CROWLAND ABBEY AS ANGLO-SAXON SANCTUARY IN THE PSEUDO-INGULF CHRONICLE

By LINDY BRADY

Crowland Abbey was one of many English monasteries after the Norman Conquest to forge documents that claimed a right to permanent sanctuary rooted in the Anglo-Saxon period. Yet Crowland's claims stand out because while other ecclesiastical chronicles that grounded their sanctuary claims in an earlier tradition did so in order to defend those rights in the twelfth century or later, Crowland never claimed this privilege for anything other than the abbey's Anglo-Saxon past. Indeed, I argue that the three forged "Anglo-Saxon" charters that make this assertion, which all appear in the Pseudo-Ingulf section of the abbey's chronicle, the Historia Croylandensis*, do so in order to emphasize a more fundamental claim about the institution's authority — its association with one of the most significant fenland saints, Guthlac. Moreover, I argue that the most likely date when this material was forged is the late twelfth century. In the context of the narrative in which they appear, these charters reveal that later medieval Crowland constructed a narrative that saw permanent sanctuary as an important feature of the abbey's Anglo-Saxon past.*

Introduction

The *Historia Croylandensis* is a lengthy monastic chronicle of Crowland Abbey that spans the period of time from early Anglo-Saxon England to the end of the fifteenth century. The chronicle was written in several stages, the first of which narrates the abbey's history from the seventh to late eleventh centuries and claims to be authored by the monastery's eleventh-century abbot Ingulf.[1]

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[1] The *Historia Croylandensis* survives in two extant manuscripts: the damaged fifteenth-century London, BL Cotton Otho B xiii and the sixteenth-century London, BL Arundel 178. Early editions are by Henry Savile in *Scriptores post Bedam* (London, 1596) and *Rerum Anglicarum scriptores veteres*, ed. William Fulman (Oxford, 1684), the only complete edition of the *Historia Croylandensis* ever to have been published. See the Introduction to *The Crowland Chronicle Continuations, 1459–1486*, ed. N. Pronay and J. Cox (London, 1986), for discussion of this work's textual difficulties. The text is also partially published by Walter de Gray Birch, *The Chronicle of Croyland Abbey by Ingulph* (Wisbech, 1883) and is translated by Henry T. Riley, *Ingulph's Chronicle of the Abbey of Croyland with the Continuation by Peter of Blois and Anonymous Writers* (London, 1854). Due to the inaccessibility of this text, citations will be to de Gray Birch's edition by page number, and translations will be modernized from Riley's translation, also by page number.

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However, the *Historia Croylandensis* as a whole was actually compiled in the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century,[2] and so only its fifteenth-century material is usually understood to have any independent historical value.[3] Scholars have thus long dismissed the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle as "a total forgery"[4] that "may include some factual information buried near-impenetrably within a majority of fraudulent material."[5] Consequently, the text has become almost thoroughly discredited as a source of legitimate information about Anglo-Saxon England: on the rare occasions when the earlier portion of this chronicle is discussed,[6] it is in the context of its status as a forged document, albeit "one of the most engaging and ingenious of English monastic fabrications."[7]

However, Marjorie Chibnall raised the important point that "though there is now no doubt that the *History* in its present form is a late forgery too little serious attention has been given to the question of the date of the various elements in the final chronicle."[8] David Roffe has argued that the *Historia Croylandensis* preserves some early material in the group of "Anglo-Saxon" charters collected

[2] Sir Francis Palgrave, "Anglo-Saxon History," *Quarterly Review* 34 (1826): 289–98; H. T. Riley, "The History and Charters of Ingulfus Considered," *Archaeological Journal* 19 (1862): 32–49 and 114–33; and F. Liebermann, "Ueber Ostenglische Geschichtsquellen des 12., 13., 14. Jahrhunderts, besonders den falschen Ingulf," *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde* 18 (1892): 249–67.

[3] W. G. Searle, *Ingulf and the Historia Croylandensis: An Investigation Attempted* (Cambridge, 1894), particularly 115–43. Searle firmly established the *Historia* as a late fourteenth- or fifteenth-century compilation. However, it should be noted that his study is very even-handed: as he notes (206), "the object of the author of this present investigation into the History of Ingulf, which is the first part of the Historia Croylandensis, is rather to enable a more competent student to arrive at a definite conclusion respecting its date, than to speak himself decidedly on that matter." He also notes (116) that many contemporary scholars, "in their anxiety to expose the mistakes, and thereby to disprove the genuineness, of the first two portions of the 'Historia Croylandensis,' have not only forgotten the numerous anachronisms and mistakes to be found in doubted mediæval histories … but have also, in addition, made mistakes quite as serious as those which they are dragging to light. Ingulf has quite enough to answer for, without being burdened with the mistakes of his critics."

[4] Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England*, vol. 2, *c. 1307 to the Early Sixteenth Century* (London, 1982), 400.

[5] Tim Pestell, *Landscapes of Monastic Foundation: The Establishment of Religious Houses in East Anglia, c. 650–1200* (Woodbridge, 2004), 108.

[6] The neglect of the *Historia Croylandensis* is evidenced by the fact that the only complete edition of the entire text is that of Fulman in 1684, a full three hundred years before the publication of *The Crowland Chronicle Continuations, 1459–1486*, ed. N. Pronay and J. Cox, which are at least seen to merit a contemporary edition. See also Daniel Williams, "The Crowland Chronicle, 616–1500," in *England in the Fifteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1986 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. Williams (Woodbridge, 1987), 371–90.

[7] Alfred Hiatt, *The Making of Medieval Forgeries: False Documents in Fifteenth-Century England* (London, 2004), 36–69, at 37.

[8] Marjorie Chibnall, *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis* (Oxford, 1969–80), 2:xxv.

in the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle.[9] He presents evidence that the purportedly Anglo-Saxon charters were forged in the twelfth century[10] and reveal "the compiler's access to and use of eleventh-century sources."[11] While not all scholars have accepted Roffe's conclusions,[12] his work has demonstrated that dismissing the entire *Historia* as a fifteenth-century forgery counterproductively ignores the layered nature of its composition.

Ignoring the Anglo-Saxon material in the *Historia Croylandensis* also dismisses what later medieval Crowland had to say about its Anglo-Saxon past and why the abbey might have said it. This article reviews the forged Pseudo-Ingulf portion of the *Historia Croylandensis*, arguing that it contains an internally consistent narrative in which Crowland was a permanent sanctuary during the Anglo-Saxon period alone. After reviewing the evidence, I will suggest that the group of charters claiming sanctuary privileges for Crowland during the Anglo-Saxon period are more likely to have been forged in the late twelfth century than in the fifteenth. The Norman Conquest shifted the hierarchies of English establishments, and monasteries sought to protect their interests in the wake of these changes. The late twelfth century in particular was a moment when the crown sought

[9] David Roffe, "The *Historia Croylandensis:* A Plea for Reassessment," *English Historical Review* 110 (1995): 93–108, at 96. Particularly, he discovers that "the Historia's accounts of Crowland's Domesday estates incorporates material drawn from a geographically-arranged Domesday satellite" as well as a charter "probably composed between 1086 and 1119" along with additional charters from the first half of the twelfth century (100 and 105). For later-medieval Crowland, see Sandra Raban, *The Estates of Thorney and Crowland: A Study in Medieval Monastic Land Tenure* (Cambridge, 1977) and E. D. Jones, "The Church and 'Bastard Feudalism': The Case of Crowland Abbey from the 1320s to the 1350s," *Journal of Religious History* 10 (1978): 142–50.

[10] Roffe, "Plea for Reassessment," notes the weight of evidence pointing to the twelfth century: "The early eighteenth-century facsimile of what was supposed to be the Golden Charter suggests an original written in a twelfth-century hand … current concerns intrude. The most persistent are probably Crowland's difficulties in retaining title to its fens of Great Postland, Goggisland, and Alderland in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, as reflected in the minute detail of the boundary clauses in the 716, 833, 851, 868, 948, and 966 charters" (104); moreover, "core elements can be identified and a date of composition suggested. The tradition of foundation by Æthelbald and refoundation by Eadred was known to Orderic Vitalis, who visited Crowland sometime between 1109 and 1124, possibly in 1119. He refers to Æthelbald's charter which, if not that which was known in the eighteenth century, was one very like it. Further, Orderic saw Edgar's confirmation of 966, along with Archbishop Dunstan's anathema of the same date… . The charter, or a document very like it, was probably composed between 1086 and 1119. Eadred's confirmation of Thurketel's 'original' charter is closely related to Edgar's grant and must emanate from a contemporary source. It is unlikely that the remaining charters were produced at a very much later date, for they do not include grants to Crowland made after the middle years of the twelfth century" (105).

