

ART. VI. – *St. Cuthbert and Cumbria.*

By V. TUDOR, B.A., Ph.D.

LIKE many medieval saints and by a curious process which seems not to have struck his devotees as in any way odd, Cuthbert of Lindisfarne underwent a transformation of personality at death.¹ The living Cuthbert had been warm, considerate to others (both men and animals) and, while yearning for solitude, more than conscientious in the discharge of his duties. With his death and the development of the posthumous cult, this personality gave way somewhat under the impact of certain new and in some cases less attractive characteristics. The new Cuthbert was swift to bring supernatural assistance to those who invoked his aid, but he was also a hater of women² and sensitive to the point of vindictiveness to those who mocked his power or challenged his rights. Eventually an amalgam of historical figure and new features became one of the leading saints in the country as a whole and “the unquestionably supreme patron of the north”.³ In the case of the extreme north-east of England – the location of Lindisfarne or Holy Island, where Cuthbert’s see was based, and above all of Durham, the home of his relics and the centre of his cult since 995 – the bonds which tied the saint to the area and gave him an unrivalled influence need little amplification. But what of other parts of northern England? To take but one example, what associations bound the greatest saint of the north to Cumbria⁴ and what did he mean to its people?

Born about 634, Cuthbert became a monk at Melrose, now in southern Scotland but then situated in the English kingdom of Northumbria, while still in his teens. After a period at the monastery of Ripon and a further sojourn at Melrose, he became prior of Lindisfarne. There one of his tasks was to persuade his fellow monks, brought up as he had been in the traditions of Celtic Christianity, to conform to the Roman practices which he had adopted after the Synod of Whitby in 663/4. Cuthbert had a marked leaning towards the solitary life, however, and in 676 he moved to the nearby island of Inner Farne to live as a hermit. There he remained until 685 when he became bishop of Lindisfarne and resumed the journeys of preaching and ministering to the people of a wide area which had characterized his life as a monk. At the end of his life he returned to the Inner Farne, where he died on 20 March 687. He was buried on Lindisfarne.⁵

Contact between a living saint and a particular area was not necessary for his subsequent veneration and popularity there; Cuthbert, however, was linked to Cumbria in a number of ways during his lifetime. Indeed he was obviously no stranger in Carlisle, most probably because it fell within the diocese of Lindisfarne. Repeated visits made by him to the city,⁶ together with the fact that he is known on one occasion to have ordained priests there,⁷ suggest that Carlisle belonged to his see. It is possible, furthermore, that a grant of land in the city was made to Cuthbert. He may have acquired an estate fifteen miles in circumference in Carlisle, presumably by a grant of Ecgrith, the contemporary king of Northumbria, and most probably at the time that Cuthbert was appointed bishop in 685.⁸ It has been suggested that this grant may represent the origin of the former parish of St. Cuthbert Without.⁹

A second Cumbrian grant, this time of land outside Carlisle, was also made to Cuthbert by the same king. At some point before late May 685¹⁰ the district of Cartmel, complete with its British population, was made over to the bishop.¹¹ The inclusion of the Celtic inhabitants of the area in the donation clearly reveals the attitude of the new Anglian rulers of Cumbria to the people they found living there and also reminds us of the complex racial interaction which is such a distinctive feature of the history of the region.

Other conquerors of the area figure in the most famous of the stories linking Cuthbert with Cumbria. In 685, when King Ecgfrith was launching an attack on the Picts, the bishop was in Carlisle and on the afternoon of Saturday, 20 May was being escorted round the Roman remains in the city by the local people, including Waga, the governor. He was shown the walls and an impressive fountain, which indicates how the suspicious and hostile response to Roman towns shown by the early Anglo-Saxon settlers in Britain¹² had given way to pride in what the English now regarded as their Roman inheritance. Suddenly, however, the bishop ceased to pay attention and it later emerged that, even as it happened, the fatal issue of the battle of Nechtansmere, in the course of which Ecgfrith was killed, had been revealed to him.¹³

It is at Carlisle, finally, that we see Cuthbert in the more private role of spiritual counsellor. In the city he met for the last time his old friend Herbert, a solitary who lived on the island which now bears his name in Derwentwater. Herbert was in the habit of seeking Cuthbert out each year to receive spiritual advice, but on this occasion, which must have been in 686,¹⁴ the bishop warned that they would never meet again in this world as he felt his death to be near. The hermit begged that he might be permitted to die at the same time as his friend and, although a long and painful illness was necessary to make him as fit for heaven as Cuthbert, his request was ultimately granted.¹⁵

