In the Footsteps of the Holy: Sacred Landscapes and the Cult of Saints in the Anglo-Norman World, 1066-1220

Volume 1 of 2: The Text

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Abstract:

The study of sacred space and the cult of saints in the Anglo-Norman world has been primarily focused around the shrines and the great cathedrals and abbey churches that were built to contain them. Considerably less attention has been paid to the phenomenon of sacred places in the broader landscape as they relate to the promotion and veneration of a saint and his or her cult. This thesis argues that secondary cult sites and sacred landscapes were a crucial component of the cults of several major institutions, and that they can be identified and understood using a comprehensive interdisciplinary approach (including archaeology) that captures the full extent of the experience of the medieval pilgrim and the institutional agendas that shaped the sites he or she would visit.

This project employs a specialized methodology and draws a set of conceptual models from the better-surviving and studied examples of sacred landscapes in Ireland. Three case studies (St Davids, the cult of St Cuthbert, and Glastonbury) have been selected for Anglo-Norman England and Wales, primarily centered around the efforts of the host foundations to establish institutional and historical continuity between their present communities and the distant past of their patrons in a time of fundamental transition from pre-Conquest 'native' ecclesiastical communities to those governed by reformed orders originating from the continent. This period of institutional transition can be broadly located between the year of the Conquest in 1066 to the rise of the cult of Thomas Becket in the early thirteenth century. The goal of the project is to contribute to a richer understanding of how the cult of saints was experienced and promoted, primarily through the lens of the saints' institutional guardians and their agendas, and to deepen our appreciation of how medieval people interacted with the divine in the mundane world.

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Author's Declaration:

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author.

This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other,

University. All sources are acknowledged as References.

ABBREVIATIONS

AD Adam of Damerham, *Libellus de rebus Glastoniensibus,* ed. Davic C. Standen (London, University of London: 2000)

BVSC Bede the Venerable, *Vita sancti Cuthberti prosaica*, ed Bertram Colgrave, *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 141-308

CASSS *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*

DA William of Malmesbury, *De Antiquitate Glastonie Ecclesie*, ed. John Scott, *The Early History of Glastonbury. An Edition, Translation and Study of William of Malmesbury's 'De Antiquitate Glastonie Ecclesie* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1981)

DB Domesday Book

DISM Giraldus Cambrensis, *De Iure et Statu Menevensis Ecclesiae, II*, ed. J.S. Brewer, *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*, RS 21, vol. 3, 8 vols (London: Longman & Co., 1861), 101-373

HE Bede the Venerable, *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, ed. Judith McClure and Roger Collins, *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. Oxford World Classics. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); ed. Bertram Colgrave and R.A.B. Mynors, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992)

IC Giraldus Cambrensis, *Itinerarium Kambriae*, ed. J.S. Brewer and J.F. Dimock, *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*, Rolls Series 21, vol. 6, 8 vols (London: Longman & Co., 1861); trans Betty Radice, *The journey through Wales and the description of Wales* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2004)

JG *Cronica sive Antiquitates Glastoniensis Ecclesie,* ed. James P. Carley; trans. David Townsend, *The Chronicle of Glastonbury Abbey: An Edition, Translation, and Study of John of Glastonbury's Cronica sive Antiquitates Glastoniensis Ecclesie* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1985)

LBC Reginald of Durham, *Libellus de admirandis Beati Cuthberti virtutibus quae novellis patratae sunt temporibus*, ed. James Raine (London: Nichols, 1835)

LDE Symeon of Durham, *Libellus de exordio atque procurso istius, hoc est Dunhelmensis ecclesie*, ed. David W. Rollason, *Tract of the Origins and Progress of this the Church of Durham* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000)

MSB William of Malmsbury, *Miracula S. Benigni*, ed. Michael Winterbottom and Rodney Thompson, *William of Malmesbury: Saints' lives: Lives of SS. Wulfstan, Dunstan, Patrick, Benignus and Indract* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 344-67

NLA *Nova Legenda Anglie*, ed. C. Horstman, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1901)

PSI William of Malmsbury, *Passio S. Indracti* in ed. Michael Winterbottom and Rodney Thompson, *William of Malmesbury: Saints' lives: Lives of SS. Wulfstan, Dunstan, Patrick, Benignus and Indract* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 368-81

RCAHMW Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales. *An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments in Wales and Monmouthshire VII: County of Pembroke*. Vol. 7. 7 vols. (Richmond: HMSO, 1925).

TH   Giraldus Cambrensis, *Topographia Hibernica*, ed. and trans. John O'Meara, *The History and Topography of Ireland* (London: Penguin, 1982), 23-91; ed. James F. Dimock, *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*, Rolls Series 21, vol. 5, 8 vols (London: Longman & Co., 1861), 3-204

VD   Rhygyfarch ap Sulien, *Vita S. Davidi*, ed. Richard Sharpe and John R. Davies, 'Rhygyfarch's Life of St David' *St David of Wales: cult, church, and nation* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2007), 107-155

VCH   *Victoria County History*

VME   Reginald of Durham?, *Vita et Miracula Sancte Ebbe Virginis*, ed. Robert Bartlett, *The miracles of Saint Æbbe of Coldingham and Saint Margaret of Scotland* (Oxford, 2003), 2-67

VSD   Giraldus Cambrensis, *De Vita S. Davidis Archiepiscopi Menevensis*, ed. J.S. Brewer, *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*, Rolls Series 21, vol. 3, 8 vols (London: Longman & Co., 1861), 377-404

VSH   *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae: partim hactenus ineditae*, ed. Charles Plummer, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910)

I: INTRODUCTION

The study of medieval Christian belief is a complex field with a long history of debates about the nature of contemporary worship, the origin of the major influences and drivers of change, and the importance of the underlying theology to the lived experience of the monastic, the cleric, and the layman or woman. One of the most defining features of this worldview was the belief in the immediacy of the divine; that the power of the Three Persons was present in all aspects of life, both seen and unseen. The holy could be accessed by the faithful in a range of ways, including the liturgy of the church and the miracle of the transubstantiation of the body and blood. But it could also be accessed by coming into contact with men and women touched by God's divine power, both during and after their mortal lives, as will be discussed at length in Chapter II. Holy men and women could work miracles through the power of God, rewarding the faithful and penitent and punishing the wicked and the proud. There are many records of miracles worked far from the major ecclesiastical centres and cult sites, attributed to certain saints in later telling. But the institution of pilgrimage – of travelling, sometimes great distances, to come into contact with holy men and women or the traces of sanctity they left behind, be they corporeal relics or objects touched by a saint during their lives – was a fundamental component of active piety throughout the entirety of medieval Christendom. To understand how the medieval believer experienced and passed through his or her world, we must understand the experience and ideals of pilgrimage, be it to Rome or the Holy Land or a shrine of mostly local significance.

One of Matthew Johnson's less well-received assertions in his important book on historical landscapes was the claim that that a personal commitment to Christian belief in the present was a significant advantage to anyone studying Christian belief in the past, as the rituals and practices of the contemporary churchgoer were more easily 'translated' due to familiarity with them.[1] While the author of this thesis was raised Catholic, Johnson's argument nonetheless seems a remarkably narrow-minded and ahistorical approach to the study of Christian belief and

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[1] Matthew Johnson, *Ideas of Landscape* (Oxford: Blackwell Pub, 2006), 131-32.

the rituals, practices, assumptions, ideas, and hopes and fears that went along with it. One of the suggestions that will be made in Chapter II, the literature review and intellectual context discussion, is that scholars of medieval religion, and landscape specifically, might do well to extend our theatre of inquiry beyond not just the West, but Christendom itself.

This thesis will unpack one aspect of the cult of saints and medieval observance and veneration that has been hitherto underemphasized: the landscape setting of the cults, both physical surroundings and in some cases a more intellectual 'landscape' that is inspired by or mimics real-world topography, but is not necessarily bound by it. The specific aim of this project was to investigate the phenomenon of sacred landscapes and their interaction with and influence on saints' cults ranging from *c.*1050 to 1220 in England and Wales, although Chapter IV establishes a set of possible models that can be applied to the chosen landscapes in England and Wales drawn from the better-preserved and better studied Ireland. The goal is to identify examples of sacred landscapes in the context of medieval saints' cults, and to understand their history, form, development and evolution over the course of the medieval period, with particular emphasis on the dates given above. While there will necessarily be some speculation about how pilgrims might have interacted with these landscapes, the focus will be on those who created or promoted them, typically the guardians of cults or members of religious institutions, especially monasteries and cathedrals. In a society where literacy was limited, a top-down approach offers the best chance to understand the landscapes as they functioned with the broader frame of promotion and propaganda surrounding specific saints' cults in a period of major transition and institutional change.

This is an interdisciplinary study, and this thesis aims to demonstrate that such a varied approach, which necessitates gathering, contextualising, analysing, and employing evidence from historical, archaeological, literary, folkloric, cartographical, and anthropological sources is the only option when examining sacred landscapes. At the most fundamental level, a 'sacred landscape' is neither entirely physical nor intellectual. Aspects of geography, topography,

architecture, memory, and theology all play a role in shaping it. Following several earlier thinkers including Maitland and Crawford, historical geographer W.G. Hoskins, one of the fathers of landscape studies, used the analogy of a palimpsest, a term from manuscript studies where older texts that have been written over, usually imperfectly erased from parchment and then replaced by new text, and the older texts can thus be recovered using special techniques.[2] While to some extent a useful metaphor, in many ways the landscape as 'palimpsest' is a problematic framing, as the sheer complexity of changing landscapes over centuries cannot be easily compared to one or two examples of re-use of parchment, but nonetheless it is one frame of reference with which to begin.

Key Terms

Though the makeup of any 'sacred landscape' might vary, the most important and ubiquitous feature is the 'secondary cult site.' Secondary cult sites are in part defined by their opposition to 'primary' cult sites. In the case of Anglo-Norman England and Wales (and to a lesser extent Ireland, as will be discussed), 'primary site' is essentially synonymous with a shrine, corporeal relic, and the building that contains it. Not all shrines and cults were made alike; even long after the Anglo-Norman transition and gradual movement of relics and cults to larger institutions, some minor sites (e.g. St Bertram at Ilam, Staffs.) retained relics of relatively obscure saints. In some cases, the cult of a single saint extended to a broader spiritual *familia* of blood relatives, teachers and confessors, and students or apostles. It is not impossible for a site of 'primary' importance to one cult to be a place of 'secondary' significance for a larger, more prosperous cult. For the purposes of this thesis, 'primary' cult sites will comprise those major cult centres cared for and promoted by Anglo-Norman ecclesiastical institutions, often in the form of monastic communities or houses of secular canons.

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[2] Johnson, 57-58. Trachtenberg offers a similar concept for architectural spaces: "continuous redesign," which also assumes that no building is ever 'complete' or finished changing. Marvin Trachtenberg, *Building-in-Time: From Giotto to Alberti and Modern Oblivion* (New Haven, Conn.; London: Yale University Press, 2010).

A secondary cult site can take a number of different forms, but the most common are specific locations in the geographical vicinity of a primary site or shrine, known by the presence of a church, chapel, monument, or natural feature (including springs, wells, or caves) which draw their association (and corresponding sanctity) from contact with the life and death of a saint or their 'sacred family,' as recorded in hagiography, surviving oral tradition, or ancient dedications. Brian Finucane's concept of "holy radioactivity," discussed in Chapter II is particularly helpful in these cases. In some cases, particularly in Ireland, the *praesentia* of the saint might be left behind even if the body itself had moved elsewhere (Chapter IV). For the purposes of this study, a 'sacred landscape' will be identified where there are at least two secondary sites in addition to (and at times independent of) a primary site, primarily the saint's shrine.

Structure of the Project

As an attempt to synthesize more than a century of scholarship and evidence from numerous fields, this thesis obviously owes an enormous debt to all the work that has gone before. Previous scholarship engaging with two major themes of this project, the nature and practice of Christian belief, specifically pilgrimage, and the theoretical underpinnings of space, place, and landscape, form the bulk of the review of the literature and intellectual context (Chapter II). From there, Chapter III will detail the methodological approach of this study, including further developing the ideas of 'secondary cult site' and 'sacred landscape' while also providing illustrative examples and reviewing the advantages and complications of utilizing such a wide range of evidence. Before moving onto the primary case studies, a number of theoretical models will be demonstrated through an examination of a range of sacred landscapes in Ireland, where the phenomenon has attracted previous specific scholarship, rather than individual case studies as has been the case in England and Wales, and where rates of survival of relatively minor features, such as earthwork enclosures and standing stones are much higher.

The primary case studies focus on the landscape of chapels around St Davids in Wales (Ch. V), the activities of the post-1083 Benedictine community of Durham Cathedral Priory at Durham,

Lindisfarne, and Northumbria more broadly and the cult of St Cuthbert (Ch. VI), and the use of the topography of Somerset Levels in the mythmaking and historical revisionism of the monks of Glastonbury (Ch. VII). The case studies will be followed by a discussion section (Ch. VIII) which will re-examine these and other examples of sacred landscapes thematically. By the end of this thesis, it should be fully evident how the study of saints' cults in the post-Conquest period must extend beyond the narrow situation of the shrine and the holy relics within, or even the architectural settings of such shrines, from the shrine chapels to the great cathedrals to the ecclesiastical precincts, but out into the surrounding areas, sometimes across entire regions. The study of pilgrimage, one of the most universal phenomena in medieval Christendom across the whole of Europe, Asia Minor and the Middle East, has been traditionally based upon the experience at the end of the journey, rather than what may have been experienced before or after. Christianity was not simply a system of belief, a set of theological or doctrinal practices, rituals, and convictions that bound a religious subgroup together. Every person and thing were part of an inextricably Christian World, and the landscape was no exception. To walk in the footsteps of the saints went hand in hand with coming into contact with their mortal remains.

II: Intellectual Context and Literature Review: Locating Old Saints in Anglo-Norman England

It is broadly accepted that the eleventh and twelfth centuries in England and Wales witnessed a flowering of hagiography, as the legends and miracles of pre-Conquest saints were recalled, revised, and re-contextualized by ecclesiastical institutions across the region. These communities were eager to exploit the prestige and history of native saints and assert institutional and spiritual continuity with the foundations they established. To accomplish this, they produced many new *vitae* and *miracula* even as they embellished and enhanced existing shrines and re-housed the bodies of saints in monumental Romanesque cathedrals and abbey churches. Some of the caretakers of individual cults went further, going so far as to stake claim to the landscape of their saints: the very places where they and their spiritual and blood *familia* lived and died. These landscapes comprised the kind of 'secondary cult site' which will be further explored in Chapter III. While the bulk of research has been directed towards the great Anglo-Norman churches and their lavishly decorated architectural settings, relatively little has been written on the phenomenon of claiming and promoting sacred landscapes. Such efforts, I will argue, were carried out in concert with hagiography and legend-building, and this kind of cult promotion was more common than frequently assumed. It is the goal of my thesis to fill this gap in the scholarship, using a fully interdisciplinary and theoretically informed framework to identify and examine a select few case studies of 'secondary cult sites' and 'sacred landscapes,' progressing from more explicit examples in Ireland (Ch. IV) to cases where more inference is required.

The following chapter will review the current state of research and the theoretical framework of several key thematic fields and how they relate to this thesis, including the cult of saints, Anglo-Norman hagiography, medieval conceptions of space and sacred places, the phenomenon of pilgrimage, the shrines and their architectural settings, the study of historical landscapes, and the most relevant site or cult-specific case studies that have been published to

date, as well a handful of more specialized interdisciplinary projects which can supply useful models to interpret the landscapes of sanctity in Anglo-Norman England and Wales.

The Cult of Saints

At the heart of almost any debate about medieval pilgrimage or sacred space are the institutional and ideological underpinnings of the cult of saints. The most fundamental theoretical work in this field was done by Peter Brown, beginning with his essay 'The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity,' followed by *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity.*[3] While certainly not the first to submit the subject of miracles and holy men to the sort of nuanced contextual study it needed, Brown heavily contributed to overcoming the post-Enlightenment bias of superstition that had suffused much of the early scholarship of saints' cults. While Brown worked primarily in the context of Late Antiquity and Roman social and political order as it interacted and evolved with early Christianity, his general model of the saint and his or her cult as a religious successor to the civic patron-client relationship remains highly influential in medieval studies.[4] Scholarship on saints and their cults has evolved,[5] but while some of the contentions of Brown's work have since been challenged, particularly with regard to the 'top-down' model of cult creation and promotion,[6] "there has been no demurring from Brown's basic contention that the holy man, alive and dead, was a key point of intersection between spiritual, wider cultural, social, and political forces."[7]

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[3] P.L. Brown, "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity," *JRS* 6 (1971): 80–101; Peter Robert Lamont Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity*, Haskell Lectures on History of Religions; New Ser., No. 2 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

[4] Robert Bartlett, *Why Can the Dead Do Such Great Things? Saints and Worshippers from the Martyrs to the Reformation* (Princeton, New Jersey ; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2013).

[5] Stephen Wilson, ed., *Saints and Their Cults: Studies in Religious Sociology, Folklore and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

[6] Paul Antony Hayward, "Demystifying the Role of Sanctity in Western Christendom," in *The Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages: Essays on the Contribution of Peter Brown*, ed. James Howard-Johnston and Paul Anthony Hayward (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 115–42.

[7] James Howard-Johnson, "Introduction," in *The Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages: Essays on the Contribution of Peter Brown*, ed. James Howard-Johnson and Paul Anthony Hayward (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 4.

Benedicta Ward's *Miracles and the Medieval Mind* was one of the first English-language studies, along with Ronald Finucane's *Miracles and Pilgrims: Popular Belief in Medieval England*, to further develop a theoretical framework for reading and understanding the significance of medieval miracle collections and their associated shrines, drawing examples from a range of English and French hagiography.[8] The localization of the cult of saints was particularly emphasized in Ward's study: "the miracle working shrines belonged in a specific sense to the people who lived near them as well as the pilgrims who were drawn by the fame of a shrine and its inhabitant and the tales of the wonders performed there."[9] Such wonders were themselves part and parcel of a specific attitude towards the potential and present manifestation of the sacred in the world of man: the world was "an antechamber of heaven" where Christians had "friends at court who would intercede with them in their needs and difficulties." Miracles and wonders were "the ordinary life of heaven made manifest," and the desire to experience closeness with the saints through their relics and sacred sites drove the institutions of medieval pilgrimage.[10] Finucane supplied a useful term for the phenomenon of objects and individuals acquiring sanctity, even miracle-working properties, through contact with the bodies of holy men and women: "holy radioactivity."[11] Along with Pierre-André Sigal and André Vauchez, Finucane was one first scholars to examine medieval miracles in large numbers.[12]

The development of the cult of saints began with a change in attitudes towards the bodies of the dead as compared to the pre-Christian Roman world. But what separated Christian practice from what had come before was an interest in not just the tombs of the revered dead, but their actual bodies, both entire bodies and separated body parts, and at least some theologians believed

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[8] Benedicta Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind: Theory, Record and Event, 1000-1215*, 2nd ed. (Aldershot: Wildwood House, 1987). R. Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims: Popular Belief in Medieval England* (London: Dent, 1977).

[9] Ibid, 35.

[10] Ibid, 216.

[11] Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims: Popular Belief in Medieval England*, 26.

[12] Pierre-André Sigal, *L'homme et le miracle dans la France médiévale (XIe-XIIe siecle)* (Paris: Cerf, 1985); André Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

the part was every bit as potent as the whole.[13] The actual process of development from the late antique period onwards was neither linear nor without controversy. The explosion of unverified and at times dubious relics of obscure martyrs was of great concern to the early medieval papacy, including Gregory the Great, such that the Council of Carthage in 401 issued legislation necessitating trustworthy traditions or records for a relic to be verified.[14] At the same time, more 'official' cults were tremendously successful, particularly those of the cities and towns of late antique and Merovingian Gaul.[15] Similar cults emerged and prospered in Italy, Visigoth Spain, and Anglo-Saxon England.[16] The tension between the power of the saint and ecclesiastical regulation of the cult continued into the Carolingian period.[17] This tension was ever-present beneath the surface of the Anglo-Norman efforts to appropriate, exploit, and promote 'native' cults in Anglo-Saxon England and Wales that created and sustained secondary cult sites and sacred landscapes.

Anglo-Norman Hagiography: Changing Attitudes

The historiography of the political, social, economic, and ecclesiastical consequences of the Norman Conquest of 1066 is far too extensive to be reviewed here. But just as the study of the medieval cult of the saints had to be detached from the stigma of superstition and post-Enlightenment myth and misunderstanding by writers like Peter Brown, scholars of the Anglo-

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[13] Bartlett, *Why Can the Dead Do Such Great Things?*, 85-86. A saint's body being incorrupt and miraculously preserved was seen as a sign of utmost saintly virtue, but a finger bone from a famous martyr was not necessarily less effective.

[14] Bartlett, 32-33; 551. On Gregory, William D McCready, *Signs of Sanctity: Miracles in the Thought of Gregory the Great.* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute for Medieval Studies, 2000).

[15] Ian N. Wood, "Early Merovingian Devotion in Town and Country," *Studies in Church History* 16 (1979): 62–76; Raymond Van Dam, *Saints and Their Miracles in Late Antique Gaul* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993).

[16] Wood, "Early Merovingian Devotion in Town and Country"; Van Dam, *Saints and Their Miracles in Late Antique Gaul*; N. Everett, "The Hagiography of Lombardic Italy," *Hagiographica* 7 (2000): 49–126; Kenneth Baxter Wolf, *Christian Martyrs in Muslim Spain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); D. W. Rollason, "The Cult of Murdered Royal Saints in Anglo-Saxon England," *Anglo-Saxon England* 11 (1982): 1–22; 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. A. Thacker and Richard Sharpe (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 455–94; Susan J. Ridyard, *The Royal Saints of Anglo-Saxon England: A Study of West Saxon and East Anglian Cults* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).; Blair, "A Saint for Every Minster? Local Cults in Anglo-Saxon England."; Susan J. Ridyard, *The Royal Saints of Anglo-Saxon England: A Study of West Saxon and East Anglian Cults* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

[17] Paul Fouracre, "The Origins of the Carolingian Attempt to Regulate the Cult of Saints," in *The Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages: Essays on the Contribution of Peter Brown*, ed. James Howard-Johnson and Paul Anthony Hayward (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 115–42.

Norman church had to break from another problematic tradition. Many of the foundational works of the events of the Conquest and its impact on the conquered cast the event and its aftermath in starkly nationalist terms – as a wholesale rejection and replacement of the cultural and social institutions of Anglo-Saxon England as a direct consequence of the fall of the Cerdicing dynasty.[18] Nationalist historical frameworks are now recognized to be deeply problematic in their compression of past and present worldviews,[19] and the desire to sharply and unambiguously distinguish 'Norman' from 'Saxon,' particularly by English medievalist scholars has crossed disciplinary lines to include aspects of pre- and post-Conquest material culture.[20] The label of 'Saxo-Norman' is now frequently employed in an architectural context to describe buildings whose characteristics can be dated within the decades on either side of the Conquest, an acknowledgement of the possibility of architectural continuity, but it can also be used in discussions of pottery and more broadly to characterize the social and cultural setting that bridged either side of the Conquest in England.[21]

David Knowles was among the most influential of those voices in the study of the ecclesiastical developments following 1066 in several keystone studies of the church and monastic institutions of post-Conquest England: *The Monastic Order in England* and *The Religious Orders in England*, followed by his collaborations with R. Neville Hadcock and Christopher Brooke and Vera London.[22] Knowles presented a consistent narrative of hostile attitudes and suspicion towards the Anglo-Saxon saints and their cults by the newly arrived continental clergy: "the

[18] Frank Barlow, *The English Church, 1066-1154: A History of the Anglo-Norman Church* (London; New York: Longman, 1979).

[19] Joseph Theodoor Leerssen, *National Thought in Europe: A Cultural History* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006).

[20] A clear distinction between 'late-Saxon' and 'Norman' is made in the architectural studies of the Taylors, for instance. Harold McCarter Taylor and Joan Sills Taylor, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965).

[21] E. C. Fernie, *The Architecture of Norman England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) 19, 208.

[22] David Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England: A History of Its Development from the Times of St. Dunstan to the Fourth Lateran Council, 943-1216*, 2nd Ed (Cambridge: The University press, 1963); David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, 3 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1948); David Knowles and R.N. Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953); David Knowles, R.N. Hadcock, and V. London, *The Heads of Religious Houses, 940-1216* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972).

Norman abbots, it seems, frequently outraged the feelings of their monks by their disrespectful attitude toward the old English saints ... Even the great name of St Cuthbert was not proof against Norman scepticism."[23] Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, and those in his circle came under particular scrutiny; Lanfranc was himself guilty of doubting the sanctity of a host of Anglo-Saxon saints, including the martyred Ælfeah (d.1012), according to the biography of Saint Anselm by the Anglo-Saxon hagiographer Eadmer.[24] R.W. Southern wrote of "the contempt in which these saints were held by the Norman conquerors."[25]

Subsequent scholarship has challenged this narrative of profound and destructive changes wrought in the aftermath of the Norman Conquest, as well as the supposed (and somewhat anachronistic) racial or nationalist animus between the victorious Normans and the vanquished Saxons, addressed directly by Marjorie Chibnall.[26] The importance of recognizing continuity and shared developments on *both* sides of the 1066 watershed was emphasized by a range of subsequent scholarship. In the specific instance of the cult of saints, Susan Ridyard pushed back against the consensus narrative of Norman scepticism towards the saints of the Anglo-Saxons, highlighting the abundant evidence for Norman acceptance and exploitation of the saints of Ely, particularly Ætheldreda. The story was the same at Bury St Edmunds: at both cults

> there was no alignment of Norman monk and Norman layman against Anglo-Saxon saint. At Bury, as at Ely, a foreign abbot clearly regarded the cult of the local patron saint as one of several tools which might be utilized to defend the rights and to further the interests of the church he ruled.[27]

The scandalous accounts cited by Knowles and others to demonstrate the hostility of Anglo-Norman churchmen were, when put in context of personal rivalries and a wealth of opposing evidence, dramatic outliers. Even Lanfranc was mostly exonerated of bias by Ridyard's study: the

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[23] Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England*.

[24] R.W. Southern, ed., *The Life of St Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, by Eadmer* (Oxford: Nelson, 1972); Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England*, 118-119.

[25] Ibid., 249.

[26] Marjorie Chibnall, *Anglo-Norman England 1066-1166*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 1996); Marjorie Chibnall, *The Debate on the Norman Conquest* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999).

[27] Susan Ridyard, "'Condigna Veneratio': Post-Conquest Attitudes to the Saints of the Anglo-Saxons," *Anglo-Norman Studies* 9 (1987): 188.

same works of Eadmer that had portrayed him as doubting also made it clear that he had undergone a change of heart by the end of his life, invoking the support of his Anglo-Saxon predecessor Dunstan (who appeared to Lanfranc in a dream) in a key land dispute at Penenden Heath.[28] "In terms both of publicity and veneration," Ridyard concluded, "the Norman Conquest was perhaps one of the better things ever to happen to the Anglo-Saxon saints."[29] Her argument has subsequently become the new consensus position, although in the case of Lanfranc, Jay Rubenstein convincingly argued that his actions of scepticism spoke louder than his words of acceptance, as presented by the Anglo-Saxon monk Eadmer.[30] Lanfranc's case is nonetheless unusual. The conscious and deliberate efforts of Anglo-Norman churchmen to adapt, assimilate and exploit the power of the cults they had taken under their care is central to my argument about the creation and promotion of sacred landscapes by Anglo-Norman institutions in England and Wales.

Decoding the Hagiographical 'Genre': Fictionality, *Inventiones*, and *Miracula*

The renewal of existing pre-Conquest saints' cults, and even resurrection of the defunct cults, spawned an enormous volume of new hagiographical literature written by both Anglo-Saxon holdovers seeking to preserve the history and dignity of their saints (Eadmer and Osbern of Canterbury being among the best known), as well as newly-arrived continental churchmen either bolstering their own communities or, as in the case of Goscelin of St Bertin or William of Malmesbury, serving as a travelling hagiographer-for-hire. The process of (re)discovery and reinvention was reflected in the extensive use of the literary *topos* known as *inventio.* The discovery of relics or other physical ties to a hitherto lost holy figure was by no means a new development in hagiographical narrative, but the *inventiones*' time of greatest prominence was

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[28] Ibid., 202-3.
[29] Ibid., 206.
[30] J. Rubenstein, "Liturgy against History: The Competing Visions of Lanfranc and Eadmer of Canterbury," *Speculum* 74 (1999): 279–309.

arguably during the prolific outpouring of hagiographical material from Anglo-Norman churchmen in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries. [31] These materials took the form of not only revised, translated, or newly composed saints' *Lives*, but also written *miracula*: collections of miracles attributed to a particular saint as evidence of his or her continued powerful presence even after the upheaval of the Conquest.

Inventiones were called upon to fill the gaps in historical and legendary traditions and reinforce a sense of continuity between the founding saint and the new Anglo-Norman institutions. Their presence in both contemporary texts and modern scholarship reflect long-running debates about the nature of truth and 'fact' in medieval sources[32] as well as the thorny issue of medieval forgery.[33] Furthermore, the idea of hagiography as a 'genre' is one that has been convincingly problematized, particularly by Felice Lifshitz, who argued that "the concept of the genre of 'hagiography' is a historiographical construction, and, *ipso facto*, an ideological tool" that did not exist as categorically separate from 'history' during the medieval period. [34] But while the trope of *inventio* and more broadly speaking, miraculous events past and present which had political or ecclesiastical significance might be an important part of twelfth-century hagiography, their use is hardly exclusive to such texts. Monika Otter wrote about the twelfth-century use of *inventiones* to settle disputes over land, privileges, and even contested ownership of relics and relic theft, all of which were employed to rewrite institutional histories to accord with present circumstances.[35] Such 'rewriting' has been particularly closely studied in an Anglo-Norman

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[31] Monika Otter, *Inventiones: Fiction and Referentiality in Twelfth-Century English Historical Writing* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1996). See also Richard Gameson, *The Manuscripts of Early Norman England (c. 1066-1130)*, British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship Monograph (Oxford: University Press, 1999). Gameson discussed the evidence that the size of monastic libraries was increasing dramatically from the turn of the twelfth century, and while many of these were copies of existing texts, others were new works or revisions of older ones. (5)

[32] Robert M. Stein, *Reality Fictions: Romance, History, and Governmental Authority, 1025-1180* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006).

[33] Giles Constable, "Forgery and Plagiarism in the Middle Ages," *Archiv Fur Diplomatik* 29 (1983): 1–41.

[34] Felice Lifshitz, "Beyond Posivitism and Genre: 'Hagiographical' Texts as Historical Narratives," *Viator* 25 (1994): 95–114.

[35] Otter, *Inventiones*; for the foundational study on the subject of relic theft, c.f. Patrick J. Geary, *Furta Sacra: Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990).

context as well as that of the continent.[36] The collected work of Antonia Gransden on Glastonbury and Bury St Edmunds is particularly useful for unpacking medieval English history written in monastic contexts.[37] Another important consideration is the apparently imitative nature of many of the accounts of miracles and saints written in the medieval period, although Rachel Koopmans wisely cautioned against an overly cynical approach to judging the historicity of such stories.[38] Koopmans also argued that the stated purpose of the majority of the surviving miracle collections was not as a defensive measure against historical or current scepticism, but rather addressed the anxiety that contemporary miracles of a given saint would ultimately be forgotten.[39]

Like any revisionist history, *inventiones* present a range of difficulties to modern historians, as their customary detail and accordance with historical 'facts' can give them the appearance of being more reliable and 'accurate' than most (frequently formulaic) hagiographical accounts. Otter argued that this is precisely the problem: "like all etiological legends – stories that explain causes, that explain how the current state of affairs came about – they are necessarily retroactive … *inventio* stories make specific, empirically verifiable claims about historical dates, places, people, and events."[40] The actions described in *inventiones* of this sort could even be considered examples of contemporary archaeology. While the alleged discovery of the bones of Arthur and Guinevere at Glastonbury in 1191 is perhaps best known,[41] Simon Yarrow wrote about the 'chance' *inventio* of the bones of St Milburgh at Much Wenlock, buried in an abandoned church,[42] and Otter discussed the 'double *inventio*' of St Amphibalus, a hitherto unknown saint

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[36] James Campbell, "Some Twelfth-Century Views of the Anglo-Saxon Past," *Peritia* 3 (1984): 131–50; Monique Goullet, *Écriture et réécriture hagiographiques: essai sur les réécritures de Vies de saints dans l'Occident latin médiéval (VIIIe-XIIIe siècle)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005).

