

5-2014

The Bones of St. Cuthbert: Defining a Saint's Cult in Medieval Northumbria

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2013-2014 History Honors Thesis
Trinity University
April 16, 2014
Pledged.

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Introduction: The Cult of Relics in Medieval Europe

Across Christian Europe throughout the Middle Ages, holy men and women were venerated for their sanctity in life and death by ecclesiastical and lay individuals. Saints and their remains were the focus of popular spiritual devotion, and churches displayed the relics of the holy deceased as representations of ecclesiastical and secular power.¹ Every day, individuals of all genders, ages, and socioeconomic backgrounds venerated relics in order to gain the saint's help or blessing, believing the relics' power lay in the ability to perform miracles and connect with Heaven.² The possession of a saint's relics increased the status of the church and the city, enhanced the authority of the clergy, and provided the secular owners with political, spiritual, and economic influence.³ Patrick Geary, one of the preeminent scholars on the medieval cult of relics, summarizes the value of relics by stating that the remains reflected the amount of significance a community gave them.⁴ Not all relics were equally venerated during the Middle Ages, and only specific saints with cults in powerful ecclesiastical settings were ultimately successful and long-lasting.

In order for the cult of saints to succeed, lay Christians needed to accept the idea that relics could move from place to place and still retain their sanctity.⁵ In medieval thought, deceased saints allowed their relics to be relocated in order to aid their followers or lend support to a particular community.⁶ This transfer process was known as translation, or "the ritual

¹ John Blair, "A Saint for Every Minster? Local Cults in Anglo-Saxon England," in *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West*, ed. Alan Thacker and Richard Sharpe (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 486; Charles Freeman, *Holy Bones, Holy Dust: How Relics Shaped the History of Medieval Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 14.

² Patrick J. Geary, *Living with the Dead in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 191.

³ Freeman, *Holy Bones, Holy Dust*, 156.

⁴ Patrick J. Geary, *Furta Sacra: Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 5 and 7.

⁵ *Ibid*, 168.

⁶ Geary, *Furta Sacra*, 154.

movement of a saint's bodily remains from one place to another."⁷ Saints' remains were translated because there was an understanding that holy bodies should not stay underground like the ordinary deceased.⁸ The idea that an average burial was not appropriate for a saint relates to historian Catherine Cubitt's statement that there existed a notion of hierarchical burial places in the Middle Ages.⁹ Altars and tombs were viewed as superior to graves in the ground, and shrines within large cathedrals were even more prominent resting places. Translations were often to newly built churches in order to legitimize the church and provide a proper atmosphere for the veneration of the saint, and if a church was rebuilt or consecrated after a saint's death, the saint would be translated to the newest shrine.¹⁰ Translations signified the transformation of an individual's status as a person into the role as a heavenly intercessor, and were often used to strengthen the faith of new or passive Christians.¹¹ Translations of more major saints were often accompanied by ceremony, which officially announced the sanctity of the relics to the surrounding community and was relived annually, when the relic translation was commemorated by the church officials.¹² The transfer of relics relocated the saint's cult to another church, city, or even country, enabling the ecclesiastical community to control the cult and the amount of access the people had at the tomb.¹³

Saints' relics provided a focal point for veneration and the center for a collective identity of the local community, as exhibited by the cult of St. Cuthbert in Northumbria, the northeast region of England. Cuthbert died in 687, and his body was discovered undecayed in 698 during the translation of his relics to the main altar of the church at Lindisfarne. Cuthbert's relics were

⁷ Ben Nilson, *Cathedral Shrines of Medieval England* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2001), 15.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁹ Catherine Cubitt, "Universal and Local Saints in Anglo-Saxon England," in *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West*, ed. Alan Thacker and Richard Sharpe (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 436.

¹⁰ David Rollason, *Saints and Relics in Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 41.

¹¹ Freeman, *Holy Bones, Holy Dust*, 23; Cubitt, "Universal and Local Saints," 436; Geary, *Furta Sacra*, 43.

¹² Nilson, *Cathedral Shrines*, 33; Freeman, *Holy Bones, Holy Dust*, 7.

¹³ Cubitt, "Universal and Local Saints," 423.

subsequently moved at least nine times, either through the relocation of the monastic community or translation into a new church. Multiple scholars note that Cuthbert's relics represented the ownership of the "patrimony of St. Cuthbert," the estates under the control of Cuthbert's ecclesiastical community, and that the movement of his relics reasserted the community's claim to his lands. However, the relics were not simply tools of leverage in property disputes. They were a way to invoke Cuthbert's aid against enemies of his followers, assert political alliances with his ecclesiastical brethren, and protect the identity of his community. There are both obvious and subtle power struggles between multiple groups which surround Cuthbert's cult: the Anglo-Saxons and the Scandinavians, the Anglo-Saxons and Normans, and the clerics and the Benedictine monks.

Cuthbert's relics were especially important to the Anglo-Saxons and Normans because of their incorruption, the primary indicator that a corpse belonged to a saint since the flesh and limbs remained intact.¹⁴ Incorruption displayed the saint's holiness in life through the wholeness of their flesh in death, and represented the eventual resurrection of the saint's body in the Last Judgment.¹⁵ Charles Freeman argues that, in the medieval mindset, an uncorrupted relic possessed the ability to perform miracles and manifested the saint's spiritual power.¹⁶ Therefore, the display of an incorrupt body reinforced the person's sanctity.¹⁷ Upon the 698 opening of Cuthbert's coffin, the monks discovered "the body completely intact, looking as though still alive, and the joints of the limbs still flexible. It seemed not dead but sleeping."¹⁸ With Cuthbert's relics, his incorruption set him apart from other saints in medieval England, as his

¹⁴ Freeman, *Holy Bones, Holy Dust*, 21.

¹⁵ Victoria Tudor, "The Cult of St. Cuthbert in the Twelfth-Century: The Evidence of Reginald of Durham," in *St. Cuthbert, His Cult and His Community to A.D. 1200*, ed. Gerald Bonner, David Rollason, and Clare Stancliffe (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1989), 452.

¹⁶ Freeman, *Holy Bones, Holy Dust*, 58.

¹⁷ Dominic Marnier, *St. Cuthbert: His Life and Cult in Medieval Durham* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 32.

¹⁸ Bede, "The Life of St. Cuthbert," in *The Age of Bede*, trans. J.F. Webb (London: Penguin Books, 2004), 98.

limbs were not only whole but also lifelike. This was seen as a special and distinguishing model of divine favor and recognition of Cuthbert's sanctity by God.

Cuthbert's cult is both an ordinary and exceptional example of a medieval relic cult. The basic practices used in the elevation, translation, and veneration of Cuthbert's relics are largely typical of the period. The aspects of Cuthbert's cult, those of incorruption, saintly protection, and miracles, reflect the characteristics of relic cults across medieval Europe. However, the enduring nature of Cuthbert's cult, the semi-autonomous state granted to the owners of his relics, and his identity as a unifying saint of Northumbria render Cuthbert's relic cult a more unique case study. Cuthbert's cult was a constant in a tumultuous period and region, and rulers, bishops, and power orbited around it. The dynamics of Cuthbert's cult provides the background of the perpetual struggle for authority in northern England during the Middle Ages, and the study of Cuthbert's relics reveals motivations for movement, wars, and alliances across the region. Cuthbert's cult exhibits the extent to which ecclesiastical and political domains were integrated and how secular ideals permeated religious liturgy and saints' cults. The divisions between politics and religion were not sharply defined in the medieval mindset, and this ambiguity allowed Cuthbert's cult to transcend the border between rationality and faith.

This study seeks to investigate why Cuthbert's relics were well-suited for use as symbols of authority to multiple ecclesiastical and secular factions. How were Cuthbert's memory and cult manipulated through writing and ritual action? Does Cuthbert retain a consistent character across the Middle Ages, or does his depicted demeanor change in the wake of different occurrences? These aspects of Cuthbert's cult both shaped and were influenced by the political, religious, social, and economic dynamics of medieval Northumbria. Cuthbert's relics were the

silent witnesses to, and resilient survivors of, a turbulent period in the history of northern England.

Records of Cuthbert's Cult: Primary Sources and their Contexts

St. Cuthbert died on the island of Farne off the Northumbrian coast on March 20, 687. The monks buried his body in the monastery on Lindisfarne, where he had been bishop. On March 20, 698, the monastic community exhumed Cuthbert's body and found it undecayed. The fact that the elevation and translation took place exactly eleven years after Cuthbert's death suggests that the anniversary of his death was known and celebrated, meaning Cuthbert was already in a position to become a saint for the Lindisfarne community since the annual commemoration of the day of death for a saint occurred in Christianity from its earliest practices.¹⁹ It is from here that the cult of St. Cuthbert began. In the primary texts from the Anglo-Saxon period, Cuthbert is characterized as a humble, devoted follower of God through his actions and words in his adult life.²⁰ Cuthbert is alternately depicted as a powerful prelate, a meek bishop, and a landlord. Historian Dominic Marner notes that "the implication of the three-dimensional portrayal of Cuthbert as prior, hermit, and bishop" helped Cuthbert's cult be perpetuated because multiple individuals and groups could relate to one if not all of the many personifications of the saint.²¹ A brief survey of the significant primary sources utilized in this study of Cuthbert's cult is necessary to comprehend the impact of Cuthbert on Northumbria.

¹⁹ Rollason, *Saints and Relics*, 36.

²⁰ John R. Black, "Innovations and Tradition in Representations of St. Cuthbert in Medieval England," *Medieval Perspectives* 17, no. 2 (2002): 42.

²¹ Marner, *St. Cuthbert: His Life and Cult*, 12.

