

## Chapter 5

### The surviving portion of the C text – Part II

The C booklets are not a masterpiece of calligraphy. Some of the scribes involved write rather badly; none of them seem to be trying to write very carefully. In different circumstances, most of them could probably have done better work than this; but here they had no reason to make any special effort. These booklets, as I understand it, were not expected to be kept for any length of time. Fairly soon, they would be superseded by the D text; once their usefulness had been exhausted, they would all be thrown away.<sup>1</sup> The scribes had no idea that their work would be seen by outsiders, still less by future critics. Their instructions were, I suppose, to write as rapidly as they could, provided only that what they wrote was legible. Judged by that standard, they seem to have performed well enough. They got the job done, and there is scarcely ever any difficulty in reading what they wrote.

Changes of hand are very frequent in C – much more so than they are in the surviving D booklets (below, p. 134), by a factor of about 15. A large number of scribes contributed, and their contributions are woven together in a way which has more than once been called bewildering. Analysis is certainly laborious, but I do not know that bewilderment need last for long. On the whole, these scribes are experienced workers, with well-developed individual manners. Each of them writes in his own way; they do not appear to be making any attempt to imitate one another. The changes of hand are generally obvious, often glaringly so. By scanning repeatedly through the manuscript (or, as I have done, through a microfilm copy), jumping forwards and backwards from stint to stint, one soon begins to notice the characteristics which distinguish a particular hand. With enough perseverance, one reaches the point where almost every stint can be assigned to a recognized scribe.

An article by Finn (1959) was the first attempt to identify the scribes individually. As far as it went, Finn's analysis seems to me largely correct, but there are no illustrations, and it is sometimes hard to understand what he meant because the references to the manuscript are not sufficiently precise. Finn thought he could distinguish a dozen different scribes – but he lost heart, at around the time when he started coming across the work of a tenth scribe,<sup>2</sup> and failed

<sup>1</sup> I choose my words carefully here: it was not the intention that the C booklets should be discarded as soon as the D booklets had been finished (below, p. 55).

<sup>2</sup> The scribe in question is lambda, whose existence Finn doubted simply because he did not seem to have written enough. It was 'not very likely', he thought, that a scribe 'would deal with only some twenty manors' (Finn

to complete the analysis. It seems clear enough why he stopped. He did not expect anyone to believe that a dozen or more scribes had worked on this manuscript; he was not even sure that he could believe it himself. But in fact it is certainly true. Ker (1977) said little about the script beyond commenting that there are 'many rather poor hands of Norman type' (1977, p. 807).<sup>3</sup> In a footnote, however, he analyzed one sample booklet (above, p. 42), distinguishing eight different scribes in the stretch of text relating to Devon (376r–9v), where Finn would have seen only five. In the whole manuscript, Webber (1989) recognized at least fifteen scribes; I see twenty or more.

My own results are tabulated in an appendix to this chapter (below, pp. 56–9). As a matter of policy, I worked out the analysis for myself, in a provisional way, before looking in detail at the conclusions reached previously by others; then I checked through the evidence again, wherever some difference of opinion seemed to arise.<sup>4</sup> A fair number of corrections and improvements followed from that, but no large alterations. Table 12 shows how my identifications match up (or seem to match up) with those of some other investigators; the last column refers back to the list of published reproductions given in chapter 4. Despite its prolixity, the analysis is far from exhaustive: it ignores many short insertions by other hands, as well as all marginal additions.<sup>5</sup> But there is a limit on how much can usefully be done by any

1959, p. 367).

<sup>3</sup> Ker's attention was caught by a point which is, for present purposes, of only incidental interest. One of the scribes represented in the geld accounts for Wiltshire (my sigma) is a scribe whom Ker knew from elsewhere: the same man was also employed, with many others, writing books for Salisbury Cathedral (or, as I would think more likely, for bishop Osmund of Salisbury). Webber (1989, 1992) agreed with the identification made by Ker (1976, 1977); she also suggested that two or three other scribes who worked on Exeter 3500 could be recognized as having worked at Salisbury too. But this evidence does not tend to prove that the Exeter manuscript originated in Salisbury (i.e. in Old Sarum): it does not even raise the possibility. None of the three major scribes is Salisbury-connected; if a few of the minor scribes are, that is scarcely surprising. If I had been given the job of recruiting scribes for the survey, bishop Osmund is one of the first people to whom I would have turned for advice.

