

= William Warelwast =

William Warelwast , sometimes known as William de Warelwast ( died 1137 ) , was a medieval Norman cleric and Bishop of Exeter in England . Warelwast was a native of Normandy , but little is known about his background before 1087 , when he appears as a royal clerk for King William II of England . Most of his royal service to William was as a diplomatic envoy , as he was heavily involved in the king 's dispute with Anselm , the Archbishop of Canterbury , which constituted the English theatre of the Investiture Controversy . He went several times to Rome as an emissary to the papacy on business related to Anselm , one of whose supporters , the medieval chronicler Eadmer , alleged that Warelwast bribed the pope and the papal officials to secure favourable outcomes for King William .

Possibly present at King William 's death in a hunting accident , Warelwast served as a diplomat to the king 's successor , Henry I. After the resolution of the Investiture Controversy , Warelwast was rewarded with the bishopric of Exeter in Devon , but he continued to serve Henry as a diplomat and royal judge . He began the construction of a new cathedral at Exeter , and he probably divided the diocese into archdeaconries . Warelwast went blind after 1120 , and after his death in 1137 was succeeded by his nephew , Robert Warelwast .

= = Early life = =

Little is known of Warelwast 's background or family before 1087 . Later in life he was involved in founding Augustinian houses of canons , which ? according to historian D. W. Blake ? implies that he was an Augustinian canon or spent some of his early years in a house of such canons . Several medieval chroniclers hostile to Warelwast , including Eadmer , claim that he was illiterate , but his career suggests otherwise , as it involved the extensive use of written documents . He must also have been an accomplished speaker , given the number of times he was used as a diplomat . He was possibly educated at Laon , where later in life he sent his nephew , Robert Warelwast , to school . Another nephew , William , became the bishop 's steward .

Warelwast may have been a clerk for King William I of England , as a confirmation charter from the time of King Stephen ( reigned 1135 ? 1154 ) records that a grant of churches in Exeter was given to Warelwast by " Willelmus , avus meus " , or " William , my grandfather / ancestor " ; Stephen was a grandson of William I , who reigned 1066 ? 1087 . But this charter may be a forgery , or the Willelmus referred to may have been William II rather than William I. The charter itself is insufficient evidence to confidently assert that Warelwast served William I , even though most such grants were made as a reward for royal service . It may have been that Warelwast was awarded land by William I not because he was a royal servant but because he was a relative ; certainly the late @-@ medieval writer William Worcester claimed that Warelwast was related to the king .

= = Royal clerk under King William II = =

The first reliable mentions of Warelwast occur early in the reign of King William II , when Warelwast appears as authorizing writs for the king . As well as being a royal clerk , Warelwast acted as a judge in a legal case between St Florent Abbey in Saumur and Fécamp Abbey , heard before King William II some time between 1094 and 1099 at Foucarmont .

Warelwast served the king as an envoy to Pope Urban II in 1095 , when the king was seeking to have the newly appointed Archbishop of Canterbury , Anselm of Canterbury , removed from office . He visited the pope with another royal clerk , Gerard , with orders to recognize Urban as pope in return for Anselm 's deposition , at least according to Eadmer , an Anselm partisan . The two clerks travelled very quickly , as they did not leave before 28 February 1095 and were back in England by 13 May 1095 . Eadmer claimed that the ambassadors were supposed to acquire a pallium , the symbol of an archbishop 's authority , for the king to give to his new choice as archbishop . But although the king may have instructed his envoys to attempt to secure these objects , he was probably willing to negotiate and to settle for less . The two clerks returned with a papal legate ,

Walter of Albano , who accepted the king 's recognition of Urban but refused to allow Anselm 's deposition . The king did nevertheless manage to secure recognition of his royal rights in the church , and a concession that no papal legates or communications would be sent without his approval . It may well be that the king always regarded Anselm 's deposition as unlikely .

Warelwast was probably sent as an envoy to Urban in 1096 to bribe the pope into recalling the papal legate Jarento , who had been sent to England to protest the king 's conduct towards the church . In addition to his ambassadorial duties Warelwast acted as a royal justice under King William ; the records of one case have survived .

Shortly before Anselm went into exile in 1097 Warelwast searched his baggage , probably looking for communications to the pope , either from Anselm or other English bishops rather than for valuables , and in particular for any letters of complaint . Warelwast was the king 's envoy at Rome when during his exile Anselm petitioned to have the king excommunicated , which according to Eadmer , who was also present , Warelwast succeeded in preventing by bribing the pope and papal officials . The king had sent Warelwast to Urban at Christmas 1098 , with his reply to a letter the pope had written ordering the restoration of Anselm 's estates .

= = Royal service for King Henry I = =

Warelwast may have been with the hunting party on 2 August 1100 in which King William was accidentally killed , as he was one of the witnesses to the letter sent on 5 August 1100 from William II's brother , the new King Henry I to Anselm recalling the archbishop . King Henry continued to use Warelwast as an ambassador , sending him to Rome in 1101 to bring back Pope Paschal II 's reply to a letter written by Henry immediately after his accession . Henry was seeking a reconciliation with the papacy , and confirmed to the pope the rights and obedience which his father had rendered , but he also requested the same rights within the Church as his father had enjoyed , chiefly the lay investiture of bishops and the granting of the symbols of episcopal authority by laymen . Paschal declined to grant Henry those rights .