Cuthbert's life and the importance of his cult were memorialized in the early Anglo-Saxon period by five texts: the anonymous *Life of St. Cuthbert*, Bede's metrical *Life of St. Cuthbert*, Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, Bede's prose *Life of St. Cuthbert*, and the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*. Written between 699 and 705 at the monastery on Lindisfarne, the anonymous *Life of St. Cuthbert* details Cuthbert's personality, childhood, life as a monk, death, and incorrupt body. The anonymous *Life* focuses particularly on Cuthbert's role as a bishop, asserting that his behavior and demeanor should be upheld as the model for all bishops' characteristics and practices. Cuthbert performed his duties "with the utmost dignity and graciousness."²² This is the earliest text on Cuthbert's cult.

Composed around 705, Bede's metrical *Life of St. Cuthbert* is largely dismissed by historians as a difficult and unimportant text in Anglo-Saxon hagiography, as evidenced by the lack of analytical attention it receives in comparison to other works. However, the complexity of the poem implies that it was meant to be a reflection on Cuthbert's life and posthumous importance for the monks at Lindisfarne.²³ Bede's metrical *Life* is almost identical in content to Bede's prose *Life of St. Cuthbert*, which was probably written in 721 after being commissioned by the monastery at Lindisfarne in order to perpetuate Cuthbert's memory. In the text, Cuthbert's personality is displayed through his actions as "he fed the hungry, clothed the destitute, and had all the other marks of a perfect bishop."²⁴ This is a picture of the ideal bishop, one who was free from greed and corruption, according to Bede.²⁵

²² Clinton Albertson (trans.), "The Anonymous Life of St. Cuthbert," in *Anglo-Saxon Saints and Heroes* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1967), 63.

²³ Michael Lapidge, "Bede's Metrical *Vita S. Cuthberti*," in *St. Cuthbert, His Cult and His Community to A.D. 1200*, ed. Gerald Bonner, David Rollason, and Clare Stancliffe (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1989), 93.

²⁴ Bede, "Life of St. Cuthbert," 79.

²⁵ D.P. Kirby, "The Genesis of a Cult: Cuthbert of Farne and Ecclesiastical Politics in Northumbria in the Late Seventh and Early Eighth Centuries," *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 46, no. 3 (1995): 384.

The primary difference between Bede's prose *Life* and the previous anonymous *Life* is that Bede develops Cuthbert "from layman to monk, to hermit and bishop, and to stress his dual roles as a model of the active and contemplative life."²⁶ Bede focuses on Cuthbert's qualities and personality, and includes passages on Cuthbert's model behavior for the various roles within a monastery. As evidenced by its popularity and readership, Bede's prose *Life* was probably intended for a wider audience than the Lindisfarne community.²⁷ The monks desired to disseminate Cuthbert's cult beyond their island, and chose Bede, a monk from the monastery at Jarrow, to compose the prose *Life* after their approval of his metrical version. The prose *Life* would have been easier than the metrical version for lay individuals to understand. Bede targeted an even larger audience with his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* around 731, which places Cuthbert's life and status in the context of England's Christian history. Bede presents Cuthbert's story as an episode in a wider work. Cuthbert's cult was gradually reaching more and more people in more distant locations.

Another public-oriented text is the anonymous *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, composed around 882, which lists the multiple territorial gifts, including the cities of York, Crayke, and Carlisle, donated by kings and nobles to Cuthbert during his life and death. It is a document similar to the *Domesday Book*, a record of the lands of England and Wales in 1086, and ends with a warning of damnation for anyone who attempts to take Cuthbert's patrimony. The *Historia* is not so much a hagiography as it is a political document. It does not portray Cuthbert's personality, but describes him as a vengeful protector of his lands. The *Historia* was probably created by Cuthbert's community in order to reassert their claim to the patrimony.

²⁶ Catherine Cubitt, "Memory and Narrative in the Cult of Early Anglo-Saxon Saints," in *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Yitzhak Hen and Matthew Innes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 42.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 43.

After the Norman Conquest of England in 1066 and 1140, more than 60 hagiographical texts were composed, often for already well-established cults.²⁸ This increase in hagiographical output also occurred in Cuthbert's community, which by this time was settled in Durham. The poem entitled "Durham" is a short description of the topography of city, as well as a list of the relics it holds.²⁹ Heather Blurton suggests that the poem is fashioned in a type of Anglo-Saxon riddle whose solution is the word *reliquia*, implying Norman Durham is the new and appropriate shrine for Cuthbert and other Northumbrian saints.³⁰ The poem "Durham" was intended to elevate the city of Durham into a cult center which connected the past and future of the area.³¹ Its creation parallels the rise of Durham as the ecclesiastical center of saints' cults in Northumbria, and the Norman desire to popularize their appropriation of Anglo-Saxon saints.

Concern with the past and present of Cuthbert's cult is displayed in the writings of Symeon of Durham, a monk in the twelfth-century church of St. Cuthbert. One of Symeon's works, *Tract on the Origins and Progress of This the Church of Durham*, is the most extensive primary source on Cuthbert and his cult. It begins with the foundation of the church in Northumbria by King Oswald, and continues through the establishment of Cuthbert's cult at Durham. The work connects Cuthbert and Durham with Northumbria's distant past. The details of the record provide evidence for the movement of Cuthbert's relics and their importance to the political and social changes in Northumbria. Symeon intended to justify the institutional reform which occurred at Durham in 1083, and portrays the incoming Benedictine monks as the legitimate ecclesiastical and secular successors of the monastery at Lindisfarne, making their

²⁸ Paul Antony Hayward, "Translation Narratives in Post-Conquest Hagiography and English Resistance to the Norman Conquest," *Anglo-Norman Studies* 21 (1998): 67.

²⁹ Heather Blurton, "Reliquia: Writing Relics in Anglo-Norman Durham," in *Cultural Diversity in the British Middle Ages: Archipelago, Island, England*, ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 48-49.

³⁰ Blurton, "Reliquia: Writing Relics," 42.

³¹ *Ibid*, 52.

duties continuous, not new.³² Symeon also portrayed the Normans as beneficial to Cuthbert's cult, and emphasized the importance of the contemporary environment of Durham.

All of these primary sources, both Anglo-Saxon and Norman, detail the major, celebrated peregrinations or translations of Cuthbert's remains. In addition to these recorded scenarios, scholars have researched and found that Cuthbert's bones were relocated in 793, 830-845, 1069, and 1070. Between 875 and 995 alone, Cuthbert's body was taken to Crayke, Chester-le-Street, and Ripon, headed towards Chester-le-Street again, and finally stopped along the way at Durham.³³ Movement was a common factor and theme in Cuthbert's cult, and journeying with the relics was not an anathema in a time where travel is generally understood to have been fairly dangerous and difficult at best. The community of St. Cuthbert was mobile, and Cuthbert's relics were relocated whenever a threat to the safety of the community arose in the area or the cult needed to benefit from a new location. Translation was a common practice in the Cuthbert's cult, and the permanence of a physical cult center was not a primary concern until its establishment at Durham, as Cuthbert's relics constituted the cult's focus instead of a place. The veneration of Cuthbert's remains began on Lindisfarne, but the practice did not stay there.

The Departure from Lindisfarne: Disputes in Historiography

Most of the monks fled Lindisfarne in 793 after a Viking attack, returned to the monastery in the same year, and left again in 875 with Cuthbert's body and the relics of other

³² Meryl R. Foster, "Custodians of St. Cuthbert: the Durham Monks' Views of Their Predecessors, 1083-c.1200," in *Anglo-Norman Durham, 1093-1193*, ed. David Rollason, Margaret Harvey, and Michael Prestwich (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1994), 57; William Morton Aird, *St. Cuthbert and the Normans: the Church of Durham, 1071-1153* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1998), 104-105.

³³ David Rollason, "The Wanderings of St. Cuthbert," in *Cuthbert, Saint and Patron*, ed. David Rollason (Durham: Durham University Press, 1987), 45.

saints.³⁴ Scholars debate the motivations behind the community's departure from Lindisfarne in 875. Some historians conclude that the community feared further Viking attacks, while other scholars suggest the monks anticipated the shift of power in Northumbria to the Danish center at York and wished to move south, closer to the city.³⁵ One of the primary accounts of the community's migration includes an anecdote that Cuthbert tells his monks to take his body. In Bede's prose *Life of St. Cuthbert*, the saint tells the monks on his deathbed, "Never forget that if you should ever be forced to make the choice of two evils I would much rather you left the island, taking my bones with you, than that you should be a party to wickedness on any pretext whatsoever, bending your necks to the yoke of schism."³⁶ The text implies that removing Cuthbert's relics would be a religiously negative action, but it would be worse to abandon the saint. This justifies the later peregrinations of Cuthbert's remains.

Throughout Cuthbert's cult, wherever the community went, whether in flight or in purpose, Cuthbert's bones were taken with them. Cuthbert's command was intended to be obeyed. However, the anonymous *Life of St. Cuthbert* and Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* do not include details of any request by Cuthbert to be taken with the community should they leave. Barbara Abou-El-Haj surmises that Cuthbert's instruction to take his body literally served as a death scene in the narrative of the anonymous *Life of St. Cuthbert*.³⁷ Catherine Cubitt believes Bede's addition signifies in the text "some sort of internal dispute over the removal of the body from Farne."³⁸ This scenario is likely, as the inclusion of Cuthbert's direct instruction to take his corpse with the monastic brethren provided the legitimacy for taking him to Lindisfarne instead

³⁴ Marner, *St. Cuthbert: His Life and Cult*, 15.

³⁵ For a map of Northumbria and the sites relevant to Cuthbert's cult, see Appendix B

³⁶ Bede, "Life of St. Cuthbert," 95.

³⁷ Barbara Abou-El-Haj, *The Medieval Cult of Saints: Formations and Transformations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 51.

