Cuthbert's relics and the origins of the diocese of Durham

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ABSTRACT

The established view of the Viking-Age Northumbrian Church has never been substantiated with verifiably contemporary evidence but is an inheritance from one strand of 'historical research' produced in post-Conquest England. Originating *c.* 1100, the strand we have come to associate with Symeon of Durham places the relics and see of Cuthbert at Chester-le-Street from the 880s until a move to Durham in the 990s. By contrast, other guidance, including Viking-Age material, can be read to suggest that Cuthbert was at Norham on the river Tweed and did not come to Durham or even Wearside until after 1013. Further, our earliest guidance indicates that the four-see Northumbrian episcopate still lay intact until at least the time of Æthelstan (r. 924–39). The article ends by seeking to understand the origins of the diocese of Durham and its historical relationship with both Chester-le-Street and Norham in a later context than hitherto sought.

In the decades around AD 700 a large number of important texts were created in northern England including, most famously, Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*. The Northumbrian 'Golden Age' and its literary output is a relatively short interruption to what, otherwise, is now a long stretch of darkness extending from Roman times to the Norman takeover in the second half of the eleventh century. Very few literary texts shed much light on the Northumbrian Church of the preceding centuries, the so-called 'Viking Age' (*c.* 850 to *c.* 1050), but we can say with some confidence that the four sees of Bede's era had fallen to two by the time of the Norman Conquest. Of the episcopal seats at York, Hexham, Lindisfarne and Whithorn, only the first retained its position by the late eleventh century; by that time it had come to be joined by Durham. Precise details regarding how this transformation took place are not provided by any sources certainly contemporary with the Viking Age.

Historians have come to rely on texts finalized in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Among these, two episodes relating to the movement of the body of Cuthbert have worked their way into surviving traditions about the Viking Age. Together, the two accounts explain the disappearance of Lindisfarne and the rise of Durham. The first is the episode we can call the 'Flight of Eardwulf': driven from Lindisfarne by fear of vikings, Bishop Eardwulf and seven guardians of Cuthbert's body escaped to Chester-le-Street. The earliest witness to the 'Flight of

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Eardwulf' comes from *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* [hereafter *HSC*], a work probably completed in the eleventh century but long held to contain more ancient material.[1] Secondly, there is the episode we can call 'Ealdhun's Translation': a certain Bishop Ealdhun abandoned Chester-le-Street, guiding the body to the hill on the river Wear that came to be known as *Dunholm*, that is, Durham. 'Ealdhun's Translation' is first documented slightly after 1100, in works now attributed to Symeon of Durham (fl. *c.* 1100–*c.* 1128).[2] Although a few scholars, notably David Dumville and Alex Woolf,[3] have expressed reservations about this material and its usefulness for the Viking Age, the outline provided by these episodes has largely been followed by interested scholars.[4]

The 'Flight of Eardwulf' or 'Ealdhun's Translation', as far as we can isolate them, are potentially very late creations. The modern historian cannot accept them at face value, and at the very least must, if possible, compare them with sources of equal or superior value, and in particular with sources which we know for certain were written in the Viking Age itself. As we shall see, very serious credibility issues arise when this type of analysis is carried out. We find that sources of equal and superior value offer the historian the chance to consider quite a different picture of the Viking-Age Cuthbertine episcopate – and indeed the Northumbrian Church more generally. Rather than moving to Chester-le-Street in the late ninth century and then to Durham in the late tenth century, as the Durham material suggests, our only snapshot of the era locates the body of Cuthbert at Norham on the river Tweed in the first third of the eleventh century. Working from the premise that the earlier evidence is preferable, the study will attempt to make sense of the new bishopric of Durham and try to understand why the 'Flight' episode may have

[1] *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* [hereafter *HSC*], ed. and trans. T. J. South, AST 3 (Cambridge, 2002) 52–9; for further discussion, see below at pp. 130–5.

[2] Symeon of Durham, *Libellus de exordio* [hereafter *LDE*] ii.I, in *Libellus de exordio atque procursu istius, hoc est Dunhelmensis, ecclesie: Tract on the Origins and Progress of this the Church of Durham*, ed. and trans. D. W. Rollason (Oxford, 2000), pp. 146–8; and *Annales Lindisfarnenses et Dunelmenses* [hereafter *ALD*], ed. W. Levison (with H. E. Meyer), 'Die "Annales Lindisfarnenses et Dunelmenses" kritisch untersucht und neu herausgegeben', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 17 (1961), 447–506, at 478–89; the Ealdhun episode is inserted at *ALD*, *s.a.* 995 (ed. Levison, p. 486).

[3] D. N. Dumville, 'Textual Archaeology and Northumbrian History Subsequent to Bede', *Coinage in Ninth-Century Northumbria: the Tenth Oxford Symposium on Coinage and Monetary History*, ed. D. M. Metcalf, BAR Brit. seri. 180 (Oxford, 1987), 43–55; A. Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba: 789 to 1070* (Edinburgh, 2007), pp. 81–5.

[4] E.g. H. J. Higham, *The Kingdom of Northumbria, AD 350–1100* (Stroud, 1993), pp. 183, 191–2 and 226; D. Rollason, *Northumbria, 500–1100: Creation and Destruction of a Kingdom* (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 244–55; K. L. Jolly, *The Community of St Cuthbert in the Late Tenth Century* (Columbus, 2012), pp. 15–36; K. Cross, *Heirs of the Vikings: History and Identity in Normandy and England, c. 950–c. 1015* (Woodbridge, 2018), pp. 139–46; C. Rozier, *Writing History in the Community of St Cuthbert, c. 700–1130: from Bede to Symeon of Durham* (Woodbridge, 2020), pp. 32–96.

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emerged – though it must be stressed in advance that there may be other ways in which the problems identified here could be reconciled.[5]

'RESTING-PLACES OF SAINTS'

The Viking-Age text that sheds light on the location of Cuthbert's body in the Viking Age is the early-eleventh-century 'Resting-Places of Saints', familiar to many under the title *Secgan be þam Godes sanctum þe on Engla lande ærost reston* or, simply, 'the *Secgan*'.[6] The text tells us that Cuthbert lay at *Ubbanford*, later known as Norham, on the river Tweed: 'Ðonne resteð sanctus Cuthbertus on þare stowe seo is genemned Ubbanford neh þære éá, þe is genemned Twiode.'[7] Norham, the site of a famous later medieval castle, lies on the northern edge of (what is today) the Northumberland council region, a stone's throw from (what is now) Scotland. The list took its final form sometime after 1013, when St Florence was interred in Peterborough, but before 1031, by which time the list had to have been entered into Stowe 944.[8] A later update to the list (that is, to the Stowe version), preserved in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 201, altered 'seo is genemned Ubbanford neh þære éá, þe is genemned Twiode', to read 'þe men hátað Donhólm'.[9] Later in the eleventh century the text was translated into Latin; highlighting the limits of 'living memory', the translator appears to have been unfamiliar with the place-name *Ubbanford*, and incorrectly added 'vel Dunholm' to 'in loco vocatur Ubbanford', its translation of 'þare stowe seo is genemned Ubbanford'.[10]

[5] The following argument is drawn from earlier work that formed part of a wider re-evaluation of Viking-Age 'Northumbrian' political history; for which see N. McGuigan, 'Neither Scotland nor England: Middle Britain, c. 850–1150' (unpubl. PhD dissertation, Univ. of St Andrews, 2015). It has also been summarized in print by S. Foot, 'Kings, Saints and Conquests', *Conquests in Eleventh-Century England: 1016, 1066*, ed. L. Ashe and E. J. Ward, (Woodbridge, 2020), pp. 140–64, at 146–51; as well as A. Woolf, 'The Diocese of Lindisfarne: Organisation and Pastoral Care', *The Battle of Carham: a Thousand Years On*, ed. N. McGuigan and A. Woolf (Edinburgh, 2018), pp. 231–9, at 232–3, and V. Thomson, 'A New Reading of Late Anglo-Saxon Sculpture in and around the Tweed Valley: Carham, Lindisfarne, Norham and Jedburgh', *Battle of Carham*, ed. McGuigan and Woolf, pp. 174–201, at 176–7; also noted by L. Roach, *Æthelred the Unready* (New Haven, CT, 2016), p. 173, n. 121 (cf. *ibid.* p. xv, Map 1); and F. Edmonds, *Gaelic influence in the Northumbrian Kingdom: the Golden Age and the Viking Age* (Woodbridge, 2019), p. 111, n. 93.

[6] E.g. D. Rollason, **'**Lists of Saints' Resting-Places in Anglo-Saxon England**',** *ASE* 7 (1978), 61–93.

[7] 'Then lies St Cuthbert in the place known as *Ubbanford*, near the water that is known as the Tweed.' *Liber Vitae*, ed. W. de Gray Birch (Winchester, 1892), pp. 86–97 (from Stowe 944) and *Secgan be þam Godes Sanctum and Notationes de sanctis*, ed. F. Liebermann*, Die Heiligen Englands: Angelsächsisch und Lateinisch* (Hanover, 1889) [hereafter, *Secgan*], pp. 9–20 (from CCCC 201 and Stowe 944).

[8] Rollason, 'Lists of Saints' Resting-Places', pp. 63–8.

[9] *Secgan*, p. 9; see Rollason, 'Lists of Saints' Resting-Places', p. 68.

[10] *Secgan*, p. 10; for *Ubbanford* as Norham, see *Historia regum 'Part 2'* [hereafter *HR2*], ed. T. Arnold, *Symeonis monachi opera omnia* [hereafter *Sym. Op.*], 2 vols., RS 75 (1882–5) II, 95–283, at 101, and Roger of Howden, *Chronica* [hereafter *RHC*], ed. W. Stubbs, 4 vols., RS 51 (1868–71) I, 59.

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The date of the 'Resting-Places of Saints' presents difficulties for our acceptance of the 'Flight of Eardwulf' to Chester-le-Street and suggests that Cuthbert's move to Durham was later than 995, the date provided for 'Ealdhun's Translation' in the chronological scheme devised by Symeon of Durham. David Rollason, the chief commentator in recent decades on both the 'Resting-Places of Saints' and on Symeon of Durham, tried to account for the entry by suggesting that there had been a ninth-century version of the burial list that the extant eleventh-century versions simply copied without update. According to Rollason's interpretation, the creator of the earlier text had been uninterested in southern saints and had listed only the Northumbrian and 'midland' saints we find in the earlier portion of the surviving text; in the early eleventh century (or perhaps before), this 'first half' came to be incorporated into the extant version, retaining Cuthbert with his defunct ninth-century resting place unaltered. Rollason pointed out that entries falling in this 'first half' are much more likely to be identified with river names (for example, *Ubbanford*'s localization on the river Tweed) than entries in the 'second half' suggesting 'a different and more elaborate convention' (p. 62) and that, perhaps, a separate textual tradition lay behind the 'first half'.

Rollason's theory is plausible but also, it must be recognized, speculative and insecure. Even if we accepted that there was a 'first half' and even if we accepted that it had a separate author (there are surely plenty of other explanations for Rollason's observation),[11] there is no independent evidence that it was composed much earlier. A more significant problem is that the creator of the extant text does not, otherwise, verifiably present 'outdated' information. Even if Rollason's 'first half' hypothesis is correct and the surviving list is indeed an expanded version of an earlier text (even one that had not excluded southern resting places), that would not be enough to believe fossilized ninth-century entries made their way into the eleventh-century text that we actually have. Even in the 'first half', Oswald is located at Gloucester and not Bardney, a move dating to either 909 (*Mercian Register*) or 906 (*ASC* MS D).[12] Similar anomalous, 'updates' would also have occurred for saints Edmund of Bury and Eadburg of Southwell; indeed, of all the

[11] The author's own geographical origin may have affected his interest in this information, for instance; or he may have lost interest in presenting river names while drawing up the text; or he may have only been interested in the names of rivers that were less familiar (hence omission of the Thames and Severn). Rollason, it should be stressed, acknowledged that rivers were used as reference points in both 'halves' of the text.

[12] *Mercian Register*, *s.a.* 909 (*The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle MS C*, ed. K. O'Brien O'Keeffe, AS Chronicle: a Collaborative Edition 5 (Cambridge, 2001), p. 75): 'Her wæs Sancte Oswaldes lic gelæded of Beardanigge on Myrce'; translated 'In this year St Oswald's body was brought from Bardney into Mercia', in *English Historical Documents, c. 500–1042*, ed. D. Whitelock, Eng. Hist. Documents 1, 2nd ed. (London, 1985) [hereafter *EHD*, I], no 1, p. 210; cf. *ASC* MS D *(The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle MS D*, ed. G. P. Cubbin, AS Chronicle: a Collaborative Edition 6 (Cambridge, 1996)) 906 (p. 37): 'Her wæs Sancte Oswaldes lichoma alæded of Beardanigge.'

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English saints, only Cuthbert seems to be 'misplaced', a reasonable indication that the problem lies with the eleventh- and twelfth-century Cuthbertine writing at Durham and not the 'Resting-Places of Saints'. Rollason's interpretation creates the need for numerous 'interpolations' that are not otherwise necessary, including in the allegedly conservative 'first half'.[13] The need to reconcile the 'Resting-Places of Saints' with the eleventh- and twelfth-century traditions would be the only solid reason to believe that the 'earlier' 'first half' had to be ninth century in date, logic that is open to criticism for circularity. In short, the complications of this Early Core–Interpolation model create more problems than they solve, and the hypothesis is completely unnecessary unless *HSC* and Symeonic traditions have already convinced us that the 'Resting-Places of Saints' must be outdated on the matter of Cuthbert and Norham *specifically*. On the other hand, the 'Resting-Places of Saints' predates our material from Anglo-Norman Durham and verifiably dates to the early eleventh century. Is the latter really reliable enough to necessitate what some might regard as special pleading for one entry in the 'Resting-Places of Saints'? That is a question that will be examined further below, but first we must recognize that even among Anglo-Norman-era texts there were alternatives to Symeon's vision of the Cuthbertine Viking Age. Indeed, explicit support for the 'Resting-Places of Saints' can even be found elsewhere.

WILLIAM OF MALMESBURY

The 'Resting-Places of Saints' is not as isolated as it might first appear. William of Malmesbury's (†*c.* 1142) *Gesta pontificum Anglorum* was completed by 1125 but compiled in preceding years from pre-existing episcopal lists and miscellaneous other sources, including (apparently) pre-Symeonic or proto-Symeonic material from Durham.[14] William's principal value here is that he had access to sources

[13] To reconcile the Symeonic tradition with the interpretation of the 'Resting-Places of Saints' designed by Rollason, some scribe would have had to 'update' Oswald's body but retain the outdated location for Cuthbert's; Rollason himself makes a list of such 'interpolations', for which see Rollason, 'Lists of Saints' Resting-Places', pp. 63–4; see also J. Blair, 'A Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Saints', *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West*, ed. A. Thacker and R. Sharpe (Oxford, 2002), pp. 495–565, at 550.

