Making a Difference in Tenth-Century Politics: King Athelstan's Sisters and Frankish Queenship

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'The holy laws of kinship have purposed to take root among monarchs for this reason: that their tranquil spirit may bring the peace which peoples long for.' Thus in the year 507 wrote Theoderic, king of the Ostrogoths, to Clovis, king of the Franks.[1] His appeal to the ideals of peace between kin was designed to avert hostilities between the Franks and the Visigoths, and drew meaning from the web of marital ties which bound together the royal dynasties of the early-sixth-century west. Theoderic himself sat at the centre of this web: he was married to Clovis's sister, and his daughter was married to Alaric, king of the Visigoths.[2] The present article is concerned with a much later period of European history, but the Ostrogothic ruler's words nevertheless serve to introduce us to one of its central themes, namely the significance of marital alliances between dynasties. Unfortunately the tenth-century west, our present concern, had no Cassiodorus (the recorder of the king's letter) to methodically enlighten the intricacies of its politics, but Theoderic's sentiments were doubtless not unlike those that crossed the minds of the Anglo-Saxon and Frankish elite families who engineered an equally striking series of marital relationships among themselves just over 400 years later. In the early years of the tenth century several Anglo-Saxon royal women, all daughters of King Edward the Elder of Wessex (899-924) and sisters (or half-sisters) of his son King Athelstan (924-39), were despatched across the Channel as brides for Frankish and Saxon rulers and aristocrats. This article addresses the fate of some of these women through an analysis of their political identities. In particular, it is concerned with the ways that they sought to exercise power in kingdoms where they were outsiders.

The sequence began in c. 919 with the marriage of Eadgifu to the Carolingian king of west Francia, Charles the Straightforward (also known as 'the Simple').[3] In the years thereafter, the new queen's sisters (and half-sisters) made a habit of marrying members of continental dynasties. In 926 Eadhild married Hugh the Great, 'duke of the Franks', an extremely powerful magnate whose father, King Robert I (922-3), had fought a bloody civil war against Charles. Then in 929-30 Edith was married to the future

emperor Otto I, son of Henry I of east Francia; and at the same time or slightly later Edgiva wedded Louis, the brother of King Rudolf II of Burgundy.[4] By the early 930s, then, four of Athelstan's half-sisters were married into four of the great dynasties of tenth-century Europe; a fifth, meanwhile, became the wife of Sihtric, Viking leader in Northumbria. The political careers of these women are shadowy. Only Edith, hitched to the rising star of the Saxon Ottonian dynasty, left anything approaching a significant impression on the contemporary sources.[5] Yet collectively the presence of these sisters on the continent is very striking; indeed, this pattern of amorous activity arguably marks the high point in cross-Channel royal links in the early middle ages as a whole.[6]

To understand just how much of a high point, we need to appreciate the exceptional nature in our period of these inter-dynastic marriages. Despite the criss-crossing dynastic connections which helped articulate politics in the age of Theoderic, Clovis and Alaric, in the context of more recent Frankish history the phenomenon of outsider queens was emphatically a novelty.[7] In the pantheon of early medieval dynasties, the ninth-century Carolingians were singular in the insularity of their marital strategies.[8] Charlemagne (768-814), so his biographer Einhard tells us, 'never wanted to give any of [his daughters] away to anyone, whether it be to a Frankish noble or to a foreigner.'[9] Einhard added that this was 'strange to report,' but it would seem that the emperor's desire to restrict claims to inheritance must go a long way to explaining his motives.[10] His reluctance also reflected the Franks' deep sense of superiority over their neighbours. Pope Stephen III pandered to this sentiment when he attempted (in pursuit of his own agendas) to dissuade Charlemagne and his brother from the idea of a marriage alliance with the Lombards in 770: 'You are not at liberty to mix with the blood of another race. None of your forebears…took a wife from another kingdom or a foreign race…Take note, I beseech you, of many and how great have been those powerful men who have fallen away from God's commandments by marrying into another people…'[11] Bitter experience may also have inspired the emperor's marital protectionism, for (having ignored the pope's pleading) Charlemagne well knew that the course of diplomatic love did not always run smooth. Attempts in the 780s and 790s to betroth his daughter to the young Byzantine emperor Constantine VI and his son to a daughter of King Offa of Mercia both collapsed amidst recriminations and worsening relationships.[12]

Thereafter, Charlemagne and his successors kept a firm grip on the marriages of their family members. Occasional Carolingians princesses were despatched to seal alliances through marriage, such as Charles the Bald's daughter Judith who married Æthelwulf king of Wessex in 856.[13] However, this was a highly unusual case. In the case of royal sons in the ninth century there were to be no exceptions. This was spelled out explicitly in the *Ordinatio Imperii* of 817 which stated that, unlike their aristocratic followers, none of Louis the Pious's heirs 'should presume to take a wife of foreign nationality…in order to avoid discord and take away opportunities for harm.'[14] Instead, young Carolingian males were to marry only members of the Frankish aristocracy, in order to seal political alliances within the empire.[15] Ninth-century Francia thus witnessed almost no inter-dynastic marriages. This norm later reasserted itself in the second half of the tenth century. After the 940s, high-profile political links between England and the continent seem to have declined, a trend reflected in the fact that there were no more cross-Channel royal marriages until 1002, when the English ruler Aethelred II married Emma of Normandy.[16]

Against this background, the unions arranged for Athelstan's sisters stand out conspicuously. These marriages raise a whole host of questions. What do they reveal about the relative status of the various European dynasties in power at the time?[17] How do they inform our understanding of directions of political influence (usually assumed to be south-north) in the period? How deep were the underlying currents of cross-Channel contact on which they rested? How did these people communicate with each other? What was the character of the tenth century's multicultural courts? How did Athelstan's Frankish connections fit in with his patronage of political factions from Brittany and Norway? Other such issues are not hard to identify. However, this article cannot address them all. Rather, our spotlight will lie specifically on the positions of these English women themselves. Previous scholarship has noted their significance, but has tended to describe them as simple avatars of their male relatives' political agendas.[18] There is certainly some truth in this model: after all, the twelfth-century historian William of Malmesbury, here probably relying on a contemporary source, regarded the desire of foreign princes for his sisters' hands as evidence of Athelstan's greatness.[19] However, one of its weaknesses is that it casts the sisters in rather passive roles. The political

centrality of royal women in this period, illuminated brightly in the work of historians such as Janet Nelson and Pauline Stafford, means that this implication of passivity should not pass unexamined.

In studying Eadgifu and her sisters, we cannot lose sight of the fact that they were rootless outsiders in the kingdoms and principalities they married into. This is not merely a curiosity. Rather, it takes us to the heart of their political identities. The women who became Carolingian queens before Eadgifu were, as we have seen, Frankish aristocrats chosen at least in part for the political resources they brought with them to the marriage. They gave their husbands access to political networks, family ties and lands in areas of the empire where they needed to build influence. At the same time, her position as bridge between the royal court and the regional aristocracy from which she emerged was one of the crucial and enduring bases of a ninth-century queen's own power.[20] However, when the queen in question came from outside the realm, of necessity this bridging role could not sustain her position in the same way. It is therefore the aim of this article to ask how queenship worked in such unusual circumstances. This aspect of the topic has not been fully explored. Much has been published on tenth-century Frankish queenship, but by and large the approach adopted has involved compiling fragments of evidence from across the period. Although useful, this serves to emphasise the common features of queenly power rather than highlighting individual peculiarities.[21] By directing attention to the outsider status of Athelstan's sisters, I hope to map out some of the contours of queens' power in tenth-century Francia, identifying differences between them as well as similarities.

