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Death and remembrance: the Durham *Liber Vitæ*¹

In a late sixteenth-century description of the *Rites and Customes* of the monastic church of Durham before the Dissolution, there is the following passage:

There did lye on the high altar an excellent fine booke verye richly covered with gold and silver conteininge the names of all the benefactors towards St Cuthberts church from the first originall foundation thereof, the verye letters for the most part beinge all gilded as is apparent in the said booke till this day the layinge that booke on the high altar did show how highly they esteemed their founders and benefactors, and the dayly and quotidian remembrance they had of them in the time of masse and divine service did argue not onely their gratitude, but also a most divine and charitable affection to the soules of their benefactors as well dead as livinge, which booke is as yett extant declaringe the s[ai]d use in the inscription thereof.²

The book referred to in the description of 1593 is the Durham *Liber Vitæ*, now British Library Cotton Manuscript, Domitian vii.³ It is bound in a post-medieval red leather

¹ This paper was originally written for delivery at Keio University in Tokyo and at an Anglo-Japanese conference held at Kumamoto University in March 2001. The aim of the colloquium was to compare the medieval documents of Japan and England. The present paper was presented in a session on records of commemoration. Financial support was provided by the Research Committee of the School of History and Archaeology at Cardiff University and a British Academy Overseas Conference Grant. I would like to thank Professor Hirokazu Tsurushima of Kumamoto University for his invitation to the Anglo-Japanese colloquium and Professor Kenji Yoshitake for his hospitality at Keio University. I would also like to express my thanks to Ann Williams, David Roffe and Stephen Church, the other members of the 'British delegation' to the Anglo-Japanese colloquium for their comments on the original paper and, not least, for their fellowship on the journey. The forthcoming appearance of the Japanese version of the text has prompted this publication of the original paper. It remains as originally delivered, although its subject, the Durham *Liber Vitæ* (British Library, Cotton MS Domitian vii) has recently been the focus of a British Academy-funded colloquium and series of seminars. The Durham *Liber Vitæ* project resulted in the publication of a volume of collected essays, *The Durham Liber Vitæ and its Context*, edited by David Rollason, A.J. Piper, Margaret Harvey, and Lynda Rollason (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2004). In addition, David and Lynda Rollason's edition of the Durham *Liber Vitæ*, including a digital facsimile on CD-Rom, is forthcoming in 2007. Further information can be found at www.dlv.org.uk.

² J.T. Fowler (ed.), *Rites of Durham, being a description or brief declaration of all the ancient monuments, rites and customs belonging or being within the monastical church of Durham before the suppression. Written, 1593, Surtees Society*, 107 (1902), pp. 16–17.

³ J. Planta, *A Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Cottonian Library in the British Museum* (London: British Museum, 1802), pp. 572–3.

binding, which bears little resemblance to the highly ornate covering described in the passage above. The codex proper is composed of eighty-six parchment folios, approximately 20.5 x 14.2 cm, although a few are slightly smaller and some have been trimmed close, probably when rebound in the seventeenth century.⁴ The *Liber Vitæ* text, which begins on folio 15 *recto*, is preceded by chapters from the four Gospels in a hand of the late eleventh or twelfth century.⁵ A full codicological investigation of the manuscript has not been possible and so the relationship of these Gospel folios to the main body of the text is unclear. It should be noted, however, that the only other surviving English *Libri Vitæ*, those from Thorney Abbey (British Library Additional Manuscript 40,000) and from the New Minster at Winchester (British Library, Stowe MS 944), are both associated with Gospel texts. As we shall see, the presence of a copy of the Gospels was essential in the ritual creating the bond of confraternity between a lay person and the monastic community.⁶

The manuscript contains a number of items of interest, although it was originally a list of personal names, probably produced in one of the monastic houses of ninth-century Northumbria. This list of names was written in three, well-arranged columns on each side of the folio. The fact that the gold lettering, mentioned in 1593, is strikingly apparent seems to confirm the identity of this manuscript, although the silver ink has faded or bled into the parchment over the centuries.⁷ Gold ink was reserved for particularly prestigious medieval manuscripts, as is evident in the

⁴ There are two *memoranda* concerning the seventeenth-century binding process on folios found at the beginning and end of the text, presumably added at the time. References here are given to the more accurate pencil foliation, rather than to the ink numbers visible in the facsimile prepared by Macbeth for the *Surtees Society* edition (see below).

⁵ The initials of each Gospel are simply decorated in red ink or, in the case of the capital 'I' at the beginning of Mark's Gospel, with a crude surround of blue-green; f. 6^r. Matthew (ff. 4^r-5^v), I, 1-III, 4; Mark (6^r-8^v), I, 1-III, 8 and XVI, 1-7; Luke (9^r-11^v), I, 1-II, 20; John (12^r-14^v), I, 1-14, XIII, 1-35, XIV, 23-XVI-6.

⁶ See below, p. 10.

deservedly celebrated Lindisfarne Gospels.⁸ The original list of names arranged according to ecclesiastical or secular status was executed in one sustained scribal endeavour, and there was a regularity and order which was generally obscured as additions were made from the tenth century onwards.⁹ The original ninth-century lists occupy most of the folios between 15^r and 45^r, finally giving out on folio 45^r and followed, significantly, by a coherent list of the bishops and monks of the Benedictine Cathedral Priory of Durham, compiled in the early twelfth century.¹⁰ It was once thought that this original list of names represented the bishops, abbots, monks, and lay associates of the community of Lindisfarne, famous as the home of Cuthbert (d. 687), the most prominent of the northern English medieval saints. However, more recently it has been suggested that perhaps the original text is associated in fact with the houses of Monkwearmouth and Jarrow, a reassessment which raises some interesting questions about the circumstances surrounding the acquisition of the text and the relationship between these monasteries and the Community of St Cuthbert.¹¹

The Durham *Liber Vitae* is one of only three such texts to survive from English monasteries, although it is reasonable to suppose that commemorative documents

⁷ On the writing of manuscripts in gold and silver ink see Bernhard Bischoff, *Latin Palaeography. Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 17 and 233.

⁸ British Library, Cotton MS Nero D iv.

⁹ Planta observed *sed posteris temporibus non tanta cura et methodo conscripta* [‘but in later times not written with such care and method’]. Planta, *Catalogue*, pp. 572–3.

¹⁰ This early twelfth-century list of monks has been discussed by A.J. Piper, ‘The Early Lists and Obits of the Durham Monks’, in David Rollason (ed.), *Symeon of Durham, Historian of Durham and the North* (Stamford: Shaun Tyas, 1998), pp. 161–201; also see below.

¹¹ See J. Gerchow, ‘Die Gedenküberlieferung der Angelsachsen’, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Alberts-Ludwigs-Universität, Freiburg, 1987, pp. 140–93, cited in Michelle P. Brown, ‘The Lindisfarne Scriptorium from the late seventh century to the early ninth century’, in Gerald Bonner, Clare Stancliffe, and David Rollason (eds), *St Cuthbert, His Cult and Community to AD 1200* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1989), pp. 151–63, and 162, n. 59; Jan Gerchow, *Die Gedenküberlieferung der Angelsachsen mit einem Katalog der Libri Vitae und Necrologien* (Arbeiten zur Frühmittelalterforschung: Schriftenreihe des Instituts für Frühmittelalterforschung der Universität Münster 20; Berlin and New York, 1988).

were to be found in most, if not all, medieval houses.¹² The other English examples, for the abbeys of Thorney in Cambridgeshire and New Minster, Winchester in Hampshire, represent a class of memorial document which has received considerable attention from German and French scholars in the last thirty years or so. British and Japanese scholars, most notably the late Cecily Clark, who produced a number of articles concerning the Thorney *Liber Vitæ*, Professor John Moore, who has exploited the demographic information contained within the Thorney and New Minster (Winchester) texts, and Professor Hirokazu Tsurushima, who has examined Rochester cathedral's *Textus Roffensis* for its material on fraternity agreements, have begun to explore the potential of these texts as sources for the investigation of a variety of questions about medieval monastic communities and their contacts, both with each other, and with the secular world around them.

