It has explored the significance of this theme in English representations. Beyond its Anglo-Saxon textual connections (proposed in Chapter II), the Virgin cycle in the York Psalter rests on the artistic tradition for the theme in insular and later Anglo-Saxon art, stimulated by a long history of indigenous Mary worship. In my opinion the Virgin miniatures in the York Psalter can be explained as a revival of Anglo-Saxon
iconography originating in the north in the tradition of pictorial narrative which had influenced images of the Death and Assumption from the 8th century.
CHAPTER IV

Anglo-Saxon Iconography in the other Miniatures of the York Psalter

This thesis has claimed that insular iconography deriving from northern traditions has been revived in the Virgin cycle of the York Psalter. To show this, I have concentrated first (in Chapter II) on isolating the textual basis for the cycle which corresponds closely to an Anglo-Saxon vernacular derivative of the apocryphal Latin narrative. Second, I have analyzed (in Chapter III) the iconography of the theme of the Death and Assumption of the Virgin in Western and Eastern art, narrowing the field to the significance of the English contribution. From my findings, I have proposed that a Northumbrian heritage for the iconography of the Death and Assumption, descended through important Anglo-Saxon representations, has re-surfaced in the miniatures of the York Psalter. The question now arises whether Anglo-Saxon antecedents play a role in the iconography of the other miniatures.

Like those of the Virgin cycle, the iconography of the rest of the miniatures has received little detailed attention. Brief references by Turner, Boase and Kauffmann have noted two general influences: i) the undercurrent of Byzantine iconography present in most English illuminated manuscripts especially after the second half of the 12th
century when political contact increased; and ii) the alliance to the pictorial traditions established by the *St. Albans Psalter* and its progeny. Certainly diverse traditions are at work throughout the iconography of the miniatures and the artist's often unique combinations obtain from his customary blending of different sources. For example, strong Byzantine influence is reflected in the *Genesis* miniatures (folios 7v, 8r Figs. 15, 16) which can be paralleled in the 12th century mosaics from Palermo, ca 1160, and Monreale, ca 1180 (Figs. 80, 81). Sometimes the artist revives an Early Christian motif, such as the portrayal of Isaac as a naked figure in the Sacrifice of Isaac (folio 9v Fig.17). Kauffmann points out this was a motif revived in Continental art in the 12th century, but I have found comparisons also in the 11th century ivory plaque from the Cathedral of Salerno (Fig. 82) and the late 11th century wall-painting from Concordia Sagittaria (Fig. 83). Other iconographic motifs in this miniature, viz.: the draped altar, long sword instead of a knife, and the device of the arresting angel, derive from similar representations in the *Lambeth Bible*, ca 1150 (Fig. 84) and the 6th century mosaic from San Vitale, Ravenna (Fig. 85). Elsewhere the artist uses an iconography common to local versions, such as his miniature of *Christ at the Sea of Tiberias* (folio 13v, Fig. 20); a rare theme which is paralleled in Pembroke College *MS.120*.3
It is not the intent nor within the scope of this essay to analyze the iconography of all the other miniatures in the *York Psalter*. However, I do wish to point out that for some of the subjects I have identified certain iconographic features of Anglo-Saxon origin which indicates that the artist, as he did for the Virgin cycle, opted to follow insular traditions. The remainder of this Chapter will therefore present these observations from my own research. They are not meant to be definitive conclusions but may open discussion on the iconographic sources for the miniatures of this manuscript.

Characteristic Anglo-Saxon iconography affects the full-page miniature of the Ascension (folio 14r Fig. 21) in both treatment of theme and compositional features. The Ascension here is represented as a Disappearing Christ. Above the Virgin and assembled apostles, the legs of Christ are seen, the upper torso having vanished from their sight into a cloud formed by differently coloured bands of wavy lines. This type of Ascension has been credited by Meyer Schapiro as an Anglo-Saxon invention expressed for the first time in Western art in English manuscripts around the year 1000, for example the Missal of Robert of Jumièges (Rouen, *MS.Y.6* Fig. 86) and the *Hereford Troper* (British Museum, *MS.Caligula A.XIV* Fig. 87). He notes that in the new variant
"... only the legs or feet of Christ were represented, the rest of the body disappeared in the clouds... It is as if the artist wished to show Christ as he looked to the apostles who observed from below... Even the mandorla which encloses Christ... is cut by the clouds." This description corresponds exactly to the image in the York Psalter which shows Christ disappearing between a layer of clouds and an aureole. In contrast, Eastern Ascensions normally show Christ standing or enthroned in a mandorla, e.g.: the 6th century Rabula Gospels (Florence, Bib.Laur.Cod.Plut. 1 56, Fig. 88), the 6th century ampulla from the Monza Cathedral Treasure (Fig. 89), and the 12th century mosaic at Monreale (Fig. 90). Western Continental versions may show Christ active and striding forward as in the Drogo Sacramentary (Paris, Bib.Nat.MS lat.9428, folio 71v, Fig. 91), and 10th century Anglo-Saxon representations also differ from the Ascension with a Disappearing Christ. The miniature in the Benedictional of Ethelwold (Fig. 92) has been connected by Deshman to the 9th century ivory at Minden, and the Ascension in the Athelstan Psalter, (Brit.Mus. MS Galba A.XVIII, Fig. 93) combines different Continental traditions.

On balance it seems as if the variant which developed in English art around the year 1000 could be the prototype for the Ascension in the York Psalter. Other exceptional iconographic features coincide as well. In the miniature in the
York Psalter, an angel descends from each of the upper corners and Christ's feet are supported by their wings. The angels hold scrolls inscribed according to Acts 1: 9-11. In other 12th century English Ascensions such as the Pembroke College Ms.120 (Fig.94), the Winchester Psalter and the St. Albans Psalter (Fig.95), the angels do not carry scrolls. As far as I have found, the angels in Continental Ascensions also do not hold scrolls but customarily use their hands in gestures toward the main figures in accordance with Western or Eastern traditions. Carolingian representations such as the ones in the Drogo Sacramentary or the Bible from San Paolo fuori le Mura depict the angels pointing with one hand toward Christ and with the other hand toward the lower group. In Byzantine art, e.g. in a copy of the Homilies of the Virgin by James of Kokkinobaphos, first half of the 12th century (Paris, Bibl.Nat. Ms.grec.94, Fig.96), the angels point as a rule only toward Christ.

However the use of scrolls in the Ascension is characteristic of the representations of the new variant with the Disappearing Christ in England about the year 1000. For example, in the Psalter from Bury St. Edmonds (Vatican. Reg.Ms.12 folio 73v Fig.97), the angels gesture toward Christ with one hand and hold scrolls with the other. On another folio (103) of the same manuscript, the scroll
recurs but is held this time by the ascending Christ who is supported by a cloud. In the *Hereford Troper* (Fig. 87), the angels together hold a scroll which carries Christ as he steps up into the clouds. This unusual and practical support system might have inspired the artist of the *York Psalter*. His Ascension uses a similarly unorthodox method of transport since Christ stands on the wings of the angels for additional support, a feature also which seems unparalleled in Eastern or Western art.