[11] Roffe, "Plea for Reassessment," 101–4.

[12] See, for example, Hiatt, *Making of Medieval Forgeries*, 42.

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increasing royal control over local practices concerning the privilege of sanctuary. Crowland's claims to permanent sanctuary appear only in the Anglo-Saxon portion of the *Historia Croylandensis* and are not carried forward into its post-Conquest history. This suggests that the abbey was building a case for its sanctuary privileges at a moment when it was of pressing concern, but these claims do not appear throughout the remainder of the *Historia Croylandensis* because Crowland's interests shifted over time, becoming more focused on landholdings than sanctuary claims as the Middle Ages wore on.

Claiming Sanctuary

Because both the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle and its embedded charters are such obvious forgeries, Crowland has not been counted among the group of medieval abbeys that appear to have actually been recognized as permanent sanctuaries.[13] While England's sanctuary laws provided that any fugitive who fled to the shelter of a church could remain there for forty days, some abbeys became known as a separate class that was able to offer permanent refuge to any fugitive who fled to (and remained within) their grounds.[14] Well-known examples include Ripon, Beverley, Hexham, and Durham, and a full list was compiled by J. Charles Cox in his study *The Sanctuaries and Sanctuary Seekers of Mediæval England*.[15] Sanctuary was "particularly well defined under medieval England's laws and customs,"[16] having been well established in the Anglo-Saxon period and further solidified after the Norman Conquest.[17] However, it was supposed to offer only

[13] The classic study on this topic remains J. Charles Cox, *The Sanctuaries and Sanctuary Seekers of Mediæval England* (London, 1911). Cox carefully compiles documentary evidence for medieval English sanctuary laws, customs, and historical incidents, with chapters dedicated to those places that actually did have rights of chartered sanctuary. He discusses Crowland briefly but notes that its claim to chartered sanctuary rests on forged documents (201–2).

[14] For a thorough study of sanctuary in the later medieval to early modern periods, see Shannon McSheffrey, *Seeking Sanctuary: Crime, Mercy, and Politics in English Courts, 1400–1550* (Oxford, 2017).

[15] See Cox, *Sanctuaries and Sanctuary Seekers*, for a full list.

[16] Candace Gregory-Abbott, "Sacred Outlaws: Outlawry and the Medieval Church," in *Outlaws in Medieval and Early Modern England: Crime, Government and Society, c. 1066–1600*, ed. John C. Appleby and Paul Dalton (Surrey, 2009), 75–89, at 85.

[17] On sanctuary, see Gervase Rosser, "Sanctuary and Social Negotiation in Medieval England," in *The Cloister and the World: Essays in Medieval History in Honour of Barbara Harvey*, ed. J. Blair and B. Golding (Oxford, 1996), 57–79; Wendy Davies, "'Protected Space' in Britain and Ireland in the Middle Ages," in *Scotland in Dark Age Britain*, ed. Barbara Crawford (St. Andrews, 1996), 1–19; R. H. Helmholz, "The Law of Sanctuary," in *The* ius commune *in England: Four Studies* (Oxford, 2001), 16–81; William Chester Jordan, "A Fresh Look at Medieval Sanctuary," in *Law and the Illicit in Medieval Europe*, ed. Ruth Mazo Karras, Joel Kaye, and E. Ann Matter (Philadelphia, 2008), 17–32; T. B. Lambert

temporary protection from vigilante justice:[18] sanctuary "was not intended to replace punishment, but to allow the suspect criminal protection until proper legal proceedings could be convened."[19] As Karl Shoemaker has noted, in the Anglo-Saxon period sanctuary was quickly embraced as a natural extension of two important cultural institutions: a lord's (that is, king's) protection of his thanes (sanctuary was "a crucial feature of royal law" in Anglo-Saxon England)[20] and the feud structure that underlay the Anglo-Saxon legal system. Yet "sanctuary law was aimed less at restraining violence per se and more at providing a space where warring parties might honorably come together in peace and concord."[21] In Anglo-Saxon England, sanctuary's existence within feud culture meant that its purpose was to end conflicts as swiftly as possible, not prolong their resolution indefinitely.[22]

After the Norman Conquest, "sanctuary protections expanded and solidified."[23] While most Anglo-Saxon law codes dealing with sanctuary "had included a time limit, but different time periods had been set in them," in Anglo-Norman England, "the rule became settled by the twelfth century that, after the forty days had passed, all those who had taken sanctuary were required to leave the church," and "if they refused, they would be starved out."[24] Thus, generally speaking, time limits to sanctuary seem to have become fairly well established after the Conquest.[25] Shoemaker has argued that the concept of permanent

and David Rollason, eds., *Peace and Protection in the Middle Ages* (Durham, 2009); and Karl Shoemaker, *Sanctuary and Crime in the Middle Ages* (New York, 2011).

[18] As Helmholz in "Law of Sanctuary" notes, "the medieval law of sanctuary permitted any person who had committed a serious crime to take refuge in a church, churchyard, or other designated place of asylum" (16) — however, "in England, as in Scotland and Wales, and, indeed, in most parts of the Continent, the law of sanctuary settled into a regular form during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries… . English custom permitted that men and women who took sanctuary in a parish church were permitted to remain there for no longer than forty days after the coroner's arrival … the rule became settled by the twelfth century that, after forty days had passed, all those who had taken sanctuary were required to leave the church" (18–19).

[19] Gregory-Abbott, "Sacred Outlaws," 85.

[20] Shoemaker, *Sanctuary and Crime in the Middle Ages*, 78 and 92.

[21] Shoemaker, *Sanctuary and Crime in the Middle Ages*, 82.

[22] See Paul R. Hyams, *Rancor & Reconciliation in Medieval England* (Ithaca, 2003), 92–98.

[23] Shoemaker, *Sanctuary and Crime in the Middle Ages*, 98.

[24] Helmholz, "Law of Sanctuary," 18–19.

[25] Shoemaker notes that the forty-day rule "would crystallize in the late-twelfth- and early-thirteenth-century royal law governing sanctuary" (*Sanctuary and Crime in the Middle Ages*, 107). He suggests (in a personal comment) that if Crowland's assertion of a permanent sanctuary right arose in direct response to royal encroachment on local practice in the twelfth century, there is reason to suspect that these forgeries were made in the late twelfth century, when royal encroachment was at its peak. See the conclusion below for further discussion.

sanctuary did not become widely accepted until the later medieval period, and that it was only by the fourteenth century that "some liberties offered permanent protection from royal law, and appear to have prompted many of the attacks on sanctuary law that gained momentum in the fifteenth and sixteenth century in England."[26] However, Julia Crick has demonstrated that while the concept of Anglo-Saxon liberty has been treated as "an origin myth, a sought-after quality anachronistically attributed to pre-Conquest origins,"[27] there exists a great deal of pre-Conquest documentary evidence that "the notion of liberty was deployed by English churchmen in defence of monastic freedom from the eighth century onwards, creating an archival legacy that was rewritten and imitated in later centuries, becoming fixed in institutional memory as fiscal and legal freedoms bestowed on the populations of monasteries and towns by pre-Conquest kings."[28] Crowland's forged charters underscore the fact that the abbey created a narrative of its Anglo-Saxon past in ways shared by other English monasteries in the period after the Norman Conquest.

Yet Crowland's claims to permanent sanctuary do stand out in one surprising way from those of its contemporaries. While there was certainly a widespread pattern of increased ecclesiastical concern with documenting sanctuary claims in the twelfth century,[29] these claims were usually justified by contemporary, local incidents of sanctuary-seeking (often, as Shoemaker notes, concluding "on a note of ecclesiastical or saintly vindication"[30]). Claims of permanent sanctuary with roots in the Anglo-Saxon period became part of a portfolio of evidence used to bolster a given monastery's claims in the present (post-Conquest) moment. Crick has traced this process in great detail for St. Albans, which — like Crowland and many English monasteries after the Norman Conquest — "paraded Anglo-

[26] Shoemaker, *Sanctuary and Crime in the Middle Ages*, 110. McSheffrey, *Seeking Sanctuary* (n. 14 above), has recently made a compelling case that the institution of sanctuary thrived in the late medieval and early modern periods, right up until the dissolution of the monasteries: "Sanctuary did not wither away under the early Tudors, but instead revived. The years between Henry VII's accession in 1485 and the late 1530s witnessed a resurgence of sanctuary-seeking, as many like the Southwells used sanctuary to avoid capital penalties for felony. The prevalence of sanctuary-seeking in the first fifty years of Tudor rule has until now escaped notice… . The revival of sanctuary from the 1480s indicates that we have to question the premises of the model that sees sanctuary as a 'medieval' phenomenon unsuited to the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century English system of laws" (6).

