

## V.—ABBESS HILDA'S FIRST RELIGIOUS HOUSE.

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The story of the early Northumbrian church is more generally studied and appreciated at the present day than it ever has been before, and it certainly has an interest that is all its own. The heroic leaders, who stand out as living personalities from the far past, especially in Bede's artless narrative; the variety of methods adopted, and of work accomplished, in the short space of some three or four generations; the numberless local associations still lingering on in place-names and buildings and traditions; the scanty but invaluable treasures of art and devotion which have been preserved through successive iconoclasms to our own day; above all the unbroken heritage of faith and worship which links the nineteenth with the seventh century; these all constitute an attraction which is irresistible. To antiquaries and students of church history the record has of course always been familiar; but the widespread and growing popular interest in it which has been roused of late years in the north has in turn stimulated the experts to a closer examination of details. Thus it happens that the whole picture of the planting and organization of the church in Northumbria, and by Northumbrian missionaries in almost every part of Saxon England, in the seventh and eighth centuries, is year by year being filled in more completely; and so that even what might appear at first sight to be quite trivial points are well worth a careful investigation, as tending in their degree to make the realization of the whole more accurate. It is with one of these minor details that the present paper is intended to deal, viz., the situation of the first religious house over which bishop Aidan commissioned Hilda to bear rule as abbess.

The character and capacity of Aidan can scarcely be said to have received adequate recognition in the many sketches which have been drawn of him from the account given in Bede. His great simplicity of life, his love and self-sacrifice, his freedom from personal ambition, his earnest and untiring missionary zeal, are all rightly enough dwelt

upon, but that is all ; so that he has come to be generally regarded as an amiable and devoted but wholly unpractical man. And indeed it must be confessed that to modern ideas the quaint personal anecdotes which Bede tells of him<sup>1</sup> seem at first to corroborate this estimate, until due allowance is made for the different standard of thought in his day from that of our times. But if this were really all, it would utterly fail to account for the results of his sixteen years' episcopate. For apart from his personal attractiveness and the influence of his own saintly life, he manifested a genius for organization, a quick perception of new methods, a fearless readiness to adopt them, and a power to achieve their success and to ensure their acceptance, which were all but unique. His first scheme of the training school for his twelve boys at Lindisfarne,<sup>2</sup> in which he did not shrink from including alike the sons of nobles and children redeemed from slavery by the alms of the faithful,<sup>3</sup> by its conduct and its issues proclaims a more than ordinary founder. He knew how to utilize the goodwill of the king for the strengthening of the church, and at the same time with singular tact could draw the people to recognize the king as their direct benefactor. He planted religious houses as centres of work in an ever-widening range, until from Melrose to Tadcaster the chain was complete, yet did not confine himself to this one plan, though to a former monk of Iona it must have been the familiar ideal, but side by side with them he raised wooden churches,<sup>4</sup> and appointed priests to serve them, in every part of his

<sup>1</sup> *e.g.*, his reckless gift of the horse presented to him by king Oswin, with its rich trappings ('ita ut erat stratus regaliter'), to the first beggar he met. Bede, *H. E.* iii. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Bede, *H. E.* iii. 26 : 'Eo quod esset idem Eata unus de duodecim pueris Aidani, quos primo episcopatus sui tempore de natione Anglorum erudiendos in Christo accepit.'

<sup>3</sup> Bede, *H. E.* iii. 5 : 'Denique multos quos pretio dato redemerat, redemptos postmodum suos discipulos fecit, atque ad sacerdotalem usque gradum erudiendo atque instituendo prouexit.' On the other hand, Wilfrid, 'ubi quartum decimum ætatis contigit annum, monasticam sæculari uitam prætulit. . . . Venit ergo ad insulam Lindisfarnensem, ibique monachorum famulatui se contradens.' etc. v. 19. This was in the year 648.

<sup>4</sup> Bede, *H. E.* iii. 3 : 'Construebantur ergo ecclesiæ per loca.' Compare the churches consecrated early in the eighth century by bishop John, which were built by the 'comites' Puch and Addi on their respective vills. v. 4, 5. That Aidan's churches were of wood is shown by the marked emphasis with which Bede refers to any stone churches which were raised ; *e.g.*, Edwin's church at York, ii. 14 ; Ninian's at Whithern, iii. 4 ; the second church at Lastingham, iii. 23 ; etc. Compare also the notice of Finan's church at Lindisfarne, iii. 25 : 'Qui in insula Lindisfarnensi fecit ecclesiam episcopali sedi congruam ; quam tamen more Scottorum non de lapide sed de robore secto totam composuit, atque harundine texit.'

huge diocese. He proved himself again and again a shrewd judge of men and of their special capacities for particular posts ; and he was ready to trust his workers in their several spheres of labour.

But one of the most remarkable features even of Aidan's administration is the position he boldly assigned to women in his organization of church life. In a rough age of constant warfare, when the amenities of home life seemed to be impossible except in the strongly guarded castles of the great, he brought the softening and refining influence of women to bear directly on the common life of all his people by placing specially gifted women in charge of double religious houses, for men and for women.<sup>5</sup> It is obvious that for the pioneers of this scheme there were required in the first instance women whose social status would at once establish the dignity of the calling, while it had already accustomed them to command, and prepared them to set the best standard of management and influence.

The first to be vested with this authority was Heiu,<sup>6</sup> of whose parentage and family nothing is known,<sup>7</sup> but whose ability as an organizer and administrator is vouched for by Aidan's selection of her not only as the practical foundress of the new system, but afterwards as the leader of the new house planted, almost as an outpost of the church, in 649 A.D. in the far south of Deira at 'Kælcacaestir,'<sup>8</sup> near Tadcaster (where Healaugh is said still to bear her name<sup>9</sup>), practically at the utmost limit of his diocese on the dangerous borderland towards the turbulent Mercians.

Soon after the investiture of Heiu as abbess, news reached bishop Aidan that the princess Hilda was anxious to devote herself to the monastic life, and that she was only waiting for an opportunity to cross the sea and join her sister Heresuid in the house at Cale<sup>10</sup> (or

<sup>5</sup> This system, said to be originally Celtic, was adopted by the Anglo-Saxon church. Theodore's *Poenit.* II. vi. 8. It was not restored after the Danish invasions. The Celtic missions carried it also to the continent, where, however, it soon died out. See *Diet. Chr. Antt.* vol. i. p. 6 b, *s.v.* Abbat.

<sup>6</sup> Bede, *H. E.* iv. 23 : 'Heiu, quæ prima feminarum fertur in prouincia Nordanhymbrorum propositum uestemque sanctimonialis habitus consecrante Aidano episcopo suscepisse.'

<sup>7</sup> See page 60 ; and *Diet. Chr. Biog.* vol. ii. p. 879.

<sup>8</sup> Bede, *H. E.* iv. 23 : 'Secessit ad ciuitatem Calcariam quæ a gente Anglorum Kælcacaestir appellatur, ibique sibi mansionem instituit.'

<sup>9</sup> See *Diet. Chr. Biog. s.v.* Heiu.

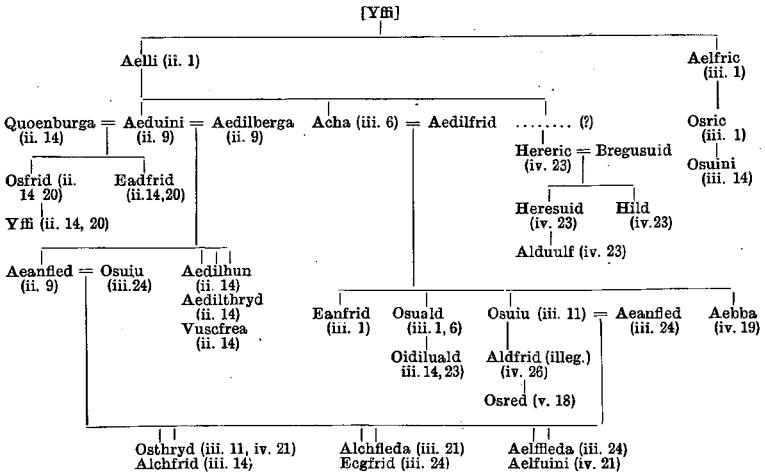
<sup>10</sup> Bede, *H. E.* iv. 23 : 'Proposito peregrinandi annum totum in præfata prouincia (*sc.* Orientalium Anglorum) retenta est : deinde ab Aidano episcopo in

Chelles), near Paris. He immediately sent an invitation to her in East Anglia, where she had been staying for a year past at the court of her nephew Aldwulf, Heresuid's son, offering her the opening she desired in her own native Northumbria, where her connexion with the royal family would give her an exceptional influence. This invitation she at once accepted, and so became the second, and eventually the greatest, of the Northumbrian abbesses.

It was a masterly stroke of policy on Aidan's part thus to secure Hilda for work in Northumbria under his episcopate ; and he further emphasized his attempt to utilize her influence as a bond of peace between the rival kings, by assigning her a post in Oswin's territory of Deira, while she was closely connected with Oswy's branch of the royal family (as may be seen by reference to the accompanying genealogical table, drawn up from Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*).

#### THE NORTHUMBRIAN ROYAL HOUSE

(From Bede's *Ecc. History*).



To explain this motive it is necessary to briefly glance at the story of the Northumbrian dynasty; and as it has a somewhat important bearing on the question of the location of Hilda's first house, it is worth while to do so.

patriam reuocata,' etc. She therefore never actually crossed the sea; yet bishop Forbes, in *Dict. Chr. Biog.*, referring to this passage, strangely says: 'When St. Hilda returned from Gaul (Bede, *Ecc. Hist.* iv. c. 23),' vol. i. p. 304, s.v. Begha.