If the years immediately after Cuthbert's death furnish some proof that he was already venerated as a saint, it was the discovery made eleven years later, in 698, of the incorruption of his body that marks the beginning of his distinctive cult, centred round his "miraculously" preserved remains. For many years these continued to lie on Lindisfarne but the sack of the island by the Vikings in 793 inaugurated a period of great insecurity and it is highly probable that as early as 830-45 the holy body was transferred to Norham on the mainland. The year 875 witnessed the beginning of seven years of wandering in northern England and south-western Scotland for the saint's body and his followers. In 883, thanks to an agreement between Cuthbert's representatives and the Danish army engineered by Eadred, the former abbot of Carlisle,¹⁶ the saint settled at Chester-le-Street. The removal to Durham, prompted by a renewed Viking threat, occurred in 995 but it was not until 1083 that the Benedictine monastery so intimately associated with the saint's cult was founded. In 1104 Cuthbert's body was translated to its final home in the new Romanesque cathedral of Durham. It had never lacked the power to work miracles and attract pilgrims but the century which followed probably marks the zenith of the saint's cult. Indeed until the Reformation Cuthbert maintained his popularity both in the north and other parts of England and never relinquished "his place as one of the most prominent members of the pantheon of English saints".¹⁷

As the second Cuthbert, the composite figure projected by the cult, established and maintained a position of dominance in north-east England, but how was he regarded by the people of Cumbria? Hardly the object of as much veneration as on the other side of

the Pennines, he was rarely forgotten in Cumbria, the evidence suggests, from the time of his death to the end of the Middle Ages.

Perhaps the memory of the living Cuthbert was responsible for the presence of some of his relics at the monastery of Dacre near Penrith about forty years after his death. Some of the saint's hair had been removed from the coffin in 698, partly to be given as relics to those friends of the Lindisfarne monks who requested them. Presumably some member of the Dacre community had obtained a small portion of the hair in this way. By about 728 the relics were in the possession, not of the body of monks as a whole, but of a priest of the house called Thrythred. While the hairs were temporarily out of their reliquary, the priest passed them to a young monk who happened to have a diseased eye. To us the "tumour" on the eyelid from which he was suffering sounds like a particularly bad stye but he, with the profound fear of ill-health so characteristic of the Middle Ages, thought it would cost him the eye. He applied the relics to the affected area, and a few hours later the lump had entirely disappeared.¹⁸

This miracle no doubt helped to maintain veneration for the saint in Cumbria, especially as it was described in Bede's widely-read *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. Of far greater importance in this respect, we may be sure, was the journey made through Cumbria by Cuthbert's body itself during the period of acute danger in the late ninth century. At one point in the seven years' wanderings the party accompanying the body despaired of ever finding a refuge from the Viking invaders on the mainland of Britain. The decision to cross to Ireland was taken therefore by the leaders of the group, bishop Eardulf of Lindisfarne and abbot Eadred, the former abbot of Carlisle.¹⁹ As a result the party made its way to "the mouth of the river which is called Dyrwenta",²⁰ the site of the present-day Workington, and the holy relic was placed on board ship. Cuthbert had no desire to go, however, and he expressed his disapproval in unmistakable fashion. A dreadful storm blew up and, even more terrifying, three huge waves fell on the ship, the water they contained turning immediately to blood. The saint's will being quite plain, those on board fearfully set their course back to the shore.²¹ It was during this storm, according to one story, that the Lindisfarne Gospels, which date from around 700 and which were adorned with gold and precious stones on the binding and elaborate illuminations within, fell into the sea. The manuscript was recovered only when the party reached Whithorn in Galloway.²²

The presence of the former abbot of Carlisle among the saint's followers was probably an indication of the extreme insecurity of the times, as, in a world where most institutions had collapsed, men "looked to saints for identity, protection and economic sustenance . . .".²³ A little later three other Cumbrians, fleeing almost certainly from the Norse settlers who were arriving at this time on the west coast, sought the security offered by Cuthbert. At some point between 899 and 915 Tilred, abbot of Heversham near the mouth of the Kent, bought the vill of South Eden²⁴ near the east coast and used it to establish himself in a permanent position of closeness to the saint. Thus half of the vill was given to Cuthbert himself, so that Tilred could become a monk at Chester-le-Street, where the saint at that time was based. The other half passed to the monastery of Norham,²⁵ also it would seem linked to Cuthbert, and in return Tilred became abbot there.²⁶ At about the same time bishop Cutheard of Chester-le-Street (900-15) is found granting extensive lands to two important noblemen, who had both apparently fled to St. Cuthbert from the other side of the Pennines. The two individuals concerned were