[14] Text is William of Malmesbury, *Gesta pontificum Anglorum* [hereafter WM, *GP*] iii. 130.5, in *William of Malmesbury: Gesta pontificum anglorum / 'The History of the English Bishops'*, I: *Text and Translation*, ed. and trans. M. Winterbottom with R. M. Thomson (Oxford, 2007); for the date, see *ibid.* p. xii, and n. 8 therein; see also A. Gransden, *Historical Writing in England, c. 550–c.1307* (London, 1996), p. 182. William's Durham episcopal lists, like those initially available to John of Worcester, seem to be less fully developed than those fine-tuned by the Symeon and his associates, see McGuigan, 'Middle Britain', pp. 65–7 (where the term 'Symeonic School' is used to include Symeon and associates or acolytes who for all appearance look indistinguishable but who, in practice, may have consisted of several individuals working together in association with or under the leadership of Symeon).

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similar to those used by Symeon and, potentially, some of his predecessors at Durham, but reached independent judgements about how to use the material. William applied enormous effort to document the pre-Viking and Viking-Age episcopate of England, and in the case of the Cuthbertine see he managed to find an account of how the diocese of Lindisfarne became the diocese of Durham. According to William, the bodies of the Lindisfarne saints had been moved to the mainland because of the ravaging of the Danes in the ninth century; there was an attempt to move St Cuthbert to Ireland (also attested in the 'Flight of Eardwulf'), but instead the body was taken to 'Ubbanford … iuxta amnem Twda', where it lay until the time of King Æthelred II (reigned 978–1016) – noting however that a 'correction' to Cnut (r. 1016–35) appears in later manuscript variations.[15] William's account is very like the 'Flight of Eardwulf', but it lacks knowledge of either Eardwulf or Chester-le-Street (though Eardwulf appears, subsequently, in William's list of bishops).[16] William goes on to say that, 'in the interval', between the body's removal and the reign of Æthelred/Cnut, Cuthbert had performed miracles all over England, specifically recounting one concerning Ælfred the Great (iii.129). After the death of Bishop Ealdhun, a certain Bishop Eadmund decides, with the consent of the king, to relocate to Durham. It is worth quoting the passage so that the full detail is appreciated:

Defuncto ergo Aldhuno antistite, clerici consederant, de rectoris futuri electione consultantes, nec, ut fit in talibus, quicquam certi pro scismate partium diffinientes. Tum Edmundus, quem nullus accersiendum putauerat, cunctantibus superueniens consuetaque usus facetia 'Me' inquit 'accipite et episcopum facite'. Illi omnes, quasi diuinitus accensis spiritibus, rapuerunt ex ore illius uerbum quasi diuinum oraculum; stupentemque et dicti penitentem, utpote qui mallet lusum pilae quam usum cucullae, monachum fecerunt, et regi Agelredo [Cnutoni], qui tunc regnabat, in episcopum sibi postulauerunt. Omine felici fuit haec facta prolusio, ut commemorant indigenae loci. Regis enim serenitas quod petebatur annuit, et propitia diunitas quod sperabatur impleuit. Sub eo enim presule multum in modum aecclesiae promouit prosperitas: corpus sanctum Dunelmum delatum, basilica ibidem a fundamentis consummata, multa preterea quae nullo umquam apud ciues aeuo fallax consumet obliuio.[17]

[15] The manuscripts that the editors refer to as the 'β tradition', which may originate in corrections that William himself made; see R. M. Thomson with M. Winterbottom, *William of Malmesbury: Gesta pontificum anglorum / 'The History of the English Bishops'*, II: *Introduction and Commentary* (Oxford, 2007), p. 185.

[16] WM, *GP* iii. 130.5 (ed. Winterbottom *et al.*, pp. 408–13).

[17] WM, *GP* iii. 130.5 (ed. Winterbottom *et al.*, pp. 410–11). 'On the death of Bishop Ealdhun, therefore, the clerics had gone into session to discuss the choice of their future ruler, and, as happens on such occasions, they could not come to a decision because of a party split. Then Eadmund, whom no one had thought of calling in, came upon them as they hesitated, and in his usual joking manner said: "Take *me* and make me bishop." They all, as if God had inspired them,

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The specificity of the detail has the potential to be particularly important, as is the reference to potential sources, 'as the locals tell' ('ut commemorant indigenae loci'); uncertainty in the manuscript tradition about the name of the English king might be interpreted as evidence that William performed the synchronization himself, that the account of Eadmund's election and episcopate had been supplied without reference to any English king's reign.[18]

One could dismiss William's account, but the broader picture makes that difficult. William of Malmesbury as a potential purveyor of earlier material carries at least equal weight to Symeon, but unlike the latter's his account corresponds to the testimony of a witness that is verifiably contemporary. That the 'Resting-Places of Saints' is Viking-Age in date is not itself, it goes without saying, enough to guarantee its accuracy. Although it is more likely that William's northern source material is pre- or proto-Symeonic, that is not certain and it is not completely out of the question that William used the 'Resting-Places of Saints' and then altered Durham material to accommodate a resting-place at Norham, a complex interpretation that would also require William to reach his own judgement about the date of the burial list as a historical document and use that judgement to alter material coming from the north. The question for the modern historian is how worthwhile is it to create theories as complex as these? Does the evidence we have really demand we go so far? As discussed below, it is much simpler to deny authority to the specifics of *HSC*'s 'Flight of Eardwulf' and Symeon's 'Ealdhun's Translation' than to explain why the 'Resting-Places of Saints' and William are both wrong and why they both get the story wrong in the same specific way.

Moreover, there is even more evidence that Norham, not Chester-le-Street, was the seat of the tenth-century Cuthbertine cult. Before discussing this evidence, however, we need to better understand the potential of the 'Flight of Eardwulf' and of 'Ealdhun's Translation', and of *HSC* and the Symeonic material more generally, as purveyors of accurate information about the Viking Age. It is this that deprives the historian of the right to reject these episodes out of hand.

snatched the words out of his mouth, as though God had spoken. Aghast and repenting what he had said (for he preferred ball games to the cowl), he was made monk; then they asked Æthelred [manuscript variant reads 'Cnut'], who was king at that time, to make him their bishop. This prelude was of good omen, as the locals tell. The king kindly assented to their request, and God made all their hopes come true. For under Eadmund's rule the church's prosperity was much advanced. The holy body [of Cuthbert] was taken to Durham, the church there was completed from its foundations, and many other things happened besides which deceiving oblivion will never blot out among these people in any age.'

[18] Without reference to Anglo-Norman evidence, our only certain dates for Durham bishops are Ealdhun's floruit of 1009 (S 922, *Burt* 32) and the succession of Eadmund's own successor Æthelric *c.* 1041 (*ASC* D, 1041), but everything we are told does suggest that changing the name 'Æthelred' to 'Cnut' is an accurate 'correction'; see again, for instance, Foot, 'Kings, Saints and Conquests', pp. 146–51; and Thomson with Winterbottom, *Introduction and Commentary*, p. 185.

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HSC, the earliest text to mention the move to Chester-le-Street, is a compilation that was *completed* sometime in the eleventh or early twelfth century (see below). The relevant episode, the 'Flight of Eardwulf', occupies 'chapter 20' of the modern edition by South. In the story, Bishop Eardwulf and Abbot Eadred lead the community of Cuthbert during seven years of rootless exile. The wanderers attempt to take passage to Ireland from the mouth of the Derwent (Cumbria) but, lacking heaven's approval, are compelled to return east, residing at Crayke (Yorkshire) with Abbot Geve, then finally settling at Chester-le-Street (County Durham):

Eodem quoque tempore bonus episcopus Eardulfus et abbas Eadred tulerunt corpus sancti Cuthberti de Lindisfarnensi insula et cum eo errauerunt in terra, portantes illud de loco in locum per septem annos, et tandem peruenerunt ad fluuium qui uocatur Derunt muthe et illud ibi in naui posuerunt, ut sic per proximum mare in Hiberniam transueherent. Tunc omnis populis eius qui eum diu erat secutus, dolens quod eripiebatur pius eorum patronus, stans in littore flebat et ululabat, eo quod et ipsi relinquebantur captiui et captiuus eorum abducebatur dominus. Tunc Deus magnum miraculum ostendit pro amore dilecti sui confessoris. Horta siquidem in mari horribili tempestate maximae tres undae in nauim ceciderunt et statim, mirabile dictu, aqua illa in sanguinem est conuersa. Quo uiso episcopus et abbas ad pedes sancti uiri ceciderunt, et timore perterriti ad litus quamtocius reuersi sunt, et sanctum illud corpus ad Crecam detulerunt, et ibi a bono abbate nomine Geue caritatiue excepti quattuor mensibus manserunt, et inde sanctum corpus ad Cunceceastre transtulerunt. Eo tempore obiit rex Elfredus et Eardulfus episcopus.[19]

The 'Flight of Eardwulf' episode could potentially be a standalone account predating the completion of *HSC* or it could be an 'interpolation' that is later than a 'core'; what is clear is that the architect of *HSC* took care to synchronize it with the reigns of kings Guthred (fl. late ninth century) and Alfred the Great (r. 871–99). The 'Flight' concludes a narrative sequence also containing 'Alfred's Dream'

[19] See *HSC*, ch. 20 (ed. and trans. South, pp. 58–9). 'Also at that time the good bishop Eardwulf and abbot Eadred bore the body of St Cuthbert from the isle of Lindisfarne and wandered with it through the land, carrying it from place to place for seven years, and finally they arrived at the mouth of the river that is called Derwentmouth, and there they placed it in a boat so that they might thus transport it across the adjoining sea to Ireland. Then all his [i.e. St Cuthbert's] people who had long followed him, mourning that their pious patron was being taken away, wept and wailed as they stood on the shore, because they themselves were captives being left behind and their captive lord was being abducted. Then God manifested a great miracle out of love for his beloved confessor. For a horrible storm arose on the sea, three very great waves fell on the ship and at once, marvellous to say, that water was turned to blood. Having seen this, the bishop and the abbot fell at the feet of the saint and, terrified with fear, they returned to the shore as quickly as possible and carried the holy body to Crayke, and there, having been charitably received by the good abbot named Geve, they remained for four months, and from there they translated the holy body to Chester-le-Street. At this time King Alfred died, as well as bishop Eardwulf.'

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and the 'Donation of Guthred'; in the former, Cuthbert's spirit guides King Alfred to victory over the Danes (chapters 14–18); in the latter, Cuthbert's power is used to free a certain Guthred from slavery and raise him to the kingship of the 'army of Danes over the Tyne' ('super Tinam ad exercitum Danorum'), whereupon the new ruler rewards Cuthbert's followers with certain powers of sanctuary and with tenure of the land between the Tees and the Tyne (chapter 13).[20]

HSC does not, it should be repeated, describe the translation from Chester-le-Street to Durham. The first extended account of this second migration, 'Ealdhun's Translation', occurs in *Libellus de Exordio* [hereafter, *LDE*], an early-twelfth-century work that builds upon *HSC*; however, the Ealdhun episode had been referred to briefly in the *Annales Lindisfarnenses et Dunelmenses* [hereafter *ALD*], seemingly the preliminary scheme that established much of the dating framework used by *LDE* (discussed below). *LDE* is larger and more sophisticated than the comparatively crude *HSC,* and possesses a more explicit commitment to chronological structure:

Anno autem ab incarnatione Domini nongentesimo nonagesimo quinto, imperii vero regis Ethelredi septimo decimo, idem antistes incipiente iam accepti presulatus sexto anno, celesti premonitus oraculo, ut cum incorrupto sanctissimi patris corpore quantotius fugiens superuenturam pyratarum rabiem declinaret, tulit illud centesimo tertio decimo anno ex quo in Cunecacestre locatum fuerat, et inde cum omni qui eius dicitur populo in Hripum transportauit. In qua fuga illud memorabile fertur, quod in tanta multitudine nemo a minimo usque ad maximum ulla infirmitatis molestia affligebatur, sed sine ullo labore, sine ullo incommodo, uiam gradiendo peragebant. Nec solum homines sed etiam animalia tenera et nuper quoque nata (erat enim tempus ueris) sana et incolumia sine aliqua difficultate et uexatione toto itinere gradiebantur. Post tres autem uel quattuor menses, pace reddita, cum uenerandum corpus ad priorem locum reportarent, iamque prope ad orientalem plagam in locum qui Wrdelau dicitur, aduenissent, uehiculum quo sacri corporis theca ferebatur, ulterius promoueri non poterat'.[21]

[20] *HSC*, chs. 13–20 (ed. and trans. South, pp. 52–9).

[21] See *LDE* ii.I (ed. and trans. Rollason, pp. 146–8); cf. *ALD*, *s.a.* 995 (ed. Levison, p. 486). 'Now, in the year of our Lord 995, that is in the seventeenth year of the reign of King Æthelred, the said bishop [Ealdhun], who was then entering the sixth year of the episcopal office which he had accepted, was forewarned by a heavenly premonition that he should flee as quickly as possible with the incorrupt body of the most holy father Cuthbert, to escape the fury of the Vikings whose arrival was imminent. Accordingly he raised that body in the 113th year since it had been brought to Chester-le-Street and, accompanied by all those people who are called the 'people of the saint', he transported it to Ripon. It is related that one very memorable circumstance about the flight was that in all that multitude no one from the lowest to the highest was afflicted by any scourge of illness, but instead the whole party completed their journey with neither suffering nor inconvenience. It was not only men but also young and even new-born animals (for it was springtime) who accomplished the whole journey safe and sound and without any difficulty or hardship. When three or four months later peace had returned, they were taking the venerable body back to its former resting place, and they had reached a place called *Wrdelau*, which is near Durham on the

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The account goes on to relate that the precise resting place favoured by St Cuthbert was only revealed in a vision by a certain Eadmer after several days of fasting and prayer.[22]

DATING AND 'EXCAVATING' *HISTORIA DE SANCTO CUTHBERTO*

Again, it must be conceded that some of the material in *HSC might* date to the tenth century. John Hodgson-Hinde in the nineteenth century and Edmund Craster in the 1950s suggested that there had been an early core to *HSC*, written in the mid-tenth century.[23] Their case drew weight from the fact that one of the three extant manuscripts of the text (Cambridge, University Library, Ff. 27) terminates with the tenth-century King Edmund's visit to St Cuthbert's church; the other manuscripts (including the older version in Oxford, Bodleian, Bodley 596) incorporate material from the reign of Æthelred (r. 978–1016) and conclude in the reign of Cnut (r. 1016–35), leaving a potentially significant chronological lacuna in the second half of the tenth century. Perhaps shorn of a few 'interpolations', Craster suggested, *HSC* could be understood as 'originally' ending with Edmund's visit; subsequently, another scribe added material relating to the reigns of Æthelred and Cnut, interpolating chapters 14–19 to commemorate King Alfred. Craster was interested in the Northumbrian Church of the Viking Age and needed the theory of an 'early core' to legitimize his reliance on *HSC*, but the hypothesis was not itself *necessary* to explain any problem offered by the text and it required 'interpolations' to be plausible, because *HSC*'s Alfred episode was clearly influenced by the late-tenth-century *Vita prima Sancti Neoti*, and because *HSC*'s author betrays his knowledge of the battle of Assandun (1016). Craster's interpretation dominated views of *HSC* until the appearance of Ted Johnson South's edition of the text in 2002. *HSC*'s modern editor has offered a simpler and more convincing case for a unitary text of eleventh century date, reinforcing the other scholarship that had already demonstrated stylistic and narrative unity to *HSC*.[24]

In the 940s there would have been people alive who could remember the 'Flight of Eardwulf', and a text written at that point would command some respect.

east side, the cart on which they were carrying the coffin containing the holy body could be moved no further.'