<sup>4</sup> I am greatly obliged to Dr Teresa Webber, who checked a version of this listing against her notes and discovered a number of errors. She allows me to say that my identifications, by and large, agree very closely with hers. A few points of disagreement are mentioned in the footnotes below.

<sup>5</sup> The text has been more or less heavily corrected throughout. On the whole, the corrections seem to have been made by the same scribe who wrote the original text, or by one of the scribes who is known to have been working with him; but some alterations and marginal notes are certainly by alien hands. This evidence needs to be looked at very closely, but I have not made any serious effort to deal with it.

*The survey of the whole of England*

	Finn (1959)	Williams (1968)	Ker (1977)	Webber (1989)	Reproductions (cf. Table 9)
beta	A	C	1–2	A1	108r, 117r, 438r
alpha	G	A	3	A2	103r, 117r, 438r
mu			6	A3	8r
eta	J	B		D2	114v
omicron					—
ksi	= F	D			1v, 47r
epsilon	T		4		313r
gamma	S		5		313r
delta	F		7		313r
kappa					—
zeta	C			C	245r
theta	H			= D1	—
iota	D				—
lambda	?				—
rho					8r
sigma				E	8r, 9r, 14r
tau				D1	8r, 9r, 14r

Table 12. Published identifications of the scribes represented in Exeter Cathedral Library 3500. (Scribe sigma is the ‘Salisbury scribe’ identified by Ker (1976).)

one person, and I think that I have reached it. Several people will need to have looked at the evidence before a fair measure of consensus can emerge. That is why I publish my results in full, despite the amount of space which they take up. I would rather risk wasting space than risk wasting the time of anyone else who may wish to check this analysis, and (if it passes the test) to build upon it.

Three scribes stand out from the crowd, because they contributed to several county texts, not just one or two. Of these three major scribes, two are especially conspicuous, alpha and beta. They each have a highly individual hand; they each wrote a large proportion of the text, much larger than any of the minor scribes who from time to time worked alongside them. Though neither of them wrote the sole surviving Wiltshire entry, it would not seem rash to assume that they wrote large parts of the lost C-WiDo booklets, as they certainly did of the surviving (Do-only) booklets. It was Finn’s (1959, pp. 367–8) suggestion that alpha – his clerk G – had some supervisory role; I am inclined to agree.<sup>6</sup> The third scribe, mu, wrote very much less than alpha or beta, but I treat him as one of the major scribes because he worked on every county text. In fact, if we allow ourselves to look beyond C for a moment, mu is the only scribe who can be said for certain to have worked on the record for all five counties covered by the Exeter booklets.<sup>7</sup> Though alpha and beta did most of the actual work,

I suspect that mu may have been the man in command.<sup>8</sup>

The minor scribes, by and large, worked on only one county text each.<sup>9</sup> A few small exceptions to this rule would not be disconcerting;<sup>10</sup> but some apparent anomalies turn out, when looked at more closely, not to be exceptions after all. (1) One entry occupying a leaf by itself (398r1–7), supposedly part of C-Dn, was written by scribe omicron, whose other stints are confined to C-Do. There is, however, some reason to think that this entry became displaced, in D and therefore in DB, and that it was indeed originally part of omicron’s contribution to C-Do (above, p. 44). (2) One entry in C-Dn (98r15–22) was written by two scribes who otherwise do not occur outside Co. Scribe zeta wrote the first two lines; the rest was written by a very poor scribe whose only other appearance is a seven-page stint of C-Co (259r1–62r9). The placement of this entry allows us to think that

Do, Dn and So. Some additions he made in the margin of 8r are the only published sample of his work (Table 9): here he is writing small, but in his most formal manner. The fancy & is his signature, when it occurs; sometimes he used the 7-shaped sign instead.