Elfred son of Birihtulfinc and Edred son of Rixinc. Somewhat surprisingly and no doubt for complex reasons which we shall never understand, the latter received a warm welcome from St. Cuthbert's circle although his arrival east of the Pennines had been followed by the murder of a certain Eardulf who is referred to as "prince" and the abduction of his wife. In spite of this, both men proved loyal vassals of the saint, faithfully discharging the obligations which came with their lands. Not even Cuthbert could withstand all the evils of the time, however, and both Elfred and Edred died fighting the Norse king Regenwald.²⁷

When next we know of someone applying to the saint in an extremity it is in the very different world of the mid-twelfth century. The individual concerned was John, abbot of the Cistercian monastery of Furness, and his predicament some time in the 1150s²⁸ was a dispute involving the lands of his house. A certain wealthy man²⁹ had gained the friendship of king Henry II and, on the strength of this, had seized a strip of rich land thirty four miles long and four miles wide which belonged to the abbey. The abbot and monks took their case repeatedly before the royal judges but the latter always found reasons to avoid hearing it. John then travelled to Rome where he obtained papal letters which insisted that a judgement be given. A day was arranged for the case to be heard but the king then proceeded to defer it for some years despite the opposition of his bishops and barons. John, realising that supernatural aid was required, suggested to his monks that an altar dedicated to the perpetual memory of St. Cuthbert should be erected in the abbey church. A decree of the common chapter gave official force to this idea. After some days the abbot arrived to argue his case before the king and found him well disposed towards him. The land was returned in full while his wealthy antagonist was confounded. Cuthbert had performed another miracle and John, full of gratitude, vowed that he would visit the saint's shrine in Durham.³⁰

But Cuthbert was prepared to assist the abbot further, as became apparent when John decided to discharge his vow. On the evening previous to his journey he placed the horses he judged suitable for such an arduous enterprise in a separate stable, committing one particular animal to the saint's safe-keeping. During the night a thief broke into the stable and tried to steal the horse in question, attempting to lead it through a gap which he made in the fence surrounding the building. The horse could not be persuaded to pass through the gap, however; neither could the thief remove the reins from his hands. He was caught at dawn by the abbot and John of course attributed the events of the night to the watchfulness of St. Cuthbert. The abbot allowed the thief to go free, believing that the saint's punishment, the unnerving experiences of the night, was sufficient. He then proceeded to Durham where he recounted the two stories of the saint's intervention to the monks.³¹

Perhaps a strand of devotion to Cuthbert traditional in that part of Cumbria³² prompted the abbot of Furness to appeal to the saint in his difficulty.³³ How traditional devotion might be augmented by the influence of the saint's shrine at Durham is shown by the case of a young man whose home was apparently Skirwith, near Penrith. His father, the knight Roger Fulger,³⁴ had placed him in the baronial household of Robert Bruce³⁵ to receive a military training. While living, almost certainly in 1172, at Hart, near the east coast, he had paid a visit to Newcastle-upon-Tyne. There he contracted an extremely debilitating fever which he threw off, only to go out of his mind. His speech at that time was unintelligible and he was a threat to both himself and others. He had also experienced

a severe loss of weight. After three weeks St. Thomas of Canterbury appeared to him in a vision or dream and, perhaps surprisingly, predicted that he would regain his health if he visited Durham. This vision was succeeded by a vivid subconscious experience of Cuthbert himself. The young man believed he was installed beneath the tomb of the saint in Durham but at the mercy of four terrible demons. Cuthbert appeared in a window, however, apparently in the form of a figure depicted in stained glass, and dispersed his assailants. On waking the sick man felt an enormous improvement in his condition and when, a few days later, he entered Durham cathedral he realized he was restored to full health. After describing his experiences to the Durham monks and entering into a relationship of confraternity³⁶ with them, he returned to Hart. Very probably he went home to Cumbria eventually, to add his miracle to the body of stories about the saint in existence there.³⁷

With the last twelfth-century miracle associated with the region we return to Cumbria itself. The site was Plumbland, about six miles from Cockermouth and the location, so we are led to believe, of many earlier miracles performed by the saint. In 1173 or 1174, when king William of Scotland was ravaging the area around Carlisle,³⁸ the inhabitants fled to the safety of the local churches and lived as refugees in makeshift huts in the churchyards. They also deposited their valuables within the churches for safe-keeping. A knight, Cospatrick FitzUlf,³⁹ had placed a chest containing a bag of silver coins in the church of St. Cuthbert in Plumbland. One night, however, a thief armed with a counterfeit key to the church let himself in. Discovering Cospatrick's bag of silver, he removed it from its chest but found he was unable to extract from it more than one silver penny. This notwithstanding, he made repeated attempts to leave the churchyard with the bag in his possession but was never able to do so. Finally the thief entered a local inn and offered the coin, a Scottish penny, in exchange for food and drink. When the landlady rejected it, out of loyalty to her king, Henry II, the other customers asked if they might inspect what was obviously a rare sight in Cumbria at this time. Even worse, the penny was then recognized by a young man belonging to the household of Cospatrick himself. This led ultimately to the thief's capture and the knight wished to hang him. Cospatrick was restrained, however, by the local priest who said that it was unfitting for the instrument of St. Cuthbert's miraculous power to die. From that time on no thief dared to approach a church dedicated to Cuthbert in the area, with the result that everyone brought his riches to the buildings under the saint's patronage.⁴⁰