[37] Antonia Gransden, *Legends, Tradition and History in Medieval England* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 1992).

[38] Rachel Koopmans, *Wonderful to Relate: Miracle Stories and Miracle Collecting in High Medieval England*, The Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 29-30. Koopmans noted the effect of the standard miracle story framework – problem, miracle, solution – on creating the impression that few of the stories were original. Michael Goodich, *Miracles and Wonders: The Development of the Concept of Miracle, 1150-1350* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), is particularly representative of the traditional scepticism held by medieval scholars towards the originality or veracity of any individual miracle.

[39] Koopmans, *Wonderful to Relate*, 97.

[40] Otter, *Inventiones*, 36.

[41] Antonia Gransden, "The Growth of the Glastonbury Traditions and Legends in the Twelfth Century," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 27, no. 4 (1976): 337–58.

[42] Simon Yarrow, "The Invention of St Mildburg of Wenlock," *Midland History* 38, no. 1 (2013): 1–15.

associated with St Alban whose bones were found in what was probably a prehistoric burial mound.[43] These were by no means isolated incidents; fortunate discoveries (and the hagiography composed to legitimize them) were a frequent device used in the promotion of saints' cults in Britain, Ireland, and the continent, in particular at Glastonbury Abbey.[44]

Some *inventiones* use the detailed description of space to add credibility to their somewhat incredible tales of miraculous (re)discovery. The modern historian must thus approach them with caution, although to some extent the new accounts might have been seen as 'true' in their day, at least by the communities that created them. Helen Gittos joined Otter and many other scholars in highlighting the extent to which these types of detailed incidents in hagiographical texts can be read as metaphor or allusion, not recalling actual events in a locatable space.[45] In the case of *inventiones*, the physical (re)discovery of 'hidden' or 'lost' physical evidence of a saint's life or ancient religious foundation can be plausibly interpreted as a metaphor for the recovery of lost knowledge formerly 'buried' in the distant past, and is not necessarily evidence of medieval-era 'archaeology.'[46] To some extent, genre could dictate the extent to which space related directly to the real-life map rather than being subordinated to narrative – in romances, there was no expectation that place names or geography would accurately reproduce the real world. 'History' itself was still seen as a form of rhetoric – it was not "reality, a sequence of events, but a means of 'recognizing' past facts."[47] Hagiography could be seen to lie somewhere in between romance and history. Otter also opened a discussion of fictionality in specifically twelfth-century English contexts, working particularly from perspectives on the nature of fiction put forth by Paul Ricoeur.[48] Anthony Kemp specifically criticized Otter's lack of consistent theoretical vigour, and

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[43] Otter, *Inventiones,* 45-50.

[44] Lesley Abrams, "St Patrick and Glastonbury Abbey: 'Nihil Ex Nihilo Fit?,'" in *Saint Patrick, AD 493-1993*, ed. Lesley Abrams and D.N. Dumville, Studies in Celtic History 13 (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1993), 233–42.

[45] Helen Gittos, *Liturgy, Architecture, and Sacred Places in Anglo-Saxon England*, Medieval History and Archaeology (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 22-23.

[46] Otter, *Inventiones*, 55-56.

[47] Ibid., 9.

[48] Paul Ricoeur, *History and Truth* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1965).

her failure to adequately address and follow through on the broader consequences a 'flexible' view of truth might have in our reading of these types of sources.[49]

Following the historiographical trend of moving "away from bobbing for data to reconstructing mentalities,"[50] Simon Yarrow's *Saints and their Communities: Miracle Stories in Twelfth Century England* also contributed to discussions of author and audience in the hagiography of this period, and importantly, the implications this has for modern historians.[51] As others had drawn particular attention to the extent to which 'fictionality' in medieval texts can frustrate any attempt to separate historical and fictional narratives, Yarrow argued that historians cannot allow their suspicions of authorial intent to lead them to dismiss the historical value of problematic sources. Rather than treating an account of this type as worth less as an 'historical' source, it should be understood as just one perspective on past events and societies, from an author with a set of ideological and practical objectives; hagiography of this sort was not inherently more biased and limited than any other textual source. Yarrow describes this particular perspective as the "relic's-eye view of society."[52] Ecclesiastical authors were privileged by means of their access to writing, and the importance of textuality – of things written down – meant that they could lay claim to a unique relationship with their patron saint, as the interested informants of his or her life and miracles. Powell argues that "even if we were to strip hagiography of its seemingly fictitious elements and retain just the bare "historical facts" the genre does not lend itself to an uncritical reading," and that rather than trying to draw historical context from these narrative, the better approach is to "reconstruct its historical context: not what the texts say about the past, but what they disclose about the [historical] present."[53] Along the same lines, Gittos writes that the presence of a theological argument or use of common *topoi* does not require

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[49] Anthony Kemp, "Review: *Inventiones*: Fiction and Referentiality in Twelfth-Century English Historical Writing by Monika Otter," *Speculum* 74, no. 1 (1999): 235–37.

[50] Lifshitz, "Beyond Posivitism and Genre: 'Hagiographical' Texts as Historical Narratives."

[51] Simon Yarrow, *Saints and Their Communities: Miracle Stories in Twelfth Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006).

[52] Ibid., 15.

[53] Hilary Powell, "'Once Upon a Time There Was a Saint': Re-Evaluating Folklore in Anglo-Latin Hagiography," *Folk-Lore* 121, no. 2 (2010): 171.

that an incident be dismissed as a literary fabrication – it is primarily a reminder to scholars to be mindful that medieval authors and audiences would understand multiple meanings in the description of a single event, past or present.[54] Further, according to Powell, "a single saint's vita … may have been made to serve many uses," ranging from it being read aloud in a monastic context or being employed as part of a liturgical office for a saint's feast day (as was clearly the case with a number of metrical *vitae*."[55] "Hagiographic texts had to operate on several levels: their liturgical development called for clear passages of biblical and exegetical commentary to expound spiritual truths, their auditory performance necessitated a certain literary quality; and their sermonic application demanded features guaranteed to appeal to a vernacular audience."[56] Goodich importantly drew attention to the layers of interpretation, recollection, and revision inherent in this process. The sequence of communication for any individual miracle started with the participants, then up to the recorders of the event, then to the officials who verified it, then to those who communicated the miracle and finally to the audience they were communicating with.[57] Finucane supplied a vivid picture of an illiterate pilgrim struggling to communicate a healing miracle to a Latin-or-French-speaking monk at Thomas Becket's shrine at Christ Church, surrounded by the moans and groans and exhortation of other miracle seekers.[58] It is thus entirely possible, indeed likely, that multiple versions of the same miracle story could have been circulated by different groups of people in different mediums.[59] It is precisely because of this level of unrecorded diffusion that my focus in this thesis will be on the stories and miracles promoted by the communities and cult keepers themselves. Koopmans also pushed back against a reading

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[54] Gittos, *Liturgy, Architecture, and Sacred Places in Anglo-Saxon England*, 23. Gittos elaborates on the recorded miracle that accompanied the return of St Mildrith to England, when the saint left behind her footprints in marble. In addition to perhaps referencing the footprints left behind by Christ at his ascension from the Mount of Olives (by then a popular pilgrimage destination), the miracle might also have served to placate the people of Sheppey after their saint was taken away to St Augustine's Abbey in Canterbury in 1030. But while "Goscelin's story is so tantalizing that it is tempting to go in search" of the chapel built at the site where her footprints were preserved, there is no evidence that it ever existed, and the story might entirely be a biblical allusion (22).
[55] Powell, "Once Upon a Time There Was a Saint," 172.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Goodich, *Miracles and Wonders,* 4.
[58] Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims: Popular Belief in Medieval England*, 9-10.
[59] Koopmans, *Wonderful to Relate*, 26-7.

of miracle collections, Yarrow's "relic's-eye view," that privileges accounts written down by literate churchmen by treating them as the definitive proof of a cult's spread and success.[60]

It is evident that medieval hagiographers drew heavily upon both biblical examples (particularly in borrowed language) and authoritative histories with a wide circulation such as Bede. But while such displays of learning leant authority to new writings in the highly educated circles of ecclesiastical institutions, Yarrow argued that they would have required "the authentic raw material of human experience" to achieve "social purchase" with a credulous but by no means unquestioning lay audience. This seems particularly relevant in the context of this study and programs of cult expansion and diffusion that would have to some extent engaged with the laity.[61] My argument for the existence of eleventh- to early thirteenth-century ecclesiastical programs which created, renewed, and promoted saints and their cults at multiple sacred sites within physical or intellectual landscapes relies heavily on a critical and nuanced reading of contemporary hagiography. In the course and aftermath of the Anglo-Norman transition, institutional 'history' itself was frequently in a similar state of flux to the society itself, and deliberate choices could be made to emphasize, downplay, or altogether transform events in the institutional past or present, including saints' cults.

It would be a mistake, however, to assume that *miracula* or other written accounts of miracles and cults are the only, or even the primary, evidential basis for a cult, either in the medieval period or surviving to the present day. Following Julia Smith, Koopmans argued that "written accounts were in fact not needed at all" to promote or sustain a saint's cult, and that "cults did not need texts or their writers to form, to function, or to be terrifyingly strong."[62] This was certainly true, and it has interesting implications for the study of the promotion of sacred landscapes. While references to specific miracles at a range of 'secondary' cult sites are rare outside of a handful of cases discussed in the next chapter, this does not mean miracles were not

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[60] Ibid., 25.
[61] Yarrow, *Saints and Their Communities*, 16-17.
[62] Koopmans, *Wonderful to Relate*, 26.

occurring at these sites, or that pilgrims did not go there in hopes of receiving one, either there or perhaps on their return to a shrine. When authors chose to specify places in the landscape in the context of hagiography or historiography, it is almost certainly not by chance. When combined with an assessment of the evidence of material investment that might be associated with site promotion, the odds that each reference was without specific meaning, either in terms of a saint's biography or the institutional history of a monastery, decrease even further.

The State of the Field: The Shrine and the Cult

Anglo-Norman scholars have long grappled with the influence of the cult of the saints in post-Conquest England. The architectural impact of post-Conquest transformation and assimilation is obvious: archaeological excavations of major cathedrals and abbeys have shown that, in nearly every case, the irregular multi-phase Anglo-Saxon churches and church groups were replaced within a century by regularized monumental Romanesque structures, and many of these projects began before the year 1100. Much has been written on familial architectural links (often reaching across the Channel) between the plan of various churches; points of interest include the number of bays in the nave, transepts, or presbytery, the arrangement of transept galleries, or the layout of subterranean crypts.[63] It can be argued that the many studies focusing on comparatively minor points of difference serve only to highlight the relative homogeneity of Anglo-Norman monumental churches. John Crook argued:

> It is therefore not really possible to use the architectural design and development of early Anglo-Norman churches to support or challenge the traditional view that local saints' cults declined in prestige after the conquest, for one cannot be sure whether the absence in a church of an obvious architectural response to a cult reflects the attitude of the patron towards the saint, or whether it results merely from the copying of recent continental prototypes on which the cult of saints had no influence.[64]

In addition to the surviving fragments of medieval shrines, contemporary architectural descriptions, the excavated evidence of steps or altars and the rare churches which retain their

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[63] Fernie, *The Architecture of Norman England*.
[64] J. Crook, *The Architectural Setting of the Cult of the Saints* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000)*,* 181.

Romanesque presbyteries or shrine chapels have been used as evidence for reconstructing shrine spaces. For the vast majority of Anglo-Norman ecclesiastical institutions, the architectural backdrop, spatial arrangement, and form of the shrines has been assessed or speculated on by modern scholars. Winchester, Worcester, Bury St Edmunds, Christ Church Canterbury, and Durham are only a few of the major cult centres studied intensively in the last three decades of scholarship.[65] Ben Nilson has also written on the importance of the *translatio* in the (re)establishment of saints' cults after the Conquest, particularly evident in the elaborate multi-day 'festival' of translations at St Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury, in 1091.[66] In the conclusion to his book, Nilson laid out the common narrative of a devolutionary progression from the heyday of the great shrines to a growing interest in alternative and sometimes more local sources of sanctity (particularly in Marian veneration) later in the Middle Ages. "Much of the devotion formerly directed towards saints' shrines in cathedrals was now given to those in smaller churches and to Marian shrines. Without new construction and new saints in the greater churches it is not surprising that the older sites yielded to the newer."[67] It is certainly true that shrines were at the height of their popularity in the high Middle Ages, but this assessment omits the fact that shrines of local or secondary rank may have already held an important place in Anglo-Norman cult activity. At the 2016 British Archaeological Association conference on 'Romanesque Saints, Shrines and Pilgrimage,' only a handful of the papers presented focused on sacred space outside of the shrines of monumental churches, and even fewer on the landscape as the subject of

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[65] J. Crook, "The Romanesque East Arm and Crypt of Winchester Cathedral," *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 62 (1989): 1–36; Phillip Barker, "Reconstructing Wulfstan's Cathedral," in *St Wulfstan and His World* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 167–88; Antonia Gransden, ed., *Bury St Edmonds: Medieval Art, Architecture and Economy* (Leeds: The British Archaeological Association, 1998); R.D. Gem, "The Significance of the 11th Century Rebuilding of Christ Church and St Augustine's Canterbury in the Development of Romanesque Architecture," in *Medieval Art and Architecture at Canterbury before 1220*, ed. Nicola Coldstream and Peter Draper (London: British Archaeological Association, 1982); David Brown, ed., *Durham Cathedral: History, Fabric and Culture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015).
[66] B. Nilson, *Cathedral Shrines of Medieval England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003); Richard Sharpe, "The Setting of St Augustine's Translation, 1091," in *Canterbury and the Norman Conquest: Churches, Saints and Scholars, 1066-1109*, ed. R. Eales and R. Sharpe (London: The Hambledon Press, 1995), 1–14.
[67] Nilson, *Cathedral Shrines*, 193.

pilgrimage. A handful of recent studies[68] have begun to tackle phenomena of the 'landscapes' of

cults and the sites that make up these, the primary foci of my thesis.

"The Spatial Turn": 'Place' and 'Space' in the Study of Sacred Landscapes

To understand how space was understood and used in the medieval period, or any pre-

modern context, it is helpful to take a broader, more theoretical perspective. Henri Lefebvre's

influential work The Production of Space is primarily a Marxist interpretation of the transition

from pre-to post-Industrial modes and understandings of space, with space occupying the

unusual role of being all at once a product to be used, a product to be consumed, and a means of

production.[69] While much of the work lies outside the parameters of this study, certain

theoretical models posited by Lefebvre are useful in this discussion. Most of the sites that will be

discussed are made up of what Lefebvre calls "absolute space," that is, "fragments of nature

located at sites which were chosen for their intrinsic qualities … but whose very consecration

ended up stripping them of their natural characteristics and uniqueness."[70] To create absolute

space, natural space was "made complete by being filled to the saturation point with beings and

symbols, while other spaces were withdrawn from nature only to be kept empty as a way of

symbolizing a transcendent reality."[71] This description aptly fits a number of the secondary cult

sites in this study, which are overwhelmingly rural and were indeed part of "natural" landscapes

before they were given new importance by the installation of permanent monuments or buildings

that made them both part of this world (nature) and part of the next (heaven). Lefebvre also

described space as occupying the dual role of being a "field of access" as well as a "basis of

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[68] Martin Locker, *Landscapes of Pilgrimage in Medieval Britain* (Oxford: Archaeopress Archaeology, 2015); Julia M. Candy, *The Archaeology of Pilgrimage on the Camino de Santiago* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2009); Emma J. Wells, "'And He Went Round the Holy Places Praying and Offering'': Evidence for Cuthbertine Pilgrimage to Lindisfarne and Farne in the Late Medieval Period'" in *Newcastle and Northumberland: Roman and Medieval Architecture and Art*, ed. Jeremy Ashbee & Julian M. Luxford, British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions ; 36 (Leeds: Maney, 2013), 214-31; P. S. Barnwell, ed., *Places of Worship in Britain and Ireland, 300-950* (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2015).
[69] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 85.
[70] Ibid., 48.
[71] Ibid., 163.

action."[72] Secondary cult sites were created and drew power from the action or presence of departed holy figures, but were themselves the settings for contemporary miracles and the performance of the liturgy.

Lefebvre's explanation of the permanence of social space is also relevant. While space is acknowledged by most to be ever changing, at the same time, it never entirely vanishes. There is an "interpenetration" of multiple spaces, the newer ones inheriting and reorganizing those that came before. Tying into the discussion of absolute space, Lefebvre argued that this is the reason that natural objects retain at least some of their natural context even as the intervening space is filled with symbols which change the way the space is perceived and understood.[73] A holy well remains a well, a natural source of water, but its origins and properties are divine, and thus it has powers that exceed any of a 'mundane' well. The miraculous is made manifest through a manipulation of the natural – that is, the created world – by supernatural forces. The idea of space as changeable and dynamic was discussed at length by Julie Smith,[74] drawing from Michel de Certeau's work, *The Practice of Everyday Life.*[75] But Smith defined 'place' differently: rather than being a stable location transformed into 'space' by the actions and behaviours of the people who inhabit it, which then guides their actions (a phenomenon known as *habitus*), place "is defined and constituted of its spaces and of the inter-relationships of the people who inhabit them."[76] Because spaces and the relationships which define them can change over time, and different physical locations can be assigned to different purposes, place is, by its very nature, not stable. What stability does exist is created and held by spatial relationships, the inhabitants, and just as importantly, the institutions which bind them all together and create certain patterns of behaviour. Megan Cassidy-Welch credited Lefebvre with being a pioneering force behind "the spatial turn" by his argument that "historical change can be tracked through spatial

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[72] Ibid, 191.
[73] Ibid., 164.
[74] Julie Ann Smith, "*Clausura Districta*: Conceiving Space and Community for Dominican Nuns in the Thirteenth Century," *Parergon* 27, no. 2 (2010): 13–36.
[75] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984).
[76] Smith, "*Clausura Districta*," 16.

understanding and forms."[77] Geographer Doreen Massey explained that space is "constituted through interactions, from the immensity of the global to the intimately tiny."[78] Rather than enclosing a 'place' within arbitrary boundaries, it is important to look at the networks of relationships between the 'place' and the people who have experienced it over the centuries. Space is a "simultaneity of stories-so-far" while places are "collections of those stories" in a given geographical context.[79] This approach is not without criticism: returning to Marxist interpretations, Leif Jerram argues that understanding space offers a perhaps unique opportunity to examine not only particular human relationships but also broader taxonomic categories, in part because space not so much "incidental to the production and maintenance of a grotesquely unequal system," but "precisely the mechanism that generated and sustained that system."[80] Space and place are thus often approached from a perspective that privileges the powerful, an idea that partly dictates the decision in writing this thesis to look at sacred space and place primarily from the perspective and intentions of the ecclesiastical elite: their commissioned texts, expensive buildings, and use of the landscape for their own ends, with only minimal speculation as to how the medieval pilgrim would have engaged with these spaces beyond surviving accounts or traditions.[81] Appreciating this complex (and fundamentally unequal) process of the construction of space is essential when considering the sacred programs that I believe were created through concerted efforts to bolster the prestige and power of a variety of cults in a variety of circumstances. Through production of hagiography and historiography, certain

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[77] Megan Cassidy-Welch, "Space and Place in Medieval Contexts," *Parergon* 27, no. 2 (2010): 1.

[78] Doreen B. Massey, *For Space* (London: SAGE Publications, 2005), 9.

[79] Ibid., 130.

[80] Leif Jerram, "Space: A Useless Category for Historical Analysis?," *History and Theory* 52, no. 3 (2013): 402. Jerram is particularly concerned with how 'space' and 'place' can be treated as interchangeable, as in his view, "places, crucially, need not have a geographical location at all," in part because scholars tend to include within the term 'place' the "values, performances, habits, and meanings associated with that location too" (407).

[81] Erecting buildings and altering landscapes (whether for ideological or economic reasons) are for the most part activities that can only be carried out by the elite of a society (with a few exceptions, such as the first oratory at Coldingham discussed in the next chapter), and this makes them unusually capable of overcoming the usual 'obduracy' of space. "Changing space usually (though not invariably) requires a level of money, power, skill, relationships, debate, consensus-forming (or violence), and sheer physical brutality that does not characterize changes to the usual objects discussed in the literature on material culture" (Ibid., 415).

locations could be highlighted, their sacred significance granted or reinforced by their relationship to a saint during his or her life and death. Such sites were often simultaneously the beneficiaries of substantial material investment, with visually distinctive stone-built Norman churches either replacing older structures or being installed as fixtures in the landscape (a process of creation similar to that which created Lefebvre's "absolute" spaces). Other churches or chapels were augmented by the addition or insertion of Romanesque architecture. Some of these secondary sites were set along pilgrim routes, and the visitation of pilgrims further reinforced the sacred nature of these 'side-attractions' to the major cult. This summary is necessarily a generalization, but aspects of it can be found in a wide range of Anglo-Norman sites in England as well as Wales and Ireland during the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

The concept of 'sacred space' has itself been the subject of a lively debate. Among the most influential works were those of Mircea Eliade.[82] Eliade sought to some extent to universalize the experience of the sacred, particularly in the case of medieval Europe, by studying shared phenomena such as pilgrimage and sacred sites across a range of cultural and geographical contexts. A number of key observations informed his work: regardless of creed, any site of pilgrimage or venerated shrine was to some extent an archetype, sharing common features. It was a place where the heavens and the earth converged, and it was possible to make contact with the divine. Such places were seldom, if ever, "chosen" by man, but rather discovered by him.[83] Eliade also questioned the dichotomy between 'sacred' and 'profane' (from the Latin *sacer* and *profanes*, both of which "originally had a primarily spatial meaning.") The divine could be found in mundane objects and routine places depending on the circumstances[84] and, following Finucane, each place or object infused with sanctity had the ability to "bombard" its surroundings with holy radioactivity.[85] Eliade was not without his critics; his characterization of sacred places

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[82] Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, trans. R. Sheed (London: Sheed and Ward, 1958).
[83] Ibid., 368-9.
[84] Sarah Hamilton and Andrew Spicer, *Defining the Holy: Sacred Space in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2005).
[85] Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims*, 26.

as "timeless and ahistorical," is particularly problematic, but his influence on Turner and others is undeniable.[86]

A debate about the role of sacred places in Christianity, from its inception to the medieval period, was opened up by Robert Markus and John Howe. Markus sought in part to build on Peter Brown's work by emphasizing the role of martyrs in the gradual creation of a 'Christian topography,' a phenomenon that was not present in the earliest days of the Christian faith.[87] John Howe, on the other hand, advocated a narrative of continuity and appropriation, where many 'Christian' sites had pagan or otherwise pre-Christian roots.[88] Howe has since revised his argument, recognizing that assuming most 'Christian' sites had pagan origins (and continuity with their possibly pagan predecessors) made it difficult, if not impossible, to recognize "any distinctively Christian landscape." As such, he proposed "putting aside temporarily all notions of 'pagan survivals'" and looking instead at elements of Christian originality.[89] Howe's more recent work broke down Christian holy sites into three non-exclusive categories: *locus amoenus* ("the pleasant, lovely place"), *locus horribilis* (a blighted landscape; untamed wilderness) and the "archetypical sacred centre" as described by Eliade, among others.[90] There are a number of important factors to consider: first, as mentioned above, these categories were not mutually exclusive – indeed, one commonly observed practice was the transformation of *locus horribilis* to *locus amoenus*, as the foundation stories of numerous Cistercian monasteries aptly demonstrate, a phenomenon also observed by Catherine Clarke to be at work in the institutional mythology of Glastonbury, Ely and Ramsey.[91] Interlinked with Clarke's examples is the special role of water in

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[86] John Eade and Michael Sallnow, "Introduction," in *Contesting the Sacred: The Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage*, ed. John Eade and Michael Sallnow (London: Routledge, 1991), 14.

[87] R. Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); R. Markus, "Holy on Earth Could Places Become Holy? Origins of the Christian Idea of Holy Places." *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 2:3 (1994): 139-55.

[88] J. Howe, "Creating Symbolic Landscapes: Medieval Development of Sacred Space," in *Varieties of Religious Conversion in the Middle Ages*, ed. James K. Muldoon (Gainsville: University Press of Florida, 1997), 63–78.

[89] J. Howe, "Creating Symbolic Landscapes: Medieval Development of Sacred Space," in *Inventing Medieval Landscapes: Senses of Place in Western Europe*, ed. John Howe and Michael Wolfe (Gainsville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2002), 208–209.

[90] Ibid., 210-215.

[91] Catherine A.M. Clarke, *Literary Landscapes and the Idea of England, 700-1400* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2006).

Anglo-Saxon England, discussed best by Della Hooke.[92] Mary Lee Nolan noted in her comprehensive study of Western pilgrimage that "winding roads and short trails" to shrine sites belie the fact that the vast majority are within an accessible distance of population centres.[93] Finally, Howe argued that buildings could be sacred centres, especially when one considered how much the erection of great stone churches changed the topography of any given site, at times dominating and commanding the landscape.[94] This concept will be particularly important to my own study, as one of the most ubiquitous features of Anglo-Norman occupation of sacred sites was the erection of stone churches, often with the intention of providing more fitting surroundings for shrines. More recently, Austin Mason and Tom Williamson examined the transition between 'pagan' and Christian in the context of ritual sites in conversion-period England, extensively using GIS technologies.[95]

It would be a difficult task to address every study of sacred space even in a medieval context, so I will instead draw attention to specific points in a number of more recent projects with particular relevance to my thesis. Clare Lees and Gillian Overing observed that while "the notion of 'landscape' is post-medieval … that of *locus* or place is thoroughly medieval – a familiar element of monastic habits of thought and knowledge."[96] During their study of Anglo-Saxon landscapes of power in Northumbria, they realized that the orientation of the traveller was to some extent based upon the location of certain sites (particularly Bamburgh Castle, Yeavering, and Lindisfarne), a number of which were visible from others.[97] Discussing Goscelin of St Bertin's close personal ties to Wilton Abbey, Stephanie Hollis wrote that "a specific location, particularly

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[92] Della Hooke, "Rivers, Wells and Springs in Anglo-Saxon England: Water in Sacred and Mystical Contexts," in *Water and the Environment in the Anglo-Saxon World.* ed. Maren Clegg Hyer & Della Hooke (Exeter Studies in Medieval Europe: History, Society and the Arts)*, (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2017), 107–35.

[93] M.L. Nolan & Nolan, S., *Christian Pilgrimage in Modern Western Europe* (Philadelphia: Haworth, 1992), 38.

[94] Howe, "Creating Symbolic Landscapes: Medieval Development of Sacred Space," 2002: 215.

[95] Austin Mason & Tom Williamson, "Ritual Landscapes in Pagan and Early Christian England," *Fragments: Interdisciplinary Approaches to the Study of Ancient and Medieval Pasts* 6 (2017).

[96] Clare Lees and Gillian Overing, "Anglo-Saxon Horizons: Places of the Mind in the Northumbrian Landscape," in *A Place to Believe In: Locating Medieval Landscapes*, ed. Clare Lees and Gillian Overing (University Park: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 2.

[97] Ibid., 12.

the built environment, gains significance and meaning from the lives lived within it," a point of particular relevance to sites that were organized around the life of a particular holy individual.[98] Roberta Gilchrist drew overdue attention to the works of thirteenth-century linguist Guilielmus Durandus (whose work was heavily derived from Honorius Augustus, d.1140) in her study of Norwich Cathedral, specifically his division of ecclesiastical space into three categories: sacred (churches and consecrated ground), holy (monastic accommodations, churchyards) and religious (the site of Christian burials).[99] The goal of the project was to "redress [the] imbalance [between the study of cathedrals and the study of their landscapes] by interpreting the development of Norwich cathedral close" and study it "in terms of the creation of the landscape of the close and transformations in its use and meaning over time."[100] A similar study was done by Peter Fergusson on the development of the cathedral priory of Christ Church Canterbury in the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[101] Hamilton and Spicer drew attention to the role of the senses in delineating sacred space, from the use of incense to the intrusive presence of church bells, which could sonically dominate the landscape as well as marking out the passing of the day.[102] Through the bells, as well as other timekeeping instruments such as sundials and, later, early mechanical clocks, "church buildings thus encapsulated sacred time."[103] Laura Howes argued that in writing, as in the design of everything from gardens to palaces to churches, time in the medieval period proceeded "processionally, sequentially, rather than all at once and from a particular vantage point."[104] The scholarship on medieval time is too extensive to be recounted here, though the work of Donald Wilcox and a collection of essays on *Medieval Concepts of the Past* were

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[98] Stephanie Hollis, "Strategies of Emplacement and Displacement: St Edith and the Wilton Community in Goscelin's Legend of Edith and the Liber Confortatius," in *A Place to Believe In: Locating Medieval Landscapes*, ed. Clare Lees and Gillian Overing (University Park: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 152.

[99] Roberta Gilchrist, *Norwich Cathedral Close: The Evolution of the English Cathedral Landscape*, Studies in the History of Medieval Religion (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2005), 237-238; 243.

[100] Gilchrist, *Norwich Cathedral Close*, 1.

[101] Peter Fergusson, *Canterbury Cathedral Priory in the Age of Becket* (London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2011).

[102] Hamilton and Spicer, *Defining the Holy*, 6-8.

[103] Ibid., 10.

[104] Laura L. Howes, "Narrative Time and Literary Landscapes in Middle English Poetry," in *Inventing Medieval Landscapes: Senses of Place in Medieval Europe*, ed. Michael Wolfe and John Howe, (Gainsville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2002), 193-4.

important contributors to the debate.[105] The more specific examples cited above address key aspects of medieval conceptions of time and place, which are of vital importance in considering cult sites within the medieval imagination in a period of transition from Anglo-Saxon or Welsh to Anglo-Norman, and importance of a saint's life and legacy in the operation and promotion of the contemporary cult and shrine and the surrounding landscape.

Pilgrimage

Any discussion of saints and cults must engage with the vibrant discussion surrounding pilgrimage, both in Medieval European and non-Western contexts. This study is no different; indeed, the focus on 'secondary' sites removed from the main *foci* of cults, but possessing their own sacred significance, depends on the existence and activities of pilgrims. The social meaning of pilgrimage, in terms of both structure and the individual, has been hotly debated. Emerging from the work of the sociologist Emile Durkheim, a number of Marxist interpretations explaining pilgrimages and shrines as normalizing and reinforcing obedience to and the authority of the dominant cultural and social paradigm (in this case, Christianity) have been put forward.[106] Opposing this train of thought is the influential work of Victor Turner, who strongly argued that pilgrimages and pilgrimage behaviour had the opposite effect: through the shared experience of pilgrimage, no matter what one's social rank, pilgrimages and cults created *communitas*, and thus the pilgrimage experience was inherently, even uniquely, egalitarian and inclusive.[107] Critics have contested Turner's claim by examining non-Western pilgrimage contexts, including Eickelman's study of Moroccan pilgrimage.[108] Eade and Sallnow offered a further deconstruction, suggesting

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[105] Donald J. Wilcox, *The Measure of Times Past: Pre-Newtonian Chronologies and the Rhetoric of Relative Time* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); Gerd Althoff, Johannes Fried, and Patrick J. Geary, eds., *Medieval Concepts of the Past: Ritual, Memory, Historiography*, Publications of the German Historical Institute (Washington, D.C.: German Historical Institute, 2002).

