

268. London, British Library, Harley 1117

Bede, "Vita S. Cuthberti" (prose and verse)

[Ker 234, Gneuss 427]

HISTORY: The main texts in the manuscript are Bede's prose and verse Lives of Saint Cuthbert to which have been added liturgical texts, an excerpt from Bede's "Historia ecclesiastica," and an anonymous poem on Edward king and martyr. Lapidge (1995: 142) dates the poetic Life in Harley 1117 (= H) to "c. 1000 or in the earliest years of the eleventh century," finding Ker's dating of "xi" too late (see also Bishop 1963: 420–21; Dumville 1993: 108–9). Suggestions of provenance are various: Ker assigns a Christ Church, Canterbury provenance; Rollason (1989: 418–19) suggests a Wessex provenance. Hohler (1956: 161) regards the late 10c liturgical material as a "breviary supplement . . . from some monastic church in the West, possibly Sherborne." On the basis of display script, Gameson (1996: esp. 169, n. 160) groups Harley 1117 with manuscripts associated with Canterbury. The manuscript was given by John Anstis (1669–1744) to Robert Harley (inscription, f. 1v). Harley 1117, BL, Cotton Vitellius A. xix [252], and Vatican City, Reg. lat. 204 [477] share a core of 13 glosses to the verse Life (see Ker, *Cat.*, 283).

CODICOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION: [iii] + 66 ff. + [ii]. The leather binding, stamped in gold, dates from the 19c. The front and back flyleaves and pastedowns are marbled pages. Manuscript pages measure 253–255 x 175–178 mm. (but 251 x 164 mm. for f. 1). The writing area measures 189–194 x 133–137 mm. (but f. 64v is 190 x 125 mm.). There are 31 lines per page except on f. 1 (26 lines) and in quires VI (29 lines) and IX (25 lines). The latter two quires contain the neumed material. Rulings were done with drypoint usually on the hair side. Prick marks for horizontal rulings are still visible on the outer left and right edges. Two sets of prick marks at the top and bottom guide the ruling of the left and right capital columns. Many lines in the prose Cuthbert were ruled again to guide the height of small letters. Rulings are barely visible in the last quire of four leaves. The arrangement of sheets is Insular (i.e., HH-HH) until the last quire (IX^d), which is arranged in the continental manner (HF).

The prose *Life* on ff. 2r–42r is written in the same hand throughout in an English Caroline minuscule. The ink varies in color from very dark brown, almost black, to a chocolate brown. The neumed liturgical texts are in a brown ink lighter than that used for the Cuthbert texts. There is a range of ornament throughout the manuscript. On f. 1r initial capitals alternate green and red except for the first initial which seems to have oxidized. The ornamentation for the prose Cuthbert includes a range of colored inks and occasional elaborate capitals. On f. 2r the incipit is written in now oxidized red. 'Domino' is in blue and the line following in green. The initial 'D' is in zoomorphic interlace. The incipit (f. 3v) of the prose text is written in serified square capitals enclosed in a double border. These square capitals include among them an uncial 'E' and uncial 'H'. The lines of writing alternate green, a now silvered red, and red. The elaborate borders have three outer bands in red, green, red; and three inner bands in oxidized red, blue, and oxidized red.

On f. 4r the vertical stroke of initial 'P', decorated by biting birds and beasts in an interlace pattern, extends down the length of the page. The initial is outlined in ink and detailed in red and blue. Chapter headings are in red, and small internal capitals are likewise filled in red. The initial capitals of individual chapters are in green or red. The explicit is in red. The verse *Life* of Cuthbert begins on f. 45r with a large zoomorphic initial 'D' accented in red. The incipit on f. 45r is in red/orange. There is on the same page an interlace capital 'M' with red detailing. The initials in the manuscript are in Wormald Type II(b) (Wormald 1945: 123; Temple 1976: no. 30 and ill. 108–9). Chapter headings and initials (for verses) are in red, though some of the red has now oxidized. Each division of the verse begins with a large red initial, many with decoration of modest ability.