The political era through which these women lived was defined by a generational change in the main European ruling dynasties in the middle years of the 930s. East of the Rhine, the Saxon king Henry was succeeded by his son Otto in 936; a year later Rudolf II of Burgundy also died, to be replaced by his young son Conrad III the Peaceable. The possible roles of Edith and Edgiva in these events have been superbly picked out from the sparse evidence by Karl Leyser and Eduard Hlawitschka.[22] Our attention, however, will be concentrated further west, on the career of Eadgifu in the kingdom of west Francia. Here, political change was also the order of the day. After the deposition and imprisonment of her husband Charles the Straightforward in 923, Eadgifu sent their

infant son Louis across the sea to Wessex, where he was brought up at the court of his uncle Athelstan. She herself also went back to England, probably at the same time as her son, though possibly not until Charles's death in 929.[23] Eadgifu and Louis remained in exile until 936, when news arrived of the death of King Raoul (923-36), a non-Carolingian whose power base lay in Burgundy. The west Frankish magnates asked Athelstan to return his nephew, now aged 15 or 16, to be their king: he landed on the beach at Boulogne that summer and began to rule as Louis IV. History remembers him as Louis d'Outremer ('from across the sea').

Given his youth and the circumstances of his succession, it is hardly surprising that Louis was far from being master of all he surveyed. Although it would provide useful context, space precludes meaningful discussion of the events of his reign.[24] Its Leitmotif, however, was conflict between on the one hand a group of extremely powerful aristocrats, led at various times by some combination of Hugh the Great (count of Tours and 'duke of the Franks'), Count Herbert II of Vermandois, William Longsword (leader of the Northmen based at Rouen) and Arnulf, count of Flanders; and on the other a ruler who had lost control of almost all the major estates on which his predecessors had depended. After some initial success in these struggles, bolstered by his marriage in 939 to Gerberga, sister of Otto I and widow of duke Giselbert of Lotharingia, Louis's fortunes declined further in the 940s and reached a nadir in 945-6 with his imprisonment at the hands of first William Longsword and then Hugh the Great. Only at the very end of the decade did he start to assert his power with consistent effectiveness. Yet this purple patch was cut short when, at the age of 33 in 954, he met his unfortunate death in an archetypally Carolingian hunting accident. The materials available for studying the first half of the tenth century are unenviable: much depends on gleanings from Louis's 53 known charters and the only major contemporary west Frankish narrative source, the *Annals* of Flodoard of Rheims.[25] We will use this material to address three main questions: How did Eadgifu's family ties interact with the politics of her son's reign? How was she integrated into a political landscape of which she was not by birth or background a part? And how might the unusual experience of Eadgifu and other outsider-queens have influenced the concept and practice of queenship in Francia?

THE ANGLO-SAXON SISTERLY NETWORK

Our first task is to ask what it meant for Eadgifu that so many of her sisters were married to the continental big hitters of the day. If, as an outsider, she lacked the access to political networks within Francia that others acquired during their youth, then did her natal family identity in fact have any bearing on her career? The evidence suggests that there was relatively substantial contact between the court in Wessex and its representatives on the continent. For example, Nelson has plausibly argued that if Eadgifu remained in Francia until her husband's death, she may well have had a hand in arranging the marriage in 926 between her sister Eadhild and Hugh the Great.[26] Whether or not the dethroned queen's hand rested silently on the tiller in these negotiations, it must also be noted that the ambassadors who travelled to Wessex on Hugh's behalf to set up this union were members of the comital dynasty of Flanders.[27] This highlights another important family link, for Arnulf of Flanders was the grandson of King Alfred of Wessex (871-99). This tie was clearly still active in the 920s and 930s, and it features prominently as the conduit for communication between Francia and Athelstan in the reign of Louis IV.[28] It was Arnulf who organised Louis's landfall on the continent in 936, at the key Flemish port of Boulogne.[29] He had also seen to the burial of Athelstan's brother at the Flemish comital monastery of St-Bertin after he was apparently drowned at sea.[30] Arnulf's contacts with Athelstan were ongoing: when he captured the family of his nemesis Erluin of Ponthieu in 939, he sent them as hostages to England.[31] Louis IV's attempts to utilise this Anglo-Flemish family connection were conspicuous in the early years of his reign. We meet him twice in close congress with Arnulf. In 937 he issued a royal diploma at St-Bertin, and in 938 we meet the king and the count trying to improve cross-Channel communications by renovating a port at or near Quentovic.[32] The Flemish branch of this family network was also attached to Wessex by an underlying material basis. Arnulf had claims to lands in Wiltshire and the Isle of Wight which his grandfather King Alfred had bequeathed to his mother Ælfthryth. These included rights at Chippenham and Wellow, key royal estates where Athelstan held major assemblies in the earlier 930s, at which Louis and Eadgifu may well have been present.[33]

In the most spectacular instance of direct intervention by any early English king in west Francia, it can be argued that both the sisterly network and the Flemish

connection played significant roles. In 939, Athelstan sent a fleet to Arnulf to help Louis in his struggle against the rebellious magnates. In the end it was no help at all: Flodoard tells us, without further explanation, that the fleet turned aside and attacked 'the places of the Morini touching the sea' instead, after which Arnulf seems to have joined the ranks of the young king's enemies.[34] Historians have been at a loss to explain this turn of events. Freeman suggested the fleet attacked Arnulf because Athelstan realised he was about to betray Louis, while Grierson interpreted the raid as the cause of the count's defection. Steenstrup, meanwhile, hypothesised that the fleet had diverted to attack Danish settlers in Flanders.[35] None of these explanations is particularly compelling. A closer reading of the text in the context of relations between Athelstan and Arnulf suggests an alternative. The term 'Morini' was not Flodoard's usual term for the people of Flanders, but its use reflects his familiarity with the nuances of classical terminology. We must therefore take seriously the possibility that he consciously used it in its ancient sense to refer to the people of western Flanders, and intended to identify an area distinct from Flanders proper.[36] To the west of Flanders lay Ponthieu, with whose count Erluin Arnulf was in a state of open war at exactly this time. He thus had a motive to turn the ships sent by his cousin to his own ends, and his close ties to Wessex gave him the opportunity. Athelstan himself had interests in this zone, in the shape of close political ties with a community of monks based at Montreuil on the frontier between Ponthieu and Flanders: these links had proved important in orchestrating his intervention in Breton affairs in 936-7.[37] Arnulf had seized Montreuil from Erluin shortly before the arrival of the English ships with the help, according to Flodoard, of an insider, and sent the count's family into exile in Wessex. The convergence of Arnulf's and Athelstan's interests at Montreuil thus gives some support to the hypothesis that Arnulf was able to turn the fleet against his own local rival. This diversion of the force from its original purpose could also explain why Arnulf and Louis became enemies at this point.

Despite the failure of the fleet to fulfil its mission, the very fact that it was despatched at all is worth stressing: this is unique evidence for direct intervention by an English king in Frankish affairs in the period. Athelstan's charters from 939 may help to illuminate the matter more clearly. It is well known that royal charters were sometimes granted in anticipation of military campaigns in order to pave the way for the movement

and provision of armies: Athelstan's own diplomas can be used in this way to pick out the progress of his armies into the north.[38] It is interesting in this context that in one of the king's charters from 939 we meet another of the king's sisters, Eadburh, a nun at Nunnaminster best known for her posthumous saintly career, in which she is granted extensive properties (17 hides) in full possession at Droxford.[39] This is a very rare example of a privilege for a royal woman, and is susceptible to various interpretations.[40] However, given its date and the identity of the recipient, it is tempting to associate it with the naval expedition of 939. Droxford is southeast of Winchester, only a few miles from the Hampshire coast, and the properties granted are specifically designated as being on the river. We know that monastic institutions routinely had ships under their control; and this grant is one of a flurry of charters from the same period granted to recipients in various areas of Wessex.[41] It is thus possible that we are seeing here evidence of the preparations for Athelstan's naval intervention on behalf on Louis IV. The profile of Eadburh in this suggests that the sisterly network of which Eadgifu was part had been activated.[42] Moreover, the fact that Arnulf of Flanders claimed land on the nearby Isle of Wight indicates that he could well have been involved in the preparation of this campaign as well as its execution.[43]