<sup>8</sup> To speak plainly, I suspect that mu was the treasurer – in which case his name was Henric (DB-Ha-49ra). But this suggestion is hardly worth making until it has been agreed that Exeter 3500 originated in Winchester.

<sup>9</sup> Finn (1959) seems to have approached this conclusion but then backed away from it. Trying to keep the number of scribes as small as he possibly could, he convinced himself that he could recognize contributions by clerk S in Co as well as Dn, by clerk J in Co as well as Do and So, and (more tentatively) by clerk F in Do as well as Dn. None of these identifications seem justified to me.

<sup>10</sup> One such anomaly is the final paragraph in Capp-Dn (506v1–5), written by scribe iota, who is otherwise only represented in C-So. Presumably this paragraph was added as an afterthought.

<sup>6</sup> The best evidence for the pecking order will come, I expect, from a study of the corrections, about which I cannot speak with any assurance.

<sup>7</sup> Scribe mu made important additions to the second version of the Wiltshire geld account; as was said above (pp. 41–2), he also wrote the statistical summary (527v–8r) covering the lands of Glastonbury abbey in Wi,

it may have been an addition, and that is almost certainly what it was – an entry inserted here later, in a convenient space, while work was in progress on C-Co.<sup>11</sup> (3) The sole surviving entry for Wi (47r1–11) was written by scribe ksi, who also contributed to C-Do.<sup>12</sup> That is odd; but the mere fact that this entry survives marks it as a special case, and one cannot think of arguing anything from it.<sup>13</sup>

There is, as far as I can judge, only one minor scribe who wrote more than one entry in more than one county text. The scribe whom I call eta wrote a good share of the entries in C-Do; he also wrote a good share of the entries in C-So. Here I am gratified to discover a large measure of agreement between my results and those of both Finn (1959) and Webber (1989): my eta is roughly the same as Finn's clerk J, almost exactly the same as Webber's scribe D2.<sup>14</sup> It is not to be thought that there was any prohibition against a minor scribe participating twice, but this seems to me to be the only discoverable instance of a minor scribe actually doing so. For that reason I have looked at the evidence with special care, and (to put the result in a suitably negative form) have failed to find any significant consistent difference between the scribe who worked on C-Do and the scribe who worked on C-So. I am satisfied that they are the same man.

Table 13 gives a summary of the results listed in the appendix, for the C booklets alone (including Capp).<sup>15</sup> Ignoring C-Wi, we do not have to look very hard to see some pattern here. As might be expected, the pattern is most distinct in the two counties – Devon and Somerset – for which the evidence is fullest; but it is discernible elsewhere too, to some extent. Two major scribes, alpha and beta, are jointly represented in all four county texts. In each they are assisted by a different squad of minor scribes, of whom normally there seem to have been three.

The details are as follows. For C-Do, only a fragment of the text survives, but there is no reason why the fragment, in this respect, should not be representative. The minor scribes occurring here are three: eta, omicron, ksi.<sup>16</sup> For

C-Dn, the pattern is very clear, and was recognized well enough by Finn. The minor scribes here are three again: epsilon, gamma, delta. For C-Co, the quantity of text is relatively small, and alpha and beta wrote a larger share of it than usual. There is only one minor scribe who occurs here often enough to be given a name, and that is zeta; but two other scribes write one large stint apiece (259r1–62r9, 263r1–4r20).<sup>17</sup> For C-So, again, the same sort of pattern exists, though the number of minor scribes occurring here is (as Finn suspected) four rather than three: theta, iota, eta, lambda.<sup>18</sup> However, there is only one booklet (fos. 456–67) in which the last two scribes appear together – lambda wrote an early stint (463r5–v15), eta wrote two later ones (464r18–22, 465r2–v7) – so it seems quite possible that lambda left the squad, for one reason or another, and that eta (the same scribe who had worked on C-Do previously) was brought in to take his place. On that view, the number of minor scribes at work simultaneously would not have exceeded three.

