

## INTRODUCTION

# BEFORE THE CONQUEST

**I**N the hundred years or so before the Norman Conquest, the art of illumination in England reached a maturity of artistic expression that was unsurpassed on the Continent, and achieved a delicacy and vigour of line-drawings that have rarely been surpassed since. At that time there was a national artistic idiom, which is easily recognizable. This is not only because of its strong calligraphic emphasis, but also because the normal style was a rapid, impressionistic one—an artistic shorthand, in fact, interested not in precision of detail but in swift, general statement.

A psalter written at the St Augustine's house of Canterbury,<sup>1</sup> and now in the British Museum, where it is catalogued as MS. Harley 603, provides an excellent example of this style. Many of its illustrations were copied from that most celebrated of all Carolingian manuscripts, the Utrecht Psalter,<sup>2</sup> which was certainly at Canterbury during the Middle Ages. It is from this Carolingian source and other related manuscripts that the impressionistic style of Anglo-Saxon art in general, and of the Harley drawings in particular, must have derived. This impressionistic style was originally a classical one, for it had been fully developed in Roman times.<sup>3</sup> Its transmission to the Middle Ages can already be traced in such late antique and early Christian works of art as the Vatican Vergil, the Catacomb paintings and the Vienna Genesis, even before it was consciously revived by the Carolingian Renaissance which was so influenced by the art of late antiquity. 1 a

But if Anglo-Saxon illumination perpetuates a classical style, it also expresses a native tradition. It is important to appreciate that there were other Carolingian styles current in England at the time when the Harley Psalter was made, about 1000. These were more 'painterly' and less calligraphic in character, but it was not to them that the English artist turned. The style, for example, of a ninth-century *Aratus*, which was probably already at Canterbury then (B.M. MS. Harley 647), has all the spaciousness of the Pompeian frescoes.<sup>4</sup> Again, another style in the heavier technique of the

<sup>1</sup> There are two hands in the manuscript. The first, which can be dated *c.* 1000, is similar to that of the additions to a St Augustine's manuscript in the British Museum (MS. Cotton Vesp. A i). The second, which belongs to the second quarter of the eleventh century, is close to the hand of another St Augustine's book (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS. 44).

<sup>2</sup> A facsimile has been published by E. T. DeWald in *The Illustrations of the Utrecht Psalter* (Princeton, 1932).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. M. H. Swindler, *Ancient Painting* (New York, 1929), pp. 372 ff., Pls. 542-6, 572-9, etc.

<sup>4</sup> See Edwin Panofsky and Fritz Saxl, 'Classical Mythology in Mediaeval Art', *Metropolitan Museum Studies*, vol. iv, pt. 2, p. 236.

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'Palace-School' tradition is represented in the illustrations of a Gospel Book (now B.M. MS. Cotton Tib. A ii).<sup>1</sup> This was certainly at Canterbury by the beginning of the eleventh century, for it had been given by the German Emperor Otto to Athelstan and by him to the Canterbury house of Christ Church. Yet, while the impact made by these Carolingian styles on Anglo-Saxon illumination was insignificant, the 'Utrecht' style became the dominant influence in the development of Anglo-Saxon art. Some explanation is required to account for the acceptance of one style and the rejection of others. It is, no doubt, found in the consonance between the impressionistic style and the English art tradition. From the time of the Lindisfarne and Chad Gospels the latter had shown an interest in sensitive line, in animation and in pattern, and the impressionistic style had an affinity with just these native predilections.

1 a This style offered endless opportunities for line, animation and pattern. The figures of the Harley Psalter quiver with vitality; the line itself is restless with an organic life of its own. It is concerned not to separate events but to transmit them, so that the eye is caught up in a linear convection and whirled from fold to fold or incident to incident conscious not of a particular event but of a surface breathless with episode. These are features implicit in the Utrecht drawings, but they are features drawn out and enhanced by contact with the English tradition. The spirited quality of the Carolingian drawings is given a fresh emphasis. This is sometimes obtained by small changes in the drawings. In the first illustration, for example, the spears held parallel by the soldiers are tilted by the English artist into diagonals to increase the sense of movement. In general, however, it is achieved by the fact that shading, which gives a feeling of solidity to the Carolingian illustrations, is relinquished in the Canterbury ones. Now the line is free to whisk over the surface of the page, snatching up the figures in an excited whirl of activity and transforming the hillocks into light swirling puffs of smoke. The line itself is more delicate and calligraphic, and used more for its own sake.