There are also signs that the sisters' relationships with each other could play a significant part in continental politics without referring back to Wessex. Hlawitschka and Leyser have identified various political exchanges whose courses may have been smoothed by the bond between Edith in Saxony and Edgiva in Burgundy. For example, when Rudolf II of Burgundy sent prestigious relics to the Ottonian court late in his reign, the gift was conspicuously made jointly to both Otto and his queen.[44] I would like to contribute a further reconstruction which suggests that the English sisterhood may also have enabled Eadgifu to play an influential diplomatic role at the end of the 930s. One of Louis's charters places him at Breisach, at the bend of the Upper Rhine, in August 938.[45] This has puzzled historians, who have sought to redate it to 939, when we know (thanks to Flodoard) that the king passed through nearby Alsace.[46] However, this redating is arbitrary and doesn't fit well with Flodoard's annal for 939.[47] Breisach was situated in the frontier zone between Alsace, East Francia and the kingdom of Burgundy.[48] A plausible context for Louis's presence in this area in 938 is provided by the death of

Rudolf II in the previous year. The king's demise, and the fact that his heir Conrad was a child, inevitably upset the balance of power in the area as rulers of neighbouring realms sought to take advantage of the minority. Even before the end of 937 Hugh of Provence turned up mob-handed, took Rudolf's widow as his wife and engineered another marriage between his own son and the late king's daughter. In the following year Otto intervened and took Conrad to Saxony to be educated at his court.[49] In these circumstances it would be surprising if Louis had not also sought to stake a claim, and this would explain his presence in southern Alsace and the Breisgau in August 938.[50] The people calling the shots in Burgundy in Conrad's absence must have been Rudolf's brother Louis and his wife Edgiva. At this time, then, Louis IV clearly had a window of opportunity to pitch for influence in an area where his aunt was one of the key power-brokers. Did he take advantage successfully? There is evidence that the answer is yes: it is suggestive that in the early 940s we find Louis in control of properties in areas which can only be explained as the result of a territorial concession by the rulers of Burgundy.[51] The most plausible context for this achievement is the period at the end of the 930s when Conrad's absence placed Edgiva in a particular position of power. In any case, at least as much as his Carolingian blood it was the family connections of his mother Eadgifu which legitimised any claims Louis had in the kingdom of Burgundy.

These snippets of evidence suggest that the network of Anglo-Saxon royal sisters at times played a significant role in continental politics during the later 930s. These women's membership of the royal house of Wessex, their kinship with the Flemish counts, and their relationships with each other constituted a political resource which was useful not only to the women themselves but also to the kings in their lives. Their natal family identity remained important to the sisters, and its part in Frankish politics (which had to be deliberately activated) shows that their role was anything but passive.

Kinship ties could be critical to political alliances and strategies, and this was explicitly recognised by contemporaries. When under siege in 946, for example, Archbishop Hugh of Rheims appealed for help in his hour of need to his relatives by marriage, described by Flodoard as 'some *principes* who seemed to be his friends.'[52] However, family relationships could not be relied on as an exclusive source of political stability. They did not map straightforwardly onto the contours of political relationships.

Hugh the Great and Louis IV remained almost constantly at loggerheads, despite the fact that the latter's mother was the sister of the former's wife: nor did things improve between them as a consequence of the fact that by 939 they were both married to sisters of Otto I. By the same token, multiple marriage connections did not automatically create peace between Louis and Otto. Indeed, by the middle of the tenth century almost all the leading families of Europe were related to each other in one way or another: in any given political context, an alliance suggested by one set of family relationships would therefore almost inevitably lead to conflict with another set of relatives. Marriage represented an opportunity for political alliance rather than the alliance itself.[53] Moreover, family members could die unexpectedly, as did Eadhild in 937 and Athelstan in 939, and the effects were unpredictable.[54] Family networks were thus a potential source of power, but by their very nature they were contingent, impermanent and fragile: an unstable foundation on which to build lasting political security and power. The power of women like Eadgifu had to be reinforced by being anchored to an underlying material base. As an outsider Eadgifu had to be socialised into the west Frankish kingdom, and her power naturalised in its political landscape. To understand how this was done, we will now turn to an examination of the lands she held.

QUEENS' LANDS

The material weakness of Louis IV's position upon his return to Francia in summer 936 is patent. The main estates on which Carolingian power in the region historically rested had long since passed from the dynasty's control, a fact illustrated by the contrast between the paucity of charters Louis issued dealing with Francia proper and the great number he dispensed for recipients in peripheral parts of his realm (Burgundy, Aquitaine and the Spanish March). Indeed, such was his desperation by 938 that he had to resort to handing out the treasure of the church of Laon to secure support.[55] The masters of political patronage and leadership in the heartlands of the kingdom were now Hugh the Great and Herbert of Vermandois, not the king.[56] Louis himself openly acknowledged this situation in 936 when Hugh, who had led the magnates requesting Louis's return from England, was referred to in royal charters by the exalted titles 'duke of the Franks' and 'second to the king.' But Hugh's sinister loyalty was a capricious

commodity, hardly surprising since he was the son of a rival king killed in battle by Louis's father.[57] All Louis could really rely on at the beginning were his possession of the imposing fortress of Laon, the palace of Compiègne, and the allegiance of the Archbishop of Rheims. Accordingly, the early years of his reign were dominated by continuous military struggles to recapture key estates and fortresses from the powerful supermagnates so that he might establish a basis for effective rule.

Eadgifu's role in this struggle has passed largely unobserved. This is perhaps not surprising, for she appears in no charters of Louis (nor had she in those of her husband). However, when she arrived at the start of 937, presumably from England, Flodoard tells us that: 'King Louis withdrew himself from the management of the *princeps* Hugh [the Great] and received his mother [Eadgifu] at Laon.'[58] This phrase clearly suggests that Louis's rejection of the incredibly powerful Hugh was made possible because he thought his mother could somehow underwrite his authority instead. But how? The roots she put down in the late 910s, when she had been queen for only a matter of months at a particularly difficult time for her husband, could not have been deep. Since then she had been absent from Francia for between seven and fifteen years and could have held no land.

What she did have, however, was a series of claims to land. In this context, Flodoard's account of the first phase of Louis's campaigning in 938 is significant. These campaigns were directed principally against strongholds and estates controlled by Herbert of Vermandois, and sought to establish the king in the area around and between his three main power-centres, Laon, Compiègne and Rheims. Among the very first on his list of strategic targets was Tusey on the Meuse 'which Louis's father had given to [Eadgifu] as a dower along with other *villae*.'[59] No charters survive giving details of Eadgifu's dower. However, Flodoard immediately goes on to relate the capture of the estate of Corbeny, near Laon. He identifies this as an estate which the church of Rheims had claims upon, betraying here his own agenda. But we know from earlier charters that Corbeny had a further significance: it was one of the two key estates which made up the dower of Frederun, Charles the Straightforward's second wife (who died in 917).[60] It is likely that this estate was subsequently given to his Anglo-Saxon bride, and that this was one of the other *villae* alluded to by Flodoard. So, the fact that two of the first three fortresses Louis

attacked can be definitely associated with the queen suggests that his top priority in the early months of his reign was to establish his position by reconquering properties to which his mother held a dormant claim.[61]

From scattered references we can infer the identity of some of the other lands and *honores* that Eadgifu acquired in this early period of her son's reign. After she absconded with Count Herbert the Elder (a son of Herbert of Vermandois) in 951, Flodoard tells us that Louis took away from her the nunnery of St-Mary in Laon, and in the same breath strongly implies that she was simultaneously divested of the estate of Attigny.[62] Although Flodoard doesn't say so explicitly, it also seems likely that she held Ponthion: after the confiscations of St-Mary and Attigny, he reports that among Louis's first acts was to reconquer this estate from Herbert's men, supported by his wife Gerberga.[63] Both Attigny and Ponthion, moreover, had been given as a pension to Charles the Straightforward by his captors in 928: this can only have strengthened Eadgifu's claim on them.[64] So too did the fact that dowers (if she held any of these estates as part of a dower) were intended to be held by one woman for one lifetime.[65]

These estates clearly had a material significance. For a start, they constituted a significant proportion of all the properties Louis controlled which, in comparison to those belonging to Hugh and Herbert, were nugatory.[66] Moreover, places like Compiègne, Corbeny and Laon were physically associated with each other by their locations along and around the Aisne valley, and may have formed part of a linked estate hierarchy.[67] We may even catch a glimpse of one queenly estate functioning as a practical power-centre: control of Ponthion presumably underwrote Louis's ability to gather military support in the Perthois in 941 at a time when Laon was threatened by his enemies.[68]