I am not proposing to press this point very far. I do not suggest that there was any rigid rule that a squad should consist of exactly three scribes, and always exactly the same three. Some flexibility would obviously be desirable, and was no doubt permitted. But it does seem clear, generally speaking, that the minor scribes were organized into three-man squads – that three, by and large, was thought to be a suitable number, and that scribes who were accustomed to working together were, by and large, allowed to continue doing so. Again, I am not suggesting that there was a different squad of three scribes for every single county text. On the contrary, I take it that each squad would have been employed successively on several texts, in whatever sequence was dictated by the flow of the work. In the surviving booklets, we see four of these squads each writing itself out of a job by completing the county text which formed its final assignment.<sup>19</sup>

How many squads there were, and how many scribes alto-

were attributed by Webber (1989, p. 12) to a scribe who worked on the Wiltshire geld accounts, the scribe whom I call tau. I do not feel confident that the hand is the same, though it is certainly very similar. The disagreement extends further than that, because the scribe whom I call theta (represented only in C-So) is, in Webber's judgment, the same as scribe tau, not somebody else. For the moment I leave these questions unresolved, intending to come back to them later when I deal with the geld accounts. ((Some further comments will be found in chapter 6 (below, p. 66).))

<sup>17</sup> These stints are the ones attributed by Finn to clerk S and clerk J respectively (above, note 9). (For the latter attribution see Finn 1959, pp. 382–3.) Webber (1989, p. 12) assigned the second stint to her scribe C, who is otherwise the same as my zeta (Finn's clerk C). The hand looks different to me.

<sup>18</sup> The three scribes who worked on C-So alone are not represented in any published reproduction. Perhaps it may save somebody some time if I note that there is just one page (286v) on which all three hands occur together.

<sup>19</sup> A third reservation: I am not suggesting that these squads worked only at headquarters and only on C. I am more than willing to believe that each squad may have spent some of its time working with the commissioners in the field, putting together the B text. ((The role that they would have played is discussed in chapter 10.))

<sup>11</sup> The entry relates to Werrington. As Finberg (1944) pointed out, it is clear that this manor was initially surveyed as part of Cornwall but then recorded under Devon. In C we can watch that change taking effect: two of the scribes working on C-Co add this entry to C-Dn, rather than including it in their own text.

<sup>12</sup> He also wrote most of the first Wi geld account (1r–3r), to be discussed in chapter 6.

<sup>13</sup> What happened, I would guess, is that this entry had to be recopied for some reason (perhaps because it had been included in an omnibus booklet at first), after work had started on C-Do.

<sup>14</sup> Webber (1989, p. 13) gives a list of the stints she assigns to scribe D2. Not counting two marginal additions (which I do not include, though I agree that they are eta's work), there are only two small discrepancies between her listing and mine (36v19–20, 374v14–15). The same hand was identified by Webber (1992, pp. 12–13) in several manuscripts from Salisbury.

<sup>15</sup> It is plain to see that the same teams of scribes who worked on the county texts in C-DnCoSo worked on the corresponding sections of Capp-DnCoSo too.

<sup>16</sup> Two stints in C-Do which I have left unattributed (37v3–8r7, 51r17–v6)

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	Wi	Do	Dn	Co	So	Total
beta		17	93	7	67	184
alpha		12	83	9	70	174
mu		1	6	2	2	11
eta		15			16	31
omicron		9				9
ksi	1	7				8
epsilon			73			73
gamma			71			71
delta			36			36
kappa			3			3
zeta			1	4		5
theta					54	54
iota			1		24	25
lambda					10	10
unattributed		5	5	3	6	19
Total	1	66	372	25	249	713

Table 13. Numbers of stints performed by each scribe in each section of the C text, summed from the listing given in the appendix. (Stint 398r1–7 is counted under Do.)