Edwin's father Aelli (whose name is familiar from the pun made upon it by Gregory in the slave-market at Rome<sup>11</sup>), king of Deira, died in 588 A.D., when Edwin was only three years old. Ethelric of Bernicia at once seized Deira,<sup>12</sup> dispossessing Aelli's children, and uniting the whole of Northumbria under his own sway; but his son Ethelfrid, by his marriage with Aelli's daughter Acha,<sup>13</sup> obtained some sort of right to the throne of Deira, which he held, after his father, with that of Bernicia. In 617 A.D., however, Redwald championed Edwin's cause, and overthrew Ethelfrid, who was killed, in the battle of Retford;<sup>14</sup> and so Edwin not only recovered his own kingdom of Deira, but secured Bernicia as well. Thus, under the three successive reigns of Ethelric, Ethelfrid, and Edwin, the whole of Northumbria was united as one kingdom. Edwin on his accession at once retaliated for his own long exile by 'driving out the Athelings, sons of Ethelfrid,' including Eanfrid, Oswald, and Oswy.<sup>15</sup> He reigned over Northumbria for sixteen years. After his death, at the battle of Hatfield, in 633 A.D., the kingdom was again divided, his cousin Osric taking Deira, while Bernicia fell to Ethelfrid's son, Eanfrid. But in the following year both kings were slain by Caedwalla;<sup>16</sup> and when he in turn was vanquished and killed by Oswald at Heavenfield shortly afterwards, Bernicia and Deira were once more united under Oswald,<sup>17</sup> who represented the Bernician dynasty on his father's side and the Deiran on his mother's. His reign and life came to an end at Maserfield in 642 A.D.<sup>18</sup> His next brother Oswy might also have seemed to hold the same claim to both thrones, but not long after his accession Osric's son Oswin, the direct

<sup>11</sup> Bede, *H. E.* ii. 1: 'Rex provinciae illius quomodo appellatur? Responsum est quod Aelli diceretur. At ille adludens ad nomen ait, Alleluia! laudem Dei Creatoris illis in partibus oportet cantari.'

<sup>12</sup> See Bright, *Early English Church History*, p. 106, n. 2.

<sup>13</sup> Bede, *H. E.* iii. 6: 'Erat autem (Oswald, Ethelfrid's son) nepos Æduini regis ex sorore Acha.'

<sup>14</sup> Bede, *H. E.* ii. 12.

<sup>15</sup> *A. S. Chron. s.a. DCXVII.* See Bright, *E. E. Ch. Hist.* p. 108. The four younger sons were Oslac, Oswudu, Oslaf, and Offa.

<sup>16</sup> Bede, *H. E.* iii. 1.

<sup>17</sup> Bede, *H. E.* iii. 6: 'Huius industria regis Derorum et Berniciorum provinciae, quae eatenus ab invicem discordabant, in unam sunt pacem et uelut unum compaginatae in populum.'

<sup>18</sup> Bede, *H. E.* iii. 9.

male representative of the southern royal family, obtained by popular vote the kingdom of Deira.<sup>19</sup> This arrangement gave rise to continual friction between the two neighbouring kings, which eventually resulted in Oswin's murder by Hunwald, with Oswy's connivance, in the year 651.<sup>20</sup>

It was during the height of this vexed rivalry that Aidan, who was devotedly attached to Oswin, so much so in fact that the shock of the news of his murder apparently brought on his own fatal illness, invited Hilda to come north. She was the daughter of Oswy's cousin Hereric,<sup>21</sup> and so by relationship was connected with the Bernician house; but her direct descent from Aelli, and still more her close association with Edwin, by whom she seems to have been practically adopted after her father's death, linked her even more intimately with

<sup>19</sup> *Vita Oswini* (Surtees Soc. Publ. vol. 8), p. 3: 'Observans tempus congruum redeundi ad patriam, ecce tandem post actum in exilio decennium, audiuit regem Oswaldum de medio in ore gladii sublato, fratremque eius Oswi pro eo in regnum sublatum: initoque cum suis consilio, Deyrorum provinciam reuertitur, ibique cum summo honore ab omnibus suscipitur: paruoque temporis intervallo, principes primatesque regni illius conuenerunt in unum, communicatoque unanimiter consilio, Beatum Oswinum hereditarii iuris successione Deyrorum dominum in regem sublimantes, regia purpura ornauerunt.'

<sup>20</sup> Bede, *H. E.* iii. 14.

<sup>21</sup> Hereric was a nephew of Edwin—'nepos Eduini regis,' Bede, *H. E.* iv. 23—but not a son of his sister Acha, for his name does not occur in the list of her seven sons given in the *A. S. Chron.* DCXVII. Florence of Worcester, apparently mistaking the sense of 'nepos' for 'grandson,' three times speaks of him as the son of Eadfrid, Edwin's son by his first wife, Quenburga (*Monumenta Hist. Brit.* pp. 532, 632, 639). But Edwin was born in 585, and Hilda in 614 A.D. It is clearly therefore impossible that she could have been his great-granddaughter. That Florence derived his information from Bede is shown by his verbal quotation from *H. E.* iv. 23, under the year DCLXXX. (p. 536). Canon Raine's notice of Hereric in the *Dict. Chr. Biog.* is strangely confused. He first describes him as 'a nephew of Edwin,' and then goes on to speak of him in the same sentence as 'son of Eadfrith.' Moreover, he adds that 'he was baptized with Edwin by Paulinus at York on Easter Sunday A.D. 627,' whereas Hereric was poisoned by Cerdic ten years before that date ('ueneno periit,' Bede, *H. E.* iv. 23), in revenge for which Edwin expelled Cerdic from Elmet (near Loidis, or Leeds), (see app. to Nennius. lxvi. *Mon. Hist. Brit.* p. 76), and took Hilda under his own protection. It was she, not her father, who was baptized with Edwin (Bede, *H. E.* iv. 23: 'Filia nepotis Eduini regis, uocabulo Hererici; cum quo etiam rege (sc. Edwin) . . . fidem et sacramenta Christi suscepit.' So, too, Montalembert (*Monks of the West*, ed. Gasquet, 1896, vol. iii. p. 320), with equal confusion, transferring the account of Hereric's death to his wife Bregusuid, and making Cerdic a West Saxon, writes of Hilda: 'Born in exile, during the sovereignty of Ethelfrid, among the Saxons of the west, where her mother died a violent death, she had returned with her father on the restoration of his race in 617.' But Bede's statement is clear enough: 'Quæ (Bregusuid) cum uir eius Hereric exularet sub rege Brettonum Cerdice, ubi et ueneno periit, uidit per somnium quasi subito sublato eum quæsserit,' etc. The constant inaccuracy of references to the various characters in Northumbrian history renders it necessary thus to draw attention to the actual facts.

the royal house of Deira. She was therefore of all persons the most likely to form a bond between the two estranged families. Accordingly Aidan assigned her a post within Oswin's territory, and (as will appear presently) actually in his own home, or at least his birthplace,<sup>22</sup> but on the very border of Bernicia, which was separated from Deira by the river Tyne.<sup>23</sup>

The site thus selected is described by Bede<sup>24</sup> in vague and general terms: 'deinde ab Aidano episcopo in patriam reuocata accepit locum unius familiae ad septentrionalem plagam Viuri fluminis, ubi æque<sup>25</sup> anno uno monachicam cum perpaucis sociis uitam agebat.' The expression 'ad septentrionalem plagam Viuri fluminis' has unfortunately been the victim of a careless and persistent mistranslation which has obscured the whole question of the actual situation of the house. Indeed it is not too much to say that but for the misinterpretation of the one word *plaga* in this passage there never could have been any uncertainty as to the real locality. Thus Montalembert writes (iii. 321): 'Bishop Aidan authoritatively recalled her to her own country, and settled her there, obtaining for her a small estate sufficient to support a single family, and situated *on the banks of the Wear*.' So again professor Bright, in his charming book on early English church history (page 163), says: 'He had invited Edwin's grand-niece Hilda from East Anglia into Northumbria, where, after dwelling for a year, with very few companions, *on the north bank of the Wear*, she became in 649 the superior of a nunnery near Hartlepool.' So too, to quote but one other instance, professor Mayor, in the edition of the third and fourth books of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* which he issued in conjunction with professor Lumby in 1879, states in his summary of iv. 23, 'Bishop Aidan recalled her to her own country and she for one year lived the monastic life *on the north bank of the Wear*.' But in the glossary at the end of this edition he plunges yet deeper by

<sup>22</sup> See pp. 69, 70.

<sup>23</sup> See p. 75.

<sup>24</sup> *H. E.* iv. 23. The translation of this passage in Dr. Giles's edition of Bede is a startling illustration of the need of Mr. Bates's caution (*Arch. Ael.* vol. xvi. p. 82, n. 3) that 'no trust should be placed in the English translation added by Dr. Giles,' for it is as follows: 'Afterwards, *bishop Aidan being recalled home*, he gave her the land of one family on the north side of the river Wire, where for a year she also led a monastic life, with very few companions.'

<sup>25</sup> *Sc.* in reference to the 'annus totus' spent in East Anglia. See p. 49, n. 10.

the following entry : 'plāga 'a bank' Fr. *plage* 136 29 fluminis.' In his preface he explains that 'the examples given in the glossary are intended to be supplementary to those stored in the lexicons ;' but this singular interpretation is not supplementary, it is antagonistic. For it ignores the consistent use of *plaga* by Bede, who uses it only to describe a tract or district, not a river bank (which is expressed in the usual way by *ripa*). There are actually three other instances of the regular use of *plaga* in the very books contained in professor Mayor's edition, which however he conveniently passes by without notice.

To make this point, which is of some importance, clear, it will be well to refer to other passages in Bede where *plaga* occurs. In ii. 5, he thus describes the Northumbrians : 'quintus Æduini rex Nordanhymbrorum gentis, id est, eius quæ ad borealem Humbræ fluminis plagam inhabitat ;' and again in ii. 9, he repeats his definition : 'gens Nordanhymbrorum, hoc est, ea natio Anglorum, quæ ad aquilonalem Humbræ fluminis plagam habitabat.' Now, though in both these extracts *plaga* is used in close conjunction with *fluminis*, it is obvious that the people under Edwin's sway, and Paulinus's episcopal jurisdiction (to which the second of these references alludes), could by no stretch of imagination be supposed to be limited to the mere riverside population on the north bank of the Humber. Again (in iii. 3), speaking of the grant of the island of Hii to the Scottish monks, he defines the Picts who gave it as those 'qui illas Britanniae plagas incolunt ;' just as afterwards (v. 21), when referring to Naiton, he calls him 'rex Pictorum, qui septentrionales Britanniae plagas inhabitant ;' or as in his account of the ravages of the plague in the year 664 he mentions its progress before it reached Northumbria : 'depopulatis prius australibus Britanniae plagis' (iii. 27). Further, in denoting the position of islands lying off the coast, he makes use of *plaga* to mark their situation. Thus (i. 25), Tanatos is described as lying 'ad orientalem Cantiae plagam,' and (iv. 4) Inisboufinde as 'ad occidentalem plagam ab Hibernia procul secreta.' And yet once more, referring (i. 1) to the short summer nights in Britain, he accounts for them 'utpote nocturno sole non longe sub terris ad orientem boreales per plagas redeunte.' Now it is clear in all these cases that *plaga* means a tract or district, and nothing else. The only instance of its use in Bede's history which seems at first sight to lend



some countenance to professor Mayor's translation in the passage about Hilda's first location in Northumbria, is in ii. 12, where Ethelfrid's death at the battle of Retford is said to have taken place 'in finibus gentis Merciorum ad orientalem plagam amnis qui uocatur Idlæ;' but here the clue to the understanding of the phrase lies in the words 'in finibus gentis Merciorum,' showing that the description refers to the district, (as, indeed, it must do, if there is any consistency or meaning in language), and not to the bank of the river Idle.

