

5-26-2020

Mitre and Sword: Fighting Norman Bishops and Clergy

Timothy R. Martin

College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University, tmartin001@csbsju.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/obsculta>



Part of the [History of Christianity Commons](#)

ISSN: 2472-2596 (print)

ISSN: 2472-260X (online)

Recommended Citation

Martin, Timothy R.. 2020. Mitre and Sword: Fighting Norman Bishops and Clergy. *Obsculta* 13, (1) : 120-133. <https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/obsculta/vol13/iss1/11>.

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@CSB/SJU. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Obsculta* by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@CSB/SJU. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@csbsju.edu.

ABSTRACT:

This thesis examines Norman bishops and abbots, either as armed combatants, or commanders of military forces in Normandy, and later in England after 1066. Focusing primarily on the roles of bishops, other accounts of martial feats by other Norman clergy are also examined. The use of justified force and later the sanctioned use of violence by secular clergy is explored to better understand the rationale perceived by the clergy when acting as 'soldiers of God. These accounts of Norman bishops participating in combat show a natural progression of a tradition that was discouraged by reformers but embraced by secular rulers.

Mitre and Sword

Fighting Norman Bishops and Clergy

by Timothy Martin

In 911 CE, a Viking chieftain named Rollo was granted a stretch of land in the former Carolingian kingdom of Neustria by Charles III the Simple. Eventually Rollo and his descendants, the *northmanni* or north men, later to be known as Normans, secured almost the entirety of the ecclesiastical province of Rouen through a combination of political maneuvering and conquest, and gave rise to what would (come to) be known as Normandy. The Norman dukes who controlled the duchy inherited a land that had been wracked by Viking raids with its churches and monasteries abandoned or destroyed, the secular clergy and monks driven out, and its sacred holy relics displaced and dispersed among the other northern kingdoms. Over the course of the following two centuries, the Norman dukes would reconstitute the secular clergy and monastic communities within the duchy through lay investiture of bishops and affirming elections of abbots in monastic communities with members of the ducal family and leading aristocratic families. This transformed the Norman church into an extension of centralized ducal power and control. Contrary to Christ's message of faith, hope, love, forgiveness, and a philosophy of pacifism that Christians

believed, many ecclesiastics acknowledged that this ideal was in stark contrast to the reality of the violent world they lived in. These Norman bishops and other ecclesiastics were a continuation of a tradition of armed clergy, which has been documented and supported by Church teachings, sacred imagery, and hagiography since the early foundations of the Christian church and were not unknown on the battlefield. It was not as uncommon during this period to see clergy amongst the combatants either in support roles, directly in charge of military forces, or taking up arms to fight in the battles.

Since the time of St. Paul's conversion to Christianity during the early first century CE, there have been those Church leaders who viewed the world not only as a spiritual battle ground against evil and Satan, but a physical one, as well, and equally important in the service of God. Paul's writings to his fellow Christians incorporates several military metaphors throughout his epistles, such as donning the armor of God, brandishing the sword of the spirit, and taking up the shield of faith,¹ all of which were designed to reaffirm the beliefs and teachings of Christ and strengthen his fellow Christians' resolve. Several of the early jurists of the Christian church spoke on the righteousness of just war, the authority to wage it, and how to conduct it. Saint Augustine of Hippo in *The City of God*² and Saint Ambrose, bishop of Milan's treatise 'On the Duties of the Clergy,' wrote on who had the right to enact violence in a just war, the methods and justification to wage war, as well as the role that the clergy should play. Though at first these writings may seem counter to the founding Christian beliefs, Augustine and Ambrose seemed to take a positive stance on Christians who used justifiable force and showed no aversion to service in the military³ These armed clergy who had a long history of fighting for Christ relied on scripture, sacred imagery, the teachings from Saint Paul, early Church history, and the hagiographies of the saints who were perceived as soldiers of Christ. They also depended on works from Church patriarchs who promoted or incorporated martial terms and exploits.