gether, is hard to decide.<sup>20</sup> Four squads are represented in the surviving portions of C, a fifth perhaps in the batch 4 geld accounts, i.e. the accounts for Wiltshire.<sup>21</sup> There are, besides, several stints in C which I have left unattributed. In some cases, the script resembles that of an identified scribe, and might perhaps be attributed to him if we were willing to stretch the definition slightly.<sup>22</sup> Still, there are several stints of which I think it can be said with confidence that they were not written by any of the major or minor scribes mentioned above. There are, so to speak, some occasional scribes who make sporadic appearances in C; and possibly these are members of other squads, lending a hand here when they have no work of their own to keep them busy. At the very least, four occasional scribes occur. One of them writes three short stints in C-Dn, just enough to deserve a name (this is the scribe whom I call kappa); two others write one stint each in C-Co (see above); and the fourth – with a small and rather elegant hand – writes one sizable stint in

C-So (430v2–1v9).<sup>23</sup> In total, therefore, I think I can recognize twenty different hands: three major scribes, thirteen minor scribes (including the three who occur in the batch 4 geld accounts), and four others (including kappa).

There is no order for the C booklets which is absolutely right. On the contrary, one advantage of dividing the text into self-contained units of this kind was to make it possible to sort and shuffle the booklets into different arrangements, depending on the task in hand. The scribes assigned to write D-Dn, for instance, would separate out the booklets that they did not need, and impose some appropriate order on the ones that they did; the scribes assigned to write D-Co would resort the booklets and make their own arrangement of the ones which interested them. Given some definite task, one can start deciding which order would be best. Without knowing what the task is, one cannot.

When Ellis set about rearranging the text,<sup>24</sup> he seems to have assumed that the preexisting sequence made no sense at all. He changed it without recording it. Nobody working from the printed text could tell how much of the arrangement originated with the editor. If the leaves had not been numbered previously, there would be no way to undo what Ellis did; because they had, we can – virtually – put the quires back into the sequence which existed before 1816. If we do that, as Whale (1905) did, we discover that the

<sup>20</sup> If I had been in charge, perhaps I might have thought of employing eight squads and assigning four counties to each. To make up these squads, therefore, I should have had to recruit a total of 24 scribes. Some strategy not very different from that lies behind the division of labour observable in the surviving booklets.

<sup>21</sup> Not counting mu, three scribes worked on the second version of the Wiltshire account (7r–9v), two of whom also wrote the third version (13r–16r). It is clear, by the way, that the third version is a fair copy of the second version. The order in which the batch 4 booklets were arranged by Ellis (1816) is the right order; Darlington (1955) misread the evidence. (Anyone who doubts this will find the proof at the end of chapter 6.)

<sup>22</sup> In doubtful cases like this, I have preferred to err on the side of caution. For example, one unattributed stint (373r3–v12) is very similar to iota's work, and is indeed cited as a specimen of it by Finn (1959, p. 367). It does not look quite right to me; but perhaps the differences might be explained away. (The light was bad, the scribe was using a borrowed pen – some ad hoc conjecture of that sort might be enough.)

<sup>23</sup> As far as this fourth scribe is concerned, Dr Webber allows me to say that she too thought that this was his only stint.

<sup>24</sup> Some of the work seems to have been done by Barnes (above, p. 39), but he was just doing what Ellis wanted done.

arrangement was far from being senseless: the booklets had been put into a task-specific order. This order was not meant to be permanent – it only became permanent when the manuscript was bound – and Ellis was, arguably, entitled to impose a new arrangement which would be generally more convenient. By choosing to do this, however, and then by failing to explain what he had done, he made a significant aspect of the evidence entirely invisible in the printed edition. Once Barnes had imposed the same arrangement on the original manuscript, the same aspect became invisible there as well.<sup>25</sup>

The task-specific order was, as I have said, rediscovered by Whale (1905). He did not, as far as I can see, have any idea what it meant; but he did realize that there was a pattern in the evidence, obliterated by Ellis's rearrangement, which could be recovered with the help of the old foliation. The pattern is not perfect – but it is perfectly obvious (Table 14). Some time before they were bound, the C booklets had been sorted into four stacks, as follows:

the C-WiDo quires relating to Wi (including those which also related to Do) were put into stack 1;

the C-DnCoSo quires relating to So (including those which also related to Dn or Co or both) were put into stack 2;

the C-WiDo quires not in stack 1 were put into stack 3;

the C-DnCoSo quires not in stack 2 were put into stack 4.