Since the motif of the disappearing Christ had already appeared in 12th century English work predating the *York Psalter* (e.g. the *St. Albans* and *Winchester Psalters*), we may assume it had become popular. But the coincidence as well in the other details between the *York Psalter* and the Anglo-Saxon representations cited above does suggest some closer association. One could say that likely the artist admired the new English Ascension in its most innovative aspects and incorporated much of it in his own imagery.

Other motifs derived from insular iconography feature in the miniatures of the *York Psalter*. For example: the representation of Christ in Glory (folio 16, Fig. 23), depicts the four symbols of the evangelists full-length and equipped with halos, wings and either scrolls or book. This multiple combination, which is adopted also for the scene of Ezekiel's Vision in the *Bury Bible*, is infrequent in contemporary English or Continental work, though fully equipped sym-
bolts are common in Carolingian art of the late 8th and early 9th century. It is not my intent here to try to unravel the iconographic development of the evangelist symbol but we may note that the full-length type with all its attributes which is preserved in the York Psalter had already occurred in a variant known in England by the end of the 7th century. The fully equipped symbol occurs on the top of St. Cuthbert's Coffin ca 698, on four pages of the Lindisfarne Gospels (British Museum Cotton Nero D.iv folios 25v, 93v, 137v, 209v, early 7th century) and in the 9th century Book of Cerne (Cambridge, Univ. Libr. Li. I 10) Figs. 98, 99, 100).

In the miniature of David Harping in the York Psalter (Fig. 27), the harp is exceptional for its addition of a lion's head and the peg at the top, two details which J.J.G. Alexander regards as originating in the 10th century Benedictional of Archbishop Robert. The scene of the Third Temptation (Fig. 18) depicts a particularly English devil in a type invented by the Anglo-Saxon miniaturist who, according to Nordenfalk, creates a grotesque caricature "... with his preposterous nose, huge mouth and beast-like body... an alarming adversary of the heavenly hosts." Finally, the motif of the round, cap-shaped hats depicted on the Jews in the Raising of Lazarus (Fig. 18) and the Virgin cycle in the Psalter can be traced to an Anglo-Saxon origin. Although this type of head covering had become a common mark of identification for the Jews by the 12th century in England and the
Continent, the special type of round hat depicted in the York Psalter belongs to a tradition whose most significant aspect is its remarkably early appearance in the 11th century Aelfric Pentateuch (Fig. 10).\textsuperscript{12}

To sum up: throughout the miniatures the artist of the York Psalter has followed a variety of models, combining iconographic elements from Byzantine art and from contemporary pictorial traditions in English illumination. However in some unusual and inventive features very often the prototype turns out to be insular art. Anglo-Saxon iconography which is the formative influence on the Virgin cycle also contributes an imaginative aspect to the other miniatures as well.

Conclusions

In Chapter II I have explained the distinctive iconography of the Death, Burial and Assumption of the Virgin by relating the cycle to the vernacular account in the 10th century Blickling Homilies, an Anglo-Saxon recension of the original Latin text known as the Transitus. This Chapter has also traced the pictorial form of the shrouded body in the Assumption as a characteristic trait of English art. The persistent recurrence of the motif from early 8th century insular art onward supports the theory that the artist of the York Psalter found his inspiration at home rather than abroad. Consequently we may doubt the value of the specific connection forwarded by Boase between the Assumption in the Psalter
and a popular 12th century Continental account of the miracle in the *Visions* of Elisabeth of Schönau. We may also discard his suggestion that the emphasis on Peter in the Virgin cycle is a reference to York Minster which is dedicated to the saint, since Peter figures prominently in the Anglo-Saxon text.

An additional comment on the *Blickling* text may be noted here in these *Conclusions*. Chapter II has cited the confusion of the homilist when he recounts at the end of the story the episode of the Virgin's soul being reunited with her body at two different moments. This emphasis on a dual reunion may have stimulated the imagination of the artist of the *York Psalter Assumption*. His depiction of the totally shrouded body could also be interpreted as an apt expression of the reunion of the soul—often portrayed in Assumptions as a swaddled figure—with Mary's body, together ascending in harmony from the tomb. As such he would belong to that line of English miniaturists who have created new imagery from inherent ingenuity and a sensibility to the fittingness of form and content.

An influence from liturgical drama on the *York Psalter Assumption* is also possible. Although there are no extant manuscripts of an Assumption play connected with York before the 15th century cycles enacted by the York Weavers' Guild, there is evidence that as drama the subject was important in the north. Civic organizers would go out of their way to
stage the Assumption on occasions of special importance, as York in 1486 honoured the visit of Henry VII. We do know that other dramatized cycles from the Old and New Testaments such as the Anglo-Norman *jeu d'Adam* and the *Peregrinus* plays were popular in England by the 12th century. The specific stage directions from a copy of the *Peregrinus* have been convincingly cited first by Emile Mâle and later by Pächt to explain the unusual pilgrim's costume worn by Christ in the Emmaus miniatures of the *St. Albans Psalter*. Similarly, there could have been some connection between the unique form of the Assumption in the *York Psalter* and an early drama. In the 15th century play the Assumption is related from the divine point of view with the angels commanded by Christ to fetch the Virgin's body from the tomb. Accordingly an image of the Virgin was raised by some machinery to the heavens in the upper reaches of the church which was the usual place for the performance. From these directions Anderson has noted the similarity between the type of device which would have been suitable in this scene and the distinctive design of the sheet which is grasped by the angels in the alabaster Assumption in New York (Fig.57), itself a descendent of the *York Psalter* miniature.

Chapter III has examined the development of the Death and Assumption in the wider setting of Continental iconographic traditions. It appears that the Virgin cycle
in the *York Psalter* does not relate to these formulae, or to southern English versions of the subject, other than in general resemblance common to all representations. However, another indigenous tradition does relate more closely to the cycle in the northern manuscript. Images of the Death and Assumption of the Virgin can be traced back to important manuscripts of the 10th century, an 8th century Saxon carving, and to what may be the oldest surviving Dormition in Western art, the late 7th-early 8th century work attributed to Bede. Northumbrian interest in the Virgin is attested further by expressions of a Marian cult in the north in written form from the 7th century and in representations of the *Hodegetria*. Therefore, while miniatures of the Death and the Virgin in 12th century manuscripts from the south of England reflect contemporary Byzantine influence by depicting the *Koimesis*, I can account for the unique Virgin iconography in the *York Psalter* because of its association with this separate northern tradition. Thus the northern provenance of the manuscript is a significant factor in the argument of insular ancestry.