1 Ephesians 6:10-18.

2 Augustine, *City of God*, trans. Henry Bettenson, intro. G. R. Evans (London: Penguin Classics, 2003).

3 Augustine, "Letter to Boniface; #189," <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1102189.htm>; Ambrose, *On the Duties of the Clergy*, chapter 28; 134, chapter 29; 139-142.

Christian ecclesiastical leaders, mainly the secular bishops, took a more aggressive stance and actively participated in armed combat and spiritual warfare to protect and, in the case of the crusades, some would argue that they also promoted and expanded Christianity. The hagiographies of militant clergy such as Saint Germanus, Saint Gerald, and the warlike Turpin - archbishop of Rheims from *The Song of Roland*, referenced their roles as military leaders as well as their individual fighting prowess. Stories of militant archbishops, bishops, and clergy can be found side-by-side with soldiers and secular lords who took up arms: Saint Germanus as recorded by Constantius of Lyon in *The Life of St. Germanus of Auxerre*,⁴ fought a mixed force of Pict and Saxon warriors near St. Albans in what was referred to as the Alleluia Battle. In c. 429 Archbishop Turpin, from *The Song of Roland*,⁵ dressed in armor and, wielding spear and sword, rode a horse and struck down enemies, cleaving them in half from head to torso. As early as the third century, the writings on the *Life of St. Antony* by Athanasius of Alexandria, depict several temptations by demons and their rebukes by Saint Antony as he traversed the Egyptian wilderness. For early monks, Saint Antony's physical and spiritual warfare against a horde of demons in a cave, and God's subsequent assistance and power over the demons, destroying them, is one aspect of this militant fervor that can be referenced in monastic history.⁶ In England Guthlac, an Anglo-Saxon warrior, gives up his royal heritage and trappings upon being shown by the Holy Spirit what rewards awaited him in heaven if he became a soldier of Christ.⁷ The transformation from a secular to a spiritual warrior, which prompted him to lead the life of a hermit, is recorded in Felix of Croyland's, the *Vita Sancti Guthlaci*.⁸ During his life as a hermit, Guthlac deploys his spiritual weapons, songs and prayers to God when confronted

-
- 4 Constantius of Lyon, "de Vita Germani," ed. by Thomas Noble and Thomas Head, trans. by F. R. Hoare, *Soldiers of Christ: Saints' Lives from Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 75-106.
 - 5 "The Song of Roland," trans. Robert Harrison (New York: Signet Classics, 2012).
 - 6 Jacobus de Voragine, "The Life of Saint Anthony," *The Golden Legend or Live of the Saints*. trans. William Caxton, 1st ed. 1483, vol. 2, ed. by F.S. Ellis (1900 reprinted 1922, 1931), 100. Medieval Sourcebook. <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/goldenlegend/GoldenLegend-Volume2.asp#Anthony>
 - 7 John Edward Damon, *Soldier Saints and Holy Warriors: Warfare and Sanctity in the Literature of Early England* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2003), 62-64, 75-81.
 - 8 Felix of Croyland, *Life of Saint Guthlac*, ed. and trans. Bertram Colgrave (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956).

by spiritual and seemingly physical peril, presented as demons in disguise. Felix's account of Guthlac's spiritual battles contain all the weaponry and pageantry of that of a heroic warrior figure, depicting these battles in words and imagery as if they were actual physical battles taking place.⁹ Some monks and holy men even transformed themselves into an image of a knight, took on the worldly appearance of a warrior in the battle against the devil, and followed a practice where they behaved more like knights and warriors than spiritual guides for Christians. If bishops who were often secular lords as well, could don armor with weapon in hand and march at the head of armies to do physical battle against the earthly enemies of God, then so, too, could the Norman monks battle the devil in a much loftier arena, the spiritual realm, and wage war in perpetual battle on behalf of all Christendom. *Saints in Shining Armor: Martial Asceticism and Masculine Models of Sanctity, ca. 1050- 1250* by Katherine Smith shows that between the years 1050-1250 there were eighteen recorded accounts of these soldiers of Christ who were in various monastic hagiographies which she examined donning real armor for spiritual battle.¹⁰