It is the intention here to describe briefly the contents of the Durham *Liber Vitæ*, the arrangement of the entries, and their chronological stratification. The liturgical function of the *Liber Vitæ* will also be examined, and the text related to other memorial documents produced by medieval monastic churches. The avenues of research opened up in the recent historiography of these records will be explored with the Durham material. Finally, by examining in some detail a number of blocks of name entries, and other *memoranda*, which can be dated to the late eleventh century or to the first decades of the twelfth, the significance of one period of scribal activity in the manuscript will be assessed. Although some additions had clearly been made to the original ninth-century lists between the period of their compilation and the closing

¹² For example, there was a *Liber commemorationum* at Abingdon Abbey. See Emma Cownie, *Religious Patronage in Anglo-Norman England, 1066–1135* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1998), p. 159 and n. 47.

years of the eleventh century, there seems to be ample evidence that concerted efforts were made around the year 1100 to bring the Durham *Liber Vitæ* out of retirement.

The Durham *Liber Vitæ* has received relatively little attention from modern scholars.¹³ This is not, however, because the manuscript is unknown. Indeed the text was edited by James Stevenson for the *Surtees Society* as long ago as 1841.¹⁴ Stevenson's edition makes no real attempt to reproduce the layout of the original manuscript, so that it is difficult to see evidence of the original palaeographical connections between the names. Instead of trying to replicate in print the sometimes columnar, sometimes horizontal arrangements of the name-lists, Stevenson decided to use a three-column layout for the whole, thereby imposing a sense of order on the text not evident in the original.¹⁵ In addition, Stevenson's identification and dating of the various scribal hands was rudimentary and in places misleading. In his defence, it should be noted that modern scholars have found that the only answer to such editorial problems has been to provide photographic reproductions of the manuscripts in question. This option was not open to Stevenson in 1841, but in 1923, the *Surtees Society* once again undertook to produce an edition of the text. Under the editorship of the Society's then secretary, Alexander Hamilton Thompson, a collotype facsimile of the original manuscript was produced. Thompson stated in his preface that it was the intention to give, in a subsequent volume:

¹³ See n. 1 above.

¹⁴ James Stevenson (ed.), *Liber Vitæ Ecclesiæ Dunelmensis*, *Surtees Society*, 13 (1841). The Surtees Society was established in 1834 in honour of Robert Surtees of Mainsforth, the historian of County Durham. Its mission was to publish materials, 'illustrative of the intellectual, the moral, the religious, and the social condition of those parts of England and Scotland included on the east between the Humber and the Firth of Forth, and on the west between the Mersey and the Clyde, a region which constituted the ancient kingdom of Northumbria.' (*The Surtees Society. Report for the Year MCMXXII*, p. 5, appended to Thompson's edition of the Durham *Liber Vitæ*.) Cf. N.J. Tringham, 'County Durham', in C.R.J. Currie and C.P. Lewis (eds), *A Guide to the English County Histories* (Stroud: Sutton, 1994), pp. 132–41.

¹⁵ For a guide to the contents of the manuscript and the arrangement of the name lists and other *memoranda* see the 'Appendix' to this paper.

a complete and accurate text, with an introduction upon the history and palaeography of the MS. by Mr J.A. Herbert of the Department of MSS. in the British Museum. These will be supplemented by an alphabetical index of the names included in the text, with brief notes identifying, as far as possible, their bearers.¹⁶

Despite the fact that Thompson went on to thank, in anticipation of their collaboration, H.H.E. Craster and William Farrer, two scholars eminent in the medieval prosopography of the North of England, this second volume never appeared. The 1923 facsimile itself is sometimes difficult to read and does not do justice to the brilliance of the gold lettering of the original manuscript's list of names. Although the codex and its contents have been the subject of renewed interest in recent years, it has still received less attention than the other extant English *Liber Vitæ*.¹⁷

The lists of names occupy the majority of the Durham *Liber Vitæ* manuscript and these names represent the men and women who were liturgically commemorated by the community, which served the shrine of St Cuthbert. Even if we accept that the original ninth-century list is to be associated with the monasteries of Jarrow and Monkwearmouth, the fact that early in the eleventh century it was in the possession of the *congregatio sancti Cuthberti* implies that the names recorded in that early list had a meaningful place in the liturgical commemorative practices of the Church of Durham.¹⁸ The acquisition of the *Liber Vitæ* from another religious corporation may

¹⁶ A. Hamilton Thompson (ed.), *Liber Vitæ Ecclesiae Dunelmensis. A Collotype facsimile of the original Manuscript, with introductory essays and notes*, vol. I, *Surtees Society*, 136 (1923), 'Preface'. Thompson states that Dr Henry Sweet printed a version of the early lists in his *The Oldest English Texts*, which noted their linguistic and philological interest.

¹⁷ See the work of Gerchow cited above, n. 11.

¹⁸ For the evidence suggesting that the manuscript was in the possession of the *congregatio sancti Cuthberti* in the early eleventh century see BL, Cotton MS, Domitian vii, f. 47^v, where a *memorandum* records the grant of estates in the North Riding of Yorkshire to St Cuthbert by earl Thured; cf. no. 1660 in P.H. Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters, an annotated list and bibliography* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1968). Another *memorandum* records the gift of Escombe by an Earl Northman (Sawyer, no. 1659) and that of Norton by Ulfcytel Osulfes *sunu* (Sawyer, no. 1661). Finally, there is the record of a manumission discussed in H.H.E. Craster, 'Some Anglo-Saxon records of the see of Durham', *Archæologia Æliana*, 4th series, I (1925), pp. 189–98.

be redolent of some otherwise hidden relationship between the institutions, perhaps indicating the demise of Jarrow-Monkwearmouth or the aggressive acquisitiveness of the Church of St Cuthbert.

There is a chronological stratification of the name lists, with the strata identifiable largely on palaeographical grounds. The earliest chronological layer, it has already been argued, is the ninth-century list of names, which occupies folios 15^r to 45^r. Over this are layered individual names or blocks of entries, ranging in date from the early tenth century to the eve of the suppression of the monastery in the reign of Henry VIII. Some of these later entries are dated. For example, on folio 83^r, there is the rather surprising *memorandum*:

anno domini 1431 obiit Johannes Dukett, de Softly, dictus senex; vixit enim annis cxxxi et septem, excepto spatio inter Purificationem B Mariæ et festum Bartholomæi apostoli.

[in the year 1431 John Dukett of Softly died; he had lived 127 years less the period between the Purification of the Blessed Mary (2 February) and the Feast of Bartholomew the Apostle (24 August).]¹⁹

Unfortunately, even for the later medieval entries, such precise dating is rarely possible, and one is forced to rely on palaeographical evidence or, occasionally, the positive identification of the individuals involved, to determine the deposition of the various layers of entries.²⁰ What this evidence does suggest, however, is that the entries in the Durham *Liber Vitæ* were made in two ways: either in discrete, chronologically identifiable campaigns of scribal activity, or within a more organic process, whereby individual entries accumulated gradually over time.²¹ In addition, it

¹⁹ BL, Cotton MS, Domitian vii, f. 83^r; Stevenson (ed.), *Liber Vitæ*, p. 134. The *memorandum* is followed by a number of entries giving the names of the Dukett family. Folio 81^r is headed by the date 1493; Stevenson (ed.), *Liber Vitæ*, p. 130.