[22] *LDE* ii.I (ed. and trans. Rollason, pp. 146–8).

[23] E.g. J. Hodgson-Hinde, *Symeonis Dunelmensis opera et collectanea,* Surtees Society 51 (Durham, 1868), xxxv–xxxviii; H. H. E. Craster, 'The Patrimony of St. Cuthbert', *EHR* 69, 177–99, at 177–8.

[24] L. Simpson, 'The King Alfred/St Cuthbert Episode in the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*: its Significance for Mid-Tenth-Century History', *St Cuthbert, His Cult and His Community*, ed. G. Bonner, D. Rollason and C. Stancliffe (Woodbridge, 1989), pp. 397–411; South, *HSC*, pp. 27–36; see also, Rollason, *LDE*, pp. lxxii–lxxiii; the only part of the text that Craster thought specifically to be served by the hypothesis was the rubric that opens *HSC* in the Cambridge manuscript, which claimed to take the story *usque nunc temporis*, 'up to the present day', something that has other explanations (including provenance in an earlier, longer version of the text).

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However, even Craster himself disavowed such a simple approach to *HSC*. Although he did argue for an 'early core', he explicitly stated that '[i]t does not follow that the entire Cambridge text goes back to so early a date'.[25] Craster's vision of *HSC* would not, independently, give automatic credence to the 'Flight of Eardwulf'. Since the *HSC* tradition encompasses a notice about gifts made by King Cnut (r. 1016–35), the earliest date for the completion of *HSC* (as we have it) would be that reign; with or without the 'Flight of Eardwulf', *HSC* as a unitary compilation cannot be given a meaningful date that precedes the reign. Although there would remain the theoretical possibility that *HSC* came from the first third of the eleventh century, there would be no way to establish a secure date even this early. All we can say for sure is that it was composed *by* the first decade of the twelfth century, prior to Symeon of Durham's *LDE* and prior to Symeon's inclusion of *HSC* in the Oxford manuscript.[26] The 'early core' debate is, in fact, not central to how we should evaluate *HSC*. *HSC* did have access to early information (see below), but we do not know whether the 'Flight of Eardwulf' came from the type of source that would likely preserve early evidence reliably. In any case, no 'early core' case that relied on interpolations could ever coherently discount the likelihood of small-scale interference, like the type that could change the name of a church from, say, *Cunecacestre* to *Ubbanforde*. The most important observation to make is that our ability to date *HSC* is simply not good enough to draw the kind of general judgements we would need to establish a tenth-century date for any uncorroborated information with the text, let alone to infer confidently and specifically that the 'Flight of Eardwulf' represents an uncorrupted narrative pre-dating the 'Resting-Places of Saints'.

To understand the value of *HSC*, we have to evaluate its chronological framework critically. Many Anglo-Norman era writers take their basic chronology from a known annalistic tradition, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*; they are fundamentally reliable when they depend on this. It is reasonably clear, by contrast, that the architect of *HSC* did not always have adequate chronological guidance. Although the creator of *HSC* benefitted from, perhaps indirectly, Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica*, early *vitae* of Cuthbert and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, otherwise he seems to have had little help figuring out Northumbrian chronology. By the time he brought *HSC* together he had not reconstructed the chronology well enough to realize how much time had passed between Cuthbert's life and the ninth century. Among the more serious signs of the compiler's limitations, seventh-century Cuthbert himself is presented as the direct predecessor of Bishop Ecgred, who, we know from

[25] Craster, 'The Patrimony of St. Cuthbert', p. 178.
[26] For these dates, see South, *HSC*, p. 15, and Rollason, *LDE*, p. xlii–xliv.

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elsewhere, held office in the ninth century.[27] The compiler believed that Cuthbert (†687) had been a contemporary of King Ceolwulf (r. 729–37) and that he had been succeeded directly by the ninth-century bishop (chapters 7 and 8, with first lines of chapter 9). Similarly, he confused the eleventh-century battle of *Assandune* (Assandun) and ninth-century *Ethandun* (Edington), a point that may undermine the tradition's credibility as a witness even to eleventh-century history.[28] The confusion could be read to suggest that even the second battle had already fallen outside, or at least into the margins of, living memory; not very likely for the era of Cnut, but it could point to an incoming Continental or Southumbrian scholar relying on a mixture of oral and (possibly second-hand) written sources. English authors are, however, possible. It is worth remembering that native Northumbrian members of the Cuthbertine community experienced a period of marginality within their see for a significance chunk of the eleventh century. Since the early 1040s Southumbrian bishops (from Peterborough) had presided over Durham, an imposition on the community by the kings of England and the northern ealdormen based at York. The Norman Conquest saw the demise of this arrangement, along with a short period of resurgence for the native community; so *HSC* could also be explained as an attempt by the resurgent group to reassert their own 'historical memory', along with its concomitant privileges, even if, perhaps, it was a Norman audience they had in mind.[29]

There are other considerations that suggest *HSC* was drawn up during the post-Conquest period. It should go without saying that the labour, ink and animal skin used to produce *HSC* were not expended in a charitable attempt to help modern historians understand Viking-Age politics. *HSC* is a series of territorial and jurisdictional claims promoted through assertions about historical acquisitions and losses; it is best understood, above all, as asset advocacy. The creator's achievement is to arrange Cuthbert's procurements and injuries sequentially in accordance with the best chronology he was able to construct; further verisimilitude is provided by a patchy background taken from what little he was able to discover about Northern English history. In essence, it is a collection of

[27] Ecgred is known from a contemporary letter written to Wulfsige of York; for which see, D. Whitelock, 'Bishop Ecgred, Pehtred and Niall', *Ireland in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. D. Whitelock *et al.* (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 47–68, at 48–50, and *EHD*, I, no. 214, at pp. 875–6

[28] This error was one of Craster's 'interpolations', see Craster, 'The Patrimony of St. Cuthbert', p. 178. For an attempt to explain this error in a different way, see S. Crumplin, 'Rewriting History in the Cult of St Cuthbert from the Ninth to the Twelfth Centuries' (unpubl. PhD dissertation, Univ. of St Andrews, 2006), p. 40; it is worth noting that both locations are also at quite some geographic distance from Durham and northern England.

[29] For the turbulent Peterborough episcopate, see *LDE* iii.7 and iii.9 (ed. and trans. Rollason, pp. 162–3, and pp. 168–73); see also McGuigan, 'Middle Britain', pp. 188–9, and W. M. Aird, *St Cuthbert and the Normans: the Church of Durham, 1071–1153* (Woodbridge, 1998), pp. 52–74.

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pseudo-charters compiled for the purposes of proprietorial security and aggrandisement, meant to have an effect beyond the community at Durham. This type of pragmatic, contest-driven 'historical' writing is widespread in the eleventh century, and *HSC* shows many of the same Norman literary–legalistic tendencies illustrated by the *pancartae* especially common late in the reign of William the Conqueror.[30]

The specific territorial assets chosen for historical representation by *HSC* could lend some weight to the above interpretation. *HSC* is not simply a list of properties owned by the Cuthbertine corporation that the compiler has listed for historical interest; *HSC* focuses tendentiously on properties that were almost certainly not in their possession in the Anglo-Norman era. Although *HSC*'s dossier of asset rights included properties held in the eleventh century (like Crayke and Darlington), on the whole, its compiler seems to have been much more interested in targeting properties like those in the coveted Wapentake of Sadberge, or among the group of churches retained by the Northumbrian earls that, as their successor, King Henry I used to endow his new foundation at Carlisle.[31] Then there is Billingham, a 'lost' asset that according to *LDE* was successfully 'regained' by Durham after a grant by William the Conqueror. *HSC*'s author has included two apparently contradictory stories about how Cuthbert had lost this property. According to one account, it had been stolen by the notorious Northumbrian king Ælla; according to another, the Norse king Rǫgnvaldr, grandson of Ívarr, had been to blame. There are ways to explain this if you believe *HSC* is faithfully reproducing facts from the tenth century; but, realistically, this looks to be something like what lawyers call the 'kitchen sink approach', and that the author or the establishment at Durham had come across two reasonable arguments for repossessing the property, but was unable to decide which to use – perhaps with good reason, as King William may not have regarded one or the other, Ælla of Northumbria or Rǫgnvaldr of the Anglo-Danes, as his legitimate predecessor! William the Conqueror's historic grant of Billingham might, then, tempt us to date *HSC*'s compilation to his reign; but that would be dangerous too, since the region beyond

[30] E. Van Houts, 'Historical Writing', *A Companion to the Anglo-Norman World*, ed. C. Harper-Bill and E. Van Houts (Woodbridge, 2002), pp. 103–22, at 117; and *The Acta of William I (1066–1087)*, ed. D. Bates (Oxford, 1998), pp. 22–30 for more detail. This is not to suggest, incidentally, that *HSC* was influenced by these precise textual forms.

[31] For these, see *Regesta Henrici primi, 1100–1135*, ed. C. Johnson and H. A. Cronne, Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum, 1066–1165, volume 2 (Oxford, 1956), nos. 572, 1431; see also, R. Sharpe, *Norman Rule in Cumbria 1092–1136: a Lecture delivered to Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society on 9th April 2005 at Carlisle*, Cumberland and Westmorland Ant. and Archaeol. Soc. Tract 21 (Kendal, 2006), pp. 57–8. This tendency is also one way of accounting for the superficially significant fact that *HSC* did not mention, and why no eleventh-century scribe 'interpolated', a story about the translation to Durham.

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the Tees became politically unstable in the 1080s, creating opportunity to regain Billingham for anyone deprived by the Conqueror's gift.[32]

USING *HISTORIA DE SANCTO CUTHBERTO*

HSC seems to be aimed at those able to grant or remove property rights or influence the related process, for example, the king, his court, the populace and so on. It is easy to account for this motivation in the colonial land grab that reshaped English society in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries. Foreign conquerors were confiscating and redistributing land, and native property rights were frequently being challenged and lost to nobles and institutions of Continental origin (or even sometimes to their more adaptable native rivals). The process created a surfeit of charter histories and other historical writing by great churches trying to demonstrate the authority of their possessions and privileges. Other English episcopal churches produced similar accounts, including *Hemming's Cartulary* and *Liber Eliensis,* comparable but more substantial texts from Worcester and Ely.[33] As both *Hemming's Cartulary* and *Liber Eliensis* illustrate, researchers in the Anglo-Norman era did seek out and utilize available evidence from written and oral sources. In Durham's case, sources seem to have been in shorter supply, but we cannot doubt their existence. Separable components of *HSC* may, therefore, have potential as sources for the preceding two or three centuries. Indeed, attempting to dismiss the content of *HSC* entirely will create far more problems than it solves, particularly in regard to detail placed in the reign of Edward the Elder (r. 899–924). How, for instance, was the compiler of *HSC* able to invent an accurate synchronism of the Battle of Corbridge with several rulers and nobles of the 'Edwardian' era? There is no obvious known source for this information, but it is accurate (here we are able to verify the details from reliable texts).[34] Again, what about chapter 33 of *HSC,* which is attested independently in a separate collection containing what appears to be late-tenth-century material?[35] The charters purporting to be issued by King Æthelred II and Styr son of Ulf seem to be based on

[32] For strife in Northumbria in the 1080s, see *HR2*, p. 199.

[33] See South, *HSC*, pp, 12–14; see also, M. Brett, 'John of Worcester and His Contemporaries', *The Writing of History in the Middle Ages*, ed. R. H. C. Davis, and J. M. Wallace-Hadrill (Oxford, 1981), pp. 101–26, at 101–4. For *Hemming's Cartulary*, see London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius A. xiii, available in an eighteenth-century edition *Hemingi chartularium ecclesiæ Wigorniensis*, ed. T. Hearne (Oxford, 1723); and *Liber Eliensis*, ed. E. O. Blake (London, 1962) and translation by J. Fairweather (Woodbridge, 2005). For pre-Conquest northern English charters, see *Charters of Northern Houses*, ed. D. A. Woodman, AS Charters 15 (Oxford, 2012) [hereafter Woodman, *North*], of which nos. 18–20 are of most interest here.

[34] E.g., McGuigan, 'Middle Britain', pp. 48–55. For its Edwardian coverage, see *HSC*, chs. 19–24 (ed. and trans. South, pp. 58–65). South's discussion of the sources for *HSC* can be found at pp. 4–12.

[35] See below, n. 78.

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authentic exemplars, while the similarity of a grant attributed to Earl Northman in chapter 31 with *notitiae* found in Durham's *Liber Vitae* could suggest that similar *notitiae* were used for some of the alleged later tenth- and early-eleventh-century grants.[36]

A charter or land grant on the margins of a gospel book could have provided some easily distilled and reproducible information with reliable synchronisms; the 'Flight of Eardwulf' on the other hand, an episodic narrative, does not jump out as this type of text. Like the Alfred episode, it may originate in some type of oral or hagiographic tradition and community myth, potentially one that took some time to emerge.[37] That does not mean necessarily that the architect of *HSC* recycled a source that, in its original form, post-dated the tenth century; but it is difficult to employ the accompanying detail as a window on the Viking Age when we rely only on *HSC* and only on manuscripts from the twelfth century or later. It is not possible on current information to distinguish information in any hypothetical earlier text from what the 'author of *HSC*' could have added. Assuming for the sake of argument that the 'Flight of Eardwulf' was extracted from some earlier source, there would still be no particular reason to believe that the episode's position within *HSC*'s chronological framework had any authority. How could we know that the creator of *HSC* was correct to synchronize the 'Flight of Eardwulf' with the reign of Alfred the Great? Again, even if we were to believe that 'Ealdhun's Translation' had substance, how can we verify the date provided by Symeon? What allows us to believe that the compiler of *HSC* or even *LDE* was able to assign these episodes accurate synchronisms, dates or even eras?

SYMEON OF DURHAM AND VIKING-AGE CHRONOLOGY

It is worthwhile, here, to stress the limitations of the historical chronology available, more generally, at Anglo-Norman Durham, and to consider what we might be able to work out about its evolution. Historians writing in Anglo-Norman Durham did not begin with a systematic chronology integrating the history of their church with the wider world. That was something they had to construct. *LDE* is the closest they got to a final product. The author of *LDE*, responsible for the completion of this masterpiece and its accompanying chronological framework, may have relied on work carried out by a predecessor or with the help of associates. An earlier version of the 'Symeonic' chronology is attested

[36] *Durham Liber Vitae: London, British Library, MS Cotton Domitian A.VII: Edition and Digital Facsimile with Introduction, Codicological, Prosopographical and Linguistic Commentary, and Indexes*, ed. D. Rollason and L. Rollason, 3 vols. (London, 2007) [hereafter *DLV*] I, 140; *North* 19; cf. *HSC*, chs. 29–31 (ed. and trans. South, pp. 66–9), with discussion at pp. 112–13.

[37] Aird, *St Cuthbert and the Normans*, pp. 33–5; D. Rollason, 'The Wanderings of St Cuthbert', *Cuthbert: Saint and Patron*, ed. D. Rollason (Durham, 1987), pp. 45–61.