As the monastic revival began to take hold in the tenth century and spread throughout Western Europe, monks were called upon to employ their greatest weapon, prayer. These monks incorporated militant terminology into their liturgy and sensationalized the militancy of biblical heroes with their writings. These prayers were not only for victory over a mortal enemy but also for the spiritual battle against the devil and his legions of demons' crusade for Christians' immortal soul. Smith, in her book *War and the Making of Medieval Monastic Culture*, provides an in-depth examination of this transformation of the monastic community from monks into soldiers of Christ.¹¹ One reason for the increased militancy of these spiritual reinforcements was the retirement of aging warriors and leading members of the Norman aristocracy to monastic communities. These warriors took religious vows in their later years, but still imposed a warrior's ethos that had governed their lives and Norman society upon the monastic communities that they now served.¹² The influx of these

9 Damon, *Soldier Saints and Holy Warriors*, 75-77.

10 Katherine Allen Smith, "Saints in Shining Armor: Martial Asceticism and Masculine Models of Sanctity, ca. 1050-1250," *Speculum*, Vol. 83, no.3 (July 2008): 573-574.

11 Katherine Allen Smith, *War and the Making of Medieval Monastic Culture*. Studies in the History of Medieval Religion vol. 37 (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2011).

12 *Ibid.*, 51-57.



BECOM OF HOPE

by Katryna Bertucci

individuals with similar upbringings influenced how these prayers were written and how their devotion to God was expressed.¹³ Although these warriors were injured, infirmed, or exhausted from the warfare of the age, and could no longer serve on the battlefields as frontline combatants, it did not mean that their fight had to end. The energy and passion for fighting that were honed by these warriors from combat was redirected into the spiritual war against the devil and his hordes of demons by utilizing the power of prayer and devotional writings, as exemplified by earlier militant hagiographies of saints and bishops, and sacred images and relics.

The use of relics by Christians to seal oaths, confirm agreements, or garner support for a specific undertaking was a continuation of a practice that was seen even in Roman times¹⁴ as bishops, priest, and in particular monks, led processions accompanied by relics of saints at the head of advancing armies or to initiate ceremonies that served to protect soldiers and defeat their enemies in battle.¹⁵ William of Poitiers recorded an account of how Duke William brought the relics of Saint Valery to the Norman port of departure prior to the invasion of England to calm the winds and sea, and to ensure safe passage for his ships carrying his troops and horses.¹⁶ Even the objects carried or worn by saints such as swords or lances, boasted an impression of holiness. Martial weapons once used by these soldiers of Christ, were an extension of the saint themselves and conferred an aura of sacredness about them when called into action.¹⁷ In the article "Weapons in the Daily Battle: Images of the Conquest of Evil in the Early Medieval Psalter," Openshaw shows that psalters were frequently illustrated with images of saintly warriors locked in spiritual combat, particularly apostles and other biblical heroes who battled against hell's legions of demons and devils. Within these daily devotional books, which she refers to as "weapons in the battle fought daily by soldiers of God"¹⁸ Openshaw shows

13 Joseph and Frances Gies, *Life in a Medieval Castle* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979), 166-174; Marc Bloch, *Feudal Society*, trans. by L.A. Manyon, foreword by M.M. Postan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 293-299.

14 David S Bachrach, *Religion and the Conduct of War c.300-c.1215*, Warfare in History (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003), 7-9.

15 *Ibid.*, 39.

16 William of Poitiers, *Gesta Guillelmi*, ed. and trans. by R. H. C. Davis and Marjorie Chibnall, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 108-113.