²⁰ An early twelfth-century memorandum on f. 50^v records the laying of the foundations of the new cathedral at Durham on 11 August 1093.

²¹ For an example of several layers of additions to the ninth-century list, see ff. 19^{r-v} and 26^r.

is clear that the text was in use right up until the demise of the monastic institution whose liturgical and commemorative practices it represented.

The entries in the original ninth-century list in the Durham *Liber Vitæ* are arranged under a series of headings which reflect the ecclesiastical or secular status of the individuals concerned. These divisions are:

Nomina regum vel ducum (f. 15^r), Nomina reginarum vel abbatissarum (f. 16^r), Nomina anchoritam (f. 18^r), Nomina abbatum gradus presbyteratus (f. 18^v), Nomina abbatum gradus diaconatus (f. 19^v), Nomina abbatum (f. 20^r), Nomina presbyterorum (f. 21^v), Nomina diaconorum (f. 26^r), Nomina clericorum (f. 27^r) Nomina monachorum (f. 37^r).

It seems that attempts were made to add names under the appropriate headings, but generally speaking as time went by and vacant space in the manuscript became less plentiful, the earlier layout was superseded by a more haphazard, not to say chaotic, arrangement. The one exception to this is the twelfth-century introduction of a new section headed *Nomina monachorum ad succurrendum*, on folio 61^r. This records the names of laymen who, either in the infirmity of an illness or old age, were allowed to receive the monastic habit. How long this new division was adhered to is uncertain, as the names of wives and daughters appear alongside those of the *monachi ad succurrendum*. Otherwise, later scribes seem for the most part to have simply added individual names or blocks of entries where they could. Sometimes, as for example on folio 45 *recto-verso*, there was an attempt to arrange the names in neat columns, whereas on other folios, blocks of names were entered in horizontal lists, or crammed into the margins at the top, side or bottom of the page. In the later entries there is little

decoration to compare with the gold and silver lettering of the ninth-century campaign, but here and there red ink has been used to highlight some names.²²

The original liturgical function of the Durham manuscript, like all *Libri Vitæ*, was to record the names of the members of its ecclesiastical community, but eventually this was extended to encompass all those men and women, living or dead, who merited commemoration and intercession, either during the celebration of the daily mass, or on the anniversaries of their deaths. The preface to the New Minster (Winchester) or ‘Hyde’ *Liber Vitæ* explains the liturgical use of the name lists:

in befitting order there follow the names of brethren, monks, admitted members and benefactors alive and departed, [so that] by the temporal record of this writing they may be written in the page of the Book of Life...for a daily remembrance in celebrating of the mass or the singing of the Psalter, the names to be presented daily by the sub-deacon before the altar at matins or the principal mass, and recited, as far as time will permit, in the presence of the Almighty; and afterwards the chief priest who celebrates may commend them most humbly to Almighty God for their advancement in glory according to their merits.²³

The name, ‘Liber vitæ’, was a reference to the ‘Book of Life’ brought out at the Last Judgement, wherein all the names of the saved were listed. For example, in the *Revelation of St John the Divine*, it is written:

²² Cotton MS Domitian vii, ff. 25^v; cf. 46^v and 58^r. On f. 49^r the first five names were added alternately in red and green ink, whereas the list of monks *ad succurrendum* seems to bear witness to an attempt to decorate the initials of each name.

²³ See Walter de Gray Birch (ed.), *Liber Vitæ; Register and Martyrology of New Minster and Hyde Abbey, Winchester* (Winchester: Hampshire Record Society, 1892), pp. 11–12, translated by J.S. Moore in ‘Prosopographical problems of English *Libri Vitæ*’, in K.S.B. Keats-Rohan (ed.), *Family Trees and the Roots of Politics. The prosopography of Britain and France from the tenth to the twelfth century* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1997), pp. 165–88 at 167.

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the *book of life*: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works.²⁴

Therefore, medieval *Libri Vitæ* originally made no distinction between the names of the living and dead, since according to the theological ideas of the early medieval church they were joined across the mortal divide as brothers and sisters in the faith, members of the same liturgical community.²⁵ As ideas promoting the efficacy of suffrages for the dead gained ground, other forms of commemorative documents aimed specifically at keeping the memory of the faithful departed appeared. These were the more specialised *Libri commemorationum*, obituaries, and necrologies.²⁶ Historians of the liturgical commemorative practices of the early medieval church have argued for a steady evolution of these documents, from the *Libri Vitæ*, where the names of the living and dead occur side by side, to the necrologies and obituaries, which arranged the names of the deceased in calendar form, according to the date of their death. Necrologies and obituaries developed from the tendency of religious communities to make agreements with other such institutions to remember each others' living and dead brethren in their liturgies. Originally, lists of names in the form of mortuary rolls were circulated between monasteries joined in such prayer unions and revised to include the notices of the recently deceased. The *Libri confraternitatum* or 'confraternity books', which recorded arrangements between religious communities whereby they undertook to commemorate each others' living brethren in their daily rituals, grew from a similar impulse. Spiritual benefits were

²⁴ King James Bible, *Revelation*, XX, 12.

²⁵ On the development of the *Liber Vitæ* from diptychs kept at the altar, recording, on one side, the living and on the other, the dead, see Thompson, *Liber Vitæ*, Introduction, p. x.

²⁶ R.C. van Caenegem, *Guide to the Sources of Medieval History* (Amsterdam and Oxford: North Holland Publishing Company, 1978), pp. 102–3.

also extended to deceased brethren and, eventually, lay men and women, especially patrons, who were accorded the privilege of becoming *confratres* and *consorores* of the church in question. In the latter cases ecclesiastical communities agreed to associate these lay men and women in their liturgical practices, thus, it was hoped, easing the passage of their souls towards salvation in the life to come.²⁷ We are fortunate in having a detailed description of the ceremony of admission to confraternity from late eleventh-century England. Archbishop Lanfranc (1070–89) produced a series of monastic constitutions for the community serving Christ Church Cathedral, Canterbury, among which were the provisions relating to the admission of lay men and women to confraternity. After describing the reception of fellow monks, Lanfranc offers the following:

If the applicant be a secular, and a distinguished person, he shall sit before or by the abbot, and when his request has been made known to the brethren he shall receive fellowship by taking into his hand a book of the gospels. Then he shall go round receiving the kiss of peace, which is not given when the applicant is a woman.²⁸

Those who were to receive confraternity were led by the guest-master of the monastery into the chapter house, where the ceremony, which marked the reception of the *confrater* or *consoror* into the full liturgical benefits of membership of the community, took place.²⁹ It is worth noting the essential role played here by a copy of the Gospels in the reception of the laity, especially given the fact that they are found in the Durham *Liber Vitæ* manuscript. Monks, on the other hand, were received into

²⁷ Megan McLaughlin, *Consorting with Saints. Prayer for the Dead in Early Medieval France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994).

²⁸ David Knowles (ed. and trans.), *The Monastic Constitutions of Lanfranc* (London: Nelson's Medieval Texts, 1951; revised edition by C.N.L. Brooke, Oxford: Oxford Medieval Texts, 2002), pp. 170–1.

²⁹ Durham, Dean and Chapter, Cartuarium Vetus, [CV], f. 95^v: Charter of Ralph fitz Gilbert given in alms *pro b[e]n[e]ficiis [et] orat[i]onib[us] quas p[re]fati monachi nob[is] et[er]nalit[er] concesser[un]t. Et pro societate [et] fraternitate quam in capit[u]lo eor[um] recepim[us].*

confraternity using a copy of the Rule of St Benedict.³⁰ We can be fairly confident that this was the format of the ceremony of admission to confraternity in the Church of Durham in the early twelfth century, as one of the manuscripts given to the monks by Bishop William of Saint-Calais in the early 1090s (Durham, Dean and Chapter Library MS B.IV.24) contained a copy of Lanfranc's *Monastic Constitutions*.