[106] D. Eickelman, *Morrocan Islam: Tradition and Change in a Pilgrimage Center* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1976).

[107] Victor Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives*, Lectures on the History of Religions; 11 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1978).

[108] Eickelman, *Morrocan Islam*.

that "much of what Turner has to say could be seen as representative of a particular discourse *about* pilgrimage rather than as an empirical description *of* it, one which might well co-exist or compete with alternative discourses."[109]

This thesis does not aim to settle this ongoing debate (which extends into broader discussion of medieval community and identity), but rather focuses on the organization and ideology around specific saints' cults in a period where most of the agency belonged to the ecclesiastical institutions trying to blend local and new traditions and structures. For the most part, this meant the governing institutions and keepers of inherited cults renewing and restoring them without sacrificing their continuity with the pre-Conquest world. Turner's model (which finds support in the more 'populist' readings of cults like that advanced by Koopmans), being based upon the experience of the pilgrim rather the cult organizers, is therefore less applicable. The model of pilgrimage to and the veneration of saints as promoted in hagiographical literature and miracle collections is the one of the strongest manifestations of Peter Brown's 'patron-client' relationship model: the worthy were granted miracles, the defiant were punished, and the unsuccessful were largely forgotten.[110] To an extent, the top-down model of pilgrimage and the creation of sacred space validates the Marxist interpretation. Some caution is warranted, however, as some Marxist theoretical approaches risk obscuring the true nature of a thought-world where belief in the supernatural as omnipresent was the norm even among the most learned intellectuals,[111] although the intellectual developments of the twelfth century, as well as the creation of the formalized canonization process, added new levels of scrutiny and elite control of sanctity.[112]

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[109] Eade and Sallnow, 'Introduction,' 5.

[110] Brown, *The Cult of the Saints*; though see Hayward, "Demystifying the Role of Sanctity in Western Christendom," for criticism of this model, as well as Brown himself; in more recent work he has recognized a missing component in the metaphor of the patron-client and saint-supplicant relationship: the tension between the celebration of the saints' ultimate virtues being spiritual and otherworldly, while the requests made were intensely grounded in the needs and desires of this world. (P.L. Brown, "Enjoying the Saints in Late Antiquity," *Early Medieval Europe* 9, no. 1 (2000): 10-11).

[111] Robert Bartlett, *The Natural and the Supernatural in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

[112] Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*.

To return to Turner, it cannot be doubted that any single site was experienced at least slightly differently by each pilgrim. While there has been a degree of speculation based on indirect references and archaeological finds,[113] we have no explicit suggestions in an Anglo-Norman context in England or Wales that there was a prescribed practice of procession or any one order to progress from one site to the next, although examples do exist elsewhere; specifically in Rome, the Holy Land itself, and, mostly intriguingly, pilgrimage practices at Irish sacred sites (the *turas*, or pilgrimage round) that in some cases continue to this day, discussed at greater length in Chapter IV.[114] Furthermore, pilgrims undoubtedly came from every direction and every walk of life. The speed at which they travelled, and the degree of access they would have to more remote sites, would be determined by their social status (and access to horses or other transportation) as well as their physical health. A certain degree of wealth and power might entitle some individuals to special access to the relics themselves, as seems to have been the case with the Hand of St James at Reading Abbey.[115] One possible model of interaction is that the smaller and more local sites may have been visited first, as they often lay along popular pilgrimage routes leading to major shrines (the Saint's Road to Mount Brandon in Dingle would be an example of this). Each successive experience of the sacred would build the anticipation of arriving at their ultimate destination. By visiting sites associated with a saint or housing relics of people associated with them in life, the experience of being in the presence of the shrine would be all the more powerful. But it is just as likely that pilgrims experienced this in reverse, visiting the shrine before exploring local sites, having learned of them by hearing parts of the saints' *vitae* or *miracula* read aloud on their feast days, or advice from the clerical guardians of the cult. Instances of both occur

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[113] Wells, "'And He Went Round the Holy Places.'"

[114] Debra J. Birch, *Pilgrimage to Rome in the Middle Ages: Continuity and Change* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer Ltd, 2000); Josephie Brefeld, *A Guidebook for the Jerusalem Pilgrimage in the Late Middle Ages: A Case for Computer-Aided Textual Criticism* (Uitgeverij Verloren, 1994); Peter Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland: The Monuments and the People* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1995); Michael Herity, "The Antiquity of an Turas (the Pilgrimage Round) in Ireland.," in *Lateinische Kultur Im VIII. Jahrhundert: Traube-Gedenkschrift* ed. Traube et al (St. Ottilien: EOS Verlag Erzabtei St. Ottilien, 1989), 95–143.

[115] Brian Kemp, "The Miracles of the Hand of St James," *The Berkshire Archaeological Journal* 65 (1970): 1–19.

in the handful of accounts we have that explicitly mention secondary cult sites.[116] Furthermore, except for those already familiar and with access to hagiographical literature, the importance of these secondary sites (especially those not located along thoroughfares) might not be apparent. The likely audience for hagiography and the literature of saint's cults is a thorny issue,[117] but Yarrow has argued that trying to disentangle the 'elite' reception from the 'popular' risks overlooking their intended purpose and how they would be understood by any medieval audience.[118]

To summarize, Turner's model of social equality and the breaking down of social barriers through a universal experience seems inadequate to explain non-Western pilgrimage traditions, or these distinctively medieval post-Conquest developments. A transfer of power would almost certainly lead to the establishment of new ways of doing things. Particularly in the case of minor cult sites, it is hard to imagine that this did not include how pilgrims engaged with the sacred, which would have been in large part shaped and propagated by the keepers of the cult themselves, acting in the interest of their saint, but of also in the interests of their institutions as well.

Beyond the Medieval: The Role of Prehistory and Non-Western Ideas of Sacred Space

While both the fields of medieval landscape archaeology and pilgrimage have grown and developed significantly, particularly in terms of theoretical approaches, the number of studies that use both historical and archaeological data on medieval sacred spaces, and more importantly, critically examine both types of evidence, is still quite small.[119] Studies of pilgrimage from Eliade

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[116] Robert Bartlett, *The Miracles of Saint Æbbe of Coldingham and Saint Margaret of Scotland*, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003); 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 AD 1200*, ed. Gerald Bonner, D. W. Rollason, and Clare Stancliffe (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1989), 437–46.

[117] Barbara Abou-El-Hai, "The Audiences for the Medieval Cult of Saints," *Gesta* 30, no. 1 (1991): 3–15.

[118] Yarrow, *Saints and Their Communities*, 16-17.

[119] Johnson, *Ideas of Landscape*; Aleksandra McClain, "Theory, Disciplinary Perspectives and the Archaeology of Later Medieval England," *Medieval Archaeology* 56 (2012): 131–70; Roberta Gilchrist, "Medieval Archaeology and Theory: A Disciplinary Leap of Faith," in *Reflections: 50 Years of Medieval Archaeology*, ed. Roberta Gilchrist and Andrew J. Reynolds, Society for Medieval Archaeology Monographs 30 (Leeds: Maney, 2009), 385–408.

onward have exploded out from a Western European perspective, recognizing the phenomenon across the world, including many areas where Christianity never reached. Perhaps unsurprisingly, prehistorians were largely responsible for the development of rigorous landscape archaeology and its theoretical framework, as the absence of textual evidence to give insight into the prehistoric worldview necessitated greater creativity in the quest to understand how pre-literate societies understood and used space, particularly sacred space.

The field of prehistoric landscape archaeology is expansive, encompassing generations of debate between New Archaeology processualists (arguing for a rigorously 'scientific' methodology) and post-processualists (emphasizing that humans and human perception could affect their environment and behaviour as much if not more than vice versa). One of the most enduring and spirited debates has been over phenomenology, a theory of landscape interpretation that grew out of the 'landscape as palimpsest' approach of geographer W.G. Hoskins and was embraced by prehistorian Chris Tilley,[120] who was himself drawing from the concept of 'lifeworlds' and the sensory experience of landscape, both individual and collective, developed by Edmund Husserl.[121]   Phenomenology is centred around 'embodiment' – the experience of landscape that occurs through the full utilization of the bodily senses. Tilley divided the human understanding of landscapes into an 'inner' and 'outer' sense; the former can only be accessed by personal experience and full immersion in the landscape. Only then is the active agency of a landscape, natural or man-made, truly revealed. The 'outer' sense pertains to various kinds of representations of landscape, from text to maps to computer imagery. From the phenomenological perspective, the knowledge these provide is "relatively superficial and abstracted."[122] Tilley argued that there cannot be "non-contextual definition of either landscape

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[120] W. G. Hoskins, *The Making of the British Landscape* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1955).

[121] Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, Northwestern University Studies in Phenomenology & Existential Philosophy (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1970). Beatrice Widell, "The Monastic Lifeworld: Memories and Narratives of Landscapes of Early Medieval Monasticism in Argyll, Scotland," *Landscapes* 18, no. 1 (January 2, 2017): 4–18, applied Husserl's 'lifeworlds' phenomenon to the collective transmitted memory of the landscape of Iona by early monastic institutions.

[122] Christopher Y. Tilley, *Interpreting Landscapes: Geologies, Topographies, Identities*, Explorations in Landscape Phenomenology; 3 (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2009), 25-26.

or place" and that the primary concern of the phenomenologist is finding the routes and paths between various aspects of the landscape to understand how they might have been experienced in the past. The concern is with "stasis and movement … places alter with regard to how they are experienced, as do the paths or routes of movement within or between them."[123] Tilley's approach has been criticized, primarily due to the tendency to universalize the experience of prehistoric individuals by reflecting on a twentieth-twenty-first century examination of landscapes that have undergone many profound changes,[124] leading to the rejection of data that does not fit a pre-determined hypothesis based on present-day observation. Tim Ingold objected to the division between 'inner' and 'outer' senses, instead arguing that "the human experience of landscape is inductive – meaning is gathered from the world around us" in contrast to 'space' "which has meaning attached by us."[125] According to Ingold, the landscape is defined by its form, not its function, and because it is constantly being rebuilt and redefined by the people occupying it, it is "never complete: neither 'built' nor 'unbuilt'; it is perpetually under construction."[126]

Despite these limitations, phenomenology can, in some instances, be a useful tool for understanding medieval sites and spaces. Though they did not state it explicitly, Lees and Overing employed a phenomenological approach in their study of landscapes of power in Anglo-Saxon Northumbria, particularly with the observation that important sites such as Bamburgh Castle, Lindisfarne, and Yeavering could on some days be seen on the horizon from one site to another.[127] Lees and Overing described the onset of "a process of orientation" as they moved through the landscape (by car and foot) "whereby our sense of where we were was often found or defined in relation to these sites – whether or not they were visible."[128] Importantly, they also acknowledged the challenges of such an approach on a dynamic landscape with a long history: "What we actually saw, in fact, was decidedly un-Anglo-Saxon, in that the original structures on

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[123] Ibid., 27.
[124] J. Brück, "In the Footsteps of the Ancestors: A Review of Christopher Tilley's A Phenomenology of Landscape: Places, Paths, and Monuments," *Archaeological Review from Cambridge* 15, no. 1 (1998): 23–36.
[125] Tim Ingold, "The Temporality of the Landscape," *World Archaeology* 25, no. 2 (1993): 154-5.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Lees and Overing, "Anglo-Saxon Horizons: Places of the Mind in the Northumbrian Landscape," 12-13.
[128] Ibid., 12.

the sites of Lindisfarne and Bamburgh are long gone and replaced or built over by later ones," while the palace site at Yeavering looks today like just another "hilly pasture just below Yeavering Bell."[129] Nonetheless, between their scholarly knowledge of the sites and "an awareness conditioned by proximity and ordained by contour and mass," they were aware of the relationship, just as visitors or residents of Anglo-Saxon Northumbria surely were. This type of 'historically informed' phenomenology can be very revealing and will be used as a tool to understand the spatial significance of sacred sites within designed or inherited holy landscapes, particularly those in rural settings such as Glastonbury and St Davids. As long as scholars are broadly aware of the changes that have occurred that might make the landscape they see fundamentally different (the draining of the Somerset Levels, for example), personal observation is still a valid methodological approach that can yield unique insights into how spaces might have been experienced in the medieval period.

Phenomenology is of course not the only theoretical approach that medieval landscape studies can borrow from scholars outside the medieval field. Mike Pearson has argued for consideration of the "spirit of place" in the minds of those who pass through a landscape, particularly those aware of or participating in folk tales and traditions; in many cases "the land is a repository of memory."[130] The concept of "performative memory," where the physical act of travelling through a landscape recalls and accesses memories linked to certain monuments or features in the mind of a pilgrim, overlaps with phenomenology, but requires the input of aspects of the contemporary thought world. Irish history and the landscape have frequently been understood through the phenomenon of *dindshenchas*, or 'the lore of places.'[131] Simon Schama, another important voice in the discussion of landscape and memory, characterises landscape as "the work of the mind. Its scenery is built up as much as from the strata of memory as from layers

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[129] Ibid., 13.

[130] Mike Pearson, *"In Comes I": Performance, Memory and Landscape*, Exeter Performance Studies (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2006), 6.

[131] Petra Helmuth, "The Dindshenchas and Irish Literary Tradition," in *Cin Chille Cúile*, ed. John Carey, Máire Herbert, and Kevin Murray (Aberystwyth: Celtic Studies Publication, 2004), 116–26.

of rock."[132] The addition of buildings to a landscape has its own important effects; in his study of sacred sites in Neolithic Ireland, Gabriel Cooney observed that "places recognized as sacred can be made permanent by monument building. The introduction of a monument into the 'natural' environment can signify that the human institutions that created the monument are taking on the permanence of nature.[133]

This may have been particularly true for medieval Christianity, which Ellen F. Arnold in her study of the use of the landscape by the monks of Stavelot-Malmedy argued "was in many ways a *tangible* religion," reflecting on the substantial investment in the materiality of churches and the performance of the liturgy itself. "To further cement the ties between wealth and spirituality and to draw people to the monasteries, the monks built and continuously renovated an impressive religious infrastructure of monasteries and churches, and packed them with shrines, altars, candles, and artworks."[134] Churches and other public material expressions of Christian belief, such as high crosses, and chapels at holy wells were the medieval version of Cooney's prehistoric monuments, and could be installed across a wider landscape to 'make' it Christian during the conversion period, or later on to stake an institutional claim on certain sites. For the most part, these monuments only grew more 'monumental' as years went on, and this is certainly true in the context of the post-Conquest transition period in England and Wales. The replacement of smaller churches (some, though not all, made of timber) with distinctively Anglo-Norman Romanesque structures dramatically altered the landscape, creating new focal points of sanctity and to some extent, even a distinctive Anglo-Norman presence as a result of the short time-frame in which the conversion of wood to stone or rebuilding of pre-existing stone churches was undertaken.[135] While Gem's notion of a universalized 'Great Rebuilding' must be at least made

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[132] Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (London: Harper Collins, 1995), 7.
[133] Gabriel Cooney, "Sacred and Secular Neolithic Landscapes in Ireland," in *Sacred Sites, Sacred Places*, ed. David L Carmichael et al., 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 1997), 35.
[134] Ellen F. Arnold, *Negotiating the Landscape: Environment and Monastic Identity in the Medieval Ardennes* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 175.
[135] R. Gem, "The English Parish Church in the 11th and Early 12th Centuries: A Great Rebuilding," in *Minsters and Parish Churches: The Local Church in Transition, 950-1200*, ed. John Blair (Oxford: Oxford University Committee for Archaeology, 1988), 21–30.

to account for regional differences,[136] I would argue that one of the clearest signs of Anglo-Norman sacred landscape construction is the erection or rebuilding of substantial stone churches at the same time that certain sites are being promoted through hagiographical and historiographical literature. Stone buildings were expensive, requiring specialized labour to build and decorate, and raw materials that were not always close at hand. It seems reasonable to assume that the sites they occupied must have been of some importance to contemporary patrons, be they individuals or institutions.

From Eliade to the anthropological studies of pilgrimage promoted by Eade and Sallnow, the history of scholarship on pilgrimage behaviour at sacred places has been one that frequently expanded its lens beyond any single geographical region or historical era. Despite significant differences in theology, social or political circumstances, or historical context, comparative study of religious practice across the world can be useful for formulating theoretical models to categorize and identify specific types of behaviour and practice, and their role in the formation and reinforcement of cults. There has been no small amount of attention drawn to the fundamental differences between Western and non-Western attitudes towards space, particularly natural space, in the context of religion: Yi-Fu Tuan argued that while Chinese tradition saw man as part of nature, Europeans approached nature as a subordinate entity.[137] In a specifically western Christian context, the landscape was not imbued with holy significance in its own right; rather, a combination of human and divine alterations and additions (altars, shrines, buildings) granted to it additional sacred significance. Natural features with sacred significance (wells, springs, caves) were frequently enhanced with the construction of churches or other permanent buildings (Chapter V discusses the Welsh examples of Holywell and Penrhys). More important than nature was the ritual or ceremony that marked it as separate from the profane.

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[136] Aleksandra McClain, "The Archaeology of Transition: Rethinking Medieval Material Culture and Social Change," in *The Art, Literature and Material Culture of the Medieval World*, ed. Meg Boulton, Jane Hawkes & Melissa Herman (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2015), 33-4.
[137] Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2014).

Tuan's assessment (which draws contrast between Ancient Greek as well as non-Western thought and Western Christian practices) would on the whole seem quite accurate (though following Eliade, one might suggest that certain locations and natural features could be made holy merely by the perception of divine presence, without churches or other buildings being a necessary component), but this does not mean that non-Western models are completely incompatible with their Western Christian counterparts. Anne Feldhaus's study of pilgrimage and sacred geography in the Maharashtra region of India detailed a number of practices that would not seem inappropriate within the observance and structure of a medieval saint's cult, as well as observing the influence that such sites and the traditions around them can have in the formation of a "regional consciousness."[138] During the course of a pilgrimage to Signapur, a group of pilgrims broke off from the main route, following local guides, and came to a place called Rankhila, the site of several monuments including a circular mound of rocks (a *khila*) with a *kar* tree growing from the centre and another tree (a *nepati*) projecting from the side of the mound, a small shrine, and a wall of rocks "arranged to form a kind of bunker." The pilgrims performed a series of rituals, including circumambulating the *khila* five times in a clockwise direction. The entire event directly preceded the 'climax' of the pilgrimage, as the pilgrims and the *kavads* they bore arrived at the temple of Signapur.[139] Circumambulation around sacred sites is a familiar aspect of Christian pilgrimage and sacred ritual as well as that of South Asian traditions, but what is more significant for the current thesis is the timing of this detour – a last minute diversion to a site of lesser significance preceding the arrival at the main shrine and object of the pilgrimage.[140] While specific descriptions of medieval pilgrimage activity are somewhat limited outside of the Holy Land and Rome (contemporary Irish practices probably resemble medieval rituals, although there is limited evidence to prove the similarity), such a model of ritual practice is one possible explanation for the use of secondary cult sites in an Anglo-Norman Christian context. A number

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[138] A. Feldhaus, *Connected Places: Region, Pilgrimage, and Geographical Imagination in India* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), 7.

[139] Ibid., 51-52.

[140] Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland*; Wells, "'And He Went Round the Holy Places'"; Agehananda Bharati, "Pilgrimage in the Indian Tradition," *History of Religions* 3, no. 1 (1963): 135–67.

of other sacred traditions in the Maharashta region are centred around the legendary travels of individual goddesses, sometimes as part of their own lives on earth, other times as part of accounts of contact between man and the divine. There is an intriguing distinction drawn between *sakti* (roughly, 'holiness') left by the divine incidentally versus intentionally, which might have resonance with Western Christian models. While Sutra X.171 of the *Sthanpothi* states that all "*sakti* is deposited through contact with the Absolute":

> It is *sakti* of both these kinds in the Mahanubbav holy sites that make pilgrimage to them effective: they help one solve practical, worldly problems, and they increase one's inner worthiness, thus helping one to transcend this world and its suffering and to attain the permanent presence of God.[141]

Similar ideas are frequently expressed in medieval Christian sources. Studies such as Feldhaus's offer this current project, as well as medievalists in general, a working model of pilgrimage and its relationship to sacred sites based on present-day observation of a living and vibrant religious tradition with significant structural similarities to those of our period, even considering the substantial cultural differences. A great deal of the difficulty in understanding how medieval societies understood and approached sacred space and pilgrimage activity necessarily comes from the vagueness of the sources of the time – personalized accounts of pilgrimage are mostly later medieval in date, and those texts that address popular devotion around cult sites in the eleventh and twelfth centuries in England are written from the limited perspective of ecclesiastical elites. Feldhaus's is just one study, but it offers an example of how scholarship on contemporary non-Western religious phenomena can shed some light on that of the medieval period.

The State of Scholarship: Sacred Spaces and the Cult of Saints

The greatest shortcoming of existing research on sacred space in high medieval contexts is that it has almost entirely been conducted on a site-by-site basis. To a large extent, studies of medieval perception of sacred space have centred around the experience in the proximity of or

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[141] Feldhaus, *Connected Places*, 202.

within medieval buildings.[142] Despite the recognition of the vital importance of landscape context in understanding churches, following Richard Morris, most comparative or regional studies of church landscapes have focused upon parish churches and not the broader surroundings of larger ecclesiastical sites like abbeys or cathedrals.[143] Even with these limitations, such studies provide helpful models for approaching a variety of sites that can be readily adapted for different sources and contexts. One of the most comprehensive is Roberta Gilchrist's study of Norwich Cathedral and its environs, discussed previously, as well as Peter Fergusson's study of Christ Church, Canterbury.[144] Gilchrist also made a major contribution to the study of sacred space within ecclesiastical precincts with her more recent publication on Glastonbury Abbey.[145] Along with Cheryl Green, Gilchrist has drawn together and critically analysed the often problematic archaeological scholarship on the abbey, reinterpreting the finds of Blythe-Bond, Radford and others, and correcting a number of assumptions that were based more on flights of fancy than concrete evidence. As the project was limited to previous excavations within the precinct, Gilchrist and Green offered few observations about the broader context of a sacred landscape and the presence of certain sites in contemporary sources, though this had been previously addressed by Phillip Rahtz and Lorna Watts, the former of whom led excavations of the chapel at Beckery and the summit of Glastonbury Tor.[146] A more ambitious and sweeping study was undertaken by Everson and Stocker on the landscape of Barlings Abbey, covering the prehistoric period through to the establishment, destruction, and post-Dissolution history of the

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[142] C. Pamela Graves, *The Form and Fabric of Belief: An Archaeology of the Lay Experience of Religion in Medieval Norfolk and Devon*, BAR British Series; 311 (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2000).

[143] Richard Morris, *Churches in the Landscape* (London: Dent, 1989); John Blair and Carol Pyrah, *Church Archaeology: Research Directions for the Future*, Research Report (Council for British Archaeology); No. 104 (York: Council for British Archaeology, 1996).

[144] Fergusson, *Canterbury Cathedral Priory in the Age of Becket*.

[145] Roberta Gilchrist and Cheryl Green, *Glastonbury Abbey: Archaeological Investigations 1904-79* (London: The Society of Antiquaries of London, 2015).

[146] Philip Rahtz and Lorna Watts, *Glastonbury: Myth & Archaeology* (Stroud: The History Press, 2009); Philip Rahtz, "Excavations on Glastonbury Tor, Somerset, 1964-6," *Archaeological Journal* 127 (1971): 1–81; Philip Rahtz and S.M. Hirst, *Beckery Chapel, Glastonbury* (Glastonbury: Glastonbury Antiquarian Society, 1974).

Premonstratensian abbey.[147] Everson engaged closely with the theoretical landscape approaches of Matthew Johnson in his *Ideas of Landscape* and made an important distinction between 'true' continuity of the use and understanding of historic landscapes (the basis of a frequent criticism of Johnson's approach) and the 'perception' of continuity.[148] This was a landscape "continuously occupied … where memory and custom, *i.e.* people's perceptions, inform the power of place." The difference is key to my identification of sacred landscapes and the secondary cult sites that anchor them: whether there truly *was* historical continuity is considerably less important than how ecclesiastical communities *constructed* narratives of continuity. This phenomenon fits into a broader discussion of memory in the Middle Ages, addressed most comprehensively in textual sources by Mary Carruthers.[149] Tim Pestell's 2004 study of monastic landscapes of East Anglia also addressed this phenomenon in the physical world: "landscapes are constructed not just physically, but mentally … the church was fundamentally important, not only having landholdings and wealth to manipulate the environment physically, but, through its access to literacy, the power to shape written sources influencing such perceptions."[150] The context-driven, post-processual approach of both studies contrasts with earlier surveys of monastic landscapes, such as the Bordesley Abbey project,[151] as well as a series of essays on the archaeology of rural monasteries,[152] and more recently the work of James Bond,[153] which focused on the economic role of outbuildings and monastic granges in the development and expansion of monasteries, though he has also drawn attention to points of sanctity in monastic landscapes, including the collection of chapels around St Davids, the subject of Chapter V.[154] There have been attempts to marry the

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[147] Paul Everson and David Stocker, *Custodians of Continuity? The Premonstratensian Abbey at Barlings and the Landscape of Ritual*, Lincolnshire Archaeology and Heritage Report Series; No. 11 (Sleaford: Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire, 2011).

[148] Everson and Stocker, *Custodians of Continuity*, 7.

[149] Mary J. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*, 2nd ed., Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

[150] Tim Pestell, *Landscapes of Monastic Foundation: The Establishment of Religious Houses in East Anglia C. 650-1200* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2004), 9.

[151] Philip A. Rahtz and S.M. Hirst, *Bordesley Abbey, Redditch, Hereford-Worcestershire: First Report on Excavations 1969-1973* (Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, 1976).

[152] Roberta Gilchrist and H. C. Mytum, *The Archaeology of Rural Monasteries* (Oxford: B.A.R., 1989).

[153] James Bond, *Monastic Landscapes* (Cheltenham: Tempus, 2003).

[154] James Bond, "Landscapes of Monasticism," in *Landscape: The Richest Historical Record*, ed. Della Hooke, SLS Supplementary Series 1 (Amesbury: Society for Landscape Studies, 2000), 68.

two approaches, notably by Pestell, in both his work on monastic landscapes (above) and the Bromholm Project, which sought to use scatters of material culture to understand landscape use and change in East Anglia.[155] Arnold investigated the links between hagiography and legends originating from the monks of Stavelot-Malmedy and the natural world of the Ardennes that surrounded the two sites.[156] A selection of other scholarship for individual sites will be reviewed as part of the methodology chapter and case studies chapters to follow.

Several projects have analysed much larger landscapes. There have been a number of key studies of ritual landscapes in pre-historic and pre-Christian contexts.[157] Karen Altenberg examined three rural landscapes in Britain and Scandinavia, using a combination of archaeological, historical and even folkloric evidence to assess the history and popular understanding of these 'liminal' landscapes.[158] Like Pollard and Reynolds' study of Avebury, Altenberg employed a 'biographical' *longue durée* approach to landscape history, also used by Nico Roymans to study the Netherlands.[159] Sam Turner focused on the rich and multi-layered ecclesiastical landscapes of Devon and Cornwall, and on how their development can be traced through the use of monuments (particularly stone crosses), place-names, and land-ownership patterns, employing innovative mapping techniques to unpack the religious and political history of these landscapes, though he did not specifically address West Country saints' cults.[160] John Baker and Stuart Brookes utilized an integrated interdisciplinary approach to re-examine

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[155] Tim Pestell, "Using Material Culture to Define Holy Space: The Bromholm Project," in *Defining the Holy: Sacred Space in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. Sarah Hamilton and Andrew Spicer (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 161–86.

[156] Arnold, *Negotiating the Landscape: Environment and Monastic Identity in the Medieval Ardennes*.

[157] Joshua Pollard and Andrew J. Reynolds, *Avebury: The Biography of a Landscape* (Cheltenham: Tempus, 2002); Stefan Brink, "Myth and Ritual in Pre-Christian Scandinavian Landscape," in *Sacred Sites and Holy Places: Exploring the Sacralization of Landscape Through Time and Space*, ed. Saebjorg Walaker Nordeide and Stefan Brink, vol. 11, Studies in the Early Middle Ages (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 33–52.

[158] Karen Altenberg, *Experiencing Landscapes: A Study of Space and Identity in Three Marginal Areas of Britain and Sweden* (Uppsala: Almquist and Wiksell, 2003).

[159] Nico Roymans et al., "Landscape Biography as Research Strategy: The Case of the South Netherlands Project," *Landscape Research* 34, no. 3 (2009): 337–59.

[160] Sam Turner, *Making a Christian Landscape: How Christianity Shaped the Countryside in Early-Medieval Cornwall, Devon and Wessex* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2015), 22-9. Turner extensively utilized Historic Landscape Characterisation, an English Heritage-created methodology further developed by Stephen Rippon).

defensive landscapes in Anglo-Scandinavian England.[161] Hillary Powell has recently examined the use of place names within Anglo-Latin saints' lives from the late Anglo-Saxon period to the thirteenth century,[162] while Eleanor Barraclough has done similar work on landscapes as they exist within medieval sagas.[163] Among the case studies of Karen Overbey's study of 'sacral geographies,' one examined the 'mental' geography of the sacred laid out by the mid-twelfth-century Irish *Life* of Colum Cille (Columba), discussed at more length in Chapter IV.[164] While many of these projects had different aims and methods, all were to one extent or another multidisciplinary overviews of a wide range of evidence in order to understand specific areas and the relationship between points within them, and thus provide possible models for my study of secondary cult sites and ecclesiastically-generated sacred landscapes.

Two recent published doctoral theses explicitly attempted to build flexible, fully interdisciplinary, and comprehensive models for the archaeology of pilgrimage in several medieval European contexts. The subject was first directly addressed by Stopford, but while his article proposed a number of possible sources of archaeological evidence for pilgrimage, it did not propose a methodology.[165] Julia Candy's study of the Camino, the traditional medieval pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela, provides a useful definition of 'landscape': "every material component that was encountered during the pilgrimage journey or associated with the process of travel," which included natural and man-made features, as well as the road itself.[166] Her approach focused on the 'in-between' aspects of pilgrimage, de-emphasizing 'sites' and 'artefactual collections' as they "can only consider a mere fraction of the experience of pilgrimage

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[161] John Baker and Stuart Brookes, *Beyond the Burghal Hidage: Anglo-Saxon Civil Defence in the Viking Age* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

[162] Hilary Powell, "Saints, Pilgrimage and Landscape in Early Medieval Kent c.800-1220," in *Early Medieval Kent, 800-1220*, ed. Sheila Sweetinburgh, Kent History Project 10 (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2016), 133–53.

[163] Eleanor Rosamund Barraclough, "Inside Outlawry in 'Grettis Saga Ásmundarsonar' and 'Gísla Saga Súrssonar': Landscape in the Outlaw Sagas," *Scandinavian Studies* 82, no. 4 (2010): 365–88.

[164] Karen Overbey, *Sacral Geographies: Saints, Shrines, and Territory in Medieval Ireland* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012).

[165] J. Stopford, "Some Approaches to the Archaeology of Christian Pilgrimage," *World Archaeology* 26, no. 1 (1994): 57–72.