In this case a miracle was attributed to Cuthbert because a church dedicated to him was the scene of what occurred. This story points to an important means of gauging the hold of the saint on Cumbrian devotion and affections in an age when most individuals were illiterate: an inspection of church dedications. Of the greatest use in this context is an historical survey, conducted in the 1920s, of patron saints in the diocese of Carlisle, an area which corresponds quite closely to Cumbria.⁴¹ One conclusion of the survey is strikingly important. With the exception of the universally popular Virgin Mary,⁴² St. Cuthbert, with fifteen dedications,⁴³ was the most widely venerated saint in the area and was indisputably the English saint with the largest number of churches under his patronage.

This result prompts one to ask about buildings dedicated to saints perhaps more traditionally associated with Cumbria, such as Kentigern, Ninian and Bega. St. Kentigern or Mungo, who helped to evangelize Cumbria, has seven dedications to his credit,⁴⁴

while St. Ninian, the apostle of Galloway, had only one, which has now lapsed.⁴⁵ St. Bega, possibly not a person at all so much as a *sancta bega* or holy ring, but who nevertheless gave her name to the village of St. Bees on the Cumbrian coast, again has only one church under her patronage.⁴⁶ It would appear that none of these individuals can rival the saint more usually associated with north-eastern England.

Why were the buildings which are about to be discussed dedicated to the former bishop of Lindisfarne? During the last century James Raine the elder, working from a list of Cuthbert dedications ascribed to John Wessyngton, prior of Durham (1416-46), constructed an itinerary for the wanderings of the saint's community in the years after 875. Thus, for Raine, a church of which Cuthbert was patron in the six northern counties was merely a stopping-place in the route of the fugitives. This theory has now been shown to be ill-founded,⁴⁷ but there is a possibility that memories of the journey were responsible for the dedication of churches to the saint in Cumbria. It has also been suggested that, in the twelfth-century at least, a conscious effort was made, in an historically-minded age, to revive devotion to a saint of the past and thus to stress that the Norman Conquest of 1066 represented no break in the history of the English Church.⁴⁸ While an element of calculation of this kind may have been present in the minds of a few founders, it seems likely that the more spiritual stimulus of an appreciation of Cuthbert as an active and living saint, an assumption fundamental to the posthumous cult, encouraged many more acts of dedication. The great prestige that both the saint and his shrine enjoyed in the twelfth century, together with his continued popularity until the end of the Middle Ages, are almost certainly of relevance here also. It is often difficult to account for the dedication of a church to a particular saint but, in the absence of an obvious reason for the choice of Cuthbert, factors such as these may be held responsible.

The most northerly church under Cuthbert's patronage is at Bewcastle, where the graveyard also contains a famous Anglo-Saxon carved cross. The history of the site as a place of worship has not been continuous, however, as the church seems to have been refounded in the twelfth or thirteenth century.⁴⁹ It is probably not surprising to find the saint revered not far from a road, that leading from Hexham to Carlisle, which he is known to have used.⁵⁰ Even closer to that road is Nether Denton where a church is known to have existed in 1170-80 though at that time the patron was St. John the Baptist and the Cuthbert dedication is later.⁵¹ Kirklington, also in this general area and to the north of Carlisle, has a building which probably dates from the twelfth century but, as is often the case, the first record of the saint as patron comes from a later period than the earliest reference to the church. The Cuthbert dedication first appears in 1374.⁵²

In Carlisle there was a church under the saint's patronage in the twelfth century⁵³ and conceivably much earlier for, as we have seen, it may owe its ultimate origin to a land grant made in 685. Even if its history cannot be traced back so far,⁵⁴ there were strong reasons for commemorating the saint in the city. Similarly reflecting veneration for him in Carlisle and its environs was the holy well found in the early thirteenth century at Wetheral, just to the east of the city.⁵⁵

Some little way to the south-west of Carlisle stood the Cistercian abbey of Holm Cultram whose monks were prompted at an unknown date to found a chapel to the saint near the coast. This building, first referred to in 1538,⁵⁶ is now remembered in the name of the hamlet, Holme St. Cuthbert. Probably more ancient in origin is St. Cuthbert's

Stone to be found near Waverbridge, not far from the abbey. Formerly the Helly Well or holy well occurred in conjunction with it, but by 1912 this no longer produced any water.⁵⁷