³⁸ Cubitt, "Memory and Narrative," 45.

of burying him at his hermitage on Farne. Cuthbert was physically connected to his community through his relics, not simply a distant memory in the monastic texts. Bede desired to assert this through the account of Cuthbert's instruction. Cuthbert's directions held authority to settle any disputes or strife which may have arisen in the community after his translation.

Early secondary scholarship on Cuthbert's cult generally attributed the move from Lindisfarne in 875 to the desire to escape more Viking attacks.³⁹ Despite the widespread belief that the Cuthbertine community left Lindisfarne in a hurried escape from Viking invaders, more recent scholarship suggests that the departure from the island in 875 was more of "an orderly withdrawal rather than a headlong flight."⁴⁰ Gerald Bonner, in his essay on Cuthbert's cult at Chester-le-Street, asserts that during the wanderings of Cuthbert's community between 875 and 883, the community was still powerful and influential.⁴¹ David Rollason emphasizes that the continuous ownership of Cuthbert's patronage suggests that the monks were not fleeing as refugees who needed shelter.⁴² Additionally, the monks carried many valuable items, such as the coffin of Cuthbert and the stone cross of Lindisfarne, with them throughout the peregrinations. A community which was fleeing would probably not be able to retain all of these items for such a long period of time.⁴³ William Aird believes that, "far from being without any purpose other than to escape from the Danes, these peregrinations may have been undertaken in order to preserve the community's hold on its estates."⁴⁴ The community needed to reinforce its claim to Cuthbert's patrimony in person, especially in the wake of previous Viking attacks on northeastern England and the settlement of peaceful Scandinavians to the south. This need was

³⁹ Rollason, "The Wanderings of St. Cuthbert," 47.

⁴⁰ Aird, *St. Cuthbert and the Normans*, 34.

⁴¹ Gerald Bonner, "St. Cuthbert at Chester-le-Street," in *St. Cuthbert, His Cult and His Community to A.D. 1200*, ed. Gerald Bonner, David Rollason, and Clare Stancliffe (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1989), 388.

⁴² Rollason, "The Wanderings of St. Cuthbert," 50.

⁴³ Rollason, *Saints and Relics*, 211.

⁴⁴ Aird, *St. Cuthbert and the Normans*, 34.

fulfilled by a sort of relic tour, where Cuthbert's body was taken through its estates to assert Cuthbert's ownership. Similar relic tours, which occurred across medieval Europe as clergy journeyed with their relics to various cities before returning to their church, reinforced ecclesiastical authority and presence.

The Cuthbertine community more than likely sought to escape neither raiding Vikings nor the southern Northumbrian Danes.⁴⁵ In fact, noble Danish settlers in the area of York may have at least tolerated, if not directly aided, Cuthbert's monks and community.⁴⁶ The local Danish king, Guthfrith of York, had friendly relations with Cuthbert's community, agreed to protect the lands in Cuthbert's patrimony from outsiders, and even provided land for the site of the community's new church at Chester-le-Street.⁴⁷ Chester-le-Street was closer to the center of Danish power in northeastern England, but still far enough away that it was not under the Danes' direct control.⁴⁸ It was a center for Cuthbert's cult, not a place of refuge. There may have already been a small monastic community at Chester-le-Street, under the authority of the Northumbrian monasteries of Monkwearmouth and Jarrow or Lindisfarne, before 883.⁴⁹ The episcopal see had remained in power at Lindisfarne even while Cuthbert's remains were away, implying that Lindisfarne was not in as much danger and Cuthbert's community was not fleeing the Vikings.

In 995, the bishop at Chester-le-Street had a premonition that he should flee with Cuthbert's body from the Viking raiders on the coast, and he and the community went to Ripon.

⁴⁵ William Morton Aird, "St. Cuthbert, the Scots, and the Normans," *Anglo-Norman Studies* 16 (1993):16.

⁴⁶ Julia Barrow, "English Cathedral Communities and Reform in the Late Tenth and the Eleventh Centuries," in *Anglo-Norman Durham, 1093-1193*, ed. David Rollason, Margaret Harvey, and Michael Prestwich (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1994), 28.

⁴⁷ Symeon of Durham, *Tract on the Origins and Progress of this the Church of Durham*, trans. David Rollason (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 125; Aird, *St. Cuthbert and the Normans*, 37; Barrow, "English Cathedral Communities," 28.

⁴⁸ Aird, *St. Cuthbert and the Normans*, 35; Barrow, "English Cathedral Communities," 29.

⁴⁹ Eric Cambridge, "Why Did the Community of St. Cuthbert Settle at Chester-le-Street?" in *St. Cuthbert, His Cult and His Community to A.D. 1200*, ed. Gerald Bonner, David Rollason, and Clare Stancliffe (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1989), 380.

Three or four months later, peace returned and they began to take the body back to Chester-le-Street, but were stopped at Durham when Cuthbert's coffin could not be moved.⁵⁰ The monk Symeon states that "this occurrence clearly revealed to all that the saint did not wish to be taken back to his former resting place ... so with rejoicing and praise they took the holy body to the place revealed to them by heaven, that is Durham, and there they quickly made a little church of branches, and in it they placed the body for the time being."⁵¹ Cuthbert's supposed choice of Durham as his resting place increased the prestige of the town, which was already a strategic and safe location on a bend in the River Wear. Cuthbert's decision to stay at Durham also echoes his establishment of a hermitage at Farne before his death, which Bede had recorded decades earlier in his prose *Life of St. Cuthbert*:

Cuthbert, having routed the enemy, became monarch of the place, in token of which he built a city worthy of his power and put up houses to match.⁵²

Once Cuthbert's relics were translated into the larger church at Durham, the episcopal see was officially moved to the city and the bishopric was consolidated.⁵³ The position of Bishop of Durham became homogenous with that of Earl of Northumbria, until the late eleventh century, and the Bishop wielded secular power over the entire region. With Cuthbert's relics, the ecclesiastical authority of Northumbria was transferred to Durham. Cuthbert's cult continued at Durham, where it still remains, without interruption until 1066, when Norman political,

⁵⁰ Symeon of Durham, *Church of Durham*, 145.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, 147.

⁵² Bede, "Life of St. Cuthbert," 68.

⁵³ Symeon of Durham, *Church of Durham*, 153.

ecclesiastical, and cultural practices overtook Anglo-Saxon England. Cuthbert's relics and legacy emerged from the shift with an even stronger presence in Northumbria.

The Norman Conquest of Northumbria: Political and Religious Transformations

The Norman Conquest of England began in 1066, when William the Conqueror and his Norman troops overtook King Harold at the Battle of Hastings. It took two years for the Norman regime to reach Northumbria, and when the Normans appeared in northeastern England in 1068-69, Cuthbert's cult was already religiously and politically influential across the entire region.⁵⁴ The arrival of the Normans exacerbated an already tumultuous situation. A hostile Viking force invaded the Northumbrian coast between 1068 and 1070, and there were occasional raids from Scottish groups and fighting between Anglo-Saxon nobles.⁵⁵ In 1069, William the Conqueror devastated the area around York on his way north, so Bishop Æthelwine of Durham and the community took Cuthbert's body to Lindisfarne via Jarrow, Bedlington, and Tughall.⁵⁶ Presumably, Bishop Æthelwine was unsure of William's sentiment towards Cuthbert and the clerical community, and wished to avoid danger to the saint's shrine and relics. William did not pursue Cuthbert's relics to Lindisfarne, and left Northumbria shortly after his ruin of York. Later in 1069, William appointed Robert de Comines as Earl of Northumbria, but Robert and his seven hundred troops were massacred at Durham by local Anglo-Saxons before he could assume control of the region.⁵⁷ In retaliation, William outlawed Bishop Æthelwine in 1069, indicted him

⁵⁴ Aird, *St. Cuthbert and the Normans*, 9.

⁵⁵ Aird, "St. Cuthbert, the Scots, and the Normans," 1.

⁵⁶ Symeon of Durham, *Church of Durham*, 185.

⁵⁷ Aird, "St. Cuthbert, the Scots, and the Normans," 6.

for rebellion, and sent him to prison where the Bishop died.⁵⁸ The body of Cuthbert was returned to Durham from Lindisfarne by the community on March 25, 1070,⁵⁹ and a period of peace lasted in Durham.

However, the Anglo-Saxon locals still did not accept the Norman authorities who William appointed over them. In 1076, William promoted Bishop Walcher of Durham to Earl of Northumbria, a position which was often given to the Bishop of Durham, allowing him to exercise secular power. Walcher did not have military support to back his secular title, and he and his household were murdered at Gateshead by local Northumbrians.⁶⁰ After Walcher's assassination, the Bishops of Durham lost the title of Earl of Northumbria but kept their secular jurisdiction.⁶¹ The amount of influence held by the Bishops of Durham remained substantial, and the Bishops continued to exercise power over the entire region of Northumbria from Cuthbert's shrine. The Norman removal of the earldom position from that of the Bishop did not lessen the previously established secular influence which Cuthbert's cult possessed.

Upon arriving in Northumbria, the Normans recognized the political value of Cuthbert's cult and relics, which had already been steadily venerated in the region for over three centuries, through movement of the remains and loss of property. William Norton Aird notes that Cuthbert's community was "the natural ally of revolt in Northumbria" since it was a symbol of Anglo-Saxon identity; however, both Aird and Susan Ridyard mention that the community was never portrayed as an enemy of the Normans.⁶² Instead, Cuthbert was understood to be a protector of his monks and patrimony, if not all of Northumbria. The flight of Cuthbert's

⁵⁸ Susan J. Ridyard, "'Condigna Veneratio': Post-Conquest Attitudes to the Saints of the Anglo-Saxons," *Anglo-Norman Studies* 9 (1986): 196.

⁵⁹ Symeon of Durham, *Church of Durham*, 187.