[Note: T. A. M. Bishop uses the hand of the prose *Life* in his scheme to classify and date the development of English Caroline minuscule (Bishop 1963). Insular letter forms appear in Anglo-Saxon names (e.g., 'd', 'f', 'æ'); 'y' is dotted throughout. Hand 1 also has a splay-limbed 'y'. The verse *Life* is in another hand. Present in this stint are insular letters (e.g., 'ð' in ff. 45r/10, 48v/31 'cuðberhtus'). At f. 40v/28 'beaduðegn' has a square 'a', insular 'd' and 'ð', but a Caroline 'g'. Bishop is of the opinion that Harley 1117 was written in two installments within a few years of each other (part i = quires I–VI; part ii = quires VII–VIII), with the second installment ruled to match the first. However, this proposal was made to support the stemma of scribal connections he erects through the hands of Cambridge, Trinity College MS B.4.27 (141) (see Bishop 1963: 420 and Dumville 1993: 108–9), and it has little else to support it other than the different hands of the manuscript itself.]

COLLATION: Quiring: I²¹⁺⁷ (ff. 1–8); II–V⁸ (ff. 9–40); VI⁴ (ff. 41–44); VII⁸ (ff. 45–52); VIII¹⁰ (ff. 53–62); IX⁴ (ff. 63–66).

[**Note:** Bishop (1963: 420) posits the production of the manuscript in two stages, with a break after quire VI (see above). The binding of the first quire is too tight to verify the collation. The present quire I appears to have been of 7, with the current f. 1 added later; no stubs are visible. Ff. II–VIII all share a substantial wormhole at the left margin below line 9. The hole in f. 1 does not match. However, three other wormholes in the early pages of the manuscript do match with those in f. 1, if f. 1 is adjusted to the right, approximately 1 mm. While f. 1 was not original to the quire, it has been with it for a long time. There are prick marks but no rulings visible on f. 1. For both quires VII and VIII the sewing through the central folio of the quire is obvious. Quire IX is now sewn onto quire VIII through the last two leaves of VIII.]

OE GLOSSES: There are 47 OE glosses from f. 45v through f. 62v (pr. Meritt 1945: no. 7).

CONTENTS:

1. f. 1r/1–26 Poem on the death and translation of St. Edward, king and martyr: ‘Omnibus est recolenda dies qua maximus anglum’; ends: ‘Fundē preces pro quo sodes rogamine summo’ (pr. Fell, 1971: 17) [f. 1v blank, except for a paste-in with a dedication to Robert Harley from John Anstis].
2. ff. 2r–40v/24 Bede, prose “Vita S. Cuthberti” (ed. Colgrave 1940):
ff. 2r/1–3r/29 Preface: **INCIPIT PRAEFATIO BEDAE PRESBITERI DE VITA | S(AN)C(T)I CVTHBERHTI LINDISFARNENSIS EPISCOPI. AD | EADFRIDVM EPISCOPVM. | ‘DOMINO | S(AN)C(T)O AC BEATIS | SIMO PATRI EADFRIDO EP(ISCOP)O. SED ET OMNI CONGRE | gationi fratru(m) qui in l[i]ndisfarnensi insula chr(ist)o | deseruiunt’.**
- ff. 3v–40v/24 “Life”: **INCIPIT LIBER DE VI|TA S(AN)C(T)I CVTHBERHTI | EPISCOPI LINDISPHAR|NENSIS AEC-CLESIAE.** Chapter 1, title: ‘QVOMODO PVER D(E)I | CVHT-BERHTVS PER IN|FANTE(M) SIT PREDICTO | EPISCOPATVI ADMONITVS.’ || Text: ‘PRINCIPI|VM NOBIS | SCRIBENDI DE VITA BEATI CVTHBERHTI | hieremias propheta consecrat’.
3. ff. 40v/25–42r/23 Excerpt from Bede, “Historia ecclesiastica,” 4.31–32: **ITEM EX LIBRO HISTORIAE AECCLSIASTICAE GENTIS | ANGLORVM. VICESIMO NONO CAPITVLO. | ‘Erat in eodem**