With the next three examples we approach the mouth of the Derwent, one of the fixed points in the wanderings of Cuthbert's body. North of the river is Plumbland, the site, as we have seen, of one of the saint's twelfth-century miracles. From the account of that happening we know that a church there was dedicated to Cuthbert in 1173-4,⁵⁸ but the presence of tenth- to eleventh-century remains including a Viking hogback tombstone⁵⁹ suggests a pre-Conquest place of worship whose origins may stretch back to a period closer to the wanderings of the community. The other two buildings are both south of the river and apparently somewhat later. It is not known when the church at Embleton was founded but the fact that it was a chapel in the parish of Brigham suggests a post-Conquest date at least. By 1198 a second chapel of Brigham had been built at Lorton, now divided into Low and High Lorton. Whatever the dates of foundation, neither church appears as St. Cuthbert's until the list ascribed to 1416-46 was composed.⁶⁰ The apparently late date of Embleton and Lorton seems to preclude a direct association with the journey of the saint's body; two authorities, in addition, believe there was nothing to bring the fugitives to these locations.⁶¹ An indirect link with the wanderings cannot be entirely ruled out, however.

In the area of Penrith and Appleby is a cluster of seven churches under Cuthbert's patronage. The two most northerly are at Great Salkeld and Edenhall, both on the river Eden. Great Salkeld church is recorded as existing in the twelfth century; there was a church in Edenhall by 1240-50. In both cases the Cuthbert dedication is first found in the list associated with Prior Wessington.⁶² Edenhall in addition has a well named after the saint, which was mentioned in 1794 and may be much older.⁶³ To the south of these two villages and to the west of the river are two more churches. Clifton has a building which again is twelfth century in origin and which may well have been dedicated to Cuthbert from its foundation.⁶⁴ Closer to the river is Cliburn, where the existence of a church was recorded in 1133-56. As in so many other cases, the dedication to Cuthbert first appears in the list ascribed to 1416-46.⁶⁵

In the same group but forming an irregular line to the east of the river were three other churches. Milburn is the most northerly and, as a chapel of Kirkby Thore, is not likely to have been a pre-Conquest foundation. The Cuthbert dedication first occurs in 1354.⁶⁶ The existence of the church at Dufton, the second of the three, was first noted in 1291-2; it was recorded as "St. Cuthbert's" in 1366.⁶⁷ The church at Murton was a chapel of St. Michael's in Appleby. Now destroyed, it was dedicated to Cuthbert in the eighteenth century.⁶⁸

This gathering of seven churches is unique in Cumbria. It is interesting to note that the monastery of Dacre, the scene of the miracle performed by Cuthbert's hair, was not too distant from the group, while Skirwith, the home of Roger Fulger's son, is also nearby. It is conceivable that the Cuthbert associations of these two places contributed to the development of this group of dedications. It is noteworthy also that in the ninth century, just as today, the Eden valley formed one of the main routes connecting Cumbria with what lay to the east. It is very tempting therefore to see some link, the details of which we shall never know, between these seven churches and the wanderings of the saint's body.

Some way to the south-west of Penrith is Kentmere, where Cuthbert is the patron of the church today. It is possible, however, that Kentmere church, a chapel of Kendal, had a different dedication in the Middle Ages.⁶⁹ Hawkshead church, beyond Windermere, was in existence about 1208 and may have been dedicated to Cuthbert for a time – it appears in the list associated with Prior Wessyngton – but St. Michael is now the patron and has been for many centuries.⁷⁰

The three remaining instances relate to the Furness peninsula. Kirkby Ireleth, north of Barrow, was noted by the compiler of the Wessyngton list and the church there is dedicated to Cuthbert today, though in 1336 it was one of the many under the patronage of the Virgin.⁷¹ On the outskirts of Barrow is the site of Furness Abbey. Assuming that the chapter decree of the time of abbot John was put into effect, there would have been an altar to St. Cuthbert in the abbey church from the 1150s. Due east, on Morecambe Bay, is Aldingham where there was a church about 1180. The “Wessyngton” list is again the first source to record the Cuthbert dedication. It has been suggested that this example of the saint’s patronage may conceivably be traced to memories of the journey of Cuthbert’s body which “may have lingered about the shores of Morecambe Bay and the coast-line from the Ribble to the Mersey . . .”.⁷²