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in *ALD*, annals entered into margins of a manuscript of paschal tables (Glasgow, University Library, Hunterian 85) by the same hand identified today as Symeon's.[38] Those annals attempted to integrate the history of Durham with that of England and Christendom more widely, providing key dates of numerous bishops within a broader set relating to English kings, popes, emperors and so forth. Like *LDE*, *ALD* as a document has limited independent value for the Viking Age. While the author was able to draw on familiar Continental and English sources for the chronology of the aforementioned notables, there is no known single source that verifies his synchronization of events from Viking-Age Northumbria. Indeed, where Viking-Age material in the *ALD* can be tested or compared with other sources, even with sources likely to have been available to him, there are serious problems: Rollo's takeover of Normandy is set to an implausible year 807, Æthelstan's punitive expedition to Scotland set to 924 (*recte* 934), and Siward's battle against Macbeth of Scotland set to 1046 (*recte* 1054).[39] The attempt to establish a chronology for Durham history was clearly a work in progress. Reliable assistance was occasionally available, but the limitations of available source material forced them to make informed guesses at times. We have to accept that there is at least a very strong possibility that this applied to much of the Viking-Age Northumbrian material, which would include 'Ealdhun's Translation'; by extension, this would also include *HSC*'s treatment of the 'Flight of Eardwulf'.

PRE-SYMEONIC CHRONOLOGY?

The author of *LDE* and his predecessors ultimately had to account for the fact that the diocese of Lindisfarne, the ancient see very famously documented in Bede and elsewhere, had by the time of the Conquest come to be re-seated far to the south, in Durham. The problem would have become an unavoidable headache when attempting to draw together a systematic chronology for the see. If we can find Anglo-Norman historical writing that pre-dates, or otherwise ignores, the solution to this problem offered by Symeon of Durham, we may have a better idea about how to contextualize and evaluate Symeon's new chronological scheme. The Symeonic material is not the only product of early Anglo-Norman Durham, and it is worth recognizing that other sources sometimes provide detail at odds with the Symeonic system. One of these appears to be *Cronica monasterii Dunelmensis* [hereafter *CMD*], an early chronicle identified by Edmund Craster. *CMD*'s list of property acquisitions is organized according to a schema of English rulers very similar to *HSC*'s, but *CMD*'s is much more streamlined and without the same

[38] M. Gullick, 'The Hand of Symeon of Durham: Further Observations on the Durham Martyrology Scribe', *Symeon of Durham: Historian of Durham and the North*, ed. D. Rollason, Stud. in North-Eastern Hist. 1 (Stamford, 1998), 14–31, at 17–18 and 29.

[39] *ALD*, *s.a.* 807, *s.a.* 924, *s.a.* 1046 (ed. Levison, pp. 483, 485 and 486).

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extreme grievance-driven political narrative. Craster argued that *CMD* had been completed in the time of William the Conqueror (†1087), during the episcopate of William de St Calais (1081–96); *CMD* records a grant that cannot predate 1085, but Craster also thought that this may have been added to a text written between 1072 and 1083 – meaning that its 'core' could be as early as the episcopate of Walcher (†1080). Written or transcribed into the margins of a book on the altar of Durham Cathedral, *CMD* came to be preserved in an appendix to a chronicle overseen by Prior John Wessington (†1451) and in a notarial instrument of 1433.[40] In this case the chronological distance between composition and first manuscript witness is relatively large and must lighten the weight of evidence drawn from it; but if Craster is correct about *CMD*, we would have another window on history-making at early Anglo-Norman Durham that could provide an insight into the decision-making of Symeon and his associates.

One interesting point is that *CMD* does not seem to be aware of the critical 'Flight of Eardwulf' and, thus, does not mention Chester-le-Street or any move by Cuthbert to that location. If the historian were to follow Craster and take *CMD* as a witness to early Durham historical writing, *CMD* suggests that an otherwise well-informed researcher in Anglo-Norman Durham had no knowledge at all of Bishop Eardwulf or his deeds. Could this just be an editorial omission? After all, the inclusion of the Tyne–Tees grant in the 'Donation of Guthred' may suggest that the same contributor 'knew' about the Chester-le-Street move, but that it was omitted or removed for concision. On the other hand, the 'Flight of Eardwulf' would be an odd casualty of later textual interference given the significance of the story to Durham Cathedral after 1100. Why would Bishop Eardwulf specifically be 'omitted' from *CMD*'s version of the 'Donation of Guthred'? The omission would make sense if the 'Flight of Eardwulf' was not part of the author's framework for understanding the Cuthbertine house in the Viking Age, and that could mean that the move to Chester-le-Street did not gain a major role in Durham historical theory until later in the Anglo-Norman era. That is to say, it might suggest that there had been a pre-'Flight of Eardwulf' stage in Durham historical theory that involved ignorance of the Chester-le-Street move. The suggestion is supported elsewhere in *CMD*. When King Edmund (†946) is given his turn in the sequence of kings, *CMD* tells us that soon after his accession (939), the royal donor conducted an expedition to suppress Scottish incursions. When Edmund comes to pay his respects to the shrine of Cuthbert and to make the donations [that formed the real interest of *CMD*], he does so in Durham (*Dunelmum*), at the

[40] E. Craster, 'The Red Book of Durham', *EHR* 40 (1925), 504–32, at 519–23; A. J. Piper, 'The Historical Interests of the Monks of Durham', *Symeon of Durham*, ed. Rollason, pp. 301–32, at 305–6 and 308–10.

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'church of Mary the mother of God and the holy confessor Cuthbert' ('ecclesiam sancte Dei genitricis Marie et sancti confessoris Cuthberti').[41]

Later Symeonic chronology is very clear that Durham did not become the seat of Cuthbert until decades after King Edmund; according to the familiar Symeonic schema, the seat should have been Chester-le-Street during King Edmund's reign. Obviously, the alleged mid-tenth-century shrine at Durham has no direct implications for where the shrine actually was in the mid-tenth century – it would be natural for an early Anglo-Norman to locate the shrine at Durham if he knew nothing else otherwise. However, the architect of *CMD* took great care with his chronological structure, which would mean that the 'error' and the 'omission' of Eardwulf could (and if *CMD* is what Craster proposed, probably should) be taken as positive evidence to suggest that, even as late as the episcopate of William de St Calais, at least some of historical investigators, despite completing considerable research on the history of Viking-Age Durham, had not yet factored a Chester-le-Street theory into their chronology of the shrine's location and that the 'Flight of Eardwulf' was a subsequent, and thus a relatively late, 'discovery'.[42]

CMD is not the only early reconstruction of Cuthbertine history that fails to mention a Chester-le-Street stage. *Descriptio status ecclesie Lindisfernensis et Dunelmi*, another tract from the early Anglo-Norman era, mentions how Eardwulf and 'several of his successors wandered hither and thither' with the body, but makes no suggestion that Cuthbert's relics went anywhere but Durham. The tract may date to 1083 and the episcopate of William de St Calais, when it ends; but a later date is plausible (indeed, Rollason suggested it was a later summary of *LDE*), and it would be possible in any case that the omission was one of editorial concision rather than 'ignorance'.[43] Yet another tract, known a little misleadingly as *De obsessione Dunelmi*, 'On the Siege of Durham', contains some potentially better corroborating evidence. This collection of historical material appears to be designed to support a Cuthbertine attempt to 'repossess' the estates of Barmpton and Skirningham. It cannot have been finished before 1073, but there is a possibility that it was completed not long afterwards, at least in its early form.[44]

[41] *Cronica monasterii Dunelmensis* [hereafter *CMD*], in 'Red Book of Durham', ed. Craster, pp. 523–9, at 526.

[42] Craster saw *CMD* as borrowing from *HSC*, but that had been based on his tenth-century theory of *HSC*'s origins; the presentation in this article might suggest that *CMD* could be the earlier of the two.

[43] For *Descriptio status ecclesie Lindisfernensis et Dunelmi*, see *LDE*, ed. Rollason, pp. 258–65; for discussion of this tract, see *ibid.* pp. lxvi–lxvii.

[44] For the suggestion of an early date, see B. Meehan, 'The Siege of Durham, the Battle of Carham and the Cession of Lothian', *The Scottish Hist. Rev.* 55 (1976), 1–19, at 18–19; but see fuller discussion in C. J. Morris, *Marriage and Murder in Eleventh-Century Northumbria: a Study of* 'De Obsessione Dunelmi', Borthwick Papers 82 (York, 1992), 7–10.

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The particular siege of Durham it purports to record is synchronized with King Æthelred II of England, Earl Uhtred, and Máel Coluim mac Cinaeda, king of Scotland; although the synchronism itself is historically possible, the absolute date that *De obsessione Dunelmi* provides, 969, is incompatible with the potential date range of the synchronism, 1005 × 1016.[45] Although it appears to be a chronological miscalculation, the misjudgement offers insight about the understanding behind it. A scribal error that affected the century, decade and year must remain a theoretical possibility, but only an extremely unlikely one;[46] but on the face of things, the author of *De obsessione Dunelmi* believed that there had been a bishopric at Durham in 969; this in turn would suggest that, like the compiler of *CMD*, he did not have Symeon's chronology nor did he factor in the Chester-le-Street stage of Cuthbertine history that came to be so integral to the picture drawn up in the time of Symeon.[47] Plausible alternative explanations can be given, no doubt, for these anomalies on an individual basis; but, to the extent it supports anything the cumulative picture seems to be more in line with a *later* rather than an early beginning for the 'Flight of Eardwulf' in historical theory at Anglo-Norman Durham.

DURHAM MATERIAL IN ANGLO-LATIN ANNALS

The 'Flight of Eardwulf' and 'Ealdhun's Translation', along with certain other pieces about the Viking-Age Cuthbertine community, appear in some of the Anglo-Latin annals compiled in the twelfth century. These annals could be regarded as confirmatory if, for instance, they were early or if they revealed independent use of a source also used by *HSC* or Symeon (assuming they are distinct). The chronicle work in question consists of the northern Anglo-Latin annals contained in *Historia regum 'Part 2'* and its derivatives, which would include *Historia regum 'Part 1'* (for this information), as well as the annals of Roger of Howden's *Chronica,* 'Roger of Wendover', and related sources. The common tradition carries an entry on the Eardwulf episode, placed *s.a.* 875, similar enough

[45] There was a battle between the Scots and Northumbrians at an unknown location in 1006 (*AU* 1006.5); some tradition about the 1006 battle may be the source of the text's potentially accurate combination of rulers, but the siege that influenced this text otherwise was probably a different event of *c.* 1040; see Woolf, *Pictland to Alba*, pp. 254–5.

[46] See Meehan, 'The Siege of Durham', p. 6, n. 8, for a brief discussion of 969 as a 'disastrous mess'; Meehan offered an extremely complex multi-stage case for a scribal error, but Meehan's 'just possible' correction to 999 would not affect the argument at hand.

[47] *De obsessione Dunelmi,* ed. Arnold, *Sym. Op.* I, 215–20, at 215; for translation and commentary, see Morris, *Marriage and Murder in Eleventh-Century Northumbria*; see also see McGuigan, 'Middle Britain', pp. 14–15; and S. MacLean, 'Recycling the Franks in Twelfth-Century England: Regino of Prüm, the Monks of Durham, and the Alexandrine Schism', *Speculum* 87 (2012), 649–81, at 674–5.

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to *HSC* as to leave no doubt that there is, at least, a common source.[48] The episode is built into what had originally been the equivalent year's entry in the early *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* tradition (as translated into Latin); the relevant entry is sandwiched between the notice of Hálfdan and a list of Norse leaders said to have wintered at Cambridge.[49] Thus, it appears to be a genuine 'interpolation' originating at a later point. Another 'interpolated' note added *s.a.* 883, describes the end of the wandering and the reseating of the bishopric at Chester-le-Street.[50] Most of these later versions of the account include Bishop Eardwulf and, like *HSC*, have a synchronization with King Alfred of Wessex. Most of them say that the body was moved to Chester-le-Street after many years of wandering, in most cases the figure being seven years.[51]

[48] *Historia regum 'Part 1'* [hereafter *HR1*], in *Byrhtferth's Northumbrian Chronicle: an Edition and Translation of the Old English and Latin Annals*, ed. C. Hart, Early Chronicles of England 1 (Lewiston, 2006), 2–233, at 214–15 (=*Sym. Op.* II, 82); *HR2*, pp. 95–283, at 110; *RHC* I, 42; Roger of Wendover, *Chronica, sive, Flores Historiarum* [hereafter *RW*], ed. H. O. Coxe, 5 vols. (London, 1841–4) I, 326. For recent discussion of *HR2*, see D. Woodman, 'Annals 848 to 1118 in the *Historia Regum*', *Battle of Carham*, ed. McGuigan and Woolf, pp. 202–30.

[49] From the 'common stock', translation in *EHD*, I, p. 194. John of Worcester reads '…exercitus Hreopedune deserens, in duas se diuisit turmas, cuius altera pars cum Halfdene in regionem Norðanhymbrorum perrexit, ibique hiemauit iuxta flumen quod dicitur Tine, et totam Norðanhymbrorum regionem suo subdidit dominio, necnon Pictos et Stratcluttenses depopulati sunt. Altera quoque pars cum Guðrum et Oscytel et Amund, tribus paganorum regibus, ad locum qui dicitur Grantebrycge, peruenit, ibique hiemauit', for which see JW, *Chron.* (see below, n. 52), *s.a.* 875 (ed. Darlington *et al.*, II, 304–5); cf. Roger of Howden *s.a.* 875 (*HR1* proper is slightly fragmentary at this point), '[P]aganorum exercitus Reopadun deserens, in duas se divisit turmas, cuius altera pars cum Alfdene in regionem Northanhimbrorum perrexit, et totam Northanhimbrorum regionem dominio suo subdidit. Tunc Erdulfus episcopus Lindisfarnensis, et Edredus abbas, corpus Sancti Cuthberti de insula Lindisfarnensi tollentes per septem annos passim uagabantur. Altera autem pars exercitus cum Guderum et Oskitel et Amundo, tribus regibus, apud Grantebrige hyemauit'; for which see *RHC* I, 42. I have underlined the passage distinct to the 'northern' tradition.

[50] *HR1*, pp. 222–3 (=*Sym. Op.* I, 86), *HR2*, p. 114; *RHC* I, 44–5; *RW* I, 335–6; in Cyril Hart's interpretation, anything in *HR1* has the potential to originate *c.* 1000, but even he seems to have believed it more likely that *s.a.* 883 was 'a post-Conquest insertion made at Durham' (Hart, *Byrhtferth's Northumbrian Chronicle*, p. 223, n. 1).

[51] The exception is *HR1,* which says nine (ix) years, though an interlineation was added to the manuscript correcting the original scribe's number to seven (vii); for which see Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 139, 72v, and the useful notes by B. Meehan, 'A Reconsideration of the Historical Works Associated with Symeon of Durham: Manuscripts, Texts, and Influences' (unpubl. PhD dissertation, Univ. of Edinburgh, 1979), p. 195 (for 74v). *HR1*'s outlying figure is potentially interesting as a possible sign of a distinct source behind its *s.a.* 875 'interpolation'; the entry mentions Bishop Eardwulf but not Chester-le-Street: 'Eardulfus episcopus et abbas Eadredus de Lindisfarnensi insula corpus sancti Cuthberti tollentes per.ix. annos ante faciem barbarorum de loco ad locum fugientes, cum illo thesauro discurrerunt', *HR1*, *s.a.* 875 (ed. Hart, p. 214=ed. Arnold, *Sym. Op.* II, 82).