More importantly, all of Eadgifu's holdings had extremely high profile royal identities. Corbeny was associated with Rheims, one of the centres of Carolingian dynastic legitimacy.[69] Tusey had hosted major political negotiations in the reign of Charles the Bald.[70] Both Ponthion and Attigny were sites of major Carolingian royal palaces. St-Mary in Laon was remembered in a charter of Charles the Straightforward as one of the nodal points of Carolingian dynastic history and legitimacy, along with Prüm, Aachen and Compiègne.[71] Properties like these were pregnant with meaning and could advertise something about the status of their holders.[72] Palaces in particular were potent

focal points for political memory and dynastic identity.[73] In this context it is interesting to note that most of these estates also had a specifically queenly identity. Ponthion was the other half (in addition to Corbeny) of Frederun's dower; and St-Mary in Laon had also been controlled by a series of earlier royal women, including Charles the Bald's sister Hildegarde and his wife Ermentrude.[74] It is also striking that almost exactly the same group of properties later came under the control of Louis's wife Gerberga. Gerberga, the sister of Otto I, married Louis in 939 after the death of her first husband Duke Giselbert of Lotharingia: like Eadgifu, then, she was an outsider. The sources suggest, however, that she did not begin to eclipse the influence of her mother-in-law until the end of the 940s, when Louis's power was stabilised thanks to Otto's intervention.[75] This growth of influence is probably what caused Eadgifu to abscond from Louis's side against his wishes in 951 by marrying his enemy Count Herbert III the Elder.[76] After her departure, Louis with Gerberga at his side proceeded to take by force many of the estates which had hitherto been held by his mother, and the younger queen assumed their control.[77]

Eadgifu and Gerberga may not have controlled all of these properties in turn as dowers. After all, two charters of King Lothar, Louis's son, reveal that his father had confirmed Frederun's grant of Corbeny to the church of St-Remi at Rheims shortly before his death.[78] Nevertheless, the fact that Gerberga's presence at and consent to this confirmation were highlighted in the charters suggests that the estate was considered to be closely associated with the queen in some particular way. Moreover, queenly estates like Corbeny and Ponthion remained important as focal points of dynastic commemoration. Frederun's gift of her dower estates Corbeny to St-Remi and Ponthion to the church of St-Corneille at Compiègne (which she had re-founded) had been made in return for annual commemoration of her death. These grants were posthumously endorsed by her husband.[79] Simultaneously, Charles ordered the monks of St-Remi to commemorate, alongside Frederun's demise, his own consecration (28 January, the anniversary of Charlemagne's death).[80] Association with elements of Frederun's dower therefore inserted her queenly successors into a series of relationships with the two principal centres of Carolingian legitimacy in the kingdom: Rheims and Compiègne. Rheims was considered the traditional anointing place of the Frankish rulers, and Louis

IV's consecration by Archbishop Artold confirms that he saw himself continuing this tradition. Compiègne, built by his great-grandfather Charles the Bald, was also very important to Louis, who used the palace for his most explicit statements of dynastic heritage.[81] These resonances were not lost on contemporaries like Flodoard, who refers to Compiègne as a 'customary royal residence.'[82] Association with these places plugged the queens into a network of commemoration arrangements whose dynastic orientation and political function is clear. These arrangements mattered: competitive commemoration was a central arena of dynastic conflict in the early tenth century, not a peripheral flourish.[83] We know that Louis and his women respected the commemoration arrangements focused on these estates: charter evidence shows they regarded themselves as holding these estates from the churches at Rheims and Compiègne.[84]

All of this lends weight to the suggestion that the women in his life were seen by Louis IV to be a central support in his struggle for power and land in Francia. For him, the pursuit of claims to queenly lands that could be legitimised by reference to his mother and then his wife was a crucial political strategy. Their queenly associations justified his use of force to conquer lands that had long since slipped from his family's grasp. One wonders whether Louis's reliance on his mother early in his reign also reflects his upbringing at the court of Athelstan, a powerful ruler who does not seem to have been married, but whose court was populated by several formidable women.[85] It is also interesting that while previous Carolingian queens sometimes controlled elements of their dowers in sequence, these tended to be monastic institutions. The successive possession of queenly estates is a phenomenon perhaps better attested in Anglo-Saxon politics, and this model may also have inspired his thinking.[86]

ENGLISH QUEENS AND FRANKISH QUEENSHIP

How, in conclusion, does all this affect our appreciation of Frankish queenship, that is of the way that queens' position in this period was conceptualised and enacted? Here we return to our starting point, namely the fact that Eadgifu and her sisters were outsiders. The distinctiveness of their origins leads us to wonder whether their queenship may also have been articulated in a distinctive way. The roles that Eadgifu (and Gerberga) played in acquiring these properties suggests that their possession was crucial

not only to the king's position, but also to the queen's: making good their claims to these lands helped them legitimise their power as queens in west Francia. Not only did the women possess dormant claims to estates, but there are hints that they actually participated in their conquest.[87] This suggests a pronounced emphasis in this period on a link between queenship as an idea or an office and the control of lands that had a queenly identity. Queenly status could be asserted through ceremonies such as consecration, through public appearances with the king, through the production of heirs, and so on. As an outsider, a woman like Eadgifu had to clutch at all these straws: her claims to land and authority rested exclusively on her queenly status, unsupplemented by access to wider resources and networks within the kingdom. This distinguished her from almost all of her predecessors since at least the reign of Charlemagne, and explains the significance for her of gaining control of particular estates: queenly status could rub off from land which had a queenly identity. The length of time that had elapsed since the deposition of Charles the Straightforward in 923 meant that Eadgifu's personal claim on these lands was slender. More important was the fact that they had other royal associations, and in particular that many of them had been controlled by earlier queens of west Francia, particularly Frederun. Eadgifu's status had to be advertised: control of lands with queenly identities was important to the way she became part of the kingdom's political landscape; to how she was socialised into its traditions; and to how her authority was legitimised.

Two final pieces of evidence help reinforce the point. Firstly, a fragment: Flodoard refers to Gerberga, acting *as* queen, defending the crucial Carolingian fortress of Laon against Herbert of Vermandois 'along with her *fideles* gathered from all her royal residences.'[88] This phrase suggests that contemporaries acknowledged the close association between queenly status and queenly lands which we have observed: Gerberga's status is here implicitly understood to be intimately bound up with her actual authority and the material basis of her power. These residences, wherever they were, had become integrated into the role of queenship and become a 'natural' adjunct to the queen's position.[89]

Secondly, a contrast. Queen Emma, the wife of King Raoul (923-36) features in the pages of Flodoard's annals engaged in many of the same prominent activities we have

encountered in the careers of Eadgifu and Gerberga. Over winter 927-8 she was left in charge of the royal fortress at Laon; in 931 we learn of her confiscation of the *castrum* of Avallon from Count Gislebert of Autun, causing him to defect from the king; and in 933 she took possession of the Herbertine stronghold at Château-Thierry after a siege.[90] These similarities have fed into composite images of tenth-century queens as powerful and independent figures.[91] However, on closer inspection there are clear differences between Emma and Eadgifu. Emma was an insider playing an insider's game. She was the sister of Hugh the Great, which is why she was so important to Raoul, whose power base was in Burgundy: he was the outsider, not her. In fact, she used her queenly status to pursue the interests of her natal family as often as she did those of her husband. The ambiguity of her identity is hinted at by Flodoard when he tells us that she refused to accompany Raoul to Burgundy in 928, but instead remained at Laon.[92] Her reluctance here and her participation in the conquest of Château-Thierry both suggest that the direction of her efforts was less pro-Raoul than it was anti-Herbert: it is in exactly this period that Herbert was at loggerheads with her brother Hugh.[93] Similarly, the attack on Avallon represented the reactivation of an ongoing rivalry between the family of Emma and Hugh and that of Gislebert.[94] The superficial similarity of Emma's actions to those of Louis IV's women therefore masks a fundamental difference in their positions and the bases of their power. As an insider, Emma had available to her a wide range of resources and strategies, not all of which depended on the exercise of her queenly status; outsider queens, by contrast, were uniquely dependent on their royal identities.