Moving on from church dedications, it is appropriate that we should find powerful evidence for continued devotion to Cuthbert at the close of the Middle Ages in Carlisle. There is a strong probability that the prior of the Augustinian chapter of Carlisle cathedral borrowed an illuminated manuscript from the monks of Durham with a view to using its designs in the decoration of the cathedral. The individual concerned was Thomas Gudybour, who occurs as prior in 1473 and 1485,⁷³ and the manuscript a precious twelfth-century copy of Bede’s prose life of St. Cuthbert.⁷⁴ It seems likely that Gudybour was acting at the suggestion of bishop Bell of Carlisle, a former prior of Durham. The miniatures in this volume were then used, it is virtually certain, as the models for a series of eighteen paintings representing the life of Cuthbert still to be seen in the cathedral. They are painted on the back of the choir stalls within an arch of the north choir aisle and are accompanied by others depicting, for example, Augustine of Hippo, within other arches in this and the south choir aisle. The work was done in oil, the colours being yellow, green, black, white and various reds, and each painting has an inscription in English at the top. Now badly worn away, the paintings still present the rather curious spectacle of twelfth-century designs executed in a late medieval style.⁷⁵ They also reveal that interest in and veneration for the saint were very much alive in the cathedral even so close to the Reformation.

While not the overwhelming force he represented in the north-east, Cuthbert was obviously a recurring presence in Cumbrian life. A recourse in times of trouble and an object of veneration and affection, he was part of the experience of the people of the region, part, as it were, of the landscape. One reason for this was the way in which he had shared the experiences of Cumbrians, as his life and the wanderings of his body in the area showed. In the period after his death, furthermore, the Celtic elements in his religious upbringing could perhaps have appealed to the British sections of the population, while his adoption of Roman practices and consequent orthodoxy made possible the veneration of his own people. At a later date it was perhaps inevitable that the influence of the powerful saint of Durham should make itself felt in Cumbria. This was especially the case in an area where other saints presented no significant challenge and

poverty in any case militated against a profusion of shrines. But Cuthbert did far more than merely fill a spiritual void: as far as Cumbria is concerned he fully deserves to be known as the greatest saint of the north.

Notes and References

- ¹ I should like to thank the Rev. J. C. Dickinson for first suggesting this subject to me and for his advice.
- ² For this characteristic of the later Cuthbert, see B. Colgrave (ed. and trans.), *Two 'Lives' of St. Cuthbert* (Cambridge, 1940), notes, 319.
- ³ R. B. Dobson, *Durham Priory 1400-1450* (Cambridge, 1973), 19.
- ⁴ The most convenient definition of this term is the modern county, established in 1974. It is impossible to give a satisfactory medieval definition of Cumbria.
- ⁵ The chief sources on the saint's life are the *Vita Sancti Cuthberti Auctore Anonymo* by an unknown monk of Lindisfarne and Bede's *Vita Sancti Cuthberti Prosaica*. Both are printed and translated in *Two 'Lives'* by Colgrave whose edition is that to which the page references given below apply. See also the account in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* (B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (ed. and trans.), *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford, 1969), 430-48).
- ⁶ *Vita Anon.*, 116, 122; *Vita Pros.*, 242, 248.
- ⁷ *Vita Pros.*, 248.
- ⁸ *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* given in T. Arnold (ed.), *Symeonis Monachi Opera Omnia* (Rolls Series lxxv, 2 vols., 1882-5), I, 199. See also H. H. E. Craster, 'The Patrimony of St. Cuthbert', *English Historical Review*, lxxix (1954), 181.
- ⁹ A. M. Armstrong, A. Mawer, F. M. Stenton and B. Dickins, *The Place-Names of Cumberland* (English Place-Name Society, 3 pts, xx, xxi and xxiii, 1950-2), III, introd., xxii.
- ¹⁰ Ecgrith died on 20 May 685 (see below).
- ¹¹ *Hist. de S. Cuth.* (*Sym. Mon. Op.*, I), 200.
- ¹² Cf. *Two 'Lives'*, notes, 334.
- ¹³ *Vita Anon.*, 122; *Vita Pros.*, 242-8. Cf. *Two 'Lives'*, notes, 334.
- ¹⁴ It was the last of the annual meetings before their deaths in March 687 and could not have occurred in the early part of that year as Cuthbert spent the few months remaining to him, from shortly after Christmas 686, on the Inner Farne (see *Vita Pros.*, 270).
- ¹⁵ *Vita Anon.*, 124; *Vita Pros.*, 248-50.
- ¹⁶ He was one of the leaders of the saint's community at the time of the abortive crossing to Ireland. See below.
- ¹⁷ Dobson, *Durham Priory*, 27. On pp. 16-32 Dobson gives a description in outline of the development of the cult of Cuthbert, together with a most perceptive commentary.
- ¹⁸ *Bede's Eccles. Hist.*, 446-8. This story must be dated to about 728 as Bede refers to the incident as occurring 'three years ago' (*op. cit.*, 446) and we know that his *Ecclesiastical History* was completed in 731.
- ¹⁹ Eadred's presence in the party has suggested to one scholar that Cuthbert's body may have spent some time in Carlisle (Craster, 'Patrimony', 188), a city some distance from the threat that had prompted the original removal but, almost certainly, still in the diocese of Lindisfarne. One source, however, states that Carlisle was destroyed and then lay in ruins for 200 years before William Rufus conquered it in 1092 (*VCH, Cumberland*, II, 7). As the figure of 200 years is almost certainly an approximation, it is possible that the city had been laid waste by this time, making a visit by Cuthbert's body impossible.
- ²⁰ *Symeonis Monachi Historia Dunelmensis Ecclesiae* (*Sym. Mon. Op.*, I), 64.
- ²¹ *Hist. de S. Cuth.* (*Sym. Mon. Op.*, I), 207-8; *Hist. Dun. Eccles.* (*Sym. Mon. Op.*, I), 63-5.
- ²² *Hist. Dun. Eccles.* (*Sym. Mon. Op.*, I), 64, 66-8.
- ²³ P. J. Geary, *Furta Sacra: Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1978), 21.
- ²⁴ According to the editor of the text in which this appears, the will may be either Castle Eden or Little Eden, near Hartlepool (*Sym. Mon. Op.*, II, index, 420).
- ²⁵ For a discussion of Norham's role in the saint's history, see Craster, 'Patrimony', 187-8.
- ²⁶ *Hist. de S. Cuth.* (*Sym. Mon. Op.*, I), 208. This source dates the transaction to the reign of Edward the Elder (899-924), but as Tilred became bishop of Chester-le-Street in 915 it must have occurred between 899 and 915.