A northern tradition of Marian iconography suggests further that a pictorial cycle not known in the south, and distinct from the archetype discussed by Kauffmann for the *St.Albans-Pembroke Coll.Ms.120-Four Leaves* group, was available to artists in the north. This is borne out also by the stress on narrative elements in representations stemming from
this line. The illustration in Bede's work, the Wirksworth slab, the two Benedictionals and the York Psalter are not in any sense hieratic as Carolingian and Ottonian versions tend to be. Instead the English works reflect in its various recensions the narrative in the Transitus. Perhaps even earlier than Deshman believed, manuscripts of this text illustrated with extensive Dormition cycles may have been available to English artists at least from the end of the 7th century in Northumbria and later in the south. In a small way this gives us a clearer idea of the kind of Early Christian illuminated manuscripts which were circulating between English libraries. We know that in the 11th and 12th centuries artists in England had recourse to Late Antique and Early Christian models of the Old Testament, since iconographic features in the Aelfric Pentateuch, St. Albans Psalter and Lambeth Bible scenes of Genesis have been shown by Dodwell, Pächt and others to depend on a Cotton Genesis recension. 16 Swarzenski also has noted that it is possible that the miniatures in the Gospels of St. Augustine (Cambridge, C.C.C.MS 286) are English copies made in the 8th century of Late Antique miniatures which had found their way to England. 17 Similarly, supposing that an early illustrated Transitus manuscript did exist, one may conclude that the Apocryphal Gospels as well as the Scriptures were subjects for illumination in the Early Christian period. In its wider implications, the pictorial tradition to which the Virgin cycle in
the *York Psalter* attaches itself, is of very respectable ancestr y and extends its significance beyond the orbit of English art.

In this last Chapter, I have outlined other aspects of Anglo-Saxon iconography in the *York Psalter* miniatures such as the new type of English Ascension, the characteristic devil and the round hat tradition for depicting Jews. One could argue that these features recur generally in 12th century English illumination and are not confined solely to the *York Psalter*, but their combination with a Virgin cycle of Anglo-Saxon ancestry suggests more than coincidence. The revival of indigenous iconography in an important manuscript from a northern scriptorium may also be due to a resurgence of national sentiment in the north after the Conquest. This is consideration properly belonging in another thesis. However it is not unreasonable to suggest that in view of its political history of rebellion and independence from the 7th and 8th century uprisings by the kings of Northumbria\textsuperscript{18} to the troublesome period following the Norman takeover, the north country traditionally exerted an individual character. Such quality is consistent with the particularly English aspects of the iconography of the *York Psalter*. Perhaps in their appreciation and preservation of insular traditions, these miniatures may express in patriotic terms the inclination to avoid imported influences.
The abundance of Marian imagery in the *York Psalter* is justified also by an explanation of larger implications: contemporary religious sentiment. The emotion and intellectual stimuli behind the Virgin cycle in the wider sense must be attributed to the ever-increasing worship of Mary, venerated not only in religious literature and art, but by immense popular devotion in England and on the Continent. That England's contribution played a major role in the advancement and propagation of the cult is widely acknowledged. Already by the 9th century, the Feast of the Assumption had been instituted as a holiday according to the laws of Alfred and Lanfranc later recognized it as one of the five principal festivals in the liturgical calendar. The chief promoters of the cult in the 12th century included the elder Anselm's biographer and devoted English disciple, Eadmer (d. 1124), the great Cistercian spiritual leader of Yorkshire, Ailred of Rievaulx (d.1167), Osbert of Clare, the English prior at Westminster (1127-1128), and the younger Anselm, Abbot of Bury St. Edmonds, 1121-1148. Southern has identified this Anselm as the one responsible for copying and popularizing a collection of the *Miracles of the Virgin*, which was to be a major catalyst in the dissemination of popular veneration. Anselm is noted too for his efforts to reinstate the Feast of the Immaculate Conception at Bury. This Feast, unknown to the Normans, had been generally abolished after the Conquest and its reintroduction at Bury St. Edmonds
and in several other monasteries was the subject of intense disputes.\textsuperscript{21} This friction and the related controversy surrounding the question of the bodily Assumption must have created an atmosphere suitable for advanced iconographic innovations. In this setting of provocative intellectual conditions, the early appearance of new iconographic formulas in English art in advance of Continental developments--such as the actual Coronation of the Virgin which Zarnecki has identified at Reading--should not be surprising.

Under the compelling surge of the cult of the Virgin, the unique Marian cycle in the York Psalter also mirrors this creative environment. By its preservation of indigenous iconography, one might say that in these miniatures there is revival of a special form of insular piety. Of such northern spiritual atmosphere, Knowles has commented that it was to remain a different thing from the religious sentiment of the south\textsuperscript{23} and William of Malmesbury also has given us an evocative description of the special temper of northern devotion. There is thus some satisfaction in observing that although the northern heritage of the York Psalter is distant by centuries, the present-day guardian of the manuscript remains in the north.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 1  Pages 1-20


3 J. Young and P.H. Aitken, A Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of the Hunterian Museum in the University of Glasgow. (Glasgow: James Maclehose and Sons, 1908) no.229.

4 Kauffmann Romanesque Manuscripts, No.95 pp.117-8.

5 Ibid., and my own measurements of the manuscript concur.


8 Carl Nordenfalk, Romanesque Painting from the Eleventh to the Thirteenth Century. (Lausanne: Skira, 1958) p.172 notes: "There is no question that England played a decisive part in the creation of the de luxe Psalter for private use, and we need not be surprised at the fact that . . . the calendar saints in the Psalter of Queen Melisende of Jerusalem . . . derive from an English prototype."

9 Meyer Schapiro, "The Image of the Disappearing Christ. The Ascension in English Art around the year 1000", Gazette des Beaux arts, 1943, p.148: "Where artists of the preceding period and throughout the XII and XIII centuries, with few exceptions, represent the months by a single figure. . . in English calendars of the early XI century. . . whole groups of cooperating figures (sometimes as many as five or six), are introduced." Another example would be British Museum MS. Julius A.VI: see Nordenfalk, Early Medieval Painting from the Fourth to the Eleventh Century (Skira, 1957), p.191.

10 See Otto Pächt's magisterial study on this key manuscript, The St. Albans Psalter, (London: Warburg Institute, 1960). The dating used for this work and others follows Kauffmann's Romanesque Manuscripts.
NOTES for pages 1-20

11 See Kauffmann, *Romanesque Manuscripts*, Nos. 56, 35, 70, 78.

12 Pächt, op.cit., pp. 105-114.


14 The secular feature of an animal playing a musical instrument is paralleled in the Sigena wall-paintings, ca 1170, which were supposedly painted by English artists who were in part responsible for the miniatures of the *Winchester Bible*. Though this is not necessarily a sign of direct influence, it demonstrates the wide range of contact available to traveling English painters and also the directions in which popular motifs could journey. Otto Pächt first noticed the coincidence in "A Cycle of English Frescoes in Spain", *Burlington Magazine*, May, 1969, pp.166-175.