The Durham text makes explicit the theological connection between the inscription of the names of the faithful in the earthly and heavenly *Libri Vitæ*. For example, on folio 26^v, it contains the prayer:

Deprecamur te, Domine, sancte Pater, per Ieshum Christum filium tuum in spiritu sancto ut eorum nomina sint scripta in libro vitæ. [We ask you, Lord, Holy Father, through Jesus Christ your son, in the Holy Spirit, that their names be written in the 'Book of Life'.]³¹

However, it also reproduces elements of the other categories of commemorative document noted above. It seems that, certainly from the early twelfth century and perhaps earlier, attempts were made to record the deaths of individuals named in the lists, presumably soon after they occurred. For example, a number of obit marks [Ø] appear against the names of monks in the list of the late eleventh and early twelfth-century community, which begins on folio 45^r.³² There are also, as we have seen, *memoranda* recording individual obits. The death of the hermit Godric of Finchale in 1170 is noted on folio 45^v.³³ At the same time the monks of Durham were recording the deaths of their brothers and benefactors in specialised obituaries, such as that contained in the Durham Cantor's Book (Durham, Dean and Chapter Library, MS

³⁰ Knowles (ed. and trans.), *Monastic Constitutions*, pp. 170–1.

³¹ Stevenson (ed.), *Liber Vitæ*, p. 18. Cf. early twelfth-century entry on f. 51 (Stevenson [ed.], *Liber Vitæ*, p. 68): *Eadwine munuc servus dei et sancti Cuthberti sit nomen eius in libro vitæ et Eadmund munuc servus dei et sancti Cuthberti sit nomen eius in libro vitæ*.

³² Discussed by Piper, 'Early Lists and Obits', p. 167.

³³ *Godricus heremita et monachus: hic apud Finchale per annos fere LX vitam heremiticam ducens, anno ab incarnatione Domini MCLXXo xii kal' Junii obdormivit in Domino*. Stevenson (ed.), *Liber Vitæ*, p. 47. See also the reference to the death of John Dukett above.

B.IV. 24).³⁴ In addition, records of confraternity with other religious institutions, as well as with individual monks and clerics, were recorded in the *Liber Vitæ* (see below).

The monks of Durham also ensured that copies of other important documents found their way into the manuscript. For example, there is an early twelfth-century entry purporting to be the foundation charter of the Benedictine monastery established at Durham by Bishop William of Saint-Calais in 1083, together with copies of two royal charters from William I, and one from William Rufus granting estates in Yorkshire to St Cuthbert.³⁵ There is also an eleventh-century manumission in Old English, the only such document to survive for Northumbria in this period.³⁶ Among these miscellaneous entries, important in showing Durham's interests in the kingdom of the Scots, is the report of a meeting between Thurstan, archbishop of York, Rannulf, bishop of Durham, Robert, bishop of St Andrews, John, bishop of Glasgow, and Gosfrid, abbot of St Albans at Kelso in 1127, to decide on episcopal jurisdiction over Durham's possessions in Lothian.³⁷ These are documents which one would later expect to find in an episcopal register, cartulary, or monastic chronicle, and they

³⁴ Piper, 'Early Lists and Obits', pp. 161–201, especially pp. 186–201, Appendix, 'The Obits entered in DCL MS B.IV.24'. Cf. Robin Fleming, 'Christchurch's sisters and brothers: An edition and discussion of Canterbury Obituary lists', in Marc A. Meyer (ed.), *The Culture of Christendom. Essays in Medieval History in Commemoration of Denis L.T. Bethell* (London: Hambledon Press, 1993), pp. 115–53.

³⁵ [William of Saint-Calais], Domitian vii, ff. 53^r–54^r, Stevenson (ed.), *Liber Vitæ*, pp. 74–6; Hilary S. Offler (ed.), *Durham Episcopal Charters, 1071–1152*, *Surtees Society*, 179 (1968), no. *3, pp. 6–15; [William I], Domitian vii, f. 54^v, Stevenson (ed.), *Liber Vitæ*, p. 76, see David Bates (ed.), *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum: The Acta of William I (1066–1087)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), nos. 112, 113, pp. 402–3; [William Rufus], Domitian vii, f. 54^v–55^r, Stevenson (ed.), *Liber Vitæ*, pp. 76–7, cf. H.W.C. Davis (ed.), *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, I (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1913), no. 318, p. 83. Cf. David Bates, 'The forged charters of William the Conqueror and Bishop William of Saint-Calais', in David Rollason, Margaret Harvey, and Michael Prestwich (eds), *Anglo-Norman Durham, 1093–1193* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1994), pp. 111–24.

³⁶ Domitian vii, f. 47^r, Stevenson (ed.), *Liber Vitæ*, p. 56, translated in Craster, 'Some Anglo-Saxon records', p. 189. On the scribe who wrote the manumission, see Michael Gullick, 'The Scribes of the Durham Cantor's Book (Durham, Dean and Chapter Library, MS B.IV.24) and the Durham Martyrology Scribe', in David Rollason, Margaret Harvey, and Michael Prestwich (eds), *Anglo-Norman Durham, 1093–1193* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1994), pp. 93–109 at 97.

³⁷ Domitian vii, f. 48^r and 51^r, Stevenson (ed.), *Liber Vitæ*, pp. 59 and 67.

might at first appear to be out of place in a liturgical text.³⁸ The monks of Durham, however, felt that it was appropriate to record such items in what was in essence a book of commemoration, as each of these acts directly or indirectly affected the monastic community at Durham and so deserved a place in the memory of the convent alongside the names of their benefactors. The Durham *Liber Vitæ* should not be assigned too narrowly therefore, i.e. to only one category of record, and it is probably the fact that it has been considered purely a liturgical text which has led to its comparative neglect.

Modern historians have examined medieval commemorative documents from a number of perspectives. The work of the late Cecily Clark on the Thorney Abbey *Liber Vitæ* demonstrates the onomastic and etymological value of such texts for the study of medieval naming patterns. As an anthroponymist, Clark was interested in the ethnic and territorial affinities of those mentioned in the Thorney *Liber* as revealed in their personal nomenclature. From an analysis of the toponymic elements in these names, she drew attention to the ‘catchment area’ of Thorney Abbey, which reflected the monks’ own landholding interests as well as those of the lay men and women who chose to associate themselves with the abbey, and whose affiliations could not always simply be explained in tenurial terms.³⁹ She also interrogated the text in her search for English cultural patterns and asked whether the Thorney *Liber* revealed any specific traditions, linguistic or otherwise, which were being preserved and transmitted by the monks. In the context of the period after the Norman Conquest this is an important avenue of investigation, especially with regard to the survival (or otherwise) of Anglo-Saxon cultural values in the face of the French settlement, which followed

³⁸ H.H.E. Craster, ‘A Contemporary record of the pontificate of Ranulf Flambard’, *Archæologia Æliana*, 4th series, vii (1930), pp. 33–56.

William the Conqueror's victory at Hastings. Clark examined the list of Thorney Abbey's own monks, which was compiled in the early twelfth century but incorporating earlier material. Collating these references with other Thorney Abbey documents, particularly the unpublished early fourteenth-century cartulary, she examined the social and geographical provenance of these monks.⁴⁰ She pointed to the significant presence of Scandinavian as well as Old English names, the former consistent with recruitment of monks from an East Midlands catchment area, and, especially after 1066, the appearance of increasing numbers of continental toponyms. The appointment of abbots from Northern France, such as the Fleming Fulcard and then Gunter of Le Mans (c. 1085–1112), raises the question of how far English traditions were holding their own when these immigrants brought significant changes, such as the introduction of the customs of Marmoutier. Clark concluded that there was a certain amount of English self-confidence, evident for example in the community's treatment of foreign name material which she saw as indicative of the resilient 'Englishness' of the community.⁴¹ So, the English *Libri Vitae* offer valuable material for a discussion of the impact of the post-Conquest continental settlement on the cultural traditions of Anglo-Saxon society.