- ²⁷ *Hist. de S. Cuth.* (*Sym. Mon. Op.*, I), 208-9 (Elfred); 210 (Edred). On both individuals, cf. Craster, 'Patrimony', 186-7, 189, 190.
- ²⁸ John is known to have been in possession of his office in 1152, 1155 and 1158, but these events belong to the reign of Henry II, who came to the throne in 1154.
- ²⁹ He is referred to as the 'founder' of Furness abbey. This must be a mistake, however, as the monastery was founded in 1124 by Stephen of Blois, later king Stephen, the predecessor of Henry II.
- ³⁰ J. Raine (ed.), *Reginaldi monachi Dunelmensis libellus de admirandis beati Cuthberti virtutibus* (Surtees Soc. i, 1835), 112-14. This account is somewhat confused in the original and it is not possible to relate it to any dispute in which the abbey is known to have been involved at this time.
- ³¹ *Reg. libellus*, 114-15.
- ³² See the discussion of Aldingham parish church below.
- ³³ One wonders also if John was influenced by his fellow Cistercian, Ailred, abbot of Rievaulx in Yorkshire, whose devotion to Cuthbert was marked and who liked to recount the miracles of the saint (see *Reg. libellus*, 4, 5-6 (where Ailred is the person addressed), 32, 176-7, 178, 188).
- ³⁴ I have been unable to find any details about this individual.
- ³⁵ For a brief note on Robert Bruce III (1138-1189?), see L. Stephen and S. Lee (ed.), *Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 1921-2), III, 114-15.
- ³⁶ On this practice, see D. Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England* (2 edn., Cambridge, 1966), 475-6.
- ³⁷ *Reg. libellus*, 255-9. Cf. *op. cit.*, 331, n. This narrative can be dated as we know that the young man's visit to Durham took place on Wednesday, 14 June (*op. cit.*, 259). This day is described as the Wednesday after Pentecost which apparently means the Wednesday after the week of Pentecost. The visit must have occurred after 29 December 1170 because of the reference to St. Thomas Becket, martyred on that day, while the work in which the narrative appears was completed in or after 1174 (V. M. Tudor, 'Reginald of Durham and St. Godric of Finchale: a study of a twelfth-century hagiographer and his major subject' (University of Reading Ph.D. thesis 1979), 91-2). Thus, of the years when 14 June fell on the Wednesday after the week of Pentecost, 1172 is the most likely candidate in this context.
- ³⁸ This geographical expression must be interpreted broadly as the writer of the original account was not familiar with the region.
- ³⁹ It is possible that this is the 'Cospatricus de Plumlund' who witnessed an undated charter of Adam Fitz-Uctred confirming a grant to Adam's niece, J. Wilson (ed.), *The Register of the Priory of St. Bees* (C.W.A.A.S., Cartulary Series, iii, 1915), 550-1.
- ⁴⁰ *Reg. libellus*, 275-8. The date of this story can be ascertained from the reference to king William of Scotland's devastation of the Carlisle region (*op. cit.*, 275). This must relate to the troubles of the years 1173-4 when William the Lion intervened during a period of rebellion in England (A. C. Lawrie (ed.), *Annals of the reigns of Malcolm and William, kings of Scotland* (Glasgow, 1910), 132-48, 156-82).
- ⁴¹ T. H. B. Graham and W. G. Collingwood, 'Patron Saints of the Diocese of Carlisle', CW2, xxv (1925), 1-27.
- ⁴² A total of twenty dedications (Graham and Collingwood, 1-2). If natural features such as holy wells (springs) or holy stones, or chantry chapels, or church dedications to which some doubt attaches are included, the figure rises to fifty. St. Michael the Archangel has eleven undisputed dedications which rise to thirty if items of every kind are included (Graham and Collingwood, 2-3).
- ⁴³ Twenty three when doubtful cases and other means of commemorating Cuthbert are added. Items of this kind will be discussed in the text in addition to churches definitely associated with Cuthbert.
- ⁴⁴ Eight if a dubious case is included (Graham and Collingwood, 10-11).
- ⁴⁵ Together with two holy wells (Graham and Collingwood, 9).
- ⁴⁶ Graham and Collingwood, 15-16. On St. Bega, see J. M. Todd, 'St. Bega: Cult, Fact and Legend', CW2, lxxx (1980), 23-35.
- ⁴⁷ A. H. Thompson, 'The Manuscript List of Churches Dedicated to St. Cuthbert, attributed to Prior Wessyngton', *Transactions of the Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland*, 1 ser., vii (1934-6), 151-77.
- ⁴⁸ Graham and Collingwood, 14.
- ⁴⁹ Graham and Collingwood, 13, 14, 18. Cf. Thompson, 'List', 165.
- ⁵⁰ *Vita Anon.*, 116.
- ⁵¹ Graham and Collingwood, 14, 21.
- ⁵² Graham and Collingwood, 14, 23; Thompson, 'List', 167.