[27] Julia Crick, "*Pristina Libertas*: Liberty and the Anglo-Saxons Revisited," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 14 (2004): 47–71, at 49.

[28] Crick, "*Pristina Libertas*," 47. See her "Appendix: The Language of Liberty in Charters before the Norman Conquest," 69–71 and Cox, *Sanctuaries and Sanctuary Seekers of Mediæval England* (n. 13 above), for claims made by individual monasteries throughout the medieval period.

[29] Shoemaker, *Sanctuary and Crime in the Middle Ages* (n. 17 above), 99.

[30] Shoemaker, *Sanctuary and Crime in the Middle Ages*, 100.

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Saxon founders and benefactors, royal and episcopal, in defence of exceptional status."[31] Yet unlike Crowland, "for more than eight hundred years the liberty of St. Albans existed as a zone of legal privilege."[32] In contrast, the rights of chartered sanctuary claimed for Crowland are not extended throughout the *Historia Croylandensis* as a whole but are restricted to the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle and thus the abbey's Anglo-Saxon past.

In other words, while Crowland's charters — like those of many other medieval English monasteries — are later forgeries that claim to be Anglo-Saxon in origin, the *Historia Croylandensis* is unlike other ecclesiastical chronicles in that its discussion of sanctuary is restricted to the Anglo-Saxon period alone. While other chronicles that ground their sanctuary claims in Anglo-Saxon England do so in order to defend those rights in the present (post-Conquest) moment of the chronicle's composition, the *Historia Croylandensis* never claims rights of permanent sanctuary for anything other than the abbey's Anglo-Saxon past. This is best illustrated by an incident in the second continuation of the *Historia* from 1391, which speaks with disapproval of "a certain Hoylander, Simon Geldard by name, who, by reason of a homicide which he had committed in an outbreak, had been banished from his native place, and had been for a long time harboured at Depyng, in contravention of the laws of England. On thus capturing him, the men of Spalding took him home with them, and, on the Lord's day, at about the ninth hour, with the common consent of all, cut off his head at Spalding."[33] Apart from passing references to Elizabeth Woodville's flights to Westminster in 1470 and 1483 in the third continuation of the *Historia Croylandensis*,[34] the fourteenth-century death of Simon Geldard is the sole mention of sanctuary outside of the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle. The concept of sanctuary disappears as a concern from the *Historia Croylandensis* after the Anglo-Saxon period. Indeed, judging from the Simon Geldard episode, Crowland seems to have frowned upon the practice of permanent sanctuary in principle by the later medieval period rather than trying to claim those rights for itself.

The restriction of the *Historia*'s permanent sanctuary claims to the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle thus creates a narrative of origin for the abbey's Anglo-Saxon past rather than a justification of its post-Conquest rights. Shannon McSheffrey has recently demonstrated that sanctuary remained a thriving practice in

[31] Julia Crick, "Liberty and Fraternity: Creating and Defending the Liberty of St Albans," in *Expectations of the Law in the Middle Ages*, ed. Anthony Musson (Woodbridge, 2001), 91–103, at 91.

[32] Crick, "Liberty and Fraternity," 91.

[33] Riley, *Ingulph's Chronicle* (n. 1 above), 344. (I quote in translation because de Gray Birch's edition ends in the eleventh century and *Crowland Chronicle Continuations, 1459–1486*, ed. N. Pronay and J. Cox [n. 2 above], begins in the fifteenth.)

[34] See *Crowland Chronicle Continuations, 1459–1486*, ed. N. Pronay and J. Cox, for these episodes.

England right up until the dissolution of the monasteries.[35] Yet unlike contemporary monastic institutions that claimed sanctuary privileges for the Anglo-Saxon period, Crowland did not seek to exert these rights after the Norman Conquest. In the record left by the *Historia Croylandensis*, the time when sanctuary was of most pressing concern at Crowland was not the fifteenth century, as no effort was made to extend the claim of sanctuary privileges forward from the Anglo-Saxon period into the present day when the chronicle as a whole was compiled. In the conclusion to this article, I will argue that the late twelfth century is the most likely moment of origin for these sanctuary claims and suggest some reasons why sanctuary faded as a priority for Crowland over the course of the abbey's later history. For the moment, it is noteworthy that the *Historia Croylandensis* uses forged charters to claim sanctuary privileges yet anomalously restricts those claims to the Anglo-Saxon period alone. Within the narrative of the *Historia Croylandensis*, sanctuary claims are used to contextualize the abbey's Anglo-Saxon past rather than to serve as evidence to extend those rights forward to the post-Conquest moment when the chronicle was written.

A subset of the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle's forged "Anglo-Saxon" charters — those attached to the names of minor Mercian kings Wiglaf and Bertulf, and later Eadred — claim the privilege of permanent sanctuary for Crowland. The rights claimed by these charters are reiterated in the narrative of the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle, as the abbey's foundational myth and what appear to be several local legends all center around Crowland's role as a shelter to fugitives during the Anglo-Saxon period. Excavating the layers of this document suggests that later medieval Crowland had some compelling reasons to project rights of permanent sanctuary back upon its Anglo-Saxon past. Taken together, this material sheds valuable light on how the abbey remembered its own earlier history in the post-Conquest period.

Guthlac, Æthelbald, and Crowland's Foundation Legend

The Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle begins with Crowland's origin myth of foundation by the hermit saint Guthlac and exiled king Æthelbald and then quickly introduces its claim to be a permanent sanctuary in the forged charters of Mercian kings Wiglaf and Bertulf. This juxtaposition suggests that the status of Guthlac and Æthelbald as exiles was so important to the abbey's foundation legend that an affinity for fugitives became remembered as an intrinsic part of Crowland's Anglo-Saxon identity. The abbey's origin legend, preserved in both the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle and the spurious Æthelbald foundation charter, states that it was founded by Mercian king Æthelbald in gratitude for the

[35] McSheffrey, *Seeking Sanctuary*.

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kindness of Guthlac, Crowland's patron saint, to the future king during his exiled youth. Felix's eighth-century *Vita Sancti Guthlaci* provides evidence of a relationship between Guthlac and Æthelbald,[36] but as Bertram Colgrave has noted, "the tradition of the establishment of a monastery at Crowland before the mid tenth century is based on little or no evidence."[37] The abbey's foundation claims, then, were always vulnerable, and the forged charters and its foundation myth fit together in seeking to shore up Crowland's claims by creating a cohesive origin narrative dating back to the early Anglo-Saxon period. There is also no evidence for Æthelbald's role as the monastery's founder before the twelfth century, when this legend was recorded by Orderic Vitalis in his *Ecclesiastical History* after his visit to Crowland. This narrative is also preserved in the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle, where it serves as an anchor to the abbey's identity as a space of refuge for fugitives.

Guthlac, while certainly no fugitive, was one of the Anglo-Saxon saints most emblematic of exile. He spent a portion of his youth in exile among the British, banished himself from the *comitatus*, and left monastic life at Repton to live as a hermit in the fens. Guthlac's *vita* presents a narrative in which the saint not only embraced the path of an exile — that is, distance from society — at every turn but also played a crucial role in offering sanctuary to the exiled king Æthelbald in the early years of his reign. This foundation myth in which two exiled figures were the reason for Crowland's existence stands at the heart of the forged charters which claim sanctuary privileges for the abbey later in the Anglo-Saxon period. Crowland's origin myth was clearly being promulgated by the abbey in the twelfth century. While Æthelbald's "foundation charter" is in every way a forgery,[38] its legend was well established at Crowland by the twelfth-century moment when Orderic Vitalis visited the abbey and recorded the story of its foundation in his *Ecclesiastical History*.[39] As Marjorie Chibnall has noted, although the *Ecclesiastical History* is "no more reliable, as a record, than the sources on which Orderic depended for his information, it fixes to within a few years the date of the traditions he used," while the slightly later

[36] See Bertram Colgrave, ed. and trans., *Felix's Life of Saint Guthlac* (Cambridge, 1956, repr. 1985), 1–58 for more information on Guthlac (674–715). The *Vita Sancti Guthlaci* was written between 730 and 740 at the request of Ælfwald, king of the East Angles from 713 to 749.