But the interpretation of the word does not depend upon Bede's use of it alone, though that in itself would be quite sufficient to decide the question. For example, for purposes of comparison it is interesting to observe the application of the word in the Vulgate, as representing the standard Latin of Bede's day. From the passages tabulated in Dutripon's concordance it appears that *plaga* occurs 116 times.<sup>26</sup> It will have been noticed that in every instance adduced above from Bede (except one, where the vaguer definition 'illas' is employed) *plaga* is used in conjunction with an adjective denoting one of the cardinal points, north, south, east, or west. This peculiarity is abundantly borne out by the Vulgate idiom. For out of the 116 times the word occurs, it is used in exactly the same conjunction clearly in 104, and practically in 115 cases.<sup>27</sup> It is, therefore, a not unnatural inference that Bede drew the inspiration for his use of the word from the Vulgate; and this would make it doubly certain that he could not have used it as a synonym for *ripa*. It thus becomes evident that in his reference to Hilda's first house, the expression 'ad septentrionalem plagam Viuri fluminis' means 'in the district north of the Wear.'

Now, this 'district north of the Wear' was, some centuries later, in early Norman times, a well-defined territory under the name of 'Werhale.'<sup>28</sup> Thus, in the spurious charter 'Venerabilibus patribus,'

<sup>26</sup> Dutripon gives 117 instances; but one of them, Is. x. 26, is wrongly included. The word there is *plāga*, not *plūga*. It is noteworthy that the word occurs only in the Old Testament, and there, not in the Psalms: that is to say, it is only used in the books newly translated by Jerome, not in those merely revised by him.

<sup>27</sup> The phrase 'plaga maris' is repeated eleven times in Ezech. xlviii., where, however, 'mare' is used for the 'west,' so that these cases really fall under the same head as the rest. The one variant instance is the obviously hyperbolic expression 'plaga lectuli' in Amos iii. 12.

<sup>28</sup> See Surtees, *Hist. and Antt. of Durham*, vol. ii. p. 59; and Symeon of Durham, Surtees Soc. Publ. vol. 51, p. 143 n. Leland, *Itin.* vol. vii. p. 64, fol.

which purports indeed to date from 1093 A.D., but is probably a fabrication of the next century, and cannot in any case be later than 1229 A.D. (when the final agreement between the bishop and the prior of Durham, known as 'Le Convenit' was ratified),<sup>29</sup> it is referred to by name as a separate district : 'In Werhale, the whole of the land near the Tyne in wood and in plain on the eastern side from Mareburn as far as to the sea, and the fisheries which are on the south side of the river Tyne, etc.'<sup>30</sup> In this reference it is noticeable that Werhale, which takes its name from the Wear, is described as stretching along the Tyne. Moreover, in bishop Hatfield's survey of 1345-1382 A.D., it is recorded that John de Hedworth collected the rents of 'Werhall.'<sup>31</sup> Again, in Symeon's *Historia Ecclesie Dunelmensis*, the story is told how St. Cuthbert appeared in a dream to abbot Eadred after the death of king Haldene, and directed that Hardecnut's son Guthred should be redeemed from slavery, and elevated to the throne. This was accordingly carried out, and Guthred did not fail to prove his natural gratitude to the saint and his representatives who had brought about his good fortune. For shortly afterwards Eadred again came forward with a further vision of St. Cuthbert, claiming a cession to the church of the whole district between the Wear and the Tyne, with perpetual right of sanctuary ; and Guthred cheerfully acquiesced in this demand, with the approval of his suzerain Alfred, and with the consent of his people,<sup>32</sup> which was necessary for a grant of

78 :—'From *Darwent* Mouthe to *Wyre* Mouthe the low country betwixt is cawlyd *Wyralshire*. Parte, or moste Parte of *Chester*, is in *Wyrale*.'

<sup>29</sup> See Dr. Greenwell's *Feodarium Prioratus Dunelmensis*, Surtees Soc. Publ. vol. 58, pp. xxv. xxxi. lvi.

<sup>30</sup> 'In Werhale; totam terram in boscho et plano iuxta Tinam, ex orientali parte de Mareburne usque ad mare, et piscarias, quæ ex australi parte sunt fluminis Tini, scilicet Hildeiare,' etc. *Ibid.* p. lv. For the position of Mareburn, *ibid.* p. 110 n.

<sup>31</sup> 'Johannes de Hedworth ten j. mess., et xxxvj acr. terræ, quondam Ricardi de Hedworth, et uadit in legationibus Episcopi, et adducit redd. de Werhall apud Dunolm. per librum de Boldon *ibid.*, et red. p.a. ad iij term. usuales 6s. 8d.' Surtees Soc. Publ. vol. 32, p. 98.

<sup>32</sup> 'Interea . . . abbati Eadredo . . . ipse beatus Cuthbertus per somnium astitit, iamque suorum quieti providens, ei hæc facienda iniunxit. Pergens, inquit, ad exercitum Danorum mea te ad illos missum legatione dices, ut scilicet puerum quem uiduæ illi uendiderant, uocabulo Guthredum, filium Hardecnut, ubinam sit tibi ostendant. Quo inuento et pretio libertatis eius uiduæ persoluto, ante totius exercitus frequentiam producat, atque ab omnibus, me uolente ac iubente, in Oswiesdune, hoc est monte Oswiu, electus, posita in brachio eius dextro armilla, in regnum constituatur. Euigilans ergo abbas rem sociis retulit, moxque profectus iussa per ordinem compleuit ; productoque in medium iuene,

folcland.<sup>33</sup> There seems to be no reason to doubt the reality of this gift, which was apparently made soon after 880 A.D.<sup>34</sup> And the magnitude of the donation finds a parallel in Coinwalch's earlier gift to the church of Winchester of all the lands within seven miles of that city.<sup>35</sup> Possibly however the distinctive and formal definition of 'Werhale' as a separate territory dates from this benefaction of Guthred, and does not therefore reach back as far as Aidan's, or even Bede's time; and if so it can hardly be technically identified with Bede's 'septentrionalis plaga Viuri fluminis.' But it is by no means unlikely that the tract between the two rivers was treated informally as a separate territory long before Guthred's time, and that this fact in the first instance suggested the demand for its cession as a whole to the church.

Indeed the eastern portion of this Wear-Tyne district was very distinctly marked off by its physical conformation as an insulated strip, surrounded on all sides by natural barriers. With the sea on the east, and the two main rivers on the north and south, it was also protected on the west partly by the outcrop 'in boldest escarpment'

tam barbari quam indigenæ reuerenter iussa sancti Cuthberti suscipiunt, atque unanimi fauore puerum ex seruitute in regnum constituunt. . . . Nec parum honoris et donorum illi ecclesiæ (sc. Cuncacestre) rex Guthredus contulit, eique qui ex seruo se in regem promouerat deuota deinceps humilitate subditus fideliter seruiuit. Unde cuncta quæ pro priuilegiis ecclesiæ suæ ac libertate atque pro sibi ministrantium sustentatione mandauerat, ille ut promptus minister mox adimplere festinauit. Denique memorato abbati per uisum astans ipse sanctus, Dicit, inquit, regi ut totam inter Weor et Tine terram mihi et in mea ecclesia seruientibus perpetuæ possessionis iure largiatur, ex qua illis ne inopia laborent uitæ subsidia procurentur. Præcipe illi præterea ut ecclesiam meam tutum profugis locum refugii constituat, ut quicumque qualibet de causa ad meum corpus confugerit pacem per triginta et septem dies nulla unquam infringendam occasione habeat. Hæc per fidelem internuntium abbatem audita tam ipse rex Guthredus quam etiam rex potentissimus . . . . Elfredus declaranda populis propararunt; eaque, toto non solum Anglorum sed et Danorum consentiente atque collaudante exercitu, in perpetuum seruanda constituerunt.' Symeon, *Hist. Eccl. Dun.* ii. 13, ed. Arnold in Rolls series, vol. i.

<sup>33</sup> See Lingard, *Anglo-Saxon Church*, vol. i. pp. 230, 413.

<sup>34</sup> The date is thus arrived at: It was shortly after the removal of the 'sedes episcopalis' to Cuncacestre that this grant was made. In 899 A.D., according to the *Hist. Tranl. S. Cuthberti*, Alfred died ('anno ab incarnatione Domini DCCCXCIX. idem piissimus rex Anglorum Alfredus . . . defunctus est'), and in the same year, which is further marked as the nineteenth from the removal of the see to Cuncacestre (Chester-le-Street) bishop Eardulf also died ('eodem anno quo rex Alfredus mortuus est ille sæpe memoratus antistes Eardulfus . . . ab hac uita migravit, anno scilicet nonodecimo ex quo sacrum beati patris Cuthberti corpus in Cuncacestre translatum fuerat'); the settlement at Chester-le-Street must, therefore, have been in 880 or 881 A.D.

<sup>35</sup> Lingard, *Anglo-Saxon Church*, vol. i. p. 238.

of the magnesian limestone, and partly by the river Don and the great bog through which it flowed.<sup>36</sup> That the Don was in ancient times considerable enough for ships to pass up it is clearly stated by Leland :<sup>37</sup> and this statement has lately received a singular confirmation. For in June, 1894, when a deep drain was being laid near Brockley Whins, by the bed of the Don, the workmen came upon the unmistakable framework of an ancient ship, apparently of Scandinavian building, at a depth of some eight feet below the present surface. Now this strip of definite territory was in Bede's time strongly dominated by the first position within it which the church had occupied in force, Benedict Biscop's foundation at Wearmouth ; and therefore not unnaturally it would as a whole be regarded and described as from that position.

