

= Robert Bloet =

Robert Bloet (sometimes Robert Bloett ; died 1123) was Bishop of Lincoln 1093 @-@ 1123 and Chancellor of England . Born into a noble Norman family , he became a royal clerk under King William I. Under William I 's son and successor King William II , Bloet was first named chancellor then appointed to the See of Lincoln . Continuing to serve the king while bishop , Bloet remained a close royal councillor to William II 's successor , King Henry I. He did much to embellish Lincoln Cathedral , and gave generously to his cathedral and other religious houses . He educated a number of noblemen , including illegitimate children of Henry I. He also was the patron of the medieval chronicler Henry of Huntingdon , and was an early patron of Gilbert of Sempringham , the founder of the Gilbertine monastic order .

= = Early life = =

Bloet was a member of the Norman noble family that held Ivry in Normandy . Bloet was related in some manner to Hugh , the Bishop of Bayeux from 1015 to 1049 , and Hugh 's brother John , who was Bishop of Avranches from 1060 ? 1067 . Another relative was Richard Bloet , Abbot of St Albans Abbey .

= = Chancellor and bishop = =

Bloet was a royal clerk in the household of King William I of England . He accompanied William I 's son , William Rufus , when Rufus traveled to England to claim the throne after William I 's death . Rufus named Bloet as chancellor by January 1091 , but then named Bloet to the See of Lincoln in March 1093 after the death of Remigius de Fécamp . Bloet was appointed at the same time that Anselm was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury , during a severe illness when Rufus feared he was dying . Bloet was consecrated at Hastings not long before 22 February 1094 , probably on 12 February the day after the dedication of the church at Battle Abbey . By 19 March 1094 he had been replaced as chancellor by William Giffard .

Prior to Bloet 's consecration , the Archbishop of York , Thomas of Bayeux , who had previously had a claim to supervise the see of Lincoln , tried to prevent the Archbishop Anselm 's consecrating Bloet . Thomas argued that the area of Lindsey , which was within the diocese of Lincoln , really belonged to the archdiocese of York . The medieval chronicler Hugh the Chanter alleged that Bloet gave Rufus £ 3 @,@ 000 to intervene on Bloet 's side when Thomas attempted to assert York 's claim to Lindsey , but another medieval chronicler , Henry of Huntingdon , who knew Bloet well , said that the sum was £ 5 @,@ 000 . This payment secured Rufus ' support in the dispute between York and Lincoln , which was settled in Lincoln 's favour . The sum of £ 5 @,@ 000 was extremely large , eight times what Domesday Book records as the bishop of Lincoln 's annual income . The king gave York the abbeys of Selby and St Oswald , Gloucester in return for the settlement in favour of Lincoln . Bloet also refused to profess obedience to Anselm , but when King William intervened on Anselm 's side , Bloet made the profession to Anselm .

Bloet was one of the chief administrative officers of the kingdom under William II , often associated with Ranulf Flambard , Urse d 'Abetot , and Haimo the dapifer . As a bishop , he moved the newly founded monastery of Stow to Eynsham instead . This church was considered a proprietary church and the bishops of Lincoln retained the right to appoint the abbot and installing the abbot in office . The monks of Stow had been established by his predecessor . Bloet also gave the manor of Charleton to the priory of Bermondsey , which became a Cluniac priory during Rufus ' reign .

Even after becoming a bishop , Bloet continued to witness royal writs , witnessing six of Rufus ' writs while bishop , to add to his 11 witnessed writs during his chancellorship . Bloet was one of the bishops in 1097 that attempted to persuade Anselm when the archbishop was in a dispute with Rufus over travelling to Rome to consult with the papacy . When Anselm refused to be persuaded not to go , the king ordered him to leave the kingdom , with the support of most of the bishops and nobility .

= = Under Henry I = =

Bloet continued to be an advisor to the king even after Rufus was succeeded by King Henry I , and was a supporter of Henry during the rebellion of 1102 . During the rebellion , Bloet was sent by King Henry to besiege Tickhill Castle , which surrendered when the king joined Bloet with a larger army . When the king and Anselm clashed over investiture , the king persuaded Bloet to consecrate a number of the king 's abbatial appointments in 1102 and 1103 . Throughout Henry 's reign , Bloet continued to be a trusted councillor , and was often trusted with advising the queen when the king was absent from England . Bloet is only recorded as accompanying the king outside England once , in 1114 . He served as a royal justice often , being named by Henry of Huntingdon as one of the justices who were not restricted to one or a few counties but who served throughout England . During Henry 's reign , Bloet witnessed 155 royal documents .