Yet what emphatically differentiates the drawings of the two psalters is the English preoccupation with pattern. This is not simply seen in the patterning of hills and trees and buildings. The whole illustrations are now—unlike the Carolingian ones—outlined in bright colours, such as red and blue and green, and this transforms them into gay and delicately shimmering patterns.

This emphasis on pattern becomes more and more dominant as later drawings are added. For the illustrations are not all by the same artist nor are they all of the same period. They were made by several artists and may be separated into three main groups—the original drawings, those added in the eleventh century, and those added in the twelfth. The earliest drawings are from folios 1 to 27v. and from 50 to 57v.,

<sup>1</sup> One of the illuminations of this manuscript is copied in Oxford, St John's College MS. 194. The Tiberius Gospel Book is of further interest, since it can be shown that the leaves containing a copy of the so-called 'Lanfranc' forgeries concerning the primacy of Canterbury, and now dispersed between B.M. MSS. Cotton Faust. B vi and Claud. A iii, originally belonged to it.

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with later additions intervening on folios 15, 15v. and 17v. The second group comprises the illustrations on folios 58 to 73v. and on folios 28 and 28v. as well as the additions referred to above. To these must be added the representation of the Trinity on folio 1.<sup>1</sup> This was not derived from the Utrecht Psalter. The details of the drawing are not particularly sensitive, but by some artistic alchemy they amalgamate into a composition of persuasive tenderness. The final group, which belongs to the twelfth century and therefore does not concern the present chapter, consists of the illuminations from folios 29 to 35.

The first group of drawings is a faithful iconographical copy of the Utrecht Psalter. It belongs to the period when the manuscript was first made—that is, about 1000—and it is of interest to see that these drawings were actually copied into the book before the text, for one can clearly see where the ink of the script overlays the lines of the drawings. The text itself was not copied from the Utrecht Psalter, for its version of the psalms is Roman, whereas the Utrecht Psalter's is Gallican. It is clear that the latter manuscript had been borrowed for a short time by the monks of St Augustine's and then returned, and this fact would confirm the St Augustine's provenance of the Harley Psalter, for the Utrecht Psalter belonged during the Middle Ages to the neighbouring house of Christ Church.

This Carolingian exemplar was evidently not available to the artists of the second group of drawings, which were probably added between 1040 and 1070. These illustrations<sup>2</sup> were not copied from the Utrecht Psalter, and, though a second iconographical model cannot be entirely excluded, it seems probable that the artists assimilated such details of the Utrecht iconography as they had in front of them in the Harley Psalter, and on this basis proceeded to invent their own compositions.

There are stylistic as well as iconographical differences between the first group of drawings and the second. The figures of the second group are heavier and larger than the others. The line is more crisp and the statement more terse. Patterning predominates even at the expense of buoyancy and exuberance; it is seen in the use of the hillocks to divide up the illustration into a fairly formal pattern; it is seen also in the figure-drawing. The group of figures on folio 70v., for example, is fused into a hard, but still vigorous pattern. Here impressionism is quite subordinate to pattern. Indeed, in the very severity and rigidity of the pattern can be detected the beginnings of a movement away from impressionism towards Romanesque. 1 b

The claim that there was already in England before the Norman Conquest a reaching out from impressionism to Romanesque is a sweeping one, and this detail from the Harley Psalter is not sufficient in itself to support such a statement. However, there is evidence in another Canterbury manuscript to confirm the suggestion that this trend was perceptible in Canterbury illumination before the Conquest. This

<sup>1</sup> T. D. Kendrick, *Late Saxon and Viking Art* (London, 1949), Pl. xiv.

<sup>2</sup> Apart from those on folios 28 and 28v., which probably follow an underdrawing.