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The hope that these entries reveal a long, secure chain of transmission appears to be dashed by the earliest certain witness to this tradition of Anglo-Latin annals: *Chronicon ex chronicis*, currently attributed to John of Worcester and now known by his name.[52] In this compilation, the basis for *Historia regum 'Part 2'* and other annal collections named above, we find instead that a scribe writing sometime between 1128 and 1140 (or soon after) added a marginal note, *s.a.* 995, summarising the account about Bishop Eardwulf and the flight to Chester-le-Street, remarking that the body had remained there until moved to Durham in the time of King Æthelred II.[53] This is one of a number of Durham-related *notitiae* added to *Chronicon ex chronicis* by later hands. Durham material in these annals originates in *LDE*, which makes it almost certain that there were no such Durham entries in that particular annal tradition prior to Symeon of Durham's historical work; by extension, we can probably rule out the inclusion of these episodes in any pre–twelfth-century annals ancestral to surviving ones.[54] At the very least, the annals as we have them do not offer independent authority for either the 'Flight of Eardwulf' or 'Ealdhun's Translation' as early sources. In essence, despite amplification by the annal tradition and modern historiography, the tradition about the move to Chester-le-Street (rather than Norham) in the ninth century seems to represent a single strand of historical evidence. A single error, misunderstanding, mix-up, rationalization, lie or act of narrative recycling, made perhaps *c.* 1100, could be responsible. As things stand, it is only this that needs to be weighed against the 'Resting Places of Saints' and William of Malmesbury.

'FLIGHT OF EARDWULF' AND THE *PERSONAE* OF DURHAM

Given the imperfect information available to the modern scholar, we are not in a position to treat the 'Flight of Eardwulf' as a reliable account of any event that happened in the Viking Age; even if the episode documents a real event, we have no particular reason to trust the chronological context built for it in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. None of that means, however, that the tale was *invented* by the compiler of *HSC* or by Symeon or his associates. We can allow a lot of room for rewriting, 're-spinning' and creative storytelling, but the modern historian will face fewer issues by accepting that, most likely, the 'Flight of Eardwulf' is

[52] John of Worcester, *Chronicon* [hereafter JW, *Chron.*], in *The Chronicle of John of Worcester*, ed. R. R. Darlington and P. McGurk with J. Bray, 2/3 vols. (Oxford, 1995–8).

[53] *Chronicle of John of Worcester*, ed. Darlington *et al.,* II, xxviii–xxxv; marginal entry is on the left at Oxford, Corpus Christi College 157, p. 318, printed JW, *Chron., s.a.* 995 (ed. Darlington *et al.*, II, 444–7), with the scribe identified by Darlington, *et al.*, *ibid.* p. 447, n. 1.

[54] Cf. Oxford, Corpus Christi College 157, pp. 280, 282, 284, 285, 286, 304, 307, 309, 311, 314, 316, 328 and 335; printed JW, *Chron.*, ed. Darlington *et al.*, pp. 230–1, 240–1, 246–7 (and n. 6), 60–1, 268–9, 352–3, 372–3, 386–7, 398–9, 418–19, 438–9, 506–7 and 544–7; Brett, 'John of Worcester', p. 121, n. 3.

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modelled on some Northumbrian English tradition, even if only an oral account. The same logic may apply to 'Ealdhun's Translation', though the latter is so similar to the 'Flight of Eardwulf' that outright fabrication probably should be considered as a serious possibility. In any case, the limited value these accounts have for pre-Norman history should not be allowed to obscure one of the few things we seem to know: what *HSC* and *LDE* do tell us about the 'Flight of Eardwulf' is that, around 1100, it was a key story for the principal native stakeholders in the Cuthbertine corporation: the men claiming an inherited right to attend the body of Cuthbert.

These men, whom we can call *personae* (following conveniently ambiguous contemporary usage),[55] claimed descent from ancestors who had, according to legend, personally guided the body of Cuthbert on its seven-year exodus from Lindisfarne to Chester-le-Street. *LDE* mentions four: Hunred, Sitheard, Eadmund and Franco.[56] *LDE* further provides genealogies descending from two of them, Hunred and Franco: Hemming, priest of Sedgefield, and his brother Wulfkill, priest of Brancepeth, are said to descend from Hunred *Cretel* through their mother; a certain Ælfred, son of Alchmund the priest, is said to descend through his grandmother from Franco.[57] One of Hunred's descendants, Collan son of Eadred, was regarded as the first *prepositus* of Hexham in a twelfth-century tract on Hexham, taking up the office during the episcopate of Eadmund.[58] As Symeon put it, 'many of their descendants … take pride that their ancestors are said to have served St Cuthbert so faithfully'.[59] The seven-year exile and supernaturally-guided foundational ancestors present the 'Flight of Eardwulf' as a 'charter myth'.[60] The senior members of the Anglo-Saxon Cuthbertine community who encountered the Normans in the eleventh century seem to have used

[55] *The Augustinian's St Andrews Foundation Account*, ed. and trans. S. Taylor, *The Place-Names of Fife*, 5 vols. (Donington, 2006–13) III, 600–15, at 602, 608, n. 336.

[56] *LDE* ii.12 (ed. Rollason, pp. 116–7).

[57] *LDE* iii.1 (ed. Rollason, pp. 146–9).

[58] For the two slightly different accounts of the provosts and priests of Hexham, see *The Priory of Hexham*, ed. J. Raine, 2 vols., Surtees Society 44, 46 (Durham, 1864–5) I, Appendix, vii–viii, and vii, n. j (where this specific claim is made); for the lineage, see *LDE* iii.1 (ed. Rollason, pp. 146–7).

[59] *LDE* ii.12 (ed. Rollason, pp. 116–17).

[60] To borrow a term derived from the 'sociological charter' analogy employed by the renowned Anglo-Polish anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski for oral–historical traditions that function to legitimize the rights and inequalities that make up any social order; see B. Malinowski, *Magic, Science and Religion* (Boston, MA, 1948), pp. 79–124; a good discussion of how 'history' works in this context can be found in M. Herzfeld, *Anthropology* (Malden, MA, 2001), pp. 55–89; for a longer study about the flexibility and utility of genealogy and 'historical memory' even within a modern literate society, see A. Shryock, *Nationalism and the Genealogical Imagination: Oral History and Textual Authority in Tribal Jordan* (Berkeley, CA, 1997).

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something very similar to the 'Flight of Eardwulf' to account for their own status and privileges.

The 'Flight of Eardwulf' (and indeed 'Ealdhun's Translation') bears noteworthy similarity to another creative origin myth of the era. The native establishment at St Andrews, the bishopric immediately to the north on the east coast of Britain, produced a tale with some striking similarities. The 'B-version' of the 'St Andrews Foundation Legend' recounted the flight of a certain Bishop Ríagal (*Regulus*) from Patras with pieces of Saint Andrew's skeleton. In both aims and methods, this foundation legend is very similar to the 'Flight of Eardwulf': Hálfdan corresponds to the Emperor Constantius in causing the 'flight' and demise of the old order, Guthred is equivalent to the Pictish ruler *Hungus* for facilitating the emergence of the new order; the ecclesiastical father figures, Ríagal and his followers, build seven churches after landing in Fife. A larger number of companions of Ríagal are also named; but the seven churches, like the seven companions of Eardwulf, seemingly narrativize the corporate structure of a Viking-Age monastery or monastic *familia*. Indeed, according to another early St Andrews text, the so-called 'Augustinian account', there were seven *personae* at St Andrews *c.* 1140.[61] The story had probably been one of many similar collective origin legends propounded by Britain's native ecclesiastical establishment around 1100.

Recognizing the 'Flight of Eardwulf' as origin or 'charter myth' circulating in Symeon's time eliminates the need to debate the precise truth or falsity of the episode, at least in its extant textual form. For the hopeful historian, the detail presented by a such a story may 'hark back' to a precise set of real events, but as we saw above it is not possible to rely on the chronological framework offered by *HSC* or by Symeon even if this hope could be well founded. The mythic episode is offering us more about the politics of the era in which it emerged than the era with which it was synchronized by *HSC* and Symeon. Unfortunately, as we have seen, we cannot be certain about the context of its emergence because of the uncertainty about the date of all the components of *HSC*. In terms of the available evidence, it is possible that this myth emerged as late as the post-Conquest era as an attempt by the *personae* and their associates to gain credibility with their new Norman overlords or to counter disdain directed at them by incoming Benedictines; or perhaps they managed to use it to convince colonial incomers like Symeon that their origin legend should be regarded as a core part of the Cuthbertine shrine's story prior to the institution of Southumbrian Benedictines and French bishops as the religious house's dominant stakeholders. The episode's lack of solid accompanying chronology would have given significant interpretational freedom to

[61] For which, see *Augustinian's St Andrews Foundation Account*, ed. and trans. Taylor, pp. 602, 608; for the 'B version', see S. Taylor, *Place Names of Fife* III, 567–79; cf. T. M. Charles-Edwards, 'The Seven Bishop-Houses of Dyfed', *The Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, 24.III (1971), 247–62.

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historical researchers like Symeon, but it would also have created pressure to reconcile solid chronology derived from written sources with the 'truth' of the 'charter myth' and related tradition. That would have included not only the Eardwulf episode itself, but satellite genealogical traditions relating to the ancestors of the *personae*.

If the historian looks closely at *LDE*, this pressure seems to have made its mark on Symeon's project. There appears to be, for instance, a doubled-up parent-child relationship within a pedigree provided for one *persona*: its Hunred–Eadwulf–Eadred–Collan–Eadred–Collan lineage is the kind of thing that would have been more plausible in Symeon's world than that of the modern specialist of Anglo-Saxon naming practices, where this pattern is rare. Symeon's procrustean chronological bed could also explain the 210-year stretch of life given to a certain Riggulf, grandson of companion Franco, who had been part of the move to Durham from Chester-le-Street; again, this kind of lifespan might have been more plausible to the early-twelfth-century monk familiar with the ages assigned to early biblical figures than it would be to a modern scientist familiar with human ageing.[62] The important point here is that, when corrected, these pedigrees are incompatible with the narrative chronology that Symeon presents. Without the superhuman lifespans added by Symeon, these genealogies would take the *personae* ancestors back not much earlier than 1000, certainly not the ninth century.

Reginald of Durham indicates that another of the bearers of the body, (what in the ninth century would be) the anachronistically-Scandinavian name *Eilaf*, had been caught stealing cheese and transformed into a fox. Though Cuthbert returned him to human form, Eilaf's descendants retained the name *Tod*, translated *uulpecula* ('little fox').[63] Eilaf's kin, Reginald claims, became holders of Bedlington (one of Durham's exclaves in Northumberland) by hereditary right,[64] and indeed one Eilaf is recorded as 'of Bedlington' in a purported charter of 1085.[65] The rationalizing assumption would be that the latter Eilaf and the ancestor were distinct people, but by Reginald's time in the later twelfth century the eleventh-century Eilaf could have come to be remote enough to telescoped

[62] *LDE* iii.1 (ed. Rollason, pp. 146–9).

[63] Reginald of Durham, *Libellus de admirandis beati Cuthberti virtutibus*, ed. J. Raine, Surtees Society 1 (London, 1835) [hereafter *Cuth. Virt.*], 27–8; for the etymology of the name, see *DLV*, II, 219.

[64] *Cuth. Virt.*, p. 29; cf. W. H. D Longstaffe., 'The Hereditary Sacerdotage of Hexham', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 2nd Ser., 4 (1860), 11–28, at 13–14.

[65] *Durham Episcopal Charters, 1071–1152*, ed. H. S. Offler, Surtees Society 179 (Gateshead, 1968), no. 5; cf. D. S. Boutflower, *Fasti Dunelmenses: a Record of the Beneficed Clergy of the Diocese of Durham down to the Dissolution of the Monastic and Collegiate Churches,* Surtees Society 139 (Durham, 1926), 187.

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with the ninth century as part of distant 'deep past'.[66] This Eilaf may even have been the same Eilaf who was priest of Hexham at the time *LDE* was composed. Other sources indicate that this office, although nominally conferred by the bishops of Durham, had been passed down to him from his father Ælfred, son of Westou, who himself appears to have acquired the right through marriage to a female descendant of Hunred. Eilaf *Tod* could, then, be an attempt to reinforce the position of Ælfred's descendants by beefing up the historic credentials of their agnatic line.[67]

One cannot rule out, entirely, the possibility that the events of the 'Flight of Eardwulf' originated under the influence of an early textual source, but there is no confirmation of this from sources that are demonstrably early. There may have been some earlier basis for the account, and some earlier source may yet turn up; but, as things stand, we are not able to verify the existence of such a source, and we have to acknowledge that it remains based on hope and accompanying speculation. The episode seems to make sense as an origin or 'charter myth' of the *personae* of Durham, which would allow us to account for significance without necessarily assigning the account much usefulness as a guide to Viking-Age history. Indeed, as we saw above, there appear to some signs that Symeon's attempts to reconcile it with his own chronological system caused him problems.

Whether or not that explanation is accepted, the move to Chester-le-Street in the later ninth century is not a historical event that is entitled to the credibility often given it by historians working on the era. We should seek other sources that may shed light on the Viking-Age episcopate in the far north of England, and interpret them with an open mind, without any particular need to reconcile anything 'surprising' with the unreliable detail or chronological framework presented to us by *HSC* and Symeon. It is with this approach that the value of the 'Resting-Places of Saints' stands out. If we recognize that we are dealing in probabilities based on the value of the evidence we actually have, it makes no sense to use the late information in the Durham tradition to reject the information provided by the 'Resting-Places of Saints'. Its information about Cuthbert's body could very well be out of date, but there is no better evidence for any alternative. Moreover, even if the 'Resting-Places of Saints' was out of date, that itself would not make the Durham material reliable. That is to say, the Durham account of the Cuthbertine community produced in the eleventh and twelfth centuries could not be used with confidence for the early Viking Age even if it was the only tradition that presented

[66] Cf. Herzfeld, *Anthropology*, p. 57, with the late-nineteenth-century 'Columbus' as the originator of all oppressive social order among late-twentieth-century Andean peasants, including late-nineteenth-century land legislation.

[67] For discussion of the Hexham descendants of the heroic companions of Cuthbert, see Aird, *St Cuthbert and the Normans*, pp. 116–22.

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us with relevant dates and episodes. It is probably still open to question how reliable the 'Resting-Places of Saints' is for its information about Norham *c.* 1000, but the information provided by the 'Resting-Places of Saints', re-affirmed (if not corroborated) by William of Malmesbury, that Cuthbert lay at Norham *c.* 1000 prior to the move to Durham, is the closest thing we have to knowledge about the location of Cuthbert in the Viking Age.