But even if there were no special 'district north of the Wear' in Bede's day to which he might naturally refer in general terms, still the vague form of his expression will cause no surprise or difficulty to a careful student of his writings. It is, in fact, exactly after his usual manner.<sup>38</sup> For example, if clear and accurate description of the site of any religious house were to be expected, it would be looked for obviously in the case of his own life-long home at Jarrow above all others. Yet in the whole of his *Ecclesiastical History* Jarrow is only once mentioned by name, and that is in the account of Ceolfrid's correspondence with Naiton (v. 21). There is no notice whatever, in the history, of the foundation of that monastery by Benedict Biscop. Moreover, in his special *History of the Abbats of the Monastery at Wearmouth and Jarrow*, this vagueness, or rather absence, of description is still more remarkable. For, except in the title of the work, he does not once mention the name of Jarrow ;<sup>39</sup> and when he tells of the foundation of Biscop's second house (at Jarrow), his narration is so worded as to give the distinct

<sup>36</sup> See Heslop's 'The Permian People of North Durham,' *Arch. Ael.* vol. x. p. 100.

<sup>37</sup> *Collectanea* (ed. Hearne, 1770), vol. ii. (i.) p. 328, n. : 'Portus Ecefridi sinus qui a Tina ad Girwi penetrat. Penetrabat et interius usque ad Bilton, pene 3 pas. millibus super Girwi, quo antiquitus et nauciculæ peruenerunt.'

<sup>38</sup> Compare the dearth of place-names in his *Life of St. Cuthbert*. See Bates, *Arch. Ael.* vol. xvi. p. 82.

<sup>39</sup> The same strange omission of the name of Jarrow is noticeable also in the anonymous *Life of Ceolfrid* (printed as *Historia Abbatum Giruensium, auctore anonymo*, in Giles's *Bede*, vol. vi. pp. 416-432).

impression that it was on Wearside. This at least would be the only natural inference to be drawn from his account taken by itself, if no further knowledge of the institution were available from other sources. For having described (§ 1) how Biscop 'built a monastery in honour of the most blessed chief of the Apostles, Peter, near the mouth of the river Wear on the north side, through the help of Egfrid, the worthy and most religious king of that nation, who gave the land,' he afterwards goes on to say (§ 6) that this same king, in his great regard for Biscop's character and energy, and seeing the fruitful result of his original gift, subsequently augmented his grant of land by a 'further gift of a site of forty holdings, where . . . Benedict . . . built the monastery of blessed Paul the Apostle;' but there is no word of reference to Tyneside, or to the actual distance between the two houses. And yet no misinterpretation of this passage is ever suggested, though it lends itself to misunderstanding far more readily than Bede's description of the position of Hilda's first house; for in this case no mistranslation would be involved, such as does occur in the other.

There remains yet one word more to add about Bede's diction. His habitual phrase for expressing a site on a river bank, when he desires to define it accurately, is 'iuxta,' or 'ad ostium.' So, *e.g.*, St. Peter's monastery at Wearmouth is twice described as having been built by Biscop 'iuxta ostium fluminis Viuri (Vyri),'<sup>40</sup> twice as 'ad ostium Viuri amnis (fluminis Viri) ad aquilonem;'<sup>41</sup> Jarrow was 'iuxta annem Tinam;'<sup>42</sup> Biscop exchanged two silk robes for an additional site of three holdings, 'ad austrum Vuri fluminis iuxta ostium;'<sup>43</sup> and Ceolfrid bought of king Aldfrid, for a copy of the Cosmographers which Biscop had brought from Rome, a parcel of land of eight holdings, 'iuxta fluuium Fresca;'<sup>44</sup> and so forth. But all these expressions are different from, and by no means synonymous with, that which has caused so much unnecessary trouble, 'ad septentrionalem plagam Viuri fluminis.'

Here, then, the question of the interpretation of Bede's phrase may be dismissed. It was inevitable to deal with it at some length on account of the persistent misunderstanding with which it has been beset, and for which there can be no pretence of justification.

<sup>40</sup> *H. E.* iv. 18, *Hist. Abb.* § 1.    <sup>41</sup> *H. E.* v. 21, *Hist. Abb.* § 4.

<sup>42</sup> *H. E.* v. 21.    <sup>43</sup> *Hist. Abb.* § 8.    <sup>44</sup> *Hist. Abb.* § 12.

The main point, however, still remains to be discussed, where the actual site was of Hilda's house in the 'district north of the Wear.' Three places only have been suggested, and it will be convenient to take them in order.

(1) First, on the north bank of the Wear. It has already been shown that in modern histories this opinion is merely an inference from Bede's statement, and is founded upon a mistake as to the meaning of his words. But there is one other earlier allusion to this locality which must be further considered. Leland in his *Collectanea*,<sup>45</sup> quoting from a *Life of St. Bega* (which he apparently found at Whitby), says that she (Bega) was born in Ireland, and that she first founded a small and humble monastery in Caupland, which is commonly called 'Saynct Beges.' 'Next, she built a monastery on the north side of the river Wear (ad septentrionalem partem Wiræ fluminis). Thirdly, she migrated to Herutey, . . . and established a nunnery of virgins there, and a little after ceded it to the holy virgin Hilda. . . . But Bega, leaving the island of Herutey, betook herself to Calcaria, where she built herself a new monastery. . . . She died at Hacanos.' Now it is clear that in this account Bega is identified, or rather confused, first with Heiu, of whom Bede gives an exactly corresponding account,<sup>46</sup> so far as Heruteu and Calcaria are concerned; secondly with Begu of Hacanos, who had the vision of Hilda's death;<sup>46</sup> and thirdly with Hilda herself, inasmuch as the notice of the house 'ad septentrionalem partem Wiræ fluminis' is evidently adapted from Bede's words about Hilda. Indeed, the whole of the *Life of St. Bega* seems to be a mere farrago from the lives of other saints;<sup>47</sup> even the miracles ascribed to her read like adaptations of

<sup>45</sup> Vol. iv. (iii.) p. 39: 'Bega nata in Hybernia. Bega primum humile monasterium construxit in Cauplandia, ubi nunc sunt aliquot monachi Mariani urbis Ebor. et vulgo uocatur Saynct Beges. Deinde ad septentrionalem partem Wiræ fluminis monasterium construxit. Tertio Herutey . . . commigravit, cœnobiumque uirginum ibi condidit, pauloque post Hildæ, sacræ uirgini, cessit. . . . Bega autem relicta insula de Herutey contulit se Calcariam . . . et nouum sibi monasterium condidit. . . . Bega tandem a Calcaria peregre proficiscens obiit apud Hacanos monasterium uelatarum uirginum.'

<sup>46</sup> *H. E.* iv. 23.

<sup>47</sup> This confused story appears also in the Legend for Oct. 31, in the Aberdeen Breviary (Bright, *E. E. Ch. Hist.* p. 322, n. 4). See Montalembert, vol. iv. pp. 384-7. A like confusion is admitted into the *Dict. Chr. Biog.*, which has two independent articles on 'Bega' and 'Begha.' Leland, in his quotation from Bede (*Coll.* vol. iii. (ii.) p. 150), goes so far as to substitute 'Bega' for 'Heiu.'

similar well-known achievements of other holy women. Probably the similarity of the name of Begu, the nun of Hackness, with that of Bega led to the identification of the two, and then, in order to bring her from the west coast to the east, Bega was further identified with Heiu.<sup>48</sup> It is clear, therefore, that this reference is worthless as evidence of the existence of a house on the banks of the Wear before Biscop's first monastery there a generation later. Moreover, Egfrid's gift of the site 'de suo'<sup>49</sup> in 674 A.D. seems to preclude altogether the idea of an earlier foundation on the spot.

(2) Next, in a note, ascribed to Greveson, in the margin of Leland's summary of St. Bega's life in his *Collectanea*,<sup>50</sup> it is stated that 'there is between the mouths of the Tyne and the Wear a small church dedicated to the lady Hilda, and it lies farther from the Wear than from the Tyne. It is situated on a certain promontory, which the people call Sowter. Perhaps here was formerly Bega's small monastery.'

Who Greveson was, who is responsible for this statement, it seems impossible to ascertain. Leland does not quote him again either in his *Collectanea* or in his *Itinerarium*; nor does he refer to him in his *Commentarii de Scriptoribus Britannicis*,<sup>51</sup> in which he identifies most of his informants. From his minute knowledge of the locality shown by his allusion to Sowter Point, it may with some probability be inferred that Greveson was a local informant whom Leland met in the neighbourhood. If so, his statement is of course the more deserving of attention. But is there any confirmation of it to be found elsewhere? Mr. Robert Allison of Whitburn says he remembers that when he was a boy the old inhabitants of Whitburn had a tradition that a church had once stood on the edge of the coast, which has since been eroded by the sea, opposite a post which now

<sup>48</sup> An ingenious attempt to justify these identifications may be seen in the anonymous and undated *Notes on the History of S. Bega and S. Hild*, published by J. Procter at Hartlepool.

<sup>49</sup> Bede, *Hist. Abb.* § 4; Lingard, *Anglo-Saxon Church*, vol. i. p. 240, n.

<sup>50</sup> Vol. iv. (iii.) p. 39: 'Est humilis ecclesia inter ostia Tini et Wedræ D. Hildæ dicata, atque longius distat a Vedra quam a Tina. Sita est autem in quadam prominentia, quam uulgus Sowter uocat. Forsan hic olim fuit Begæ monasteriolium.' Mr. F. Madan, sub-librarian of the Bodleian Library at Oxford, has kindly referred to Leland's original MS., in which, as printed in Hearne's edition, the note is ascribed to 'Greueson.' It was, therefore, added by Leland himself, and not by Hearne.

<sup>51</sup> Ed. by Antony Hall, 1709.

marks the boundary line between the river jurisdictions of the Tyne and the Wear. This tradition, however, may be simply derived from the note in Leland. For there seems to be no mention whatever of such a church in any of the multitudinous records of various kinds preserved at Durham. Moreover, Surtees, with all his careful investigation, could not trace any allusion to it other than Leland's note on Greveson's authority ; he heard of no local tradition about it ; for he writes, after translating Greveson's words : 'The description, though accurate as to neither, may be better referred to Shields than to Wearmouth ;' and again, 'It is extremely probable that the church (*sc.* St. Hild's, South Shields) is of high antiquity, and it is not perhaps without some claim to be considered as the "humble church dedicated to St. Hilda, which standeth nearer to the Tyne than to the Wear."' <sup>52</sup> And further, early in the eighteenth century John Smith wrote, with reference to Greveson's note, <sup>53</sup> 'This spot has disappeared, unless we are to understand by it the church of St. Hilda. Nowhere have I been able to find a monastery in "the district north of the Wear," except that which was founded by Benedict Biscop.'