⁶⁰ Aird, "St. Cuthbert, the Scots, and the Normans," 1; Donald Matthew, "Durham and the Anglo-Norman World," in *Anglo-Norman Durham, 1093-1193*, ed. David Rollason, Margaret Harvey, and Michael Prestwich (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1994), 4.

⁶¹ Blurton, "Reliquia: Writing Relics," 47.

⁶² Aird, "St. Cuthbert, the Scots, and the Normans," 13; Ridyard, "Post-Conquest Attitudes," 196.

community in the presence of the Normans can be understood that the monks wanted to remove themselves from the turbulent area and any blame. The disagreements between the Norman nobles and the Northumbrian locals did not directly involve Cuthbert's cult, and Norman sentiments were not a threat to Cuthbert's relics.

Norman Attitudes towards Anglo-Saxon Saints

The ecclesiastical changes brought by the Norman Conquest have led many historians to argue that the Normans were inherently opposed to the Anglo-Saxon saints.⁶³ In early Conquest literature, the Normans were portrayed by many authors as hostile towards the Anglo-Saxon church, saints, and practices. Anglo-Saxon monasteries claimed the Normans took their lands and forced disrespectful continental monks into their communities.⁶⁴ William the Conqueror's threat to kill the leaders of the Church of Durham if Cuthbert's body was corrupt supports this assertion.⁶⁵ However, it is often ignored that William ordered the devastators of Cuthbert's Church in 1069 to be captured and taken to the bishop for judgment.⁶⁶ William's warning to the Church of Durham expressed his desire to only tolerate valid saints' cults in England, and his aggressive retaliation against anyone who damaged Cuthbert's shrine displays his honorable intentions towards the saint. This was the case across England after the Norman Conquest. The Normans did not despise the Anglo-Saxon saints; instead, they used the Anglo-Saxon saints to consolidate their own power.

⁶³ Ridyard, "Post-Conquest Attitudes," 179.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, 179.

⁶⁵ Aird, "St. Cuthbert, the Scots, and the Normans," 17.

⁶⁶ Symeon of Durham, *Church of Durham*, 189.

In her study of post-Conquest religious sentiments in England, Ridyard concludes that the Norman perspectives on Anglo-Saxons saints are best understood through the study of individual saints' cults across England during the transition period and their context within post-Conquest ecclesiastical history.⁶⁷ She asserts that the Normans recognized the influence the Anglo-Saxon saints possessed over the laity, and the Normans readily utilized that influence to their advantage to make the Conquest a smoother transition and dispel tension, at least in the religious sector.⁶⁸ Anglo-Saxon religious communities, and their saints' cults, were tied to the politics, history, and economics in local areas, and the Norman disruption of these practices would not have made the conquerors popular. Additionally, Ridyard asserts that the Norman respect for one of the most prominent Anglo-Saxon saint cults, that of St. Alban, reveals the Normans' overall positive treatment of the Anglo-Saxon saints.⁶⁹ The Normans may have been occasionally skeptical about the authenticity of a few Anglo-Saxon relic cults, and did review the existing cults with critical perspectives, but they were not contemptuous of them.⁷⁰

Ben Nilson and David Rollason agree that the Normans actively promoted Anglo-Saxon saints' cults through the output of new hagiographies and the practice of extravagant translations into new Norman churches. The Normans assessed and incorporated existing saints' cults into their patronage and care if the cults were influential. Individual cults were used to enhance the legitimacy and power by incoming continental churchmen in order to gain more wealth and prestige.⁷¹ Rollason pushes the idea further, contesting that the Normans enabled the triumph and thriving of English saints' cults in the later Middle Ages.⁷² The publicity gained from the

⁶⁷ Ridyard, "Post-Conquest Attitudes," 180.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 205.

⁶⁹ Ridyard, "Post-Conquest Attitudes," 189.

⁷⁰ Ridyard, "Post-Conquest Attitudes," 204; Rollason, *Saints and Relics*, 225.

⁷¹ Rollason, *Saints and Relics*, 223.

⁷² *Ibid*, 230.

Norman hagiographies helped promote the Anglo-Saxon saints during the post-Conquest period.⁷³ Many post-Conquest texts aimed “to assert the righteousness of these English communities in the sight of God which was signified by the history and continuing prosperity of their saints’ cults.”⁷⁴ The Anglo-Saxon saints and their relics were not threatened by the Norman Conquest, as they were valuable tools to the success and popularity of the new Norman England. However, the caretakers and communities of the saints’ cults were in danger of being replaced.⁷⁵

The Impact and Implications of the 1083 Benedictine Reform

Alongside the Norman political shift in England during the late eleventh century, ecclesiastical changes overtook the Anglo-Saxon churches and monasteries. These changes and reforms were implemented primarily by churchmen from the continent, who took charge of the ecclesiastical positions in England under William the Conqueror.⁷⁶ In particular, Benedictine reforms were impactful on England and provided a new example for cathedral types in monastic communities instead of clerical churches.⁷⁷ Benedictine monasticism followed the Rule of St. Benedict, which governed the day-to-day pious living of the celibate and prayerful Benedictine monks. Prior to the Benedictine reform of England in the eleventh century, Durham Cathedral was served by clerics, who married, held estates, and were not as ascetic as monks. Clerics obtained lay patronage and had close social and spiritual ties with their local communities.⁷⁸ This practice had been in place in England for decades, and was widely accepted by the ecclesiastical

⁷³ Ridyard, “Post-Conquest Attitudes,” 206.

⁷⁴ Hayward, “Translation Narratives,” 89.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 92.

⁷⁶ Rollason, *Saints and Relics*, 215.

⁷⁷ Barrow, “English Cathedral Communities,” 29.

⁷⁸ John Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 346.

and political leaders, as there was no standard for monasticism or clerical life in Anglo-Saxon England prior to the Benedictine reform.⁷⁹ The clerics of Cuthbert's community were free from the rules of monasticism, and functioned as an ecclesiastical brotherhood which took care of Cuthbert's relics and administered his cult. This was unacceptable to the Norman administration, who desired a cohesive way of life for all clergy in England.

William the Conqueror appointed William of St. Calais, a Norman Benedictine, as Bishop of Durham in November 1080.⁸⁰ In May 1083, Bishop William dissolved Cuthbert's clerical community and installed a convent of Benedictine monks, taken from Monkwearmouth and Jarrow, because he considered them better custodians of Cuthbert's cult than the secular clerics.⁸¹ The 1083 reform at Durham was meant to streamline the running of the Durham Church and bring monastic order to the cult of Cuthbert, which had deviated from monasticism since the foundation of Cuthbert's community.⁸² The introduction of Benedictine monasticism at Durham, along with Benedictine reforms across England, standardized the practices of cathedrals, monasteries, and ecclesiastical communities.

Bishop William's 1083 reform occurred peacefully and without the need for military intervention. He gave the clerics the choice of staying and conforming to the monastic lifestyle, or leaving the church of Durham.⁸³ All but one chose to leave the church and keep their wives, property rights, and lives. They were the last of the generations of clerics who had accompanied Cuthbert's relics in their travels to Durham from Lindisfarne, and this change marked a new chapter in the history of Cuthbert's community. The Benedictine monks, who were native

⁷⁹ Sarah Foot, "Anglo-Saxon Minsters: A Review of Terminology," in *Pastoral Care Before the Parish*, ed. John Blair and Richard Sharpe (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), 213.

⁸⁰ Aird, *St. Cuthbert and the Normans*, 103-104.

⁸¹ Matthew, "Durham and the Anglo-Norman World," 5; Aird, *St. Cuthbert and the Normans*, 145.

⁸² Barrow, "English Cathedral Communities," 26.

⁸³ Symeon of Durham, *Church of Durham*, 231.

Anglo-Saxons, moved into the newly established priory without hesitation or bloodshed in 1083. Almost immediately, they responded to external pressure through a program of hagiography and the obtaining of estates.

The Benedictine monks at Durham have been understood to either disapprove of their predecessors, the clerics, or as eager to emphasize their duty as continuous with the Northumbrian past.⁸⁴ Despite the peaceful transformation from clerics to monks at the monastery at Durham, the new administrators of Cuthbert's cult were not free from criticism. The incoming monks smoothed the transition by acknowledging the role of the clerics in Cuthbert's cult, and then asserting that the role was completed.⁸⁵ The clerics were understood to be the "genuine, if misguided guardians of the traditions of St. Cuthbert's church," who needed to be replaced by custodians worthy of Cuthbert's new, more modern cult under William the Conqueror and the Norman regime.⁸⁶ Benedictine monasticism was emphasized as the proper way to conduct and uphold a venerated saint's cult and community, and Benedictine values were expressed through hagiographic texts written during the transition period. To further assert their legitimacy as the heirs of the clerics of Cuthbert's cult, the new Benedictine monks literally reclaimed Durham's past by reassembling the various lands that had been lost to warring nobles during the years that the community was on the move. Bishop William oversaw these changes and approved of the different land charters. Within the span of twenty years, he made another alteration at Durham which directly involved Cuthbert's relics and solidified the identity of Cuthbert's cult in Northumbria.

⁸⁴ Foster, "Custodians of St. Cuthbert," 53.

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, 54.

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 58.

The 1104 Translation of St. Cuthbert's Relics

In the early twelfth century, Bishop William of Durham tore down the Anglo-Saxon church at Durham and built a new Norman cathedral. The cathedral itself was extremely modern for the period and unlike most English Norman cathedrals built at the same time.⁸⁷ By 1104, the choir of Durham Cathedral was complete and Cuthbert's coffin, with his relics, the relics of other Northumbria saints, and some of his possessions, was translated in a public ceremony to the apse. This was probably meant to unite the Normans and Anglo-Saxons in celebration of Cuthbert's cult, and signify a new era in the history of Northumbria. It was ultimately successful, but prior to the event, the translation was surrounded by controversy and anticipated with fear and distrust.