18 Ibid., p.53.


22 Kauffmann, *Romanesque Manuscripts*, Nos. 96; also M.Mackeprang, V.Madsen, C.S. Petersen, *Greek and Latin Manuscripts in Danish Collections* (1921), pp. 32-42, P1.48-60. Neither Calendar of the *York Psalter* or the *Copenhagen Psalter* has an entry for Thomas Becket whose murder in December, 1170, led to his widespread cult in the years shortly afterwards. This omission has been interpreted by Boase and others to mean that these psalters were likely completed by 1170 or by 1173 when Becket was canonized.
NOTES for pages 1-20

23 Kauffmann, Romanesque Manuscripts, Nos. 94, 97. Boase, York Psalter, p.244-245.
24 Boase, York Psalter, p.5; Young and Aitken, Catalogue, p.174.
27 Kauffmann, Romanesque Manuscripts, p.118.
29 Boase, York Psalter, pp.5-6.
32 Boase, English Art, p.241. Also Renee Marcouse Figure Sculpture in St. Mary's Abbey, York. (York: Yorkshire Philosophical Society, 1951).
NOTES for pages 1-20

35 *V.C.H. A History of Yorkshire*, p.6f. Also see The Rev. G.F. Browne, *Alcuin of York* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1908), p.84: "... Alcuin succeeded Albert in the mastership of the School of York and in the ownership of the great library. ... Alcuin tells us that it contained all Latin literature, all that Greece had handed on to the Romans, all that the Hebrew people had received from on high. ... and had works of the learned men of the English Church such as Aldhelm of Malmesbury, and Bede. ..."


45 Millar, E.G. *La miniature anglaise*, p.49.
E. Saunders, *English Illumination I* (Florence & Munich, 1928) n.1, p.41. Saunders also identifies as a Death of the Virgin the representation in the large initial 'E' in the St. Jerome on Isaiah manuscript in the Bodleian Library (Bodl.MS. Bodley 717). According to Boase this is incorrect since he attributes the subject to the burial of Paula, to whose death Jerome refers in his introduction. Above Paula sits the Virgin, carrying the 'virga', Isaiah's 'shoot out of the seed of Jesse', enthroned between Jerome and Isaiah. See Boase, *English Art*, p.29, pl.5a.

![Burial of Paula. Initial E. Bodl.717, folio 6v (Boase, p.1.5a)](image)

**Fig. 1**

Burial of Paula. Initial E. Bodl.717, folio 6v (Boase, p.1.5a)


51 Robert Deshman, *Iconography*, p.102, n.76.

30-a.

See also J. Beckwith, *Ivory Carvings*, p.13f and especially p.58f., for description of early York as cultural center of the north. "This culture was made possible by the teaching of Theodore, Hadrian, later Aldhelm, at Canterbury but in the north the Irish monks at Lindisfarne and Benedict Biscop at Wearmouth and Jarrow were responsible for centers of learning with important
NOTES for pages 21-59

libraries which put England in the forefront of early medieval civilisation." , p.13.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II  pages 21-59


2The Rev. R.Morris, ed. The Blickling Homilies of the Tenth Century (London: Early English Text Society, 1880), 136-151. The manuscript was then owned by the Marquis of Lothian.


4Olav Sinding, Mariae Tod und Himmelfahrt, p.89, first noticed this. I am grateful to Dr. Mary Morehart for assistance in the German translation.


6Gregory of Tours' work is in Migne, Patriologiae. . . Series Latina, 71, 708B,C; R. Deshman, Iconography, p.100, n.68 notes at least two Anglo-Saxon translations of an abridged version of the recension by Gregory of Tours.

7M.R.James Apocryphal, p.216.

8Ibid.


11Ibid., p.211.


For examples, Figs. 33, 63, 64, 65, 66, 68, 69.


James, *Apocryphal*, p.214.


Morris, *Blickling Homilies*, pp.136-151. See also R. Deshman, *Iconography*, p.100, n.68. The account of Christ's Ascension in the *Blickling Homilies* has been associated by Schapiro with the new image of the disappearing Christ in English art around 1000: "The Image of the Disappearing Christ", *Gazette des Beaux Arts* 1943, 134-152.


NOTES for pages 21-59

30 James, Apocryphal, p.211.
31 Morris, Blickling Homilies, p.144.
32 Ibid.
33 James, Apocryphal, p.212.
34 Morris, Blickling Homilies, p.144.
36 Ibid.
38 Morris, Blickling Homilies, p.156.
40 See M.R. James, Apocryphal, pp.209-216 for other versions.
42 Morris, Blickling Homilies, p. 152.
44 Ibid., p.10.
45 Ibid.
NOTES for pages 21-59

48 For MS 149 see H.O. Coxe, Catalogus Codicum Manuscriptorum qui in collegiis aulisque Oxoniensibus hodie ad servantur II (Oxford, 1852), 45-46.


50 Ibid., p.10.


52 Otto Pächt, The St. Albans Psalter, p.72-73 and p.72,n.7.

53 A. Heimann, op.cit.; p.222.

54 evidence that the motif was used in representations of secular burials, also see below.

55 See Francis Wormald, "Continental Influence on English Medieval Illumination", Transactions of the International Congress of Bibliophiles, London 1965 (London: 1967), pp.4-5: "... your attention is drawn to Cotton MS Claudius B.iv in the British Museum. This is an eleventh-century copy of the Pentateuch and Joshua in Old English belonging once to ... Canterbury. In it there is a large number of illustrations telling the story of the Old Testament: ... In one scene, f.72b, of the burial of Joseph, the corpse is wrapped up like a cocoon which on closer inspection bears a strong resemblance to a mummy case."

56 Arthur Watson, The Early Iconography of the Tree of Jesse (London: Oxford University Press, 1934), especially Ch.VII.


58 Lethaby, op.cit., p.42 f.

59 Augusta S. Tavender, "Mediaeval English Alabasters in American Museums, II", Speculum, XXXIV no.3 July 1959, p.437

*54 cont'd. The motif is found also on folio 18, The Burial of Edmund, Pierpont Morgan MS 736 (New York), illustrated on Pl.21 of MA thesis: The Pierpont Morgan Life and Miracles of St. Edmund: Some observations on the content and style of its Illuminated Miniatures, by Pamela Fraser, UBC, September 1978.
NOTES TO CHAPTER III pages 60-84

1 F. Cabrol, "L'Assomption dans l'art", Dictionnaire de théologie catholique, ed. R. Leclerq (Paris: 1947), 2989, 2990, fig. 1025. This attribution is disputed by Sinding and James, (Tristram & James, 1927).


3 Jacqueline Lafontaine, Peintures Médiévales dans le Temple dit de la Fortune Virile à Rome, (Etudes de Philologie, d'archéologie et d'histoire anciennes, Tome VI, Brussells, Ravenstein, 1959), pp. 28-35.