MISCELLANEOUS EXTRACTS

As far as our problem in concerned, the value of *HSC*, and indeed William of Malmesbury and Symeon of Durham, is the potential to transmit earlier material. When there is reason to believe that a particular passage is earlier or originated separately from the surviving unitary account, historians must be prepared to review how the extract has been presented in regard to context and chronology. If a textual fragment or episode can be an independent source, then it can be evaluated independently—independent of a dating apparatus or narrative context provided by any compiler reproducing it. It is worth noting, then, that even *HSC* itself does reproduce a source supporting the 'Resting-Places of Saints' and William of Malmesbury. This is an extract that we can call the 'Norham Account': 'Hoc tempore obiit sanctus Cuthbertus et successit Ezred episcopus, qui transportauit quondam ecclesiam olim factam a beato Aidano tempore Osuualdi regis de Lindisfarnensi insula ad Northam, ibique eam reedificauit et illuc corpus sancti Cuthberti et Ceolwulfi regis transtulit…'[68] *HSC* as we have it is a unitary document, but *some* components of *HSC* were produced from pre-existing material. It happens to be the case that the compiler of *HSC* arranged the 'Norham Account' to precede the 'Flight of Eardwulf', but for us this would only matter if we were certain about the historical competence possessed by the architect of *HSC*. This person, as discussed above, thought that the ninth-century Bishop Ecgred had been the direct successor of the seventh-century saint ('Hoc tempore obiit sanctus Cuthbertus et successit Ezred episcopus').[69]

Unlike the 'Flight of Eardwulf', we do have evidence that the 'Norham Account' arose from a component of *HSC* that originated separately as a textual extract; and we also have some reason to believe that other historical writers of the Anglo-Norman era came to decisions about how to use the 'Norham Account' that differed from the decisions made by the architect of *HSC*. A variation of the 'Norham Account', arranged quite differently, is preserved in the later-twelfth-

[68] See *HSC*, ch. 9 (ed. and trans. South, pp. 48–9). 'At this time the saintly Cuthbert died and was succeeded by bishop Ecgred, who transported the former church, originally built by beatified Aidan in the time of King Oswald, from the isle of Lindisfarne to Norham and there rebuilt it, and translated thither the body of St Cuthbert and [that] of King Ceolwulf.'

[69] *HSC* ch. 9 (ed. and trans. South, pp. 48–9).

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century *Vita sancti Oswaldi regis*, sometimes attributed to Reginald of Durham. The 'Norham Account' was included in this compilation because the compiler was concerned with the movement of Oswald's head (which had accompanied Cuthbert). *Vita Oswaldi*'s version is more or less identical in words and detail to the version in *HSC*, except that the date given, 884, postdates the chronology suggested by *HSC's* arrangement; and conflicts with the Symeonic framework.[70] *Vita Oswaldi* as a whole need not concern us, but the *vita* rather than being a fluid hagiography is quite transparently a series of edited extracts that the compiler had been able to find in the work of earlier writers who discussed the life, death and relics of the saint.[71] This independent attestation of the story, seemingly presented in a separate chronological scheme, may provide another reason for believing that the detail of the 'Norham Account' could significantly predate *HSC* and the 'Flight of Eardwulf' (much like 'Guthred's Dream', see below).

There are difficulties in assessing how the 'Norham Account' was incorporated into *Vita Oswaldi*. There is little reason to think that *Vita Oswaldi* is reproducing a Viking-Age source verbatim. The episode's chronological setting is no less plausible than the alternative offered in *HSC*. Following Symeonic tradition, Bishop Ecgred is normally assumed to have died in the 840s, though this is not corroborated by contemporary sources. The later date offered by *Vita Oswaldi*, the year 884, still lies within the range of what is plausible,[72] and no obvious motive for fabricating it is immediately apparent. Nonetheless, it clearly contradicts the chronology and narrative finalized by Symeon and disseminated in the early twelfth century.[73] The situation discourages the view that the otherwise rather clumsy author of *Vita Oswaldi* calculated the date himself, but there is no obvious reason to date the extract prior to the Norman Conquest. Theoretically, 884 may be an error, but it is difficult to dismiss or explain away with any type of reasoning

[70] '[A]nno ab incarnatione Domini octingentesimo octogesimo quarto, ecclesiam quandam olim factam a beato Aidano tempore sancti Oswaldi regis, de Lindisfarnensi insula ad Northam, quae antiquitus Ubbanforde dicebatur, transtulit. Aedificata ibi ecclesia in honore sanctorum Petri et Pauli, corpus Sancti Cuthberti et sancti Ceowlfi regis corpus illuc transtulit, et in eorum nomine ecclesiam dedicavit'; for which, see *Vita sancti Oswaldi regis et martyris* [hereafter *VSOR*], ed. Arnold, *Sym. Op.* I. 326–85, at 361.

[71] The printed version is missing about half its content, mostly extracts from Bede omitted by Arnold for that reason; for discussion, see V. Tudor, 'Reginald's *Life of Oswald*', *Oswald: Northumbrian King to European Saint*, ed. C. Stancliffe and E. Cambridge (Stamford, 1996), pp. 178–94.

[72] See n. 27 above.

[73] According to Symeon (*LDE* ii.5 (ed. Rollason, pp. 92–5)), Ecgred's episcopate begins and post-dates the time of King Eanred; Symeon calculated that Ecgred's episcopate ended in 846 or 847, but Symeon's treatment of this phase of chronology is virtually useless and better evidence suggests that King Eanred was probably still reigning in the early-to-mid 850s, for which see Pagan, 'Northumbrian Numismatic Chronology in the Ninth Century', and Rollason, *LDE*, p. 91, n. 931.

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that would not do even more damage to the credibility of the 'Flight of Eardwulf'. Crucially, *Vita Oswaldi* suggests that whoever was responsible for the extract's chronological framework believed that Cuthbert had been moved to Norham in the same year that Symeon had claimed (or would claim) Cuthbert had been moved to Chester-le-Street.[74] Had this historian been influenced by William of Malmesbury, or by other established (or even subaltern) traditions about Norham? The modern scholar cannot know for certain, but our analysis hardly encourages confidence in the presentation of the Viking-Age past offered by *HSC* and Symeon. The author of *Vita Oswaldi* was able to reproduce a piece of text independently attested in *HSC* in a way that conflicts with its presentation in *HSC*: unlike the 'Flight of Eardwulf', the 'Norham Account' circulated in sources not created or influenced by Symeon. The simplest explanation is that the 'Norham Account' is based on pre-*HSC* and pre-Symeonic theory about Cuthbert's Viking-Age movement, one that corresponds better to the contemporary evidence of the 'Resting-Places of Saints' than the familiar presentation of the 'Flight of Eardwulf'. At the same time, although William of Malmesbury's account is not a direct textual borrowing of the 'Norham Account' used by *HSC*, its picture is very similar to what is suggested by the 'Norham Account' in the context presented by *Vita Oswaldi*, which also points to access to a pre-existing source not subject (so the theory would go) to Symeonic revisionism.

According to *HSC*'s own particular arrangement of its extracts, Cuthbert was moved to Norham soon after his own death [sic] led to the succession of Ecgred (c. 9); later, during the time of King Alfred, Cuthbert's body was relocated to Chester-le-Street. At face value, it might look as if *HSC* is suggesting that the corpse lay at Norham for a period in the early-to-mid-ninth century, until the last decades of the century when it was moved to Chester-le-Street. However, the detail is more complicated, and indeed even a face-value reading would not produce this coherent picture without 'correction' by a modern historian: *HSC* specifies that the body was moved *from Lindisfarne* (that is, not Norham) to Chester-le-Street.[75] This difference may appear minor, but it is evidence that the architect of *HSC* has not properly integrated the 'Norham Account'; the wording seems to be betraying the relative chronology of *HSC*. The modern historian has to invent a move back to Lindisfarne from Norham to rationalize *HSC*'s narrative. The two almost identical versions of the 'Norham Account', attested in *HSC* and elsewhere in *Vita Oswaldi*, happen to be arranged differently, but the modern historian is probably free to look at the 'Norham Account' and the

[74] See Rollason, *LDE*, pp. 122–3, n. 78, for the dating of Cuthbert's arrival at Chester-le-Street in 883, which is not explicitly stated by *LDE* in annalistic form.

[75] See p. 128 above; for the suggestion that it returned to Lindisfarne from Norham, see Aird, *St Cuthbert and the Normans*, pp. 24–5.

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standard version of the 'Flight of Eardwulf' as parallel, contradictory explanations for how Cuthbert left Lindisfarne, explanations which the compiler of the *HSC* *may* have attempted to reconcile merely through the relative positioning of each extract. Going further, if we believe that the compiler of *HSC* and Symeon were different people or had no contact with each other – even the former is far from *certain*, particularly as the handwriting in the earliest manuscript of *HSC* has been identified as Symeon's[76] – Symeon would have been faced with a similar choice between either the 'Flight of Eardwulf' or the 'Norham Account'; in *LDE* he decided to favour the 'Flight of Eardwulf' and to discard the information about Cuthbert's body presented by *HSC*'s 'Norham Account' (he only retained the part about the movement of Ceolwulf to Norham).[77] Modern historians are not compelled to follow Symeon's judgement here; and probably should not.

There are other items that should be mentioned not because they provide *direct* evidence against the Symeonic interpretation, but because they have consonance with the alternative picture suggested by the 'Norham Account', by William of Malmesbury and by the 'Resting-Places of Saints'. One is yet another extract witnessed by *HSC* that appears, like the 'Norham Account', to have had an independent life. It is present in only one manuscript of *HSC*, and it is independently attested in a twelfth-century manuscript with tenth-century content, Paris, Bibliotheque nationale de France, lat. 5362 (fols. 53v–54r). South calls this extract 'Guthred's Dream'.[78] In a battle between the Northumbrians and the Scots at a place called *Mundingedene*, 'Guthred's Dream' relates that the Scottish host is

[76] See above, p. 136, and n. 38. It is also worth noting, as it seems to have escaped significant scholarly notice, that the mid-twelfth-century *Vita Kentegerni imperfecta*, written in Durham's neighbouring diocese, refers to 'Symeon once monk of Durham' as the author of a certain 'History of his own St Cuthbert' (*Symeon monachus olim Dunelmensis de Sancto suo Cuthberto historiam contexuit*…), wording that mirrors the incipit of *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* in one of the three surviving manuscripts, hence its modern title; see *Vita Kentegerni imperfecta auctore ignoto*, prologue, ed. A. P. Forbes, *Lives of S. Ninian and S. Kentigern: Compiled in the Twelfth Century, Edited from the Best MSS* (Edinburgh 1874) , pp. 243–52, at 243. This could obviously refer to *Libellus de exordio*, and as the title suggests *Vita Kentegerni imperfecta* does not survive intact. Judging by the full, re-written version by Jocelin of Furness, there may have been similarities between the texts, including a resemblance between the 'Donation of Guthred' and a similar Glasgow episode, which we might call by analogy the 'Donation of Rederech'; see Jocelin of Furness, *Vita S. Kentegerni*, ch. 33, ed. Forbes, *Lives of S. Ninian and S. Kentigern*, pp. 159–242, at 218-19.

[77] See *LDE* ii.1 (ed. and trans. Rollason, pp. 78–9), and ii.5 (ed. and trans. Rollason, pp. 92–3).

[78] For discussion of 'Guthred's Dream', see South, *HSC*, pp. 116–17; M. Lapidge, *The Cult of Swithun*, Winchester Stud. 4.ii (Oxford, 2003), 555, n. 26; and B. Colgrave, *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert* (Cambridge, 1950), p. 35; the text is *HSC*, ch. 33 (ed. and trans. South, pp. 68–71). There is evidence that the episode may be based upon (it is at least related to) accounts about the death of King Causantín mac Cinaeda that circulated in the Insular Scandinavian world in the centuries after his death in 877, for which see B. T. Hudson, *Prophecy of Berchán: Irish and Scottish High-kings of the Early Middle Ages* (Westport, CT, 1996), p. 204.

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swallowed by the earth. The precise site of *Mundingedene* has not been identified with certainty, but the surrounding action is set along the Tweed and, seemingly, close to Lindisfarne. Reginald of Durham in the later twelfth century described *Munegedene* as a hill on the Tweed lying in the vicinity of Norham – perhaps Ladykirk, but possibly the raised ground that later became the site of Norham Castle.[79] The source does not mention the body of Cuthbert at Norham, but as a tale of potential tenth-century origin its depiction of a great threat to the Cuthbertine church and the lack of reference to anything further south than the Tweed basin would be in line with a tenth-century resting place at Norham (or indeed Lindisfarne).

Likewise, at the end of c. 21, *HSC* has a note of how a certain Tilred, abbot of Heversham (Westmorland), bought Castle Eden from Edward the Elder, giving half to Cuthbert 'so that he might be a brother in his monastery' ('ut esset frater in eius monasterio') and half to Norham 'so that he might be abbot there' ('ut ibi esset abbas'). This could be another case where the *HSC* compiler may be preserving earlier material. It shows Tilred gaining membership of the Cuthbertine *familia* and an abbacy; it does not explicitly state that the 'abbacy' at Norham had particularly high status within the *familia*, but freed from the Symeonic straight-jacket that would be the natural inference to draw. If this information did come from an earlier source, the incidental notice of Norham in this type of context would strongly support the idea that it had been the centre of the Cuthbertine *familia* in the tenth century. If Norham was at the heart of the Cuthbertine see in Tilred's time, it makes sense for an extract like this to have survived in Cuthbertine records. The appearance of Tilred's name on the Cuthbertine episcopal lists, perhaps, strengthens the appeal of this reading, even though these only begin appearing *c.* 1100.[80]

As we saw above, material that was derived from *HSC*, probably via *LDE,* was re-used by being added to the northern Anglo-Latin annals derived from *Chronicon ex chronicis*, a tradition represented best by *Historia regum 'Part 2'* and Roger of Howden. The northern annals also utilize a number of additions from other source(s). Among these, there is a passage explicitly about the Viking-Age diocese of Lindisfarne, which for the sake of analysis we can call 'Properties of the Diocese of Lindisfarne'. The extract has been inserted alongside the 'Flight of Eardwulf', and in this surviving form appears to be pushing a claim to Carlisle. Carlisle was a concern of Durham 'historians' in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, before King Henry I decided to make the site the centre of a new diocese.

[79] *Cuth. Virt.*, p. 149: ch. 73.

[80] *HSC*, ch. 21 (ed and trans. South, pp. 60–1); the William of Malmesbury recension of the lists is represented by WM, *GPA*, iii. 140.5 (ed. Winterbottom *et al.*, pp. 410–11), with the revised Symeonic version represented by *LDE*, prologue (ed. Rollason, p. 4) – for a sample of lists, see McGuigan, 'Middle Britain', p. 251.

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The geography and place-names used in the text, however, suggest the influence of an older exemplar, and indeed that the 'Properties' could be a recycling of a genuine list of churches subject to Lindisfarne in the Viking Age.[81] After proclaiming its 'ancient' possession of Carlisle and overlordship over all churches north of the Tyne, it lists a number of minsters subordinate to the bishopric of Lindisfarne in and around the Tweed basin. The list begins with *Ubbanford* / Norham, and proceeds around the moor moving from the lower Tweed into Teviotdale (Carham *et Culterham,* Jedburgh, Melrose), up into West Lothian (*Tigbrechingham* and Abercorn), through Midlothian and East Lothian (Edinburgh, *Pefferham*, Auldhame, Tyninghame) back to the lower Tweed (Coldingham, Birgham [only Howden], Tillmouth), returning to *Ubbanford* / Norham.[82] The 'Properties of the Diocese of Lindisfarne' reads as if the episcopal monastery of Lindisfarne claimed supervisory rights over the other 'head ministers' of the region between the Coquet and the Firth of Forth, but the presentation seems to be modelled on a circuit or itineration performed by a bishop based in Norham. In the early medieval Insular World, performance of a circuit was 'a normal expression of lordship'.[83] The extract could be either an accurate description of the Viking-Age diocese or else a tendentious claim made to advance Cuthbertine control over these churches at a later date, perhaps in the eleventh century when the political order of northern Northumbria was disrupted by Scottish, Danish and Norman invaders (see below). On the other hand, the description presents the diocese in a way that clearly pre-dates any merger with Hexham or incorporation into the greater diocese of Durham. Moreover, the centrality of Norham in the account appears as incidental, almost inconvenient information, and concurs with what the 'Resting-Places of Saints', William of Malmesbury and the 'Norham Account' suggest about the Viking-Age diocese of Lindisfarne and the location of its principal shrine.