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manuscript is a copy of the Rule of St Benedict and of the *Regularis Concordia*, made at Christ Church between 1040 and 1070 (B.M. MS. Cotton Tib. A iii). It is probably among the last illuminated manuscripts to be made at Canterbury before the Conquest. It has two illustrations, one of which is a painting of St Benedict and his monks on folio 117v.

The composition of this illustration derives from an earlier Canterbury illumination, found in a manuscript of the first quarter of the eleventh century (B.M. MS. Arundel 155). There, on folio 133, St Benedict is represented seated under an arcade. His head is bound with a ribbon inscribed TIMOR DEI, and he has a halo, on which are written the words S[AN]C[TU]S BENEDICTUS PATER MONACHORUM. In his right hand he grasps a pastoral staff, and with his left points to the prologue of his Rule, held by one of the monks in the neighbouring arcade. Beneath him a prostrate monk with a book inscribed LIB[ER] PS[ALMORUM], embraces his master's feet. A scroll, held by the hand of God, unites the two arcades. Words on it inclined towards the saint read QUI VOS AUDIT ME AUDIT, while those intended for the monks are OBEDIENTES ESTOTE PREPOSITO V[EST]RO.

The general style of this illustration is frankly impressionistic. The monks are drawn in a delicate line, which skims lightly over the surface of the page. The grandeur of St Benedict is emphasized by the use of body colour, but the treatment even here is essentially calligraphic, and a flickering line indicates the restless folds of his drapery.

The Tiberius artist was undoubtedly acquainted with this illumination, for he has adopted a similar composition. His painting has been damaged in the Cotton fire, but 'Pater Benedictus' can still be identified by some of the letters of his head-band. His position is the same as that of the earlier representation, though the pastoral staff, in his hand, can no longer be seen. The arcades have been dispensed with. A monk, however, still appears at the saint's feet, while a group of monks is seen on his left. Another monk, holding an extended scroll, which forms an arabesque in the lower part of the painting has been taken from the earlier illustration of the manuscript (Pl. 3a). The background of this painting is green and vermilion; the figures are coloured cool green, blue and brown heightened with white. The whole picture is disposed in a flowing design, which leads the eye to what is undoubtedly the keynote of the composition—the powerful S-like formula of St Benedict's knees.

If this painting is compared to the Arundel illumination it will be seen that, as in the additions to the Harley Psalter, impressionism is now much more subordinated to pattern. Patterning of a delicate kind appears in most Anglo-Saxon drawings, but here it predominates. The impressionistic lines, which in such manuscripts as the Benedictional of St Ethelwold and the Missal of Robert of Jumièges electrify the atmosphere, are here used to break up the background into pattern. The body of the monk holding the scroll is articulated into zones of dark green, and outlined by a colour band which embraces the figure like a silhouette. Above all, the formalization of

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a well-known Anglo-Saxon figure style leads to the complete reduction of St Benedict to a vigorous pattern; his legs, in particular, become a triangular shape surmounted by roundels to represent the knees. It is in this reduction of bodies, not only to pattern, but to geometric shapes that one can detect the beginnings of the transition from illusionism to Romanesque.

This is more marked in the earlier illustration of the manuscript. It is a drawing of King Edgar and SS. Dunstan and Ethelwold, which precedes the text of the *Regularis Concordia*. The three figures sit under arcades. A monk, looking up to them from below, represents those for whom the Rule was written. All the figures in this drawing hold undulating scrolls, which combine with the arcades to divide the whole composition into a patternwork of ellipses and ovals. Particular attention should be paid to the figure of King Edgar. He is not drawn with the flimsy line of the others, but is harder and more geometric in appearance. His legs are reduced to a firm triangle, and his knees are stylized into round shapes, which have the rigidity of carvings. Here is a stylization such as has been seen in the painting of St Benedict, but now line gives a crisper effect than brush strokes.

3 a

A copy of this drawing, perhaps made between 1050 and 1070, exists at Durham.<sup>1</sup> In it the central figure of Edgar is omitted, but the continuation of the hardening process is quite evident in the remaining figures.