5 See also the following representations of the Koimesis: Steatite plaque, late 10th, early 11th century (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Mus.), Weitzmann, ibid. fig. 197, showing the soul as a completely wrapped figure; mosaic, middle of the 14th century (Prague: National Gallery) The Bohemian Master, (Demus, Byzantine Art and the West, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1970, fig. 154); wall-painting, ca 1320, Church of the Annunciation, Gracanica, Yugoslavia (Schug-Wille, Art of the Byzantine World, New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc., 1969) illustrated on p. 219; ivory from the end of the 10th century (Darmstadt, Hessische Landesmuseum S. 6 (H. Feldbusch, Die Himmelfahrt, pl. 2) my fig. 11, p. 117.


7 H. Graef, Mary: A History, p. 178 f.

8 Ibid. p. 222-249. See also Valerie I. J. Flint, "The Commentaries of Honorius Augustodunensis on the Song of Songs", Revue Benedictine, 84, 1914, pp. 196-211.


10 Boase, York Psalter, p. 12.
NOTES for pages 60-84

11. Ibid.; Réau, Iconographie, fig. 41.


13. F. Wormald, The Winchester Psalter (London: Harvey Medcalf Ltd., 1973), pp. 87-90, ""How then are these two miniatures to be explained? They are not additions and are clearly contemporary with the rest of the full-page miniatures... The situation has now somewhat altered by the discovery of a large number of icons preserved in the monastery of St. Catharine on Mount Sinai... Some of these icons were produced in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem and Weitzmann has published one icon which is almost certainly by an English artist (see Wormald fig.91). If an English icon could find its way to Mount Sinai it is equally possible for a Byzantine diptych to find its way to Winchester and to be copied there. Historically this would be perfectly possible, particularly at Winchester where the bishop, Henry de Blois, was a well known collector of curiosities and antiques."

14. O. Demus, Byzantine Art and the West, p.158ff, Demus fig. 10.

15. See note 44, p.103; note 18, p.106. Also M.R. James, "Wall-paintings in Croughton Church, Northamptonshire", Part II, Archeologia, LXXVI, 1927, pp.202-204. *

16. Ibid., p.185f.


19. Ibid.

* On the so-called Bury Psalter, see also the Descriptive Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts in the Library of Charles William Dyson Perrins, 2 vols. (Oxford: University
NOTES for pages 60-84

Press, 1920).


21 D.Meehan, Adamnan's, p.3 and J.Finegan, The Archeology, xviii. Peter H.Blair, Northumbria in the Days of Bede (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1976) also discusses the association between Arculf, Adamnan and Bede in Chapters 2 and 3.

22 Meehan, Adamnan's, opposite p.47.

23 Ibid., p.3-5.


26 Betty Kurth, "The Iconography of the Wirksworth Slab", Burlington Magazine, LXXXVI (April 1945), 114-121

27 Ibid., p.121.


NOTES for pages 60-84.

33 Ibid.
34 Ernst Kitzinger, "The Coffin-Reliquary", p.264.
36 The Rev. T.E. Bridgett, Our Lady's Dowry, or How England gained and lost that Title (London: Burns and Oates, 1875), Ch. 1.
39 Ibid., p.189.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV pages 85-99

1 D.H. Turner, "The Last Phase of Romanesque", p.151, suggests a different attribution for folio 13v (see below, note 3); Boase, The York Psalter, points out the unusual features of some of the miniatures such as the naked Isaac in folio 9v, but makes no attempt to analyze the iconography in detail; Kauffmann, Romanesque Manuscripts, pp.118-119. As far as I know, the iconography of the entire cycle has never been published, although a Ph.D. dissertation in progress (brought to my notice by Dr. Mary Morehart) may prove of interest: Jane Heatherington Brown, "The York Psalter: a Codicological, Paleographical, and Art Historical Study". University of North Carolina, Art Journal, Spring 1979.

A key aspect of the pictorial cycle is its incomplete state. The thirteen full-page miniatures are on facing pages, and each pair of pictures is followed by a pair of blank pages. I have indicated this in the sequence of illustrations for this thesis. I include here the collation of the illustrated folios in order to show the struc-
nature of each gathering, since this would have bearing on the decoration of both the blanks and the cycle as a whole. For example, the Assumption of the Virgin is on folio 19v, the left side of the folio, and it faces a blank page on the right, numbered as folio 20r. One would expect to see on this blank page a miniature of the Coronation, given the emphasis on the Virgin in the psalter and the appearance of the subject in other English psalters, e.g. the Winchester Psalter. This suggestion would be plausible for the companion blank facing the Assumption folio as well as the next following blank (20v) are all leaves contained in the fifth gathering. The new sixth gathering begins only at folio 21r, also blank, followed by the scene overleaf of David Harping. One could thus conceivably argue that the Virgin cycle did not end with the scene of the Assumption and probably included an additional miniature of the Coronation, or Virgin Enthroned.

The stitching appears to be untampered (from my own observation), and thus the collation for the miniatures runs as follows:

Second gathering: four leaves 2:1/1v 2/2v 3/3v 4/4v
Third gathering: two leaves 3:1/1v 2/2v
Fourth gathering: four leaves 4:1/1v 2/2v 3/3v 4/4v
Fifth gathering: four leaves 5:1/1v 2/2v 3/3v 4/4v
Sixth gathering: two leaves 6:1/1v 2/2v and continuing.

This corresponds to the handwritten folio numbers and subjects:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7r Blank 2:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7v Creation 2:1v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temptation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8v Blank 2:2v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9v Sacrifice 2:3v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10v Blank 2:4v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11v Temptation 3:1v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lazarus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12v Blank 3:2v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13v Incredulity 4:1v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ on Water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14v Blank 4:2v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15v Pentecost 4:3v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16v Blank 4:4v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17v Announcement-Death 5:1v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18v Blank 5:2v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19v Assumption 5:3v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20v Blank 5:4v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21v David 6:1v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8r Expulsion 2:2 (second gathering)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9r Blank 2:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10r Blank 2:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11r Blank 3:1 (third gathering)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12r Emmaus 3:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ's Appearance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13r Blank 4:1 (fourth gathering)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14r Ascension 4:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15r Blank 4:3:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16r Christ in Majesty 4:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17r Blank 5:1 (fifth gathering)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18r Death 5:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19r Blank 5:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20r Blank 5:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21r Blank 6:1 (sixth gathering)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22r Beatus 6:2r</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Also to note from the structure of the third gathering is the fact that it contains only two leaves, whereas the others have four leaves of illustrations. This suggests, (and Kauffmann, p.118, has noted this also) that two leaves may be missing. Such an omission may explain the lack of any scenes between the Raising of Lazarus (folio 11v) and the Emmaus miniature (folio 12r), where normally one would expect to see scenes from the Passion.