Clark's work on the Thorney *Liber Vitae* was eagerly seized upon by Professor John Moore, who recognised, as German scholars had done, the possibilities of these texts as sources for medieval prosopography. In particular, Moore, approaching the material from the viewpoint of the socio-economic historian, has been interested in the demographic information embedded in the name lists. When lay men and women

³⁹ Cecily Clark, 'The *Liber Vitae* of Thorney Abbey and its Catchment area', *Nomina*, ix (1985), pp. 53–72.

⁴⁰ Cecily Clark, 'A Witness to Post-Conquest English Cultural Patterns: The *Liber Vitae* of Thorney Abbey', in A.M. Simon-Vandenberghe (ed.), *Studies in Honour of René Derolez* (Gent: Seminarie voor Engelse en Oud-Germaanse Taalkunde, RUG, 1987), pp. 73–85.

were received into confraternity with the liturgical community or associated themselves with ecclesiastical institutions in other ways, their names were often recorded together with those of their immediate family. For example, the association of the principal donor of a gift to a monastery with the members of his or her family, whether living or dead, occurs time and again in the charters recording their benefactions. The reason for a gift might be given as, '*pro salute animæ meæ et omnium antecessorum et hereditorum meorum*' ('for the salvation of my soul and those of all my ancestors and heirs'), thus bringing the consideration of past and future generations into the present act. Essentially, Moore's work on reconstructing these family groups involves detailed prosopographical analysis, which depends on positively identifying the individuals named in the text.⁴² Such detailed examination of the evidence allows the data to be interrogated from various points of view: the demographic implications of the size of each family group, the gender ratio of family members, the prevalence of intermarriage between the native English and Continental immigrants, and the frequency of clerical marriage in the post-Gregorian reform era are just some of the possible avenues of research that are opened up by such analysis.⁴³ Sometimes the families of the monks themselves become historically visible, providing an insight into the social backgrounds and connections of members of religious communities, as well as underlining the family effort that was involved in most monastic professions. Professor Tsurushima has found illuminating evidence on family involvement in monastic professions in his study of the Fraternity of Rochester

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 79–82.

⁴² J.S. Moore, 'Prosopographical problems', pp. 165–88; *idem.*, 'Family-Entries in English *Libri Vitæ*, c. 1050 to c. 1530', Part I, *Nomina*, xvi (1992–3), pp. 99–128; Part II, *Nomina*, xviii (1995), pp. 77–117.

⁴³ J.S. Moore, 'The Anglo-Norman family: Size and structure', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 14 (1992), pp. 153–96. Domitian vii, f. 46, line 10, *Turk' pr[es]b[yte]r, Ragnild uxor ei[us], Raulf fili[u]s ei[us]*.

Cathedral Priory around the year 1100.⁴⁴ In the Durham *Liber Vitæ* we have twelfth-century entries recording Everard, brother of William the monk (f. 47^r) and Agnes, the mother of William de Lintun, a monk of St Cuthbert (f. 48^v).

As well providing evidence of cultural patterns in the catchment areas dependent on the abbeys in question and allowing the historical demographer to reconstruct family groups, the blocks of entries in these *Libri Vitæ* are revealing of other associations, which might include, but also go beyond, bonds of kinship. In the last thirty years or so, German scholars, particularly Karl Schmid and Joachim Wollasch, heading research teams at the universities of Freiburg and Münster, have been editing commemorative texts with a view to understanding the structure and inter-relationships of the early medieval nobility, information not always provided by charters and chronicles.⁴⁵ In this case, the name lists in the *Libri Vitæ* are used to locate medieval individuals in the context of their social or institutional affiliations. For example, the Freiburg-Münster team has studied the composition of the various *Sippen*, or kin groups, which collectively formed the *Reichsaristokratie* of the Carolingian and Ottonian eras.⁴⁶ Therefore, behind these ‘cemeteries of names’, as the documents have been termed, lay significant groupings, which imparted social meaning and identity. Similarly, the social and institutional connections of the

⁴⁴ H. Tsurushima, ‘The Fraternity of Rochester Cathedral Priory about 1100’, *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 14 (1992), pp. 313–37.

⁴⁵ These volumes have appeared in *Monumenta Germaniæ Historica, Libri memoriales et necrologia, nova series* and include, for example, *Das Verbrüderungsbuch der Abtei Reichenau*, herausgegeben von J. Autenrieth, D. Geuenich und K. Schmid (1979) and *Die Totenbücher von Merseburg, Magdeburg und Lüneburg*, herausgegeben von Gerd Althoff und Joachim Wollasch (1983). For a critical evaluation of the earlier edition of the *Liber memorialis* of Remiremont and a discussion of these memorial documents in general see G. Constable, ‘Review article: The *Liber Memorialis* of Remiremont’, *Speculum*, xlvii (1972), pp. 261–77.

⁴⁶ For example Karl Schmid, ‘Über die Struktur des Adels im früheren Mittelalter’, *Jahrbuch für fränkische Landesforschung*, 19 (1959), pp. 1–23, translated as ‘The structure of the nobility in the earlier middle ages’, in T. Reuter (ed.), *The Medieval Nobility: Studies on the Ruling Classes of France and Germany from the Sixth to the Twelfth Century* (Amsterdam and Oxford: North Holland Publishing Company, 1979), pp. 37–59.

monastic communities themselves, reflecting their spiritual and secular interests as well as their *memoria*, or liturgical and historical self-awareness, have been examined.⁴⁷

The Durham manuscript has not yet received the level of scholarly attention that has been devoted to the *Libri Vitæ* of Thorney and Winchester, despite the fact that there is material in it which can provide the basis for research along the lines discussed above.⁴⁸ Judging by the onomastic and toponymic elements in the name lists, Durham's catchment area stretched the length of Britain as well as including men and women of continental origin. As has been noted above, present within the text are a large number of names and a few other *memoranda* relating to the kingdom of the Scots. In the late eleventh or early twelfth century, additions were made to the original ninth-century register headed *nomina regum vel ducum*, on folio 15^v. These additions give the names of the kings of England and Scotland together in one list:⁴⁹

Ædelstan rex, Adelred rex, Cnut rex, Ædward rex, Ædmund rex, Ædred rex, Suain rex, Ædgar rex, Harold rex, Guill[elmus] rex, Magtild regina, Guill[elmus] rex, Henric[us] rex, Magtild regina, Malcolm rex, Margareta regina, Dunacan rex, Ædgar rex, (and in a later scribal hand), Alexander rex, David rex, Melcolm rex, Will[elmus] rex.

The pivotal point of the list is the name of Matilda (*Magtild'*), wife of Henry I of England (1100–1135) and daughter of Malcolm III of Scots (1054/7–1093) and his wife Margaret, sister of Edgar Ætheling, and thus a representative of the Old English royal dynasty. Before Matilda, a list of the English kings is set out in a rather eccentric order, from Æthelstan to Henry I. Ælfred's name is missing, which is

⁴⁷ Jan Gerchow, 'Societas et Fraternitas. A report on a research project based at the Universities of Freiburg and Münster', *Nomina*, xii (1988–9), pp. 153–71. Cf. Otto Gerhard Oexle, 'Memoria und Memorialüberlieferung im früheren Mittelalter', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*, 10. Band (1976), pp. 70–95.