3 b

How far this process continued before 1066 is not known. Possibly, some of the manuscripts that could answer this question were destroyed by the fire of 1067, in which most of the ancient charters of Christ Church perished.<sup>2</sup> At Winchester, at least, Romanesque development before the Conquest was well advanced. B.M. MS. Cotton Tib. C vi is probably a Winchester book, and the figure of David on folio 30v., massive and chiselled out, as it were, from stone, is nothing if not Romanesque. Yet however doubtful was the state of development of Canterbury illumination on the day 'when Harold was alive and dead', one thing is certain—the immediate effect of the Conquest was not to accelerate the Romanesque development, but rather to impede it: the Norman figure style that was introduced, and even at first the accompanying figure style of native Anglo-Saxon artists, were both reactionary.

10 a

<sup>1</sup> Durham MS. B III 32, f. 56v. It is published and described by F. Wormald in 'Two Anglo-Saxon Miniatures Compared', *British Museum Quarterly*, vol. IX, no. 4, p. 113, and Pl. xxxvb.

<sup>2</sup> Eadmer, *Historia Novorum* (Rolls Series), p. 16, '...antiqua ipsius ecclesiae privilegia in ea conflagratione quae eandem ecclesiam tertio ante sui (Lanfranci) introitus annum consumpsit pene omnino perierant'.

## I

## THE NORMAN INCURSION

THE Norman genius was for organization rather than for art. In the spheres of administration and architecture, where organizing abilities were primarily required, the Normans were more accomplished than the Anglo-Saxons and in this respect their contribution to England was very far-reaching. On the other hand, where the arts were concerned, the Normans could not claim either the aesthetic perceptions or the technical abilities of the Anglo-Saxons, and their illumination, their stone carvings and ivory carvings rarely achieved the quality of English work. In these applied arts, their contribution was not to enhance the native refinement or to introduce new skills, but rather—after a lapse of time—to bring England into touch with other Romanesque developments on the Continent. This contribution was of consequence for English sculpture and for manuscript illumination at such centres as St Alban's and Rochester, but for the illumination at the monastic houses of Canterbury it was not of overwhelming importance.

At Canterbury the building activities of Lanfranc, which extended to Rochester and St Alban's, were characteristic of the Norman conquerors. No one can doubt the benefits of his imposition of a Norman discipline on a house that was somewhat relaxed on the eve of the Conquest. The remarks of William of Malmesbury about the secular pursuits of the Christ Church monks before the advent of the Normans must be taken critically; however, Eadmer, from whom he derives his account,<sup>1</sup> and who is a Christ Church chronicler of integrity, has little enthusiasm for the state of his house before the Conquest. On the other hand, for the Norman abbot Lanfranc he has nothing but praise. Lanfranc, he says, employed all his skill and knowledge to further the affairs of God and of men, enhancing the dignity of his church and promoting the spiritual welfare of its inhabitants. Certainly the arrival of Lanfranc at Canterbury was one of the decisive events of its history. 'At no house', says Professor Knowles, 'was the break with the past so complete as at Christ Church.'<sup>2</sup>

The break is seen in the change of script of that house. A closely-written angular hand suddenly replaces the rounder Anglo-Saxon one. This intrusion is clearly seen, for example, in the episcopal professions, which are themselves of such importance that some space must be devoted to their description.

Before being consecrated, it was the custom for bishops and abbots to make a profession of canonical obedience to the primate. This was written out by a Christ

<sup>1</sup> Dom David Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England* (Cambridge, 1940), p. 80, n. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 122.

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Church scribe according to a given formula, and signed by the dignitary concerned with a cross. By the greatest good fortune, the originals of these professions, beginning in the year 1086, and continuing throughout and beyond the twelfth century, actually survive in the library of Canterbury Cathedral. They provide an unparalleled series of palaeographical documents showing, almost yearly, the development of script at Canterbury. It is on this evidence that the Canterbury manuscripts have been dated in the present work. Two copies were made of the episcopal professions. One, in the form of a scroll, is now in Canterbury Cathedral library, while the other, which was not begun until 1120, is in a British Museum manuscript (MS. Cotton Cleop. E i). These copies also are of palaeographical importance, for it can be assumed that each group of professions was copied out some time between the last entry of one group and the first of the next. So the first group in the Canterbury scroll was probably written in 1087. This is the date of the consecration of the last ecclesiastic given there, while the next group begins with the profession of John of Bath, who was consecrated in 1088.

