

= Hervey le Breton =

Hervey le Breton ( also known as Hervé le Breton ; died 30 August 1131 ) was a Breton cleric who became Bishop of Bangor in Wales and later Bishop of Ely in England . Appointed to Bangor by King William II of England , when the Normans were advancing into Wales , Hervey was unable to remain in his diocese when the Welsh began to drive the Normans back from their recent conquests . Hervey 's behaviour towards the Welsh seems to have contributed to his expulsion from his see . Although the new king , Henry I wished to translate Hervey to the see of Lisieux in Normandy , it was unsuccessful .

In 1109 , a new diocese was created in England , at Ely , and Hervey was appointed to the bishopric created . While bishop , Hervey ordered the compilation of a house chronicle , which later became the Liber Eliensis . He supervised the construction of a causeway between Ely and Exning , which allowed easier access to Ely .

= = Early life = =

Hervey was a native of Brittany , and some sources state a chaplain of King William II of England , while others are less certain that he was a chaplain for the king . He was appointed Bishop of Bangor in 1092 by King William . Bangor at the time was in the Kingdom of Gwynedd , which had recently been overrun by the Normans , and following the killing of Robert of Rhuddlan had been taken over by Hugh d 'Avranches , 1st Earl of Chester . The appointment of Hervey was probably intended to further consolidate the Norman hold on the area . Bangor was under the jurisdiction of the diocese of Canterbury , but Hervey was consecrated by Thomas of Bayeux , who was the Archbishop of York , since the see of Canterbury was vacant at the time .

= = Problems at Bangor = =

Relations between Hervey and the Welsh appear to have been very bad . The Liber Eliensis described the situation as follows :

Since they [ the Welsh ] did not show the respect and reverence due to a bishop , he [ Hervey ] wielded the sharp two @-@ edged sword to subdue them , constraining them both with repeated excommunications and with the host of his kinsmen and other followers . They resisted him nonetheless and pressed him with such dangers that they killed his brother and intended to deal with him the same way , if they could lay hands on him .

Hervey was forced to rely on his own armed bands for protection . In 1094 a Welsh revolt against Norman rule in Gwynedd began under the leadership of Gruffudd ap Cynan , and by the late 1090s Hervey had been driven from his diocese by the Welsh . William of Malmesbury , however , states that the reason Hervey left Bangor was that the revenues of the see were too low . He remained nominally Bishop of Bangor until 1109 . King Henry I of England tried to translate Hervey to the see of Lisieux in 1106 , but the attempt was unsuccessful . The main opposition came from Archbishop Anselm of Canterbury , who was the metropolitan of Bangor , and refused to allow Hervey to go to a Norman bishopric . Anselm had the ability to decide the issue as Pope Paschal II had turned the decision of whether to translate Hervey to another see over to Anselm in 1102 . While in exile , Hervey served as King Henry 's confessor . Bangor itself remained vacant until 1120 , when David the Scot was appointed .

= = Appointment to Ely = =

Before his death in 1107 , Richard the abbot of Ely had attempted to secure from the papacy the elevation of his abbey into a bishopric . After Richard 's death , Hervey was appointed to oversee the abbey during the vacancy . He convinced the monks of Ely to support Richard 's project , which received the conditional approval of Archbishop Anselm , contingent on papal approval . Paschal signalled his approval , and in 1109 the monastery became a bishopric . Ely still remained a

monastic house , as the abbey itself became the cathedral and the monks of the abbey became the monks of the cathedral chapter . Also in 1109 , the pope approved Hervey 's translation to a new see , and he was made Bishop of Ely . He was enthroned at Ely in October 1109 .

While bishop , Hervey ordered the compilation of a history of the refounding of the abbey of Ely , which later became incorporated into the Liber Eliensis . This was a Latin reworking of an Old English book of grants compiled by Bishop Æthelwold of Winchester . He was energetic in recovering the feudal rights of the bishopric against knights who had intruded themselves on the lands , but were not rendering knight service to the bishop . As bishop , he attended a legatine council , or council held by a papal legate , in 1127 , and a royal council in 1129 , but otherwise his administrative actions remain obscure . The causeway between the island of Ely and Exning , which made it easier for pilgrims to visit the shrine of Saint Ethelreda , was built under Hervey 's orders . Insight into his activities as bishop is given in the Pipe Roll of 1130 , the first surviving Pipe Roll . In that record , Hervey is recorded as owing King Henry 45 pounds to provide an office for a nephew , 100 pounds on an old settlement with the king , another 100 pounds for the settlement of a case dealing with Ramsey Abbey , Bury St. Edmunds Abbey and the bishop , 240 pounds for the right to be rid of a surplus of knights , and finally 1000 pounds for the king to allow the bishop 's knights to serve castleguard at Ely instead of Norwich .

= = Death = =

Hervey died on 30 August 1131 . He was buried in Ely Cathedral on 31 August 1131 . He was disliked by Archbishop Anselm , and he was described as a man of " secular tastes " . His nephew , William Brito , was a royal chaplain and was appointed Archdeacon of Ely by 1110 . Another nephew was Richard , who in 1130 is recorded in the Pipe Roll as paying a fine to the king because of land that his uncle had given him . Another of Hervey 's relative was Gilbert Universalis , who was appointed to the see of London in 1128 by Henry I.