Certain clergymen, who were visiting from outside of Durham to see the new cathedral, openly challenged the notion of Cuthbert's incorruptibility and even his existence in the coffin which rested in his shrine. This was an affront to Cuthbert's sanctity and the pride of Cuthbert's community. If Cuthbert's body suffered normal decay and was corrupt, Cuthbert's cult was false. If Cuthbert's remains were not even in the coffin, Cuthbert's community was unfounded and dishonest. These doubts as to the location of Cuthbert's relics and their state were dangerous to the prestige and influence of the church at Durham.

The translation of Cuthbert's relics took place, but only after the controversy was settled. Two accounts of the translation, one anonymous and the other by Reginald of Durham, provide insight into the proceedings of the event and the repeated skepticism surrounding Cuthbert's relics. The anonymous account details the widespread doubt as to the existence of Cuthbert's body and its incorrupt appearance:

⁸⁷ Matthew, "Durham and the Anglo-Norman World," 3.

All did not entertain one and the same opinion, either with respect to the presence of the sacred body of St. Cuthbert, or its state of incorruption. Some, founding their opinion on vain conjectures, dreamt that long before this our time his body has been removed to some other place by some secret act of violence ... Others admitted that the sacred remains are still here, but, that the frame of a human body should remain undissolved during the revolutions of so many ages ago, they said was more than the laws of nature allow of ... In this manner the one party conjecturing that the holy body had been carried away elsewhere, and the other not allowing its incorruption, the brethren who affirmed that it was there, and in a perfect state, were disbelieved, and they became in consequence somewhat anxious and ashamed.⁸⁸

Although many historians have assumed those who questioned Cuthbert's incorruptibility were Norman, no evidence for a Norman identity has ever been stated in the primary sources. This again highlights the supposition, discussed in the section "Norman Attitudes towards Anglo-Saxon Saints," that the Normans inherently antagonized Anglo-Saxon saints' cults. Indeed, the accusers may have been native Anglo-Saxons, who wished to shame the Norman Bishop William and his new cathedral at Durham.

Regardless of the identity of the skeptics, the community needed physical proof of Cuthbert's incorrupt presence in Durham after various clergy expressed disbelief, but questioning the validity of a saint was also thought to be potentially spiritually damaging. After

⁸⁸ C.F. Battiscombe (ed.), "The Anonymous Account of the Translation of St. Cuthbert, 29 August 1104," in *The Relics of Saint Cuthbert* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956), 99.

some deliberation, nine Durham monks and Prior Turgot of Durham were chosen to open Cuthbert's coffin five days before the translation was to take place. These select individuals were known for their piety and loyalty to Cuthbert and were the ideal candidates to view the saint's relics. On the night of August 24, the ten monks prayed and fasted, then opened the outer lid of Cuthbert's coffin. The anonymous author relates the monks' fear of divine punishment for touching the holy relics:

At last they raised the shelf, and having removed the linen cloth which had covered the sacred relics immediately beneath it, they smelt an odour of the sweetest fragranc; and behold, they found the venerable body of the blessed Father, the fruit of their anxious desire, laying on its right side in a perfect state, and, from the flexibility of its joints, representing a person asleep rather than dead.⁸⁹

The state of Cuthbert's body, fresh and limber, after decades of burial, confirmed his holiness and the validity of his cult and recalls the description of Cuthbert's remains in 698. The flexibility of Cuthbert's corpse is also described in Reginald of Durham's account of the 1104 translation, where he cites the names of the Durham monks who investigated Cuthbert's relics:

Osbern, standing at the head, grasped the holy body of St. Cuthbert with his hands, and lifted it on high out of the place where he slept; but Aldwin, standing at the feet, embraced the body, and raised and lifted up the sacred limbs. Algar

⁸⁹ Battiscombe, "The Anonymous Account," 101.

also, when the body bent in the midst, as though it were living, embraced and held fast in his arms the pliant middle part of the body.⁹⁰

Cuthbert's body was found not only undecayed, but supple and life-like. He was therefore even more of a prestigious saint. Cuthbert's relics were placed back in the coffin, and the translation ceremony took place a few days later. The doubts as to Cuthbert's sanctity were put to rest, and Cuthbert's cult moved to Durham Cathedral amid celebration. The 1104 translation was a type of spectacle with the monks acknowledging a controversy, and publicly resolving it before and during the translation ceremony.⁹¹ The translation signified that "veneration of St. Cuthbert was to be of central importance within the new Norman cathedral of Durham."⁹² Bishop William transformed the nature of the custodians and location of Cuthbert's cult physically and visually, and solidified the legacy of Cuthbert in Durham.

St. Cuthbert's Cult and Local Politics: Relationships of Mutual Respect

Relic cults were often managed by powerful religious communities who skillfully and purposefully manipulated "the prestige, traditions, supposed miraculous powers and territorial associations of the relics they possessed" in order to gain wealth and influence.⁹³ Relic cults were often associated with a royal line or policy, and their relationship with kings had the potential to be symbiotic through the public exchange of respect, gifts, and lands.⁹⁴ The

⁹⁰ Reginald of Durham, "Reginald of Durham's Account of the Translation of St. Cuthbert, 29 August 1104," in *The Relics of Saint Cuthbert*, ed. C.F. Battiscombe (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956), 107.

⁹¹ Abou-El-Haj, *The Medieval Cult of Saints*, 52.

⁹² Ridyard, "Post-Conquest Attitudes," 198.

⁹³ David Rollason, "Relic-cults as an Instrument of Royal Policy c. 900 – c. 1050," *Anglo-Saxon England* 15 (1986): 101.

⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 101.

patronage of nobles did not have the same effect as that of royals, as nobles generally did not command large armies with which to overtake a region and its resources. Bishop Robert de Comines and Bishop Walcher's need for military support in order to control Northumbria exhibits the lack of power which accompanied a lack of military force. Kings possessed the means to manage the region, and this combined with Cuthbert's spiritual protection, was a valuable and stabilizing asset for the Norman royalty.

After Cuthbert's death, his relics and cult were a tool and ally for kings who wished to control Northumbria.⁹⁵ Since Cuthbert's cult was located on what is now the border of Scotland and England, both the Scottish and English kings attempted to control the area and provide patronage to Cuthbert's cult. Both William the Conqueror and King Malcolm III of Scotland were officially made royal patrons of the Church of St. Cuthbert, which helped them and the Church.⁹⁶ William and Malcolm's patronage lent the Church of Cuthbert royal legitimacy in England, which stabilized Cuthbert's cult in a disputed region with a shifting national border. The recognition of the new Norman king permitted Cuthbert's community to continue its presence in Northumbria, and William frequently stopped in Durham while traveling between Scotland and southern England. His presence, and that of his retinue and troops, displayed the might of the English crown. William donated lands and money to Cuthbert's church, increasing its wealth and investing in its future.

Apart from monetary donations, Durham Cathedral gained the benefit of having royal protectors when William and Malcolm III pledged their loyalties to Cuthbert. Cuthbert's cult was secure from other rival cults under the royal patronage and support. William the Conqueror's veneration of Cuthbert connected him to the glorified Anglo-Saxon past. Malcolm's veneration

⁹⁵ Rollason, "Relic-cults as an Instrument," 102-103.

⁹⁶ Aird, "St. Cuthbert, the Scots, and the Normans," 18-19.

of Cuthbert continued to be a way the Scots could retain their claim over Northumbria. During this time, national identities were beginning to form, and the fluctuating boundary between the English and Scots, which ran roughly along the ruin of Hadrian's Wall, symbolized the cultural delineations between the two nations. Malcolm refused to let the English have full control and influence over Cuthbert's cult, and by association, Northumbria, through his attempts to control Durham. The cult of Cuthbert remained neutral so that it could benefit from both or whoever was more powerful at a given time, ensuring that Cuthbert's relics, influence, and status survived.

St. Cuthbert as a Landlord

Medieval saints were "patrons of communities, invoked not only for miracles of healing but also to safeguard monastic property."⁹⁷ Possession of a saint's relics reinforced the owner's claim to the saint's lands.⁹⁸ The accumulation of land represented authority in medieval Europe, as more land equaled more resources for the owners. The revenue generated from property separated the rich from the poor, creating a cycle of wealth or poverty for various families. During the late Anglo-Saxon and Norman periods, the communities of greater saints in England amassed large quantities of land in the form of donations from royalty or wealthy nobles, and the custody of the saints' relics entitled the owners to the control and revenue of the lands, tenants, and livestock.

Not only did the saint's remains act as a symbol of property ownership, but the saint's presence in heaven and on earth also meant he or she could defend their follower's land claims

⁹⁷ Cubitt, "Memory and Narrative," 34.

⁹⁸ Rollason, *Saints and Relics*, 208.

through divine intervention.⁹⁹ Cuthbert is one of the best examples of a saint's cult as a tool for bargaining and possession.¹⁰⁰ The *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* admonishes princes and kings who attempt to steal the lands belonging to Cuthbert, threatening spiritual damnation for a secular crime. Its list of donations to Cuthbert's patrimony is interspersed with warnings to greedy nobles who might take part of the property. Much later, Symeon of Durham also includes information on the significance placed on Cuthbert's patrimony:

When soon afterwards the land between the two aforementioned rivers had been given to the saint as he had commanded, it was decreed by the common resolve of the aforesaid kings and of the whole people that if anyone should give land to St. Cuthbert, or if land should be bought with the saint's own money, no one thenceforth should dare to arrogate to themselves from it any right of service or custom, but that the church alone should possess it perpetually in undisturbed liberty and freedom from claims...Anyone who by whatever effort presumed to infringe these laws and statutes was condemned by the judgment of all, unless he mended his ways, to anathema and perpetual punishment in the fires of hell.¹⁰¹

The wrath of God was a common punishment for the theft of ecclesiastical property across medieval Europe.¹⁰² Monasteries and churches did not have the physical or martial ability to defend their estates and lands gained from donations. The historian Lester K. Little notes that the monks and clergy believed the threats which they made, as did most of the lay people who were

⁹⁹ Rollason, "The Wanderings of St. Cuthbert," 54.