What is significant about these early entries in the Canterbury scroll is that the first are in an Anglo-Saxon charter-hand, and the next in the new angular book-hand, while the original professions from which these are copied actually begin with the new hand. That this is a Bec script can be demonstrated by comparing the hand of one of the original professions with that of a Bec manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale (MS. lat. 12211). To this may be added the evidence of two Bec manuscripts, which were brought to Canterbury by Lanfranc and bound into one volume (now Cambridge, Trinity College MS. B 16 44).<sup>1</sup> There, additions made after 1070 by Christ Church monks are in a similar hand to that of the main texts.

4 b

4 a

4 d

4 c

The intrusion of a Bec hand is due to the advent of Bec monks. Of this the chroniclers have nothing to say. The vernacular prose of the Anglo-Saxon chronicle at St Augustine's flows smoothly on, undiverted from its course by events of such importance to the neighbouring house. Eadmer remarks on the dispersal of Christ Church monks by Rufus after the death of Lanfranc, but does not refer to the changes effected by the archbishop himself. Nor does William of Malmesbury. It is only in the dignified prose of Anselm's letters that the full significance of the effects of the Conquest on the personnel of Christ Church becomes clear. His correspondence with Lanfranc illustrates the intimate ties that existed between Bec and Canterbury.

That Norman monks accompanied Lanfranc to Canterbury in 1070 is evident from Anselm's first letter<sup>2</sup> where, after congratulating Lanfranc, he adds a brief note for the Bec monks already with him: 'dilectissimi fratres nostri qui vobiscum sunt.'

<sup>1</sup> Professor Z. Brooke, who discusses this book in his *English Church and the Papacy*, argues that it consists of two volumes bound into one. The gatherings confirm this. They are contemporary books written before 1070, when Lanfranc brought them to Canterbury and after 1059, since the synod of that year which condemned Berengar is referred to in the second.

<sup>2</sup> The numbering of the letters is taken from Dom F. S. Schmitt's edition of them (*S. Anselmi Opera Omnia* (Edinburgh, 1946), vol. III).

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Some of these, or of those who arrived soon after, shortly received individual letters, or were mentioned by name. Among them were Hernostus, later bishop of Rochester, Gundulph, his successor in that see, and Henry and Herluin, who were to become abbots of Battle and Glastonbury respectively.

Relations between the two abbeys were clearly of the closest. Gifts were sent to Bec.<sup>1</sup> Anselm not only dispatched his writing on the Epistles of St Paul<sup>2</sup> and his *Monologion* to Lanfranc for comment,<sup>3</sup> but asked a Bec monk, on his approaching return from Christ Church, to bring with him from that house an *Aforismus*, of which he had perfected the glosses.<sup>4</sup> Osbern, a Canterbury monk, went to Bec for his spiritual health.<sup>5</sup> More and more Norman monks who had joined Lanfranc were mentioned by name. Some of them Anselm had parted from with difficulty; some he exhorted to greater perfection; all he remembered though away from him. It was, however, in a letter written after he had become abbot that Anselm first mentioned the transfer of whole contingents of Norman monks to England. In his ninetieth letter, after thanking Lanfranc for his largesse, he referred to monks he was sending in obedience to the other's instructions: 'Servos et filios vestros, fratres nostros, ad vestra mittimus vestigia, ut sicut vestra eunt iussione, ita vel maneat vel redeant vel quidlibet agant, quidquid nos ordinaverimus, vestra dispositione.' Another draft, it may be added, was sent to Gundulph of Rochester,<sup>6</sup> and yet another to Bury St Edmund's;<sup>7</sup> Anselm might well in his ninety-sixth letter refer to the monks 'de Beccensi congregatione in Anglia conversantibus'.

