

= Robert of Jumièges =

Robert of Jumièges (sometimes Robert Chambert or Robert Champart ; died between 1052 and 1055) was the first Norman Archbishop of Canterbury . He had previously served as prior of the Abbey of St Ouen at Rouen in Normandy , before becoming abbot of Jumièges Abbey , near Rouen , in 1037 . He was a good friend and adviser to the king of England , Edward the Confessor , who appointed him Bishop of London in 1044 , and then archbishop in 1051 . Robert 's time as archbishop lasted only about eighteen months . He had already come into conflict with the powerful Godwin , Earl of Wessex , and while archbishop made attempts to recover lands lost to Godwin and his family . He also refused to consecrate Spearhafoc , Edward 's choice to succeed Robert as Bishop of London . The rift between Robert and Godwin culminated in Robert 's deposition and exile in 1052 .

A Norman medieval chronicler claimed that Robert travelled to Normandy in 1051 or 1052 and told Duke William of Normandy , the future William the Conqueror , that Edward wished for him to become his heir . The exact timing of Robert 's trip , and whether he actually made it , have been the subject of debate among historians . The archbishop died in exile at Jumièges sometime between 1052 and 1055 . Robert commissioned significant building work at Jumièges and was probably involved in the first Romanesque building in England , the church built in Westminster for Edward the Confessor , now known as Westminster Abbey . Robert 's treatment by the English was used by William the Conqueror as one of the justifications for his invasion of England .

= = Background and life in Normandy = =

Robert was prior of the monastery of St Ouen at Rouen before he became abbot of the important Jumièges Abbey in 1037 . Jumièges had been refounded under William Longsword , Duke of Normandy. around 940 , Its ties with the ducal family were close and it played a role in ducal government and church reform . Robert 's alternate surname " Champart " or " Chambert " probably derived from champart , a term for the part of a crop paid as rent to a landlord . Besides evidence that the preceding abbot at Jumièges was a relative , Robert 's origin and family background are otherwise unknown . While abbot , Robert began construction of the abbey church , in the new Romanesque style .

Robert became friendly with Edward the Confessor , a claimant to the English throne , while Edward was living in exile in Normandy , probably in the 1030s . Edward was the son of Æthelred the Unready , king of England , who had been replaced by Cnut the Great in 1016 . Cnut subsequently married Æthelred 's widow Emma of Normandy , Edward 's mother , and had a son with her , Harthacanute . For their own safety , Edward and his brother Alfred were sent to Emma 's relatives in Normandy . After Cnut 's death in 1035 , Harold Harefoot , his elder son by his first wife , acceded to the English throne . Following Harald 's death in 1040 , Harthacanute succeeded him for a short time , but as neither Harald nor Harthacanute left offspring , the throne was offered to Edward on Harthacanute 's death in 1042 . There is some evidence that Edward spent some of his time in exile around Jumièges , as after becoming king he gave gifts to the abbey .

= = Bishop and Archbishop = =

Robert accompanied Edward the Confessor on Edward 's recall to England in 1042 to become king following Harthacanute 's death . It was due to Edward that in August 1044 Robert was appointed Bishop of London , one of the first episcopal vacancies which occurred in Edward 's reign . Robert remained close to the king and was the leader of the party opposed to Earl Godwin , Earl of Wessex . Godwin , for his part , was attempting to expand the influence of his family , which had already acquired much land . His daughter was Edward 's queen , and two of his sons were elevated to earldoms . The Life of Saint Edward , a hagiographical work on King Edward 's life , claimed that Robert " was always the most powerful confidential adviser of the king " . Robert seems to have favoured closer relations with Normandy , and its duke . Edward himself had grown up in the duchy ,

and spent 25 years in exile there before his return to England . He brought many Normans with him to England , and seems to have spent much time in their company .

When Archbishop Eadsige of Canterbury died in October 1050 , the post remained vacant for five months . The cathedral chapter elected Æthelric , a kinsman of Godwin and a monk at Canterbury , but were overruled when Edward appointed Robert Archbishop of Canterbury the following year . Godwin was attempting to exercise his power of patronage over the archbishopric , but the king 's appointment signalled that the king was willing to contest with the earl over the traditional royal rights at Canterbury . Although the monks of Canterbury opposed it , the king 's appointment stood . Robert went to Rome to receive his pallium and returned to England where he was ceremonially enthroned at Canterbury on 29 June 1051 . Some Norman chroniclers state that he visited Normandy on this trip and informed Duke William , the future William the Conqueror , that he was the childless King Edward 's heir . According to these chroniclers , the decision to make William the heir had been decided at the same Lenten royal council in 1051 that had declared Robert archbishop .