17 Smith, *War and the Making of Medieval Monastic Culture*, 176-179.

18 Kathleen M. Openshaw, "Weapons in the Daily Battle: Images of the Conquest of Evil in the Early Medieval Psalter," *The Art Bulletin* 75, no. 1 (1993): 34.

how they were utilized in the spiritual battle waged between good versus evil by monks, in a collection of similes attributed to Saint Anselm. Within the psalters there is also distinct and direct connections to military terms that were used as metaphors to show how these soldiers of God should dress and properly prepare for battle. In the Bible, Paul the Apostle used several metaphors comparing Christianity and faith with that of the Roman legions and military terminology of the period, for example the breastplate of faith and love, helmet of salvation, and the armour of righteousness.

At the head of this centralization and projection of ducal power within Normandy were the archbishops of Rouen, who guided their suffrage bishops and the abbots in charge of the numerous monastic communities throughout the duchy. The bishops, through their family ties (by blood and through marriage) to other powerful Norman families, and ultimately to the ducal family itself, were placed strategically in geographical and militarily important regions of the duchy. The Norman bishops often shared the same upbringing that the other male members of their respective households received including fighting techniques, hunting, horsemanship, and how to wage war. Raised as sons of a ruling noble 'warrior' aristocracy, these bishops received the same training as other knights.¹⁹ Taught from birth how to fight, ride, hunt, and lead men, these Norman bishops were equally proficient as they preached from the pulpit, administered their dioceses, led the construction of their bishoprics' cathedrals, or attacked their foes in either God's name or the duke's, and after 1066, in the king's name. Because of this similar lifestyle of being raised in a warrior society, it was not only functional, but desirable that these Norman bishops held dual obligations; one to the Church for their bishopric and the other to their liege lord. Moreover, these Norman bishops provided more loyalty to the dukes than to any papal legit who originated from Rome. In the end, the role that the Norman bishop assumed as a spiritual and secular leader in Normandy or England, and the tradition of being an armed and active participant in combat as soldiers of Christ, served the duke and king very efficiently. As accounts of bishops and other ecclesiastics in Normandy and England who took up arms while fulfilling their duties as members of the aristocracy at the behest of their worldly lords have

19 Constance Brittain Bouchard, *Strong of Body, Brave and Noble: Chivalry and Society in Medieval France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), 151-152.

shown, their position within the Church hierarchy did not relieve them (or their family members) of their responsibilities to fulfill the expectation of fully supporting the duke's agenda.

Through family connections, ducal appointments and nominations to various ecclesiastical positions of members of the Norman aristocracy, known as lay investitures, the ducal family promoted loyal and trusted immediate family members and extended relations to key strategic positions within Norman ecclesiastic institutions and land holdings. Though religious in nature, these bishoprics provided important administrative and military centers for the duchy, and as such those bishops appointed to those positions by the Norman dukes, were expected to perform their duties as secular lords and members of the Norman aristocracy. Bishops who acted as secular lords and participated in martial endeavors, such as Odo who was both the bishop of Bayeux and the earl of Kent; Henry of Blois, bishop of Winchester and abbot of Glastonbury; and Geoffrey of Montbray, bishop of Coutance, all highlight a contingent of fighting bishops and provided a glimpse into their dual roles as men of God and members of the ruling aristocracy in their society who fulfilled the oaths and obligations taken to liege lords.

The Norman clergy, regular and secular,²⁰ continued to act according to what at the time was a common occurrence throughout Europe: participation of ecclesiastics in armed combat and leadership in military endeavors. Clergy from Normandy and, after Hastings in 1066,²¹ Anglo-Norman clergy, would be called upon at first by William I, king of England, and subsequent English kings, to act on their behalf to lead raids and punitive expeditions. They were also left in charge to manage the defenses of territory under their control such as Walcher, bishop of Durham and earl of Northumbria²² Thurstan, archbishop of York, who defended the northern reaches of England from Scottish incursion during the Battle of the Standard in 1138²³ Odo, bishop of Bayeux acting as the earl of Kent; and Geoffrey, bishop of Coutances, who governed England

20 Secular clergy consist of archbishops, bishops, deacons, archdeacons, priest and the like who do not belong to a religious order such as canons, monks, and friars.

