

A.D. 963. This year died Wulfstan, the deacon, on Childermass- day; (42) and afterwards died Gyric, the mass-priest. In the same year took Abbot Athelwold to the bishopric of Winchester; and he was consecrated on the vigil of St. Andrew, which happened on a Sunday.

On the second year after he was consecrated, he made many minsters; and drove out the clerks (43) from the bishopric, because they would hold no rule, and set monks therein. He made there two abbacies; one of monks, another of nuns. That was all within Winchester. Then came he afterwards to King Edgar, and requested that he would give him all the minsters that heathen men had before destroyed; for that he would renew them. This the king cheerfully granted; and the bishop came then first to Ely, where St. Etheldritha lies, and ordered the minster to be repaired; which he gave to a monk of his, whose name was Britnoth, whom he consecrated abbot: and there he set monks to serve God, where formerly were nuns. He then bought many villages of the king, and made it very rich.

Afterwards came Bishop Athelwold to the minster called Medhamsted, which was formerly ruined by heathen folk; but he found there nothing but old walls, and wild woods. In the old walls at length he found hid writings which Abbot Hedda had formerly written; -- how King Wulfhere and Ethelred his brother had wrought it, and how they freed it against king and against bishop, and against all worldly service; and how Pope Agatho confirmed it with his writ, as also Archbishop Deusdedit. He then ordered the minster to be rebuilt; and set there an abbot, who was called Aldulf; and made monks, where before was nothing. He then came to the king, and let him look at the writings which before were found; and the king then answered and said: "I Edgar grant and give to-day, before God and before Archbishop Dunstan, freedom to St. Peter's minster at Medhamsted, from king and from bishop; and all the thorps that thereto lie; that is, Eastfield, and Dodthorp, and Eye, and Paston. And so I free it, that no bishop have any jurisdiction there, but the abbot of the minster alone. And I give the town called Oundle, with all that thereto lieth, called Eyot-hundred, with market and toll; so freely, that neither king, nor bishop, nor earl, nor sheriff, have there any jurisdiction; nor any man but the abbot alone, and whom he may set thereto. And I give to Christ and St. Peter, and that too with the advice of Bishop Athelwold, these lands; -- that is, Barrow, Warmington, Ashton, Kettering, Castor, Eylesworth, Walton, Witherington, Eye, Thorp, and a minster at Stamford. These lands and all the others that belong to the minster I bequeath clear; that is, with sack and sock, toll and team, and infangthief; these privileges and all others bequeath I clear to Christ and St. Peter. And I give the two parts of Whittlesey-mere, with waters and with wears and fens; and so through Meerlade along to the water that is called Nen; and so eastward to Kingsdelf. And I will that there be a market in the town itself, and that no other be betwixt Stamford and Huntingdon. And I will that thus be given the toll; -- first, from Whittlesey-mere to the king's toll of Norman-cross hundred; then backward again from Whittlesey-mere through Meerlade along to the Nen, and as that river runs to Crowland; and from Crowland to Must, and from Must to Kingsdelf and to Whittlesey-mere. And I will that all the freedom, and all the privileges, that my predecessors gave, should remain; and I write and confirm this with the rood-token of Christ." (+) -- Then answered Dunstan, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and said: "I grant, that all the things that here are given and spoken, and all the things that thy predecessors and mine have given, shall remain firm; and whosoever breaketh it, then give I him God's curse, and that of all saints, and of all hooded heads, and mine, unless he come to repentance. And I give expressly to St. Peter my mass-hackle, and my stole, and my reef, to serve Christ." "I Oswald, Archbishop of York, confirm all these words through the holy rood on which Christ was crucified." (+) "I Bishop Athelwold bless all that maintain this, and I excommunicate all that break it, unless they come to repentance." -- Here was Bishop Ellstan, Bishop Athulf, and Abbot Eskwy, and Abbot Osgar, and Abbot Ethelgar, and Alderman Elfere; .Alderman Ethelwin, Britnoth and Oslac aldermen, and many other rich men; and all confirmed it and subscribed it with the cross of Christ. (+)

This was done in the year after our Lord's Nativity 972, the sixteenth year of this king. Then bought the Abbot Aldulf lands rich and many, and much endowed the minster withal; and was there until Oswald, Archbishop of York, was dead; and then he was chosen to be archbishop. Soon after another abbot was chosen of the same monastery, whose name was Kenulf, who was afterwards Bishop of Winchester. He first made the wall about the minster, and gave it then the name of Peterborough, which before was Medhamsted. He was there till he was appointed Bishop of Winchester, when another abbot was chosen of the same monastery, whose name was Elfsy, who continued abbot fifty winters afterwards. It was he who took up St. Kyneburga and St. Kyneswitha, that lay at Castor, and St. Tibba, that lay at Ryhall; and brought them to Peterborough, and offered them all to St. Peter in one day, and preserved them all the while he was there.