If, therefore, any such chapel ever existed at all, and was not an invention of imagination, it can never have been of any importance, and indeed can hardly have been more than a small way-side chapel, without any cure attached to it. In any case it cannot seriously be regarded as the site of an ancient religious house.

(3) There remains, then, as the only possible one of the three suggested positions, the site of St. Hild's church at South Shields ; and several different lines of evidence converge to point to this spot, until it becomes at last a practical certainty that this is the actual site of Hilda's first house under Aidan.

(a) It has been more than once pointed out by Mr. Bates in the *Archæologia Aeliana*, <sup>54</sup> that what he calls 'proprietary dedications' were especially common in Celtic countries, and were prevalent in Northumbria. In these dedications 'churches were called after the

<sup>52</sup> *Hist. and Antt. of Durham*, vol. ii. pp. 2, 98.

<sup>53</sup> 'Interit . . . hic locus, nisi per eum intelligamus ecclesiam S. Hildæ, cuius certa initia sunt sequiorum temporum, et quæ in australi Tinæ fluminis potius quam septentrionali Viuri plaga sita est . . . Nusquam inuenire potui Monasterium a septentrionali plaga Viuri nisi illud quod Benedictus Biscop fundauit.' Bede, ed. 1722. It is clear that Smith too misinterpreted *plaga*.

<sup>54</sup> Vol. xiii. p. 324. Vol. xvi. p. 86.



names of the saints who founded them,' by constant custom, if not in virtue of their original designation. Besides the instances of the various churches of St. Cuthbert, other examples of this practice in the north are found in the titles of the churches of St. Aidan at Bamburgh,<sup>55</sup> St. Boswell at Tweedmouth,<sup>56</sup> and St. Hilda at Hartlepool, and in the name of Ebchester,<sup>57</sup> all of which are memorials of the personal labours of their eponym saints. A remarkable case, too, is the persistency with which to this day the old church at Jarrow, consecrated in honour of St. Paul,<sup>58</sup> as the inscription on the still extant dedication stone indicates, and as Bede records, is commonly spoken of in the neighbourhood as 'Bede's' or 'St. Bede's' church. Now to no place or church has the name of a local saint clung in this way more tenaciously than has that of St. Hilda to St. Hild's chapel (or church) in South Shields. It is universally referred to in all official documents by the name of its dedication, and not merely of its location.<sup>59</sup> In this respect it is unique among the churches in the diocese; for the only other instances of the regular<sup>60</sup> use of the dedication title are the

<sup>55</sup> Not to be confused with the church of St. Peter at Lindisfarne, as it very often is. See Bede, *H. E.* iii. 17: 'Cum fabricata esset ibi (sc. in insula Lindisfarnensium) basilica maior atque in honorem beatissimi apostolorum principis dedicata;' cf. iii. 25 'qui (Finan) in insula Lindisfarnensi fecit ecclesiam episcopali sedi congruam . . . quam tempore sequente reuerentissimus archiepiscopus Theodorus in honore beati apostoli Petri dedicauit.' In Archdeacon Singleton's visitation notes, 1828, it is cited strangely as 'St. Bartholomew.' *Arch. Ael.* vol. xvii. p. 256.

<sup>56</sup> *Arch. Ael.* vol. xiii. pp. 326, 342.

<sup>57</sup> Boyle, *Comprehensive Guide to the County of Durham*, p. 599. *Dict. Chr. Biog.* vol. ii. p. 22 b.

<sup>58</sup> Moberly, in the introduction to his useful edition of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, speaks of 'the abbey of St. Paul at Wearmouth' (p. xiii), and of 'the monks of St. Peter's, Jarrow' (p. xiv.), though he quotes (p. 376), but quotes inaccurately, the inscription on the dedication stone of St Paul's, Jarrow.

<sup>59</sup> In the *Jarrow Account Rolls* (Surtees Soc. Publ. vol. 29), after 1409 A.D., the reference is always to 'the chapel, or chaplain, of Schellis, or Sheles.' Before that date, it is always 'the chapel, or chaplain, of St. Hilda,' except once in 1355 A.D. and once in 1408 A.D. In the *Detections, Comperts, and Injunctions* of Bishop Barnes (Surtees Soc. Publ. vol. 22, p. 118), Thomas Meslet is described as 'Curate of Sowthshields' (though in the visitation lists he is always entered as 'Curate of St. Hild's'—see pp. 53, 73, 97). But such references, without mention of St. Hild's, are very rare.

<sup>60</sup> There are very occasional instances of reference to the dedication title of other churches; e.g., 'Ferie, ecclesiam Sancti Johannis cum uilla sua,' *Carta Johannis Regis*, printed by Dr. Greenwell, *Feodarium Prioratus Dunelmensis*, Surtees Soc. Publ. vol. 58, p. 94. Also, 'Ecclesiam Sancti Pauli in Gyruet ecclesiam Sancti Petri in Wiremutha,' in one of the spurious charters of bishop William. *Ibid.* p. xlviij.

city churches of Durham and Newcastle, where such differentiation was rendered necessary by the fact of there being several parish churches in the same town. So marked indeed is this that it is constantly even officially designated simply as 'St. Hild's chapel,' without any mention of Shields at all, or any reference to its situation, and ignoring altogether the possibility of confusion with St. Hilda's church at Hartlepool. The church on the Tyne is *par excellence* the St. Hild's of the diocese of Durham. Thus, to cite but a few instances at various dates: the charter granted to the church of Durham by king John, and dated 2 February, 1204, specifies in the list of the rightful possessions of the priory of Durham 'Jarrow with its church and the fisheries of the Tyne, the church of St. Hilda,' etc.;<sup>61</sup> and the same words occur also some thirty years earlier in the charter of Henry II.<sup>62</sup> In the collation of William Cuke as chaplain<sup>63</sup> in 1327 A.D., the phrase runs, 'laudabilis conuersacio tua nos inducit ut capellam nostram Sanctæ Hyldæ tuæ custodiæ committamus,' etc.; a phrase which is repeated in the collation of John de Gyseburn in 1402 A.D.<sup>64</sup> At prior John Fossor's first visitation, as 'Archdeacon in the churches belonging to the church of Durham,' in 1343 A.D., the clergy and representatives of 'Jarowe, Monketon, Heberine, Folesceby, lower Heword, upper Heword, the Felling, Wylington, and Walleshend,' were cited (through the chaplain of Jarrow) to attend at the 'chapel of Heword' (Heworth), while those from 'Hetheword, Simondset, Schelles, Wyvestowe, and Herton,' were summoned to 'the Chapel of S. Hilda the Virgin.'<sup>65</sup> The commissioners of Edward VI. in May, 1553, reported that they found at Jarrow 'one chalice, with a paten, embost with lead, weying xxv unces, one chalice at St. Hyldes, with a paten, weying

<sup>61</sup> 'Giruum cum ecclesia sua et piscariis de Tine, ecclesiam Sanctæ Hildæ,' etc. *Ibid.* p. 94. See also p. iv.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.* p. lxxxiii. See pp. iv-v. Bishop Hugh, one of the witnesses, died in 1173 A.D.

<sup>63</sup> Printed in the appendix to the *Jarrow Account Rolls*, p. 234, but with a wrong reference to the original record, which should be 'Reg. I. Parv. 37' (not Reg. II.).

<sup>64</sup> Printed by Hutchinson, vol. ii. p. 483, from a copy at the end of St. Hild's Burials Register, 1718-1740. Again the reference is wrongly given as 'Reg. V. fo. 126, 6' for Reg. II. fol. 126 b.'

<sup>65</sup> Printed in the appendix to the *Jarrow Account Rolls*, p. 235. John Fossor became prior in 1342.

xi unces, two bells in the stepell at Jarrow and one at St. Hyldes.<sup>66</sup> In the year 1568 Thomas Blackeston was nominated<sup>67</sup> to the 'capella de lez Sheles uulgo uocata St. Hildes.' On 8 October, 1755 'William Radley, clerk, M.A., was licensed<sup>68</sup> to serve the cure of St. Hild's in the county of Durham, and to receive a salary of forty pounds a year.' In 1768 an Act of Parliament was passed for 'vesting in the Dean and Chapter of Durham a certain piece of ground,<sup>69</sup> adjoining the town of South Shields, in the county palatine of Durham, and for making an adequate compensation to the curate of the chapel of Saint Hild's in the said county,' etc. In 1775 the appointment of an incumbent for the first time omitted the claim of the dean and chapter to 'collate' to the living, and the reverend Richard Wallis was nominated to 'the perpetual curacy or chapel of St. Hild's in the county and diocese of Durham.'<sup>70</sup> And to the present day the incumbent of the church is described in the affidavit required in chancery before he receives a certain payment due to the living as 'the present perpetual curate or incumbent of Saint Hilda in the county of Durham.' And it is not without significance that locally the usual popular designation of the church is 'Hilda church,' or simply 'Hilda.'

But, further, Hilda's name is associated also with the place in other ways. For example, in the supposititious charter 'Venerabilibus Patribus' referred to above, the first name in the list of fisheries on the south side of the Tyne is 'Hildeiare.' Moreover, in the collations of William Cuke, in 1327, and of John de Gyseburn, in 1402, already quoted, one of the sources of stipend allotted to the chaplain is the 'pisces uocati Saynt Hyldesfysche (or Sainthildefish);'<sup>71</sup> a

<sup>66</sup> List of 'Church Goods, etc., within the Countie of the Byshopricke of Duresme.' Surtees Soc. Publ. vol. 22 (*Ecclesiastical Proceedings of Bishop Barnes*), p. lvii. See also note 150, p. 88.

<sup>67</sup> Reg. C. fol. 2, in the Treasury of the Dean and Chapter at Durham. A note is added at the side of the entry, 'nondum emanuit sub sigill. capitulare;' and Randal adds to the name, in his MS. list of the clergy of St. Hilda's, 'N.B. this p'sentac'on is cancell'd.' But on 24 October, 1583, William Bramall was presented to the chapel of St. Hilda then vacant 'per cessionem Thomæ Blaxton.' Reg. E. fol. 16.