We can see the experience of Eadgifu as an outsider queen reflected in the forms of power she exercised. She lacked the local clout to interfere in Frankish patronage networks, hence her absence from royal diplomas in contrast to almost all previous queens and queen mothers. Her family ties could be activated at times, but the material basis of her position could not, unlike Emma's, be linked to her natal family. This is why it had to be built on association with lands controlled by previous queens. These lands carried Carolingian identities and also specifically queenly identities: Louis went to such lengths to acquire them because they advertised the queen's status and underwrote her power. Possession also involved their holders in commemoration of royal predecessors, particularly Frederun and her husband. This commemoration suited Louis's political

persona as it was expressed more generally: his reign was partly based on an attempt to erase memories of the non-Carolingians who had reigned since his father's deposition.[95] Yet it was surely Eadgifu, an Englishwoman, who was responsible for educating her Frankish son in the traditions of his dynasty and people; and she who inculcated in him the belief in the need for a restoration of the queen's position in the kingdom.

Early medieval queenship was not a fixed institution, but a shifting concept constructed from a smorgasbord of ideas, always in the process of redefinition and change. Queens' political behaviour did not passively reflect the fulfilment of an office: rather, the practice of queenship was part of a process of creation and recreation. With this in mind, we may end by asking whether the peculiar circumstances of women like Eadgifu might not have had the function of crystallising family commemoration as a key part of the west Frankish queen's role. Dynastic commemoration was idealised as the central function of Ottonian queens in the second half of the tenth century.[96] Karl Ferdinand Werner has traced the heritage of this ideal back to mid-tenth century west Francia, convincingly identifying its expression more or less fully formed in the *Life of Clothild* which was probably written for Gerberga during the 950s.[97] Was it in fact the particular experience of queens as outsiders in the age of Athelstan, Otto I and Louis IV that of necessity led to this emphasis on dynastic commemoration as a central basis of queenly identity? For, in contrast to all their predecessors, they were forced to rely much more on the traditions and resources of the families into which they married than those into which they had been born.

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[1] *Cassiodori Senatoris Variae*, ed. by T. Mommsen, Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Auctorum Antiquissimorum vol. 12 (Berlin1894), III.4, p. 80; trans. S.J.B. Barnish, *The* Variae *of Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus Senator: Being Documents of the Kingdom of the Ostrogoths in Italy* (Liverpool 1992), p. 48. My title is plundered from J.L. Nelson, 'Making a Difference in Eighth-Century Politics: the Daughters of Desiderius', in A. Murray (ed.), *After Rome's Fall. Narrators and Sources of Early Medieval History. Essays Presented to Walter Goffart* (Toronto 1998), pp. 171-90. I am indebted to Charles

[2] For context see I. Wood, *The Merovingian Kingdoms 450-751* (London and New York: 1994), pp. 164-75.

[3] I refer to Charles as Straightforward following B. Schneidmüller, 'Die "Einfältigkeit" Karls III von Westfrankreich als frühmittelalterliche Herrschertugend. Überlegungen zu den cognomen *simplex*', *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Geschichte* 28 (1978), pp. 62-6.

[4] Edgiva is an alternative spelling of Eadgifu (they had different mothers). The identity of her husband was convincingly demonstrated by E. Hlawitschka, 'Die verwandtschaftlichen Verbindungen zwischen dem hochburgundischen und dem niederburgundischen Königshaus. Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Geschichte Burgunds in der 1. Hälfte des 10. Jahrhunderts', in Waldemar Schlögl and Peter Herde (eds), *Grundwissenschaften und Geschichte. Festschrift für Peter Acht* (Lassleben: Kallmünz, 1976), pp. 28-57, at pp. 50-7. Some historians continue to identify him as Louis of Aquitaine, Louis of Provence or Conrad of Burgundy: V. Ortenberg, 'Aux périphéries du monde carolingien: liens dynastique et nouvelles fidélités dans le royaume Anglo-Saxon', in R. Le Jan (ed), *La Royauté et les élites dans l'Europe carolingienne (début IXe siècle aux environs de 920)* (Lille 1998), pp. 505-17 at pp. 507-8; S. Sharp, 'The West Saxon Tradition of Dynastic Marriage With Specific Reference to Edward the Elder', in N.J. Higham and D.H. Hill (eds), *Edward the Elder, 899-924* (London 2001), pp. 79-88 at pp. 83-5.

[5] For references and discussion see K. Schmid, 'Neue Quellen zum Verständnis des Adels im 10. Jahrhundert', in *Zeitshrift für die Geschichte des Oberrheins* 69 (1960), pp. 185-232, esp. pp. 186-202; K. Leyser, 'The Ottonians and Wessex', in K. Leyser, *Communications and Power in Medieval Europe: I. The Carolingian and Ottonian Centuries*, ed. by T. Reuter (London and Rio Grande1994), pp. 73-104 at pp. 75-81, 85-93; W. Glocker, *Die Verwandten der Ottonen und ihre Bedeutung in der Politik* (Cologne 1989), pp. 18-27; W. Georgi, 'Bischof Keonwald von Worcester und die Heirat Ottos I. mit Egitha im Jahre 929', in *Historisches Jahrbuch* 115 (1995), pp. 1-40; K. Görich, 'Mathilde – Edgith – Adelheid. Ottonische Königinnen als Fürsprecherinnen', in B. Schneidmüller and S. Weinfurter (eds.), *Ottonische Neuanfänge* (Mainz2001), pp. 251-91; L. Körntgen, 'Starke Frauen: Edgith – Adelheid – Theophanu', in M. Puhle (ed.), *Otto der Große. Magdeburg und Europa* (Mainz 2001), vol. 1, pp. 119-132 at pp. 120-2.

[6] For a useful (but imperfect) table of cross-channel marriages see Sharp, 'West Saxon Tradition', pp. 83-5.

[7] On outsider queens in Late Antiquity see J.L. Nelson, 'Gendering Courts in the Early Medieval West', in L. Brubaker and J.M.H. Smith (eds.), *Gender in the Early Medieval World. East and West, 300-900* (Cambridge 2004), pp. 185-97. Charles was not absolutely the first Frankish ruler of the age to take a foreign wife: that distinction seems to belong to Louis of Provence for his marriage to Anna, daughter of the Byzantine emperor Leo VI. See Hlawitschka, 'Die verwandtschaftlichen Verbindungen', pp. 36-43.

[8] P. Stafford, *Queens, Concubines and Dowagers: the King's Wife in the Early Middle Ages* (London 1983), pp. 47-8.

[9] Einhard, *Vita Karoli*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, MGH SRG (Hanover, 1911), c. 19, p. 25; translation from P.E. Dutton, *Charlemagne's Courtier: the Complete Einhard* (Peterborough, Ontario 1998), p. 29.

[10] Sexual motivations are also a possibility: see J.L. Nelson, 'Women at the Court of Charlemagne: a Case of Monstrous Regiment?', in J.L. Nelson, *The Frankish World, 750-900* (London and Rio Grande, 1996), pp. 223-42 at pp. 237-40.

[11] *Codex Carolinus*, ed. W. Gundlach, MGH Epp. 3 (Berlin, 1892), no. 45, pp. 560-3; translation from P.D. King, *Charlemagne: Translated Sources* (Kendal, 1987), p. 271.

[12] The Empress Irene is also thought to have proposed a marriage between herself and Charlemagne: on these cases see J.L. Nelson, 'Carolingian Contacts', in M. Brown and C. Farr (eds.), *Mercia: An Anglo-Saxon Kingdom in Europe* (London and New York: 2001), pp. 126-43; J. Herrin, *Women in Purple: Rulers of Medieval Byzantium* (London: 2001), pp. 116-8, 121-9, 130-1; J. Story, *Carolingian Connections: Anglo-Saxon England and Carolingian Francia c.750-870* (Aldershot 2003).

[13] P. Stafford, 'Charles the Bald, Judith and England', in M.T. Gibson and J.L. Nelson (eds), *Charles the Bald: Court and Kingdom* (2nd ed, Aldershot 1990), pp. 139-53; J.L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald* (London 1992), p. 182.