2 Kauffmann, Romanesque Manuscripts, p.119.

3 In folio 13v of the York Psalter, Christ on the right stands upon the surface of the water and reaches with his right hand to Peter, who is naked and half-submerged. On the left, six apostles in a boat turn their heads (saving one man who stares ahead) toward the event. The scene has been identified by Boase, (The York Psalter, Plate 3) as Christ Saves St. Peter upon the Waters, according to the text in Matthew 14:22-31. This identification however creates a chronological confusion, since the scene of the Doubting Thomas in the upper register is an event which occurs after the Resurrection, and Christ saves Peter before the Passion. Surely the artist would not have combined models in such a way. For Boase there seems to be no clear explanation for the out-of-order scene, unless the common theme of lack of faith on the part of an apostle is the link between them. However, Turner ("The Last Phase of Romanesque", p.151) suggests that the scene is in fact the appearance of Christ at Tiberias. Although based pictorially on a representation of Christ saving Peter, the subject is meant to show Peter swimming to his risen Lord on the shore of the sea of Tiberias, according to John 21:4-8. Thus there would be no chronological break between this scene and the one of the doubting Thomas above it. And though Christ at Tiberias is an unusual Post-Resurrection subject, two previous instances in English art may be cited: Pembroke College MS 120, folio 31b (where Peter is described as being half-naked: see M.R.James, A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Pembroke College, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1905, p.123); and the leaf in New York, MS.521 (Pierpont Morgan Library), see M.R.James "Four Leaves", p.9 no.5b, Plate V.

At attribution of this scene to Christ at Tiberias would also concur with vs 7 of John 21: "Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him (for he was naked), and did cast himself into the sea." The 10th century Egbert Codex, folio 90, also depicts Peter's nakedness, now covered by a coat. (see Franz Ronig, Codex Egberti, Trier: Spee-Verlag, 1977, p.113.)
NOTES for pages 85-99


6 Ibid.

7 Ibid., p.150-152. See also Otto Pächt's discussion of the St. Albans Ascension in The St. Albans Psalter, p.56 and p.95.

8 Ernst Kitzinger, "The Coffin-Reliquary", p.235f.


11 Carl Nordenfalk, Early Medieval Painting, pp.190-191.


NOTES for pages 85-99


18 See P.H.Blair, _Northumbria in the Days of Bede_, Chapters 1 and 2 for discussion of the activities of these warrior kings of 7th century Northumbria, as he terms them; also D.Knowles, _The Monastic Order in England: A History of its Development from the times of St. Dunstan to the Fourth Lateran Council 943-1216_ (Cambridge: University Press, 1949) who describes Yorkshire as follows: "From more than one point of view the north of England was a field ready for sowing. Despite the spread of monasticism after the Conquest, it was still largely virgin soil. . . . In the north, too, the spiritual atmosphere was congenial. In the early decades of the twelfth century a renaissance, intellectual and religious, was taking place at York itself and other centres, which were at last recovering from the Scandinavian invasions and the more recent harrying of the Conqueror, and the earnest, somewhat stern northern piety. . . . was to remain a different thing from the religious sentiment of the south. . . ." (p.229). That a wave of enthusiasm for native history arose in the late 11th and early 12th centuries is evident in the historical writers whose works show an increasing pride in England and its insular traditions. Ordric Vitalis, who was sent around the year 1085 to become a monk in a Norman monastery, wrote a history of Norman achievements but he wrote and thought of himself as an Englishman in exile. William of Malmesbury, whose _Gesta Regum_ was written about 1125, followed Bede's example in writing history as distinct from biography or annals. Geoffrey of Monmouth, Bishop of St.Asaph, (ca 1165-75), wrote an imaginative _History of the Britons, ca 1139_, later revised in 1147, which by its tone and character encouraged a revival of English feeling. See Doris Mary Stenton, _English Society in the Early Middle Ages (1066-1307)_ (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1972), pp. 271-274; G.O.Sayles, _The Medieval Foundations of England_, (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd.1966), Chapter XVIII.


* See also A. Gasquet and E. Bishop, The Bosworth Psalter, p.72-73.

Fig. II Koimesis. Ivory, end of the 10th century
(Darmstadt: Hessische Landesmuseum S.6)
(Feldbusch, Pl.2)
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ILLUSTRATIONS
Fig. 1 January: Plowing. Detail from Calendar Page. British Museum Cotton MS Tiberius B.v, folio 3.

Fig. 2 June: Pruning. July: Mowing. Calendar Pages. Glasgow: Univ.Libr. MS U.3.2. Folios 3v, 4.

Photos from slides: UBC Slide Library
Fig. 3 Glasgow, Univ. Libr. MS U.3.2.
Folio 1 January: Feasting

Fig. 4 Glasgow, Univ. Libr. MS U.3.2
Folio lv February: Warming before a Fire

Photos from slides: UBC Slide Library
Fig. 5 Glasgow, Univ. Libr. MS U.3.2.  
Folio 2 March: Digging

Fig. 6 Glasgow, Univ. Libr. MS U.3.2  
Folio 2v April: Lovemaking

Photos from slides: UBC Slide Library
Fig. 7 Glasgow, Univ.Libr.MS U.3.2. Folio 3 May: Hawking

Fig. 8 Glasgow, Univ.Libr.MS U.3.2 Folio 3v June: Pruning

Photos from slides: UBC Slide Library
Photos from slides: UBC Slide Library
Fig. 11 Glasgow, Univ. Libr. MS U.3.2
Folio 5 September: Gathering Grapes

Fig. 12 Glasgow, Univ. Libr. MS U.3.2
Folio 5v October: Treading Grapes

Photos from slides: UBC Slide Library
Fig. 13 Glasgow, Univ. Libr. MS U.3.2
Folio 6 November: Gathering Acorns for Hogs

Fig. 14 Glasgow, Univ. Libr. MS U.3.2
Folio 6v December: Killing Hogs

Photos from slides: UBC Slide Library
Fig. 15 Glasgow, Univ.Libr. MS U.3.2 Folio 7v Creation of Adam; The Temptation (2:1v)

Fig. 16 Glasgow, Univ.Libr. MS U.3.2 Folio 8 Expulsion from Paradise; Adam digging, Eve Spinning (2:2r)

Photos from slides: UBC Slide Library
Fig. 17 Glasgow, Univ. Libr. MS U.3.2.
Folio 9v Angels Tells Abraham
to sacrifice his son; Sacrifice
of Isaac (2:3v)

Glasgow, Univ. Libr. MS U.3.2.
folio 10 Blank Page (2:4r)

Photo from slide: UBC Slide Library
Fig. 18 Glasgow, Univ. Libr. MS U.3.2
Folio 11v Third Temptation of Christ; Raising of Lazarus (3:1v)

Fig. 19 Glasgow, Univ. Libr. MS U.3.2
Folio 12 Supper at Emmaus; Christ's Appearance to the Disciples (3:2r)