¹⁰⁰ Rollason, *Saints and Relics*, 197; Aird, *St. Cuthbert and the Normans*, 11.

¹⁰¹ Symeon of Durham, *Church of Durham*, 127.

¹⁰² Lester K. Little, *Benedictine Maledictions: Liturgical Cursing in Romanesque France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 55.

made aware of the punishments.¹⁰³ The *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, written after Cuthbert's cult had moved, served to list and reestablish the patrimony of Cuthbert. Later, Symeon's text solidifies the authority of Cuthbert's cult at Durham over the rest of Cuthbert's properties, power which may have been forgotten or ignored during the Norman changes in Northumbria.

The morality of property ownership by ecclesiastical communities was disputed in the Middle Ages. Prior to any relocation of Cuthbert's community, the monks at Lindisfarne "had no property apart from cattle...for it was not necessary for them to amass money or to provide buildings for receiving the powerful of this world, who used to come to church only to pray or to hear the word of God."¹⁰⁴ The clerical community which was replaced in 1083 by the Benedictine monks held lands and had marriages. It would appear that Symeon disapproved of the materiality of the pre-reform Durham clerics, which indirectly increased the lands of Cuthbert.¹⁰⁵ However, Symeon later describes an intriguing account of Cuthbert's posthumous demand for land:

Now the saint appeared in a vision to the aforesaid abbot and said: "Tell the king that he should give rights of perpetual possession to me and to those who minister in my church all the land between the Wear and the Tyne, so that they may not struggle in want, but may be able to procure from these lands a living for themselves."¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Little, *Benedictine Maledictions*, 59.

¹⁰⁴ Symeon of Durham, *Church of Durham*, 31.

¹⁰⁵ Aird, *St. Cuthbert and the Normans*, 116.

¹⁰⁶ Symeon of Durham, *Church of Durham*, 125.

In this passage, Cuthbert is portrayed as a commanding landlord, equal to an earthly ruler.

Cuthbert's authority stemmed from his status as a saint, and allowed him to make demands of secular kings. Cuthbert's powerful posthumous ownership of property, in an ecclesiastical setting where materiality and earthly wealth were not always condoned, implies that Cuthbert was understood to be a figure of both secular and sacred authority. Cuthbert was a landlord, able to defend his property and negotiate with powerful individuals. In the absence of a strong and legendary king in Northumbria, Cuthbert rose to become the leading political figure of the region. His protection, patronage, and patrimony likened him to a prince instead of a hermetic monk. This was a valuable image that increased the amount of authority Cuthbert's community wielded in Northumbria.

The influence of Cuthbert's cult extended to the most significant places where the saint's relics had travelled, and the similar architectural programs in multiple cities served to mark them as distinctly Cuthbert's property. Cuthbert's popularity in Durham fostered a secondary cult center at Lindisfarne and caused the renovation of Chester-le-Street's church from timber to stone.¹⁰⁷ Durham Cathedral's design and ornament were copied at a new church at Lindisfarne in the twelfth century.¹⁰⁸ Architecture and building dedications left no doubt as to who was the patron and guardian of the area, and the wealth gained from Cuthbert's patrimony enabled his community to expand, renovate, and establish structures which further promoted his memory and reasserted his influence in Northumbria. Cuthbert's cult remained stable in northern England, but was prevented from expanding south by the rise of another saint's cult, that of Thomas Becket.

¹⁰⁷ A.J. Piper, "The First Generations of Durham Monks and the Cult of St. Cuthbert," in *St. Cuthbert, His Cult and His Community to A.D. 1200*, ed. Gerald Bonner, David Rollason, and Clare Stancliffe (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1989), 444.

¹⁰⁸ Abou-El-Haj, *The Medieval Cult of Saints*, 54.

St. Cuthbert's Rival in Thomas Becket's Cult

Cuthbert's relics remained a successful pilgrimage destination after the 1104 translation occurred, and Durham Cathedral became the new center of Cuthbert's cult. According to the primary sources which detail the miracles surrounding Cuthbert, the nature of his cures changed drastically around 1170. Before, they occurred outside of Durham where his relics had rested at some point; after, they happened almost exclusively at his shrine in Durham.¹⁰⁹ Victoria Tudor notes this alteration, but does not investigate the surrounding context of the change in the hagiographical miracle stories. A possible explanation could be the murder of Archbishop Thomas Becket, a powerful priest who was at odds with the English king Henry II, in Canterbury Cathedral in 1170. Almost immediately, he was revered as a martyr saint by the English people, and his cult became immensely popular fairly quickly. The assassination of Thomas Becket placed Durham and Cuthbert's cult on the defensive. The religious leaders could no longer rely just on Cuthbert's reputation to promote his fame¹¹⁰ Under the direction of Bishop Hugh du Puiset, the Durham clergy and monks altered some of the architecture of the cathedral and wrote more hagiographies in order to increase Cuthbert's popularity and pilgrimage traffic to Durham Cathedral.¹¹¹ Cuthbert's flexibility in his incorruption set him apart from the other holy dead in England, and the Durham church emphasized this miracle to reassert Cuthbert's sanctity over Thomas Becket.¹¹²

Dominic Marner observes the primary difference in the two saints with the statement that "unlike Cuthbert, Becket was rooted firmly in the secular world."¹¹³ Cuthbert's life had been one

¹⁰⁹ Tudor, "The Cult of St. Cuthbert in the Twelfth-Century," 455.

¹¹⁰ Young, "The Appropriation of St. Cuthbert," 34.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 49.

¹¹² Marner, *St. Cuthbert: His Life and Cult*, 32.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 24.

of piety and monasticism, whereas Thomas Becket was heavily involved in English politics and secular affairs. In order to counter this fact, Cuthbert's character was transformed into "someone with princely connections who was clearly part of the aristocratic culture of Ireland and Northumbria."¹¹⁴ The miracles written after 1170, which occurred at Cuthbert's shrine in Durham, reinforced the idea of the power of his relics. Many of the miracle tales explained that "the sick person had already applied to Thomas [Becket]...before being restored to health in Durham,"¹¹⁵ implying that Cuthbert exerted greater sanctity than Thomas Becket. The miracle tales and hagiography directly confronted the threat of Thomas Becket's cult to Cuthbert's community and its prestige.

If Thomas Becket had not been killed, or if his cult had not gained an immense following, would Cuthbert have become the "national" saint of England? It is extremely likely that this would have been the case. Cuthbert's cult in Durham was strong and had already eclipsed that of Aidan, who was considered the first and most prominent British saint.¹¹⁶ Without a major rival, Cuthbert's popularity had the potential to expand nationally, attracting pilgrims from across England. However, Cuthbert's cult probably would not have gained a solid foothold in southern England unless his relics were translated from Durham. Thomas Becket's shrine physically claimed the ecclesiastical loyalty of the region. The rise of Thomas Becket's following inhibited the spread of Cuthbert's cult territory to southern England, restricting it to Northumbria where it maintained its firm hold on Northumbrian allegiance. Today, the shrines are two of the most venerated holy sites in England, places of history, influence, and spirituality for the pilgrims and tourists.

¹¹⁴ Marner, *St. Cuthbert: His Life and Cult*, 35.

¹¹⁵ Tudor, "The Cult of St. Cuthbert in the Twelfth-Century," 459.

¹¹⁶ Aird, *St. Cuthbert and the Normans*, 16.

“Whose” saint was Cuthbert? The Relics and Northumbrian Identity

The Northumbrians, the community at Lindisfarne, the Normans, and other groups either claimed or related themselves to Cuthbert during the Middle Ages. Cuthbert’s ethnic and cultural identity is widely accepted as Northumbrian simply because of his location in northern England. Cuthbert’s familial origins are unknown, but many historians believe he was a member of the Northumbrian nobility.¹¹⁷ His ambiguous nationality, like the various characteristics of his personality, allowed Cuthbert to identify with multiple people and many individuals to feel personally connected to Cuthbert. His cult was not confined specifically to one regional group or another, but it was seen as a unifying and identifying aspect of northern England.

Cuthbert’s earliest cult existed at Lindisfarne by the eighth century, where the relics helped define the community’s collective identity.¹¹⁸ After Cuthbert’s death, “the self-awareness of the community on Lindisfarne was redefined in an intensity of emotional and spiritual experiences associated with the cultivation of the image of Cuthbert as a holy man of heroic proportions through whose intercession divine grace and power could be mediated to his devoted disciples.”¹¹⁹ Lindisfarne continued to be revered as the home of Cuthbert even after his relics were removed from the church there. The island maintained its claim to Cuthbert’s reputation and origins, allowing itself to become a legend of its own in Cuthbert’s hagiographies. Except for at Chester-le-Street, the same prestige did not imbue the minor towns where Cuthbert’s relics rested. This distinction permitted Lindisfarne to become a prominent site in the history of Cuthbert’s cult.

¹¹⁷ Kirby, “The Genesis of a Cult,” 386.

¹¹⁸ Cubitt, “Universal and Local Saints,” 437.

¹¹⁹ Kirby, “The Genesis of a Cult,” 392.