Stack 1 does not survive (in due course I propose to ask why); stacks 2–4 do survive, and in that order, sooner or later, they were bound.

The plan is clear, even though its execution was not altogether perfect.<sup>26</sup> A few mistakes were tolerable, so it seems. If one or two unwanted leaves were included in stack 2, say, that would cause no trouble. If a few quires which ought to have been included were overlooked, that did not matter greatly: their absence would be detected, once the task for which this stack was intended was under way, and any missing quire could be found at that stage, just by flipping through stack 4. Similarly, it does not seem to have been thought important for the quires to be kept in the right order: on reaching the end of one quire, it would be easy enough to find the next, just by flipping through the rest of the stack.

One result of the sorting was that some of the larger book-

<sup>25</sup> There are two issues here. (Q1) Was Ellis justified in rearranging the text? (Q2) Was Barnes justified in rearranging the original? Briefly put, my answers would be as follows. (A1) Certainly he was; in fact he ought to have rearranged it much more thoroughly than he did. (A2) Probably not.

<sup>26</sup> Anomalies are few, and perhaps we might think of explaining them away as accidental displacements, occurring while the booklets remained unbound. But that seems facile to me. I think we had better accept that the sorting was not very carefully done in the first place.

lets became split between two stacks.<sup>27</sup> The booklet for the bishop of Coutances, cited previously (above, p. 38) as an example of the disruption which Lyttelton tried to undo, can be cited again here. It consists of six quires. Quires 3–6 contain portions of the C-So text, so they belong in stack 2, even though quire 3 (fos. 135–40 in the old foliation) starts with the broken-off end of the C-Dn text. Quires 1–2 relate to Dn alone, so they belong in stack 4.<sup>28</sup>

Up to a point, it is clear what the stacking means. Some operation was being performed on each county text in turn, and the C booklets were being sorted into stacks for that purpose. As far as these five counties are concerned, the division into stacks suggests that the intended sequence was this: Wi, then So, then Do, then either Dn or Co. There is one weak link here: we cannot feel sure that So was intended to be dealt with sooner than Do. (We could only be sure of that if we had some guarantee that the order of the stacks remained unaltered until it was permanently fixed when the booklets were bound.) It is certain, however, from the way in which the C-WiDo booklets were divided between stacks 1 and 3, that Wi was intended to be dealt with sooner than Do, and equally certain, from the way in which the C-DnCoSo booklets were divided between stacks 2 and 4, that So was intended to be dealt with sooner than Dn and Co.

Suppose that the operation – whatever it was – had continued running smoothly. The sequel would have been this. When work on Wi was finished, the booklets from stack 1 would have been resorted: those which included some section of C-Do would have been added to stack 3 and the rest (relating to Wi alone) discarded (as all the preceding C booklets already had been). When the moment arrived for work to start on Do, stack 3 would now be ready. Similarly, when work on So was finished, the booklets from stack 2 would have been resorted: those which included some section of C-Dn or C-Co would have been added to stack 4 and the rest (relating to So alone) discarded. Eventually it would have had to be decided whether Dn or Co was to be dealt with first, and a fifth stack would then have been formed accordingly – a stack which, when first created, would consist of the booklets relating to Co alone, if Dn was to be dealt with first, or of the booklets relating to Dn alone, in the opposite case. But that decision had not yet been made, or, if it had, had not yet issued in action.