It was Warelwast who told Anselm in 1103 that the king would not permit his return to England . This came after a failed joint mission by Warelwast and Anselm to Paschal attempting to resolve the dispute between Henry and the archbishop over the king 's investiture of bishops , a dispute generally known as the Investiture Controversy . It is quite likely that the king had given instructions that if the mission failed , Warelwast was to inform Anselm that he should only return to England if he agreed with the king 's position in the dispute . In 1106 Warelwast was the king 's negotiator in the discussions that led to the settlement of the Investiture Controversy in England . The king ultimately lost little , relinquishing the right to actually give the symbols of episcopal authority to a newly elected bishop in return for continuing to receive homage from the bishops . Early in 1106 Warelwast was sent to Bec Abbey , where Anselm was residing in exile , to inform him of the settlement and deliver to the archbishop the king 's invitation to return to England . In May 1107 Warelwast acted as the king 's envoy at Paschal 's council at Troyes , where Paschal was attempting to secure support for Bohemond of Antioch 's proposed campaign against Byzantium . Warelwast probably relayed to the pope the news that King Henry would make no contribution to Bohemond 's efforts .

Henry had reserved the episcopal see of Exeter for Warelwast since the death of Osbern FitzOsbern in 1103 , but the controversy over investiture meant that his election and consecration were not possible before a settlement was reached . Instead the king gave Warelwast the office of Archdeacon of Exeter after Osbern 's death . The medieval chronicler William of Malmesbury records that Warelwast had earlier tried to remove Osbern from office , but this story probably originates with Eadmer and is of dubious veracity . While archdeacon , Warelwast is recorded as being present at the transfer of a Devon church to Bath Cathedral . He was elected Bishop of Exeter , and was consecrated on 11 August 1107 , by Anselm at the royal palace of Westminster . Other bishops consecrated at the same time included William Giffard to Winchester , Roger of Salisbury to Salisbury , Reynelm to Hereford , and Urban to Llandaff . Warelwast 's elevation was a reward for his diplomatic efforts in the investiture crisis . The mass consecration signalled the end of the

investiture crisis in England .

After his consecration Warelwast continued to serve the king , often appearing on documents or in accounts of the royal court . The bishop served the king as a messenger , once more carrying messages to Anselm in 1108 . He also served as a royal judge , hearing a case at Tamworth in 1114 and another at Westbourne the same year . He was with the king in Normandy in 1111 , 1113 , and 1118 , and may have been in Normandy more frequently . During Henry 's reign Warelwast was a witness to 20 of the king 's charters .

In 1115 Henry sent Warelwast back to Rome to negotiate with Paschal , who was angry that the king was prohibiting papal legates in England , not allowing clerics to appeal to the papal court , and was failing to secure papal sanction for church councils or the translation of bishops . Warelwast was unable to change the pope 's mind , but he did manage to prevent sanctions against the king . Henry also employed Warelwast as a papal envoy during the Canterbury ? York disputes over the primacy in the English Church , with visits in 1119 , 1120 , and possibly also in 1116 .

= = Work as bishop = =

As a bishop , Warelwast attended the Council of Reims in 1119 along with three other bishops from England , as well as the Council of Rouen in 1118 , a provincial synod for Normandy . In his diocese of Exeter he began the construction of a new cathedral in about 1114 ; it was consecrated in 1133 . The existing two towers in the transepts date from that period . He also replaced the secular clergy staffing collegiate churches with regular canons : at Plympton in 1121 with canons from Aldgate in London , and in 1127 at the church in Launceston in Cornwall . In addition he founded a house of regular canons at Bodmin . Royal charters survive that granted several churches in Cornwall , Devon , and Exeter to Warelwast .

Warelwast 's relations with his cathedral chapter were good , and no disputes arose during his episcopate . It was not until late in his bishopric that the diocese was split into multiple archdeaconries , which appears to have happened in 1133 . Warelwast instituted the two offices of treasurer and precentor for the cathedral chapter , as well as the first sub @-@ archdeacons , who were under the archdeacons . Sub @-@ archdeacons are not attested again at Exeter until the episcopate of Bartholomew Iscanus , who was bishop from 1161 ? 1184 . William of Malmesbury felt that during Warelwast 's episcopate the cathedral chapter relaxed its communal living , which previously had been strong . It is likely that during Warelwast 's episcopate the canons of the cathedral chapter quit living in a communal dormitory .

Warelwast went blind in his later years , starting in about 1120 , which William of Malmesbury regarded as a fitting punishment for Warelwast 's alleged attempts to remove his predecessor from office early . He died about 26 September 1137 , and was buried in the priory at Plympton . He may have resigned his see prior to his death . The 16th @-@ century antiquary John Leland thought that Warelwast resigned his see before 1127 , became a canon at Plympton , and died in 1127 . Although Leland 's year of death is incorrect , it is possible that Warelwast became a canon shortly before his death . The Annales Plymptonienses records that Robert of Bath , the Bishop of Bath , gave Warelwast his last rites on 26 September 1137 , and records that the dying bishop was made a member of the collegiate church at Plympton . Warelwast 's nephew Robert Warelwast succeeded as Bishop at Exeter in 1138 ; Robert had been appointed archdeacon of Exeter by his uncle .

The historian C. Warren Hollister described William Warelwast as a " canny and devoted royal servant " .