

= Oda of Canterbury =

Oda ( or Odo ; died 958 ) , called the Good or the Severe , was a 10th @-@ century Archbishop of Canterbury in England . The son of a Danish invader , Oda became Bishop of Ramsbury before 928 . A number of stories were told about his actions both prior to becoming and while a bishop , but few of these incidents are recorded in contemporary accounts . After being named to Canterbury in 941 , Oda was instrumental in crafting royal legislation as well as involved in providing rules for his clergy . Oda was also involved in the efforts to reform religious life in England . He died in 958 and legendary tales afterwards were ascribed to him . Later he came to be regarded as a saint , and a hagiography was written in the late 11th or early 12th century .

= = Early career = =

Oda 's parents were Danish , and he may have been born in East Anglia . His father was said to have been a Dane who came to England in 865 , together with the Viking army of Ubba and Ivar , and presumably settled in East Anglia . Oda 's nephew Oswald of Worcester later became Archbishop of York . It is possible that Oswald 's relatives Oscytel , afterwards Archbishop of York , and Thurcytel , an abbot , were also relatives of Oda , but this is not known for sure .

In Byrhtferth of Ramsey 's Life of Saint Oswald , Oda is said to have joined the household of a pious nobleman called Æthelhelm , whom he accompanied to Rome on pilgrimage . While on pilgrimage , Oda healed the nobleman 's illness . Other stories , such as those by the 12th @-@ century writer William of Malmesbury , describe Oda as fighting under Edward the Elder and then becoming a priest , but these statements are unlikely . Other statements in the Life have Oda being named " Bishop of Wilton " by the king , who is stated to have been Æthelhelm 's brother . The appointment to Wilton is likely to be false , as no English king of the period had a brother named Æthelhelm . Some sources state that he became a monk at Fleury @-@ sur @-@ Loire in France .

= = Bishop of Ramsbury = =

Oda was consecrated Bishop of Ramsbury sometime between 909 and 927 , not to Wilton as stated by both William of Malmesbury and the Life . The appointment was most likely made by King Æthelstan , and the first securely attested mention in documents of the new bishop occurs in 928 , when he is a witness to royal charters as bishop . According to the late tenth @-@ century chronicler , Richer of Rheims , in 936 Æthelstan sent Oda to France to arrange the return to the throne of France of King Louis IV . Louis was Æthelstan 's nephew and had been in exile in England for a number of years . However , this story is not related in any contemporary records . Oda was said to have fought alongside Æthelstan at the Battle of Brunanburh in 937 . It was at this battle that Oda is said to have miraculously provided a sword to the king when the king 's own sword slipped out of its scabbard . A Ramsey chronicle records that in the 1170s , the sword was still preserved in the royal treasury , although the chronicler carefully states the story " as is said " rather than as fact . There are no contemporary records of Oda 's appearance at the battle . In 940 , Oda arranged a truce between Olaf III Guthfrithson , king of Dublin and York , and Edmund I , king of England .

= = Archbishop of Canterbury = =

In 941 Oda was named Archbishop of Canterbury . During his time as archbishop , he helped King Edmund with the new royal law @-@ code , which had a number of laws concerned with ecclesiastical affairs . The archbishop was present , along with Archbishop Wulfstan of York , at council that proclaimed the first of these law codes and which was held by Edmund at London , over Easter around 945 or 946 . Oda also settled a dispute over the Five Boroughs with Wulfstan .

Oda also made constitutions , or rules , for his clergy . His Constitutions of Oda are the first surviving constitutions of a 10th @-@ century English ecclesiastical reformer . Oda reworked some statutes from 786 to form his updated code , and one item that was dropped were any clauses

dealing with paganism . Other items covered were relations between laymen and the clergy , the duties of bishops , the need for the laity to make canonical marriages , how to observe fasts , and the need for tithes to be given by the laity . The work is extant in just one surviving manuscript , British Museum Cotton Vespasian A XIV , folios 175v to 177v . This is an 11th @-@ century copy done for Wulfstan II , Archbishop of York .

At the death of King Eadred of England in 955 , Oda was one of the recipients of a bequest from the king , in his case a large amount of gold . He was probably behind the reestablishment of a bishopric at Elmham , as the line of bishops in that see starts with Eadwulf of Elmham in 956 . Oda crowned King Eadwig in 956 , but in late 957 the archbishop joined Eadwig 's rival and brother Edgar who had been proclaimed king of the Mercians in 957 , while Eadwig continued to rule Wessex . The exact cause of the rupture between the two brothers that led to the division of the previously united kingdom is unknown , but may have resulted from Eadwig 's efforts to promote close kinsmen and his wife . The division was peaceful , and Eadwig continued to call himself " King of the English " in contrast to Edgar 's title of " King of the Mercians " . In early 958 Oda annulled the marriage of Eadwig and his wife Ælfgifu , who were too closely related . This act was likely a political move connected to the division between Eadwig and Edgar , as it is unlikely that the close kinship between Eadwig and Ælfgifu had not been known before their marriage .

Oda was a supporter of Dunstan 's monastic reforms , and was a reforming agent in the church along with Cenwald the Bishop of Worcester and Ælfheah the Bishop of Winchester . He also built extensively , and re @-@ roofed Canterbury Cathedral after raising the walls higher . In 948 , Oda took Saint Wilfrid 's relics from Ripon . Frithegod 's verse Life of Wilfrid has a preface that was written by Oda , in which the archbishop claimed that he rescued the relics from Ripon , which he described as " decayed " and " thorn @-@ covered " . He also acquired the relics of St Ouen , and Frithegod also wrote , at Oda 's behest , a verse life of that saint , which has been lost . He was also an active in reorganizing the diocesan structure of his province , as the sees of Elmham and Lindsey were reformed during his archbishopric .

The archbishop died on 2 June 958 and is regarded as a saint , with a feast day of 4 July . Other dates were also commemorated , including 2 June or 29 May . After his death , legendary tales ascribed miracles to him , including one where the Eucharist dripped with blood . Another was the miraculous repair of a sword . There is no contemporary evidence for veneration being made to Oda , with the first indication of cult coming in the hagiography written by Byrhtferth about Oswald , but no hagiography specifically about Oda was written until Eadmer wrote the Vita sancti Odonis sometime between 1093 and 1125 . Oda was known by contemporaries as " The Good " and also became known as Severus " The Severe " .