The contingent to which Anselm referred in his letter to Lanfranc must have been sent after 1080, since Henry, to whom as prior a letter of commendation was forwarded,<sup>8</sup> only received office in that year. Certainly the full impact of the Norman plantation had been made by 1086, for the original episcopal professions, which were begun in that year, were all written by Norman scribes.

Yet, if in script there is a complete break with the past, there is no such complete break in the field of illumination. After about 1070 Anglo-Saxon illumination still continues, though, certainly, one is often conscious of a change of atmosphere. Bright, flat colours appear; sometimes the line has a new harshness or unaccustomed incoherence; there is also a preoccupation with decoration at the expense of illustration, and an absorption with the initial at the expense of the full-page or marginal drawing. Yet, despite this, the vocabulary remains Anglo-Saxon. It is as if, in following the narrative, one had turned over two pages instead of one. To find the missing page it is natural to look to Normandy.

Norman illumination is to some extent a provincialization of English art. It does not compare in quality with English illumination, though from English art it partly derives.

<sup>1</sup> Letters 7, 14, 49, 58, 68, 89 and 90.

<sup>3</sup> Letter 72.

<sup>6</sup> Letter 91.

<sup>4</sup> Letters 60 and 74.

<sup>7</sup> Letter 92.

<sup>2</sup> Letter 66.

<sup>5</sup> Letter 67.

<sup>8</sup> Letter 93.



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This can most clearly be demonstrated by a drawing of the crucifixion, added to a Jumièges manuscript (Rouen MS. 26, f. 48) in the eleventh century. The drawing is unfinished, but enough of it remains to show that it was simply copied from an English work. It may be compared, for example, with a drawing of the same scene from a tenth-century Pontifical from Sherborne (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. lat. 943, f. 4 v.). In each illumination the loin cloth of Christ is drawn up at the waist in a similar knot. In each there are the same restless draperies with fluttering hems and the Anglo-Saxon 'hood' over the knees. In many ways, indeed, this Norman drawing is a competent copy of the English one; only the wooden stiffness of the head, opposing the agitated feeling of the drapery, betrays the artist's inability to grasp the spirit of his original. On the other hand, the sensitive delineation of an angel in a Fécamp manuscript (Rouen MS. 1404, f. 81 v.), seems to be the work of an Anglo-Saxon, and may suggest that there were actually English artists working in Normandy at the end of the eleventh and early twelfth centuries.<sup>1</sup>

In general, the Norman illuminator was less sensitive than the English one, and some of his drawings with long stalk-like fingers and elongated and disproportionate feet unconsciously tended to parody the Anglo-Saxon style. At other times he simplified and hardened it. An example of this hardening process may be cited from a Mont Saint Michel manuscript at Avranches (MS. 76). The drawing of St Michael on folio 1 v. is clearly derived from English sources. His draperies may be compared with those of John in the crucifixion scene from the Sherborne Pontifical (Pl. 5 a); in each illustration they swing out at the side and descend in steep folds from the knee. The Norman drawing, however, is much more stylized and rigid than the English one, and to that extent more Romanesque. So, by one of those paradoxes of art history the copyist produces something more progressive than the creative artist. Again, it seems probable that the figure in a St Ouen manuscript at Rouen (MS. 457, f. 30)<sup>2</sup> was derived from Anglo-Saxon prototypes such as the figures of the *Caedmon* at Oxford. The Norman figure is once more a stylization of its exemplar; the sketchy lines of the abdomen are hardened into a belt and the strokes lightly indicating the folds between the legs become a hard V-pattern. Other characteristics of Norman figure styles—for example, the hunched-up shoulders and jutting-out necks of figures in such manuscripts as Rouen MS. 456, Évreux MS. 131 and B.M. MS. Add. 17739—can be traced to English sources. In a similar way, the constructions of Norman initials have been influenced by English art.