<sup>68</sup> *Acts of Bishop Trevor*, at Auckland castle.

<sup>69</sup> On which were laid out the Market Place, West Street, Dean Street, Thrift Street, Queen Street, King Street, East Street, and Chapter Row.

<sup>70</sup> Reg. Dampier. Pars II. fol. 58.

<sup>71</sup> Probably a tithe in kind.

right which is not apparently mentioned in subsequent collations, but which is returned as still payable, under the title of 'St. Hild's fish,' by the reverend Thomas Simpson in his answers to bishop Chandler's visitation articles in 1734.<sup>72</sup>

Of course these instances are but a few, taken almost at random, out of the vast number of references to the church of various kinds which might be quoted; but they are typical cases, and they are quite sufficient to indicate the extraordinary persistence with which Hilda's name has clung to this church. This tenacity of association is all the more remarkable when account is taken both of the great breach of continuity in the life and tradition of the Northumbrian church, which was caused by the repeated devastations of churches and monasteries by the Danes, and also of the better known and much longer maintained connexion of Hilda with Hartlepool and Whitby. In itself it would afford a very strong presumption that she had personally been connected with the place.

(b) But this presumption does not stand alone. There is definite evidence of the existence of a religious house on this spot during Hilda's lifetime. In Bede's poem, '*De miraculis S. Cuthberti*,' the well-known story is told, in chapter 3,<sup>73</sup> of the five boats coming down the river Tyne with wood for the monastery, which were swept out to sea by a sudden squall, to the cynical delight of their neighbours on the opposite side of the river, and which were restored in safety by a change of wind brought about by Cuthbert's prayers. Cuthbert is here spoken of as a boy,

Seruatur sed et hæc puero uictoria lecto ;

and it is not until the next chapter that his vision of bishop Aidan's soul being borne up to heaven on the night of his death (31 August, 651) is recorded; so that, if the chronological order is to be trusted, the monastery was already in existence before Aidan's death in 651 A.D. The actual position of the house to which the distressed brethren belonged is only stated somewhat indefinitely in the poem :—

Est locus insignis fluuii super ostia Tini,  
Eximio iam tunc monachorum examine pollens.

<sup>72</sup> 'An answer to y<sup>e</sup> several Queries of y<sup>e</sup> R<sup>t</sup> Rev<sup>d</sup> y<sup>e</sup> Lord Bishop of Durham in his Circular letter to y<sup>e</sup> Clergy of his Diocese, w<sup>ch</sup> came not to my hands till about y<sup>e</sup> month of July, 1734, otherwise they had bin answered at his Lordship's Visitation of 1732.'

<sup>73</sup> Ed. Giles, vol. i. p. 5.

But in his prose '*Vita S. Cuthberti*,' Bede, in telling the same story, describes the site accurately as not far from the mouth of the Tyne on the south side of the river:<sup>74</sup> 'Est denique monasterium non longe ab ostio Tini fluminis ad meridiem situm, tunc quidem uirorum, nunc autem mutato ut solet per tempora rerum statu uirginum, Christo seruientium nobili examine pollens.' Moreover, the sequence of events as chronicled in the poem is repeated in the prose life, which places this scene immediately before the vision of the passage of Aidan's soul, which determined Cuthbert to seek admission to the monastic life. Bearing in mind the extraordinary care which Bede took to verify all the details of this narrative, as he himself explains in his preface, there is no room left for doubt as to the occurrence of this perilous expedition of the boats,—and, therefore, also as to the existence of the monastery, from which they set forth and to which they returned,—before Aidan's death. Now as this happened in 651 A.D., and as Hilda's one year in her first religious house before she was removed to Hartlepool was 648-9 A.D., it follows that the time of the incident must have, if not exactly at all events very nearly, coincided with the brief period of her rule there.

In the *Life of St. Cuthbert*, in English verse,<sup>75</sup> written about the year 1450, the position of the house is definitely identified with the site of St. Hild's chapel:—

Als when he prayed for othir men,  
 Grace and helpe God sone thaim len.  
 In takenyng of this thing we rede,  
 Be the telling of Saint Bede,  
 How some tyme was a monastery  
 That eftir was a nonry,  
 Bot a litil fra Tynemouth'.  
 That mynster stode in to the South';  
 Whare Saint Hilde Chapel' standes nowe,  
 Thar it stode some tyme trewe.

By the year 686 the change of constitution of the house, referred to in the last two extracts, had already taken place; for in his final visitation of his diocese bishop Cuthbert 'came'<sup>76</sup> at last to the

<sup>74</sup> Ed. Giles, vol. iv. p. 214.

<sup>75</sup> Surtees Soc. Publ. vol. 87. Bk. ii. ll. 1121-1130.

<sup>76</sup> 'Inde peragratis ex ordine superioribus locis, uenit ad monasterium uirginum, quod non longe ab ostio Tini fluminis situm supra docuimus; ubi a religiosa et ad seculum quoque nobilissima famula Christi Verca abbatissa

monastery of virgins, which, as has been shown above, was situated not far from the mouth of the river Tyne, where he was honourably welcomed by the religious and, in a worldly sense, most noble handmaid of Christ, the abbess Verca.' It was this same Verca who presented him with the linen in which, at his own request, his body was wrapped after his death.<sup>77</sup>

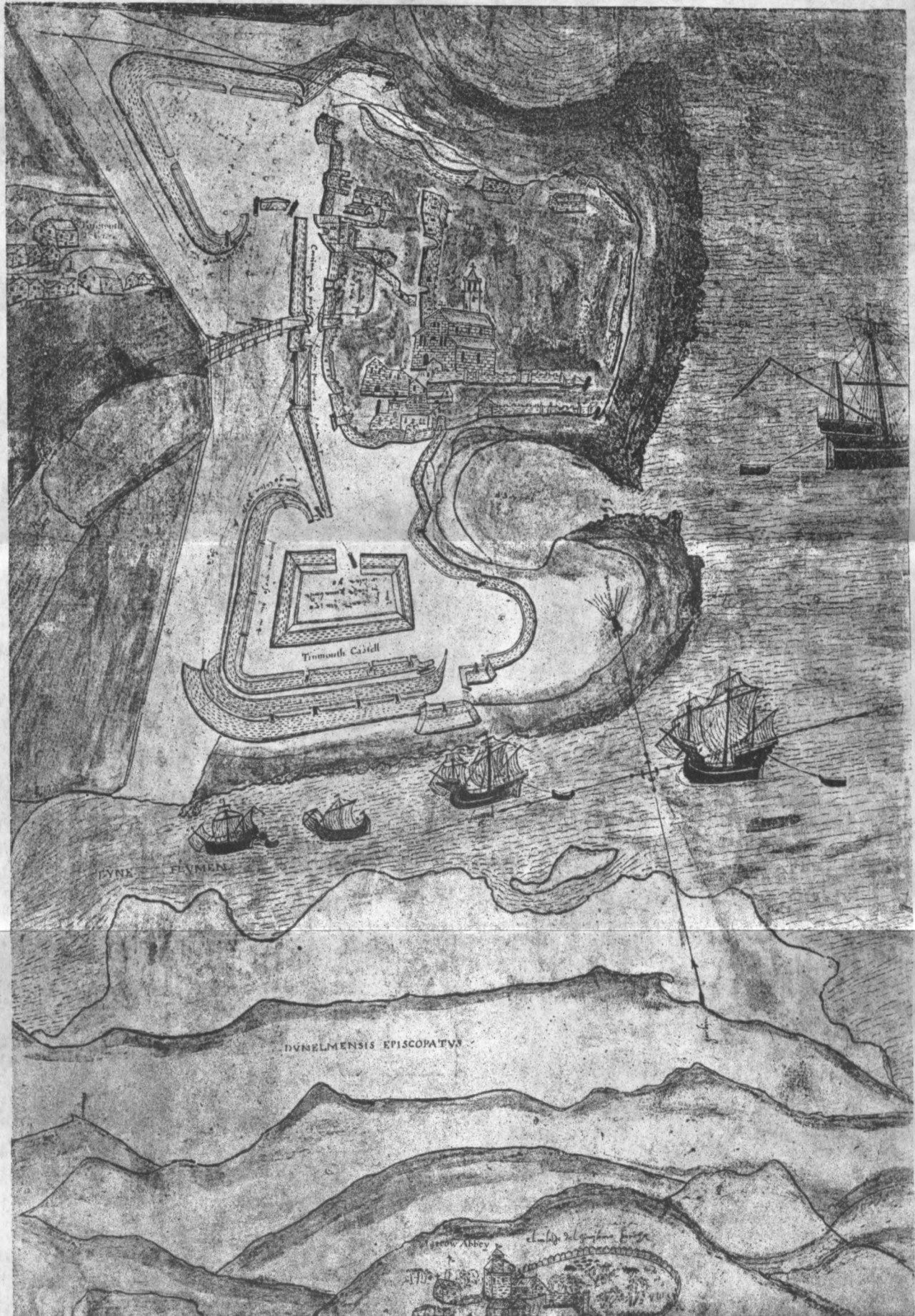
(c) Again, the sites chosen for the establishment of religious houses in the early days of the Northumbrian church were necessarily selected with a view to their natural defensive strength. Before the final overthrow of Penda, and with him of a dominant Paganism, by Oswy, at Winwædfield, in November, 655 A.D.,<sup>78</sup> the greatest danger threatened from Mercia, not from the sea; for the Danes had not as yet appeared upon the coast. The sea was regarded, therefore, as at once a protection and a way of escape in case of need; not, as afterwards under altered circumstances, as the probable side of attack. Accordingly the earlier houses are found either in strong and semi-insular positions on the coast, as at Hartlepool (and no doubt the associations of Iona and Lindisfarne encouraged the choice of this type of locality); or on the bend of a river, as at Melrose;<sup>79</sup> or in fortified Roman camps, as at Calcaria ('Kælcacestir'). Now both these conditions were united in the case of the house 'near the mouth of the Tyne on the south side.' Protected on the east by the sea, and on the north and west by the river, it also had its southern face guarded by water by the tidal channel which then, and for many

magnifice susceptus,' etc. Bede, *Vita S. Cuthberti*, cap. xxxv. ed. Giles, vol. iv. p. 316. The only reference to a 'monastery near the mouth of the Tyne' in the earlier chapters is that quoted above, p. 67, where it is described as 'ad meridiem situm;' and yet canon Raine, in his article on Cuthbert in the *Dict. Chr. Biog.* (vol. i. p. 726 a) speaks of Verca as 'Abbess of Tynemouth.'