After returning from Rome , Robert refused to consecrate Spearhafoc , the Abbot of Abingdon and the king 's goldsmith , as his successor to the bishopric of London , claiming that Pope Leo IX had forbidden the consecration . Almost certainly the grounds were simony , the purchase of ecclesiastical office , as Leo had recently issued proclamations against the practice . In refusing to consecrate Spearhafoc , Robert may have been following his own interests against the wishes of both the king and Godwin , as he had his own candidate , a Norman , in mind . In the end Robert 's favoured candidate , William the Norman , was consecrated instead of Spearhafoc . Robert also discovered that some lands belonging to Canterbury had fallen into Godwin 's hands , but his efforts to recover them through the shire courts were unsuccessful . Canterbury had lost control of some revenues from the shire of Kent to Godwin during Eadsige 's tenure as archbishop , which Robert unsuccessfully attempted to reclaim . These disputes over the estates and revenues of the archbishopric contributed to the friction between Robert and Godwin , which had begun with Robert 's election . Robert 's election had disrupted Godwin 's patronage powers in Canterbury , and now Robert 's efforts to recover lands Godwin had seized from Canterbury challenged the earl 's economic rights . Events came to a head at a council held at Gloucester in September 1051 , when Robert accused Earl Godwin of plotting to kill King Edward . Godwin and his family were exiled ; afterwards Robert claimed the office of sheriff of Kent , probably on the strength of Eadsige , his predecessor as Archbishop , having held the office .

Although Robert refused to consecrate Spearhafoc , there is little evidence that he was interested in the growing movement towards Church reform being promulgated by the papacy . Pope Leo IX was beginning a reform movement later known as the Gregorian Reform , initially focused on improving the clergy and prohibiting simony . In 1049 Leo IX declared that he would take more interest in English church matters and would investigate episcopal candidates more strictly before confirming them . It may have been partly to appease Leo that Edward appointed Robert instead of Æthelric , hoping to signal to the papacy that the English crown was not totally opposed to the growing reform movement . It was against this backdrop that Robert refused to consecrate Spearhafoc , although there is no other evidence that Robert embraced the reform position , and his claim that the pope forbade the consecration may have had more to do with finding an easy excuse than any true desire for reform . There are also some indications that Spearhafoc was allied to Godwin , and his appointment was meant as a quid pro quo for the non-appointment of Æthelric . If true , Robert 's refusal to consecrate Spearhafoc would have contributed to the growing rift between the archbishop and the earl .

= = Royal adviser = =

The Life of Saint Edward claims that while Godwin was in exile Robert tried to persuade King Edward to divorce Edith , Godwin 's daughter , but Edward refused and instead she was sent to a nunnery . However , the Life is a hagiography , written soon after Edward 's death to show Edward as a saint . Thus it stresses that Edward voluntarily remained celibate , something unlikely to have

been true and not corroborated by any other source . Modern historians have felt it more likely that Edward , at Robert 's urging , wished to divorce Edith and remarry in order to have children to succeed him on the English throne , although it is possible that he merely wished to be rid of her , without necessarily wanting a divorce .

During Godwin 's exile , Robert is said to have been sent by the king on an errand to William , Duke of Normandy . The reason for the embassy is uncertain . William of Jumièges says that Robert went to tell Duke William that Edward wished William to be his heir . The medieval writer William of Poitiers gives the same reason , but also adds that Robert took with him as hostages Godwin 's son Wulfnoth and grandson Hakon (son of Sweyn) . The Anglo -Saxon Chronicle is silent on the visit however , so it is uncertain whether Robert visited Normandy or not , or why he did so . The entire history of the various missions which Robert is alleged to have made is confused , and complicated by propaganda claims made by Norman chroniclers after the Norman Conquest in 1066 , leaving it unclear if Robert visited Normandy on his way to receive his pallium or after Godwin was in exile , or if he went twice or not at all .