[166] Ibid.

movement," which does not include "the complex sequences of bodily movement in reaching them."[167] Candy eschewed the 'bird's eye view' of modern cartography, employing a phenomenological approach to 'experience' the pilgrimage route by walking it; the process "was accompanied by the unfolding of memories, perceptions and socially conditioned responses or interpretations."[168] According to Candy, "the journey of a pilgrim becomes an infinitely more complex and more interesting subject when no longer regarded as a mere line on a map and reconceptualised from a landscape perspective."[169] Candy's study is extremely important, but to an extent limited in its specific application to the Camino, which perhaps uniquely retains its almost exclusive use as a pilgrimage route from the medieval period to the present. By contrast, Martin Locker examined four *former* pilgrimage routes in Medieval England (Salisbury to Winchester, Ely to Walsingham, St Asaph to Holywell, and Camelford to Bodmin).[170] These are significantly harder to access from a phenomenological perspective, as already multi-purpose roads have been substantially modified by developments such as motorways and canals in the intervening centuries. Locker's own approach "aim[ed] to be applicable primarily to localized environments (i.e. cross-country), yet flexible enough in approach and comprehensive enough in terms of varied data sources to be expanded to larger trans-frontier routes" and to explore "the pilgrimage phenomenon in Britain, its subtlety in the archaeological and topographical record, its potential cultural distinctiveness (in comparison to other countries in Medieval Christendom), and the comparison of 'local' and 'universal' pilgrimage."[171] Both studies provide valuable tools for examining the experience of pilgrims in the landscape, and how it can be detected through archaeological and historical evidence. While my study will be focused more closely on individual secondary sites and the sacred programs of their ecclesiastical patrons, Candy and Locker's

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[167] Candy, *The Archaeology of Pilgrimage*, 2.
[168] Ibid., 23.
[169] Ibid., 24.
[170] Ibid..
[171] Ibid., 21.

studies represent two examples of effectively applying landscape theory to distinctively medieval phenomena.

Despite the range of previous scholarship - on conventions and uses of Anglo-Norman hagiography, post-Conquest shrines and saints' cults, medieval understandings of time and space, archaeological theory of landscapes, a range of site-specific studies, broader landscape analysis, and the archaeology of pilgrimage - a great amount of work remains to be done. While each of the sites I will focus on has been the subject of (at times) extensive study, comparative analysis and discussion of sacred landscapes as an ideological phenomenon in the post-Conquest British Isles has been severely limited. This thesis will evaluate not just specific sites and related hagiographical or historical works but cult *programmes* that were initiated and utilized by monastic communities, frequently in the service of promoting or reviving dormant cults and rewriting historical narratives to create continuity between new or revived institutions and the ancient past. Models and theoretical approaches will be drawn from a number of the studies discussed above as well as from the more developed body of scholarship on Irish pilgrimage sites, a select few of which can provide theoretical models that can be used to identity, categorize, and inform speculation about the use and promotion of the three primary case studies: St Davids, Durham Cathedral, Lindisfarne, and the Cult of St Cuthbert, and Glastonbury Abbey, but the methodology will be my own, and the different context of the selected sites will be properly considered. Before moving onto the case studies, I will draw out a number of possible models for Anglo-Norman sites and landscapes in England and Wales from the much-better preserved and researched pilgrimage sites and routes of Ireland. Overall, this thesis will aim to bring together a wide range of individual studies from different disciplines and regions to propose the existence of a broader phenomenon of constructing and revitalizing sacred landscapes in Anglo-Norman England. There are certainly other examples of secondary cult sites preserved either in the contemporary landscape or featured within hagiography of the period besides those examined in chapters IV through VII. Recently, Richard Morris speculated about the potential significance of both natural and prehistoric features in the hills around St Cedd's monastery at Lastingham, a

relationship that might have been reflected in the architecture of the church built by the short-lived Benedictine priory.[172] Glastonbury's use of multiple sacred sites in a connected landscape (discussed in Chapter VII) may also be observed in their ownership of the twinned chapels of St Michael at Looe in Cornwall.[173] The minor cult of St Kenelm, based in Winchcombe, possessed links to the site of the royal saint's martyrdom at Clent, which was the location of a holy well marked by a Romanesque church.[174] Gittos discusses the somewhat ambiguous case of the footprints of Mildreth of Sheppey, possibly a legend created by the monks of St Augustine's Canterbury when they acquired her relics in the eleventh-century.[175] At Burton Abbey, a chapel dedicated to a well of St Modwenna was located in the River Trent.[176] In a case of competition between two powerful foundations in East Anglia, Norwich Cathedral may have claimed ownership of the hamlet of Hoxne while promoting it as the site where the patron saint of their rival Bury St Edmunds had been martyred.[177] St Albans Abbey set up a nunnery near the site of the barrow from which a skeleton was pulled during the *inventio* of St Amphibalus in the thirteenth century, a legend the Abbey used both to promote a new cult and later drew upon in legal disputes over the land on which the barrow was located.[178] The appropriation and importance of the village of Binsey to the Augustinian-restored foundation of St Frideswide in Oxford has been the subject of several publications.[179] The 'Holy Mile' of Walsingham might be

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[172] Richard Morris, "Landscapes of Conversion among the Deirans : Lastingham and Its Neighbours in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries," in *Places of Worship in Britain and Ireland, 300-950.* Ed. Barnwell, P. S., Rewley House Studies in the Historic Environment, 4 (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2015), 119–52.

[173] Wessex Archaeology, *Looe, Cornwall.*

[174] Catherine Cubitt, "Sites and Sanctity: Revisiting the Cult of Murdered and Martyred Anglo-Saxon Royal Saints," *Early Medieval Europe* 9, no. 1 (March 1, 2000): 69-71. His *Vita* was published in Rosalind C. Love, *Three Eleventh-Century Anglo-Latin Saints' Lives: Vita S. Birini, Vita et Miracula S. Kenelmi, and Vita S. Rumwoldi*, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford :Clarendon Press, 1996), see Notes 2 and 3.

[175] Helen Gittos, *Liturgy, Architecture, and Sacred Places in Anglo-Saxon England*, 19-31. c.f. Hilary Powell, "Following in the Footsteps of Christ: Text and Context in the Vita Mildrethae," *Medium Aevum* 82, no. 1 (2013): 23–43.

[176] Geoffrey of Burton, *Life and Miracles of St Modwenna*, ed. Robert Bartlett, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002).

[177] Margaret Carey Evans, "The Contribution of Hoxne to the Cult of St. Edmund King and Martyr in the Middle Ages and Later.," *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History* 36, no. 3 (1987): 182–95.

[178] Lily Hawker-Yates, "In the Very Place Where the Saint Had Lain: Healing and Cursing at the Barrow of St Amphibalus" (International Medieval Conference, Leeds, UK, 2019).

[179] John Blair, "St Frideswides's Monastery: Problems and Possibilities," in *St Fridewide's Monastery at Oxford: Archaeological and Architectural Studies*, ed. John Blair (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1990), 3–20;

another example of an artificial sacred topography associated with a major cult site in the later

Middle Ages. It is likely that further networks of sites featured within hagiography remain to be

identified; the ultimate goal of this research, therefore, is to enable the study of sacred landscapes

from the Anglo-Norman period beyond the case studies considered here

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Lydia Carr, Russell Dewhurst, and Martin Henig, eds., *Binsey: Oxford's Holy Place: Its Saint, Village, and People* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2014).

III: METHODOLOGY AND THEORETICAL APPROACHES

In Chapter I, the concept of 'secondary cult sites,' the building blocks of 'sacred landscapes' in this study, were introduced. To review, secondary cult sites are areas of sacred significance to a saint's life or afterlife apart from the shrine and the corporeal remains, usually contained within a larger church. Secondary cult sites are often in 'natural' settings, either comprised of or spatially defined by features in the landscape, often identified by their role in the biography of a saint before or after his or her death, as promoted through hagiographical literature. These sites are frequently marked by forms of material investment, ranging from churches and chapels to standing crosses or other ecclesiastical monuments. The oratory associated with St Æbbe near Coldingham in the Scottish borders represents the best example of such a site in Anglo-Norman England, with contemporary hagiography that records both the construction of a church on the site and the miracles that were performed there. The remains of the church itself are just visible within a hilltop enclosure. Unlike the remainder of the case studies discussed in Chapters IV through VII, however, it is an isolated site linked only to Coldingham Priory, where the body of Æbbe rested in her shrine. Given its self-contained nature, it is a useful diagnostic illustration of a secondary cult site, a concept which will be crucial to the identification and analysis of the sites discussed in the case studies of the following chapters.

The Oratory of St Æbbe, Coldingham

Prior to the Norman Conquest and the adoption of Benedictine monasticism at Durham Cathedral in 1083, the Anglo-Saxon monastery of Coldingham and its most famed head were best known for their utter destruction on account of their sinful behaviour, as told by the Venerable Bede in his *Ecclesiastical History*.[180] But in the later twelfth century, after monastic life was re-established at Coldingham by monks of Durham, the unlikely saint and her monastery were reinvented to be the centre of a cult based both at the priory in Coldingham itself and at an

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[180] *HE* (iv.25).

isolated chapel several kilometres distant, high above the churning waters of the North Sea. What is less unusual than the invention of this cult is the way in which it was spatially oriented.

The *Vita et miracula S. Ebbe* was composed sometime after 1188, perhaps in the early 1190s, by an individual who might be identified as the Durham-based hagiographer Geoffrey of Coldingham. It is a collection of 43 miracles which the author claims were drawn from an earlier account of the saint's life and works, a claim taken in the past by many to be a rhetorical trope.[181] However, Lauren Whitnah argues that *vita* itself was predated by a divine office written for Æbbe, which suggests interest in reviving the cult earlier in the twelfth century.[182] The key event of the late-twelfth-century advent of the cult, at least according to the author of the *vita*, was the construction of an oratory of "humble materials, but as the frequency of miracles afterwards made clear, endowed with heavenly power" in 1188 by a local layman named Henry, called "the man of St Æbbe," who had received a vision instructing him to do so.[183] "The unskilled craftsman had mud for mortar and, instead of shaped stones, hard, rough rocks that antiquity had covered with soil and the hand of destroyers had left behind long ago."[184] The crude building that he raised drew scorn from the monastic community at Coldingham Priory who were the keepers of Æbbe's mortal remains, at least until reports of miracles validated Henry's efforts.[185] Eager to capitalize

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[181] Robert Bartlett, *The Miracles of Saint Æbbe of Coldingham and Saint Margaret of Scotland*, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003), xix-xx.

[182] Lauren L. Whitnah, "Reshaping History in the Cult of Æbbe of Coldingham," in *Medieval Cantors and Their Craft: Music, Liturgy and the Shaping of History, 800-1500* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2017), 212-214. The author of the *vita* was clearly familiar with the office, at times quoting directly from it.

[183] *VME*, 30-31: *oratorium construxit uili quidem materia conditum sed celesti uirtute, sicut postea signorum frequencia claruit preditum.*

[184] Ibid.: *Rudis enim artifex pro scemento lutum habebat et pro lapidibus sectis saxa dura et aspera,que solo uetustas obruerat et destruentium olim manus relinquerat.* Notably in this passage, the author claims that some of the building material for Henry's oratory was *spolia* from whatever remained of the destroyed monastery on the Coldingham headland.

[185] *VME*, 29-31. There appear to have been two post-Conquest translations: first, her relics were found on the headland (presumably at the site of the chapel) by a group of shepherds and brought to the new priory in Coldingham around 1139. A second translation occurred sometime before 1160, and this one is described in detail in the *vita et miracula* (Whitnah, " Reshaping History in the Cult of Æbbe of Coldingham," 215).

on this new source of divine power and sanctity, the monks shortly demolished Henry's building and replaced it with one that was larger and "more suitable for the divine service."[186]

The miracles did not cease: 34 out of 43 (79%) curative miracles were recorded as taking place near or at the site of the oratory, while only six (14%) are recorded as happening at the shrine in Coldingham Priory during the same period.[187] The oratory, which was presumed to be on the site of Æbbe's burial (and thus possibly her original monastery) became a place of equal importance to the shrine in Coldingham Priory church, and the miracles worked there provided vital evidence of Æbbe's sanctity and the cult's power.[188] The record of miracles explicitly taking place at a site far from the saint's shrine is unusual enough for this period, although a significant number are known from other twelfth-century *miracula* in the North, particularly the *Libellus* of Reginald of Durham (Chapter V). The percentage of miracles taking place at a site other than the primary shrine, however, is fairly unique, and is suggestive of an alternative spatial model for an Anglo-Norman saints' cult – one focused elsewhere than the shrine and the church that holds it.

The oratory has been traditionally identified with the building known from later records as St Æbbe's Chapel on Kirk Hill, a high massif towering above the surrounding hills on the edge of the shoreline. [**Figures 3.1** and **3.2**] A description of the site given in the *Vita et Miracula* is of an elevated place "hard to climb and to reach, for to the north and south it is approached by narrow paths, not without fear of the precipice which plunges downwards, while to the west it rises to a peak in a little hill and thence slopes eastwards to an uneven flat surface, where the oratory of the blessed virgin can be seen."[189] This description from the twelfth century perfectly fits the present-day situation, though the site is now crossed by a walking path across and below Kirk Hill, and the site of Æbbe's oratory is marked only by a rectangular set of earthworks, at the

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[186] *VME*, 31. As Whitnah notes, the story of the revival of Æbbe's cult is misleadingly presented; the liturgical office does not mention the story of Henry, and thus is suggestive of renewed interest in the cult even before this incident. (Whitnah, "Reshaping History in the Cult of Æbbe of Coldingham," 212-215).

[187] Bartlett, *The Miracles of Saint Æbbe,* xix-xx.

[188] Whitnah, "Reshaping History in the Cult of Æbbe of Coldingham," 220-221.

[189] *VME, 8-9: difficilis illo ascensus et accessus. Ab aquilone enim et meridie per angustas semitas uenientibus patet nec sine metu precipitii quod deorsum imminet. Ad occidentem in exigue collis | tumulum altius exurgit et inde ad orientem in gibbosam descendit planiciem, in qua beate uirginis oratorium conspicitur*.

east end of which some fragments of the walls may be visible.[190] [**Figure 3.3**] According to the

vita and later records, on the lower and higher elevations of Kirk Hill there were also a pair of

miracle-working holy wells. One of these, known as the Spring of St Æbbe, was at the base of Kirk

Hill on the southern side; a stone basin was removed from Kirk Hill to Coldingham during the

nineteenth century.[191] The approach to the oratory site from the northern or southern slopes

entirely obscures the destination; despite the elevated ground, the oratory is not visible from

anywhere to the west, and has no line of sight with Coldingham. Later records indicate that the

oratory continued in use through the time of the Reformation, though no more sets of miracles

are recorded after the twelfth-century compilation.[192] A 'semi-circular arch' was pulled down in

about 1800, but nothing but the crumbling wall footings of the chapel remains above ground.[193]

Defining a 'Sacred Landscape'

The example of Coldingham demonstrates not only the criteria I will be using for a

secondary cult site – a location, frequently marked by a church, chapel, or other ecclesiastical

monument, of significance to a saint's cult – but also the range of sources that I will be using to

examine my larger case studies. While the degree of survival and the availability of sources varies,

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[190] Whether the site of the oratory is also, as implied by the *vita et miracula*, the site of *urbs Coludi* or *Coludesbyrig*, Æbbe's monastery, is a matter of some debate. Alcock (Leslie Alcock, Elizabeth A. Alcock, and Sally M. Foster, "Reconnaissance Excavations on Early Historic Fortifications and Other Royal Sites in Scotland, 1974-84: 1, Excavations near St Abb's Head, Berwickshire, 1980," *Journal of the Society of the Antiquaries of Scotland* 116 (1986): 255–79). believed the presence of an early medieval palisade bank uncovered in excavations suggested the monastery was at Kirk Hill (while dismissing the traditional site of St Abb's Head) while Stronach (Simon Stronach, "The Anglian Monastery and Medieval Priory of Coldingham: Urbs Coludi Revisited," *Proceedings of the Society of the Antiquaries of Scotland* 135 (2005): 395–422). argued for the present site of the priory, with Kirk Hill serving as an additional site in an arrangement of "obscure religious site twinned with coastal landing place" known from places such as Whithorn (416-17). But the true location of the Anglo-Saxon monastery is of little consequence for the twelfth-century cult; the cult was where the miracles were.
[191] Rennie Weatherhead, "Æbbe - Her Life and Cult," *History of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club* 47, no. 3 (1998), 284. One of the wells originated from an incident where Æbbe and her nuns were trapped on a hilltop while pursued by an ardent suitor. Interestingly, a nearly identical incident is recorded in the *Liber Eliensis*, only in this case, Ely's patron Ætheldreda both the pursued party (by her husband) and the miracle worker, and Æbbe is merely the head of the monastic house in which Ætheldreda takes refuge. (Janet Fairweather, *Liber Eliensis: A History of the Isle of Ely from the Seventh Century to the Twelfth* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2005), 33-35 (i.11) .
[192] Weatherhead, "Æbbe - Her Life and Cult," 284-5.
[193] "St Abb's Head, Kirk Hill | Canmore," accessed August 27, 2016, https://canmore.org.uk/site/60173/st-abbs-head-kirk-hill.

the sites chosen for this study are ones with the best available range of hagiographical, archaeological, and architectural evidence. When close dating is possible, I have argued for a link between the commissioning of new texts or the revision of older ones and the construction or renovation of ecclesiastical buildings, mostly made of stone. Rather than studying these sites in isolation, I have identified them as components of a series of sacred landscapes.

Sacred landscape, as used in this thesis, is a similarly versatile category. Strictly speaking, any two points of sacred significance can comprise a 'landscape,' and these can exist across distances that can be walked in minutes or hours (i.e. the coastal chapels of St David) to those that might be many days' journey apart (the cult centres of Cuthbert at Durham and Lindisfarne). Julia Candy's definition of what constitutes a sacred landscape is useful here: "every material component that was encountered during the pilgrimage journey or associated with the process of travel."[194] These are Lefebvre's "absolute spaces," 'natural' locations whose 'natural' character is redefined by contact with the holy (following Eliade)[195] and the imposition of symbols which change the way a space is perceived and understood (Lefebvre)[196] along with the "holy radioactivity" of Finucane[197] and the 'sahkti' left by the Hindi goddesses in Maharashta,[198] or the *praesentia* of Colum Cille left behind at his 'bed' on Iona (the last discussed in the following chapter).[199] They take many forms, both sites with "natural" origins (wells, springs, caves) and the human and divine alterations which consecrate them (altars, shrines, buildings). Therefore, multiple secondary cult sites, combined with the main site (frequently that of the shrine), make up a sacred landscape in the sense that it has been used here.

Of course, sacred landscapes have much earlier origins than the medieval period; therefore it will be necessary to distinguish between 'natural' landscapes imbued with a sense of sanctity from an early, even prehistoric, date, and those sacred landscapes with specifically

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[194] Candy, *The Archaeology of Pilgrimage*, 2.
[195] Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, 368-69.
[196] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 164.
[197] Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims: Popular Belief in Medieval England*, 26.
[198] Feldhaus, *Connected Places*, 202.
[199] Overbey, *Sacral Geographies*, 73.

identified networks of sites that were the product of or were promoted by ideological programmes in the Anglo-Norman period, and which were frequently the recipient of significant material investment in the form of a church or chapel to 'mark' the site in the landscape. The distinction is essentially one of agency; in the latter case it lies not with the laity, the saint's contemporaries, or his or her distant predecessors, but with the caretakers of the saint in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries, who might revise and even rewrite historical narratives, extant hagiography, or the landscape itself, in pursuit of glorifying their saint and the landscape they were said to have once walked. In some instances, the evidence exists to demonstrate a concerted effort by the ecclesiastical institutions associated with cult sites to promote these secondary sites or sacred landscapes, when specific references within twelfth and thirteenth-century hagiography can be chronologically linked to material investment or ownership by the very same caretakers. Three sacred landscapes comprise the primary case studies of this project: Durham and Lindisfarne (St Cuthbert), St Davids in Wales, and Glastonbury Abbey. With the example of Coldingham, there is a clear contemporary link made between the secondary cult site of the chapel of St Æbbe of at Kirk Hill and the post-Conquest Coldingham Priory in the surviving *Lives* and miracle collections. It is explicit that the chapel was visited by pilgrims due to its historic association with the patron of the recently re-founded institution and that it was a place of recorded miracles. Extremely specific (and broadly reliable) dates can be assigned on the basis of contemporary hagiography, and the location of the medieval building described is precisely known from surviving remains and earthwork survey. The three major case studies (Ch. IV-VII) require more detailed interrogation. While a scattering of many different types of evidence can provide context and aid in reconstructing the development and promotion of a saint's cult, for the most part the individual sites and their role in a comprehensive landscape traversed by pilgrims is more speculative.

The central component of my methodology has been reconstructing the form and function of the sacred landscapes at St Davids, Lindisfarne and Durham, and Glastonbury. To aid in this process, the following chapter will focus on examples of widely-recognized and previously

studied sacred landscapes in Ireland, with a specific emphasis on the models that these sites exemplify, rather than the specific circumstances of their growth and development, as many of them date from outside the time frame of this study. There are a range of advantages to the Irish material, foremost among them being the degree of existing scholarship and the much higher rates of survival of the physical artefacts of medieval sacred sites. The importance of secondary sites in a broader landscape context has been previously recognized in Ireland, and thus more sites have been studied *as* landscapes than is the case in England and Wales. A number of examples have been chosen that best exemplify certain 'types' of sacred landscape, both physical and ideological, that can be used to reconstruct landscapes in England and Wales, where fewer such features have been preserved, and the significance of those that has not been studied in depth or in a comparative context. The theoretical models demonstrated in the chapter on Ireland can then be applied to the three case studies as an interpretative framework for the available evidence.

Case Studies: Criteria for Inclusion

I have chosen to select my case studies from the period between *c.*1050 and the early thirteenth century, from sites located in medieval England and Wales (though they will also be compared to other regional examples). Far from being a period of suppression or scepticism for Anglo-Saxon and Welsh cults, as was once conventional wisdom, it is now evident that the late eleventh through early thirteenth centuries were a time of renewal, expansion, and investment, signalled by a flowering of Latin hagiography and the dramatic rebuilding of dozens of Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical centres. What that means for this project is that this period presents the best confluence of intense interest in appropriating the Anglo-Saxon and Welsh cults through written sources and using them to revise and rewrite institutional histories to suit present needs. By this period also, most buildings being added to the sites were made of stone, which has led to better rates of survival or archaeological understanding. Between the number of potential sources and

the evidence of major ideological programmes, this period is the most fertile ground to study the use of sacred landscapes in the promotion of saints' cults in the Britain and Ireland.

Three case studies have been selected, primarily on the basis of the strength of available evidence, in particular the presence of either standing remains, credible accounts of vanished buildings, or archaeological findings of churches and chapels, along with a set of contemporary hagiography which uses specific place-names and can thus be linked to these points in the landscape. Each of these case studies, drawn from Anglo-Norman England and Wales, represents a post-Conquest institution's attempts at appropriating, reshaping, and promoting the landscapes associated with their saints in life and death, though the areas concerned can vary significantly in scale, from a series of satellite chapels around St Davids Cathedral to a landscape that spans the whole of the kingdom of Northumbria. While Irish, Scottish, and continental models can provide useful comparisons and possible models, their ecclesiastical politics had substantial differences from those of Anglo-Norman England and Wales, and these other examples must be considered in a depth that is in some cases beyond the scope of this project. While certainly tempting, making direct comparisons across these contexts or attempting to track the diffusion of ideas from region to region is thus quite risky. With the theoretical models of sacred landscapes from Ireland explained and illustrated with specific examples in the next chapter, the chapters following will look at the possible sacred landscapes at St Davids, Durham and Lindisfarne, and Glastonbury.

Advantages and Challenges to an Interdisciplinary Study of Sacred Landscapes

A wide range of different kinds of sources and types of evidence can be utilized to create a more comprehensive and contextualized understanding of the sacred landscapes associated with a select number of saints' cults, with more potentially waiting to be identified. The goal of this project is not just to critically compare a range of sites that have not previously been placed in a broader intellectual context, but to evaluate a number of theoretical models which might be

used to identity other examples of the same phenomenon which were not addressed in this study. I intend to demonstrate that these this phenomenon is not specific to any one region or ecclesiastical culture, and that the narrative of cult centralization and the primacy of the shrine and its setting in the post-Conquest period is not as universally applicable as some scholars have assumed. While it is important to consider every piece of evidence, it is even more important to understand the context of both the evidence itself and the scholarship that already exists.

Needless to say, there are a range of potential pitfalls and problems. Different sources of evidence, analysed through different theoretical frameworks, are best used to answer different questions. To take one example: to avoid archaeology serving as "the handmaiden of history," a point of contention which in part led to the New Archaeology movement, material and textual evidence cannot be used interchangeably or used to 'confirm' or 'verify' the other.[200] Hagiography and medieval histories in particular must be read with their literary features in mind, from metaphor (including allegory), to style, and historical bias (primarily revisionist history). What matters more than anything else is the intent and agenda of the author and the significance of the texts to the eventual audience, though the same literary features and expectations often influenced the writing of the texts themselves, which can result in a misleading sense of specificity to the modern reader. Archaeological evidence, specifically that relating to buildings and landscapes, necessarily relies on what has survived from the time that earthworks, buildings, or art objects were first created or installed *in situ*. Theoretical models and informed inferences are needed to fill in the gaps, and the post-processual approach is best suited to unpack and contextualize the sacred. However, when dealing with antiquarian or early archaeology the possibility that certain questions cannot be conclusively answered must be acknowledged. The

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[200] There is not enough space here to unpack nearly a half-century of debate in archaeological theory. The evolution from the processual approach of prehistorians such as Binford and Clarke to post-processualism of Hodder and his successors has been neither linear nor universal. Given the nature of the evidence and the extensive use of surviving historical documents and textual evidence, the post-processual approach will be most favoured here. The author's understanding of archaeological theory owes a significant debt to the work of Matthew Johnson, particularly his *Archaeological Theory: An Introduction* (2nd Ed (Oxford: Blackwell, 2010)). For a recent assessment in the specific application of archaeological theory to the study of the medieval period, c.f. McClain, "Theory, Disciplinary Perspectives and the Archaeology of Later Medieval England."

same difficulties exist when employing other problematic forms of evidence, including place-name studies, antiquarian accounts and maps, and most of all personal observation of landscapes that have greatly changed since the medieval period.[201] Despite these challenges, the only way to understand the phenomena of sacred landscapes in the context of post-Conquest saints' cults is a fully interdisciplinary approach. Anything less inclusive risks missing key contextual data.

History and Hagiography

While the genre is in many ways encoded by tropes and conventions, such as *inventiones*, contemporary hagiography does offer the best lens through which to view the operation and promotion of saints' cults in medieval England and Wales. While some questions remain about the intended audience of hagiography (as discussed at length in Chapter II), it would seem reasonable to assume that the attitudes of hagiographers towards saints, their treatment of historical narratives, and their portrayal of a cult in action through *miracula* can be seen as the ideal history and present that these institutions were striving towards. In this particular instance, following Otter and others, the historical 'reality' is not particularly important – what happened in the true seventh-century lifetime of St David is not as important as what the canons of St David's Cathedral at *Menevia* either believed or wished others to believe at the end of the twelfth century. Everson and Stocker's distinction between actual continuity and *perceived* continuity is useful here.[202] In many ways, it is deviations from conventional hagiographical writing, or small changes to previous versions of the same *Lives* that are most revealing of changing circumstances and new ideas within the institutions acting as caretaker to the cults and their saints. Other documentary sources are available for some of these sites, though these serve more to corroborate individual details of land and building ownership and the financial links between cult

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[201] The evidential divide goes beyond material and immaterial; as discussed by Matthew Johnson, disciplines such as architectural history and archaeology can, despite looking at the exact same evidence, approach them from very different and at times incompatible angles. Matthew Johnson, "What Do Medieval Buildings Mean?" *History and Theory* 52, no. 3 (2013): 384. For place-name studies: Margaret Gelling, *Place-Names in the Landscape* (Phoenix, 2000); Jayne Carroll and David N. Parsons, eds., *Perceptions of Place: Twenty-First Century Interpretations of English Place-Name Studies*, English Place-Name Society (Series) Supernumerary v. for 2012 (Nottingham: English Place-Name Society, 2013).
[202] Everson and Stocker, *Custodians of Continuity?*, 4-7.

centres and their satellite sites in the later medieval period than to provide evidence of institutional ideology during the target time frame. The studies of Yarrow, Gittos, Gransden, and Otter provide useful guides for critically reading twelfth-century hagiography in the context of cult promotion, restoration, and historical revisionism.[203] Furthermore, the complex medieval worldview must be taken into account – events had multiple layers of meaning, literal as well as allegorical.[204] The deliberate use, re-use, or modification of hagiographical tropes within eleventh- to thirteenth-century Anglo-Norman *vitae* and *miracula* have their own significance, and scholars must look past a 'true or false' framework for historical events as they are related in medieval sources, particularly hagiography.[205] Ellen Arnold's study of the use of hagiography by the monks of Stavelot-Malmedy to build connections between those foundations and the natural environment of the Ardennes is perhaps the most direct parallel to this project, but focuses primary on the literary and historical aspects of the programme rather than any archaeological traces or other physical evidence of contemporary activity.[206]

The Contribution of Archaeology

As demonstrated by a number of recent studies,[207] a better understanding of medieval sacred landscapes requires a comprehensive interdisciplinary approach that fully utilizes material and textual evidence while not overlooking the theoretical or practical complications in different fields of study. An archaeological approach to sacred spaces and landscapes in many ways gets to the heart of the long-running debate within the field between the processual 'New Archaeology' movement and the more human-agency driven model of post-processualists. In

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[203] Yarrow, *Saints and Their Communities*; Gittos, *Liturgy, Architecture, and Sacred Places in Anglo-Saxon England*; Gransden, "The Growth of the Glastonbury Traditions and Legends in the Twelfth Century"; Otter, *Inventiones*.

[204] Gittos, *Liturgy, Architecture, and Sacred Places in Anglo-Saxon England*, 22-23.

[205] Lifshitz, "Beyond Posivitism and Genre: 'Hagiographical' Texts as Historical Narratives."

[206] Arnold, *Negotiating the Landscape: Environment and Monastic Identity in the Medieval Ardennes*.

[207] Candy, *The Archaeology of Pilgrimage on the Camino de Santiago*; Pestell, *Landscapes of Monastic Foundation*; Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland*; Everson and Stocker, *Custodians of Continuity?*; Locker, *Landscapes of Pilgrimage in Medieval Britain*; Turner, *Making a Christian Landscape: How Christianity Shaped the Countryside in Early-Medieval Cornwall, Devon and Wessex*; Wells, "'And He Went Round the Holy Places Praying and Offering": Evidence for Cuthbertine Pilgrimage to Lindisfarne and Farne in the Late Medieval Period'"; Ryan Lash, "Pebbles and Peregrinatio : The Taskscape of Medieval Devotion on Inishark Island, Ireland," *Medieval Archaeology* 62, no. 1 (2018): 83–104.

their study of the "Landscape of Ritual" surrounding Barlings Abbey in Lincolnshire, Everson and Stocker draw from Matthew Johnson, among others. According to the former, "[scholars] should be interested in perceptions and processes in the landscape."[208] Johnson emphasised how studying landscape through the perception of religious belief, far from privileging the perceptions of the elite, was one of the best ways to access the lives of ordinary men and women living in that landscape.[209] With the exception of the Candy, Harbison, Lash, Wells, and Locker studies of pilgrimage, the vast majority of archaeological or architectural approaches to saint's cults and specific ecclesiastical institutions, particularly outside the conversion process, have focused around the site of their shrines. Roberta Gilchrist and Cheryl Green's study on Glastonbury Abbey offers a model for re-interpreting and re-evaluating problematic and piecemeal antiquarian and early twentieth-century archaeology, but the book's scope is limited to the abbey precinct.[210] Crucially, there is no discussion of the possible significance of the sites on Glastonbury Tor and Beckery excavated by Philip Rahtz to the development of the Abbey and its possible landscape of pilgrimage.[211] Outside of Glastonbury, many of the secondary sites in question, particularly the buildings themselves, have only received cursory archaeological attention with subpar recording or the 'wall-chasing' techniques of antiquarian excavators leading to the loss of valuable stratigraphic data. Some have not been excavated at all, and contemporary Anglo-Norman buildings have been replaced by late medieval constructions with few traces of the earlier edifices. But while the evidence is fragmentary, it is not non-existent. The problem primarily lies in interpreting its broader significance. The best solution is an interdisciplinary approach to construct both an historical and a 'material' context. Demonstrating a relationship between them will be crucial to proving the existence of deliberate 'programmes' of cult promotion incorporating the landscapes around larger institutions. Such 'programmes' as I have defined

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[208] Everson and Stocker, *Custodians of Continuity?*, 7. Perhaps the thorniest issue of them all is the concept of 'ritual' – how it is manifested, what its relationship to everyday life is, how exclusive/inclusive is it, and how does it fit between the supernatural and the mundane, if at all (7-9).
[209] Johnson, *Ideas of Landscape*, 133.
[210] Gilchrist and Green, *Glastonbury Abbey*.
[211] Rahtz and Watts, *Glastonbury*.

them necessarily comprised both a textual and material component and are characterized by investment in both mediums in the same time frame, often in response to the same events.