The Normans appropriated Cuthbert's cult to their program of conquest, but they never attempted to claim Cuthbert as a Norman saint or heroic figure. He was not given a specifically Norman identity, but was understood to be of the Anglo-Saxon past, an expression of the previous era in England's long history. Still, the Normans did declare protection over Cuthbert's community and shrine, and took interest in the governance of his cult. The Normans adopted Cuthbert and his successful influence in Northumbria into their conquest of Anglo-Saxon politics, religion, and social structure.

Marner writes that "the very physical presence of Cuthbert, in all areas of the kingdom of Northumbria...is a fascinating example of the way in which the corporeal presence of a saint helps sanctify a geographical region and affirms and strengthens its boundaries."¹²⁰ The movement of Cuthbert's relics not only defined property of his clergy, but also delineated the lands of the *Haliwerfolc*, the people who lived on the patrimony of Cuthbert and were called the "populus sancti," "the people of the saint."¹²¹ The *Haliwerfolc* felt an allegiance to Cuthbert more than any other power.¹²² A study of the psychology, degree of self-awareness, and character the *Haliwerfolc* possessed would perhaps enlighten the extent to which Cuthbert's cult defined these people in Northumbria.

The *Haliwerfolc* and Northumbrians obtained distinctiveness because of Cuthbert from that of the rest of the populations of England. Marner states that the "unifying factor in their lives was the shrine and land of St. Cuthbert. This provided them with a tremendous sense of cohesion and identity."¹²³ Cuthbert's cult gave the peoples of Northumbria "a saintly individual to help,

¹²⁰ Marner, *St. Cuthbert: His Life and Cult*, 16-17.

¹²¹ Rollason, "Relic-cults as an Instrument," 102.

¹²² Aird, *St. Cuthbert and the Normans*, 231.

¹²³ Marner, *St. Cuthbert: His Life and Cult*, 19.

protect, and comfort them.”¹²⁴ Bede is probably responsible for the term Northumbria, which he created to identify the peoples living north of the River Humber in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*.¹²⁵ This signals that by the time the *Ecclesiastical History* was written, a little over two decades after Cuthbert’s body had been found incorrupt at Lindisfarne, the region of Northumbria was coalescing parallel to the strengthening of Cuthbert’s cult. Bede needed a descriptor for the gradually unifying population near Cuthbert’s relics, and this name was quickly adopted by chroniclers and historians.

By 899, “the Northumbrians began to be ascribed with a distinctive set of inherent characteristics, in the same way that chroniclers attributed to the Normans their natural predilection towards cunning and deceit.”¹²⁶ Authors from both inside and outside of Northumbria distinguished the individuals from the region in their works. Northumbrians were understood to be hard-working, loyal, stubborn, and generous. Marner’s assertion that “Northumbrian identity played an important part in the way in which the North perceived itself throughout the Middle Ages, and still does even to this day”¹²⁷ is correct. Locals in the region proudly carry on traditions which display their heritage, and proclaim their devotion to their homeland and its history. Today the mentalities of Northumbria are not unlike those it had in the Middle Ages, when Cuthbert’s community developed a consciousness and self-awareness of its separate identity.

The significance of a saint’s cult to the Northumbrian collective identity was not limited to Cuthbert’s bones alone. Cuthbert’s community collected the relics of multiple Northumbrian saints. Symeon writes that in the early eleventh century, Bishop Elfred of Northumbria “visited

¹²⁴ Marner, *St. Cuthbert: His Life and Cult*, 17.

¹²⁵ Aird, “St. Cuthbert, the Scots, and the Normans,” 2.

¹²⁶ Marner, *St. Cuthbert: His Life and Cult*, 18.

¹²⁷ *Ibid*, 18.

the former sites of monasteries and churches in the kingdom of the Northumbrians. He raised from the earth the bones of those saints whom he knew to be buried in these places, and enshrined them above ground so that they might be better known to the people and venerated by them.”¹²⁸ Having told close advisors that Bede’s bones were with Cuthbert, Bishop Elfred told them to keep quiet “lest the outsiders who were at that time living in the church, should contrive some mischief, for their chief aim was to carry off relics of saints, and above all those of Bede, if they could.”¹²⁹ The removal of the saints’ relics from their shrines supplanted their cults to Durham, and combined their individual followings with that of Cuthbert. It is interesting that Bede’s remains were particularly desirable to relic thieves. This can be attributed to the role of Bede in the formation of Northumbrian identity and his importance to the region due to his writings and hagiographies which recorded Northumbrian history and distinguished it from the rest of England. Ownership of Bede’s relics, combined with a proper advertising campaign, would result in an immense following that could have potentially rivaled Cuthbert’s cult had it been kept separate from Durham at Jarrow. The twelfth century poem *Durham* lists the other saints and venerable people whose relics were laid with Cuthbert’s and Bede’s in Durham Cathedral: Eadberch, Eadfrith, Bishop Aidan, Bishop Athelwold, Abbot Basil, and King Oswald. Abbot Basil and Bishop Aidan were literarily connected with story of Cuthbert in his *Lives*. King Oswald was a prominent Anglo-Saxon martyr saint, and the addition of his head, severed in battle, with Cuthbert’s bones may have been a tactic by the Durham Church to hinder a potential competing cult from developing.¹³⁰

The furtive collection of other Northumbrian saints’ relics and the inclusion of King Oswald’s head beside Cuthbert in Durham by the twelfth century indicate a conscious movement

¹²⁸ Symeon of Durham, *Church of Durham*, 163.

¹²⁹ *Ibid*, 165.

¹³⁰ Lomas, “St. Cuthbert and the Border,” 26.

to center Northumbrian religious life at Cuthbert's shrine. By absorbing the cults of other local saints, the Church of St. Cuthbert eliminated potential rival cults. The physical combination of local saints with Cuthbert's relics also solidified the idea of a collective Northumbrian identity. The Northumbrians could take pride in multiple individuals and venerate those who had defined their history at one place. Cuthbert served as the symbolic unifier of the Northumbrian saints and the people themselves.

“I am Cuthbert, if ever you heard of me.”¹³¹

Cuthbert's relics lay at the heart of his cult in Northumbria, and it was his cult that survived social, political, and religious upheavals and alterations in the Middle Ages. From the establishment of his status as a saint, Cuthbert commanded respect and privilege. Cuthbert was one of the most successful Anglo-Saxon saints “who emerged from the trials associated with the Norman Conquest with their reputation unimpaired.”¹³² Cuthbert's cult was utilized by the local Norman bishops to “define their church's relations with Norman secular authority and, in a frontier region, with a potentially unruly Norman laity.”¹³³ The appropriation of his cult suggests that Cuthbert was a revered saint who had a powerful following in Northumbria by 1068, and this power would only increase under Norman organization and reforms.

Cuthbert's cult was organized from the beginning to disseminate the fame and importance of the saint. The anonymous *Life of St. Cuthbert*, the earliest text from Lindisfarne of his cult, includes a passage which introduces the magnitude of Cuthbert's legendary character:

¹³¹ William of Malmesbury, *Chronicle of the Kings of England, from the Earliest Period to the Reign of King Stephen*, trans. J.A. Giles (New York: AMS Press, 1968), 114.

¹³² Tudor, “The Cult of St. Cuthbert in the Twelfth-Century,” 450.

¹³³ Ridyard, “Post-Conquest Attitudes,” 197.

Even were you to believe everything that common report has circulated about Cuthbert, be assured that you would have heard only the smallest fraction of his whole great story.¹³⁴

In his early twelfth-century *Chronicle of the Kings of England, from the Earliest Period to the Reign of King Stephen*, William of Malmesbury relates details about Cuthbert's cult at Durham. He includes a narrative where Cuthbert appears to the English King Alfred the Great, in which Cuthbert proclaims, "I am Cuthbert, if ever you heard of me."¹³⁵ This line, along with the above excerpt from the anonymous *Life of St. Cuthbert*, signifies the famous and grand reputation Cuthbert enjoyed posthumously as a saint. The custodians of his cult were determined to keep Cuthbert's memory alive, and their efforts in hagiography, the occurrence of miracles at Cuthbert's shrines, and the incorruptibility of his corpse strengthened Cuthbert's cult even further. Cuthbert was a well-known saint who was widely respected and venerated in Northumbria by the local population, but his status also stretched into Scotland and southern England, as evidenced by the royal interest in Cuthbert's cult from both directions.

At the center of the shifting regional and national politics was Cuthbert's cult at Durham. But why was Cuthbert's cult so successful, lasting, and influential? The early foundations of his cult at Lindisfarne set the stage for a popular saint. Whether or not the monks at Lindisfarne intended for Cuthbert's cult to survive and thrive through centuries of English history, they employed the best ways to stabilize Cuthbert's memory: an abundance of hagiography, emphasis on the miracle of his incorruption, a fierce loyalty from a nearby community, translation of his

¹³⁴ Albertson, "The Anonymous Life of St. Cuthbert," 34.

¹³⁵ William of Malmesbury, *Chronicle of the Kings of England*, 114.

relics, and veneration of his saintly life. The miracle of Cuthbert's incorruption and flexibility set him apart from the other saints during both the Anglo-Saxon and Norman periods. His cult was widely disseminated and famous through hagiographies which perpetuated his memory. The somewhat remote location of Lindisfarne and Northumbria allowed Cuthbert's cult to be protected and autonomous. Northern England was far from Rome and all other major centers of medieval Christianity, allowing Cuthbert's community to take on a powerful ecclesiastical role in the local area without opposition. The accumulation of lands from an early date, through donations and grants, expanded Cuthbert's posthumous patrimony. Property ownership equaled wealth, and by the time of the Norman Conquest, Cuthbert's community possessed vast estates of land and resources. The cycle of increasing wealth and increasing prestige stabilized Cuthbert's cult, especially after its firm inauguration at Durham Cathedral. His physical influence and authority through architecture and shrines could never be disputed.