21 Battle of Hastings 14 October 1066.

22 William E. Kapelle, *The Norman Conquest of the North: The Region and Its Transformation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979), 124-142.

23 Robert Bartlett, *England Under the Norman and Angevin Kings 1075-1225* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 394, 465.



PEARLY GATES

by Katryna Bertucci

while William the Conqueror was in Normandy. From the founding of the duchy, the Norman secular clergy have played a prominent role in the military exploits of the dukes. Norman bishops and individual monks and abbots performed knightly services, defended Norman lands, held castles under the duke's authority, and accompanied dukes while they participated in military campaigns either as combatants or spiritual advisors. This practice of armed militant clergy continued in England after William the Conqueror's invasion in 1066 where their importance and authority expanded, further blurring the lines between their function as secular lords and their ecclesiastical offices.

Norman bishops along with other secular lords and monastic communities were expected to provide knights to fight when called upon by the Norman dukes or other members of the aristocracy who acted on behalf of the duke's authority, such as the vicomte and comte.²⁴ Bishoprics and monastic communities provided knights as agreed upon, who were utilized for manning the duke's castles, escort duties, and in times of military operations. Though as Chibnall points out, secular lords and bishops were expected to contribute more while the monasteries were often not exempt.²⁵ In addition to the watch and ward obligations, abbots and bishops contributed horses, arms, armor, and, in preparation for the invasion of England in 1066, ships to the dukes. In her article "The Ship List of William the Conqueror," Elisabeth M.C. van Houts points out the contribution of knights and ships made by several ecclesiastics: Odo, bishop of Bayeux, 100 ships; Nicholas, abbot of St Ouen, 15 ships and 100 knights; and Remigius, a monk of Fecamp, 1 ship 20 knights.²⁶

24 John Le Patourel, *The Norman Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 252-253; Marjorie Chibnall, "Military Service in Normandy Before 1066," *Anglo-Norman Studies* 5, ed. R. Allen Brown (Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, 1983): 56-77. Patourel and Chibnall believe that a form of feudalism as it concerns knight service was present in Normandy prior to 1066, as monasteries and bishoprics were already providing set numbers of knights, and days of service to the dukes. However, Charles Homer Haskins, *Norman Institutions* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1918), 8-24; and "Knight-Service in Normandy in the Eleventh Century," *The English Historical Review*, vol. 22, no. 88 (Oct 1907): 636-649, gives a much later date of c. 1047 and limits the extent of the what services was provided to the dukes.

25 Chibnall, "Military Service in Normandy before 1066," 72-73.

26 Elisabeth M. C. van Houts, "The Ship List of William the Conqueror," *Anglo-Norman Studies* 10, ed. R. Allen Brown (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1987): Appendix 4.

Norman bishop along with their knights, often followed the dukes while on campaign, such as Odo, bishop of Bayeux, who fought near Bray and the Pays de Caux as recorded by Orderic Vitalis.²⁷ And in some instances, bishops partook in private warfare and constructed fortifications during the early beginnings of the duchy: Yves, bishop of Seez, was said to have waged a campaign against the family of Sorong in 1047, and Archbishop Robert of Rouen, Bishops Hugh of Bayeux²⁸ and later Geoffrey of Coutance,²⁹ would each construct fortifications during their careers. It was during William the Conqueror's tenure as duke however, that saw the transformation of the positions of the secular bishops, members of powerful families as agents of Church reform; extensions of ducal authority; and their role during the invasion of England, as the duke's military leaders. Though Douglas refers to these warrior bishops and other members of the Norman episcopate as "crude and violent in a crude and violent age,"³⁰ it was these types of men that William wanted to accompany him on his venture into England. Outfitted in armor and wielding a club or mace during the Battle of Hastings fought on 14 October 1066, Odo, bishop of Bayeux as depicted on the Bayeux Tapestry, is a prime example of a militant Norman bishop³¹ who is perceived more as a secular lord or knight than as a bishop who led Norman forces into battle with William the Conqueror at Hastings. Odo was a key figure who ruled Normandy under his half-brother and is mentioned several times throughout contemporary accounts as being first and foremost a warrior and administrator while in England after 1066. He is also seen as supportive of reforms with regard to his bishopric in Normandy and he enriched his cathedral with the spoils of the conquest, and yet was at times condemned by his peers as being too worldly in mannerism and for his fondness of a secular lifestyle. In 1067 he was granted the earldom of Kent in England by

