

A. 1. Manumission document analysis.

In preparation for the in-class document analysis, read the following article: David Pelteret, “ ‘The Work is hard because I am not free’: Slaves and Slavery in Written Sources” and answer questions. In class (date given) we will analyze one manumission document in your course package. On (date given) you will analyze a manumission document in class -a graded written assignment.

B. Document analysis discussion in classroom; discussion led by instructor.

Old English Manumission by King Eadwig at Exeter (956-959). [Note by Dorothy Whitelock, *English Historical Documents*, volume 1; 1955 London: Eyre and Spottiswoode,

p. 610: *This entry is on a leaf which once formed part of a gospel-book at Exeter... Daniel was bishop of Cornwall; Ealdorman Aethelwold succeeded his father, Athelstan Half-King, to East Anglia, about 956...*] King Eadwig ordered Aelfnoth the sacrist to free Abunet at Exeter, free and with the right to depart, in the witness of Ealdorman Aethelwold and Bishop Daniel and Brihtric the prior and Wulfric the sacrist. And King Eadwig ordered Brihtric to put it here in Christ's book.

At the conclusion of document analysis, the instructor discusses the issue of knowledge-formation in the field: See rationale (c) above.

C. Students are provided with a document they have not seen before.

In-class Written Assignment

10th century slavery as viewed through manumission documents.

You have 45 minutes to analyze the document and answer the following question: “Using this manumission document as evidence for slavery and slave ownership in the tenth century, what information can be deduced about the practice?”

Consider the following questions while writing your essay: *Who owned slaves in Anglo-Saxon England? How might they come to own them? Who witnessed these documents? How was the manner in which such documents were preserved designed to ensure long-term knowledge of the act? For whose benefit was manumission carried out? How was slave ownership and manumission viewed by Anglo-Saxon society?*

Manumission of a woman by Æthelflæd, wife of Ealdorman Æthelweard

Burhwold cannot have become bishop before 1002, in which year his predecessor's signature occurs. He was bishop by 1016. Ealdorman Æthelweard may be the one who signs in 1018 and was exiled in 1020, but we do not know the date of the death of an earlier ealdorman of the name, the chronicler, and ealdorman of the western provinces. His signatures cease in 998, but he could have taken part in local activities such as this one for some years after he ceased to be active at court.

This is the name of the woman, Ælfgyth, whom Æthelflæd freed for her soul and for the soul of her lord, Ealdorman Æthelweard, on the bell of St. Petroc in the residence which is called Liskeard, in the presence of these witnesses looking on: Athelstan the priest, Wine the priest, Dunstan the priest, Goda the thegn, Ælfweard Scirloc, Æthelwine Muf, Ealdred his brother, Eadsige the writer. And these are the witnesses from the clerics of St. Petroc's: Prudens the priest, Boia the deacon, Wulfsige the deacon, Brihtsige the cleric, in order that freedom . . . And afterwards Ealdorman Æthelweard came to the minster of St. Petroc and freed her for his soul on the altar of St. Petroc in the presence of these witnesses looking on: Bishop Burhwold, Abbot Germanus, Tiththerd the priest, Wulfsige the deacon, Wurgent, son of Samuel, Ylcaerthon the reeve, Tethion the 'consul' . . . the son of Mor. And he affirmed that whosoever shall observe this liberty shall be blessed, and whosoever shall infringe it shall be cursed by the Lord God of heaven and by his angels. Amen.

Additional information

- Liskeard is in Cornwall (Southwest England)
- This document records a manumission associated with the church of St. Petroc at Bodmin (12 miles west of Liskeard). St. Petroc was a sixth-century Christian from Wales who ministered to the Celtic Christians in Cornwall and who became venerated as a saint in Cornwall.
- In the tenth century, the church of St. Petroc was associated with a minster, an Anglo-Saxon term for a monastery.
- The bell of St. Petroc is presumed to be a relic of the saint.
- Most of the names are Anglo-Saxon, but a couple of the signatories have Brythonic (Cornish, Welsh, Breton) names.