[37] Colgrave, *Felix's Life of Saint Guthlac*, 9.

[38] For the text of this charter, see de Gray Birch, *Chronicle of Croyland Abbey* (n. 1 above), 4–7; Riley, *Ingulph's Chronicle*, 5–8. On the charters in the *Historia Croylandensis* in general, see Searle, *Ingulf and the Historia Croylandensis* (n. 3 above), 153–90; for this particular charter see 165–66.

[39] Chibnall, *Ecclesiastical History* (n. 8 above), 2:338–41 and xxv–xxix.

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Guthlac Roll also "embodies many of the same traditions."[40] By the twelfth century, then, Crowland had a foundation legend that linked the abbey's birth to its role as a shelter for two early Anglo-Saxon exiles.

The importance of this origin story to Crowland's imagined Anglo-Saxon identity is evident from the rights of chartered sanctuary claimed for the abbey by several of its forged "Anglo-Saxon" documents. Although these charters are forgeries, they are valuable witnesses to the narratives that later medieval Crowland constructed about its Anglo-Saxon past. The links these charters draw between the privileges they claim and the abbey's foundation legend suggest that the larger narrative that Crowland sheltered fugitives in the Anglo-Saxon period had currency after the Norman Conquest. So too does the attribution of these charters to fairly obscure Mercian kings rather than more obvious choices (as R. H. Forster remarked, Æthelstan "was always a favourite peg to hang a legend on"[41]), coupled with what appear to be local legends that the abbey served as a refuge for outlaws, suggest that later medieval Crowland constructed a narrative of itself as a permanent sanctuary during the abbey's Anglo-Saxon past.

The Charters of Wiglaf and Bertulf

The first document to claim these exceptional privileges of permanent sanctuary is the false charter of Wiglaf, a minor Mercian king who ruled a few generations after Æthelbald. Of course, this charter has long been discredited as a forgery on many counts.[42] The ostensible "Anglo-Saxon" charters in the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle share numerous suspect features: protracted length; anachronisms in witness names and titles, Latin vocabulary, and historical details; boundary clauses given in Latin rather than Old English; and an identification as *chirographum* rather than *cartula*.[43] In the Wiglaf charter, as Searle notes, "of the ten bishops who subscribe only two are right," in addition to other anachronisms.[44] Yet Wiglaf's "charter" is nonetheless of interest for its role in extending Crowland's foundation legend forward, building on the origin myth of Guthlac and Æthelbald to reinforce the narrative that Crowland's identity was intertwined with its claims of permanent sanctuary.

[40] Chibnall, *Ecclesiastical History*, 2:xxv and xxvi, noting further that Orderic's visit, because it took place during the abbacy of Geoffrey of Orleans, must have occurred between 1109 and 1124 (xxvi). For the Guthlac Roll, see Sir G. F. Warner, *The Guthlac Roll* (Oxford, 1928); Chibnall dates it to the third quarter of the twelfth century.

[41] R. H. Forster, "Notes on Durham and other North-Country Sanctuaries," *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 61 (1905): 118–39, at 120.

[42] Detailed most fully by Searle, *Ingulf and the Historia Croylandensis*, 167–69.

[43] Searle, *Ingulf and the Historia Croylandensis*, 153–64.

[44] Searle, *Ingulf and the Historia Croylandensis*, 167.

After the legend of Crowland's foundation by Æthelbald, Wiglaf's charter turns to another narrative of exile and shelter to introduce and affirm Crowland's designation as a permanent sanctuary. Like his ancestor, Wiglaf began his rule in exile, and his legend adds to Æthelbald's to underscore the importance of Crowland's identity as a sanctuary for fugitives in its narrative of its early history. Early in his kingship, Wiglaf reenacts Æthelbald's role as an exiled ruler who found sanctuary at Crowland:

> Mox enim ut rex factus est, antequam exercitum poterat colligere, a ducibus Egberti per totam Merciam quaesitus, industria Domini Siwardi abbatis, iiij mensium spatio in cella sanctissime virginis Etheldrethae, Offae quondam regis Merciorum filiae ac sponsae sancti martiris Ethelberti quondam regis Estangliae in cujus nomine jam sedes episcopalis Harfordiae dedicatur, sed tunc pro Christi sponsi sui amore in australi parte ecclesiae Croylandensis contra magnum altare in quadam parte cellae reclusae, nullo alio conscio, abscondebatur, tutasque latebras illic agens quousque mediante dicto abbate venerabili Siwardo cum dicto rege West Saxonum concordatus est, et promissa tributi annualis pensione ad regnum redire pacifice permissus.[45]
>
> (As soon as he was made king, before he was able to gather an army, he was pursued by Egbert's generals throughout all of Mercia, and through the efforts of lord Siward, the abbot, he was concealed without anyone knowing for the space of four months in the cell of the most holy virgin, Etheldritha, who was the daughter of Offa, the former king of the Mercians, and wife of the holy martyr Ethelbert, the former king of East Anglia, in whose name the present episcopal see of Hereford is dedicated, but at this period, for the love of Christ her spouse, she was living as a recluse in one part of the cell situated on the south side of the church of Crowland, opposite the great altar there. Here he lay concealed in safety until the venerable abbot Siward acted as intermediary and he was reconciled to the king of the West Saxons, and after he promised the payment of an annual tribute, he was allowed to return to his kingdom in peace.)[46]

This curious charter underscores the abbey's imagined Anglo-Saxon identity as a refuge for exiles, as it links the legal rights it offers to Wiglaf's time as an exile in hiding at Crowland,[47] stating, "Unde postmodum cartam hujusmodi pulcherrima privilegia continentem dicto monasterio Croylandiae fecit in his verbis …"[48] (in return for this service, at a later period, he granted a charter to the monastery of Crowland, which contained very valuable privileges, and was to the following

[45] De Gray Birch, *Chronicle of Croyland Abbey* (n. 1 above), 13.

[46] Riley, *Ingulph's Chronicle* (n. 1 above), 15.

[47] For the full text of this charter, see de Gray Birch, *Chronicle of Croyland Abbey*, 13–18; Riley, *Ingulph's Chronicle*, 15–22. See also Searle, *Ingulf and the Historia Croylandensis*, 167–69.

[48] De Gray Birch, *Chronicle of Croyland Abbey*, 13.

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effect …).[49] The parallels between Wiglaf's exile and the legal rights ostensibly granted to Crowland are clear, as he designates the abbey a chartered sanctuary in gratitude for his earlier asylum. The charter, in a long clause worth citing in full, claims:

> Volo etiam et praecipio quod quicunque in regno meo pro quocunque delicto reus inventus et legibus obnoxius fuerit, si fugerit ad dictum monasterium, et coram abbate dicti monasterii qui pro tempore fuerit, gratiam sanctissimi confessoris Guthlaci ibidem corporaliter quiescentis invocans fidelitatem ei et servicium juraverit sempiternum, salvus et securus protectione abbatis et monachorum suorum in quocunque servitio per totam insulam Croylandiae ipsum posuerint sicut in asylo vel in camera mea propria pace mea et impunitate gaudeat, nullusque ministrorum meorum ultra ipsum insequi audeat nec in aliquo molestare sub paena perditionis dextri sui pedis quicunque de meo regno istud meum privilegium tentaverit in aliquo violare. Licebitque dicto fugitivo in quibusque aquis quae dictam insulam ambiunt navigare, et piscari, ac aliter quomodocunque a dominis suis assignatus fuerit laborare absque ministrorum meorum vel alicujus alterius calumnia vel gravamine. Quod si extra dictas aquas vel metas dicti monasterii captus aliquando fuerit, paenam quam quondam meruit, sive mortem, sive membrorum suorum mutilationem, si ministri mei vel quicumque sui adversarii per juramentum sex hominum fide dignorum probare poterunt quod extra metas suas inventus fuerit, absque ulla gratia sustinebit. Dictas vero metas monasterii Croyland in quinque ejus aquas praedictas tam ministris meis quam abbati et monachis suis pro suis dictis fugitivis describi feci et notari.[50]
>
> (I do also will and command that whoever in my kingdom is found guilty of any offense and is subject to the laws: if that person flees to the monastery, and in the presence of the current abbot of the monastery invokes the favor of the most holy confessor, Guthlac, who rests there in body, and swears everlasting fealty and service to him, he will be safe and secure under the protection of the abbot and his monks, in whatever service they place him, throughout the whole island of Crowland, just as he would enjoy my peace and exemption from punishment under asylum or in my own chamber, he will enjoy my protection and full impunity, and none of my servants will dare to pursue him any further, nor dare to bother him in any way; anyone from my kingdom who tries to violate this privilege of mine is under pain of losing his right foot. And the said fugitive will be permitted to sail upon and to fish in the rivers surrounding the island, and to labor in any other way in which he may be directed by his masters, without challenge or molestation on the part of my servants or of any other person whatsoever. But if any such person should be captured beyond these rivers, or beyond the limits of this monastery, he shall, without any mercy, suffer the penalty that he had previously incurred, whether that be death or loss of limbs, if my servants or any other adversaries of such a person are able, on the oaths of six worthy men, to prove that such a person has been found beyond its limits. I have had these boundaries of the monastery of Crowland described and marked out by its five