Cuthbert could encompass multiple aspects of social, religious, and political life with his ties to different cultures, people groups, and duties. Cuthbert was a king-like figure, as exemplified by his character and his perpetuated memory. His character persisted throughout the Middle Ages with little alteration or modification. Cuthbert was a model for kings, bishops, monks, and clergy. His pious behavior, protective nature, and humble character was applied to descriptions of ideal individuals in political and ecclesiastical settings, and Symeon asserts "they should learn from the authority of such a man how to observe the duties of subjects and rulers, the excellence of justice and piety, and the moderation of gentleness and severity... [They] should learn by his example to show to those placed over them humility, obedience, affection, reverence, and all that subjection which derives from purity of heart."¹³⁶

¹³⁶ Symeon of Durham, *Church of Durham*, 37.

Cuthbert's body was a symbol of the connection to the community's origins on Lindisfarne and early Northumbrian Christianity.¹³⁷ The relics, wherever they were taken or placed, were the focal point for veneration. The significance of Cuthbert's relics cannot be fully comprehended without a medieval mindset, which attributed miracles, wrath, protection, and favor to the holy dead and their remains. Symeon summarizes the physical, spiritual, and emotional importance of Cuthbert to the *Haliwerfolc* and Northumbrians:

“The indigenous Christian people with their children and their wives accompanied the holy body of the confessor, regarding everything they had lost – country, homes, possessions – as preserved in the one and only body of the saint, so long as they were worthy to have it with them.”¹³⁸

Cuthbert commanded a reverence for his character, and his cult obtained devotion as an institution of Northumbrian history. Cuthbert was and still is a popular focal point for Northumbrian identity. Northumbrian heritage, differentiated by the region's people from the rest of England's history, is celebrated annually at Durham with festivals and attention to Cuthbert's cult. Cuthbert's shrine rests at the heart of Durham Cathedral, and Bede's relics (having been finally separated from Cuthbert's coffin) are in a minor side chapel at the west end of the Cathedral. There has been no desire to translation Cuthbert's relics back to Lindisfarne, perhaps due to the apparent perpetuity of Durham Cathedral and Durham's ease of access for travelers.

¹³⁷ Rollason, “The Wanderings of St. Cuthbert,” 57.

¹³⁸ Symeon of Durham, *Church of Durham*, 111.

The practices of translation and veneration, the theme of bodily incorruption, the use of miracle tales and hagiography, and the transcendence of religion and politics make Cuthbert's cult an exemplary model of the medieval cult of relics. However, the extent to which Cuthbert's cult was involved in the social, religious, and political changes in its region, the amount of movement the relics endured, and the vast number of estates in Cuthbert's patrimony render Cuthbert's cult as a remarkable version of what a saint's cult could become. Cuthbert's relics were seemingly passive in the surrounding events of the Middle Ages, but they came alive with influence, authority, and fame. Cuthbert's cult in northern England both shaped and observed the formation of Northumbrian identity, English history, and Christian practices, and it will continue to inspire and intrigue scholars of hagiography, history, and religion in the future.

Appendix A: Timeline of St. Cuthbert's Cult and Northumbria

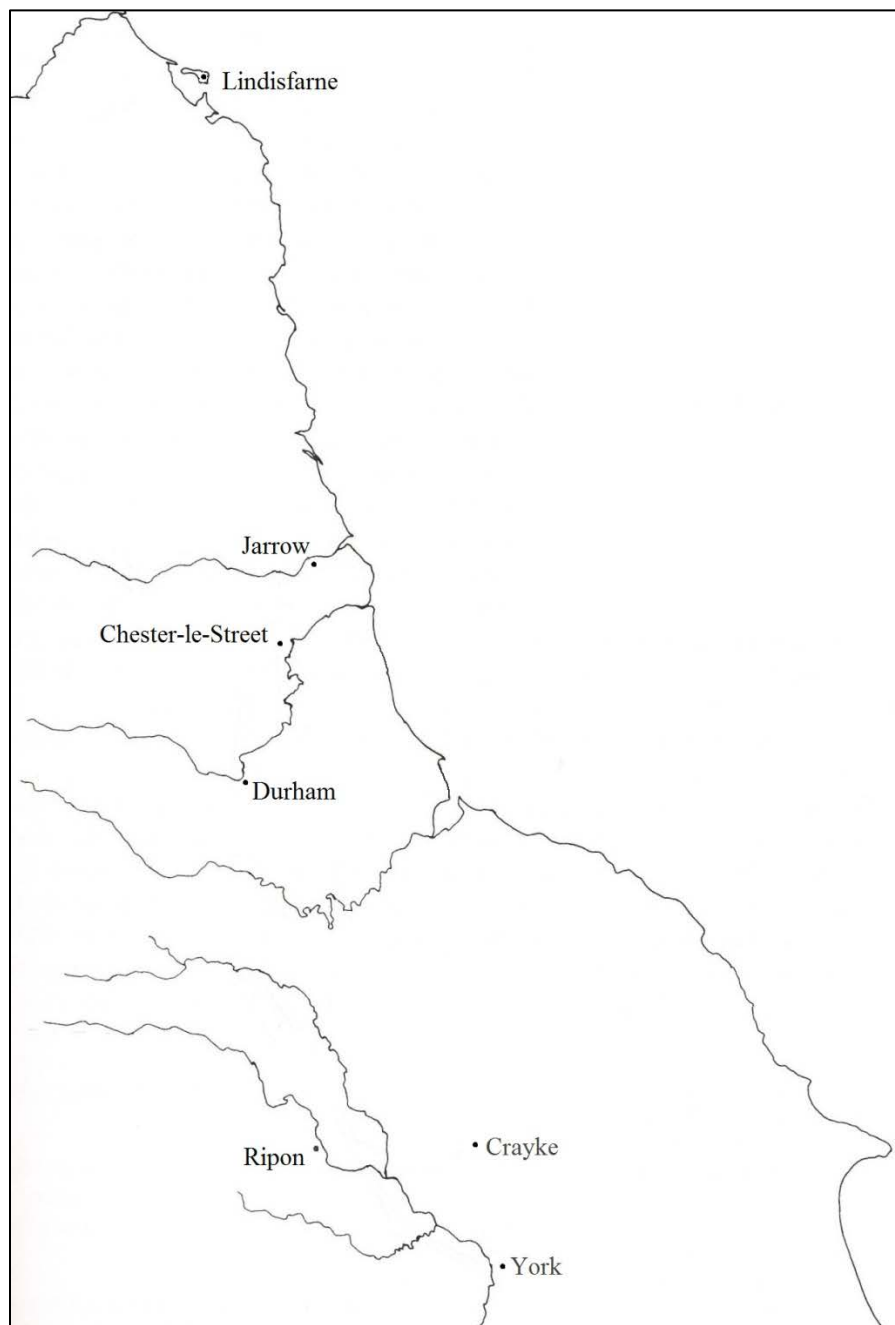
Date	Events Surrounding St. Cuthbert's Cult and Northumbria
684	Cuthbert is made bishop of Lindisfarne
687 (March 20)	Cuthbert dies and is buried at Lindisfarne
698	Cuthbert's relics are elevated and translated in the church at Lindisfarne
699-705	Anonymous <i>Life of St. Cuthbert</i> is written at Lindisfarne
716-721	Bede's <i>Life of St. Cuthbert</i> is written
731	Bede's <i>Ecclesiastical History of the English People</i> is written
793	Vikings attack Lindisfarne; Cuthbert's body is taken away by the Community, then returned
830-845	Cuthbert's relics are translated to Norham-on-Tweed, along with the monastic community
845-875	Cuthbert's relics and community move back to Lindisfarne
875	Cuthbert's relics and the community leave Lindisfarne; many of the members of the monastic community disappear or die
882	Cuthbert's relics and community settle at Chester-le-Street; the <i>Historia de Sancto Cuthberto</i> is written
995	Cuthbert's relics and community decide to stay at Durham while on the way back to Chester-le-Street
998	Cuthbert's relics are installed in a new cathedral and tomb at Durham
1068-1069	The Normans arrive in Northumbria

(continued)

Appendix A (continued)

1069	William the Conqueror sends Robert de Comines to Northumbria; he and his troops are massacred at Durham
1069 (winter)	The Normans massacre locals at Durham and the Northumbrian rebellion against the Normans begins; Cuthbert's community evacuates Durham and Cuthbert's relics are moved to Lindisfarne on December 11
1070	Cuthbert's relics are returned to Durham in March; King Malcolm III of Scotland invades Northumbria
1071	Walcher, a Norman, becomes Bishop of Durham
1072	William the Conqueror visits Cuthbert's shrine at Durham
1080	Bishop Walcher is murdered by Northumbrians at Gateshead; Durham is devastated by the Normans in retaliation for his death
1083	William of Calais, a Norman, is appointed Bishop of Durham; he founds a Benedictine abbey at Durham, replacing the Congregation of St. Cuthbert, and starts building a new cathedral
1086	The <i>Domesday Book</i> is completed – Durham is not listed as being a part of William the Conqueror's holding
1093	King Malcolm III of Scotland visits Durham, attending the foundation of the new cathedral
1104	Cuthbert's relics are examined and translated into the partly finished cathedral

N.B. – The information for this timeline was compiled primarily from *The Medieval Cult of Saints* (Barbara Abou-El-Haj), “St. Cuthbert, the Scots, and the Normans” (William Morton Aird), and *St. Cuthbert and the Normans* (William Morton Aird).

Appendix B: Significant Sites of Cuthbert's Cult in Northumbria

N.B. – The template for this map was copied and altered from Eric Cambridge's "Figure 33: Eastern Northumbria" in "Why Did the Community of St. Cuthbert Settle at Chester-le-Street?" (*St. Cuthbert, His Cult and His Community to A.D. 1200*, p. 381).

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