= = Outlawing , death , and legacy = =

After Godwin left England , he went to Flanders , and gathered a fleet and mercenaries to force the king to allow his return . In the summer of 1052 , Godwin returned to England and was met by his sons , who had invaded from Ireland . By September , they were advancing on London , where negotiations between the king and the earl were conducted with the help of Stigand , the Bishop of Winchester . When it became apparent that Godwin would be returning , Robert quickly left England with Bishop Ulf of Dorchester and Bishop William of London , probably once again taking Wulfnoth and Hakon with him as hostages , whether with the permission of King Edward or not . Robert was declared an outlaw and deposed from his archbishopric on 14 September 1052 at a royal council , mainly because the returning Godwin felt that Robert , along with a number of other Normans , had been the driving force behind his exile . Robert journeyed to Rome to complain to the pope about his own exile , where Leo IX and successive popes condemned Stigand , whom Edward had appointed to Canterbury . Robert 's personal property was divided between Earl Godwin , Harold Godwinson , and the queen , who had returned to court .

Robert died at Jumièges , but the date of his death is unclear . Various dates are given , with Ian Walker , the biographer of Harold arguing for between 1053 and 1055 , but H. E. J. Cowdrey , who wrote Robert 's Oxford Dictionary of National Biography entry , says on 26 May in either 1052 or 1055 . H. R. Loyn , another modern historian , argues that it is likely that he died in 1053 .

Robert 's treatment was used by William the Conqueror as one of the justifications for his invasion of England , the other being that Edward had named William his heir . Ian Walker , author of the most recent scholarly biography of Harold Godwinson , suggests that it was Robert , while in exile after the return of Godwin , who testified that King Edward had nominated Duke William to be Edward 's heir . However , this view is contradicted by David Douglas , a historian and biographer of William the Conqueror , who believes that Robert merely relayed Edward 's decision , probably while Robert was on his way to Rome to receive his pallium . Several medieval chroniclers , including the author of the Life of Saint Edward , felt that the blame for Edward and Godwin 's conflict in 1051 ? 1052 lay squarely with Robert ; modern historians tend to see Robert as an ambitious man , with little political skill .

= = Artistic patronage = =

In notable contrast to his successor Stigand , Robert does not figure among the important benefactors to English churches , but we know of some transfers to Jumièges of important English church treasures , the first trickle of what was to become a flood of treasure taken to Normandy after the Conquest . These included the relic of the head of Saint Valentine only recently given to the monks of Winchester Cathedral by Emma of Normandy . Though the Winchester head remained in place , another one appeared at Jumièges ; he " must have clandestinely removed the head , or at

least the greater part of it , and left his monks to venerate the empty or nearly empty capsa " . Two of the four most important surviving late Anglo -Saxon illuminated manuscripts went the same way , thus probably preventing their destruction in a series of fires that devastated the major English libraries . One is the so -called Missal of Robert of Jumièges , actually a sacramentary with thirteen surviving full -page miniatures , which bears an inscription apparently in Robert 's own hand recording its donation to Jumièges when he was Bishop of London , and the other the so -called Benedictional of Archbishop Robert , actually a pontifical with three remaining full -page miniatures and other decoration (respectively Rouen , Bibliothèque Municipale , Manuscripts Y.6 and Y.7) . The latter may well have been commissioned by Æthelgar , Robert 's predecessor as Archbishop in 988 ? 90 , although it is possible the " Archbishop Robert " of the traditional name is Emma 's brother Robert , Archbishop of Rouen from 990 to 1037 . These masterpieces of the Winchester style were the most elaborately decorated Anglo -Saxon manuscripts known to have reached Normandy , either before or after the Conquest , and influenced the much less -developed local style , though this remained very largely restricted to initials .

Before he came to England , Robert had begun the construction of a new abbey church at Jumièges , in the new Romanesque style which was then becoming popular , and introduced to Normandy the two -towered western facade from the Rhineland . On his return to Normandy he continued to build there , and the abbey church was not finished until 1067 . Although the choir has been torn down , the towers , nave and transepts have survived . Robert probably influenced Edward the Confessor 's rebuilding of the church at Westminster Abbey , the first known building in the Romanesque style in England , which is so described by William of Malmesbury . Edward 's work began in about 1050 and was completed just before his death in 1065 . The recorded name of one of the senior masons , " Teinfrith the churchwright " indicates foreign origins , and Robert may have arranged for Norman masons to be brought over , though other names are English . It is possible that Westminster influenced the building at Jumièges , as the arcade there closely resembles Westminster 's arcade , both of them in a style that never became common in Normandy . The Early Romanesque style of both was to be superseded after the Conquest by the Anglo -Norman High Romanesque style pioneered in Canterbury Cathedral and St Étienne , Caen by Lanfranc .