[49] Riley, *Ingulph's Chronicle*, 15.
[50] De Gray Birch, *Chronicle of Croyland Abbey*, 14–15.

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> aforementioned rivers for my own servants as well as for the abbot and its monks on behalf of its fugitives.)[51]

In addition to Wiglaf's personal history of exile and sanctuary, his charter underscores the importance of exiles to Crowland's history by invoking Guthlac, to whom loyalty must be sworn in order for a fugitive to receive shelter. The rhetoric of the abbey's privilege is heightened through the stated penalty for violating Crowland's protection (the loss of the right foot), a punishment that would be normally inflicted on a fugitive rather than those who seek to bring him to justice. Moreover, the emphasis on the abbey's boundaries reinforces not only its status as a permanent sanctuary but also the perpetual bondage of its fugitives. In drawing the boundaries of Crowland's holdings so far beyond the monastery itself, Wiglaf's charter offers extensive protection for fugitives to move about freely. Yet at the same time, these "mete fugitivorum"[52] (limits for fugitives)[53] tie them permanently to the abbey, as to leave would be to incur instant death. Of course, this charter is clearly intended to lay early claim to Crowland's holdings, but it also serves as a neat piece of legal maneuvering designed to attract fugitives by offering them immunity from persecution while retaining them as a permanent part of the abbey's workforce. Wiglaf's charter creates a narrative that Crowland was a sanctuary for fugitives during the Anglo-Saxon period.

The claim of Wiglaf's charter to rights of permanent sanctuary is extended through a charter said to have been granted by his brother and successor, Bertulf. In this document, Crowland's status as a chartered liberty is emphasized as its boundaries are expanded in order to give its fugitives even greater protection. This charter (which Bertulf is said to have granted as an apology for seizing the monastery's valuables when in need of funds to stave off the Vikings) extends Crowland's boundaries specifically in order to protect its fugitives.[54] Bertulf, speaking as if to the monks, notes that when he was at the abbey,

> quo tempore quia de injuriosis damnis vobis per quosdam viros adversarios malitiose nimium illatis, mihi graviter conquesti estis, qui naequiter insidiantes in exterioribus ripis aquarum vestrarum si dictas ripas ascenderent in piscando qui de fugitivis servi vestri sunt effecti, et pari modo multotiens custodientes mariscorum vestrorum si forte oves et boves aut caetera animalia vestra longius errantia revocare dicti servi vestri excederent, et eosdem servos vestros extra vestram insulam inventos velut impunitatis suae violatores publicis legibus subjicerent, et damnarent, sicque necesse fuit frequentissime vel dictos servos vestros in manus hostium suorum incidere et perire, vel eorum labores ad justum commodum vestrum non procedere.[55]

[51] Riley, *Ingulph's Chronicle*, 17.
[52] De Gray Birch, *Chronicle of Croyland Abbey*, 15.
[53] Riley, *Ingulph's Chronicle*, 18.
[54] On this charter, see Searle, *Ingulf and the Historia Croylandensis* (n. 3 above), 169–70.
[55] De Gray Birch, *Chronicle of Croyland Abbey*, 20.

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> (At which time, since you grievously complained to me about harsh losses very wickedly done to you by certain hostile men, who wickedly lie in wait on the far banks of your rivers to see if any who had been made your servants from fugitives disembark while fishing, and who, in the same way, very often keep watch on the boundaries of your marshes to see if by chance your servants should go too far in calling back sheep, cattle, or other of your animals that had wandered too far. And once your servants have been found outside your island, they subject them to public laws as if they had violated their freedom from punishment and they find them guilty, and thus it was quite often unavoidable that your servants fell into the hands of their enemies and died or that their labors did not continue to your profit.)[56]

The charter continues on first to affirm Crowland's original boundaries and then to extend them, offering the abbey's fugitives additional protection. While the primary purpose of this charter is to document Crowland's holdings, it also extends the abbey's identity as a permanent sanctuary during the Anglo-Saxon period. Bertulf's charter was said to have been granted in response to the monks' complaints that their enemies lay in wait at the edges of Crowland's boundaries to seize those fugitives who accidentally cross them. While clearly written as a justification to expand the monastery's lands within the narrative of the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle, the background to Bertulf's charter seeks to provide evidence that Crowland had a local reputation as a permanent sanctuary. The image of eager would-be medieval bounty hunters lying in wait along the abbey's perimeter is obviously fictional but nonetheless forms part of an internally consistent narrative that remembers Crowland as having been a permanent sanctuary during the Anglo-Saxon period.

The extension of Crowland's boundaries in the Bertulf charter reinforces this narrative. After confirming the abbey's historical borders, Bertulf's charter expands them specifically to better protect the abbey's fugitives, continuing,

> pro servis ergo vestris quos de fugitivis sive piscatores sive pastores vobis facietis cum communi consilio totius regni mei concedo sancto monasterio vestro ultra exteriores ripas quinque agrorum claudentium insulam vestram viginti pedes in latitudine ab ipsa aqua ubicunque ascenderint ad retia sua extrahenda, aut ad alia sua necessaria in terra solida peragenda similiter quocunque protenditur animalium vestrorum commina in praedictis mariscis, illuc extenditur etiam fugitivorum vestrorum licentia, ut si forte in agros contiguos ex tempestate vel alio infortunio vel latrocinio abducta fuerint consentientibus omnibus praelatis et proceribus meis, concedo ipsis fugitivis vestris quod sicut alii liberi homines animalia vestra praedicta persequantur, et meliori modo quo poterunt repetant et reductant et quasi in eclesia sua essent per totam viam suam pace mea et impunitate gaudeant subque mutilatione membri magis necessarii nullus eos audeat molestare, vel in aliquo contrariare.[57]

[56] Riley, *Ingulph's Chronicle*, 24.
[57] De Gray Birch, *Chronicle of Croyland Abbey* (n. 1 above), 21–22.

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(On behalf of your servants whom you have made fishermen or shepherds from fugitives, with the general assent of all my kingdom, I grant to your holy monastery twenty feet in breadth from the water on the far shores of the five rivers that enclose your island, wherever they might disembark to pull up their nets, or for doing anything that might be necessary on dry land. Likewise, wherever the common rights of feeding your animals extends in these marshes, there also the free range of your fugitives is extended, so that if, by chance, the animals are driven off into the neighboring fields by weather, some other misfortune, or by robbery, with the consent of all my nobles and prelates, I grant that these fugitives, just as other free men, might pursue your animals, call them back the best they can and lead them back. And, as if they were in church, they should enjoy impunity and my protection the entire way and let no one dare to bother them or impede them in any way, under penalty of the mutilation of his most useful limb.)[58]

The charter makes the fugitives' status as free labor for the abbey explicit in its near-direct equation of them to cattle, yet it also underscores their intrinsic importance to Crowland's identity, as the abbey's boundaries are not just redrawn, but redefined, for their protection. Bertulf's charter shifts the meaning of a boundary, as Crowland's borders are no longer fixed upon the landscape of the fens, delineated by the rivers, stones, crosses, trees, fields, and other markers that prior charters in the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle carefully enumerate. Rather, in this charter, the limits of the monastery's protection are linked to a fugitive's person instead of to places on the physical landscape.