⁴⁸ See n. 1.

⁴⁹ On the dating of this list see Gullick, 'Scribes of the Durham Cantor's Book', p. 97, n. 15.

surprising, given the attempts made to associate the West Saxon king with the cult of St Cuthbert in the tenth century.⁵⁰ After Mathilda's name there is a list of Malcolm III and his wife Margaret and their immediate successors, Duncan and Ædgar. The names of Alexander I, David I, Malcolm IV, and William the Lion were added in a later scribal hand, probably towards the end of the twelfth century. Related to this commemoration of the Scots royal house and perhaps the direct reason for it is the *conventio* between the monks of St Cuthbert and Malcolm III, made in 1093, possibly on the occasion of the king's attendance at the laying of the foundations of the new cathedral of Durham in August of that year.⁵¹ According to the terms of this document, Malcolm III and his family were to be given significant liturgical privileges, despite the king's former hostility to the Church of St Cuthbert:

This is the covenant which the Convent of St Cuthbert promised to Malcolm, King of the Scots and to Queen Margaret and to their sons and daughters to keep for ever. Namely that, for the king and queen while they live they shall nourish every day one poor man; and also two poor men shall be kept for them on Thursday in Holy Week at the common Maunday, and a collect said at the litanies and at mass. Further that they both, in this life and the next, they and their sons and daughters shall be partakers in everything which is done for the service of God in the monastery of St Cuthbert, namely masses, psalms, charities, vigils, prayers and everything of this kind. And especially for the king and queen from the day of their death shall be repeated in the convent thirty full offices for the dead, and every day the *Verba Mea*. And every priest shall celebrate thirty masses:

⁵⁰ Luisella Simpson, 'The Alfred/St Cuthbert episode in the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*: its significance for mid tenth-century English history', in Gerald Bonner, Clare Stancliffe, and David Rollason (eds), *St Cuthbert, His Cult and Community to AD 1200* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1989), pp. 397–412.

⁵¹ MS Domitian vii, f. 52^v; Stevenson (ed.), *Liber Vitæ*, p. 73. Cf. G.W.S. Barrow, 'The Kings of Scotland and Durham', in David Rollason, Margaret Harvey, and Michael Prestwich (eds), *Anglo-Norman Durham, 1093–1193* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1994), pp. 311–23 at 313–14, where Barrow points out that the scribe who wrote the *conventio* also produced the charter of Duncan II which purports to date from 1094.

and each of the others shall sing ten psalters. And their anniversary shall be celebrated every year, as is King Ethelstan's.

It is worth noting that the anniversary of Malcolm and Margaret was to be celebrated as was Æthelstan's, making clear the link between the English and Scots royal houses through Mathilda.

The fact that Malcolm III, a notorious plunderer of St Cuthbert's possessions in Northumbria, was commemorated in this way, suggests that liturgical associations might cross, and subvert, political boundaries. The *conventio*, and the confraternity agreement which it records, might also be seen as marking the end of conflict between the monks of Durham and those whom they were receiving as brothers or sisters. As well as recording in some detail the Scots royal house there are numerous Scots names listed in the Durham *Liber Vitæ*. That the Scots were relatively frequent visitors to Durham in peacetime is also suggested by other sources, such as the charters issued on behalf of the monks of Durham and the collection of the miracles of St Cuthbert compiled by the monk, Reginald, in the later twelfth century.⁵² In terms of liturgical commemoration then, the community of St Cuthbert saw no reason to exclude the Scots kings or their subjects.⁵³ This is liturgical commemoration as a political act.

Other former enemies of the Church of St Cuthbert are also well represented in the Durham *Liber Vitæ*. The presence of large numbers of Scandinavian names

⁵² See A.C. Lawrie (ed.), *Early Scottish Charters prior to AD 1153* (Glasgow: James MacLehose and Sons, 1905) and J. Raine (ed.), *Reginaldi monachi Dunelmensis Libellus de admirandis Beati Cuthberti virtutibus quæ novellis patratæ sunt temporibus*, *Surtees Society*, 1 (1835). The earliest extant Scottish charters are preserved at Durham; see A.A.M. Duncan, 'Yes, the Earliest Scottish Charters', *Scottish Historical Review*, lxxviii (1999), pp. 1–35.

⁵³ A further note at the foot of MS Domitian vii, f. 16 r shows a good grasp of the descent of the Scots throne in the twelfth century, which passed on David I's death in 1153 to his grandson Malcolm IV; *David rex, Henric[us] comes fili[us] ei[us], Malconi[us] sc[ilicet] iunior rex Scotie fili[us] Henrici comiti, q[ui] fuit fili[us] David regis Scotie*.

reflects the ethnic characteristics of the Northern Danelaw.⁵⁴ A consolidated block of names, entered on folio 55^v in the early twelfth century by a scribe whose hand has been identified elsewhere in the Durham muniments, seems to refer to the Danish king Eiric Eiegod (1095–1103) and his household:

Eiric rex danorum, Botild regina, Tovi, Modera uxor Tovi, Alf, Sunapas, Thor Muntokes sune, Ulf Duft, Torkitell muli, Osbern, Eoltkill, Askill, Turkill, Walecho, Gerbrun.

Eiric had a reputation for Christian piety, visiting Rome during his reign, successfully promoting the cult of his brother Cnut (1080–6), and applying to the English monastery of Evesham for monks to help establish a monastic cathedral chapter at Odense. The connection with Evesham is interesting as that monastery also played a central role in the establishment of the Benedictine convent at Durham. It provided two of the three brethren who revitalised the monasteries at Jarrow and Monkwearmouth before they moved on to serve the shrine of St Cuthbert in 1083.⁵⁵ King Eiric was then a worthy candidate for a place in the Durham *Liber Vitæ*, and it would be interesting to discover whether this block of names represents a pilgrimage of the Danish royal family to Durham, or whether their names were entered by proxy. Either way, it gives us good evidence of the wide range of Durham's interests and its geographically extensive catchment area.⁵⁶

The Durham *Liber Vitæ* also provides many examples of groups or blocks of names, which allow the reconstruction of family groups and other forms of association. These blocks of names record formal grants of confraternity to the laity,

⁵⁴ See for example the family groups on f. 46^r.

⁵⁵ William M. Aird, *St Cuthbert and the Normans, The Church of Durham, 1071–1153* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1998), pp. 131–37.

⁵⁶ Michael Gullick identified the scribal hand of this particular name list and suggested that the king referred to is Eiric (1095–1103); see 'Scribes of the Durham Cantor's Book', p. 97. Cf. Lesley Abrams, 'The Anglo-Saxons and the Christianization of Scandinavia', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 24 (1995), pp. 213–49 at 238–9.

as in the case of the monks' powerful neighbour in Yorkshire, Ilbert de Lacy, lord of Pontefract, where the *memorandum* is explicit:

Ilbertus de Laceio, Hathewis sua uxor, Rodbertus et Hugo filii eorum; *pro quibus fiet sicut pro monacho in conventu* [‘for whom it shall be as for a monk in the convent.’]⁵⁷

As well as containing notices of local Durham and Northumberland families, the *Liber Vitæ* contains figures of national importance. Recorded here are the names of *Magister* Herbert of Bosham, clerk of St Thomas the archbishop, and the satirist and historian, Walter Map.⁵⁸ At the foot of folio 25 *verso*, there are listed, in a scribal hand of the late twelfth century:

Rannulfus de Glanvile, et uxor eius Berta, Matillis, Amabilis, Helewisa, Mabilia filie eorum et Berct, Osbertus, Rogerius, Willelmus, Reinerius, Gaufridus, Rogerius, Merieduc and Rodbertus.⁵⁹

This would seem to represent Rannulf, his wife and his daughters, and perhaps his sons-in-law, or members of his wider *familia*, or household. Here, there is scope for collating this name list from the *Liber Vitæ* with the evidence of cartularies and the records of central government, carefully assembled by Richard Mortimer. The entry of the Glanville family into the Durham *Liber Vitæ* may have been during Rannulf's tenure of the shrievalty of Yorkshire (1163–70), or possibly after his return to favour at Henry II's court after 1173.⁶⁰ Certainly his activity in the North of England would provide a context for his entry into the confraternity of the Church of St Cuthbert.