<sup>77</sup> 'In hoc (sarcophago) meum corpus reponite, inuolentes in sindone quam inuenietis istic. Nolui quidem ea uiuens indui, sed pro amore dilectæ Deo feminæ, quæ hanc mihi misit, Vercæ uidelicet abbatissæ, ad obuolnendum corpus meum reseruare curauit.' *Ibid.* cap. xxxvii. p. 324, cf. Reginald Dunelm. cap. xli. (Surtees Soc. Publ. vol. i. p. 86).

<sup>78</sup> Bede, *H. E.* iii. 24.

<sup>79</sup> 'Not the Cistercian Melrose, with the name of which Walter Scott has made us familiar . . . but a more ancient and more holy Melrose. . . . It was situated on a kind of rounded promontory, almost completely encircled by the winding current of the Tweed, the banks of which at this part of its course are very abrupt and thickly wooded,' Montalembert, vol. iii. p. 317. The site, which is still called Old Melrose, is about three miles from that of the later foundation. Cf. Bede, *H. E.* v. 12, 'ad monasterium Mailros, quod Tuidi fluminis circumflexu maxima ex parte clauditur, peruenit.'



INK-PHOTO. SPRAGUE & CO LONDON.

MAP OF TYNEMOUTH, *temp.* HENRY VIII.  
(British Museum, Cott. MSS., Aug. I., ii., Art. 7.)





centuries afterwards, ran from the river, close by where the 'Custom house now stands, towards the sea, to the south of the Lawe.<sup>80</sup> This channel 'is shown in a plan of Tynemouth in the Cottonian Library,' as Mr. Longstaffe has pointed out in his *Durham before the Conquest*.<sup>81</sup> The last and widest portion of it remained in the 'Mill Dam', until the years 1816-18, when it was filled up through the action of the Newcastle corporation.<sup>82</sup> It is now, of course, all built over. Moreover, on the high ground at the north-east of this small, virtual island there was one of the largest of the northern Roman camps, extending over an area of five acres,<sup>83</sup> and of exceptional importance, not only as flanking the Wall, but as the terminus of the great Rykniel way;<sup>84</sup> a camp which must still have retained at least a considerable proportion of its original strength in the seventh century. The general position, therefore, at once both insular and fortified, was exactly suited to the exigencies and the custom of the times.

(d) But there was a further reason for its selection as the site of Hilda's first house, which was probably the principal factor that determined the choice. Leland again and again refers to this place as Oswin's birthplace. Thus, 'E regione Tinemuthæ fuit urbs uastata a Danis Urfa nomine, ubi natus erat Oswinus rex,' and he adds in the margin 'Caire Urfe.'<sup>85</sup> The locality is certainly not very clearly defined here, but other allusions fix it with absolute certainty. In a marginal note to his excerpts from the first book of Henry of Huntingdon,<sup>86</sup> he adds 'Caerurfe' to the 28 principal 'Caers' in the

<sup>80</sup> 'The Tyne at that time entered the sea by two mouths. The northern channel, then as now, poured through the narrows, swept past the high bluffs of diluvial clay, then projecting far out into the tideway. The southern outlet passed by what is now the Mill Dam, flowed through the present Waterloo Vale, and thus to sea. Between these circling arms rose an island stronghold, crested by the ruins of the Roman city, which flanked the eastern terminus of the Roman Wall. This was no mere delta, but a ridged height, worthy site of a great city, at full flood or at ebb standing out the key of the position.'—Mr. Heslop in *Arch. Ael.* vol. x. p. 100. The natural contour of the whole situation can be clearly seen from the top of the ballast hill immediately west of the South Shields railway station.

<sup>81</sup> *Proceedings of the Archaeological Institute*, 1852, Newcastle, vol. i. p. 46. See also note 151, p. 88.

<sup>82</sup> Salmon's *South Shields; its Past, Present, and Future*, 1856, p. 17.

<sup>83</sup> Bruce, *The Roman Camp on the Lawe, South Shields*, p. 11.

<sup>84</sup> See Leland's quotation from the 'Historia Ranulphi, alias Radulphi, Hygdeni, Monachi Castrensis' (*Collectanea*, vol. iii. (ii.) p. 390): 'Cap. 45. Rekenildstreat tendens ab Aphrico in boream Vulturnalem, et incipit a Meneuia prædicta, tenditque per Wigorniam, per Wicombe, per Brimingham, Lichefeld, Darbe, Chesterfeld, Eboracum usque ad ostium Tinæ flu.'

<sup>85</sup> *Collectanea*, vol. iv. (iii.) p. 43.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.* vol. iii. (ii.) p. 290.

country enumerated by his author: 'Monachi Tinenses dicunt ciuitatem fuisse in ulteriore ripa ostii Tinæ flu: Caerurfe nomine, ubi natus erat rex Oswi.' Here 'Oswi' is obviously a mistake for 'Oswin.' For in his *Itinerary*, Leland gives an authority for the statement about Oswin which is apparently independent of the tradition preserved by the monks at Tynemouth. He cites from a work, which he calls 'Historia incerti auctoris de paucis *Northumbr.* regibus & episcopis *Transhumbranis*'<sup>87</sup> the following statement: 'Ferunt quidam S. regem Oswinum natum in quodam castro Burgh antiquitus nuncupato, cujus fundamenta pro parte adhuc manent ex australi parte aquæ de Tina prope Southesheles in territorio quod nunc est Prioris Dunelmi;' 'there are some who say that the holy king Oswin was born in a certain camp anciently called Burgh, the foundations of which still partly remain on the south side of the Tyne water, near South Sheles, in the territory which now belongs to the prior of Durham,' and he adds in the margin, 'Burgh Castellum ad australem partem Tini. vide num sit Cairuruach.' Now, though the name is given differently, as Burgh not as Urfe, the description of the situation and its association with Oswin are quite definite, and all the stronger as evidence in that this statement is not a mere repetition of the Tynemouth tradition.

Oswin's father, Osric, would seem to have taken the Roman camp as a royal residence, as was often done by the Northumbrian princes, as for example at Campodonum,<sup>88</sup> the Cambodunum of Antoninus.

Assuming, then, the truth of this tradition that Oswin was born at Caer Urfe (and indeed there seems to be no ground whatever to doubt it), there is at once apparent a strong reason for Aidan's placing Hilda there at her first arrival in Northumbria on her return from East Anglia. The position of his own house, placed under the protection of the royal castle at Bamburgh, furnished a precedent for another case where a close connexion with the reigning family was desirable; and, as has already been shown, this was especially the case with Hilda.

<sup>87</sup> *Itin.* ed. 1769, vol. vi. fol. 34, p. 32. This work seems to have disappeared since Leland saw it. It is not the 'Life of St. Oswin,' published by the Surtees Society, in the *Miscellanea Biographica* (vol. 8), which is very fairly summarised by Leland in his *Collectanea* (vol. iv. (iii.) p. 113). It is not given by the Bollandists in the *Acta Sanctorum* for August (vol. iv. pp. 62, 63) where there are only 'Acta' from Bede, and 'Acta altera' from Capgrave.

<sup>88</sup> Bede, *H. E.* ii. 14.

It is not possible now to determine the causes which led to her removal farther south by Aidan only a year later to Hartlepool, which was also of course in Oswin's kingdom of Deira. It may have been that the growing intensity of the feud between Oswy and Oswin precluded her from acting as a bond of amity between them; or even rendered it advisable that she should not remain on the very border line of the two kingdoms; it may have been that the larger establishment at Hartlepool offered fuller scope for her powers, which had already declared themselves; or it may have been that the change was merely due to Aidan's policy of pushing the outposts of the church farther and farther to the south. But the critical point in Hilda's career was when she first returned to Northumbria to take up work as abbess of a religious house, and at this juncture the right place was found for her at *Caer Urfe*.

It is not difficult to realize the character and surroundings of the site thus placed at her disposal for the service of the church. The greater part of the virtual island at the mouth of the Tyne was occupied by the high ground, on the eastern side of which lay the ancient Roman camp, and in Hilda's day probably a royal residence, with its 'vill' spreading to the west over what was known in later times as the 'Shele Heugh.'<sup>89</sup> Below it to the south-west between the high ground, the tidal channel, and the river, lay a small plain, the greater part of which to the extent of some fifteen acres<sup>90</sup> was assigned to the church. The religious house itself was situated in this plain on the

<sup>89</sup> Compare, e.g., the *Rentale Bursarii* of 1539 A.D. (printed in Dr. Greenwell's *Feodarium Prioratus Dunelmensis*, p. 310), where 'Shelhowgh' is entered separately from 'Shelles,' and p. 329 'De decimis uillarum de Hertone, Westow, et Shelehowgh nichil, quia in manu Domini.' See also the collation of Thomas Blackeston (p. 65, n. 67), 6 October, 1568, 'ad effectum ut inhabitatoribus incolis et parochianis de lez Sheles Shelehughe Harton et Westowe diuina sacramenta celebres ac ministres in eadem,' etc.