The charter continues to shift Crowland's boundaries of sanctuary for fugitives — from the physical landscape, to a zone of proximity surrounding the monastery's cattle, to sanctuary that envelops any who carry the monastery's letters of protection:[59]

Insuper pro dicti Withlafii quondam regis fratris et praedecessoris mei, proque redemptione meorum peccatorum, cum communi consilio, gratuitoque consensu omnium magnatum regni mei concedo deo et beatissimo confessori suo sancto Guthlaco sacratissimoque monasterio vestro Croyland, quod per totum regnum meum Merciae abbas monachus conversusque sacri monasterii vestri qui nunc estis vel qui vobis succedent in futurum post vos ibidem domino servituri pro quocunque negotio processerint de dictis fugitivis viae suae famulos licenter sibi faciant, et producant inque praesentia dicti abbatis monachi vel conversi ubique per regnum meum sicut in ecclesia sua Croyland salvi permaneant et securi ac ab omni periculo impunes penitus et indemnes sub mutilatione membri magis dilecti, si quis istud meum privilegium attentaverit in aliquo temere violare. Quod si extra praedictos 20 pedes in ripis exterioribus aquarum vestrarum, aut extra villata quae communia vobiscum vendicant in occidentalibus mariscis vestris, extraque partem aquae de Weland aut alibi vobis absentibus

[58] Riley, *Ingulph's Chronicle* (n. 1 above), 26.

[59] On the idea of a zone of sanctuary protection surrounding a person, see McSheffrey, *Seeking Sanctuary* (n. 14 above), 83–111, and her discussion of "the hospitaller's cloak."

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absque viatica litera abbatis loci vestri, talis fugitivus repertus fuerit, juxta demerita legali supplicio subiacebit.[60]

(In addition, on behalf of Wiglaf the late king, my brother and predecessor, and for the redemption of my sins, with general assent and the free consent of the nobles of my kingdom, I grant to God and to his most blessed confessor Saint Guthlac, and to your most hallowed monastery of Crowland that an abbot, monk, or lay brother of your monastery — either current or those who will succeed you in the future to serve the Lord after you in the same place in whatever task they might continue to do so — throughout my whole kingdom of Mercia may freely make for themselves servants from these fugitives for their journeys for whatever the business in which they are engaged. And that in the presence of the abbot, monk, or lay brother, they may lead them anywhere in my kingdom, just as if they had remained safe in their church at Crowland and entirely free and exempt from all threats whatsoever, and uninjured, under penalty of the removal of the dearest limb if anyone rashly tries to violate this privilege of mine. But if any such fugitive is found beyond the mentioned twenty feet on the far shores of your rivers, or outside the vills that claim common pasture with you on your western marshes, and is beyond the river Welland, or in any other place without you or without letters of protection from the abbot of your monastery, he will be subject to lawful punishment according to his offenses.)[61]

The Bertulf charter extends the narrative that Crowland was a permanent sanctuary during the Anglo-Saxon period. Guthlac's name is used to evoke the legend of the abbey's foundation, and the charter itself furthers this identity by extending Crowland's sanctuary privileges beyond the abbey's physical borders to wherever its representatives travel, redefining the monastery's boundaries in order to better protect its fugitives.

Continuity of Sanctuary in the Viking Period

Within the charters of these two early Mercian kings, the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle constructs a narrative that remembers Crowland as a permanent sanctuary for fugitives during the Anglo-Saxon period. This narrative is continued in two later episodes — the legend of a band of fugitives from Crowland who fought against invading Vikings and the attention that the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle devotes to the story of the post-Conquest guerrilla rebel Hereward "the Wake" — as well as a third charter, attributed to King Eadred, that reaffirms the rights asserted in earlier ones. Together, these legends expand the narrative that during the Anglo-Saxon period, Crowland was a place that not only sheltered fugitives but also actively sought them out to defend itself during times of need.

A story of Crowland's resistance to the Vikings underscores the continued narrative, running from the abbey's foundation at the hands of exiles forward, that

[60] De Gray Birch, *Chronicle of Croyland Abbey*, 22.
[61] Riley, *Ingulph's Chronicle*, 27.

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Crowland was a refuge for fugitives during the Anglo-Saxon period. The Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle records a series of devastating Viking raids in the ninth century. In response, there was a local resistance led by Earl Algar of Mercia in 870.[62] Crowland supplied part of the local army: "una cum cohorte Croylandiae monasterii videlicet 200 bellatoribus robustissimis eo quod maxima pars illorum de fugitivis fuerat quibus praefuit frater Tolius monachus conversus ejusdem monasterii, miles ante suam conversionem per totam Merciam in bellicis artibus nominatissimus sed tunc amore caelestis patriae relicto saeculo spirituali militiae apud Croylandiam mancipatus"[63] (with these there was a band of two hundred men, very stout warriors, from the monastery of Crowland which was mostly composed of fugitives. It was commanded by brother Toley, then a monk in that monastery, who before he adopted the habit had been most renowned throughout all Mercia for his military skill. Recently, through the desire of a heavenly country, he had given up secular for spiritual warfare at Croyland).[64] In this legendary episode of local resistance to the Vikings, Crowland's fighting force of two hundred warriors is composed almost entirely of fugitives. It is also led by a man who sounds suspiciously like a fugitive himself. Toley's biography — Mercian origins, military skill, and abandonment of secular for spiritual warfare — is dubious, as it forms an exact parallel of the life of Guthlac, Crowland's legendary founder. In the figure of Toley, we can witness Crowland's origin myth of Guthlac extended further throughout the narrative of the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle, and his band of fugitives reinforces Crowland's identity as a sanctuary. This narrative of Crowland's resistance to the Viking attacks illustrates the continued narrative that the abbey was a refuge for fugitives during the Anglo-Saxon period.

As Roffe has noted, "the account of the Danish campaign in the East Midlands is unparalleled," yet "the odd comment rings true."[65] Whether or not this fenland battle against the Vikings or the figure of Toley have any basis in reality,[66] the

[62] On this episode, see Searle, *Ingulf and the Historia Croylandensis*, 62–69.

[63] De Gray Birch, *Chronicle of Croyland Abbey*, 33.

[64] Riley, *Ingulph's Chronicle*, 40.

[65] Roffe, "Plea for Reassessment" (n. 10 above), 94, continuing, "To take but one example, the men of Stamford appear to have been led against the invaders by a certain Harding of Ryhall. Ryhall (Rutland) is a small village situated to the north of Stamford, and it seems odd that an inhabitant from such an insignificant place, albeit the resting place of St Tibba, should be accorded such an important role in the affairs of a major borough in a later fabrication. But the reference may make sense in a ninth-century context, for much of the territory of Stamford was probably situated in the parish of Ryhall before the construction of the Danish borough in the 880s."

[66] Toley's biography is suspiciously identical to Guthlac's: a Mercian warrior, renowned for his military prowess, who is inspired to abandon the *comitatus* and come to a fenland monastery, ending at Croyland. However, many saints' lives deliberately share details with those of earlier saints, and the similarities between Toley and Guthlac may have been heightened consciously as a deliberate homage, rather than unconsciously, in imitation.

legendary story of these events underscores the strength of Crowland's identification with fugitives throughout the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle. In this narrative, Crowland's army is composed almost entirely of fugitives — uniquely so compared to its neighbors (Hoyland, Depyng, Langtoft, Baston, Bourne, and Lincoln), who simply send their young men to fight. The presence of this legendary battle between Toley's fugitive army and the Vikings in the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle testifies to the strength of its association between Crowland and fugitives in the Anglo-Saxon period, as the abbey's fugitives become more than a monastic work force but are seen to fight actively for Crowland's defense.