EMERGENCE OF DURHAM: SECULAR EXPLANATIONS

The evidence considered above, the 'Resting-Places of Saints' and William of Malmesbury in particular, puts the shrine of Cuthbert at Norham in the early eleventh century, with the 'Resting-Places of Saints' suggesting that it was located there until at least 1013. For what it is worth, the move of the shrine to Norham is not a theory that necessitates the abandonment of monastic life in Lindisfarne, nor

[81] For learned Durham pretensions on Carlisle, see R. Sharpe, 'Symeon as Pamphleteer', *Symeon of Durham*, ed. Rollason, pp. 214–29, particularly pp. 215–18; for the archaic place-name forms, see Woolf, *Pictland to Alba*, p. 82.

[82] See *HR2*, p. 101 (= *s.a.* 854); *RHC* I, 45 (= *s.a.* 883).

[83] For this quote, see Charles Edwards, 'Seven Bishop-Houses of Dyfed', p. 261. For the 'Properties of the Diocese of Lindisfarne', see now Woolf, 'Diocese of Lindisfarne', pp. 233-6.

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even that Lindisfarne ceased to be at the centre of the Cuthbertine diocese.[84] A reliable Anglo-Latin annal tells us that a Hiberno-Norse army from York attacked Tyninghame as well as the community of Lindisfarne around 941, enslaving some of the population; sculpture on the island seems to reach a 'second peak' in the tenth century.[85] The relocation of the shrine fourteen or so miles away at *Ubbanford* does not necessarily suggest any drastic reorientation. The site would have been slightly, but hardly much less accessible to opportunistic piratical predation; and *Ubbanford* was well located as a stop-off place on long-distance land routes. Lying just beyond the tidal limit of the Tweed, Norham is adjacent to the lowest fords over the river, and was probably better placed as an administrative centre for most of the surrounding Tweed basin than Lindisfarne, particularly if Scandinavian dominance of the open waters made Lindisfarne (far from being centrally positioned within the diocese) a somewhat riskier place to visit for native Northumbrians and for pilgrims coming from Southumbria or the Celtic-speaking regions.[86]

Despite the loss of much of Northumbria to Scandinavian settlement in the late ninth and early tenth centuries, some of the earlier kingdom of Northumbria appears to have survived as a rump, continuing to provide a set of rulers distinct from the Scandinavians who established themselves further south after the 870s. By the early tenth century, northern Northumbria was ruled by a certain Eadwulf from Bamburgh; his sons and descendants, the Eadwulfings, seem to dominate the far north of England until at least the time of Siward (died 1055). Although Southumbrian English sources deny them royal titles, two are described as 'King of the Northern English' by Irish annals in the early tenth century, and a late-tenth-century Scottish source refers to the capture by Cinaed son of Máel Coluim (died 995) of a 'son of the King of the English' during an invasion of Northumbria ('predauit Saxoniam et traduxit filium regis Saxorum'), who cannot have been the son of the reigning [Southumbrian] English monarch Æthelred.[87] Despite the establishment of a distinct ealdorman for the Northumbrian Anglo-Danish regions by the reign of Edgar, the more distant 'Northern English' principality

[84] It might be tempting to see Viking-Age Lindisfarne in light of what we know about its original mother house, Iona, in the same era; for which, see, for instance, M. Herbert, *Iona, Kells, and Derry* (Oxford, 1988).

[85] See *RW*, I, 396, and the equivalent annal in the short 'Chronicle of 957' that follows *HR1*, in *Sym. Op.*, II, 91–5, at 94. This view of the sculpture at Lindisfarne I take from David Petts, pers. comm.

[86] For sculpture at Norham, see *The Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture, Volume 1. County Durham and Northumberland*, ed. R. Cramp (Oxford, 1984).

[87] *Chronicle of the Kings of Alba*, ed. and trans. B. T. Hudson, 'The Scottish Chronicle', *Scottish Historical Review* 77 (1998), 129–61 (text and translation at 148–61), at 151; and N. McGuigan, 'Ælla and the Descendants of Ivar: Politics and Legend in the Viking Age', *Northern History 52* (2015), 20–34, at 25–31; and further, McGuigan, 'Bamburgh and the Northern English Realm', pp. 96–121.

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was almost certainty left by the West Saxon rulers, at least for the most part, to its own devices. Charter attestations seem to suggest that both the rulers of Bamburgh and the Cuthbertine bishops were very remote from their power, and the connection of the region with the West Saxon dynasty seems to have been more like that of Strathclyde or Gwynedd than Yorkshire. Around 970, one *Eadulf Dux* and the Cuthbertine bishop, Ælfsige, both show up in Southumbrian documents.[88] Almost a quarter of a century later in 994, another Eadwulfing, Waltheof (father of Uhtred) appears in Southumbria in the aftermath of the sacking of the Northern English capital of Bamburgh by a Scandinavian army.[89] The next bishop thought to be associated with northern Northumbria (Ealdhun) does not make his solitary appearance until 1009 – a significant fact, given that the body of surviving charters is substantial at this stage and that the holders of most English bishoprics, including York, attest charters regularly.[90]

There can be no doubt that the diocese of St Cuthbert in the tenth century was very closely tied to the Eadwulfings of Bamburgh. It is even possible that the see was the single, 'national' bishopric of the Eadwulfing principality in the tenth century, in the same way the *episcopus Scottorum / ardepscop Alban* (early-twelfth-century titles for the bishop of St Andrews) was responsible for the Scottish kingdom. The negative imprint of Scandinavian place-names would suggest that the Eadwulfing polity was confined to the region a little north of the Tyne, with core territory in the Tweed basin but probably some intermittent power as far south as the Tyne as well as north over the Lammermuir into Lothian proper.[91] The territory described by the 'Properties of the Diocese of Lindisfarne' corresponds with this pattern somewhat. It is worth pointing out that in *HSC* there is another, less extensive description of the boundaries of the see where the Coquet appears to form the southern frontier of Lindisfarne's jurisdiction.[92] Interestingly, that kind of frontier also seems to have been recognized in one of the historical traditions that Symeon of Durham included in relation to 'Ealdhun's Translation'. According to *LDE*, when the body of Cuthbert was moved to Durham, 'people from the whole area between the river Coquet and the river Tees' ('a flumine

[88] See S 779 and S. Keynes, *An Atlas of Attestations in Anglo-Saxon Charters, c. 670–1066*. I, Tables (xxx), ASNC Guides, Texts, and Studies, 5th draft ed. (Cambridge, 2002), table LVI, for Eadwulf's last appearance; for Ælfsige's, S 781, and Keynes, *Atlas*, table LIV; both charters are, however, from Ely archives, though contemporary sources put Cuthbertine *prepositus* Ealdred in Wessex during Ælfsige's episcopate, for which see K. L. Jolly, *The Community of St. Cuthbert in the Late Tenth Century* (Columbus, OH, 2012), pp. 66–8 and 325–6.

[89] *ASC* 993 CDE, trans. *EHD*, I, p. 235.

[90] S 922 (*Burt* 32).

[91] See McGuigan, 'Ælla and the Descendants of Ivar', p. 30, n. 44; note also that Richard of Hexham believed that the Aln had been the border between the dioceses of Hexham and Lindisfarne, for which see *Priory of Hexham* I, 20,

[92] *HSC,* ch. 4 (ed. and trans. South, pp. 46–7).

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Coqued' usque Tesam uniuersa populorum') came to help clear the vicinity of Durham of trees and construct a new cathedral.[93]

This geography would indicate that, unlike a move to Norham, a move to Durham was a radical change that would have significantly damaged the prestige and long-term position of the Eadwulfings (who were still very much around in the 1020s and 1030s). It may be no coincidence that the 1010s witnessed two disasters for them: the Danish invasions and the defeat by the Scots at the battle of Carham *c.* 1018, one of which led to the death of Uhtred.[94] It was a high fall, because Uhtred had enjoyed a historically powerful position: in addition to ruling the northern Bamburgh polity, he married the daughter of King Æthelred and acquired authority further south, holding the viceregal ealdordom in [southern] Northumbria.[95] The loss of this most prestigious, core shrine from the Eadwulfing polity could, then, be interpreted to mean a significant, sudden (if perhaps temporary) diminution of power in the aftermath of Carham and the Danish conquest of England. Cnut replaced Uhtred as ealdorman in York with a Scandinavian *dux* named Erik, and in the subsequent decades the Danish regime may have used its strength to reorder northern matters at the expense of the Eadwulfings. Cnut's period as principal ruler of England and the Scandinavian world does seem to have stimulated changes to episcopal authority and diocesan structure, both in Scandinavia itself and in the 'peripheral' Scandinavian areas of the Insular world (for example, Dublin and Orkney, and, possibly, Glasgow).[96] On the other hand, *LDE* claimed the move to Durham had been organized by Uhtred himself, a statement that is potentially baseless but which we are not free to dismiss entirely. Uhtred had exercised power throughout Northumbria as both ruler of Bamburgh and ealdorman in York and may have wished to tie the two regions back together in the interests of patrimonial aggrandizement, perhaps trying to 'reunite' Northumbria; and, presumably, he would have sought to do this before being deposed as

[93] *LDE* iii.2 (ed. Rollason, pp. 148–9); the phraseology here (particularly *uniuersa populorum*) might be read to suggest that ghosts of the sees of Lindisfarne and Hexham had wrought themselves very prominently on eleventh-century ecclesiastical organization.

[94] See Woolf, *Pictland to Alba*, pp. 230–40.

[95] Anglo-Norman learned attempts to organize Viking-Age Northumbrian history confuse the ealdordom with the Bamburgh polity, but claims that Uhtred was appointed to the ealdordom are confirmed in the *ASC*: see *ASC* CDE 1016 and *ASC* CDE 1017 (trans. *EHD*, I, p. 248, p. 251); see also S. Keynes, 'Cnut's Earls', *Reign of Cnut: King of England, Denmark and Norway*, ed. A. Rumble (London, 1994), pp. 43–88, at 57–8; and N. McGuigan, 'Bamburgh and the Northern English Realm: Understanding the Dominion of Uhtred', *Battle of Carham*, ed. McGuigan and Woolf, pp. 95–150, at 121–9.

[96] Foot, 'Kings, Saints and Conquests', pp. 146–51, sees Cnut's reign as key; see also T. Bolton, *The Empire of Cnut the Great: Conquest and the Consolidation of Power in Northern Europe in the Early Eleventh Century* (Leiden, 2009), pp. 276–87; B. T. Hudson, *Viking Pirates and Christian Princes: Dynasty, Religion and Empire in the North Atlantic* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 106–27; Woolf, *Pictland to Alba*, p. 263.

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ealdorman by Cnut in 1016. On the other hand, the role given to Uhtred by Symeon may also be conjecture, perhaps a side-effect of Symeon's semi-speculative chronology or perhaps to deflate claims by northerners that the people south of the Coquet had stolen their relics unjustly.

EMERGENCE OF DURHAM: ECCLESIASTICAL EXPLANATIONS

There may also be possible explanations that are more ecclesiastically specific. Understanding the move from Lindisfarne to Durham is inevitably tied up with how we understand the Northumbrian episcopate in the Viking Age. We know from reliable early medieval sources that Northumbria had four bishoprics in the early ninth century: York, Hexham, Lindisfarne and Whithorn. Of these only only York survived by the Anglo-Norman era, alongside one other diocese with its seat at Durham. Far to the south of Norham and Lindisfarne, Durham looks more like a successor of Hexham than Lindisfarne. Indeed, despite its appropriation of the Lindisfarne's relics and possessions, prior to the Viking Age the site of Durham was very likely within the boundaries of the diocese of Hexham. In the Anglo-Norman era, historians like William of Malmesbury trying to document the history of the English episcopate, found, as we today find, that early medieval episcopal lists cover Hexham and Whithorn only as far as the early ninth century. William and his modern successors read the pattern to suggest that the bishoprics of Hexham and Whithorn came to an end in the ninth century. Viking-Age episcopal lists covering Northumbria did indeed end in the early ninth century. But it is important to recognize that these cessations affected Lindisfarne as much as Hexham or Whithorn, and simply reflect the date the lists had been compiled. What does matter for the subsequent picture is that by 1100 episcopal lists had emerged that linked the see of Durham to the bishops of Lindisfarne. This is why William felt the need to account specifically for Hexham and Whithorn (but not the Cuthbertine see): in William's case, he attributed the disappearance of Whithorn to incursions of the Scots and 'Picts', and Hexham to the Danes.[97] William's logic makes sense in Hexham's case. After all, the ninth century had been the height of the 'Viking Age', when Scandinavian armies cleared the way for the 'birth of England' by sweeping aside much of pre-ninth-century political order; but the anachronistic incursions of 'Scots' and 'Picts' reveals William to be engaging in, or at least picking up, speculation that carries no authority.

The disappearance of the pre-Viking-Age episcopate in Northumbria has usually been regarded as one of the more definitively chronicled examples of reconfiguration in the episcopate of Viking-Age England.[98] Again, this is another

[97] WM, *GP* iii. 118 (ed. Winterbottom *et al.*, pp. 388–91).

[98] E.g. D. P. Kirby, 'The Saxon Bishops of Leicester, Lindsey (*Syddensis*), and Dorchester', *Leicestershire Archaeol. and Hist. Soc. Trans.* 41 (1965–6), 1–8, at 3.

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topic where Anglo-Norman-era historical narratives, and the survival patterns of Viking-Age evidence that the creators of these narratives encountered, have shaped modern understanding more than is merited. The demise of the classical Northumbrian episcopate in the Viking Age is not in doubt, but we have to be realistic about the kind of sources available and what kind of precision they offer for the chronology of this change. As far as contemporary evidence is concerned, we do not have to wait until the eleventh century for a window on the Northumbrian episcopate; that is provided, in fact, by charter attestations from King Æthelstan's time as ruler in Northumbria.[99] As a particular example, a genuine witness list from a charter in the Worcester archive, S 401, has Archbishop Hrothweard of York appear alongside four bishops explicitly stated to be his suffragans, with: *Rodeward quoque archipræsul cum Eboracensis suffraganeis . Æscber'h'to . Wigredo . Earnulfo . Columbano . consignauit.*[100] While it is theoretically possible they were diocese-less assistant bishops to the archbishop, this is not particularly likely and indeed the third-ranked Wigred's appearance in later Durham episcopal lists suggests that this is not the explanation. Very conveniently, there are enough empty bishoprics to account for Lindisfarne, Hexham and Whithorn, as well as one other bishopric.[101] The witness-lists of these charters do not, unfortunately, name bishoprics and do not rule out the movement of episcopal seats or saints' shrines; but they do suggest that the number of bishops north of the Humber was, if anything, higher in the early 930s than it had been in the early ninth century. The reduction in Northumbria's episcopate, the disappearance of component bishoprics, seems to have happened not in the ninth century, but at some stage after the 930s; it almost certainly had taken place by the time of the Norman Conquest, but it is difficult to arrive at more precision without relying on speculation.[102] Durham had probably become an episcopal see by the end of the episcopate of Eadmund (II): Æthelric of Peterborough, seemingly the first bishop of Durham styled as such in contemporary sources, is said to have taken the see in 1041 and to have relinquished it in 1056.[103]

[99] Illustrated Keynes, *Atlas*, table XXXVII (and later episcopal tables), and discussed more fully in McGuigan, 'Middle Britain', pp. 58–64. A fuller study of this specific issue is intended for the future.