- monasterio frater quida(m) nomine | beaduðegn. tempore non pauco hospitem mi|nisterio deseruiens'; ends: 'ac si nihil umqua(m) in eo deformi|tatis. ac tumoris apparuisset. d(e)o gratias' (ed. Colgrave and Mynors 1969: 444–48) [f. 42v blank].
4. ff. 43r/1–44r/20 Office of St. Cuthbert, neumed: **IN NAT(A)L(E) S(AN)C(T)I CVTHBERHTI EP(ISCOP)I ET CONFESSORIS ANT(IPHONA) AD VESPERAM.** | 'Oriens sol iustitiae dignatus est inlustrare per ministros lucis suae'; ends: 'pia prece tu pro nobis intercede.' [Note: See Hohler (1956: esp. 188–89), who suggests Sherborne as a possible home. There is substantial agreement with Hohler's text of the Durham service, pp. 170–73.] f. 44v Blank.
5. ff. 45r–62v/21 Bede, verse "Vita S. Cuthberti" (ed. Jaeger 1935):
- f. 45r/1–24: Prefatory letter: **INCIPIT EPISTOLA BEDAE PRESBITERI | AD IOHANNEM PRESBITERVM.** 'D(OMI)NO IN D(OMI)NO D(OMI)NORV(M) | dilectissimo (gl.: 'i. carissimo') iohanni pr(es)-b(ite)r(o) (gl.: 'i. sacerdote') beda (gl.: 's. mitr') famulus (gl.: 's. famicl') chr(ist)i sa|lutem; Dici non potest dilectissime in(christ)o domine'; ends 'Obsecro cu(m) ad limina beatoru(m) apostoloru(m) d(e)o protegente | perueneris. pro me intercedere memineris'.
- ff. 45r/25–62v/17 "Life": **.I. INCIPIT LIBER DE MIRACVLIS S(AN)C(T)I CVTHBERHTI EPISCOPI.** | 'MULTA SVIS D(OMI)-N(U)S | FULgescere lumina seclis'; ends: 'Vita manens castis lumenque salusq(ue) p(er) aeuu(m)'.
6. f. 62v/18–21 Additional verses: 'Tusserat aeclesie uigbeorhtus scribere nabla hoc. | Abbas huius . . . Quo d(eu)s om(ni)p(oten)s sibi crimina cuncta relaxet' (pr. Jaeger 1935: 133).
7. ff. 63r/1–65r/12 Office for St. Benedict, neumed: **INCIPIVNT ANTI-PHON(E) ET RESPONSORIA. IN NAT(A)L(E) S(AN)C(T)I BENEDICTI ABB(ATIS).** | 'O QVAM VENERANDUS ES EGREGIE BENEDICTE CONFESSOR CRISTI'; ends: 'hodie in gloria(m) cum angelis susceptus est' (a detail of f. 63r printed by Suñol 1935: 292, 296; pl. 82).
8. ff. 65r/13–66v/6 Unique office for St. Guthlac, neumed: **.III. ID. APR. NAT(A)L(E) S(AN)C(T)I GVTHLACI CONFESSORIS CHR(IST)I.** | 'Quicumque ad sanctum dei guthlacum perducti sunt infirmi qui | demone peruasi qui pro commissis sceleribus'; ends 'merere[]tur ostium liberius penetrare' (ed. Birch 1881; see Colgrave 1940: 28 and Colgrave 1956: 10, n. 2).

PHOTO NOTE: The apparent gaps on ff. 23v/1–3 and 50r/4–6 show holes in the parchment.

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