- ⁵³ Graham and Collingwood, 13, 14, 19; Thompson, 'List', 165.
- ⁵⁴ This is highly unlikely if there was a two hundred year hiatus in Carlisle's history (see above, n. 19).
- ⁵⁵ Graham and Collingwood, 14, 27.
- ⁵⁶ Graham and Collingwood, 14, 22, but cf. E. Ekwall, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-names* (4 edn., Oxford, 1980), 246.
- ⁵⁷ Graham and Collingwood, 18; a note, 'The Hellywell at St. Cuthbert's Stone, Warebrig, near Blencogo', CW2, xii (1912), 432.
- ⁵⁸ See above and also Graham and Collingwood, 13-14, 25; Thompson, 'List', 165.
- ⁵⁹ W. Rollinson, *A History of Man in the Lake District* (London, 1975), 67, n.
- ⁶⁰ Graham and Collingwood, 13, 14, 21; Thompson, 'List', 161, 165 (Embleton); Graham and Collingwood, 13, 14, 24; Thompson, 'List', 161, 165 (Lorton).
- ⁶¹ Graham and Collingwood, 13.
- ⁶² Graham and Collingwood, 13, 14, 26; Thompson, 'List', 165 (Great Salkeld); Graham and Collingwood, 13, 14, 21; Thompson, 'List', 165 (Edenhall).
- ⁶³ Armstrong . . . , *The Place-Names of Cumberland*, I, 191.
- ⁶⁴ Graham and Collingwood, 14, 20; Thompson, 'List', 164.
- ⁶⁵ Graham and Collingwood, 13, 14, 20; Thompson, 'List', 164.
- ⁶⁶ Graham and Collingwood, 14, 24; Thompson, 'List', 164.
- ⁶⁷ Graham and Collingwood, 13, 14, 21; Thompson, 'List', 164.
- ⁶⁸ Graham and Collingwood, 14, 25.
- ⁶⁹ Thompson, 'List', 167-8.
- ⁷⁰ Graham and Collingwood, 13, 14, 22; Thompson, 'List', 160.
- ⁷¹ Graham and Collingwood, 13, 14, 23; Thompson, 'List', 160.
- ⁷² Graham and Collingwood, 13, 14, 17; Thompson, 'List', 160, 161-2. The theory as to the church's origins is from Thompson, *op. cit.*, 161-2.
- ⁷³ For this form of his name and the years when he held office, see B. Jones (ed.), *John Le Neve, Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae, 1300-1541*, VI, *Northern Province* (London, 1963), 100.
- ⁷⁴ It is now British Library Yates Thompson MS 26, formerly Additional MS 39943.
- ⁷⁵ On these paintings and their background, see B. Colgrave, 'The St. Cuthbert paintings on the Carlisle Cathedral stalls', *Burlington Magazine*, lxxiii (1938), 17-21.