27 Daniel Gerrard, "The Military Activities of Bishops, Abbots and other Clergy in England, c.900-1200," PhD. Diss. (University of Glasgow, 2011): 37; Orderic Vitalis, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, ed. And trans. by Marjorie Chibnall, Oxford Medieval Texts, 6 vol. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969-1990), book IV, 87.

28 David Douglas, "The Norman Episcopate before the Norman Conquest." *Cambridge Historical Journal* 13, no. 2 (1957): 104; Orderic Vitalis, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, book III.

29 Christopher Dennis, "The Career of Geoffrey de Montbray, Bishop of Coutances (1048-1093) and *unus de primatibus Anglorum* ('one of the chief men of the English')," PhD. Thesis (Cardiff University, 2012): 175.

30 Douglas, "The Norman Episcopate before the Norman Conquest," 115.

31 Gerrard, "The Military Activities of Bishops, Abbots and other Clergy in England," 37, 105n.

William the Conqueror and became one of the richest and most powerful men in the kingdom. Odo is one of the few Norman clergy mentioned who accompanied William into combat and is recorded in several sources: *Gesta Normannorum Ducum*, the *Gesta Guillelmi*, the *Carmen de Hastinage Proelio*, and depicted on the Bayeux Tapestry. Throughout his stay in England, Odo personally led troops into combat or marshalled forces to deal with significant rebellions in England as they arose. In 1067, Odo was one of the commanders of the Norman forces, along with Bishop Geoffrey, who drove off Eustace II of Boulogne, which lifted the siege of Dover.³² During an uprising of English barons in 1075, Odo, Geoffrey, along with Bishop Wulfstan of Worcester, and Abbot Aethelwig of Evesham defeated the forces of Roger of Hereford.³³ After what is referred to as the “Harrying of the North,”³⁴ by William between 1069-1070, Odo was in the north of the kingdom in 1080 where he devastated the lands around Northumbria and punished the local English nobility for their roles in the murder of Walcher, bishop of Durham, and earl of Northumbria.³⁵

Geoffrey, bishop of Coutance, was also a military commander and important figure in England within William’s kingdom. Mentioned by William of Poitiers as accompanying the Norman invasion forces in 1066, Geoffrey is portrayed as one who provided spiritual needs of the troops,³⁶ while Orderic Vitalis states that he fought in the battle.³⁷ Nonetheless, during his stay in England he was often utilized as a military commander who led troops and quashed rebellions along with other ecclesiastic leaders and royal officials. In addition to helping Odo deal with Eustace II in 1067, Bishop Geoffrey led a relief force to break the siege of Montacute in 1069 and mutilated the prisoners. Later in 1075, Geoffrey was accused again of mutilating prisoners after a failed revolt of the English barons in 1075.³⁸

32 Orderic Vitalis, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, II, 204.

33 Le Patourel, “Geoffrey of Montbray,” 151; Craig M. Nakashian, *Churchmen of Medieval England 1000-1250: Theory and Reality* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2016), 145-146.

34 Orderic Vitalis, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, II, as punishment for assisting an Anglo-Danish uprising in the north centered on York.