[14] *Ordinatio Imperii*, MGH Capit. Vol. 1 (Hanover, 1893), no. 136, c. 13, pp. 270-3; trans P.E. Dutton, *Carolingian Civilization: A Reader* (2nd ed, Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview, 2004), p. 202.

[15] In general on Carolingian marriages see S. Hellmann, 'Die Heiraten der Karolinger', in S. Hellmann, *Ausgewählte Abhandlungen zur Historiographie und Geistesgeschichte des*

Mittelalters, ed. by H. Beumann (Darmstadt 1961), pp. 293-391; and in a wider context Stafford, *Queens, Concubines and Dowagers*, pp. 32-59.

[16] The definitive history of cross-Channel political relationships in the tenth century remains to be written, though see V. Ortenberg, *The English Church and the Continent in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries: Cultural, Spiritual, and Artistic Exchange* (Oxford 1992). On Æthelred and Emma see P. Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith: Queenship and Women's Power in Eleventh-Century England* (Oxford 1997); on the preceding period see Story, *Carolingian Connections*.

[17] Leyser, 'Ottonians and Wessex', pp. 77-9 argues that the Ottonians needed some of the royal prestige of Edith's family at this early stage of their dynastic career.

[18] S. Sharp, 'England, Europe and the Celtic World: King Athelstan's Foreign Policy', in *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 79 (1997), pp. 197-220, esp. pp. 206-9; Ortenberg, 'Aux périphéries'. A more nuanced reading of inter-dynastic marriages in the period is provided by J. Ehlers, 'Carolingiens, Robertiens, Ottoniens: politique familiale du relations franco-allemandes', in M. Parisse and X. Barral I Altet (eds), *Le Roi de France et son royaume autour de l'an mil* (Paris 1992), pp. 39-45. Above all, see the highly interesting insights of Leyser, 'Ottonians and Wessex'; Hlawitschka, 'Die verwandtschaftlichen Verbindungen'; and J.L. Nelson, 'Eadgifu', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2005-), *s.v.*.

[19] William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum*, ed. and trans. by R.A.B. Mynors, completed by R.M. Thomson and M. Winterbottom (Oxford 1998-9), vol. 1, c. 135, p. 216. On the utility of William's information for the reign of Athelstan see M. Wood, 'The Making of King Athelstan's Empire: an English Charlemagne?', in P. Wormald, D.

Bullough and R. Collins (eds.), *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford 1983), pp. 250-72 at pp. 265-6 and William of Malmesbury, *Gesta*, vol. 2, pp. 116-8. These argue against the sceptical arguments of M. Lapidge, 'Some Latin Poems as Evidence for the Reign of Athelstan', *Anglo-Saxon England* 9 (1981), pp. 61-98, at pp. 62-71.

[20] The bibliography on early medieval queenship is now vast. See the vital contributions and further references collected in J.L. Nelson, *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (London 1985); Nelson, *The Frankish World*; J.L. Nelson, *Rulers and Ruling Families in Early Medieval Europe: Alfred, Charles the Bald, and Others* (Aldershot: 1999); Stafford, *Queens, Concubines and Dowagers*; Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith*. The 'bridging' role of Carolingian queens is highlighted in S. MacLean, 'Queenship, Nunneries and Royal Widowhood in Carolingian Europe', *Past and Present* 178 (2003), pp. 3-38.

[21] I am thinking here principally of J. Verdon, 'Les Femmes et la politique en France au Xe siècle', in J. Schneider et al (eds), *Économies et sociétés au Moyen Age. Mélanges offert à Edouard Perroy* (Paris 1973), pp. 108-19 which nonetheless remains very useful. More nuanced insights are provided by R. Le Jan, 'D'une cour à l'autre: les voyages des reines de France au Xe siècle', in R. Le Jan, *Femmes, Pouvoir et Société dans le haute moyen age* (Paris 2001), pp. 39-52; and, in the same volume, R. Le Jan, 'La Reine Gerberge, entre carolingiens et ottoniens', pp. 30-8.

[22] Leyser, 'Ottonians and Wessex', pp. 75-93; Hlawitschka, 'Die verwandtschaftlichen Verbindungen', pp. 50-7.

[23] Nelson, 'Eadgifu'.

[24] P. Lauer, *Le Règne de Louis IV d'Outre-Mer* (Paris 1900) remains a very useful, if narrow, narrative; as does C. Brühl, 'Ludwig IV. "der überseeische" (936-54)', in J. Ehlers, H. Müller and B. Schneidmüller (eds.), *Die französischen Könige des Mittelalters. Von Odo bis Karl VIII. (888-1498)* (Munich 1996), pp. 47-59. For broader context see R. McKitterick, *The Frankish Kingdoms Under the Carolingians 751-987* (London 1983), pp. 305-40; O. Guillot, 'Formes, fondements et limites de l'organisation en France au Xe siècle', *Settimane* 38 (1991), pp. 57-124, esp. pp. 88-105; J. Dunbabin, 'West Francia: the Kingdom', in T. Reuter (ed.), *The New Cambridge Medieval History vol. III 900-1024* (Cambridge 1999), pp. 372-97; J. Dunbabin, *France in the Making 843-1180* (2nd ed, Oxford 2000), pp. 44-123.

[25] P. Lauer, *Recueil des actes de Louis IV, roi de France (936-954)* (Paris1914); Flodoard, *Annales*, ed. by P. Lauer, *Les annales de Flodoard* (Paris: 1906); English translations are taken from or based on the extremely useful translation by S. Fanning and B.S. Bachrach, *The Annals of Flodoard of Reims, 919-966* (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview, 2004). On Flodoard see above all M. Sot, *Un historien et son église au Xe siècle: Flodoard de Reims* (Paris 1993).

[26] Nelson, 'Eadgifu'.

[27] William of Malmesbury, *Gesta*, vol. 1, c. 135, p. 218. See also Aethelweard, *Chronicon*, ed. A. Campbell (London 1962), p. 2. On other aspects of the mission see L.H. Loomis, 'The Holy Relics of Charlemagne and King Athelstan: the Lances of Longinus and St. Mauricius', in *Speculum* 25 (1950), pp. 437-56; K. Leyser, 'The Tenth Century in Byzantine-Western Relationships', in his *Medieval Germany and its Neighbours 900-1250* (London 1982), pp. 103-37 at pp. 116-17.

[28] The key discussion of the Flanders-Wessex connection in this period is P. Grierson, 'The Relations Between England and Flanders Before the Norman Conquest', *TRHS* 4th series, 23 (1941), pp. 71-112. See also J.L. Nelson, 'Alfred's Carolingian Contemporaries', in T. Reuter (ed.), *Alfred the Great* (Aldershot 2003), pp. 293-310; H. Tanner, *Families, Friends and Allies: Boulogne and Politics in Northern France and England c. 879-1160* (Leiden 2004).

[29] Folcuin, *Gesta Abbatum Sithiensium*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, MGH SS 13 (Hanover, 1881), c. 102, p. 626; Grierson, 'Relations', p. 88. See also Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 936, p. 63; Flodoard, *Historia Remensis Ecclesiae*, ed. by M. Stratmann (Hanover, 1998), IV.26, p. 417. On the possible use of an English *ordo* for Louis's royal inauguration see J.L. Nelson, 'The Second English *Ordo*', in Nelson, *Politics and Ritual*, pp. 361-74 at pp. 368-9.

[30] Folcuin, *Gesta*, c. 107, p. 629; S. Irvine (ed.), *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. A Collaborative Edition. Vol. 7, MS E* (Cambridge 2004), p. 55; D. Whitelock (ed.), *English Historical Documents vol. 1* (New York 1968), no. 26, pp. 317-8.

[31] Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 939, p. 72.

[32] Lauer, *Recueil des actes de Louis IV*, no. 6; Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 938, pp. 69-70; Grierson, 'Relations', pp. 79, 89.