<sup>27</sup> The same sort of split has affected Capp-DnCoSo. This booklet consists of four quires. Quires 2–4 relate to So, so they belong in stack 2, even though quire 2 contains the broken-off end of Capp-Dn and the whole of Capp-Co, as well as the beginning of Capp-So. Quire 1 relates to Dn alone, so it belongs in stack 4. Once again, this booklet proves to have had the same history as the other C booklets. (It also turns out that we do not need to think of any special explanation for the disappearance of Capp-WiDo. That booklet would have been put into stack 1; if we can think of some reason for the loss of this stack, that reason will cover the loss of Capp-WiDo too.)

<sup>28</sup> This split explains only some of the disruption. In addition, quires 4–5 have got themselves transposed with quire 3, and quire 6 has wandered off by itself.

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		Stack 2		Stack 3		Stack 4		
ix-xii	So	437-40	247-50	Do	25-8	307-10	Dn	117-20
1-7	So	430-6	251-7	Do	29-35	318-21	Dn	121-4
8	So	375	258-60	Do	36-8	322-9	Dn	125-32
9-12	DnSo	371-4	261-8	Do	39-46	* 330-7	DnSo	161-8
* 13	?	398	* 269-71	WiDo	47-9	338	Dn	184
14-16	DnSo	196-8	272-5	Do	50-3	339-40	Dn	194-5
17-24	DnSo	456-63	280-3	Do	54-7	341-5	DnCo	177-81
25	So	154	284-7	Do	58-61	346-7	Dn	182-3
26	So	116				348-55	Dn	210-17
27	So	193				356-65	Co	224-33
28-34	DnSo	468-74				366-73	Co	234-41
35-6	DnSo	286-7				374-7	Dn	220-3
37-40	So	282-5				378-9	Dn	218-19
41-2	So	191-2				380-7	Co	247-54
43-8	DnSo	376-81				388-92	Co	242-6
49-51	So	185-7				393	Co	199
52-4	So	151-3				394-401	Dn	288-95
55-60	DnSo	382-7				402-9	Dn	296-303
61-5	DnSo	366-70				410-17	Dn	304-11
66-85	CoSo	255-74				* 418-21	DnSo	312-15
86-91, 93	So	275-81				422-7	Dn	93-8
94-101	So	422-9				428-9	Co	200-1
102-5	So	[176], 188-90				430-7	Co	202-9
106-12	So	169-75				438-42	DnCo	108-12
113-20	DnSo	83-90				443-50	Dn	495-502
121-2	So	91-2				451-8	Dn	316-23
123-30	So	139-46				459-61	DnCo	332-4
131-4	So	147-50				462-9	Dn	324-31
135-40	DnSo	133-8				470-8	Dn	335-6, 408, 337-42
141-8	CoSo	99-106				* 479-80	DnSo	343-4
149-56	DnCoSo	503-10				481-4	Dn	388-91
157-64	So	511-18				485	Dn	392
165-71	So	519-25				486-9	DnCo	394-7
172-6	So	441-5				490-1	Dn	420-1
177-80	So	446-9				492	Dn	419
181-2	So	450-1				493-4	Dn	409-10
183	So	107				495-8	Dn	399-402
184-6	So	353-5				499	Dn	393
187-9	So	113-15				500-1	Dn	481, 488
190-5	DnSo	475-80				502	Dn	407
196-203	DnSo	356-63				503-6	Dn	411-14
* 204	Do	62				507-12	Dn	482-7
207-12	DnSo	490, 489, 491-4				513-16	Dn	415-18
213-16	So	452-5				517-20	Dn	403-6
217-18	So	364-5						
219-26	DnSo	345-52						
227-30	So	464-7						
231-6	So	155-60						

Table 14. The quires of C restored to the sequence recorded by the foliation of circa 1500. (The old foliation is given on the left, the new foliation on the right; the counties represented are listed in the middle. Anomalies are marked with a star.)