Photos from slides: UBC Slide Library
Fig. 20 Glasgow, Univ.Libr. MS U.3.2
Folio 13v Doubting Thomas; Christ
at the Sea of Tiberias
(4:1v)

Fig. 21 Glasgow, Univ.Libr. MS U.3.2
Folio 14 Ascension
(4:2r)

Photos from slides: UBC Slide Library
Fig. 22 Glasgow, Univ.Libr. MS U.3.2
Folio 15v Pentecost (4:3v)

Fig. 23 Glasgow, Univ.Libr. MS U.3.2
Folio 16 Christ in Majesty (4:4r)

Photos from slides: UBC Slide Library.
Fig. 24 Glasgow, Univ.Libr. MS U.3.2  
Folio 17v Angel Announcing the death to the Virgin; Virgin Announces Impending Death to the Apostles (5:1v)

Fig. 25 Glasgow, Univ.Libr. MS U.3.2  
Folio 18 Death of the Virgin; The Funeral Procession (5:2r)

Photos from slides: UBC Slide Libr.
Fig. 26 Glasgow, Univ. Libr. MS U.3.2
Folio 19v Burial of the Virgin;
The Assumption
(5:3v)

Glasgow, Univ. Libr. MS U.3.2
Folio 20 Blank Page
(5:4r)

Photo from slide:
UBC Slide Library
Fig. 27 Glasgow, Univ. Libr. MS U.3.2
     Folio 21v David Harping
         (collation 6:lv)

Fig. 28 Glasgow, Univ. Libr. MS U.3.2
     Folio 22 Beatus Initial
         (collation 6:2r)

Photos from slides: UBC Slide Libr.
Fig. 29 Statuette from Bridlington; Backview: Fig. 30
(London: Victoria and Albert Museum)
(Zarnecki: pl. 115, 116)
1953

Fig. 31. The Visitation
Copenhagen Psalter
(Copenhagen: Royal Libr. MS Thott 143 2o)
(Zarnecki, pl. 117)
1953
Fig. 32. Beatus Initial. Full page miniature. 
Copenhagen Psalter. (Copenhagen: Royal Library MS Thott 143 2o, folio 17)

(Boase, Pl.86) 1953
Fig. 33 Winchester Psalter (British Museum MS Nero C.IV folio 29) Death of the Virgin

(Kauffmann, fig. 221) 1973

Fig. 34 Glasgow, Univ. Libr. MS U.3.2 Folio 94 Initial to Psalm 72 Woman suckling two men (Mother Church)

Photo from slide: UBC Slide Library
de cuitate domini
et unguiculam.

Non arietas faciem
in quacum: die trid.

miserere mei.
Petreus flecit in dira
benedicam te domini

Dominus protector
a quo trepidabos?

Fig. 35 Glasgow, Univ.Libr. MS U.3.2
folio 128 Decorative Initial D
to Psalm 101

Fig. 36 Glasgow, Univ.Libr. MS U.3.2
folio 46 Initial to Psalm 26
Samuel anointing and crowning
David

Photos from slides: UBC Slide Library.
Fig. 37 Glasgow, Univ.Libr. MS U.3.2.  
Folio 85v Decorative Initial T to Psalm 67

Fig. 38 Glasgow, Univ.Libr. MS U.3.2.  
Folio 101 Initial to Psalm 77  
Battle of a man and a Centaur

Photos from slides: UBC Slide Library.
Fig. 39 Glasgow, Univ.Lib. MS U.3.2. Folio 75
Initial to Psalm 51 Q, Doeg whispering to Saul and pointing to David

Fig. 40 Glasgow, Univ.Lib. MS U.3.2 Folio 125v
Decorative Initial to Psalm 97

Photos from slides:
UBC Slide Library.
Fig. 41 Assumption, 12th century Missal
(Tours, Bibl.comm. MS folio 98)
(Feldbusch, Pl. 5)

Fig. 42 Death of the Virgin, mid-12th century Pericope Book (Paris, Bibl.Nat.MS lat.17325)
(Boeckler, Pl. 48).
Fig. 43 Entombment of Christ St. Albans Psalter ca 1119-1123 (Hildesheim, St. Godehard, unnumbered ms. p.48)

(Pächt, 1960, pl.33a)
Fig. 44 Entombment of Christ ca 1072-1100 (Sant'Angelo in Formis, wall-painting, nave, north wall.

(Demus, Romanesque, pl. 156)
Fig. 45 Burial of St. Aemilius. Ivory panel from reliquary shrine 1053-1067, Abbey of San Millan de la Cogolla, Rioja (province of Logrono) (de Palol, Pl. 81)

Fig. 46 Entombment of Christ ca 1170 Sculpture, Malmesbury Abbey, Wiltshire. (Zarnecki, 1953, Pl. 94)
Fig. 47 Entombment ca 1140
(Victoria & Albert Mus.
MS 661 verso of psalter leaf) (James, 1937, Pl.VIII)

Fig. 48 Burial of Judas Mac-cabeus 1150-1180 (Winchester Cath.Libr. Bible, folio 350v)
(Roase 1953 Pl.63a)

Fig. 49 Burial of the King, first half 12th century. (Cambridge, Trinity Coll. MS.0.9.
34 folio 79)

Photo from slide,
UBC Slide Libr.
Fig. 50 Burial of the Dead (from Seven Acts of Mercy) 1170-1200 (Paris, Bibl. Nat. MS lat. 8846 folio 156v) The Paris Psalter

(Leroquais, Pl. CIV)

Fig. 51 Burial of Joseph, 11th century (British Museum Cotton MS Claudius B. iv folio 72v lower half) Aelfric Pentateuch

(Wormald, Continental Influences, fig. 1)
Fig. 52 Tree of Jesse Shaftesbury Psalter
(Brit. Libr. MS Lansdowne 383 folio 15, ca 1130-1140)

Photo from slide: UBC Slide Libr.

Fig. 53 Tree of Jesse Lambeth Bible ca 1150 (London, Lambeth Palace Libr. MS.3 folio 198r)

(Watson, Pl. XV)
Fig. 54 Tree of Jesse Winchester Psalter ca 1150
(British Museum Cotton MS Nero C.iv folio 9r)
(Watson, Pl.XIX)
Fig. 55 Reconstruction of Assumption
York Psalter (Glasgow, Univ.Libr.
MS U.3.2 folio 19v)
(reconstruction mine)

Fig. 56 Incarnation scene Bamberg
Gospels 11th century (Bamberg Staatsbiblio.MS 94.A.
11.18 folio 155) Photo from
slide, UBC Slide Libr.
Fig. 57 Assumption of the Virgin
ca 1400 Alabaster, height:
50 cm. (New York: Metropolitan Museum, The Cloisters)

(Tavender, p. 438)

Fig. 58 Assumption of the Virgin, 4th century
Sarcophagus, Sant'Engracia, Saragossa

(Leclercq, fig. 102b)
Fig. 59 Assumption of the Virgin
8th century Byzantine brocade textile (Sens Cathedral Treasure)

(Revue de l'art Chrétien 1897, p.228)

Fig. 60 Assumption of the Virgin
early 10th century. Ivory bookcover of Tuotillo
(St.Gall Monastery Libr.)