Crowland's identity as a permanent sanctuary is reaffirmed after the worst of the Viking attacks have passed, in a charter that, it is claimed, was issued by King Eadred in the middle of the tenth century.[67] After the monastery has been almost completely destroyed by the Viking raids, Eadred is persuaded by his counselor (and later abbot of Crowland), Thurketel,[68] to issue a charter that reaffirms the abbey's historical privileges and provides the funds necessary to repair the damage the Vikings have caused.[69] Eadred's lengthy charter serves as a convenient narration of the abbey's history from its foundation in the time of Guthlac and Æthelbald forward,[70] as well as an excuse to confirm Crowland's holdings in great detail. The charter also affirms Crowland's privileges as a permanent sanctuary:

> et praecipio quod omnes homines fugitivi quos iidem monachi et testimonium 4 vel 5 hominum fide dignorum coram vicecomite in patria in qua tales manent, possunt affidare suos nativos esse, reducantur per praedictum vicecomitum in abbathiam eorum cum omnibus catallis et sequelis eorum omnium reclamatione et reluctatione ab inde remota et annullata, et si quid prius egerint in fraudem dominorum suorum illud cassatum omnio discerno; et si quis hominum nativorum suorum vel nativa de eis tenentium, aliquod delictum admiserit, pro quo catalla sua debet perdere, ipsa catalla praedictis monachis integre liberentur ubicumque facta fuerit justitia.[71]
>
> (And I order that all fugitive men whom these monks can prove to be their villeins with the trust of the testimonies of four or five worthy men before the sheriff of the country in which such men dwell should be returned by the same sheriff to their abbey with all their chattels and appurtenances, and counter-claims and opposition should thence be annulled and removed. And if they previously did

[67] On this charter, see Searle, *Ingulf and the Historia Croylandensis* (n. 3 above), 174–75.

[68] On Turketul, see Searle, *Ingulf and the Historia Croylandensis*, 69–79.

[69] As Roffe, "Plea for Reassessment," 94, notes, "the only critical reassessment of the Historia has shown that its tradition of Crowland's refoundation by Thurketel is almost certainly accurate, although it probably took place some twenty or so years later than the date of 948 recorded," citing Chibnall, *Ecclesiastical History* (n. 8 above), 2:xxv–xxvii.

[70] For the text of the charter, see de Gray Birch, *Chronicle of Croyland Abbey* (n. 1 above), 56–61; Riley, *Ingulph's Chronicle* (n. 1 above), 65–72.

[71] De Gray Birch, *Chronicle of Croyland Abbey*, 59–60.

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> anything to the detriment of their lords, I command that this is made null and void. And if any of their villeins or those holding villeinage from them admits any misdeed for which he should lose his chattel, this chattel is to be delivered in full to these monks, wherever the trial is held.)[72]

Eadred's charter both confirms Crowland's earlier status as a permanent sanctuary for fugitives and amplifies the ways in which the monastery can benefit from this status, as the monks are now allowed to take possession of any property owned by an exile they are sheltering, rather than the property going to compensate the party whom the fugitive had originally wronged.[73] The affirmation of Crowland's privilege as a permanent sanctuary evident here reinforces the narrative of the abbey as a sanctuary for fugitives in Anglo-Saxon England that runs throughout the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle.

In the forged charters of these three relatively early Anglo-Saxon kings, the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle constructs a narrative that positions Crowland as a permanent sanctuary. Before this legendary aspect of Crowland's history fades from the pages of the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle entirely, a last reflex of the narrative that the abbey was a permanent sanctuary in the Anglo-Saxon period may be evident in the chronicle's attention to the legend of Hereward "the Wake," the best known of those Anglo-Saxon earls who rebelled against William after the Norman Conquest.[74] Hereward's legend is relatively well represented in a handful of post-Conquest texts,[75] and the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle adds nothing really new to the

[72] Riley, *Ingulph's Chronicle*, 70.

[73] Shoemaker, *Sanctuary and Crime in the Middle Ages* (n. 17 above), 125, notes that "although the Laws of Edward the Confessor had suggested that sanctuary-seeking thieves had to restore the goods they had stolen, from the thirteenth century onward the common law considered all of the goods in a fugitive's possession forfeit to the crown." He notes further (in a personal comment) that "the crown seems to regularize its claims on sanctuary seekers' goods in the late twelfth century, certainly by the 1190s but perhaps a decade or so sooner." The crown's claim on sanctuary seekers' goods will be discussed further below, but like the forty-day time limits for sanctuary, growing royal control over the property of those who sought sanctuary suggests that Crowland's forgeries were made in the late twelfth century in response to increased royal encroachment on local administration of sanctuary practices.

[74] On these, see Susan Reynolds, "Eadric Silvaticus and the English Resistance," *Historical Research* 54 (1981): 102–5; Maurice Keen, *The Outlaws of Medieval Legend* (London, 1977), 6–38; John Hayward, "Hereward the Outlaw," *Journal of Medieval History* 14 (1988): 293–304; and two more popular studies: Victor Head, *Hereward* (Stroud, 1995) and Peter Rex, *Hereward: The Last Englishman* (Stroud, 2005).

[75] Brief, earlier references to Hereward's life and rebellion are made in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, MSS D (1071) and E (a later interpolation into the 1070 annal); the Domesday Book (which records his estates in southern Lincolnshire); William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Pontificum Anglorum*; *The Peterborough Chronicle of Hugh Candidus*; the *Chronicle of John of Worcester* (which largely repeats the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*); Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum*; and the *Chronica Monasterii de Hida juxta Wintoniam* (known as the "Hyde" or "Warenne" chronicle). Longer, more legendary accounts of his life are to be found in several

story, meaning that this text is not often discussed in studies of Hereward's rebellion. Yet Hereward's presence in the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle is at least worth noting. The amount of attention that this text devotes to him is curious, because his famous last stand against the Normans took place at Ely, not Crowland. However, the chronicle's inclusion of his legend makes sense when it is considered as part of the more sustained narrative that framed Crowland as a permanent sanctuary for fugitives during the Anglo-Saxon period. Read in this light, Hereward becomes one more fugitive whom the later medieval author(s) of the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle saw linked to Crowland during the abbey's Anglo-Saxon past.

Sanctuary Claims in the Late Twelfth Century

The identification of Crowland as a permanent sanctuary fades away in the post-Conquest portions of the *Historia Croylandensis*. This fact is a curious one, because it is precisely in the fourteenth century when permanent sanctuaries seem to have gained ground in medieval England, and, as McSheffrey has demonstrated, the institution of sanctuary persisted right up until the dissolution of the monasteries.[76] By way of conclusion to this article, I would like to suggest that the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle's restriction of claims that Crowland was a permanent sanctuary to the Anglo-Saxon period alone adds weight to Roffe's argument that the most likely date of forgery for the chronicle's fake Anglo-Saxon charters is the twelfth century. For those charters that I have examined here, I suggest the late twelfth century as the likeliest date of origin. Roffe has argued, based on an analysis of Crowland's holdings, that the group of forged Anglo-Saxon charters as a whole were produced in the twelfth century. He notes that Orderic Vitalis's references to the charters of Æthelbald and Edgar in his *Ecclesiastical History* imply that "the first forged charters were already in existence" by the time of his visit in the first quarter of the twelfth century,[77] and he suggests that "it is unlikely that the remaining charters were produced at a very much later date, for they do not include grants to Crowland made after the middle years of the twelfth century."[78]

Broader historical context also suggests the late twelfth century as the most likely date of composition for these documents. The twelfth century has gained a reputation as the "the high watermark of forgery," "the period between the

twelfth-century texts: the *Gesta Herwardi*, Geoffrey Gaimer's *Estoire des Engleis*, and the *Liber Eliensis*, as well as the fourteenth- or fifteenth-century *Historia Croylandensis* discussed in this article and a fifteenth-century genealogy of the lords of Bourne (the Wake family) who claimed descent from Hereward and whose name is the source of his spurious appellation.

[76] McSheffrey, *Seeking Sanctuary* (n. 14 above).

[77] Chibnall, *Ecclesiastical History*, xxix.

[78] Roffe, "Plea for Reassessment" (n. 10 above), 105.

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new chaos of the Norman Conquest and the establishment of order, or growing legal precision, in the reign of Henry II."[79] Moreover, two late twelfth-century developments in England's sanctuary laws are relevant to Crowland's claims in these forged charters because they suggest that the monastery would have had reason to push back against increasing royal encroachment on local sanctuary practices at this time. The first is the forty-day time limits for sanctuary seekers, which "would crystallize in the late-twelfth- and early-thirteenth-century royal law governing sanctuary."[80] Crowland's desire to claim permanent sanctuary thus seems very likely to have arisen at the moment when royal law sought to impose standardized time limitations upon local claims of sanctuary privilege. Likewise, the Eadred charter discussed above makes a point of noting the monastery's right to claim the property of any fugitive whom they are sheltering for themselves. By the thirteenth century, royal law claimed ownership of the property of sanctuary seekers as well: from this point, "the common law considered all of the goods in a fugitive's possession forfeit to the crown."[81] There are two very good reasons, then, why Crowland might be seeking to bolster its sanctuary claims with forged documents during the late twelfth century. In doing so, it sought to protect its practices from royal encroachment on the time limits for which sanctuary could be claimed and the right to claim ownership of the goods of sanctuary seekers in its care. As royal laws surrounding sanctuary became increasingly standardized at the end of the twelfth century, it makes good sense that Crowland would be thinking about how best to protect its interests at this moment.