Antiquarian Records and Maps

Particularly in the wake of the widespread destruction following the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 1530s, antiquarians, historians, and other learned men took an interest in many of the now ruined buildings dotting the landscape around major ecclesiastical centres, the most prolific being John Leland (d.1552), who undertook a survey of monastic libraries and later travelled through England and Wales, producing his famous *Itinerary*.[212] Leland and the others recorded buildings, monuments, and sites no longer above ground or since lost, both in written descriptions and in the case of cartographers like John Speed, illustrated maps. In cases where archaeology has not been carried out but the buildings or features in question are no longer visible, antiquarian documentation may be the only written evidence for these smaller sites. The bulk of these sources dated from the sixteenth through nineteenth centuries, for an example the accounts by Browne Willis[213] and George Owen[214] of the sites of historical interest in Monmouthshire, including St Davids and its environs. Similar records exist for Glastonbury in Somerset[215] along with Raine's antiquarian records for Northumberland,[216] and other surveys survive from Ireland. In some instances, these accounts are our best or even only evidence of buildings and sites that have since disappeared. Used judiciously (with a critical eye for the possibility of erroneous historical details and problematic assumptions), antiquarian accounts can help to fill in significant gaps in the early post-medieval period, or even make up for a lack of

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[212] John Leland, *The Itinerary of John Leland the Antiquary*, ed. Thomas Hearne, 9 vols. (Oxford: Sheldonian Theatre, 1770).

[213] Browne Willis, *A Survey of the Cathedral Church of St David's and the Edifices Belonging to It, as They Stood in the Year 1715* (London: R Gosling, 1717).

[214] Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales, *An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments in Wales and Monmouthshire VII: County of Pembroke*, vol. 7, 7 vols. (Richmond: HMSO, 1925).

[215] John Collinson and Edmund Rack, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Somerset: Collected from Authentick Records, and an Actual Survey Made by the Late Mr. Edmund Rack. Adorned with a Map of the County, and Engravings of Roman and Other Reliques, Town-Seals, Baths, Churches, and Gentlemen's Seats* (Bath: R. Cruttwell, 1791).

[216] James Raine, *The History and Antiquities of North Durham, as Subdivided into the Shires of Norham, Island, and Bedlington Which, from the Saxon Period until the Year 1844, Constituted Parcels of the County Palatine of Durham, but Are Now United to the County of Northumberland.* (Durham, George Andrews; 1830).

earlier documentation by identifying material investment that has otherwise gone unrecorded in extant sources. The traditions recorded by these sources (at times dismissed as "folklore") should of course be viewed in their context of a post-Reformation Britain, with many only being recorded in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries as Protestant fervour against idolatry and superstitious beliefs had begun to wane in favour of curiosity about 'primitive' belief systems and oral culture (as well as an awareness that these were being lost in an industrialising world).[217]

Ordinance Survey maps of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries also recorded now vanished features in the whole of the British Isles, and whenever possible will be used to fill out the 'gaps' in the surviving medieval landscape. Ordinance survey maps, however, while particularly beloved of Hoskins, are problematic sources, particularly the earliest editions – cartographic iconography can vary across them, and many mistakes have subsequently been detected. In Ireland the process of producing these maps "led to the attempted erasure of much of the native Irish understanding of the landscape" and were inextricably linked to the process of plantation.[218]   In his studies of medieval settlements, B.K. Roberts has addressed some of these methodological concerns. Older OS maps should be consulted with other sources to make a comparison, such as relief maps, and a larger range of them is preferable to even out any inconsistencies.[219] As the use of OS maps is limited to specific sites, generally on a smaller scale, this is not necessarily possible for the present work; the best option is to treat these maps no differently than any written sources from the same period – suggestive but not necessarily definitive.

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[217] Alexandra Walsham, "Footprints and Faith: Religion and the Landscape in Early Modern Britain and Ireland," *Studies in Church History* 46 (2010): 169–83. It is also important not to see these as necessarily 'survivals' from pagan or pre-Reformation traditions and legends – Protestantism created its own sacred topographies (182-3). Walsham further discusses the motivations and practices of these collectors of oral legend in "Recording Superstition in Early Modern Britain: The Origins of Folklore," in *The Religion of Fools? : Superstition Past and Present*, ed. S.A. Smith and Alan Knight, Past & Present, Supplement [Ns], 3 (Oxford: Oxford Journals, 2008), 178–206. On oral culture in the post-Medieval period more broadly, c.f. Adam Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture in England, 1500-1700* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001).
[218] Johnson, *Ideas of Landscape*, 85-87.
[219] Brian Roberts, *Landscapes of Settlement: Prehistory to the Present* (London: Routledge, 1996), 40.

Finally, there are antiquarian drawings. Among scholars it is common knowledge that while antiquarian artwork depicting sites or landsca ```````````````````pes might *appear* accurate, features are frequently moved around for aesthetic and framing reasons and features can be invented to fill in gaps. As such, these will be at best considered as a possible reconstruction, and by no means a reliable portrayal of monuments at the time. The works of S.H. Grimm, held by the British Library will be used briefly to examine the previous state of ruins and buildings on Lindisfarne and Farne Island (Chapter VI), at least to the extent of what can be corroborated from other sources, including modern archaeology.

Personal Observation

Even in remote and rural areas, the landscape has changed significantly since the end of the medieval period. These changes have resulted from both artificial and natural processes, and the landscape that one walks in the twenty-first century can only be compared to that of the medieval traveller with careful consideration of what these changes might be. Earthworks have been lost under the plough, wetlands drained, and modern construction projects may have disrupted or damaged medieval landscapes as they once appeared. In most cases, retracing medieval pilgrim routes in England and Wales is not entirely possible, as they have mostly disappeared under modern roads.[220] My focus is on the sites a pilgrim may have encountered before or after visiting a shrine, as they would have appeared and been promoted during the eleventh to early thirteenth centuries rather than the routes that would have been travelled to get there. As long as one is cognizant of the changes (which can be deduced from cartographic, photographic, and documentary evidence of the post-medieval landscape), there is still value in first-hand observation. The physical relationship between sites as defined by the medieval landscape was an important part of their character. In certain cases, it may have been possible, perhaps even intended for an observant pilgrim to see one or multiple sites from any one other

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[220] Locker (*Landscapes of Pilgrimage in Medieval Britain*) and Emma J. Wells (*Pilgrim Routes of the British Isles* (London: Robert Hale, 2016)) have attempted to retrace and 'experience' pilgrimage routes in spite of this.

point. On the other hand, it may have been advantageous for medieval caretakers to conceal some sites from others, building the drama during the pilgrim's approach (as may have been the case at Coldingham, discussed above). In either case, caution is necessary for the modern observer; to suggest that a "muddy boots" approach can provide a more "genuine" appreciation of a historical or pre-historical landscape is dancing perilously close to an *uncritical* phenomenological approach of the sort critiqued by Brück[221] and Ingold.[222] Nonetheless, as Lees and Overing demonstrated, personal observations and experience of twenty first-century individuals can at least contribute possibilities to the study of medieval attitudes to landscapes.[223] My own experience is that being present in a landscape is the best solution to the 'flattening' of two-dimensional mediums like maps or satellite photography, and the abstraction of space that can come with the use of 3D elevation maps or GIS (Geographic Information Systems) graphics. Weather conditions can significantly impact the pilgrimage experience, concealing or revealing the landscape or making the going more or less treacherous, which in some cases might represent the more 'authentic' pilgrimage experience, rather than one experienced on a sunny, dry day. Even the strain and effort required by the modern pilgrim to reach some of these locations can be considered a glimpse into the experience of the medieval pilgrim.

Analysis of Digital Data

The study of historical landscapes and the points within them has begun in recent years to take advantage of technological advances in mapping and objectively analysing spaces and landscapes. GIS has been increasingly employed by archaeologists to more precisely locate important features or sites within their topographic context. Archaeologists and landscape historians have also begun to use the data made available by GIS data collection to employ

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[221] Brück, "In the Footsteps of the Ancestors: A Review of Christopher Tilley's A Phenomenology of Landscape: Places, Paths, and Monuments."
[222] Ingold, "The Temporality of the Landscape."
[223] Lees and Overing, "Anglo-Saxon Horizons."

'viewshed' analysis,[224] for example to study military fortifications in late medieval Iberia [225] and outdoor assembly sites in Anglo-Saxon England.[226] In certain areas where the landscape has changed or historical sightlines have been obscured by modern buildings, this data can be extremely helpful in recreating the medieval visual experience.

In this study, I have extensively used Digital Terrain Modelling (DTM), wherever it is available, to provide a three-dimensional component to maps showing the location of different sacred sites. In the case of Glastonbury (Ch. VII), where the landscape has been fundamentally altered by the draining of the Somerset levels, turning what were once seasonal islands into low hills and mounds, being able to see these changes in elevation has been extremely useful. Others have chosen not to use this set of tools, notably the study of pilgrimage routes by Martin Locker. I believe that while Locker's objections (that GIS analysis creates "an overly scientific gloss to a description of *potential* interaction points") are valid in some situations, it would be a mistake not to explore the possibilities of modern technology in the study of sacred landscapes, provided that sufficient attention is paid to the context in which they would have been experienced.[227] Outside of major landscaping projects, elevation and sightlines do not change that drastically, and tools such as Hillshade and Viewshed can enable a more objectively textured view of terrain. On the ground, just about everything in sight might be less than two hundred years old, even if it is not immediately obvious. Where sufficiently detailed DTM data has not been available, I have used Google Earth-created maps to provide a sense of spatial distance and distribution, even in the absence of elevation data. The range of digital data available is only likely to grow in the near future, allowing even more detailed and nuanced analysis and interpretation of these landscapes.

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[224] M. Llobera et al., "Calculating the Inherent Visual Structure of a Landscape (Inherent Viewshed) Using High-Throughput Computing," Proceedings paper, Beyond the artefact: Digital Interpretation of the Past: Proceedings of CAA2004, Prato, 13-17 April 2004, 2010.

[225] Edward Triplett, "Visualizing Medieval Iberia's Contested Space Through Multiple Scales of Visibility Analysis," in *Digital Methods and Remote Sensing in Archaeology*, ed. Maurizio Forte and Stefano Campana, Quantitative Methods in the Humanities and Social Sciences (Basel: Springer International Publishing, 2016), 199–227.

[226] John Baker and Stuart Brookes, "Identifying Outdoor Assembly Sites in Early Medieval England," *Journal of Field Archaeology* 40, no. 1 (2015): 3–21.

[227] Locker, *Landscapes of Pilgrimage*, 25.

IV: THE SACRED LANDSCAPES OF IRELAND

Introduction and Methodology: Using the Irish Case Studies

While the phenomena of sacred landscapes and secondary cult sites has been significantly understudied in the context of medieval England and Wales, they have long been a source of scholarly as well as national interest in Ireland. A higher rate of survival and preservation of Irish sacred sites in their original landscapes offers a unique opportunity to envision how the English and Welsh sacred landscapes in my primary case studies may have appeared and functioned during my study period of the eleventh to thirteenth centuries. Due to the remote nature of the sites as well as the continuous use and revival of the sites as places of pilgrimage activity (which in some cases persists to the present day), the rate of survival of relatively simple structures, along with features such as cross-slabs and cross-inscribed stones, and frequently the diagnostic circular enclosures that surrounded so many of these sites, is far higher than anywhere else in western Europe or Britain. Their survival is due to a number of different factors, among them a continuity of use by Irish Catholics in the post-Reformation period, for purposes including but not limited to acts of resistance against the occupying Protestant English.[228] But a number of these sites also enjoyed a revival in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, promoted in part by Irish nationalists who claimed the 'Golden Age' of Irish monasticism as a distinctively Irish ethnic and national achievement.

It is precisely these historical circumstances which make caution necessary; it is highly unlikely that the sites are today as they were in the medieval period, even if some of the changes are more subtle than others. In some cases, archaeological excavation has revealed that part of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century 'restoration' actually altered the sites in significant (and

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[228] Mary Lee Nolan, "Irish Pilgrimage: The Different Tradition," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 73, no. 3 (1983) and John Shovlin, "Pilgrimage and the Construction of Irish National Identity," *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* 11 (1991): 59–76. On early modern Irish religious beliefs and medieval traditions, c.f. Raymond Gillespie, "Devotional Landscapes: God, Saints and the Natural World in Early Modern Ireland," in *God's Bounty?: The Churches and the Natural World*, ed. Peter D. Clarke and Tony Claydon, Studies in Church History 46 (Saffron Walden: Ecclesiastical History Society, 2010), 217–36.

misleading) ways. Today, at the western end of the Lower Lake complex at Glendalough, three roughly carved stone crosses are embedded in mounds, forming a rough line that was thought to be a medieval ritual boundary marker. [**Figure 4.1**] But excavations in 2012 that investigated the 'cross bases' or possible *leachta* (outdoor altars common in early medieval Irish and Ionan contexts, sometimes containing a relic) did not uncover evidence for an early medieval date, but rather two cigarette filters and a piece of a modern pint glass underneath the early medieval cross, suggesting that the ritual landscape was being creatively 'restored' into the twentieth century.[229] The resumption of pilgrimage at the summit of Mount Brandon in 1868, at which time new altars were constructed, means that the ruins there, which are probably at least partially medieval in date, have at best been raided for stone, if not thoroughly altered.[230] Overall, few of these sites have been the subject of archaeological investigation.

This chapter draws extensively on the first fully comprehensive study of Irish pilgrimage landscapes and monuments, *Pilgrimage in Ireland: The Monuments and the People* by Peter Harbison, which brought together the bulk of historical, archaeological, architectural, art-historical, and folkloric evidence at all of the most significant medieval pilgrimage sites in Ireland, but it is also supplemented by a range of other sources, including the more recent scholarship of Tomás Ó Carragáin.[231] The objective of this analysis is not to prove a causal relationship or diffusion model between the Irish case studies and those in post-Conquest England and Wales, but rather to illustrate and identify specific models of interaction between saints' cults and sacred landscapes that can be recognized in the evidence presented in Chapters V through VII. Beyond the inconsistent and often ambiguous dating of the Irish materials, there is a prohibitive lack of contemporary documentation to provide even circumstantial evidence of ties between specific

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[229] Graeme Warren et al., "Archaeological Excavations at Lugduff Townland, Upper Lake, Glendalough, Co. Wicklow 2012: Stratigraphical Report," Technical Report (University College Dublin, School of Archaeology, May 2013), 12.

[230] Steve MacDonogh, *The Dingle Peninsula* (Dingle: Mount Eagle Publications Ltd, 2013), 184-5.

[231] Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland*; Tomás Ó Carragáin, *Churches in Early Medieval Ireland: Architecture, Ritual and Memory* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010); Tomás Ó Carragáin and Jerry O'Sullivan, *Inishmurray: Monks and Pilgrims in an Atlantic Landscape. Vol. 1: Survey and Excavations 1997-2000*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Cork: Collins, 2008).

Irish and Anglo-Norman institutions and their traditions and practices, though this thesis argues that a degree of speculation is warranted based on the connections between Irish pilgrims and the foundations at St Davids and Glastonbury. Furthermore, even when relatively precise dating is known for the Irish sites, the primary phase of development tends to pre-date the Norman invasion of Ireland, and in many cases even the twelfth-century reform movement that began decades earlier.

Thus, while similarities and parallels to both the *process* and *form* of these sacred landscapes and their development will be discussed, the purpose of this chapter is to draw out a set of defining characteristics of these select Irish sites and use them as theoretical models when examining the evidence from St Davids, Glastonbury, and the cult of St Cuthbert at Durham and Lindisfarne in the following chapters. The Irish examples that will be considered are the landscape of hagiography and biography of St Kevin at Glendalough; the development of the legend of St Patrick's Purgatory at Lough Derg; the 'western isles' model of early foundations, dispersed sanctity, and later renewal at Inishmurray; the 'island chapel' model of Monaincha; the expansive landscape of pilgrimage of Mount Brandon and the Dingle Peninsula; the manipulation of the monastic legacy of Colum Cille by the Abbey of Derry; and the medieval re-use of a prehistoric and early Christian landscape at Glencolumbkille. The primary advantage of studying Irish sites is existing tradition of scholarship, particularly that of Harbison, that has long recognized the significance of secondary cult sites in Ireland and the landscapes they create. Many more medieval ecclesiastical Irish sites have been studied as part of sacred landscapes than is the case in England and Wales, and the significance of these outlying sites to religious practice and the cult of saints is widely acknowledged, by contrast to sites in England and Wales which have until very recently only been written about on a site-by-site basis with a strong emphasis on the primary shrine.[232]   The examples discussed here have been selected both on the basis of the

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[232] Peter Harbison, "Early Irish Pilgrim Archaeology in the Dingle Peninsula," *World Archaeology* 26, no. 1 (1994): 90–103; Liam Price, "Glendalough: St Kevin's Road," in *Feil-Sgribhinn Eoin Mhic Neill* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1940), 244–71; K.E. Overbey, *Sacral Geographies*.

strength of the existing scholarship as well as certain themes of the use of space and memory in the landscape that I will argue can be observed at work in my primary case studies.

It is necessary to be aware of the significant institutional and cultural differences between Anglo-Norman England and Wales in the eleventh and twelfth centuries and the contemporary situation in Ireland. Ireland was not invaded by Norman forces until 1169, more than a century after the Norman Conquest of England and half a century after the Anglo-Norman and Plantagenet kings had conquered much of Wales. However, the continental reform movement (which in England had seen every Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical leader replaced by a continental cleric by the end of the eleventh century) had already begun to have an impact on the Irish church even before Henry II's invasion. The supposed exceptional nature of the Irish Church (and the broader 'Celtic' religious tradition) has long been a source of both national pride and intense scholarly debate, particularly around the role of and relationship between abbots and bishops.[233] The process of reform also began years before the Norman invasion of the late twelfth century. The Synods of Ráth Brassail (1111) and Kells (1152) established a new diocesan system throughout Ireland, with metropolitan churches established at Armagh, Cashel, Dublin, and Tuam.

At the same time, while continental pilgrimage practices and patterns of veneration were solidifying around the corporeal relics of saints, housed in great cathedrals following the model of Rome, many of the most important Irish sites were remote and rural, and only in some cases did they serve as the core of 'monastic towns.'[234] These arrangements reflected an unusually strong link between pre-Christian traditions of sacred landscapes and landmarks and their Christian successors, one that was threatened by — but in the end survived — the imposition of

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[233] Wendy Davies, "The Myth of the Celtic Church," in *Welsh History in the Early Middle Ages: Text and Societies*, Variorum Collected Studies Series (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 1–21. Following Sharpe (Richard Sharpe, "Some Problems Concerning the Organization of the Church in Early Medieval Ireland," *Peritia* 3 (1984): 230–70.), Flanagan pushed back against the traditional understanding of the Irish church as dominated by large monastic houses, at the expense of its bishops, arguing for a model of cooperative institutional co-existence. (Marie Therese Flanagan, *The Transformation of the Irish Church in the Twelfth Century*, Studies in Celtic History; 29 (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2010), 35-38).

[234] Colman Etchingham, "The Organization and Function of an Early Irish Church Settlement: What Was Glendalough?" in *Glendalough: City of God*, ed. Charles Doherty, Linda Doran, and Mary Kelly (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2011), 22–53.

continental reforms.[235] The practice of building churches out of timber also lasted far longer in Ireland than in England or on the continent, with examples known as late as the twelfth century, and even when stone began to be used on a wider scale, Irish architectural sculpture was characterized by a shallowness that suggested the craftsmen responsible were more accustomed to working with painted wood than with stone. [236] Irish shrine churches and cathedrals were far simpler and smaller than their continental or English counterparts even through the twelfth century, when small though increasingly ornate stone churches were built at sites like Clonmacnoise, Monaincha, Clonfert, and Kilmalkedar. The presence of stone churches at any Irish site is thus indicative of substantial material investment, even as late as the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

The second major development in the twelfth century Irish church was the introduction of reformed monastic orders, specifically the Augustinians and the Cistercians, significantly on the initiative of St Malachy (d.1148).[237] Malachy first re-founded Bangor in 1124 and restored the Abbey of SS Peter and Paul in Armagh under the Augustinian Rule in 1132, and in 1142 oversaw the foundation of the first Cistercian abbey in Ireland at Mellifont, not far from the important early monastic centre of Monasterboice.[238] In addition to founding or re-founding numerous monastic communities, Malachy, his fellow reformers, and their patrons introduced the Augustinian Rule to numerous existing monasteries and cathedrals; by 1148 there were at least twenty-five and possibly as many as forty-one Augustinian communities in Ireland.[239] As was the case in England, Augustinians frequently took over ancient religious foundations and exploited their history and traditions to bolster their houses' own present prestige, while Cistercian monasteries were generally founded on 'green field' sites and their monks showed little interest in the cultural

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[235] Nolan, "Irish Pilgrimage: The Different Tradition," 424-5; 430-1.
[236] R. A. Stalley, *Architecture and Sculpture in Ireland, 1150-1350* (Dublin: Macmillan, 1971), 2-3; Ó Carragáin, *Churches in Early Medieval Ireland*, 15-47.
[237] Flanagan, 120.
[238] Tadhg O'Keeffe, "Augustinian Regular Canons in Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Ireland: History, Architecture, and Identity," in *The Regular Canons in the Medieval British Isles* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2011), 473-74.
[239] Ibid., 474.

legacy of Irish monasticism. Harbison suggests that the arrival of the reform communities, and in particular the "philistine" attitudes of the Cistercians towards Ireland's sacred inheritance, led to a resurgence in native pilgrimage activity and textual production as ancient institutions sought to combat the threat posed by the new ecclesiastical order.[240] The introduction of the Augustinian Rule to existing communities also meant that the growth of the regular canons in Ireland was "an indigenously supported monastic phenomenon, unlike Cistercianism, which was brought in by overseas ecclesiastics."[241] A range of dynamics and movements were thus at play in the Irish church of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and the sites cannot be considered in isolation from them, nor should direct comparisons be made to developments in England and on the Continent without consideration of differing contexts.

'The Irish Model': *Dindshenchas, Praesentia*, and the Organization of Sacred Space

The tradition of sacred landscapes has a long history in Ireland. In Karen Overbey's *Sacral Geographies: Saints, Shrines and Territories in Medieval Ireland*, she links the close interest in place-names and landmarks associated with the lives of saints with the early (and pre-Christian) Irish tradition of *dindshenchas* ('the lore of places'). *Dindshenchas* has long been recognized as part of the mythology of pre-Christian Ireland, as it features prominently in the *Táin* and other collections of early Irish legend. A fundamental component of this mythology was the banishment of the supernatural race of the *Tuatha Dé Dannan* from the surface of the earth. There, it was said, they created their own world, a mirror of the one above, and each of these beings dwelt in a *síd*, which appeared as a mound or hill in the earthly realm. In this way, individual topographical features were linked with certain gods and supernatural entities. Likewise, where legendary heroes of the ancient Irish fought and died, their actions gave names to places which were

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[240] Peter Harbison, "Church Reform and 'Irish Monastic' Culture in the Twelfth Century," *Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society* 52 (2000): 10.

[241] O'Keeffe, "Augustinian Regular Canons in Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Ireland," 246.

remembered through the centuries.[242] Unsurprisingly, this close link between the supernatural and individual topographical features, man-made or not, persisted into the literary traditions of Irish hagiography. Gods and heroes became saints, but the significance of *dindshenchas* to the mental and mythological landscape of Ireland remained the same; this phenomenon can clearly be seen at work in several of the following case studies, particularly at Glendalough and Glencolumbkille. Many of these place-names and their mythological associations were recorded as late as the eleventh or twelfth centuries in the *Dindshenchas Érenn*; Harbison has argued that this and other compilations of Irish mythology and history were compiled by Irish monks who feared losing their traditional monastic and national heritage with the coming of the reformers, particularly the Cistercians.[243] It might even be suggested that the prevalence of such 'pre-Christian' beliefs partially explains the mostly unspoiled state of many long-abandoned Irish sacred sites. Based on local legends and folk traditions collected through the nineteenth into the early twentieth century, there is some evidence of popular belief and traditions of mischief or even harm being worked by fairies when the ringforts or enclosures they were associated with were disturbed.[244]

Simply put, *dindshenchas* changes 'space' into 'place.'[245] Overbey argues that "place-names function in part to record ownership, and to identify legacies through the incorporation of family or personal names."[246] In the context of Irish hagiography, particularly the Irish *Life* of Colum Cille, "these names record a kind of claim staked on the land," which both grants them a certain sacred power through their association with a saint or his deeds, as well as serving to legitimate later

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[242] Overbey, *Sacral Geographies*, 77-79.

[243] Harbison, "Church Reform and 'Irish Monastic' Culture in the Twelfth Century," 3-4.

[244] Máirín Ní Cheallaigh, "Ringforts or Fairy Homes: Oral Understandings and the Practice of Archaeology in Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century Ireland," *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 16, no. 2 (June 2012): 367–84. During a research trip to Dingle, my host and guide, Kathleen Reen, put forward this theory to explain the remarkably undisturbed condition of the many circular enclosures, including the ruins of collapsed buildings (and there is some corroboration of this in nineteenth and twentieth century collections of oral lore in Co. Kerry). A less supernatural possibility is the use of these lands for pasture, rather than agriculture, which seems to date into the post-medieval period, but the absence of stone robbing is still surprising based on what is seen elsewhere.

[245] Refer to Chapter II for discussion of this distinction, including Leif Jerral's critique.

[246] Overbey, *Sacral Geographies,* 80.

claims made by institutions on specific territories and places.[247] An important dimension of *dindshenchas* is that the places and features imbued with this 'lore' can be either natural or man-made; in the context of hagiography, these can thus include monastic foundations as well as rivers and hills. As will be discussed in a following section, utilizing (or manufacturing) the institutional genealogy of ancient sites to lay claim to them in the present was one major component of the deployment of *dindshenchas* during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. In his discussion of phenomenology, Christopher Tilley argued that place-names were intricately linked to historical and social memory; they "transform the sheerly physical and geographical into something that is historically and socially experienced."[248] The phenomenon at work can also be related to Henri Lefebvre's discussion of "natural space" vs "absolute space" (see Ch. II). Tilley's approach is not without its problems. Focused on locating what they assume is an "authentic, native landscape," some scholars have overlooked the known phenomenon of medieval authors assigning extant place-names to entirely fictional locations.[249] This added complexity highlights the need for an interdisciplinary approach to the study of medieval landscapes.[250]

Closely related to the Irish tradition of *dindshenchas* is the idea of *praesentia. Praesentia* is the product of what Eade and Sallnow called "the spatialization of charisma"; the idea that powerful or charismatic individuals, particularly those with supernatural qualities, could imbue places with the power merely by coming into contact with them, both during life and after death.[251] *Praesentia* is by no means an exclusively Irish phenomenon; the previously-discussed principle of "holy radioactivity" as proposed by Brian Finucane and the concept of primary,

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[247] Ibid., 78-79.
[248] Christopher Y. Tilley, *A Phenomenology of Landscape: Places, Paths, and Monuments*, Explorations in Anthropology (Oxford: Berg, 1994), 18.
[249] Overbey, *Sacral Geographies,* Note 44. See also Helmuth, "The Dindshenchas and Irish Literary Tradition."
[250] It should of course be noted that the significance of place to religious or spiritual traditions is a widespread, almost universal phenomenon. In addition to non-Western traditions such as those described by Feldhaus, Walsham has written extensively on the importance of place and religious association in post-Reformation England, as some authorities sought to suppress these practices as a superstitious remnant of the past, "stumbling blocks that stood in the path of the weak and ignorant." (Walsham, "Footprints and Faith," 174-5).
[251] John Eade and Michael Sallnow, "Introduction," in *Contesting the Sacred: The Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage*, ed. John Eade and Michael Sallnow (London: Routledge, 1991), 8.

secondary, and tertiary relics works along the same lines.[252] But it is particularly important in Irish tradition due in part to the lesser degree of interest in (or absence of) corporeal relics at a significant number of major Irish foundations. Overbey noted that many of the most popular pilgrimage destinations in medieval Ireland, including Lough Derg and Mount Brandon, discussed below, "are not associated with shrines or reliquaries, either by extant objects or in textual traditions; in these places it was the perilous journey, and the re-creation of the saints' experience of hardship in the landscape, that were the chief goals of … pilgrimage."[253] In the place of corporeal relics, features and places called the 'beds,' 'chairs' and 'pillows' of saints testify to not only their previous presence but to their continued occupation of these spaces, even though the saints have ultimately departed the mortal realm for the eternal. Many of these features are naturally-formed stones or artificially-created arrangements of stones (sometimes prehistoric), but "the saint has permanently marked the stone, transforming the solid surface with a body at once in the world and transcendent. The trace is thus not a sign of absence; but an index of presence."[254] At *Teampull Chiaráin*, the shrine church of Ciarán, the founder of the monastery at Clonmacnoise, the earth around the building was said to have curative powers.[255] and the inward lean of the building today was traditionally attributed to the removal of the soil by pilgrims. It may of course be a matter of subsidence, although a nineteenth century account describes a hole akin adjacent to the building as evidence of the continued practice.[256]

The *praesentia* of a saint could also have a didactic function; as recorded either in text or by oral tradition, a pilgrim could learn about a saint's life and example by visiting the places in which they dwelt, where they left behind a trace of their presence. To an extent this can be observed outside Ireland: Patrick Geary, in his study of the medieval relationship between the

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[252] Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims*, 26.
[253] Overbey, *Sacral Geographies,* 186. This is not to say that corporeal relics were unimportant – the efforts of Armagh and Downpatrick to claim the relics of 'national' saints like Patrick, Brigid, and Colum Cille in the later medieval period testify to that.
[254] Ibid., 73.
[255] Rachel Moss, "Architectural Sculpture at Glendalough," in *Glendalough: City of God*, ed. Charles Doherty, Linda Doran, and Mary Kelly (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2011), 294.
[256] Caimin O'Brien, *Stories from a Sacred Landscape: Croghan Hill to Clonmacnoise* (Tullamore: Offaly County Council, 2006), 76-77.

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living and the dead, suggested that "memories and legends tend to lend themselves to the physical contours of the landscapes, to become incarnate in places."[257] The pre-Christian concept of *dindshenchas* can therefore be seen to have remained consistently important to the understanding of significant landscapes and features in Medieval Ireland, entirely compatible with Christian belief, even if the agents of change and the memorialized shifted from underground fairies to holy men and women.