[33] The will is translated and the properties mapped by S. Keynes and M. Lapidge, *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of Alfred and other contemporary sources* (Harmondsworth: 1983), pp. 173-8. Grierson, 'Relations', p. 85 suggests that Ælfthryth gave these away before she died: however, there is no evidence before Domesday Book that Chippenham and Wellow had returned to the fisc, so this assumption seems to rest purely on the

mistaken belief that women could not control and bequeath land. Either way, Arnulf would have retained a claim to the land. On Athelstan's assemblies see P.H. Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1968) (revised online edition by S. Kelly and S. Miller, accessed at http://www.trin.cam.ac.uk/chartwww/eSawyer.99/eSawyer2.html), nos. 405, 422, 423; F.M. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England* (3rd ed., Oxford: 1971), pp. 349-51. Neither Eadgifu nor Louis appears in the witness lists of Anglo-Saxon royal charters (which does not prove they were not present).

[34] Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 939, p. 73.

[35] Grierson, 'Relations', p. 89 discusses this range of explanations.

[36] See Fanning and Bachrach, *Annals of Flodoard*, p. 74, n. 102.

[37] C. Brett, 'A Breton Pilgrim in England in the Reign of King Æthelstan', in G. Jondorf and D.N. Dumville (eds), *France and the British Isles in the Middle Ages and Renaissance* (Woodbridge, 1991), pp. 43-70, esp. pp. 49-50.

[38] On Athelstan's forays into the north see Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 342; on the methodology, see C.R. Bowlus, *Franks, Moravians and Magyars. The Struggle for the Middle Danube 788-907* (Philadelphia, 1995), esp. pp. 30-2.

[39] Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, no. 446; on her cult see S. Ridyard, *The Royal Saints of Anglo-Saxon England: a Study of West Saxon and East Anglian Cults* (Cambridge 1988), pp. 18-19, 258-308; A. Thacker, 'Dynastic Monasteries and Family Cults. Edward the Elder's Sainted Kindred', in Higham and Hill (eds.), *Edward the Elder*, pp. 248-63, at pp. 259-60.

[40] M. Bailey, 'Ælfwynn, Second Lady of the Mercians', in Higham and Hill (eds.), *Edward the Elder*, pp. 112-27 at pp. 124-5 provides a table of grants to English royal women in this period.

[41] On monastic ships see for example S. Kelly, 'Trading Privileges from Eighth-Century England' in *Early Medieval Europe* 1 (1992), pp. 3-28. Other relevant grants include Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, nos. 445, 447, 449; cf 392.

[42] Droxford seems not to have become part of the formal monastic estate, hinting that it may have been a special grant made personally to Eadburh: M.A. Meyer, 'Patronage of the West Saxon Royal Nunneries in Late Anglo-Saxon England', *Revue Bénédictine* 91 (1981), pp. 332-58 at pp. 347-8.

[43] For Arnulf's claims on the Isle of Wight see above, n. 33. Another instance of cross-Channel contact came in 946, when King Edmund intervened to persuade Hugh the Great to release Louis from captivity: Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 946, p. 101. This embassy may coincide with the entry of the name Eadgifu in the *Liber memorialis* of Pfäffers alongside those of English envoys: it is not, however, clear whether this refers to Louis's mother or Edmund's: see S. Keynes, 'King Athelstan's Books', in M. Lapidge and H. Gneuss (eds.), *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England: Studies Presented to Peter Clemoes* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 143-201 at pp. 198-201. Another context for the grant to Eadburh is offered by D. Dumville, *Wessex and England from Alfred to Edgar* (Woodbridge, 1992), pp. 177-8.

[44] Hlawitschka, 'Die verwandtschaftlichen Verbindungen', pp. 56-7; Leyser, 'Ottonians and Wessex', p. 92. For another example note Arnulf's role as mediator between Louis

IV and Otto I in the year 938, which must have rested partly on the English royal blood he shared with all parties: Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 939, pp. 71-2.

[45] Lauer, *Recueil des actes de Louis IV*, no. 8.

[46] T. Zotz, 'Das Elsaß- ein Teil des Zwischenreiches?' in H.-W. Herrmann and R. Schneider (eds.), *Lotharingia. Eine europäische Kernlandschaft um das Jahr 1000* (Saabrücken, 1995), pp. 49-70, at p. 67.

[47] Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 939, p. 73 says that Louis went to Alsace, but Lauer, *Recueil des actes de Louis IV,* no. 11 shows that he was back at Laon by 2 August: in view of this, it seems more likely that the charter was issued in 938 on a trip unmentioned by Flodoard than on the journey he does mention in 939.

[48] It may also have been seen as a symbolic venue for the launching of claims to power in the middle kingdom: G. Althoff, 'Breisach- ein Refugium für Rebellen im frühen Mittelalter?', in H. Nuber, K. Schmid, H. Steuer and T. Zotz (eds.), *Archäologie und Geschichte des ersten Jahrtausends in Südwestdeutschland* (Sigmaringen, 1990), pp. 457-72.

[49] C.B. Bouchard, 'Burgundy and Provence, 879-1032', in Reuter (ed.), *New Cambridge Medieval History vol. 3*, pp. 328-45 at pp. 341-2.

[50] For the properties and connections of the Burgundian rulers in these areas see G. Althoff, *Amicitiae und Pacta. Bündnis, Einung, Politik und Gebetsgedenken im Beginnenden 10. Jahrhundert* (Hanover: Hahn, 1992), pp. 226-8; T. Schieffer and H.E. Mayer (eds.), *Die Urkunden der burgundischen Rudolfinger*, MGH Regum Burgundiae e stirpe Rudolfina diplomata et acta (Munich, 1977), p. 10.

[51] Schieffer and Mayer (eds.), *Die Urkunden*, p. 14; Lauer, *Le Règne de Louis IV*, p. 51; Lauer, *Recueil des actes de Louis IV*, no. 12.

[52] Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 946, p. 102; Fanning and Bachrach, *Annals*, p. 44.

[53] R.E. Barton, *Lordship in the County of Maine, c.890-1160* (Woodbridge 2004), pp. 82-5, 93.

[54] If Arnulf's shift in loyalties in 939 was not connected to the fate of the English fleet, it could have been a consequence of Athelstan's subsequent death: see above at n. 37.

[55] Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 938, p. 71.

[56] On Hugh and Herbert see M. Bur, *La formation du comté de Champagne, v.950-v.1150* (Nancy 1977), pp. 87-97; K.F. Werner, 'Westfranken-Frankreich unter den spätkarolingern und frühen Kapetingern (888-1060)', in K.F. Werner, *Vom Frankenreich zur Entfaltung Deutschlands und Frankreichs* (Sigmaringen 1984), pp. 225-77, esp. pp. 233-41; Y. Sassier, *Hugues Capet* (Paris 1987), pp. 89-138; Guillot, 'Formes', pp. 80-105; H. Schwager, *Graf Heribert II. von Soissons, Omois, Meaux, Madrie sowie Vermandois (900/06-43) und die Francia (Nord-Frankreich) in der 1. Hälfte des 10. Jahrhunderts* (Lassleben: Kallmünz, 1994); Y. Sassier, 'Thibaud le Tricheur et Hugues le Grand', in O. Guillot and R. Favreau (eds.), *Pays de Loire et Aquitaine de Robert le Fort aux Capétiens* (Poitiers 1997), pp. 145-57.

[57] G. Koziol, 'A Father, his Son, Memory, and Hope: the Joint Diploma of Lothar and Louis V (Pentecost Monday, 979) and the Limits of Performativity', in J. Martschukat and S. Patzold (eds.), *Geschichtswissenschaft und 'Performative Turn': Ritual, Inszenierung und Performanz vom Mittelalter bis zur Neuzeit* (Cologne, Weimar and

Vienna 2003), pp. 83-103 emphasises the need to take account of such personal motivations.

[58] Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 937, p. 65; Fanning and Bachrach, *Annals*, p. 19.

[59] Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 938, p. 69; Fanning and Bachrach, *Annals*, p. 30; Flodoard, *Historia*, IV.26, p. 418.

[60] P. Lauer (ed.), *Recueil des actes de Charles III le Simple* (Paris, 1940), no. 56.