Internal evidence from the *Historia Croylandensis* also suggests that these charters were forged in the late twelfth century. The blatant anachronisms in these documents appear, paradoxically, to support one of the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle's central claims: that the devastating fire of 1091 might have actually destroyed some extant Anglo-Saxon material.[82] As Searle noted, "it is strange, that the writer of the Ingulf should not have had before him any charters of the kind, of which the cartularies and chronicles of the monasteries, such as Abingdon,

[79] C. N. L. Brooke, "Approaches to Medieval Forgery," in Brooke, *Medieval Church and Society: Collected Essays* (London, 1971), 100–120, at 115. See also Elizabeth A. R. Brown, "*Falsitas pia sive reprehensibilis*: Medieval Forgers and Their Intentions," in *Fälschungen im Mittelalter: Internationaler Kongress der Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, ed. Horst Fuhrmann (Hanover, 1988), 1:101–19.

[80] Shoemaker, *Sanctuary and Crime in the Middle Ages*, 107.

[81] Shoemaker, *Sanctuary and Crime in the Middle Ages*, 125. I am grateful to Karl Shoemaker for the suggestions discussed in this paragraph.

[82] As Roffe notes, the *Historia Croylandensis* was "at pains to point out that copies of charters had survived the conflagration, but it must be doubted, on the surviving evidence, that such was the case" ("Plea for Reassessment," 107).

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Ramsey, etc. are full."[83] As Julia Crick has painstakingly demonstrated, English monasteries in the twelfth century produced very many mimicking copies of Anglo-Saxon charters.[84] Crucially, this corpus of documents was self-consciously imitative. Crick divides twelfth-century reproductions of Anglo-Saxon charters into three categories: "first, blatant imitation of pre-Conquest script which clearly belongs neither to pre-Conquest nor to post-Conquest scribal traditions; secondly, subtler modification which it may take longer to discern because it departs only in minor details from a recognisable scribal tradition of the post-Conquest era; finally, imitation so successful that scholars remain divided about whether certain charters should be classified as pre-Conquest originals or post-Conquest copies."[85] As she concludes, "the fabrication of imitative charters indicates that their creators perceived historical difference, even anachronism, and, most importantly, that they anticipated such perceptions on the part of the audience for whom replica charters were intended."[86]

There was a flurry of production of imitative charters in the twelfth century, and during this time period, it was common scribal practice to make a reproduced or forged Anglo-Saxon charter appear as authentic-looking as possible. Crowland's deviation from this pattern suggests that it simply did not have that option.[87] It does not seem an unreasonable hypothesis that Crowland did lose some Anglo-Saxon material in the 1091 fire precisely because its post-Conquest forgeries, unlike those of its neighbors, appear to have been written from scratch rather than modeled off extant examples. While this does not, of course, mean that the destroyed Anglo-Saxon charters and the later forgeries would have contained the same information, what it does suggest is that there may be strands of truth in the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle's depiction of the abbey's pre-twelfth-century past. If so, Crowland would have had particularly good reason to be forging false "Anglo-Saxon" charters in the twelfth century, after a devastating fire wiped out its records.

[83] Searle, *Ingulf and the Historia Croylandensis* (n. 3 above), 155.

[84] Julia Crick, "Historical Literacy in the Archive: Post-Conquest Imitative Copies of Pre-Conquest Charters and Some French Comparanda," in *The Long Twelfth-Century View of the Anglo-Saxon Past*, ed. Martin Brett and David A. Woodman (Surrey, 2015), 159–90. See also the rest of the essays collected in this volume for broader discussions of documentary activity in the twelfth century.

[85] Crick, "Historical Literacy in the Archive," 164.

[86] Crick, "Historical Literacy in the Archive," 190.

[87] As Hiatt in *Making of Medieval Forgeries* (n. 7 above) writes: "the nature of the Crowland forgeries was not that of imitations of antique models of Anglo-Saxon charters, but rather of a creative, at times flamboyant, form of pastiche. Instead of a careful reproduction of the content and form of pre-Conquest charters, those responsible for the forgeries seem to have been concerned to produce a contemporary re-interpretation of the idea, the genre, of the pre-Conquest charter" (44–45).

The poor quality of Crowland's forgeries in comparison to those of its monastic neighbors perhaps raises the question of why the forgers of these documents did not consult material from other monasteries, thereby lending a greater degree of authenticity to their efforts. I believe the answer to this question is the same reason why Crowland did not seek to extend its sanctuary claims beyond the Anglo-Saxon period. Of course, the loss of documents over the centuries is always a possible explanation to the latter point. There could very well have existed an accompanying set of now-lost charters that claim sanctuary privileges for Crowland in the twelfth century — indeed, evidence of loss is present in the chronicle itself, as material is missing from the end of the first continuation, the beginning of the second continuation, and the end of the fourth continuation. Yet, as I have discussed, no claims for sanctuary in the post-Conquest period are made throughout the extensive remainder of the *Historia Croylandensis*. I suspect that the same explanation lies behind Crowland's lack of sanctuary claims in the later medieval period and its failure to create more realistic forgeries based on documents held by its contemporaries: namely, the bad blood that persisted between Crowland and its neighbors throughout the post-Conquest period over land disputes. As is well known, Crowland was embroiled in numerous legal cases over land use throughout the later medieval period. An anxiety about Crowland's holdings is present throughout the entirety of the chronicle, and it has been widely accepted that the bulk of material in the *Historia Croylandensis* was first forged to defend the abbey's holdings during these lawsuits.[88] As anxieties about land consumed Crowland over the course of the later medieval period, it is natural that sanctuary rights would have dropped out of the picture as a less pressing concern. Rather than a contemporary interest, sanctuary remained within the *Historia Croylandensis* only as a narrative relic of the abbey's Anglo-Saxon past.

It seems likeliest, then, that the charters claiming rights of permanent sanctuary for Crowland Abbey were first forged in the late twelfth century and that the concerns raised in this material dropped out of the later portions of the *Historia Croylandensis* as the abbey became more concerned with its landholdings than its sanctuary rights. Yet the question of whether these charters were forged in the twelfth century or later does not diminish the significance of the narrative they construct within the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle. Later medieval Crowland at some point attached particular significance to the narrative that the abbey served as a permanent sanctuary for fugitives in the Anglo-Saxon period alone.

[88] See Hiatt, *Making of Medieval Forgeries*, 42 and 46.

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Conclusions

This article has explored moments in the Pseudo-Ingulf chronicle that claim rights of permanent sanctuary in the Anglo-Saxon period. These were not unusual claims for a monastery to be making in the period after the Norman Conquest. What makes them stand out is that they were not extended into the abbey's post-Conquest concerns, which are almost solely focused on its holdings. Crowland preserved the narrative that it was a refuge for fugitives during the Anglo-Saxon period alone. It is striking that permanent sanctuary is never claimed as a contemporary privilege for the time within the chronicle when these charters were forged, which tentatively suggests that a late twelfth-century date for their composition is not unreasonable. Yet whenever these forgeries were made, this odd privilege, preserved in a handful of spurious Anglo-Saxon charters, builds on Crowland's foundation myth to suggest that it served as a permanent sanctuary for fugitives during the Anglo-Saxon period. These later medieval forged charters and chronicles give us a valuable window into how the monks of post-Conquest Crowland Abbey envisioned their own institution's Anglo-Saxon past. When this chronicle was written, as the abbey's monks thought about their Anglo-Saxon past, they constructed a narrative that positioned Crowland as a refuge for fugitives, outlaws, and exiles. This narrative of sanctuary privilege sheds valuable light onto how the post-Conquest abbey constructed its history during the Anglo-Saxon period.

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Keywords: sanctuary, forgery, Crowland, Pseudo-Ingulf, Guthlac