Modelling Ireland's Sacred Landscapes

Six examples out of the many sacred landscapes that survive in Ireland in various forms have been selected. The objective is to illustrate certain models which can then be more closely linked into the three Anglo-Norman case studies. The monastic landscape of St Kevin and Glendalough represents the clearest case of a biographical or hagiographical landscape. St Patrick's Purgatory at Lough Derg provides an example of a pre-existing site that was appropriated and redefined according to later developing legend, and then exploited as a pilgrimage location by an ecclesiastical institution. Inishmurray is representative of one of the most common types of sacred landscape in Ireland, found on at least a dozen islands off the western coast, and one that may have been imitated outside that region. Monaincha is a remarkably well-preserved inland island monastic complex and pilgrimage site. The Saint's Road of the Dingle Peninsula is useful both as an example of another re-used landscape and a clearly surviving pilgrimage trail across multiple different ecclesiastical sites, leading to the final destination of Mount Brandon. The Irish *Life* of Colum Cille and its links to the twelfth-century ambitions of the Abbey of Derry show how sacred landscapes on a macro scale can be used to promote claims and assert control over other foundations by drawing on a reimagined past. Glencolumbkille, in addition to showing how prehistoric and early-medieval landscapes can be re-used centuries later, is also arguably an example of Derry's ambitions playing on the micro

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[257] Geary, *Living with the Dead in the Middle Ages*, 18.

level. For the most part, these case studies will not seek to challenge existing scholarship; the purpose is to provide models that can be used for the primary case studies to follow.

Glendalough: St Kevin in the Valley

The monastery of St Kevin at Glendalough is one of the only Irish examples where the development of a sacred landscape, in this case a biographical one, can be demonstrated in both the material record of architecture and archaeology and the textual evidence of extant hagiographic material. It thus is a useful example when considering similar situations at places like St Davids or Lindisfarne, where various events in the life of a saint seem to have been memorialized, with their significance recorded by material investment in both physical structures and textual testament in contemporary *vitae* or *miracula*. Glendalough is located within a deep river valley cut into the Wicklow Mountains southwest of Dublin. [**Figure 4.2**] The river itself runs mostly underground but within the valley are two great lakes, the Lower (closer to the mouth of the valley) and the Upper. In addition to being striking features in the landscape, they have influenced, even defined, the spatial development of the monastery from its earliest days. Glendalough and its monastic sanctuary would have been approached via St Kevin's Road, an ancient trackway restored during the medieval period, passing through the Wicklow Gap, running south-east through relatively desolate and windswept heights before turning west into the Glendalough Valley.[258] Excavations near the Wicklow Gap revealed a path of roughly rectangular granite slabs, at points with a low bank on one or both sides, laid within boggy ground.[259] In addition, a pilgrim travelling from Hollywood, the traditional gathering point of pilgrims coming from the west, would have encountered a range of sacred sites and stones during their journey to the valley. These include an arrangement of stones near Hollywood called 'St

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[258] Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland*, 122-124; Price, "Glendalough: St Kevin's Road"; Peter Harbison and Josh Lynam, *St. Kevin's Way, Hollywood to Glendalough, Co. Wicklow*, Heritage Council of Ireland Series: Medieval Irish Pilgrim Paths 2 (Kilkenny: Heritage Council, 2002).
[259] Harbison and Lynam, *St. Kevin's Way, Hollywood to Glendalough, Co. Wicklow*, 36-7.

Kevin's Chair,' said to cure backache, and the stone found in Lockstown Upper that intriguingly featured the carving of a labyrinth, perhaps a metaphor for the pilgrim's journey.[260]

St *Caoimhin* (also Cóemgen or Kevin, d. 618) is said to have founded first a hermitage and then a monastery around the Upper Lake in the late sixth century, making it among the oldest monastic foundations in Ireland.[261] His family was tied to another group of early monasteries, those on Inisheer and the other Aran Islands (Co. Galway) on the west coast of Ireland.[262] His biography, the *Vita S. Cóemgeni,* was first composed in Latin around 800, with a number of subsequent Old Irish versions known as *Betha Caoimhghin* I-III.[263] Throughout all of these *Lives*, there is a major preoccupation with sacred topography. One of the most striking differences between the earliest *vitae* and their later versions has been noted by Brian Lacey, who examined the story of a beast that was driven away from the monastery by Kevin. Notably, in *Betha Caoimhghin II*, the monster is driven from the Upper Lake, which becomes a source of cures. Whereas in *Betha Caoimhghin I*, taken by Lacey to be the more recent version, the monster is driven out of the Lower Lake. Lacey argues that this change in location reflects the evolution of the monastery; the original site was in the hills above the Upper Lake, where Kevin first built his cell, but after seven years, it grew eastwards beyond the Lower Lake into the mouth of the valley (where the main monastic complex was located), so the setting of the story was moved in subsequent retellings.[264] A new Latin *Vita* was commissioned in the twelfth century, following the arrival of the Augustinian canons at St Saviour's Priory just outside the monastic boundary of

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[260] Ibid., 20-37. The labyrinth carving has been dated to the early medieval period, but surviving examples (such as one at Rathmore) are twelfth or thirteenth century in date, potentially making it part of the high medieval pilgrimage landscape. (Louise Nugent, "'A Short Note on the Co Wicklow Labyrinth Stone,'" *Kildare Archaeological Journal*, 2013 2012, 330–34).

[261] Aubrey Gwynn and R. Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland, with an Appendix to Early Sites.* (Blackrock: Irish Academic Press, 1988), 80-81.

[262] Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland*, 91.

[263] Ailbhe Séamus MacShamhráin, *Church and Polity in Pre-Norman Ireland: The Case of Glendalough* (Maynooth: An Sagart, 1996), 9-10. Brian Lacey, "Monster and Monastery: St Kevin's Lives and the Expansion of Glendalough," in ed. Doherty et al, *Glendalough: City of God*, 165–66.

[264] Lacey, "Monster and Monastery: St Kevin's Lives and the Expansion of Glendalough," 171-2. The surviving copies of Irish *Lives* are likely to be twelfth- or thirteenth-century in date, but the differences Lacey noted would seem to indicate there were several different versions in circulation, some of which might have been much older.

Glendalough.[265] It is this text that best reflects the current condition of the monastic landscape, and suggests that the sacred topography of the Glendalough Valley, as conveyed through the hagiography (which at many cult sites would be read aloud on feast days) served as one attraction to pilgrims, its promotion perhaps a response to the encroaching threat of the archdiocese of Dublin.[266] It also revises the chronology of Glendalough's founding, having Kevin first establish the monastery at the Lower Lake, then spend seven years as an ascetic in the upper part of the valley before returning to the Lower Lake complex and founding it anew.[267]

In addition to the eleventh-century round tower and eleventh- and twelfth-century cathedral, the landscape around Glendalough is dotted with chapels and churches, almost all of which were rebuilt in a Romanesque style in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries.[268] Moving west, the first is the aforementioned Priory of St Saviour's, a two-celled church with an elaborately decorated chancel arch and an adjoining residential building on the north wall.[269] [**Figure 4.3**] It was founded sometime after 1162 by the cosmopolitan Bishop of Glendalough, Lawrence O'Toole, and the king of Leinster, Diarmat Mac Murchada (d.1171), and its location beyond the precinct of the cathedral and monastery suggests that the Augustinians may not have been initially welcomed by the cathedral and monastic community.[270] Within the bounds and closer to the old monastic core is Trinity Church, one of the oldest surviving buildings at Glendalough. The nave and eastern cell were built between the tenth and eleventh century before a chancel was added in the eleventh or twelfth centuries, as well as a western cell supporting a since-collapsed bell tower; unlike St Saviour's, it is sparsely architecturally decorated. [**Figure 4.4** and **4.5**] The Trinitarian dedication was first recorded in the Down Survey of 1655-6, and

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[265] Pádraig Ó Riain, "The Lives of Kevin (Caoimhghin) of Glendalough," in ed. Doherty et al, *Glendalough: City of God*, 143.

[266] Tomás Ó Carragáin, "'Rebuilding the "City of Angels": Muirchertach Ua Briain and Glendalough, *c.*1096-1111,'" in *The Viking Age: Ireland and the West. Papers from the Proceedings of the XV Viking Congress, Cork, August 2005.* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2010), 263-4. Moss, "Architectural Sculpture at Glendalough," 278–301.

[267] *VSH*, I, 241-248.

[268] Ó Carragáin, "'Rebuilding the "City of Angels": Muirchertach Ua Briain and Glendalough, *c.*1096-1111.'", 258-59.

[269] Tadhg O'Keeffe, "Diarmait Mac Murchada and Romanesque Leinster: Four Twelfth-Century Churches in Context," *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 127 (1997): 52–79.

[270] Ibid., 53-54.

thus may be a later development; tradition has it that it was first dedicated to a St Mochuarog, a hermit and disciple of Kevin whose cell might have occupied the spot, which would have been just outside the original monastic precinct on a small rise.[271] Ó Carragáin suggests that the church as built in the eleventh century may have been the main baptistery of the monastery – the addition of a western cell and tower is unusual enough in an Irish context to suggest a building of some importance.[272]

The monastic 'core' of Glendalough consists of the Cathedral, the round tower, the so-called Priest's House, the ruined chapel of St Ciaran, and the enigmatic building known as St Kevin's House or St Kevin's Kitchen. [**Figure 4.7**] Two other churches are identified on eighteenth-century maps in the vicinity of St Kevin's House, but their dedications are not known.[273] The Cathedral was significantly rebuilt in the twelfth century, possibly re-using the fabric of an earlier stone church, but despite its similar date it is lacking in architectural ornamentation as compared to St Saviour's Priory; O'Keeffe argues that this discrepancy may very well be intentional, to differentiate the style of the newcomers from the existing community.[274] The inner monastic zone was entered through a gate to the north, and a visitor would have passed the round tower on the right and approached the cathedral to the south.

To the southwest of the cathedral is what is now called the Priest's House, after its post-medieval use. It features a significant degree of architectural embellishment, but analysis by Rachel Moss suggests that the Romanesque arch on the eastern end of the building, with its associated window, is probably taken entirely from another building, and Ó Carragáin argues that there is no reason to believe the building pre-dates *c.*1200, or held any particular importance to the cult of St Kevin.[275] The building appears to have been reconstructed almost from the ground up by the Office of Public Works during restoration and clearance operations in the 1870s.[276] The

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[271] P.O. Nuanain, *Glendalough and the Seven Churches of St. Kevin.* (Wicklow: P.J. Noonan, 1964).
[272] Ó Carragáin, *Churches in Early Medieval Ireland*, 278-280; Note 140.
[273] Ibid., Fig. 237.
[274] O'Keeffe, "Diarmait Mac Murchada and Romanesque Leinster," 63.
[275] Ó Carragáin, *Churches in Early Medieval Ireland,* 274.
[276] Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland*, 119; Ó Carragáin, *Churches in Early Medieval Ireland*, 274.

positioning of the worn tympanum above the south door probably dates to this time, and it may have been found inside the Priest's House in the eighteenth century. Based on a 1779 drawing by Beranger, the tympanum originally showed Kevin, holding a bishop's crozier, flanked by two pilgrims, one of whom is carrying a bell.[277] [**Figs. 4.8** and **4.9**].

The culmination of the visit to the Lower Lake complex would have been St Kevin's Church, known variously as his 'House' and his 'Kitchen,' which is potentially the origin of the decorated tympanum. [**Figure 4.7**] It is a two-celled, double-vaulted stone building, the upper chamber of which might have served as the residence of an anchorite.[278] As argued by Ó Carragáin, the earlier name of St Kevin's House, *Cro Cóemgen*, might reflect its original function as a reliquary chapel, as this was usually called the 'house' of the saint.[279] A section from the Irish Metrical *Life* of Kevin describes the "relics" of the bishops of Glendalough being "hard by Kevin's House" and implies that the same building is the site of Kevin's resurrection, and thus presumably his place of burial.[280] On the basis of reused masonry in the standing fabric, Ó Carragáin has concluded that it was probably not the first stone church on this site, which would make it and the cathedral the only structures on the site to have a stone predecessor, further demonstrating the importance of St Kevin's Church. [**Figure 4.10**] There is good reason to believe this building is both the former site of Kevin's Lower Lake hermitage and also held his relics; it may even have been where he died. The double-vaulted church with its northern extension, possibly another anchorhold, can be compared to similar shrine churches such as that of St Columba at Kells and St Flannan at Killahoe (though only the former has a double-vault).[281] Kevin is described as resuming his ascetic lifestyle immediately after an angel's visit convinces him to move from his hermitage at the Upper Lake – as at St Cuthbert's Isle and Farne Island (Chapter VI). The former dwelling place of the

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[277] Ibid., 120.

[278] Tomás Ó Carragáin, "Recluses, Relics, and Corpses: Interpreting St Kevin's House," in ed. Doherty et al, *Glendalough: City of God*, 64-66.

[279] Ó Carragáin, *Churches in Early Medieval Ireland*, 270-2. Two annalistic references place *Cro Cóemgen* in the vicinity of the ruined church of St Ciaran just to the south.

[280] Ibid., 275. There are a series of medieval grave markers both in and out of *situ* in and around St Kevin's Church.

[281] Ibid., 273.

saint might have been reused by other holy recluses, though in contrast to Cuthbert, whose incorrupt remains were brought to Lindisfarne and eventually to Durham, Kevin's body remained where he had died.[282] The *Lives* of Kevin also detail a negotiation between Kevin and an angel over his *loco resurrectionis*, promising the saint that "many thousands of blessed souls will arise with you from that place."[283] The insertion of this narrative would fit well with an effort to relocate the source of Kevin's cult away from the Upper Lake back towards the Lower Lake, as Lacey demonstrated with the Irish *Lives*.

Just to the south of St Kevin's Church are the foundations of another early church, a nave-and-chancel building dedicated to St Ciaran of Clonmacnoise.[284] [see **Figure 4.6**] The Church of St Mary is located just to the west of the main enclosure and is most likely to be the church of the nunnery that was founded at Glendalough at some point between the composition of the Latin and Irish *Lives*; it probably dates to around after 1100 in its present form, and its location can be compared to the nunneries at Clonmacnoise and Lemanaghan.[285] A complex of multiple churches within an enclosure is a common model for Irish and even some Anglo-Saxon examples; it can be seen particularly clearly at Clonmacnoise and a range of other Irish ecclesiastical sites. What differentiates Glendalough from these and makes it particularly relevant to the study of sacred landscapes and secondary cult sites, are the buildings and chapels around the Upper Lake, the original site of Kevin's eremitic retreat.

The complex around the Upper Lake can be divided into two sections, one based around Reefert Church, located on the hill above the southern shore, and the other, more inaccessible part marked by the presence of Temple-Na-Skellig on the far shore of the Upper Lake. Together, these make up the *Disert Cóemgen*. Reefert, known as the 'Burial Ground of Kings,' may be on the site of the church that was originally built by the monks during Kevin's time of solitude near the Upper Lake; its association with royal burial seems to be somewhat later.[286] It is a two-celled

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[282] Ibid., 269-270.
[283] *VSH* I, 246.
[284] Ó Carragáin, "Recluses, Relics, and Corpses: Interpreting St Kevin's House," 70.
[285] Ó Carragáin, *Churches in Early Medieval Ireland*, 248-250.
[286] Ó Carragáin, "Recluses, Relics, and Corpses: Interpreting St Kevin's House," 68.

building probably dating from the eleventh or twelfth centuries, surrounded by a large graveyard and what may be a curvilinear enclosure. To the west of Reefert is a semi-circular arrangement of piled stones overlooking the Upper Lake, known today as 'St Kevin's Cell;' while Kevin is said to have slept "on bare earth" within a "*mansiunculam*" ('little dwelling place') during his time near the Upper Lake, the idea that it represents the foundations of a beehive cell is more conjecture than anything else, and no excavation has established its age.[287] [**Figure 4.11**] 'St Kevin's Bed,' discussed below, seems like a more plausible candidate, but it is not at all implausible that the 'Cell' was part of the legend of Kevin as told by the monks to curious pilgrims. Reefert is also the burial place of a Carpre mac Cathuil, whose now-lost gravestone describes him as a hermit of Glendalough; the nearby 'Cell' could potentially be identified as a later ascetic retreat.[288]

The second complex, visually marked by the church of Temple-Na-Skellig, is actually oriented around a rock-cut cave high above the lake known as 'St Kevin's Bed.' [**Figure 4.13**] Recent analysis of toolmarks has shown that the cave is at least partially artificial, and so could be a Bronze-Age burial chamber or possibly a mine.[289] Alternatively, it could have been carved as late as the twelfth century, when it was used as a Lenten retreat for Bishop Lawrence O'Toole (b.1128), accessed from the lake by a ladder.[290] Traditionally, it is where Kevin was supposed to have first established his ascetic retreat, and it is effectively inaccessible from the southern shore. Temple-Na-Skellig itself is a single-celled church of the mid-eleventh century, earlier than Reefert or the buildings in the monastic core (perhaps suggestive of its importance in the landscape), though it has been substantially rebuilt. [**Figure 4.14**] Both are mentioned in both the Latin and Irish *Lives* of Kevin, with the name of Temple-Na-Skellig deriving from *scelec* ("rock") as it appears in a charter of 1198.[291] The church's location across the Lake from the edge of the original

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[287] Ibid., 69; *VSH* I, 242; Liam Price, *The Place-Names of Co. Wicklow* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1945).

[288] Ó Carragáin, *Churches in Early Medieval Ireland*, 269.

[289] W. J. Hemp, "St. Kevin's Bed, Glendalough," *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 7, no. 2 (1937): 290–94.

[290] Conleth Manning, "Rock Shelters and Caves Associated with Irish Saints," in *Above and Beyond: Essays in Memory of Leo Swan* eds. Tom Condit and Chris Corlett, (Wicklow: Wordwell Ltd., 2005), 109–20.

[291] Ó Carragáin, *Churches in Early Medieval Ireland*, 269.

monastic precinct and accessible only by boat is very unusual. It could not have been used for regular services, and thus its purpose must have been related to the cave in the cliffs above it. Its liturgical use might have been similar to the use of St Cuthbert's Isle just off Holy Island, Lindisfarne, a former hermitage site with a post-Conquest chapel and guesthouse, discussed in Chapter VI. Finally, Glendalough has one of the largest collections of bullaun (bowl-cut) stones in Ireland, with a total of 44 – most of them concentrated around the monastic complex.[292]

If the reconstruction offered above is accurate, the physical space of Glendalough is essentially narratively structured by the written *Lives*, dividing the valley up into Kevin's original sanctuary and the celestial *civitas* he founded later (and where he was subsequently buried). The inaccessibility of Temple-na-Skellig and St Kevin's Bed raises interesting questions about the role of the institutions themselves in guiding pilgrims around these landscapes, particularly those close to the pilgrimage site itself. It is of course tempting to imagine curious pilgrims being taken from the site of the relics and shown the places where the saint had lived and worshipped. These sites probably also played a role in liturgical processions, though, unlike with St Patrick's Purgatory and Glencolumbkille, records of the later medieval to early modern *turas* (pilgrimage round) of Glendalough (which was suppressed in 1862) have not survived.[293] If the theory about the original dedication of Trinity Church is correct, a site dedicated to one of Kevin's disciples might have also been part of this landscape. Regardless, the sacred topography of Glendalough Valley offers the most convincing example of a landscape organized around the biography of a saint and his foundation, with abundant evidence of material investment and corresponding references in the hagiographical material.

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[292] David McGuinness, "Bullaun Stones and Early Medieval Pilgrimage at Glendalough," in *Ordinance Survey Letters: Wicklow and Carlow*, ed. Michael Herity and David McGuinness (Dublin: Fourmasters Press, 2013), 14–24.

[293] David McGuinness, "Bullaun Stones and Early Medieval Pilgrimage at Glendalough," 17.

St Patrick's Purgatory, Lough Derg: A Twelfth-Century Legend

St Patrick's Purgatory, located in the middle of Lough Derg (Co. Donegal) is a site of uncertain antiquity. In the present day it is one of the most popular pilgrimage locations for Irish Catholics, known as the place where St Patrick was led down into a cave that afforded him a glimpse of the eternal torments waiting in hell, which the apostle of the Irish then employed to persuade a number of pagan chieftains to embrace the Christian faith. But this legend may be a more recent development than is often assumed. The 'Purgatory' cave itself was demolished by papal decree in 1497, but the site continued in use until roughly 1632, when the remaining community at Lough Derg was dispersed by the English and the pilgrimage stations were demolished.[294] At present, the site consists of a large basilica of 1931 on Station Island, as well as a series of semicircular stone 'beds' of various saints (which are probably post-1632 replacements).[295] [**Figure 4.15**] As a religious center, Lough Derg may date back as early as the sixth century. It does not appear in the earliest annals, though a site in the region described as the 'Termon of Daveoc' is listed as being plundered in 1070 and 1111 in the *Annals of the Four Masters*.[296] A cross shaft, recovered from the Lough in modern times and now installed near the 'beds', has been dated to around the ninth century on the basis of its spiral and band decoration. [**Figure 4.16**]. The role of the 'beds,' five of which survive (albeit heavily reconstructed) out of a total of seven, and are dedicated to Irish saints with the exception of St Catherine of Alexandria, may have been as shelters for individual prayer and reflection in preparation for the encounter with the Purgatory, as implied by a record of the pilgrimage from *c.*1600.[297]

Peter Harbison and others have persuasively argued that the association of the site with Patrick significantly post-dates any pre-1100 activity at the site, and that it might originally have been the monastic foundation of Dabhoec, a saint of relatively local significance who was later

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[294] Gwynn and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, 193.
[295] Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland*, 60.
[296] Michael Haren and Yolande de Pontfarcy, *The Medieval Pilgrimage to St Patrick's Purgatory, Lough Derg and the European Tradition* (Enniskillen: Clogher Historical Society, 1988), 7-17; Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland*, 66-67.
[297] Overbey, *Sacral Geographies*, 184-186.

displaced by the better-known Patrick.[298] This phenomenon is also observed on the Dingle Peninsula (the obscure St Malkedar giving way to St Brendan the Navigator) and possibly also in evidence at St Davids (see Chapter V).[299] Sometime after 1132, a house of Augustinian canons dependent on the abbey of SS Peter and Paul, Armagh took over the site.[300] It is after this time that the first legends of the Purgatory are recorded, beginning with the harrowing account of the knight Owein as told by Henry of Saltrey in the *Tractatus de Purgatorio Sancti Patricii*, *c.*1184.[301] Giraldus Cambrensis, writing around 1186, identified the Purgatory, which he described in detail, also suggesting that the legend was beginning to come together by the end of the twelfth century.[302] In addition to Giraldus's description of two islands divided between good and evil spirits, with the latter having nine pits, there are other, later accounts of its form. Antonio Mannini (*c.*1411) describes what might be a souterrain, a man-made subterranean passage frequently associated with Iron Age Irish ring-forts.[303] The Purgatory is elsewhere characterized as being a deep pit surrounded by a wall (Caesarius of Heisterbach, early thirteenth century) or a cave anywhere from two miles (George Crissaphan in 1353) to fifteen feet (Guillebert de Lannoy in 1430) in length.[304] The inconsistencies between these stories are reason enough to suspect that the physical layout and environment of the site was still evolving through the medieval period, and the number of non-Irish accounts demonstrate that it was internationally renowned.[305] Michael Haren and Yolande de Pontfarcy speculate that the Purgatory may have been a souterrain-like structure with at least one vertical opening cut through it, which could actually

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[298] Dabhoec's presence may have survived in a dedication of one of the 'beds,' though it has been subsequently lost. (Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland*, 62).

[299] Haren and de Pontfarcy, *The Medieval Pilgrimage to St Patrick's Purgatory*, 23. Other features in the surrounding landscape preserve place-names related to Dabheoc, including the townland of *Suidhe Dhabheóg,* within which is a large stone in the shape of a reclining seat known previously as 'St Dabhoec's Seat'.

[300] Gwynn and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, 193; Haren and de Pontfarcy, *The Medieval Pilgrimage to St Patrick's Purgatory*, 31.

[301] Haren and de Pontfarcy, *The Medieval Pilgrimage to St Patrick's Purgatory,* 7-17.

[302] *TH*, 61. Giraldus places the Purgatory in Ulster, but his Irish geography is frequently inaccurate, as will be seen with Mount Brandon below.

[303] Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland*, 59.

[304] Harbison, 59-60.

[305] Carol G. Zaleski, "St. Patrick's Purgatory: Pilgrimage Motifs in a Medieval Otherworld Vision," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 46, no. 4 (1985): 471-473.

account for the contradictory descriptions of vertical and horizontal spaces in some of the first-hand accounts as depending on which the pilgrim experienced (allowing for some dramatic license).[306]

The development and promotion of a legend like that of the Purgatory is fully consistent with the efforts of the Augustinians through the rest of Ireland and beyond. Unlike the Cistercians, the Augustinians who established themselves in Ireland showed a major interest in connecting their new or reformed foundations with their institutional predecessors.[307] Henry of Saltrey even engaged in blatant anachronism by describing contacts between the Augustinians and Patrick himself.[308] The origins of the Purgatory legend might also be seen in the context of the revival of Patrick's cult and the translation of his relics to Downpatrick in 1186, as the Augustinian community at Lough Derg may have sought to increase the appeal of the site and the new legend of the Purgatory by linking it directly with Ireland's national saint at the height of his popularity.[309] The association of the Augustinian priory at Lough Derg with SS Peter and Paul, Armagh is particularly interesting in light of that diocese losing control of another major Patrician pilgrimage site, the mountain of Croagh Patrick in County Mayo, after the creation of the diocese of Tuam at the Synod of Ráth Bresaill in 1111. It is possible that the legend was created or promoted in order to establish a rival pilgrimage site to Downpatrick within their control, though precisely which diocese Lough Derg belonged to at this time is unclear. The Purgatory, along with the possible displacement of St Malkedar or St Colman by St Brendan on the Dingle Peninsula, offers a plausible example of the replacement of local saints by better-known figures from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries, a phenomenon which might also be observed in the St Davids peninsula, as laid out in the next chapter.

At present, the site is only accessible by boat directly from the shore of the Lough, but it continues to operate as a place of worship and pilgrimage. While there is some degree of

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[306] Haren and de Pontfarcy, 21.
[307] Ibid., 31.
[308] Ibid., 32.
[309] Zaleski, "St. Patrick's Purgatory," 471.

confusion as to whether the Purgatory was located on the now-occupied Station Island or the larger Saints Island [see **Figure 4.17**], a plausible arrangement is that the Augustinian Priory occupied Saints Island, and it may have been a place for pilgrims to mentally and spiritually prepare themselves to be taken across to the smaller island and its otherworldly experience.[310] A putative pilgrim road presently follows a boggy logging track over a hill onto the shore opposite Saints Island, though the antiquity of this route is in some doubt. Lough Derg was and remains to this day among the most important pilgrimage destinations in Ireland, but the story of the Purgatory represents a much later tradition that appropriated a pre-existing landscape, perhaps one belonging to the little-regarded St. Dabheoc.

Inishmurray: Pilgrimage and the Western Isles

By contrast to Lough Derg, the antiquity of the well-preserved sacred topography at Inishmurray is well-attested. Innishmurray is located off the west coast of Ireland and preserves one of the most complete sets of pilgrimage rounds in the country. The bulk of the surviving ecclesiastical buildings are enclosed within a large cashel [**Figure 4.18**], which includes several associated with or dedicated to the island monastery's legendary founder, St Molaise (d.571).[311] Among the surviving structures within the cashel are his shrine chapel, Teach Molaise, which housed his bell and crozier and marks the site of his supposed grave.[312] [**Figure 4.19**] Radiocarbon dating from the mortar of the original fabric suggests an initial construction date between the eighth and tenth centuries, though all the buildings were heavily rebuilt in the later medieval period.[313] The main congregational church, known as Templemolaise, shows signs of having been extended or rebuilt sometime after the eleventh century, with some masonry being

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[310] Marion Dowd, "Saintly Associations with Caves in Ireland from the Early Medieval Period (AD 400-1169) through to Recent Times.," in *Caves and Ritual in Medieval Europe*, ed. K.A. Bergsvik and Marion Dowd (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2018), 116–32.

[311] Tomás Ó Carragáin, "The Saint and the Sacred Centre: The Early Medieval Pilgrimage Landscape of Inishmurray," in *The Archaeology of the Early Medieval Celtic Churches.* Ed. Nancy Edwards, The Society for Medieval Archaeology Monograph, 29 (Leeds: Maney, 2009), 207–8.

[312] Ó Carragáin, "The Saint and the Sacred Centre," 209.

[313] Ó Carragáin and O'Sullivan, *Inishmurray*, 210; 341.

reused from an earlier building. [**Figure 4.20**] Teac na Teine (Templenatinny) probably served as a residence for clerics or possibly a pilgrim hostel.[314] Clocha Breaca is a mostly-intact *leacht*, on top of which rests the so-called 'cursing stone,' a cross-inscribed boulder dated to the ninth or tenth century on stylistic grounds. Finally, there is what can be best described as a souterrain-like low passage or chamber which extends from the south side of Templenatinny towards the doorway of Teach Molaise. [**Figure 4.21**] What makes this structure particularly unusual is that it was built entirely above ground level. It is tempting, as Ó Carragáin and O'Sullivan do, to compare this feature to one of the descriptions of St Patrick's Purgatory at Lough Derg.[315] Their similarity might not be a coincidence - it seems entirely plausible that following the establishment of the Augustinian Aughris Priory on the headland and the assumption of management of the island of Inishmurray by the canons, some sort of Purgatory-in-miniature was created as an additional draw for pilgrims to the island.