[61] Louis's attempt to turn the clock back in this way is also reflected in his charters of this period, which reveal a systematic and ostentatious invocation of the styles of rulership employed by his father: see especially Lauer, *Recueil des actes de Louis IV*, no. 4 (issued at Compiègne on Christmas Day 936); and B. Schneidmüller, *Karolingische Tradition und frühes französischen Königtum. Untersuchungen zur Herrschaftslegitimation der westfränkische-französichen Monarchie im 10. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden 1979), pp. 147-56.

[62] Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 951, p. 132. Brühl, 'Ludwig IV.', p. 50 suggests that Louis did not hold Attigny before 951, but this is an over-literal reading of Flodoard's account.

[63] Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 952, p. 134. On the significance of Gerberga's presence see below. Ponthion was also the other half of Frederun's dower.

[64] Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 928, p. 43; cf. Flodoard, *Historia*, IV.22, p. 414; Richer, *Historiae*, ed. by H. Hoffmann (Hanover: Hahn, 2000), I.55, p. 89. On Richer see J. Glenn, *Politics and History in the Tenth Century: the Work and World of Richer of Reims* (Cambridge 2004).

[65] F. Bougard, L. Feller and R. Le Jan (eds.), *Dots et douaires dans le haut Moyen Âge* (Rome: École française de Rome, 2002). Lauer, *Recueil des actes de Charles III*, no. 91

records a lifetime grant of Ponthion to Frederun's brother Bovo, bishop of Chalons-sur-Marne; however, this was before Charles's marriage to Eadgifu.

[66] On the lands controlled by the various parties see Lauer, *Le Règne de Louis IV*, pp. 3-9; Schwager, *Graf Heribert II.*, pp. 46-66; Brühl, 'Ludwig IV.' p. 50.

[67] I am grateful to Chris Loveluck for this suggestion: see C. Loveluck, 'Rural Settlement Hierarchy in the Age of Charlemagne: an Archaeological Perspective', in J. Story (ed.), *Charlemagne: Empire and Society* (Manchester 2005), pp. 230-58, at pp. 239, 251. Both Corbeny and Laon were fortified in this period.

[68] Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 941, p. 82. Conversely, in 940 Louis's enemies used Attigny as the venue for a meeting with Otto: Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 940, p. 77.

[69] See below, n. 78.

[70] Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 216.

[71] Lauer, *Recueil des actes de Charles III*, no. 91.

[72] Cf. Barton, *Lordship*, p. 198.

[73] S. Airlie, 'The Palace of Memory: the Carolingian Court as Political Centre', in S. Rees-Jones, R. Marks and A. Minnis (eds.), *Courts and Regions in Medieval Europe* (Woodbridge 2000), pp. 1-20.

[74] Lauer, *Recueil des actes de Charles III*, no. 56 for the dower which, interestingly, was promulgated at Attigny: is this where the couple were married? On the previous proprietors of St-Mary see R. Le Jan, 'Douaires et pouvoirs des reines en France et en Germanie (VIe-Xe siècle)', in Le Jan, *Femmes et Pouvoir*, pp. 68-88 at p. 87 with n. 143. Louis the Pious sent the Empress Judith to St-Mary in Laon as rebels advanced on them

in 830: Astronomer, *Vita Hludowici imperatoris*, ed. E. Tremp, MGH SRG (Hanover, 1995), c. 44, pp. 456-9.

[75] For evidence of Gerberga's growing influence see Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 946, p. 101; Lauer, *Recueil des actes de Louis IV*, nos. 32-3, 38; Le Jan, 'La Reine Gerberge', p. 35. I will discuss her career in more detail elsewhere.

[76] Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 951, p. 132. She ended her life and was buried at the Herbertine stronghold of Soissons: her epitaph is printed by J. Mabillon, *Vetera Analecta* (Paris, 1723), pp. 377-8. This relationship between Gerberga and Eadgifu is paralleled by evidence for tension at Otto's court between Edith and her mother-in-law: Leyser, 'Ottonians and Wessex', pp. 86-90.

[77] Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 951, p. 132 for St-Mary and Attigny; s.a. 952, p. 134 for Ponthion (the fact that Gerberga is specifically said to have been present suggests that she took control of the estate). Lauer, *Recueil des actes de Louis IV*, no. 47 states that Corbeny was held by Louis; but the fact that the charter was issued expressly in Gerberga's presence suggests that she had a queenly stake in the estate. Cf. Le Jan, 'La Reine Gerberge', p. 35.

[78] L. Halphen and F. Lot (eds.), *Recueil des actes de Lothaire et de Louis V, rois de France (954-987)* (Paris 1907), nos. 3, 4.

[79] Lauer, *Recueil des actes de Charles III*, nos. 87, 91.

[80] Lauer, *Recueil des actes de Charles III*, no. 88; cf nos. 90 and 95.

[81] Particularly Lauer, *Recueil des actes de Louis IV*, no. 4; on Charles and Compiègne see Schneidmüller, *Karolingische Tradition*, pp. 101-5.

[82] Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 945, p. 96: 'regalis sedis oppidum' (Fanning and Bachrach, *Annals*, p. 41).

[83] Charles the Straightforward's ostentatious advertising of his Carolingian identity in this way is well known: Schneidmüller, *Karolingische Tradition*, pp. 121-38. Cf. Robert's counter-attempt to establish commemoration of his family at St-Denis as a foundation of his short reign in 923: J. Dufour (ed.), *Recueil des actes de Robert Ier et de Raoul, Rois de France (922-936)* (Paris 1978), Robert no. 1.

[84] I deduce this from Halphen and Lot, *Recueil des actes de Lothaire*, no. 3 (= Lauer, *Recueil des actes de Louis IV*, no. 47), which demonstrates that Louis recognised Corbeny's dependency on St-Remi.

[85] On whom see P. Stafford, 'The King's Wife in Wessex 800-1066', *Past and Present*, 91 (1981), pp. 3-27 at p. 25; Bailey, 'Ælfwynn', p. 122.

[86] The dichotomy is not, however, cut and dried: see Le Jan, 'Douaires et pouvoirs', p. 87; Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith*, pp. 123-43; P. Stafford, 'Cherchez la femme. Queens, Queens' Lands and Nunneries: Missing Links in the Foundation of Reading Abbey', *History* 85 (2000), pp. 4-27. On Anglo-Saxon queenship in general see Stafford, 'King's Wife in Wessex'.

[87] Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 952, p. 134.

[88] Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 948, p. 112: 'regina Gerberga cum fidelibus suis ex omnibus suis regiis sedibus.'

[89] Although according to the thrust of my argument so far, this phrase cannot refer to Corbeny, Ponthion etc, which Eadgifu probably still controlled.

[90] Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 927, 928, 931, 933, pp. 39-41, 48, 55-6.

[91] Verdon, 'Les Femmes', p. 112.

[92] Flodoard, *Annales*, s.a. 928, p. 40.

[93] For a useful periodisation of relations between Hugh and Herbert see Werner, 'Westfranken', p. 237.

[94] B. Simson (ed.), *Annales Xantenses et Annales Vedastini*, MGH SRG (Hanover, 1909), s.a. 900, p. 82; Le Jan, 'D'une cour', p. 48.

[95] Schneidmuller, *Karolingische Tradition*, pp. 147-56.

[96] See especially P. Corbet, *Les saints ottoniens. Sainteté dynastique, sainteté royale et sainteté féminine autour de l'an mil* (Sigmaringen 1986).

[97] *Vita S. Chrotildis*, ed. B. Krusch, MGH SS rer. Merov. 2 (1888), pp. 341-8; K.F. Werner, 'Der Autor der *Vita Sanctae Chrothildis*. Ein Beitrag zur Idee der "Heiligen Königin" und der "römischen Reiches" im X. Jahrhundert', in *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* 24/25 (1989-90), pp. 517-51; P. Corbet, '*Pro anima sua*. La pastorale ottonienne du veuvage', in M. Parisse (ed.), *Veuves et veuvage dans le haut moyen age* (Paris: Picard, 1993), pp. 233-53. M. Goullet, *Adsonis Dervensis Opera Hagiographica*, Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis 198 (Turnhout 2003), pp. xlix-l shows that Werner's identification of the author as Adso is probably mistaken, but his arguments for Gerberga as the recipient survive her deconstruction.