(Feldbusch, Pl.4)
Koimesis, late 10th century (Reichenau)
Ivory relief in gold bookcover, Gospel Book of Otto III (Munich, Bayerische Staatbibl. Clm. 4453)

(Backes, p.163)

(Weitzmann, fig. 194)
Fig. 63 Koimesis, late 10th century
Constantinople. Central panel of ivory triptych. (Washington, Dumbarton Oaks Collection)

Fig. 64 Koimesis, 12th century
Icon, Saint Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai (Weimann, fig. 94)
Fig. 65 Koimesis, mid-12th century mosaic, Martorana, Palermo

(Demus, 1949, Pl. 56)
Fig. 66 Koimesis, ca 1295
Wall-painting, Church of Saint Clement, formerly Saint Mary Peribleptos, Ohrid, Yugoslavia.

(Schug-Wille, p. 217)
Fig. 67 Assumption, 11th century Sacramentary from Augsbert (British Museum MS Harley 2908 folio 123v)
(Alexander, Norman Illum. Pl.42c)

Fig. 68 Koimesis with Coronation late 10th century Prüm Gradual (Paris, Bibl.Nat. MS lat. 9448, folio 60v)
(Sinding, pl.IXa)
Fig. 69 Death of the Virgin and Assumption, 10th century. Pericope Book of Henry II (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibl. Clm. 4452 folio 119) (Feldbusch, Pl.1)

Fig. 70 Assumption, 11th century Morgan 641 (New York, Pierpont Morgan Library MS 641 folio 142v) (Alexander, Norman Illum. Pl. 40)
Fig. 71 Death of the Virgin and Assumption. Cathedral of Senlis. Tympanum of West Portal, ca 1180-1190
(Bazin, Pl. 595)

Fig. 72 Assumption, 12th century. Capital from Clermont-Ferrand.
(Feldbusch, pl. 3)
Fig. 73 Death of the Virgin, ca 980
Benedictional of Ethelwold (British Museum MS Add.49598 folio 102v)
(photo from a slide, UBC Slide Library)

Fig. 74 Death of the Virgin, late 10th century. Benedictional of Archbishop Robert. (Rouen, Bibl. Mun. MS Y.7 folio 4)
(Rickert, pl.29b 1959)
Fig. 75 Death of the Virgin, late 7th-early 8th century, English, ?Northumbria
From Bede's De Liber Locis Sanctis (ex Olav Sinding Mariae Tod und Himmelfahrt Pl.VIIb)

Fig. 76 Plan of four Jerusalem Churches (Arculf)
(Vienna, Staat.Bibl. Cod.458, folio 4v)
Meehan, opp.p.47.
Fig. 77  Death of the Virgin, stone slab 8th century. Church of Wirksworth, Derbyshire.  
(Anderson, pl. 24 1971)

Fig. 78  Assumption. Ivory, 8th century  
(Munich, Bayer. Nat. Mus. no MA 164)  
(Beckwith, 1972, No. 24)
Fig. 79 Virgin and Child. Stone relief.

(Talbot Rice, Pl. 22)
1952
Fig. 80 Creation of Adam ca 1180
Mosaic, Monreale

(Demus, 1949, Pl. 95a)

Fig. 81 Fall of Man and Expulsion from Paradise
ca 1160 Mosaic, Palermo, Palatina.

(Demus 1949, Pl. 28b, 29a)

Fig. 82 Sacrifice of Isaac, 11th century ivory plaque. Cathedral of Salerno.

(Weitzmann, 1955, fig. 16)
Fig. 83 Sacrifice of Isaac, late 11th century
Wall-painting, Concordia Sagittaria,
Cathedral, Baptistery. (Demus, Romanesque
Mural Painting, Pl. 9)
Fig. 84 Sacrifice of Isaac Lambeth Bible ca 1150 (London, Lambeth Palace MS 3 folio 6) Photo from slide, UBC Slide Libr.

Fig. 85 Sacrifice of Isaac, 6th century Mosaic, Church of San Vitale, Lunette, Presbytery, left wall Ravenna. Photo from slide, UBC Slide Libr.
Fig. 86 Ascension, ca 1000
Missal of Robert of Jumièges
(Rouen, MS. Y.6)
(Schapiro, fig. 5
1943)

Fig. 87 Ascension, ca 1000
Hereford Troper, (British
Museum MS. Caligula A. XIV)
(Schapiro, fig. 6
1943)
Fig. 89 Ascension, 6th century Ampulla (Monza, Cathedral Treasure) (Pächt, 1960, 133c)

Fig. 88 Ascension, 6th century Pala of Gospels (Florence, Bibl. Laurentiana Cod. Plut. I 56) Photo from slide, UBC Slide Libr.
Fig. 90 Ascension, ca 1180 Mosaic Monreale (Demus, Mosaics Pl.74B)

Fig. 91 Ascension, mid-9th century Drogo Sacramentary, Metz (Paris, Bibl.Nat.MS.lat. 9428, folio 71v)

(Alexander, Norman Illumination Pl.39d)

Fig. 92 Ascension, 10th century. Benedictional of Ethelwold (Brit.Mus. MS.Add.49598)

(Alexander, Norman Illum. Pl.39e)
Fig. 93 Ascension, 10th century
*Athelstan Psalter* (British Museum MS.Galba A.XVIII)
(Schapiro, fig.1 1943)

Fig. 94 Ascension, ca 1140 Pembroke College MS 120 (Kauffmann, fig.100) 1973
Fig. 95 Ascension, ca 1119-1123
St. Albans Psalter (Hildesheim, St. Godehard's. unnumbered ms)
p.54

(Pächt, St.Albans, Pl.33a)
Fig. 96 Ascension, first half 12th century

Fig. 97 Ascension with Disappearing Christ ca 1000, Psalter from Bury St.Edmonds (Vatican,Reg.MS.12 folio 73v) (Schapiro, fig. 3 1943)
Fig. 98 Evangelist symbols, ca 698
Incised decoration, wooden coffin reliquary of St. Cuthbert (Durham Cathedral Library)

(Kitzinger, Coffin Reliquary Pl.I)
Fig. 99 Evangelist Symbols, ca 698-721
Lindisfarne Gospels (British Museum Cotton MS Nero D.IV) Kitzinger, Coffin Reliquary Pl.XII
Fig. 100 Evangelist Symbol St. Luke, ca 818-830
Book of Cerne (Cambridge, University Library Ll.1.10) folio 21v.

(Rickert, 1954, Pl. 62)
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