Like a number of the case studies here, the sacred sites of Inishmurray extend well beyond the central ecclesiastical complex. On the ancient route from the island's main harbor to the cashel are a number of buildings and sites of historic and hagiographic significance. [**Figure 4.22**] Two cemeteries - Relickoran, associated with St Odran of Iona, [**Figures. 4.23** and **4.24**] and one adjacent to Templenaman - were marked by standing stones (including a cross-inscribed stone now standing as part of the Crossatemple *leacht*) and possibly wooden buildings (the ruins of later- and post-medieval stone structures survive today).[316] These are, however, only a few of the sites that make up a pilgrimage circuit, or *turas*; others include the hermitage of Trahanareear and the cemetery of Ollamurray. Other *leachta*, in various states of disrepair and of uncertain antiquity, are found at Tobernacoragh, Treenodemore, and Laughta Patrick.[317] [**Figure 4.22**] It is

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[314] Ibid., 341.
[315] Ibid., 342-346.
[316] Ó Carragáin, "The Saint and the Sacred Centre," 207-8.
[317] Ó Carragáin and O'Sullivan, *Inishmurray*, 316-317; 319-320. The *leachta* have clearly been rebuilt on multiple occasions since the medieval period, and there is some debate as to how close the modern rituals of circumambulating the *leachta* are to those that might have been performed by contemporary monks or pilgrims, or if the entire phenomenon is an invention of the Irish Counter Reformation, but the continued presence of a religious community up into the seventeenth century on Inishmurray makes a degree of continuity more likely. See Herity, "The Antiquity of an Turas (the Pilgrimage Round) in Ireland."

the view of Ó Carragáin, on the basis of dating evidence produced by the excavation, that these sites developed over different periods, with the cemetery at Relickoran lacking an enclosure or *leachta* in its first phase, and the cemetery at Ollamurray and most of the other satellite sites only being established sometime around the tenth century.[318] What dating evidence has been found (mostly the cross-inscribed stones) indicates an earlier date, but the fact that the buildings of the cashel were substantially rebuilt in the high- to late-medieval period suggests that this process of development and expansion continued well past the twelfth century.[319] A wooden statue of Molaise originally installed in Teach Molaise (now in the National Museum) dates to the fourteenth century, indicating substantial investment in the site around this time. Analysis of the main congregational church of Templemolaise shows that it was lengthened at an unknown but possibly later-medieval date by a western extension, potentially to accommodate larger numbers of pilgrims. The retention of older fabric in this phase might suggest the monks were eager to advertise the site's antiquity.[320]

The responsible party for the later developments was the aforementioned house of Augustinian canons on the Aughris peninsula to the south, probably founded in the twelfth century, but the association between the sites was more significant than mere proximity.[321] Throughout the medieval period, the priory at Aughris was more often referred to as 'St Lasirianus of Insula Murgeardy' (St Mary of the Island of Inishmurray) than it was 'Achras'.[322] This process of acquisition, renewal, and possible expansion of an ancient secondary cult site by a reformed monastic community is well attested to in England and Wales, though fewer clear-cut examples where direct monastic patronage can be established are found in Ireland. An additional site of importance to the cult of Molaise could be what is now called "Staad Abbey" on the headland directly opposite the island, but rather than another monastic house it seems more

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[318] Ó Carragáin and O'Sullivan, *Inishmurray*, 320.
[319] Ibid., 320-1; 341.
[320] Ibid., 341.
[321] Gwynn and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, 158.
[322] Ó Carragáin and O'Sullivan, *Inishmurray*, 35-36.

likely to have been a chapel or lodge for pilgrims travelling to Inishmurray.[323] The survival of the pilgrimage round tradition into the present day affords a rare glimpse into a nearly complete western isles pilgrimage circuit, and some comparisons have been drawn to the French example of St Lerins on the Isle-St-Honarat near Cannes, as well as closer-by Inishark, the Aran Islands, and a handful of other sites.[324]

Monaincha, Co. Tipperary

The site of the Romanesque church at Monaincha, three miles from the monastic centre of Roscrea, is best known from an intriguing (and otherwise unsubstantiated) passage in the *Topographia Hibernica et Expugnatio Hibernica* of Giraldus Cambrensis, written between 1187 and 1189. In the north of Munster, he explained, there was a lake with two islands. The larger of the two had a church of ancient date, and it was said that no woman or female animal could step foot upon it without dying instantly. The smaller of the two had a chapel "cared for most devoutedly by a few celibates who called themselves 'heaven-worshippers' or 'god-worshippers,'" which is probably a reference to the ascetic movement of the tenth century called the Culdees (*Céli Dei*, or 'servants of God').[325] On the smaller island, he continued, "no one ever died or could die a natural death," to the extent that when they tired of life, the elderly would be taken to the larger island so they could peacefully expire.[326] Elsewhere in the annals, it is known as 'Inis-Locha-Cré,' and later the more evocative *Insula Viventium* ('isle of the living').[327] Its antiquity, at least as the site of a hermitage if not a full monastic community, is evidenced by the entries of 807 and 923 in the Annals of Ulster, as well as a series of entries in the twelfth century

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[323] Ibid., 41.

[324] For the Aran Islands, see: John Feehan, *The Book of Aran the Aran Islands, Co. Galway* (Newtonlynch: Tír Eolas, 1999).; Conleth Manning, "Archaeological Excavations at Two Church Sites on Inishmore, Aran Islands," *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 115 (1985): 96–120.; John Waddell, "An Archæological Survey of Temple Brecan, Aran," *Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society* 33 (1972): 5–27. For St Lerins see Yann Codou and Michel Lauwers, *Lérins, Une Île Sainte de l'Antiquité Au Moyen Age*, Collection d'études Médiévales de Nice, 9 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009); Eric G. M. Fletcher, "The Monastery at Lérins." *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 133 (1980): 17–29. For Inishark: Lash, "Pebbles and Peregrinatio"; Ryan Lash et al., "'Differing in Status, but One in Spirit': Sacred Space and Social Diversity at Island Monasteries in Connemara, Ireland," *Antiquity* 92, no. 362 (2018): 437–55."

[325] *TH*, 60.; Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland*, 133.

[326] *TH*, 60.

[327] C. McNeill and Harold G. Leask, "Monaincha, Co. Tipperary. Historical Notes," *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 10, no. 1 (1920): 19.

in both the Annals of Ulster and the Annals of the Four Masters.[328] Monaincha or Lough Cré also appears in a number of major hagiographical works, including the *Lives* of Cronan (d.665) and Cainnech (d. 600), both of whom used it as a religious retreat from their primary foundations at Roscrea and Aghaboe respectively; it was also the place of retirement and possibly burial of St Mo Lua Mac Carthach.[329]

While there is no other record of the island site having the particular properties claimed by Giraldus Cambrensis, and his apparent skepticism of many local Irish religious traditions should probably be borne in mind, it is relatively certain that Monaincha was an early Christian hermitage, even if a monastic community was not established there until several centuries later. The location of the larger island to which Giraldus refers is not known, and even in the eighteenth century there is no indication of its existence in the cartographical or textual record. It is possible that Giraldus conflated two sites into one; the map of Monaincha from 1799 by Edward Ledwich depicts a smaller island linked to the larger by a narrow causeway, along with an east-west oriented building he was unable to identify.[330] [**Figure 4.25**] Lough Cré was drained at some point in the nineteenth century, leaving the landscape visible today. On the southern shore of the main island, south of the monastic church and its northern extension, the map shows a north-south single-cell rectangular building, puzzlingly identified by Ledwich as "a church." The area where Ledwich's second island would be found is now heavily wooded, but aerial photography of 1966 as well as modern satellite photography shows no trace of it. [**Figure 4.26**] An account of 1806 describes two chapels in addition to the church and its northern extension, but similarly makes no mention of a second island or any building on it.[331]

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[328] Ibid., 22.
[329] Ibid., 20-23.
[330] Harbison (*Pilgrimage in Ireland*, 131) states that Ledwich identified the building on the smaller island as 'the abbot's apartments,' but that appears to be a misreading of the map, which uses that identification for the northern extension of the abbey church. Ledwich provides only a question mark.
[331] Sir John Carr, *A Tour Through Holland, Along the Right and Left Banks of the Rhine, to the South of Germany, in the Summer and Autumn of 1806 …* (Hartford: Lincoln and Gleason, 1807), 189.

The Romanesque church which survives today sits atop a circular mound that one tradition explains as being made of the collected disinterred remains of the "hundred generations deposited in that favourite churchyard."[332] [**Figure 4.27**] The church itself, dated to the late twelfth century, has attracted much comment for the quality of its construction and the sophistication of its decorative scheme.[333] [**Figure 4.28**] The Book of Ballymore, dating to the fourteenth century, called it the thirty-first Wonder of the World, and today due to the quality of the craftsmanship and the sandstone used the details of the chancel arch are still clear to the naked eye. The church was probably built by Augustinian Canons after the Norman invasion of Ireland in 1169-1170; Cronan's primary foundation of Roscrea, just three miles to the west and with its own fine Romanesque church, also adopted the rule of the regular canons around the same time. The church was altered throughout the medieval period with the insertion of windows in the nave wall and the east wall of the chancel.[334] The head of a standing cross of eleventh- or twelfth-century date rests atop a modern concrete shaft driven into a medieval base.[335]

As with many Irish sacred sites, Monaincha's relative inaccessibility was only an advantage for its spiritual prestige. In the Latin *Life* of St Kevin, which may also have been a creation of the Augustinian community at St Saviour's in Glendalough, Monaincha is named one of the four most important pilgrimage sites in Ireland.[336] Given St Cronan's association with nearby Roscrea, exactly what saint, if any, might have been venerated at Monaincha is unclear, and the specific "Island of the Living" legend is unique to Giraldus. Nonetheless, its renown lasted through to the suppression of Irish pilgrimage in the seventeenth century. Pope Paul V granted a plenary indulgence to any pilgrims who visited the site around 1607, and in 1611 Lord Deputy Chester described it as drawing numbers of pilgrims similar to Inishcealtra (Co. Clare), a better known inland island site which by one count boasted more than 15,000 visitors a year.[337]

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[332] McNeill and Leask, "Monaincha," 24.
[333] Tadhg O'Keeffe, *Romanesque Ireland: Architecture and Ideology in the Twelfth Century* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003), 252-255.
[334] McNeill and Leask, "Monaincha," 30-34.
[335] Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland,* 132.
[336] Ibid., 133.
[337] Ibid.

Monaincha was seized by the Crown in 1568, and subsequently leased to Sir William Carrow, though as late as 1799 Lough Cré had not yet been drained and converted to agricultural land; only in the mid-nineteenth century was pilgrimage completely abolished.[338]

Monaincha is particularly significant in the context of this thesis because it represents a remarkably well-preserved example of an ecclesiastical 'island' in a wetland setting. The church is one of the finest examples of Romanesque architecture in medieval Ireland, and the longevity of the pilgrimage to Monaincha is a testament to its importance during this period. Chapter VII will examine the landscape around Glastonbury Abbey, which like Monaincha is predominantly drained wetland with small rises that formerly constituted 'islands.' While only one later church survives there (another is known from archaeological investigation), I will propose that a series of chapels existed on a number of these islands, and like Monaincha, they were an attraction for pilgrims. Given Glastonbury's interest in Irish saints' cults, and potentially attracting Irish pilgrims, the comparison between these islands and Monaincha is all the more intriguing.

Dingle Peninsula, Co. Kerry

The Dingle Peninsula is dominated by the bulk of its mountains, in particular that known as Mount Brandon, associated from medieval times with the famous St Brendan the Navigator, and supposedly near where he set off on his famous journey. Archaeological and architectural evidence suggests a far more complicated landscape, oriented along a putative Saint's Road (first known as such from an 1840 map) from the southern shore of the peninsula to the summit of the mountain itself, though there are a number of other sites worthy of attention.[339] The mountain's dedication to Brendan is unsupported by any direct textual evidence, as the Dingle Peninsula is not mentioned in any surviving version of the *Navigatio*; a popular legend suggests that Brendan ascended the mountain to pray for a safe voyage.[340] As was the case at St Patrick's Purgatory, it

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[338] McNeill and Leask, "Monaincha," 23-4.
[339] Peter Harbison, "Early Irish Pilgrim Archaeology in the Dingle Peninsula," *World Archaeology* 26, no. 1 (1994): 91-92.
[340] There is a possible reference in c.4 of the *Navigatio*, when Brendan 'pitched his tent at the edge of a mountain stretching out into the ocean' somewhere in 'a distant part of his native' region. However, this description is vague at best, and there is reasonable evidence that the area around Mount Brandon was

seems far more likely that the Dingle Peninsula was once the province of more obscure or local saints. Based on the dedication of the grand Romanesque church at Kilmalkedar, St Maolcethair or Malkedar (d.636) is one likely candidate, but there are others.

Besides Mount Brandon, the Dingle Peninsula is perhaps best known for the beautifully preserved early medieval chapel known as Gallarus Oratory. While the standing building may not be as early in date as previously thought, it was clearly a key point in the landscape from the earliest days of Christianity in Ireland, and very plausibly even earlier.[341] It is, however, only one of the identifiable way stations starting from the harbor at Ventry, on the southern shore of the Dingle Peninsula. [**Figure 4.29**] The survival of multiple early medieval buildings, some of which have been augmented or rebuilt at a later date, makes the Dingle Peninsula extraordinary, and it is tempting to transpose what we know of the Dingle Peninsula and the Saint's Road onto other sites which do not survive as well. From Ventry, a pilgrim would have passed Kilcolman at Maumanorig, now represented by a roughly circular enclosure which contains the ruins and foundations of huts, several cross-inscribed gravestones and other evidence of early Christian activity. Nearby is a well, now dedicated to St Brendan. One of the stones is particularly remarkable, as in Ogham script it may read *Amm Colman Ailithir* or 'Colman the Pilgrim,' who gives the site its name (though this could also refer to St Colmán Oilither, also known as Colman the Pilgrim of Ross).[342] [**Figure 4.30**] Nearby there is also a holy well dedicated to St Brendan, one of several along the pilgrimage route.[343] The Saint's Road turns to the west as it rounds the hill of Lateevemore, continuing towards Kilmalkedar, past another early Christian site at

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once the domain of another saint entirely (J. Wooding, "The Medieval and Early Modern Cult of St Brendan," in *Saints' Cults in the Celtic World*, ed. Stephen I. Boardman, John Reuben Davies, and Eila Williamson, Studies in Celtic History ; 25 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2009), 188-189). Giraldus Cambrensis (*TH*) is the first to mention a *Montes Bredanici*, but he places it too far to the south, in the mountains of south-west Munster (33).

[341] Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland*, 80-82. Gallarus Oratory is traditionally dated to as early as the sixth or seventh century, but Harbison prefers a date as late as the tenth century.

[342] Harbison, "Early Irish Pilgrim Archaeology in the Dingle Peninsula," 92-3. A church also appears in the OS Map of 1841.

[343] Louise Nugent, "Exploring the Evidence for Early Medieval Pilgrimage at Kilcolman," *Journal of the Kerry Archaeological and Historical Society* 13 (2013): 28.

Templenacloonagh with the remains of two oratories (one probably of the 'Gallarus' type) and several cross-inscribed stones.[344]

Gallarus Oratory, the best-preserved building on the entire pilgrimage, actually lies a few hundred meters from the road. It is difficult to date due to its lack of diagnostic architectural features or decoration. While a date of the seventh or eighth century is broadly accepted and it is seen as a prototype, it might also be the finished result of developments in Irish stone building technology, pushing it into the tenth century and possibly even later.[345] [**Figure 4.31**] Unlike most of the other sites, there is no surviving monastic enclosure or evidence of other buildings, aside from a large spread of stones and a cross-inscribed marker just to the north. The purpose of the site as part of the pilgrimage is thus uncertain; Harbison speculated that it could have served as a shelter for visiting pilgrims.[346]

Further along the road is the Romanesque church of Kilmalkedar, which can be firmly dated to the middle of the twelfth century as one of a handful of fully surviving Romanesque churches in Ireland.[347] [**Figure 4.32**] The existence of an elaborate Romanesque church along an ancient pilgrim road recalls similar examples known from the road to Santiago de Compostela.[348] On the basis of the presence of Early Christian carved stones, including an ogham stone, a sundial, and an alphabet stone, it is likely that the church that survives is only the most recent building on the site, with its predecessor probably being made of wood.[349] Its dedication is suggestive; though the latest surviving church on the route, it was dedicated not to Brendan but to Malkedar, suggesting that even in the twelfth century the more local saint was an important part of the landscape.[350] The patronage of this church, one of the finest examples of Romanesque architecture in twelfth-century Ireland, is not entirely clear. The village is first mentioned in a

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[344] The oratory at Templenacloonagh is badly degraded, but among the stones within the rubble was a large holed stone, nearly identical to that found *in situ* above the west door in Gallarus Oratory. Kathleen Reen, our local guide, suggested these may have supported curtains or screens.
[345] Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland*, 82.
[346] Harbison, "Early Irish Pilgrim Archaeology in the Dingle Peninsula," 94.
[347] O'Keeffe, *Romanesque Ireland*, 181-186.
[348] Harbison, "Early Irish Pilgrim Archaeology in the Dingle Peninsula": 94.
[349] Cuppage, *Archaeological Survey of the Dingle Peninsula*, 308-312.
[350] Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland*, 80-82.

1298 document as paying a fine for the escape of prisoners, and the church itself is recorded in the Papal Taxation List of 1302-7, at which it fell under the diocese of Ardfert (Co. Kerry) and was retained as the prebend for the Chancellor of the cathedral community there.[351] The architectural similarities between Kilmalkedar and Cormac's Chapel at the Rock of Cashel (Co. Tipperary) are striking, and there is some argument that the same architect could have been involved in each, making royal patronage for the former a distinct and intriguing possibility.[352]

Around this time, two much-altered domestic buildings, 'the Chancellor's House' and 'St Brendan's House' (beside which is a holy well dedicated to the saint) were erected, suggesting a successful church and community.[353] A short distance to the west stands another small chapel ruin within an early enclosure, known at St Brendan's Oratory. [**Figure 4.33**] While it would appear to be the earlier foundation, it is just as plausible that Kilmalkedar could go back into the seventh century, as the original site of Malkedar's cult.[354] The oratory appears to be a less intact version of the famous Gallarus Oratory in its design.[355] From Kilmalkedar and St Brendan's Oratory, the Saint's Road continues past a few other early Christian sites, including the enclosure at *Cráilí* (Currauly) and a site about which little is known. preserved in the name of Kilquane (or *Cill Chúáin*), until it reaches the summit of Mount Brandon, just over 3027 ft (approximately 1000m) above sea level.[356] While this particular path from Ventry to Currauly is identified as the *Cosán na Naomh* (Saint's Road), there are other sites located beyond the bounds of the marked route which could suggest a more complicated pilgrimage landscape.[357] To the west of the path

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[351] Cuppage, *Archaeological Survey of the Dingle Peninsula*, 308-309.

[352] Ó Carragáin, *Churches in Early Medieval Ireland*, 295-6.

[353] Cuppage, *Archaeological Survey of the Dingle Peninsula*, 308-310. The association with Ardfert is particularly interesting, as it seems that the cathedral there was engaged in a long standing rivalry with the larger foundation at Clonfert Cathedral, which with the exception of a brief presence at Ardfert after Clonfert was burned in the eleventh century, claimed the *comarba of* Brendan as well as his body. It is plausible that the ownership of Kilmalkedar, and the rebuilding of the church, might be related to Ardfert's ambitions to became a second locus of the Brendan cult. (Wooding, "The Medieval and Early Modern Cult of St Brendan": 190-1).

[354] Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland*, 83.

[355] Harbison, "Early Irish Pilgrim Archaeology in the Dingle Peninsula," 97.

[356] Cuppage, *Archaeological Survey of the Dingle Peninsula*, 263-264.

[357] Peter Harbison and Josh Lynam, *The Saint's Road, Dingle Peninsula, Co. Kerry = Cosán Na Naomh, Corca Dhuibhne, Co. Chiarraí*, Heritage Council of Ireland Series: Medieval Irish Pilgrim Paths 1 (Kilkenny: Heritage Council, 2002).

from Kilcolman to Gallarus, but within a reasonable hike from the Saint's Road, are Tobermalaga (Ballywiheen) with its well, cross-slab, and possible penitential stations, and Reask (Riasc), an early monastic settlement that is one of the few sites on the peninsula that has been excavated in the modern era.[358] To the east of Kilcolman is the enclosure of Templemanaghan or Teampull Geal ('the white church'), which consists of several buildings including the ruins of a building similar in design to Gallarus Oratory. [**Figure 4.34**] In a nearby field is a natural spring with sacred associations. Templemanaghan is ideally located, on a small, possibly man-made platform above the slanting field, with Mount Brandon visible to the east just over the peak of Lateevemore; additionally, on a clear day, an observer might also be able to see the island monastery of Skellig Michael to the west between two hills.[359] It also provides a clear view of the boggy plain surrounding Kilfountain, another important ecclesiastical site, which offers a direct view of not only Mount Brandon, but possibly even the medieval chapel that once stood atop it. [**Figure 4.35**] It is possible, then, that Templemanaghan and Kilfountain might have been part of a different pilgrim road, this one circling around the east side of Lateevemore.

From the site of the modern carpark at Ballybrack, the pilgrims would have ascended Mount Brandon itself. The ruins of an early religious settlement, along with evidence of its being adapted and rebuilt during the medieval period, still survive on the summit, and these include a small oratory, another rectangular building, a holy well, a cross-inscribed stone and a number of mounds or possibly cairns that might mark the location of graves.[360] All of these are contained within the faint outlines of an early enclosure, raising the possibility that it might have been built inside an Iron Age hilltop fort. The remains are not easily dated, though a few possibly Romanesque fragments discovered in the nineteenth century (and now lost) could suggest that the buildings were at least restored in the eleventh or twelfth centuries.[361] After a break of several

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[358] Cuppage, *Archaeological Survey of the Dingle Peninsula*, 274. For Reask, see T. Fanning, "Excavation of an Early Christian Cemetery and Settlement at Reask, County Kerry, 1977," *PRIA* 81, no. C (1981): 3–172. The excavations revealed a multi-phase settlement with a possible founder shrine or grave.
[359] Harbison, "Early Irish Pilgrim Archaeology on the Dingle Peninsula": 98.
[360] Cuppage, *Archaeological Survey of the Dingle Peninsula*, 263-7.
[361] Ibid., 263-4.

centuries, during which time the oratory was recorded as in ruins, the pilgrimage was resumed in 1868, leading to further disturbance to the site, including the construction of several altars that might have been built using robbed stones. The chapel on Mount Brandon was recorded as plundered in 1177, suggesting some degree of wealth, and in the Papal Taxation List of 1302-7, the church on the summit (called *Collis Sancti Brendani*) paid the highest tax on the peninsula, due to its substantial revenue from pilgrims. These references provide evidence that although the origins and perhaps the heyday of the Saint's Road and the Mount Brandon pilgrimage might have been earlier, even as late as the beginning of the fourteenth century the site was lucrative.[362] The first surviving record of pilgrimage to Mount Brandon specifically is from 1542, when a murderer was assigned to visit both Mount Brandon and Skellig Michael in penance, but the archaeological and architectural evidence proves that the Saint's Road and the pilgrimage site of Mount Brandon specifically has significantly earlier origins.[363] Down the northern slope is a re-erected Maltese cross-inscribed slab at what is known as Arraglen.[364] A fragment of ogham script etched along the side spells out the name of "Ronán, priest son of Comgán." The stone at Arraglen probably marked a waypoint for climbers taking another route to the summit, this one from Cloghane and its early churches and cemetery.

As discussed above, the significance to this thesis of the Mount Brandon pilgrimage road through the Dingle Peninsula is two-fold. First, it provides another example of the phenomenon of a more famous saint taking over a site or landscape previously dedicated to a more local or obscure figure, which I will argue may have occurred at St Davids (Ch. V), and is further demonstrated in the examples of St Patrick's Purgatory (above) and Glencolumbkille (discussed below). Second, as the most extensive surviving pilgrimage landscape in Ireland, it may provide a model with which to interpret other possible 'Saint's Roads' which have now vanished, including the landscape posited at Glastonbury (Ch. VII) and perhaps some of the landscapes of monastic

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[362] Wooding, "The Medieval and Early Modern Cult of St Brendan." 188-9; Nugent, "Exploring the Evidence for Early Medieval Pilgrimage at Kilcolman." 40.

[363] MacDonogh, *The Dingle Peninsula*, 185-6.

[364] Cuppage, *Archaeological Survey of the Dingle Peninsula*, 83.

foundation and hagiographical commemoration in Northumbria (Ch. VI) and at St Davids (V). Unlike most of the other sites in this study, there is no obvious patron for the eleventh- and twelfth-century building projects along the Saint's Road of Dingle, including the grand church at Kilmalkedar. While it had been assumed for some time that all of the minor sites were monastic in origin, other scholars, including Charles Thomas, have argued that the Dingle sites originated as early lay cemeteries, only later gaining a church.[365] But limited excavations in the area, particularly at Reask, suggest that most of the sites visible today originated as settlements with only small burial plots.[366] Sharpe's suggestion that they represent the remains of a proto-parochial system is belied by the sheer density of these sites; Ó Carragáin instead argues that they were proprietary churches "transmitted from one generation of non-celibate clergy to the next", and only a handful would have been involved in pastoral care. If this interpretation is correct, the idea of many local donors contributing to the buildings along the Saint's Road becomes all the more plausible, though the possibility of royal patronage in the building of Kilmalkedar is worth considering. As independent religious institutions, these sites would have the responsibility to feed and shelter pilgrims along the way, which could explain why they survived through the medieval period.[367] But aside from Reask, none of these sites has been archaeologically investigated, and thus we have little in the way of dating evidence to determine how long they were occupied, or what structures might have stood in the enclosures besides those surviving as stone rubble. The Saint's Road of the Dingle Peninsula represents a remarkably intact pilgrimage landscape with an unusual degree of continuity from the early medieval period through the high Middle Ages, possibly only breaking down after the acquisition of Kilmalkedar by the cathedral of Ardfert during the thirteenth century.

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[365] Charles Thomas, *The Early Christian Archaeology of North Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 69; 82.

[366] M. O. H. Carver and Tomás Ó Carragáin, "A Landscape Converted: Archaeology and Early Church Organisation on Iveragh and Dingle, Ireland," in ed. M. O. H. Carver, *The Cross Goes North: Processes of Conversion in Northern Europe, AD 300-1300* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2003), 129-30.

[367] Nugent, "Exploring the Evidence for Early Medieval Pilgrimage at Kilcolman." 42.

Derry and *Betha Colum Cille* – A Landscape of Columban Foundation

The most famous biography of St Colum Cille, or Columba (d. 597) is that written by Adomnán of Iona in the seventh century. In the twelfth century, probably between 1150 and 1169, the Abbey of Derry commissioned what is known as *Betha Colum Cille*, or "The [Irish] *Life* of Colum Cille." It was a Middle Irish homily, written to be read aloud on the saint's feast day, which recorded his genealogy, his monastic accomplishments, and his sacred works in life and death.[368] Overbey makes a convincing case that it is not a typical hagiography or revision of an existing saint's life. Rather, it was specially produced as part of the effort by the community at Derry to not only appropriate the legacy of Columba, but to assert spiritual ties to and a degree of dominion over nearly all of Ireland's most significant early ecclesiastical foundations.[369] The early chapters of the Irish *Life* follow Adomnán's *Vita Columbae* in describing his birth and his earliest miracles, but with one key difference: Adomnán had arranged his material thematically, whereas the author of the Irish *Life* wrote the stories out chronologically.[370] The effect of this change is to establish an itinerary of monastic foundation across Ireland.[371] [**Figure 4.36**]

According the revised narrative, Colum Cille began his career in Moville, moving to Clonard and Glasnevin, where he trained alongside several other prominent Irish saints. His first foundation after this was at Derry, where the Irish *Life* would later be compiled. After this, he continued his travels, founding Raphoe, Durrow, Kells and Clonmore, and also visiting the existing monasteries at Clonmacnoise and Monasterboice, where he left gifts of his own, and founding a number of other monasteries before finally arriving at Iona. However, Durrow is the only one of these monasteries in Ireland said to be founded by Columba in Adomnán's *Life*, and there is no

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[368] Overbey, *Sacral Geographies*, 74-5*.* Herbert gives a date of between 1150-69, as the territory of Colum Cille (and several of the foundations named) appear to have fragmented shortly after the Norman invasion. Máire Herbert, *Iona, Kells, and Derry: The History and Hagiography of the Monastic Familia of Columba* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 181-84.

[369] Overbey, *Sacral Geographies*, 75-77.

[370] Herbert, *Iona, Kells, and Derry,* 181-2.

[371] Overbey, *Sacral Geographies*, 74-76.

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evidence of Columban foundations at Swords, Moone, and Drumcliffe, which the Irish *Life* states he established at the end of his monastic career.[372]

Overbey notes that, at each of the sites that Colum Cille visits in the Irish *Life*, he either founded a monastery or left some token of his presence, including part of his garments at Ciarán's foundation of Clonmacnoise. In her assessment, Colum Cille is 'seeding' the landscape of Ireland with pieces of the Columban monastic legacy (an activity that recalls Finucane's concept of "holy radioactivity" or the *sahkti* left by Hindu goddesses as discussed by Feldhaus). The foundations he founded were governed by clerics who were part of his spiritual *familia*, and thus their successors belong to his spiritual and institutional 'genealogy'.[373] Overbey also argues that land itself assents to Columba's presence: at Raphoe, the soil was made fertile, and at Durrow, he blessed sour apples and made them sweet, in both cases helping sustain the new communities. The account utilizes the Irish tradition of *dindshenchas* (the lore of places) in order to allow Columba to inhabit this landscape long after his death.[374] The motivation for such a dramatic revision of Columba's *Vita* can be found in the political and economic situation of Derry in the twelfth century. Kells, the post-Ionan seat of Columba's spiritual heir or *comarba*, was burned three times in the twelfth century, and Derry began to lay claim to the Columban legacy as Kells declined.

In 1150, Abbot Flaithbertach Ua Brolcháin of Derry claimed the distinction of *comarba* of Colum Cille, and from 1151 to 1153 he carried out a series of circuits through the northern Columban territories.[375] These circuits, not coincidentally, incorporated parts of the Columban itinerary laid out in the Irish *Life*. The advantage of asserting this revised version of Columban history, one that makes Derry his first foundation and then continues to cover most of the major ecclesiastical sites of Ireland, is obvious; it lent legitimacy to Derry's claim to Colum Cille's legacy and established a hierarchy that made the assumption of the office of *comarba* by the Abbot of

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[372] Ibid., 76.
[373] Ibid., 76-77.
[374] Ibid., 79-80.
[375] Ibid., 84.

Derry not a usurpation of his authority, but rather a return to first principles. This state of affairs was realized when in 1161 the churches of Colum Cille in Meath and Leinster were excluded from secular imposition, and the tribute they had paid to the lay lords was instead directed to their new monastic overlord.[376]

The most complete point of comparison for the Columban itinerary of the Irish *Life* is the narrative of the restoration of Northern monasticism by the community of Cuthbert present in Symeon of Durham's *Libellus de Exordio atque Procursu istius hoc est Dunhelmensis Ecclesiae* (which itself builds off the earlier *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*), discussed in the second of the Anglo-Norman case studies (Ch. VI). To summarize, in his account of the history of Durham Cathedral and its monks, Symeon rewrites history to link Cuthbert's Lindisfarne with a historically distinct tradition, the Benedictine heritage of the Venerable Bede at Wearmouth and Jarrow, where abandoned monasteries were re-founded and eventually provided recruits for the new Benedictine priory at Durham cathedral in 1083. As was the case with Flaithbertach Ua Brolcháin, who laid claim to Derry's supposed ancient possessions by establishing and recognizing a sacred itinerary, the Durham community traced the journey of Cuthbert's holy remains across a number of sites in Northumbria, where they maintained some sort of presence, even in Crayke, which was actually within the diocese of York. As shown in the next section, it is possible that this process of myth-building and revision was played out in local landscapes as well as that laid out by the Irish *Life*, and Derry may also have been involved. However, the literary travels of Colum Cille and the deposition of secondary relics can be viewed in the light of another, more distinctively Irish tradition – the movement of portable shrines. Records from the eighth to eleventh centuries record instances of shrines accompanying the abbots of Iona on their visits to Ireland, and while promulgating the 'law' of St Patrick in 811 in Connacht, the abbot of Armagh was accompanied by the shrine of Patrick.[377] These portable shrines seem to have been partly

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[376] Herbert, *Iona, Kells, and Derry*, 118.

[377] A. T. Lucas, "The Social Role of Relics and Reliquaries in Ancient Ireland," *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 116 (1986): 13-14. Portable relics and reliquaries also frequently found themselves carried into battle as talismans (17-20).

used as an insignia of office, with the presence of the relics lending legitimacy and authority to travelling ecclesiastics as they went about their business. This business could included collecting ecclesiastical dues on rent-seeking visitations, where the relics could sometimes extract a several price for failure to pay what was owed.[378] The problem for Derry, of course, was that they did not possess the relics of Colum Cille, which had been scattered far and wide (later tradition held that they had eventually been enshrined at ancient foundation of Downpatrick (Co. Antrim).[379]

The grand ambitions of Flaithbertach Ua Brolcháin and Derry as expressed through the Irish *Life* of Colum Cille were cut short within a few years of the Irish *Life's* completion. In 1164, the grand new abbey church at Derry reached a height of ninety feet, a towering symbol of Derry's fortune and prestige. But in 1166, Derry's most significant secular patron, Domnall Mac Lochlainn, was killed during a successful revolt, and his body was interred not at Derry, but Armagh. In the same year, the monastery at Derry was burned nearly to the ground. The Norman invasion soon afterwards fractured the existing power structures of ecclesiastical and lay lordship, and without the power of Derry to hold it together, the institutional *familia* of Colum Cille fell apart.[380] However, documentary evidence suggests that one possible product of the short-lived dominion of Derry might have outlasted the fortunes of its architect.