When the new see at Ely was established in 1109 in a former abbey , it was carved out of Bloet 's diocese who was compensated for the loss by a grant of land . This grant included the town of Spaldwick in Huntingdonshire . He was one of the councillors who urged Henry to appoint William of Corbeil to the archbishopric of Canterbury in 1123 , although Bloet died before Corbeil was selected . Bloet was opposed to the other candidates , as they were monks , and he wanted a non @-@ monk appointed at Canterbury . In 1114 , when Canterbury was vacant , he had also opposed the appointment of a monk to Canterbury . During the reign of Henry , Bloet accepted the supervision of St Albans abbey , ruled by his relative Richard , when Richard objected to the harshness of the archbishop of Canterbury and switched the abbey 's obedience to Lincoln instead . Bloet continued to be a benefactor to Albans throughout his episcopate . He doubled the number of canons in the cathedral chapter at Lincoln Cathedral during his episcopate . He also embellished the newly built Lincoln Cathedral and gave the cathedral many gifts of objects and lands . Most of his surviving episcopal documents concern the consecration of churches in his diocese or the confirmation of donations to religious houses . He also founded a hospital in Lincoln dedicated to the Holy Sepulchre .

Henry of Huntingdon , the medieval chronicler , wrote a letter entitled De contemptu mundi where he related a story from right before Bloet 's death that Bloet felt he had fallen from King Henry 's favour . Bloet allegedly told Huntingdon that the bishop had lost two lawsuits . However , the whole letter is concerned with setting out examples of prominent men who suffered a fall from grace , so possible bias on Huntingdon 's part must be kept in mind . There are also records of two legal proceedings involving Bloet at the end of Bloet 's life , and although Bloet lost both cases , neither was a loss of much income or prestige . In one , he was allowed to continue to hold the property , although instead of it being judged as his land alone , the settlement was that Bloet held it of St Augustine 's Abbey in Canterbury . The other lawsuit involved Bloet 's attempt to hold a manor free of dues owed to Westminster Abbey , which was settled in the Abbey 's favour , although Bloet continued to hold the land . Nor is there any lessening of the rate of Bloet 's witnessing to royal documents . It appears that Bloet 's lost lawsuits were decided by other royal justices , and while he may have lost some favour with the king , he did not fall completely out of favour either .

= = Death and legacy = =

Bloet was a married bishop , and he appointed his son Simon as Dean of Lincoln . It was in Bloet 's household that the medieval historian Henry of Huntingdon was brought up . He died on 10 January 1123 at Woodstock , Oxfordshire and was buried at Lincoln . He had a sudden fit while out riding with King Henry and Roger of Salisbury , the Bishop of Salisbury , and collapsed in the king 's arms before dying shortly thereafter without absolution , which combined with his style of living led many contemporaries to conclude he was condemned to Hell . His last words were " Lord king , I am dying " which he uttered right before collapsing into Henry 's arms . His entrails were buried at Eynsham , but the rest of his body was buried in Lincoln Cathedral near the southern entrance in front of St. Mary 's altar .

Henry of Huntingdon records that noblemen sent their children to be educated at Bloet 's household , whether or not they were destined for a career in the church . King Henry 's illegitimate son Robert of Gloucester was educated in Bloet 's care . Another illegitimate son of Henry 's , Richard of Lincoln , was also in Bloet 's household for an education . Gilbert of Sempringham , who founded the Gilbertine Order , was also educated in Bloet 's household , entering it before Bloet 's death and continuing there under Bloet 's successor Alexander of Lincoln . Besides educating laymen , Bloet educated his own household clergy , including sending some of them to study under Ivo , Bishop of Chartres . He was known for his ostentatious manner of living , and served personally in war when needed . The medieval chronicler William of Malmesbury claimed that he hated monks . Henry of Huntingdon , however , remembered him as handsome , cheerful and affable . Earlier in his episcopate , Bloet had aided Christina of Markyate 's family in their attempts to get the religious hermit to marry , at one point giving a judicial judgement that she must marry , which she refused to do . It was only after Bloet 's death that Christina was able to be consecrated as a recluse at St Albans Abbey .