Whether this family group visited St Cuthbert's shrine *en masse* or an individual

⁵⁷ MS Domitian vii, f. 52^v; Stevenson (ed.), *Liber Vitæ*, p. 73. Wilfred E. Wightman, *The Lacy Family in England and Normandy, 1066–1194* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), p. 61.

⁵⁸ MS Domitian vii, f. 26^v.

⁵⁹ R. Mortimer, ‘The Family of Rannulf de Glanville’, *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 54 (1981), pp. 1–16. The identification of Rannulf's sons-in-law is tenuous, given that there are no toponyms present, however, Matilda (Matillis?) married a William (d'Auverville), and Helewisa a Robert (fitz Ralph). Perhaps Amabilis and Mabilia were one and the same person through some scribal

family member attended on their behalf is not known, but it does suggest a family interested in establishing a relationship with the monks of Durham, which was probably as much political as spiritual. Many other entries clearly show family groups, but there is often no toponym to aid the identification of the individuals concerned.⁶¹ There is plenty of material here for the anthroponymist to analyse, as well as evidence of cultural assimilation and intermarriage between native Northumbrians and continental immigrants.

The presence of large numbers of women's names in the lists provides a useful corrective to St Cuthbert's reputation for misogyny. According to the early twelfth-century historian Symeon of Durham, women who tried to cross the boundaries of the precincts of the cathedral or any of the churches dedicated to Cuthbert were often struck down by the saint.⁶² Symeon and his fellow monks may have had their reasons for promoting such a misogynist attitude within their own community, but as far as the evidence of the Durham *Liber Vitæ* is concerned, it seems that women of all ages were welcomed into the liturgical family of the Church of St Cuthbert.⁶³ The mother of the monk William de Lintun has already been mentioned, and we have seen that names of the wife and daughters of Rannulf de Glanville were recorded. This

duplication. If not, then Mabilia is a hitherto unnoticed daughter. Berct may be Rannulf's *neptis* Bertha. See Mortimer, *art. cit.*, p. 9.

⁶⁰ Mortimer, 'Family of Rannulf', p. 10.

⁶¹ For example, MS, Domitian vii, f. 25^v: *Reginaldus et Æilhild uxor eius, et filii eius Hugo, Bernardus et filie eius Azcalot, Alice, Hauwas, Siwin, Matilidis, and Sitherisa.*

Stevenson (*Liber Vitæ*, p. 16) has 'Attalot' for Azcalot and his editorial decision to arrange the material in columns rather than in the horizontal blocks of the manuscript is misleading as to the relationships between the names. There seems no good reason to suppose that the list of Reginald's daughters ends with Alize.

⁶² For example a serving girl of Countess Judith, wife of Earl Tostig of Northumbria, in David Rollason (ed. and trans.), *Symeon of Durham, Libellus de exordio et procurso istius, hoc est Dunelmensis ecclesie. Tract on the Origins and Progress of this the Church of Durham* (Oxford: Oxford Medieval Texts, 2000), iii, 11, pp. 174 and 176.

⁶³ Cf. Aird, *St Cuthbert and the Normans*, pp. 125–6.

demonstrates the value of exploiting the full range of sources available, even if, at first sight they may seem to be irrelevant or intractable.

Although the Durham *Liber Vitæ* contains material dating from the ninth century to the sixteenth, there were periods when a concerted effort was made to bring the manuscript into more systematic use. Entries were made in a number of discrete scribal campaigns and one of the most intensive bursts of activity seems to have been in the thirty or forty years after 1080. Not only was it the concern of the monks of Durham during this period to record the names of their brethren and other individuals and groups associated with the abbey, they also took the opportunity to supplement their institutional muniments by adding copies of episcopal and royal charters, confraternity agreements with other monastic houses, and other miscellaneous *memoranda*. Among the *conventiones* recorded in this period are a number of confraternity agreements made with other monasteries, including the English houses of Westminster, St Peter's Gloucester, St Peter's Lavington, Winchester, Coventry, Christ Church Canterbury, Selby, Glastonbury, Hackness, and the Norman abbeys of Fécamp, and St Stephen's, Caen.⁶⁴ Some of these agreements were with the whole monastic community; others, such as those with St Augustine's Canterbury, St Mary's York, St Paul's London, Bermondsey, Chertsey, Pershore and Saint-Calais, were made with individuals or small groups of monks.⁶⁵ The archbishop and canons of Rouen also make an appearance, and serve to reinforce the fact that the Church of Durham was now part of a wide ecclesiastical network which reached beyond the borders of the kingdom of England, into Scotland, Wales, and Northern France. In the

⁶⁴ There are notices of other confraternity agreements in the Durham Cantor's book, DCL MS B.IV. 24, ff. 5, 127. Cf. Gullick, 'Scribes of the Durham Cantor's Book', p. 106, n. 52. Lists of the monks of other abbeys also appear in the Durham *Liber Vitæ*. See for example the Worcester list headed by *Wulstan' ep[iscopu]s, Samson ep[iscopu]s*, f. 25^f.

⁶⁵ MS Domitian vii, ff. 36^v, 52^{r-v}.

early decades of the foundation of their Benedictine abbey, the monks of Durham created a series of contacts with other monasteries, through which they agreed to remember each other in their daily liturgy. Such prayer unions suggest that these Benedictine monks had a sense of communal identity with brethren of their order, even if they did not have the formal administrative ties developed by the Cluniacs, Cistercians, and the other reformed orders of the twelfth century.⁶⁶

Palaeographical analysis of these early twelfth-century entries has linked them to the work of at least three scribes active in Durham from around 1090. One of these was the monk Symeon, who later became *precentor* or cantor of the abbey. As well as working on liturgical manuscripts such as the *Liber Vitæ* and the Cantor's book, Symeon wrote charters and produced a detailed history of the Church of St Cuthbert, the *Libellus de exordio*, between 1104 and 1107.⁶⁷ The presence of Symeon, who revitalised the use of the *Durham Liber Vitæ* in the early twelfth century, among the scribes is particularly significant, for it gives an explanation for the apparently miscellaneous nature of the additions of this period. As has been mentioned, Symeon, who was probably a Norman and came over to Durham when Bishop William of Saint-Calais returned from exile in 1091, became *precentor* of the monastery, and it was this role which brought him to the very heart of his fellow monks' concerns with *memoria*, or their liturgical and historical self-awareness. According to Lanfranc's *Monastic Constitutions*, the *precentor* was responsible for supervising the letters sent out to ask for prayers for dead brethren, as well as taking care of all the books of the house, in effect acting as both archivist and librarian. Symeon's access to these

⁶⁶ Cf. H.E.J. Cowdrey, 'Unions and Confraternity with Cluny', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 16 (1965), pp. 152–62.