The 'biting head' initial, for example, on folio 56 v. of Rouen MS. 483 has a good English pedigree.<sup>3</sup> So too has the great 'B' initial which is popular in Anglo-Saxon

<sup>1</sup> It may be remarked that Ordericus Vitalis, an Englishman who was in Normandy at the end of the eleventh and in the early twelfth century, refers to another at S. Wandrille; he is Ingulph of Fontenelles, later abbot of Croyland—'Hic natione Anglicus erat' (August le Prévost's edition (Paris, 1838–55), vol. II, p. 285).

<sup>2</sup> It is copied in a Jumièges manuscript at Rouen (MS. 458, f. 87).

<sup>3</sup> See for English examples of this type F. Wormald, 'Decorated Initials in English MSS. from A.D. 900 to 1100', *Archaeologia*, vol. xci, pp. 119–24.

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illumination and no less frequent in that of Normandy. This consists of a panelled upright, which is joined to the bows of Franco-Saxon interlace. The bows meet in a mask-head at the centre and then continue to circle into acanthus-leaf scrolls. In England the earliest example of this initial style occurs in a tenth-century manuscript written in a Fenland monastery (B.M. MS. Harley 2904),<sup>1</sup> and it is a favourite construction for the Beatus initial of Anglo-Saxon illumination. An initial of this type from an eleventh-century psalter in the Cambridge University Library is reproduced (MS. Ff 1 23, f. 5). With it may be compared two Norman examples, one from Jumièges (Rouen MS. 32, f. 3v.),<sup>2</sup> the other from St Ouen (Rouen MS. 1404, f. 41v.). There are, it is true, slight modifications in the Norman constructions. One replaces the mask-head by a clasp, and the other the panelled bows by dragons. Despite this, there can be no doubt about the English ancestry of these initials, though it must be added that the foliage of Rouen MS. 1404 belongs to a purely Continental tradition. Yet neither initial could be mistaken for the work of English artists. In the Jumièges manuscript the whole animation and calligraphic delicacy of the Anglo-Saxon initial have gone; the inner vitality of the foliage has been squeezed dry and has been hardened into a rigid scroll. The eye no longer dances over the surface, but follows in a dull and leaden fashion a tedious maze of lines. Apart from this difference of style there is an important difference of composition. The Norman initials combine the great 'B' construction with the inhabited scroll, and the latter is occupied by human figures.

The inhabited scroll was, of course, a familiar style in English art before the Conquest. One appears in the Bury St Edmund's Psalter in the Vatican (MS. Reg. lat. 12, f. 88v.), where it illustrates the words of the psalm, 'Thou has brought a vine out of Egypt. . . the boar out of the wood doth waste it'. Inhabited scrolls decorate the canon tables of the Trinity Gospels (Cambridge, Trinity College MS. B 10 4) which was written early in the eleventh century and perhaps belonged to Canterbury.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, the style had been used in initials as early as the first half of the century.<sup>4</sup> The Anglo-Saxon artist had formed his scroll by twisting the 'Winchester' acanthus into the desired shape, and the appearance of this acanthus leaf, albeit in a debased or highly stylized form, in Norman inhabited scrolls would argue that they received this style from England. What is quite new is the use of human figures to inhabit this scroll-

<sup>1</sup> Wormald, *op. cit.* p. 108 and Pl. 1a.

<sup>2</sup> On folio 1v. of this manuscript it is stated that Rainaldus, who became abbot of Abingdon in 1085, had sent this book to Jumièges: 'Rainaldus. . . abbas abbendonensis hunc sancti evangelii textum sic auro argenteoque ac gemmis ornatum beatae dei genetrici ac semper virgini marie beatoque P E T R O Gemmeticensis coenobii mittit. . .'. None the less, it is unquestionably a Norman manuscript, whether written at Jumièges or, more probably, by Normans in England.

<sup>3</sup> The editors of the *New Palaeographical Society Facsimiles of Ancient Manuscripts* (first ser., vol. 1, Pls. 11 and 12, and description) say that it was probably written at Winchester. It was, however, given to Trinity College, Cambridge, by Thomas Neville, most of whose books came from Christ Church.

<sup>4</sup> Wormald, *op. cit.* Pl. 1vc.