[100] S 401; cf. the consecutive appearance of the four non-Wessex bishops Cynesige, Wigred, Seaxhelm and Æscberht in S 425.

[101] Alex Woolf, pers. comm., has suggested that this might be Mayo. For the Irish house of Mayo and its eighth-century Northumbrian bishops, some of whom appear in Northumbrian annals, see V. Orschel, 'Mag nEó na Sacsan', *Peritia* 15 (2001), 81–107.

[102] See, again, Keynes, *Atlas*, table XXXVII.

[103] *ASC* D, 1056; *ASC* almost certainly refers to him taking the see in 1041, though Durham is not specifically named (*ASC* D, 1041).

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It is worth noting, however, that *CMD* purports to reproduce a letter that could provide some help. The letter was sent by Bishop Eadmund to his colleague Ælfric of Winchester, archbishop of York (consecrated *c.* 1023). If genuine (Craster viewed it as an interpolation from the reign of Henry I, when control of the church of Hexham was a live issue), the letter would probably date to the reign of Cnut, and would indicate that Eadmund and Ælfric were disputing the legacy of the see of Hexham: Eadmund uses information drawn from Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica* to show that York had no right to the control of Hexham's diocese.[104] Assuming for the sake of argument that the letter is not a forgery, it would appear to confirm that Hexham had ceased to be an episcopal centre prior to the establishment of a see at Durham, and that no clear successor to the diocese of Hexham continued to exist during Eadmund's early episcopate.[105] If so, the movement of the shrine south in the time of Bishop Eadmund could also be read as a firm assertion that the see originally based at Lindisfarne had adopted an expanded remit. The tenth-century Cuthbertine see had probably been acquiring properties in the Danish-settled areas that later became Yorkshire and County Durham; if Bishop Eadmund had moved the shrine to this area of Durham, it might have been to consolidate this position and head off attempts from York to annex the former diocese of Hexham (in the same way that the Great Northern War famously led to the foundation of a new Russian capital at St Petersburg).[106] The possibility is at least worth considering, particularly for anyone who believes that the Cuthbertine corporation was autonomous and not merely a component of Eadwulfing political armoury. As a downside, that would make the significance of Chester-le-Street in the traditions reproduced in later writings more difficult to explain. Alternatively then, if Chester-le-Street was the successor of Hexham (see below), re-foundation at Durham may have been seen as a way to create a fresh but common centre for both sees.

[104] *CMD*, pp. 524–5; the reason for viewing it as this type of interpolation is based on Hexham's exit from the Durham *familia* in Henry's reign, but as we argue in this article, Eadmund's episcopate also provides a suitable political context (see also n. 87).

[105] For motive and other relevant discussion, see R. Walterspacher, *The Foundation of Hexham Priory, 1070–1170*, Papers in North Eastern Hist. No 11 (Middlesbrough, 2002). For discussions of Hexham and emergence of Durham, see also D. Rollason, 'The Beginnings of the Diocese of Durham', *Friends of Durham Cathedral* (1995), pp. 23–34.

[106] Grants that *HSC* attributes to the time of Ealdhun and to the time of Cnut appear genuine, i.e. *HSC*, chs. 29–32 (ed. and trans. South, pp. 66–9), and we have reliable surviving evidence of grants in the area of former Danish settlement, including *notitiae* of a later-tenth-century grant to *sancte Cuðberhtes stowe* of land in Yorkshire by a certain *Ðureð eorl*, for which see S 1659 (*North* 19), S 1660 (*North* 18), S 1661 (*North* 20), as well as *DLV* II, 140, and Woodman, *North*, pp. 353–8. See also H. H. E. Craster, 'Some Anglo-Saxon Records of the See of Durham', *AAe* 4th Ser. 1 (1925), 189–98.

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Despite Symeon's belief in 'Ealdhun's Translation', he does reproduce one tradition that confirms Bishop Eadmund's era as one of relic relocation. Symeon notes an existing historical anecdote in which Ælfred son of Westou, *thesaurarius* of Durham and holder of the church of Hexham, had had the bodies of major Northumbrian saints relocated to Durham from Coldingham, Melrose, Tyninghame, Jarrow, Tynemouth and Hexham. This relic relocation, Symeon learned, had happened during the episcopate of Bishop Eadmund.[107] If Symeon's tradition about Eadmund is reliable, it would indirectly support William of Malmesbury's idea that Bishop Eadmund had presided over significant movements of Cuthbert's relics. Whether motivated by security concerns or by opportunism, both sources suggest that Eadmund's episcopate saw a concerted attempt to centralize the ecclesiastical affairs in northern Northumbria and create a single centre for the major relics of the old Bernician church, in a location further south and closer to York and 'royal England'.

DIOCESE OF DURHAM IN THE ELEVENTH CENTURY

If we accept the reconstruction above, ecclesiastical lineages north of the Tyne must have suffered a significant diminution in prestige and in public power as they were shifted into a new periphery. Weaker localities are, of course, the inevitable side-effect of most processes of centralization; in this case, however, it is not particularly evident that the new church establishment at Durham retained control of the area previously covered by the Lindisfarne diocese based at Norham. In secular affairs, the ealdormen of York may have enjoyed loose overlordship of the land north of the Tyne for much of the eleventh century. Siward appears to have enjoyed particularly wide powers, premised partly on the death of the Bamburgh ruler 'Earl' Eadwulf and marriage to the latter's niece, Ælffled.[108] This power probably did not long endure after Siward's death, and certainly did not survive the Norman Conquest; and there is no particular reason to see substantial unity restored to eastern Northumbria prior to the era of the last Norman earl, Earl Robert de Mowbray (deposed 1095). Among Robert's predecessors, the earl–bishop Walcher (died 1080) had been unable to control much to the north of Durham itself. Indeed, the famous Southumbrian 'monastic revivalists' established at Melrose during Walcher's era, men who, significantly, attended the deathbed of Walcher's rival, Earl Gospatric, at Norham, lay outside Norman power, among the still free Northern English, until they were induced southwards by letters and pleas.[109]

[107] *LDE* iii.7 (ed. Rollason, pp. 160–7).
[108] *ASC* 1041CD; *De obsessione Dunelmi*, pp. 219–20; *HR2*, p. 198.
[109] *RHC* I, p. 59 (for Gospatric and the Southumbrians at Norham); and *LDE* iii.22 (ed. Rollason, pp. 208–9) for the Southumbrians at Melrose. Durham's loss of control north of the Tyne in the

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Assuming for the sake of argument that Lindisfarne's relics were relocated to Durham during Eadmund's episcopate, we are left wondering why Eadmund's alleged predecessor Ealdhun came to be regarded as the founder of the see of Durham. According to *De obsessione Dunelmi*, Bishop Ealdhun was regarded as the 'original' holder of a variety of properties in the County Durham area.[110] One of the other things we seem to know about Ealdhun is that he was part of the kin-group that came to rule over Hexham: the *prepositus* of Hexham confirmed by Bishop Eadmund was explicitly said to have been the *nepos* of Bishop Ealdhun.[111] The southerly *personae* we know about look more likely to have been connected to Hexham than Lindisfarne, but it is also worth pointing out that St Cuthbert was remembered in connection to both sees, and could be presented as a source of unity for both dioceses. The *personae* of Cuthbert in the later eleventh century seem to be confined to territories south of the Coquet; if, as seems likely, these men held their offices as family honours, they are unlikely to have been the descendants of actual custodians of Cuthbert in Lindisfarne or the mainland Tweed basin; or, if they were, they lost whatever territorial base their ancestors had in the north by the time of the Normans.

There are other possibilities for this anomaly: the *personae* may have originated as 'carpetbaggers' who came from the north; similarly, they may have been southerly members of the Cuthbertine *familia* who survived the political turmoil of the early Viking Age. A reliable tradition in *HSC* does suggest, after all, that a minster as far south as Heversham supplied an incumbent for the abbacy of Norham in the tenth century.[112] Another possibility is that Ealdhun's kin had been hereditary holders of Hexham since it lost episcopal status but were also major stakeholders in some other church that succeeded Hexham. Could this Hexham successor have been Chester-le-Street? If so, that could mean that the 'Flight of Eardwulf' originated as a foundation myth for the *personae* of Chester-le-Street, subsequently applied to the greater honour after Ealdhun became bishop of St Cuthbert. In this scenario, Ealdhun may have been the bishop of Lindisfarne at Norham prior to Eadmund's episcopate, before the relics themselves left Norham. This would leave open how, when and why Durham as a site became an episcopal centre rather than the location for Cuthbert's relics. The temporary unity that Uhtred brought to Northumbria could have facilitated Ealdhun's appointment to Lindisfarne/Norham, a move which would probably have brought Cuthbert more southern property, perhaps giving Eadmund even more of an incentive to move south,

early Norman era and its potential significance for the emergence of the later Anglo-Scottish border is explored in detail in N. McGuigan, *Máel Coluim III, 'Canmore': an Eleventh-Century Scottish King* (Edinburgh, 2021), pp. 276–85, 316-25 and 384-90.

110 *De obsessione Dunelmi*, pp. 215–220.

111 For this kinship, see *Priory of Hexham* I, Appendix, pp. vii–viii, at vii, n. j.

112 *HSC*, ch. 21 (ed. and trans. South, pp. 60–1)

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and cemented Cuthbert's hold on these gains and other rights within the Danelaw.[113]

The age of Uhtred and Cnut, and the time of Walcher, Gospatric, and Robert de Mowbray, were separated by several generations and more than a few forms of political order. In the intervening period, hereditary ecclesiastics associated with churches far to the south of the Coquet, and beyond, over the Tyne, at places like Hexham, Chester-le-Street, and Durham, had several generations to make history more 'useable' for themselves by coming to attribute greater chronological depth to what was, possibly, their much more recent association with northern England's most prestigious set of relics. This could explain why Symeon of Durham and other 'researchers' at Anglo-Norman Durham might have chosen to overlook reliable information about the movement of relics from Norham to Durham in the first half of the eleventh century.

CONCLUSION

In the extended account of his church's history, Symeon tells us that the diocese of Cuthbert relocated to Durham in 995, having been at Chester-le-Street since the abandonment of Lindisfarne in the late-ninth century. In general, modern historians have tended to accept Symeon's account of his bishopric's Viking-Age past. It has been argued here that this acceptance should be revised. The presentation offered by Symeon is late and internally problematic. The chronological scheme and detail offered by Symeon, such as 995 as the date for the move to Durham, are not themselves reliable enough to be used with any confidence. The 'Resting-Places of Saints', a vernacular list of saintly burials finalized between 1013 and 1031, offers a contemporary view of the location of Cuthbert's body in the early eleventh century, and suggests Cuthbert's shrine was well established at Norham, a date that would keep the relics on the river Tweed until at least the 1010s, potentially beyond. As our earliest source for the Viking-Age Cuthbertine see, the 'Resting-Places of Saints' is the best guide we have to the subject. The burial list is in harmony with Anglo-Norman-era texts that believed Norham had been the centre of the Cuthbertine see from the later ninth century onwards. The alternative 'Norham Account' preserved by *Vita Oswaldi* and, more importantly, the description offered by William of Malmesbury, both appear to have utilized sources similar to those used by *HSC* and Symeon but which differed by describing Norham, not Chester-le-Street, as Durham's predecessor. William's authority is no better than Symeon's, of course, with both authors writing in the early twelfth century; however, if William's' testimony is independent of the

[113] See p. 157 above.

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'Resting-Places of Saints', then he must have made the same mistake independently – a notion that, as things stand, is far-fetched.

Working on the assumption that Norham had been the centre of the Cuthbertine see in the early eleventh century, the article has also offered some suggestions about how the diocese of Durham may have come into being, and how we might be able to understand the processes by which the traditions and accounts recycled and rewritten by Symeon and others came to emerge. It should be stressed, however, that some of this is very tentative. The 'Resting-Places of Saints' is our best evidence, but alone it does not provide a clear picture of the Viking-Age episcopate in northern England; alone, it is not enough to provide certainty even regarding the location of the body in the early eleventh century. Neither is it beyond possibility that William of Malmesbury altered his account of the Cuthbertine see to accommodate the 'Resting-Places of Saints'. Without corroborating evidence from the Viking Age, the historian must keep an open mind about the subject. Nonetheless, casual repetition of the traditional story about the Viking-Age Cuthbertine see is hardly more acceptable; and complex theories based on speculative 'early cores' and 'interpolations' should never be taken for granted as starting points of historical investigation.

This article has sought to highlight the problems of the Durham material and underline evidence for the significance of Norham within the Viking-Age Cuthbertine *familia*; however, I do not propose merely to offer a revised Symeonic account, modified only by substituting Chester-le-Street with Norham. If Symeon's presentation of the Viking-Age see is not reliable, then many of our other beliefs about the Cuthbertine church have no authority. For instance, there is no Viking-Age evidence to demonstrate that the main residence of the bishop and the body of Cuthbert were at the same site; we know little about the different roles of bishop and abbot in this church, and there is little Viking-Age evidence to suggest even that the bishop and abbot consistently operated from the same base; similarly, it is possible to imagine, reasonably, that the body had no fixed location prior to its translation. Perhaps it was only at Norham periodically? Perhaps only in the early eleventh century? As late as the winter of 1069/70, the body was taken north to Lindisfarne via Jarrow, Bedlington and Tughall.[114] It is important to acknowledge, above all, the malleability of our literary evidence for the Northern

[114] See *LDE* iii.15 (ed. Rollason, pp. 184–7). Significantly, we appear to learn also that Earl Gospatric and his follower Gilla Míchéil were involved in an attempt to relocate Cuthbert back north. We are told that Gospatric, who died at Norham in the 1070s (perhaps 1078), only relented when another of his followers, a cleric named Ernan, reported a vision of Gilla Míchéil in Hell. Gospatric may have been attempting to save Cuthbert's relics from the Normans; and we can probably assume with safety that King William I's march north the same winter had more persuasive effect than Ernan's vision. See *LDE* iii.16 (ed. Rollason, pp. 188–93); for further discussion, see McGuigan, *Máel Coluim III*, pp. 263-4.

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English Church and that, ultimately, there might be many plausible ways of understanding the emergence of the diocese of Durham that could meet the critical demands of twenty-first-century historians, though they may never quite match the detail and clarity of the picture painted by Symeon back in the early twelfth century.[115]

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