35 William E. Kapelle, *The Norman Conquest of the North: The Region and Its Transformation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979), 141.

36 William of Poitiers, *Gesta Guillelmi*, 125.

37 Orderic Vitalis, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, II, 267.

38 Gerrard, “The Military Activities of Bishops, Abbots and other Clergy in England,” 39; Orderic Vitalis, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, II, 204, 316.

Other instances of militant clergy are known as well, Remigius, a monk from Fecamp, is said to have led knights from the abbey personally at the Battle of Hastings and was later rewarded by William for his military exploits and martial prowess.³⁹ Tuold, abbot of Peterborough, supplied knights and participated in the campaign against Roger of Hereford.⁴⁰ In 1075, Wulfstan, bishop of Worcester, as previously mentioned led forced in conjunction with Bishops Odo and Geoffrey against revolting nobles.⁴¹ While the warfare in England did not cease after the death of William the Conqueror in 1087, the role of the secular clergy was slowly transformed during his reign and continued thereafter, resulting in fewer instances of secular bishops or other ecclesiastics who participated in fighting or in the command of troops. Even so, there was still clerical involvement under the Norman kings of England such as Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, who oversaw the defense of the kingdom during a rebellion in 1075, William Rufus who besieged the port city of Pevensey in 1095,⁴² and Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury who was entrusted with the defense of Canterbury and the surrounding coast by William Rufus in 1095. And as a result, forewent meeting a papal legit after being summoned because of his secular duties as directed by the king. Anselm wrote in his letters that he had been charged by the king while he is away to “guard Canterbury...guarding the coast...command the knights and foot-soldiers.”⁴³ It seems that even the saintly Anselm was not exempt from military service. At the Battle of the Standard in 1138, it was Archbishop Thurstan of York and Bishop Ralph of Orkney who raised the local forces and set out to battle the Scots;⁴⁴ and during the Anarchy, Stephen of Blois, who had usurped the English crown, depended on his brother, Henry, bishop of Winchester and abbot of Glastonbury, who commanded forces against the Empress Matilda, and at the Battle of Lincoln in 1141.

39 Nakashian, *Warrior Churchmen*, 133, 136-137.

40 C. Warren Hollister, *The Military Organization of Norman England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 60-61.

41 Ibid, 118-119; William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Pontificum Anglorum*, ed. and trans. by M. Winterbottom, Oxford Medieval Texts, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), 285; Kapelle, *The Norman Conquest of the North*, 132.

42 Nakashian, *Warrior Churchmen*, 144-145, 152-153; Orderic Vitalis, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, II, 316-17.

43 Nakashian, *Warrior Churchmen*, 165-166; Barlow, *William Rufus*, 348-351.

44 Nakashian, *Warrior Churchmen*, 191-195; Bachrach, *Religion and the Conduct of War*, 142-143.

The involvement of Norman bishops, abbots, and monks in military operations and participation in armed combat are all acceptable Norman societal views that were often in conflict with canon law and treated indifferently by their secular, aristocratic peers. This also provides a brief overview on the justification of the use of violence and sanctioned warfare that members of the clergy were often involved with. These accounts of Norman 'fighting bishops' show that in addition to their roles as bishops,⁴⁵ these individuals also performed the duties of secular lords who functioned as commanders of armies, led punitive raids, provided for the defense of lands under their control, and held castles. They also provided arms, armor, and knight service for the dukes. As members of the nobility, Norman bishops appointed in both Normandy and England acted in proper accordance with perceived responsibilities similar to those of other noble born members of the duchy, as well, and it was not out of the ordinary for these bishops to act like other members of the ruling families or knights. In short, these Norman, and later Anglo-Norman, bishops and clergy were a perpetuation of deep-rooted Christian tradition of militant and armed ecclesiastics who defended the faith and their secular lords.



45 Other accounts will include abbots and monks that also participated in combat roles.