<sup>90</sup> In the year 1768 the Dean and Chapter of Durham obtained an Act of Parliament, with the connivance of the pluralist non-resident incumbent of St. Hild's, the reverend Samuel Dennis, by which eight acres of glebe land—now the heart of the business part of the town—were alienated to them in return for a perpetual payment of £30 a year to the living. Again, in 1801, another Act (41 Geo. III. Cap. 112) enabled the then incumbent, the reverend Richard Wallis, to let on a building lease of 999 years three more acres of the glebe. If the churchyard, which has been increased at various dates [1631, 1707, 1784] by additions taken from the glebe, be added, say some three acres, the total amounts to 14 or 15 acres, which corresponds very closely in measurement with the portion round the church shown on Mr. Richardson's plan of 1768 (of which a copy is included in Mr. Salmon's first lecture on South Shields) as not divided into farms.

top of a steeply sloping bank<sup>91</sup> above the river end of the tidal channel at its broader part, where it opened out into a small lake, and near the point where the old Roman road, known as the Rekendyke, coming from the west,<sup>92</sup> crossed the water to ascend to the camp. The house looked across the broad bay of the Tyne, called a generation later 'Portus Egfridi' to the wooded promontory on which Benedict Biscop was afterwards to build his second church, of St. Paul's, Jarrow.<sup>93</sup>

But it was not destined to have a distinguished or peaceful, perhaps not even a long, history as a monastic establishment. The stone church, with its glazed windows, and the more elaborate and extensive buildings raised at Jarrow by Benedict Biscop and Ceolfrid, and the rich treasures of art collected there by them, above all the pre-eminent personal fame of Bede, must have made the neighbouring monastery to altogether eclipse the glory of the humble nunnery (as it had then become) of St. Hild by the beginning of the eighth century. Then, in 794 A.D., the Danes swept down upon the monasteries on the Tyne; and though they lost their leader in the attack on Jarrow, and though their fleet was subsequently shattered in a gale and the survivors ruthlessly slain as they were cast up on the sands,<sup>94</sup> the respite was only temporary. The Danish corsairs again came in overwhelming force in 867 and in 875 A.D., and finally devastated the whole district, burning the churches, and plundering and murdering without pity.<sup>95</sup> From that time, the monasteries on the Tyne were in

<sup>91</sup> In 1816 there were many men out of work in South Shields after the close of the French war. Employment was found for them in digging down an old ballast hill, and spreading the ballast, not only over the site of the old Mill Dam lake, where the Glass Houses afterwards stood, but also over the lower part of the churchyard, which was then again used for burials. The present level, therefore, of the south side of the churchyard, though still much below the church, is considerably higher than it was originally.

<sup>92</sup> Hutchinson, vol. ii. pp. 487-8.

<sup>93</sup> 'The prospect from the churchyard southward is worth the traveller's attention, where Jarrow and its ruined monastery, on a fine point of land, are particularly beautiful' (in 1787 A.D.) *Ibid.* pp. 483-5.

<sup>94</sup> 'Anno DCC° XC° IIII° prædicti pagani portum Ecfriidi regis uastantes, monasterium Doni amnis prædarunt . . . post exigui temporis spatium uis tempestatis eorum naues quassauit contriuit, et per plurimos mare operuit. Nonnulli itaque ad littus sunt eiecti et mox interfecti absque misericordia; et hæc recte illis contigerunt quoniam se non lædentes grauiter læserunt.' *Chronica Rogeri de Hoveden*, vol. i. p. 14 (Rolls series).

<sup>95</sup> 'Anno DCCC° LX° VII° prædictus paganorum exercitus de Orientalibus Anglis ad Eboracum ciuitatem migravit, omnia uastando usque ad Thine-mutham.' *Ibid.* p. 38. Compare Reginald's description (Surtees Soc. Publ. vol. 1, pp. 16-17, cap. xii.) 'Anno ab incarnatione Domini DCCCLXXV transacto,

a depressed, probably in some cases almost ruinous, condition for nearly two centuries ; but that they were neither actually defunct nor totally deserted is shown by the case of Jarrow, where Elfrid of Westoe attended the commemoration of Bede's festival year after year before he at last found the opportunity in 1022 A.D. to carry out his mean design of stealing the saint's bones and carrying them off to Durham;<sup>96</sup> where bishop Egelwin took refuge on his flight from Durham to Lindisfarne with the body of St. Cuthbert (and presumably also the relics of St. Bede) in 1069 A.D.;<sup>97</sup> and where, later in the same year, king William himself appeared to attack and fire the church,<sup>98</sup> which he certainly would not have done if it had been a desolate ruin.

Then came the gift of Jarrow to Aldwine by the first Norman bishop of Durham, Walcher, in 1075 A.D., and his endowment of that church with the neighbouring 'vills' of Preston, Monkton, Hedworth, Hebburn, Westoe, and Harton,<sup>99</sup> which more than ever made Jarrow overshadow St. Hild's. But though the whole surrounding district was thus made dependent on Jarrow, and afterwards, by Carilef's transference, on Durham,<sup>100</sup> there is reason to believe that the ancient church land attached to St. Hild's was exempted from this donation. There is no mention of it in the record of bishop Walcher's gift, though all the townships round it are carefully enumerated. Moreover, the wording of the collation of Robert de Dalton in 1321 A.D. as the first permanent incumbent of St. Hild's is significant ; for while it speaks of the chapel as in some undefined way dependent upon Jarrow, it seems to rest the connexion on the ground that certain of the parishioners of Jarrow were accustomed to resort

contigit Angliæ fines lata strage uastari et sæuienti pyrataram predonumque mucrone populos circumquaque ex interneccione deficiendo deperire. Nam ciuitates ignibus conflagrando consumebant, ecclesias et cymiteria multimodis sacrilegiorum pollutionibus prophanabant,' etc.

<sup>96</sup> Symeon Dunelm. cap. xlii.

<sup>97</sup> *Symeonis Dunelm. Historiæ Continuatio.* (Surtees Soc. Publ. vol. 51, p. 85). 'Cum hæc Eboraci circum circaque rex ageret, Agelwinus Dunelmensis episcopus et optimates populi . . . unanimes consilio tollentes Sancti patris Cuthberti incorruptum corpus fugam ineunt iij. idus Decembris, feria vj. Primam mansionem habuerunt in Giruum,' etc.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.* p. 86. 'Interea regis exercitus etiam per loca quæque inter Tesam et Tine diffusus, uacuis ubique domibus solam inuenit solitudinem, indigenis fugæ præsidium quærentibus, uel per siluas et abrupta montium latitantibus. Tunc et ecclesia Sancti Pauli in Giruum flammis est consumpta.'

<sup>99</sup> Symeon, *Hist. Dunelm.* iii. 21.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.* iv. 2.

for worship to it as being within more convenient distance than their own parish church.<sup>101</sup> No doubt this refers to the inhabitants of the townships of Harton and Westoe ; for six years later, when William Cuke was appointed as Dalton's successor, he was specially commissioned to 'celebrate divine service and administer the sacraments of the church for the parishioners of Scheles, Herton, and Wyvestow ;'<sup>102</sup> and from that time onwards these three townships (with the corresponding portions of the common land at Preston, or Simon-side)<sup>103</sup> seem to have been definitely attached as a parochial district to St. Hild's chapel.

The appointment to the cure of souls in this chapelry was certainly in some way acquired, if not by Jarrow, at all events by Durham ; but it was a separately endowed charge. The revenues from the glebe, small as they were, were not accounted for in the annual Jarrow account rolls. Whether the priests who served St. Hild's were engaged year by year ('conductitii annuatim'), or were appointed as permanent incumbents, the church lands belonged indefeasibly to them, and not to Jarrow or to Durham.

Moreover, Scheles never was a part of Westoe township. Its land was not included in the ancient division of Westoe into 13<sup>104</sup> 'farms,' as so many aliquot parts of the township as valued for rating purposes—a method of valuation which continued in vogue until the year 1787, both for Harton and for Westoe.

Again, a further instance of the complete independence of St. Hild's as a parochial chapelry is found in the fact that from time immemorial it has had a select vestry of twenty-four. The earliest parish book now extant dates from 1653. At that time the twenty-four were in office.

<sup>101</sup> Printed in *Jarrow Account Rolls*. App. p. 234. 'Reputantes honestius quod capellæ Sanctæ Hyldæ Virginis, infra parochiam ecclesiæ de Jarow situatæ et dependenti ab eadem, in qua propter distanciam locorum quidam de parochianis dictæ ecclesiæ de Jarow consueverunt audire Diuina, per unum capellanum perpetuum, dummodo fuerit ydoneus, deseruiatur quam per sacerdotes conductitios annuatim, Tibi, etc.'

<sup>102</sup> 'Ad effectum ut parochianis de les Scheles Herton et Wyvestow diuina celebres in eadem ac ministres sacramenta ecclesiæ, etc.' *Ibid.* p. 234.

<sup>103</sup> See Dr. Greenwell's note, *Feodarium*, p. 116.

<sup>104</sup> In 1760 the various assessments total up to 12  $\frac{1}{4}$  farms. The loss of rather more than half a farm, which may here be inferred, is illustrated by several parishes in Northumberland, e.g., Lesbury and Hawkhill. See Lord Percy's paper on 'The Ancient Farms of Northumberland,' *Arch. Ael.* vol. xvii. pp. 18, 22. So, too, in the rating of Harton township, the list of 1766 shows 9  $\frac{1}{2}$  farms, while in that of 1778 it is further reduced to 9  $\frac{1}{4}$ .

In the year 1814 the reverend John Hodgson, incumbent of Jarrow (and one of the founders of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-upon-Tyne), had a dispute about the collection of Easter dues at South Shields. In a rough memorandum of his case, in his own handwriting,<sup>105</sup> he notes :—‘The township of South Shields has immemorially enjoyed preveleges which the rest of the parish of Jarrow never has. It has never paid any church cess to Jarrow, and both Harton and Westoe, to the utmost extent of their boundaries, always have. They, too, have always sent churchwardens to Jarrow, which South Shields never did.’

And so it appears that the grant of land originally made to bishop Aidan, probably by king Oswin, and certainly not later than 648 A.D., has remained ever since the peculiar property of the church of St. Hild’s, with the exception of the miserable diversion to the Dean and Chapter of Durham of one-half of it in the year 1768. And thus there is more than a nominal or even traditional association, there is a definite historical link between the St. Hild’s of to-day and abbess Hilda’s first religious house in the seventh century.

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APPENDIX.

THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN BERNICIA AND DEIRA.

[Read on the 25th November, 1896.]

The boundary-line between the two kingdoms, or provinces, of Bernicia and Deira, into which Northumbria was subdivided, both in early Anglo-Saxon times, and also again for a brief period under the Danes in the ninth century, has been variously placed by various writers at the Tees, the Tyne, or even the Tweed. Moreover, it is not only a case of conflict of opinion between different authorities ; but in not a few instances the same author, actually in the same work, will speak of the frontier now as at the Tyne, and now as at the Tees. Thus, for example, Camden in speaking of the Brigantes says :<sup>106</sup> ‘The

<sup>105</sup> Now preserved amongst the parish records of St. Hild’s.

<sup>106</sup> *Britannia*, ed. 1607, p. 558. ‘Saxones enim has regiones Nordanhumbroꝝ regnum dixerunt, et in duas partes diuiserunt: Deiram, Deir-land illa ætate uocarunt, scilicet, quæ nobis proximior cis Tinam fl. & Berniciam quæ ulterior, a Tina ad Fretum usque Scoticum pertinuit.’