The four words of this title are apparently easy of interpretation, but it will be the contention of this note that they can tell us something of considerable importance about the early history of the Roman mass if the first two words canon and dominicus are considered carefully.

It is not enough to say that dominicus means "of the Lord", for no one, not even the eighth century Irish scribe of the Stowe Missal (where the title is found), would want to say that he was copying "the canon of the Lord of Pope Gelasius". The double genitive would not, even at that period, be well-received. It must be that he had something else in mind when he used the adjective dominicus. If one casts about for a clue, it may be remarked that the word dominicum was current in the earliest Christian Latin as a name for what we now call the mass. It meant the place where Christians assembled to hear mass, but it also meant the mass itself, as may be seen from Cyprian (de eleemos. 15) who asks how a woman thinks she is frequenting mass when she comes thither without an offering. Again in his letters (ep. 63.16) he asks if one should have mass after supper, an obvious question when the custom of the Agape was fast dying out. The pseudo-Cyprianic tract on the public games (de spect. 5) tells of a man who is let out of mass and hastens at once to the games while he still carries the eucharist with him. In this last example the word can strictly bear either meaning, of the function or of the place where it is held, but in the context both meanings seem to be required for the words to carry the full scorn which the writer means them to have. Augustine once or twice has the word (serm. 32.25 = PL

1 Dominicum celebrare te credis quae in dominicum sine sacrificio venis?
2 Numquid dominicum post cenam celebrare debemus?
3 Festinans ad spectaculum dimissus e dominico et adhuc gerens secum ut assolet eucharistiam.
38.205 and *Breviculus* 3.17.32 = CSEL 53.82) but in the second case he seems to be using the word in a citation from an earlier writer.

The use of *dominicum* for "mass" in an official source can be evidenced, as far as I know, by only one document, the Acts of the Council of Sardica. Here, in canon 15, a bishop is directed to see to it that, when he is on his estate in the country, he seeks out some place where there is a presbyter, *ne sine ecclesia facere videatur dominicum*, which may be translated: "lest he be thought to celebrate the eucharist without a church in attendance". The late C. H. Turner in his edition of these Acta (*Ecclesiae occidentalis Monumenta Iuris antiquissima*, I, ii, 3, p. 488) was emphatic in his acceptance of the sense "eucharist" for *dominicum* here, and, although the recent work on these canons by Hamilton Hess (*The Canons of the Council of Sardica*, Oxford 1958, p. 84) is undecided about following Turner, it cannot be said that his alternative "lest he seem to pass Sunday" has much to recommend it. In the fourth century it is quite to be expected that some anxiety would be shown to preserve the corporate character of the eucharist now that the hole-and-corner existence of the times of persecution were past.

There seems then to be satisfactory evidence for an early Christian Latin use of *dominicum* to mean "mass", but there is no sign in the *Thesaurus linguae latinae* of the adjective *dominicus* used to mean "of or belonging to the mass", yet that is the meaning which the title in the Stowe Missal requires. Given the noun in a fixed Christian meaning, it does not seem unreasonable to postulate that it could revert to its original adjectival use, especially as it would be hard to find in early times any other adjective that would serve the same purpose. It is notorious that the *Thesaurus* has missed occasional examples of Christian usage, especially in its earlier parts, and the state of research on the words used for mass was not in 1914 so very far advanced that the compilers could be expected to be alert to a problem of this kind. But fully to justify such a postulated meaning one will have to show that the word *canon* was used for mass-text at an equally early date. To this point we must now attend.

4 *Confitebantur in passionibus suis se collectam et dominicum egisse*...