⁶⁷ For Symeon's scribal career see Michael Gullick, 'The hand of Symeon of Durham: Further observations on the Durham Martyrology Scribe', in David Rollason (ed.), *Symeon of Durham, Historian of Durham and the North* (Stamford: Shaun Tyas, 1998), pp. 14–31.

resources made him the natural choice when, in the early years of the twelfth century, his monastic superiors were seeking someone to write the history of the Benedictine abbey, which had been established at Durham in 1083. Symeon's task was not an easy one, for he was asked to make explicit the link between the twelfth-century Church of Durham, which housed the shrine and relics of St Cuthbert, and the Church of Lindisfarne, where their patron had been both bishop and abbot from 685 to 687. In the intervening centuries, Cuthbert's relics had been translated, first to Norham-on-Tweed, then to Chester-le-Street, before finally settling at Durham in 995.⁶⁸ Symeon's solution was to suggest that the monks of the early twelfth century were not only the direct descendants of the monks of Lindisfarne in spiritual terms, but also that the two groups shared a common identity in that they followed the Rule of St Benedict. The foundation of the Benedictine convent in 1083 was therefore a re-foundation, not an entirely new venture, but merely a restoration of the proper order of things.

It was part of Symeon's role as monastic remembrancer to make additions to the *Liber Vitæ*. In its name-lists and records of confraternity, its *memoranda* recording grants to the church and the manumission of slaves, the Durham *Liber Vitæ* represents a liturgical commemoration of the past, just as Symeon's *Libellus* was an historical construction of his abbey's traditions and concerns. When the names of the monks of Symeon's generation were added to the ninth-century lists on folio 45^r, the essential continuity of the Church of St Cuthbert's past, present, and future was represented graphically. Similarly, Symeon's statement that Bishop William of Saint-Calais, after reading in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* about the original foundation on Lindisfarne, set out 'to restore to the saint's body the service which it had formerly enjoyed'

⁶⁸ The early history of the Church of St Cuthbert is traced in Aird, *St Cuthbert and the Normans*, pp. 9–59.

invoked this idea of continuity.⁶⁹ The scribe does in fact turn his *Libellus* into a liturgical commemoration book, for in the most authoritative manuscript of the text (Durham University Library, Cosin V.II.6) there is a list of the monks of Durham, and Symeon asks that his reader:

remember to invoke the abundance of God's mercy for all those whose names he will see here, asking for the living that they may adhere more fully to their holy profession and may in the future receive the reward of their virtuous perserverance, and for the dead that they may receive forgiveness for their sins and be found worthy 'to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living'.⁷⁰

Here, then, is an historical work performing a liturgical function. In the same way, the Durham *Liber Vitæ*, although ostensibly a liturgical manuscript, is an invaluable historical source. Above all else, it is a powerful expression of the relationship between the living and the dead, between the past and the present. In its recording of the names of those who would be commemorated by the community of the Church of St Cuthbert it is selective and therefore its lists are charged with meaning. What more can one ask of an historical source?

⁶⁹ Rollason (ed. and trans.), *Symeon of Durham, Libellus*, p. 227.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 4 and 6.

Appendix

British Library, Cotton Manuscript, Domitian vii: Summary of Contents

Key

An attempt has been made to give the original headings of the ninth-century names list [**Nomina abbatum**], a brief description of later additions to the manuscript and an indication of how the material is arranged on the folio, either horizontally [=] or in columns [≡].

- ff. 1^r–3^v preliminary material [=]
- ff. 4^r–14^v Gospel texts, s. xi–xii: Matthew (f. 4^r–5^v), Mark (f. 6^r–8^v), Luke (f. 9^r–11^v), John (f. 12^r–14^v) [=]
- ff. 15^r–85^v **Durham Liber Vitæ**
- f. 15^r **Nomina regum vel ducum** [≡]
- f. 16^r **Nomina reginærum et abbatissarum** [≡]
- f. 18^r **Nomina ænchoritærum** [≡]
- f. 18^v **Nomina abbatum gradus presbyteratus** [≡]
- f. 19^v **Nomina abbatum gradus diaconatus** [≡]
- f. 20^r **Nomina abbatum** [≡]
- f. 21^v **Nomina presbyterorum** [≡]
- f. 25^v name lists, s. xii and later [=]
- f. 26^r **Nomina diaconorum** [≡]/[≡]
- f. 26^v name lists, s. xii and later [=]
- f. 27^r **Nomina clericorum**, s. ix [≡]
- f. 36^v Confraternity agreements, s. xi–xii [=]
- f. 37^r **Nomina monachorum**, s. ix [≡]
- f. 45^r **original s. ix list ends**; early s. xii list of monks begins [≡]
- f. 46^r name lists, s. xii and later [=]
- f. 46^v name lists, s. xii and later [≡]
- f. 47^r name lists, s. xii and later [=]
- f. 47^v Old English *memoranda*, s. xi [=]
- f. 48^r latin *memoranda*, s. xii, name lists, s. xii [≡]/[≡]
- f. 48^v name lists, s. xii [≡]
- f. 49^r name lists, s. xii and later [=]
- f. 49^v [blank]
- f. 50^r name lists, s. xii and later [≡]/[≡]
- f. 50^v *memoranda*, s. xi–xii [=]
- f. 51^r series of grants and other *memoranda*, s. xii [=]
- f. 51^v name lists, s. xii [=]
- f. 52^{r–v} confraternity agreements [=]
- f. 53^r–54^r *Ego Willelmus*, purported diploma of Bishop William of Saint-Calais (1081–96), s. xii [=]
- f. 54^v–55^r Notitia of grants by William I (1066–87) and William Rufus, s. xii [=]
- f. 55^v name lists resume, s. xii and later [=]
- f. 56^r **Nomina monachorum ad succurrendum**, s. xii and later [≡]

- f. 56^v name lists, s. xiii and later [≡]
 f. 57^v name lists, s. xiii and later [≡]
 f. 58^r name lists, s. xii [≡]
 f. 60^v name lists, s. xii [≡]
 f. 61^r Nomina monachorum ad succurrendum (title repeated), s. xii and later [≡]
 f. 61^v name lists, s. xiii and later [≡]
- f. 62^r name lists, s. xii and later [≡]
 f. 63^v [blank]
 f. 64^r names? s. xvi–xvii
 f. 64^v name lists, s. xii and later [≡]
 f. 65^r name lists, s. xii and later [≡] [³/₄ blank]
 f. 65^v [blank]
 f. 66^r name lists, s. xii and later [≡]
 f. 66^v name lists, s. xii and later [≡]
 f. 67^r name lists, s. xii and later [≡]
 f. 67^v name lists, s. xii and later [≡]
 f. 68^r name lists, s. xii and later [≡]
 f. 68^v [blank]
 f. 69^r [blank]
 f. 69^v name lists, s. xii and later [≡]
 f. 70^r name lists, s. xii and later [≡] [³/₈ blank]
 f. 70^v name lists, s. xii and later [≡]
 f. 71^r name lists, s. xii and later [≡]
 f. 71^v name lists, s. xii and later [≡]/[≡]
 f. 72^r name lists, s. xii and later [≡]/[≡]
 f. 72^v name lists, s. xiii and later [≡]
 f. 73^r name lists, s. xiii and later [≡]
 f. 73^v name lists, s. xiii and later [≡]/[≡]
 f. 74^{r-v} name lists, s. xiii and later [≡]
 f. 75^r name lists, s. xiii and later [≡]
 f. 75^v [blank]
 f. 76^r [blank]
 f. 76^v name lists, s. xiii–xvii [≡]
 f. 77^{r-v} name lists, s. xiii and later [≡]
 f. 78^r name lists, s. xiv–xv [≡]
 f. 78^v name list, s. xvi [≡] [[>]/₂ blank]
 f. 79^{r-v} name lists, s. xiv and later [≡]/[≡]
 f. 80^{r-v} name lists, s. xiv and later [≡] (cropped)
 f. 81^r name lists, s. xiv and later [≡]
 f. 81^v name lists, s. xiv and later [≡]
 f. 82^{r-v} name lists, s. xvi [≡]/[≡]
 f. 83^r name lists, s. xvi and later [≡]

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