Of the things which would have started happening as soon as Wi had been dealt with, none actually happened. Hence it is clear that the operation was interrupted, and that the interruption occurred while work was in progress on Wi.<sup>29</sup> The four counties last in the queue were left untouched. We can be sure of that; we can also be sure that no other operation ensued which required a rearrangement of the C booklets. The untouched stacks remained untouched, and this task-specific arrangement – expected to be temporary, and not very carefully worked out – became permanent by default (till Ellis decided to change it).

The C booklets existed, in the first instance, so that the text could be copied from them into the D booklets. But that was not the operation for which these stacks were set up. If the writing of D had been interrupted as this operation was, D-Wi would have been the last D booklet to be written; and in that case DB-Do, DB-So and DB-DnCo would not exist. Since they do exist, the operation in question has to be different from the writing of D – different from and subsequent to it. Thus it is clear that the C booklets were not discarded as soon as they had served their primary purpose. They needed to be kept, at least a little longer, because they were going to be used again, for some secondary purpose; and the division into stacks was made with this purpose in view. There are two possibilities, not mutually exclusive. The C booklets may have been kept because they were going to be used when D was checked; alternatively or in addition to that, they may have been kept because they were going to be used when DB was checked.<sup>30</sup> We cannot hope to decide between these possibilities until we have developed some theory as to how the checking process might have worked.

Before the interruption, stack 1 had been removed – taken from the shelf (so to speak) and carried off to some other part of the office, wherever the work was being done for which these booklets were needed. After the interruption, stack 1 was not returned; sooner or later, all these booklets dropped out of existence. Stacks 2–4, still on the shelf, had a marginally better chance of survival, and did indeed survive – long enough for someone to rescue them and carry them away, on a journey which ended, sooner or later, in Exeter. Once there, they became part of a library: they entered an environment in which it was taken for granted that loose quires should be bound and that books should be kept for ever. The collection of booklets became a book, with

the same chance of long-term survival as any other book in the Exeter cathedral library.

I do not know that we shall ever be able to say who the man was who retrieved these booklets from the Treasury shelves and found a safe home for them elsewhere. If we want to try guessing, there is something to be said for preferring the earliest possibility. The sooner we can extract these booklets from a milieu where their chances of survival are almost nil, the sooner we can insert them into a milieu where their chances are fairly good, the less utterly unlikely it will seem that they still exist. In that abstract sense, an early date for the transfer is more probable than a late one. For what it is worth, my own guess would be that the mystery might cease to be a mystery if we knew just a little more about the early career of Willelm de Warelwast, the king's clerk rewarded for his services by being made bishop of Exeter in 1107.

## **Appendix** **Booklets and scribal stints** **in Exeter Cathedral 3500**

If it is read alongside Ker's (1977) description, the list which follows ought to be self-explanatory; but it may be helpful to clarify a few points first. (i) In numbering the lines, I have followed the ruling; in other words, I have counted blank and erased lines, not just written lines. (ii) I have ignored some of the headings, wherever I am not certain that the heading was written by the same hand that wrote the following entry. (iii) I have ignored all insertions made into the text, into spaces or over erasures, as well as all marginal additions and annotations.

The attributions made here all seem secure to me. There are no question marks. Wherever I feel any doubt, I have chosen to err on the side of caution by leaving the stint unattributed.

<sup>29</sup> I risk speaking loosely here. To describe it more carefully, the situation is this. The last sort which did happen was the sort which had to be done before work on Wi could start. Because Wi was the first county in the next collection of C booklets to be dealt with, the sort could have been done some time in advance (in the same way that stack 2 has already been separated from stack 4). The first sort which did not happen was the sort which would have had to be done before work on Do could start. The operation was interrupted before that moment arrived. (It is possible, however, that the work did not cease altogether: it may have been continued on some simplified plan – if such a plan is conceivable – which meant that it was no longer necessary for the C booklets to be consulted.)

<sup>30</sup> Perhaps we should not neglect a third possibility: that they were going to be used for checking the geld accounts. ((It seems to me now that this is the likeliest explanation (below, pp.131–2).))