Glencolumbkille: Reuse of a Prehistoric and Early Christian Landscape

While the early medieval significance of the sites previously discussed in this chapter is well established, even if the focus of veneration has changed, as at Lough Derg and Dingle, the antiquity of the pilgrimage landscape which now exists around Glencolumbkille (Co. Donegal) is in serious doubt. The place name suggests a relationship to Colum Cille, but there is no evidence that there was ever a Columban monastery at the site until a *Life* of Colum Cille compiled by

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[378] Ibid., 14-15.
[379] Manus O'Donnell, *The Life of Colum Cille*, trans. Brian Lacey (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998). For further discussion of Colum Cille's relics c.f. Raghnall Ó Floinn, "Insignia Columbae I," in *Studies in the Cult of Saint Columba*, ed. Cormac Bourke (Dublin: Four Courts, 1997), 136–61.
[380] Herbert, *Iona, Kells, and Derry*, 122.

Manus O'Donnell in 1532.[381] Glencolumbkille is located on the western extremity of County Donegal near the Irish Sea, almost completely isolated from the surrounding hinterland by a ridge of hills. It was the location of a religious site of some sort in the early medieval period; in addition to mentions of a *coarb* of Glencolumkille on more than one occasion in the annals, a number of cross-decorated stones, many incorporated into the modern pilgrimage stations and cairns, brings the date of the site back to around 800 CE.[382] The modern Protestant church (on the site of a medieval predecessor) and the much-degraded Neolithic passage tomb to its immediate west serve as Station (1) of the modern *turas* (pilgrimage round). They were originally contained within a circular enclosure, while the surrounding hillside is dotted with twelve other pilgrimage stations (a number of them possible *leachta*) which remain part of modern celebrations of the saint's feast day, 9 June.[383] [**Figure 4.37**] A number of the sites that are now part of the *turas* are prehistoric in origin, including a pair of possibly prehistoric tombs, which fit into a larger ancient landscape which may have been reclaimed as Christian during the early medieval period. The prehistoric tomb forms part of the western wall of the graveyard. [384] The early cemetery thus seems to have been deliberately established in proximity to this feature, which would have only been more noticeable at the time, as the area has since been bulldozed, erasing most traces of the enclosure. Station (2) is an elaborately carved standing stone atop what could either be a natural or artificial mound. [**Figure 4.38**] Station (3), known as 'The Place of the Knees,' is a small cairn of stones close to a hollow. The pilgrimage reaches a ruined monastic complex with a chapel (5) and three *leachta*, one of which (4) is surmounted by a carved stone cross and is known as 'The Height of the Cross.' [**Figure 4.40**] This site represents what could have been the original cult site, containing the 'bed' of Colum Cille. In the hills above are Colum Cille's 'chair' (6) and well (7), the latter within the ruins of what could be another prehistoric tomb. Descending back into the

[381] Liam Price, "Glencolumbkille, County Donegal, and Its Early Christian Cross-Slabs," *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 11, no. 3 (1941): 80. O'Donnell's hagiography was part of an underutilized corpus of hagiography in late medieval Ireland (Gillespie, "Devotional Landscapes," 225-8).
[382] Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland*, 109.
[383] Price, 'Glencolumbkille, County Donegal, and Its Early Christian Cross-Slabs': 73-76.
[384] Ibid.: 73-74.; Sinéad Ní Ghabhláin, "Carved Stone Head from Glencolumbkille, County Clare," *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 118 (1988): 135–38.

valley, the pilgrim reaches a collection of three cairns (8) known as 'The Garden of Colum Cille,' and a holed stone (9) called 'the stone of the gathering.' Along the way is a court tomb, Farranmacbride (a).

There is no mention of Glencolumbkille (or Senglenn) in Adomnán's *Vita Columbae* or the version of the *Life* in the Book of Lismore.[385] The Irish *Life* of Colum Cille discussed in the previous section mentions monasteries founded in Connacht, but specifies only Assylin and Drumcliffe.[386] Furthermore, the oldest site in the glen (b) is dedicated not to Colum Cille but to a local recluse named St Fanad, which might hint at the earlier dedication of the landscape.[387] But according to Manus O'Donnell's 1532 vernacular *Life*, likely based on earlier sources, Columba once battled devils in the glen, casting his bell into their midst where it fell and was embedded in the ground. The supposed site of this impact (according to local tradition) is today the collapsed entrance to a souterrain (12), possibly used as a place to protect valuables in times of strife, further protected by a curse laid by Colum Cille in the aftermath of his triumph.[388] [**Figure 4.39**]

The antiquity of the pilgrimage stations and the *turas* has been a matter of debate, and it is possible that the form the site took during the medieval period is not that which survives to the present day. But the presence of early Christian activity and the development of legends late in the period suggest that it probably derived from a medieval practice.[389] Certain components of the ritual, including the following of *deiseal* (right-handwise movement following the direction of the sun) "are fundamental in Irish and Scottish tradition."[390] As for why Glencolumbkille might have evolved from a local site dedicated to St Fanad to one associated with a miracle of Colum Cille, the answer may be found in the ownership of the site as recorded in the Patent Rolls of James I for the year 1603.[391] The record states that the land and fishing rights once belonged to the monastery of Augustinian canons at Derry. As was discussed previously, the twelfth and

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[385] Price, "Glencolumbkille, County Donegal," 80.
[386] Overbey, *Sacral* Geographies, 75-76.
[387] Harbison, *Pilgrimage in Ireland*, 109-110. Price, "Glencolumbkille," 78.
[388] Price, 'Glencolumbkille': 82-83; 86-87; The best edition is O'Donnell, *The Life of Colum Cille*.
[389] Herity, "The Antiquity of an Turas (the Pilgrimage Round) in Ireland."
[390] McGuinness, "Bullaun Stones and Early Medieval Pilgrimage at Glendalough," 17.
[391] Price, "Glencolumbkille," 81.

thirteenth centuries saw a protracted effort by the community at Derry to lay claim to the authority and sacred presence of Colum Cille, to legitimize and portray as pre-ordained the relocation of the *comarba* from Iona to Kells and ultimately to Derry. While Glencolumbkille is not among the monastic foundations assigned Columban origins in the 'Irish *Life* of Colum Cille,' depending on when the site came into Derry's possession, it is plausible that the isolated location with its landscape of prehistoric tombs and other reminders of antiquity might have been repurposed as a site of significance to the revived cult of Colum Cille (particularly in view of the Patrician revival at Downpatrick in 1186). In any case, Glencolumbkille has one of the most complete pilgrimage circuits in Ireland, and while caution is warranted in viewing it as a direct continuation of medieval practices, evidence at other sites, such as Inishmurray, clearly demonstrate that such survivals do exist. The cult of Colum Cille thus overlays two separate pre-existing landscapes, one pre-historic and one potentially linked to St Fanad.

Conclusions: Irish sacred landscapes and their broader significance

The case studies presented here were selected on the basis that they represent a range of different models of Irish sacred landscapes, and just as importantly, are recognized by Irish scholars as such. This chapter lays out a set of theoretical models that might be applied to the proposed landscapes in the case studies at St Davids, Durham and Lindisfarne, and Glastonbury to follow in Chapters V through VII, Further discussion of these thematic models and comparison of their execution will follow in Chapter VIII, with the goal of studying sacred landscapes as a phenomenon across different sites in the Anglo-Norman period. In this chapter the following models are established: a biographical landscape with a range of satellite chapels (Glendalough and St Kevin); an earlier religious site apparently repurposed and reinvented by an Augustinian community in the twelfth century, possibly as part of the attempt by a larger foundation to secure part of a famous saint's legacy (St Patrick's Purgatory, Lough Derg and SS Peter and Paul, Armagh); and a 'western isles' model whose form remained mostly unchanged through the eleventh and twelfth centuries despite changing political and ecclesiastical circumstances

(Inishmurray). Monaincha represents another common site type – the 'island chapel' in a wetland environment which will be further discussed in Chapter VII. Following these are examples of: a large pilgrimage landscape comprising a number of earlier sites, some of which were subsequently rebuilt (The Saint's Road, Dingle); a hagiographical landscape created centuries after the fact to legitimize the claim of an ecclesiastical foundation to a legendary saint (Derry and the Irish *Life* of Colum Cille); and a possibly related site that re-used a landscape composed of both pre-historic and early Christian features to integrate the story of that saint into an ancient landscape (Glencolumbkille). These are only a few of the models that can be found throughout Ireland, but they are the ones which are most applicable to comparison with the forthcoming case studies. The historical and cultural differences between Ireland and Anglo-Norman England must be taken into consideration, and the insecure dating of many of these sites makes any proposal of direct influence highly speculative at best. Nonetheless, it is clear that the sacred landscapes and secondary cult sites of Ireland are a valuable tool for understanding similar examples in England and Wales, and that there is evidence for the creation and promotion of these landscapes (with significant benefits to institutions and patrons) across medieval Britain. Institutional and cultural differences cannot be allowed to overshadow the fact the England and Ireland were only separated by a narrow body of water, with a range of contacts and cultural exchange between them very much a matter of record throughout the medieval period. The role of specific texts and social networks within the England and Irish churches in the Anglo-Norman period is an area that merits further exploration, but this thesis focuses upon what evidence is available at this time.

V: 'Dewisland': Diffused Sanctity around St Davids Cathedral

Introduction

The environs of St Davids Cathedral in Pembrokeshire offer perhaps the most conclusive example, outside of Ireland, of a sacred landscape that can be constructed from both hagiographical and archaeological sources. Drawing upon archaeological and antiquarian evidence, it is evident that from at least the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries, four coastal chapels operated by the cathedral radiated out from the cathedral close, with the possibility of an additional two located on nearby Ramsey Island. While the archaeological evidence is limited by the scale and proficiency of past excavation, the locations of these chapels are known, and their immediate contexts can be surmised. The chapels are dedicated to or associated with figures and events from St David's life, as told by his eleventh- and twelfth-century *Vitae*, as well as some later traditions. Moreover, there is reason to believe that this landscape can be placed in a broader context of 'Celtic' traditions of 'diffused' sanctity and sacred landscapes such as that present at sites like Glendalough in Ireland, and historically linked with the ultimately unsuccessful struggle to gain metropolitan status and recognition of *Menevia* as Wales' Canterbury. Ultimately, I will argue that the canons of St Davids Cathedral were responsible for an ideological campaign to reassert their foundation's antiquity and turn the landscape around the cathedral into '*Dewisland*': the site of St David's upbringing, early monastic career, and ultimately his death. The revision of Rhygyfarch's *Vita* of St David by Giraldus Cambrensis in the late twelfth century was a key part of this ideological programme, along with investment and rebuilding of the coastal chapels, together acting to firmly situate David's life in the area around medieval *Menevia*. Between them, there was no room for doubt as to where David had been born, raised, and first entered the monastic life. To date, the landscape around St Davids has been most fully explored by Heather James, who noted the coastal chapels and pulled together what limited archaeological

material existed for them, relating them to the broader landscape around medieval *Menevia*.[392] The major goal of this section is to further bolster James' case while also proposing a more specific ideological programme executed by the canons of the cathedral, best represented through the hagiographical and historical works of Giraldus Cambrensis (better known as Gerald of Wales). While James favoured an earlier date for the creation of this network of sites based upon the substantial evidence of early medieval activity from both antiquarian and recent archaeology, I would propose a later date for the integration of these early medieval sites into the cult of St David at medieval *Menevia*, one that coincides with the revision of Rhygyfarch's *Vita* by Giraldus in the last decade of the twelfth century.

Saints in Their Landscapes: The Welsh Pilgrimage Tradition

While the idea of saints existing within a physical landscape is by no means unique to Wales or even the British Isles, as discussed in the preceding chapter, Wales and Brittany are two areas where the landscape was particularly integral to the medieval cult of saints. In view of this, Julia Smith's article on the pilgrimage tradition in Brittany is useful to formulating a 'Welsh' model of pilgrimage and landscape.[393] Smith argues that religious landscapes played a much larger role in the creation and promotion of Welsh and Breton cults, particularly as opposed to the enshrined corporeal remains of saints. These landscapes were on the whole composed of a network of smaller shrines, holy wells, or chapels which drew their significance from events in the life of a saint or their associates, sometimes (though not always) in close proximity to a larger cult site. References to these secondary cult sites might be sprinkled throughout the newly-revised or composed *vitae* of those saints, which would be read aloud on a saint's feast day. These sacred *foci* could take a variety of forms: the Breton legend of Saint Pol de Leon mentions healing springs, and his ninth-century hagiographer wrote of Pol's sacred bell *Hirglas*. Both of these examples

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[392] Heather James, "The Cult of St David in the Middle Ages," *Journal of the Pembrokeshire Historical Society* 7 (1996): 5–25.
[393] Julia M.H. Smith, "Oral and Written: Saints, Miracles, and Relics in Brittany, *c.*850-1250," *Speculum* 65, no. 2 (1990): 309–43.

resonate in broader 'Celtic' contexts, particularly in Wales and Ireland. While no tombs or relics are mentioned, "the springs and the bell were the tangible links between the saint's earthly career and his continuing miracle-working power."[394] While the hagiographical legends offer an explanation for the power of these sites and holy objects, Smith argued that it would be a mistake to see this as the end point – what is written down in hagiography or historical sources is likely to have formed only part of the broader framework of stories and traditions surrounding the cult of a saint. Breton cults were not meant to "channel veneration" towards larger cult sites or cathedrals – rather, their sanctity is "diffused" through the local landscape.[395] Smith suggested that the impetus for the flourishing of these Breton cults was the laity, rather than the clergy: "whereas elsewhere *vitae* and accounts of post-mortem miracles frequently acted as advertisements for particular churches … [Breton *Lives*] give frank recognition to the existence of loci of contact between saint and society other than ecclesiastical shrines."[396] Unlike the case in most of the West, saints' cults were not centralized around specific institutions which cultivated and promoted their own saints and their cults, but in a Breton context these relatively well-known saints were viewed as primarily local, based around small churches, secondary relics, and natural features, with very little emphasis placed upon their corporeal remains under the control of traditional ecclesiastical authorities. Of course, such cults existed only with the tolerance of ecclesiastical authorities; there are examples of cults that were rejected by the church and supressed, perhaps most notably that of the canine 'St. Guinefort,' a greyhound whose wrongful death saving the child of his master was celebrated in thirteenth-century Lyon.[397] However, in Smith's view, it is important to avoid characterizing the dynamics of lay versus clergy and oral versus written as antagonistic; they instead reflect the wide range of practices of cult veneration and promotion.[398] Breton churches were also unusually unconcerned with the acquisition and

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[394] Ibid, 324.
[395] Ibid, 326.
[396] Ibid, 335.
[397] Rebecca Rist, "The Papacy, Inquisition and Saint Guinefort the Holy Greyhound," *Reinardus* 30, no. 1 (2018): 190–211.
[398] Smith is particularly pushing back against the idea that clerical culture "covered over, hid, and blotted out folkloric culture" and that "clerical culture opposed folklore not only out of conscious and deliberate

promotion of relics, whether those of local saints or foreign imports, in a time when this was accepted and common practice on the continent.[399] Smith observed that Breton cults were "intensely local" and foreign saints were rarely allowed to intrude upon more intimate sacred communities. A prominent example of this in a Welsh context is the cult site of St David at Llandewibrefi. The church is located on a high hill, which according to two of David's hagiographers was miraculously raised from the ground at the climax of a synod presided over by David, so that his words might reach all who were present.[400] The existence of the hill was itself part of the cult and David's story: "the raised land … was evidence of the sanctity of the site."[401] The phenomenon of the deeds of saints being recorded in the landscape is also known at several of the Irish sites discussed previously, most prominently St Patrick's Purgatory at Lough Derg, the sites associated with St Kevin in the Glendalough Valley, and the Columban landscape of Glencolumbkille (Chapter IV).

Recently, Kathryn Hurlock challenged this understanding of Welsh saints' cults as less focused on corporeal remains than their English or continental counterparts. The lack of conventional shrines at Welsh sites outside of major ecclesiastical centres like St Davids (David, Justinian, Caradog) and Llandaff (Teilo, Dyfrig, Euddogwy and Samson) does not necessarily correlate with a perceived lack of importance of the sacred remains of saints.[402] Rather, the differences were in presentation; outside of certain Anglo-Norman-influenced contexts, major translations into new shrines were infrequent, but this was because most of the bodies of the saints were often left in their original graves, often marked by special shrine chapels (known as

hostility but equally out of incomprehension." This attitude is particularly evidenced in Jacques Le Goff, "Clerical Culture and Folkloric Traditions in Merovingian Civilization," in *Time, Work and Culture in the Middle Ages*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 153–58. Elsewhere, Rachel Koopmans argues that oral stories, rather than being seen as inferior to written *miracula*, might have had a broader appeal because of the personal relationship between teller and audience. (Koopmans, 23-5). Powell ("Once upon a time there was a saint") attempted to create a methodology for identifying, though not separating, folkloric elements of hagiographic texts, though it can be argued that she neglects to consider how the alteration of stories might be a result of deliberate decision making by hagiographers rather than the uncertainty surrounding old traditions.

[399] Smith, "Oral and Written," 336.
[400] TH, 179; VD, 145-147.
[401] Kathryn Hurlock, *Medieval Welsh Pilgrimage, c.1100-1500* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2018), 96.
[402] Ibid., 20-22.

Capel y Bedd or *Cell y Bedd*), as in the case of St Issau's in Patrishow and St Mellangel at Pennant

Mellangel.[403] In other cases, they were reburied within a church, as in the example of St Padarn in

Llanbardan Fawr and St Brynach of Nevern.[404] One of the other most important pilgrimage sites

in medieval Wales was Bardsey Island, the reputed 'resting place of 20,000 saints.' In its heyday,

three trips to St Mary's Abbey on the island (cared for by 'native' Welsh canons, followed by

Augustinians in 1212) were said to be equal to a single pilgrimage to Rome, though it should be

noted the first sources for the moniker are no earlier than the twelfth century.[405] It is also notable

in that there was no specific figure's grave or shrine that was the focus of veneration. The lack of

traditional shrines is potentially related to another characteristic of Welsh saints' cults as

compared to the English counterparts: very few 'shrine miracles' are recorded, with more of an

emphasis placed on the miraculous deeds performed during the saint's lifetime.[406] But while

Hurlock argues that this precludes Welsh *Vitae* being used to promote pilgrimage sites, I would

disagree; the prominence of places associated with saints and their deeds within these Welsh

sources, particularly Giraldus Cambrensis' twelfth-century *vita* of St David, may in fact be

indicative of different settings for veneration.[407]

Nonetheless, Smith's attention to the links between Wales and Brittany is warranted.

Brittany played a key role in the narrative of the lost *pallium* of Menevia. In book ii of *De Jure et*

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[403] David Longley, "Early Medieval Burial in Wales," in *The Archaeology of the Early Medieval Celtic Churches*, ed. Nancy Edwards (Leeds: Maney, 2009), 115-16.

[404] Hurlock, *Medieval Welsh Pilgrimage*, 22-23.

[405] Ibid., 22; 28. Edel Bhreathnach, "Ynys Enlli: The Representation of Medieval Pilgrim Destination," in *Solitaries, Pastors and 20,000 Saints: Studies in the Religious History of Bardsey Island (Ynys Enlli)*, ed. Jonathan M Wooding (Lampeter: Trivium Publications, 2010), 1–14.

[406] Hurlock, *Medieval Welsh Pilgrimage*, 32. A unique *miracula* attached to a fifteenth-century manuscript containing Giraldus's *Vita* of St David (BS MS Royal 13C1) is a notable exception (D. Simon Evans, *The Welsh Life of St. David* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1988), xl).

[407] The *Liber Llandavensis*, a twelfth-century text from St Davids' rival Llandaff Cathedral near Cardiff, collects a number of *vitae* where the links between the lives of the holy and specific locations are particularly emphasized. Bardsey Island is not merely the 'Land of 20,000 Saints,' but is also the monastic retreat of the hermit Elgar (William J. Rees, *The Liber Landavensis, Llyfr Teilo: Or the Ancient Register of the Cathedral Church of Llandaff* (London: Longman and Co., 1840), 282-87). The *Vita* of Dubricius, another Bardsey saint whose relics were obtained by Llandaff in the twelfth century, also provides place-names and etymologies for the events of the saint's childhood (*Liber Llandavensis*, 323-31) and the *Vita* of the subject of the cathedral's most important cult, St Teilo, explains how he and St Samson, "planted a great grove of fruit-bearing trees, to the extent of three miles, from Dol [in Brittany] as far as Cai, and those woods are honored with their names until the present day, for they are called the groves of Teilo and Samson" (346).

Statu Menevensis Ecclesiae, Giraldus explained that Archbishop Samson, the last of David's archiepiscopal successors, fled to Brittany after a series of raids.[408] From a broader perspective, a number of Welsh (and Cornish) saints, including David's mother, Nonnita, were venerated in Brittany during the Middle Ages.[409] Furthermore, there is a clear parallel between the religious practices and traditions of the Welsh in Giraldus's earlier work and those of medieval Brittany. Giraldus drew particular attention to the Welsh preoccupation with holy objects such as "bishops' crooks, bells, holy books and the Cross itself."[410] This remark can be compared to his observation that the people of Ireland "have such a reverence for portable bells, staffs crooked at the top and encased in gold, silver or bronze, and other similar relics of the saints, that they are more afraid of swearing oaths upon them than they are upon the Gospels."[411] The early medieval links between Brittany and Wales, in particular Menevia, are significant enough to see the two later traditions of sacred landscapes and secondary cult sites as potentially related. This is also true of Ireland, where both sacred landscapes serving as the centre of veneration of a saint and the importance of secondary relics, particularly bells, is also a prominent feature of the Irish cult of saints, one that broadly speaking did not manifest in Anglo-Norman cults in England.[412] At St Davids in particular, Irish pilgrims are recorded in a number of early sources, and the dedication of one of the coastal chapels to St Patrick can hardly be coincidence.[413]

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[408] *DISM*, 229. As noted above, Samson and Teilo left their own mark on the landscape of their new home. Giraldus gives a list of twenty-five archbishops between David and Samson that is clearly erroneous, given that a number of the archbishops he names are known from the annals to have served after the death of Samson of Dol in 585 (and David himself died in 601). It is, however, hard to believe that Giraldus was ignorant of that fact, given his relationship to the canons of St Davids.

[409] Jane Cartwright, "The Cult of St Non: Rape, Sanctity and Motherhood in Welsh and Breton Hagiography," in *St David of Wales: Cult, Church and Nation*, ed. J Wyn Evans and J Wooding (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2007), 182–206.

[410] *IC*, 203.

[411] *TH*, 116. *Hoc etiam praetereundum puto, quod campanas bajulas, baculoque sanctorum in superiore parte recurvos, auro et argento vel aere contextos, in magna reverentia … ita ut sacramenta super haec, longe magis quam super evangelia, et praestare vereantur et perjure.* Giraldus is generally quite dismissive of a range of Welsh and Irish traditions, though it seems entirely plausible his stance on secondary relics of the type he describes could have changed during his association with St Davids Cathedral. Regardless, surviving bell reliquaries and crooks in Ireland testify to the accuracy of at least some of Giraldus's account.

[412] Ó Carragáin and O'Sullivan, *Inishmurray*, 318. For further discussion, c.f. Lucas, "The Social Role of Relics and Reliquaries in Ancient Ireland."

[413] James, "The Cult of St David in the Middle Ages," 7; A.B. Badger and F. Green, "The Chapel Traditionally Attributed to St Patrick, Whitesand Bay, Pembrokeshire," *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 80 (1925): 115-17.

Wendy Davies has nonetheless cautioned against extrapolating such cultural parallels between 'Celtic' regions into a universalized 'Celtic' Christianity. Her work has challenged this "myth" and criticized the static model of 'Celtic' religious traditions, where earlier sources can be uncritically applied to other regions and eras, using them to "typify all Celts in all centuries."[414] Nonetheless, the patterns are present; there are enough links in the traditions and practices of the Breton, Irish, and Welsh churches to raise the question of whether the Breton model of diffused sanctity within localized landscapes proposed by Smith can be found elsewhere, even if there is no single 'Celtic' origin. In addition to the Breton traditions discussed by Smith, the model of Glendalough in the previous chapter, where sites described in the *vitae* of Kevin were also marked by later chapels or other features, can be used to understand the medieval landscape around the cathedral and cult of St David, though I will argue that contrary to Smith's examples, the impetus for the revival of the cult in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries came from the cathedral canons, not the local lay community.

St Davids is not the only Welsh site where aspects of the 'Breton model' of the cult of saints can be observed. The Welsh affinity for holy wells as primary focal points of devotion should be noted; two of the most popular pilgrimage sites in Wales were the holy wells at Penrhys and Holywell. Holywell is a particularly interesting case, as the cult not only survived, but flourished even after the body of St Winefride, a seventh-century Welsh virgin originally (and thanks to the efforts of her saintly uncle, temporarily) martyred at Holywell, was taken across the border to Shrewsbury Abbey, where her shrine became the centre of a new cult. Around 1200, control of Holywell passed from St Werburga's Abbey in Chester to the newly-established Cistercian monastery of Basingwerk, a mile to the north of Holywell, and it became not just a popular pilgrimage destination, but a lucrative asset.[415] The sacred topography of Holywell consisted of a small complex of buildings, including the well itself (today framed by an ornate fifteenth-century

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[414] Davies, "The Myth of the Celtic Church."

[415] Katherine Hurlock, "Pilgrimage," in *Monastic Wales: New Approaches*, ed. Janet Burton and Karen Stöber (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013), 273.

canopy), a chapel of Winefride, and a church of St James (formerly dedicated to St Beuno, Winefride's uncle and miraculous healer) on top of the hill. However, the domain of Winefride and Beuno extended beyond this complex – a carved stone cross of tenth-century date stands near Whitford village four miles to the west, later accompanied by a grange and twelfth-century chapel built by Basingwerk Abbey.[416] The place name, Maen Achwyfan, refers to Cwywan, a disciple of St Beuno.[417] The cross was sited along a known pilgrimage route from St Asaph to Holywell, a key part of what Locker calls "an increasing sacralisation of the landscape" during the pilgrims' approach.[418] In relation to the proposed sacred landscape around St Davids, the presence of the Maen Achwyfan cross is particularly interesting, as it demonstrates the existence of sites associated with Winefride and her family well beyond the limits of the primary pilgrimage destination itself. The arrangement is reminiscent of the 'Saint's Road' on the Dingle Peninsula (Chapter IV). The existence of the twelfth-century chapel such a short distance away hints that even before the monks of Basingwerk had acquired the well from St Werburga's, they were already laying claim to the legacy and sacred power of the famous saint within the landscape she had once walked.

The pairing of a secondary site with a larger ecclesiastical institution seems to have been a relatively common practice for Welsh monasteries from a number of different orders during the twelfth to sixteenth centuries – the well and statue of the Virgin Mary at Penrhys was a possession of Llantarnam Abbey (Cistercian) from the middle of the twelfth century,[419] while Margam Abbey (Cistercian) attracted pilgrims to a hermitage within the abbey bounds, and Llanthony Priory (Augustinian) exploited its links to Cwmiou Church with its miraculous portrait of St Leonard. I will argue that the same phenomenon of 'diffused' sanctity and sacred landscapes identified in

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[416] Nancy Edwards and Jana Horák, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones and Stone Sculptures in Wales*, vol. 3, 3 vols. (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013). 366-371.

[417] Locker, *Landscapes of Pilgrimage*, 105-120.

[418] Ibid, 120.

[419] Madeline Gray, "Sacred Space and the Natural World: The Holy Well and Shrine of the Virgin Mary at Penrhys," *European Review of History* 18, no. 2 (2011): 243–60.

Brittany and other Welsh sites can be found in a complex network of sites around the cathedral of Wales' patron saint.

Where is *Dewisland?* Geographic Uncertainties and the History of the Cult of St David

Like most early medieval saints' cults, the historical details of the lives of David of Wales and his immediate successors are largely a matter of conjecture. The bulk of information comes from much later sources, and the narratives of Irish saints (primarily Patrick) are interwoven with Welsh foundation legends in ways that frequently contradict 'native' Irish hagiography and tradition.[420] There are certain consistencies across all the accounts. David was born in Wales to a woman named Nonnita after she was raped by a local Welsh king named Sanctus.[421] The Irish apostle Patrick was present in Wales as an evangelist before departing for Ireland, leaving Wales as '*Dewisland*', to be looked after and spiritually directed by David.[422] Following his education at *Vetus Rubus,* David established monastic communities across the south of England before returning to Wales to found his own house in the *Vallis Rosina*, of which he won control from a local tyrant.[423] He was also elevated as archbishop at the anti-Pelagian Synod of Llandewibrefi and travelled to Jerusalem where he received the *pallium* and a number of sacred objects (including altars) from the Patriarch himself.[424] He died in his monastery, and was buried there.[425]

Some of these details cannot be historically verified and seem more likely to be the product of hagiographical tropes – that his father would be named Sanctus ('saint') and mother Nonnita ('nun') is clearly one of them.[426] But while historians have traditionally accepted that the

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[420] *VD*, Note 15.
[421] Ibid., 113.
[422] Ibid., 111.
[423] Ibid., 119-125.
[424] Ibid., 141-147.
[425] Ibid., 151.
[426] Heather James, "The Geography of the Cult of St David: A Study of Dedication Patterns in the Medieval Diocese," in Evans and Wooding (eds.), *St David of Wales*, 41–83, 76-7.

site known as *Menevia* in Latin, *Hen-mynyw* in Welsh, and the *monasterium et paruchia Sancti Degui* by Asser in his *Vita Alfridi,* is the site of the present day cathedral city of St David's (*Ty Dewi* in modern Welsh), it is likely that the early medieval history of the site and its cult is more complicated.[427] [**Figure 5.1**] The most obvious cause of confusion in the earlier *Vita* (*c*.1091-1093 by Rhygyfarch), other than the general lack of geographical detail for the early part of David's life, is its reference to Gruffydd ap Cynan (king of Gwynedd, *c*.1055–1137) in a description of the entourage of Bishop Sulien. This work appears to draw a distinction between those individuals belonging to the episcopate of *Menevia* and a "*chorus universus*" associated with St David.[428] Previously, J. Wyn Evans suggested the possibility of a dispersed or relocated cult that was not, at this time, exclusively based in present-day St David's, but rather divided between *Mynyw* (*Menevia*) and *Hen Fynyw* (Old *Menevia*, in Ceredigion, now Cardiganshire). However, he assessed this as "unlikely," suggesting instead two communities existing on the site of the present cathedral.[429] But Evans' hypothetical scenario of multiple cult centres as late as the eleventh century should not be so easily discarded. Generally, the centre of a cult would be the site of the saint's relics, but none of David's corporeal relics were recovered until the thirteenth century, despite diligent work by the Norman bishops.[430]

Further evidence for a second major cult centre is that more churches are dedicated to David and his associates in the Aeron and Teifi valleys of the Ceredigion region nearer to *Hen Fynyw* and Llanddewi Brefi, respectively, than anywhere in Pembrokeshire or the ancient kingdom of Dyfed, included the site of modern St David's.[431] As noted, within Rhygyfarch's *Vita*, little geographic detail is given for the *Vetus Rubus* or *Vallis Rosina*, though Rhygyfarch adds that the Welsh refer to the latter as Hoddnant.[432] The Welsh rendering is conspicuously absent from

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[427] James, "The Cult of St David," 5-6.

[428] J. Wyn Evans, "St David and St Davids and the Coming of the Normans," *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* 11 (2005), 15.

[429] J. Wyn Evans, "Transition and Survival: St David and St Davids Cathedral," in Evans and Wooding (eds.), *St David of Wales*, pp. 38-39.

[430] Fred Cowley, "The Relics of St David: The Historical Evidence," in Evans and Wooding (eds.), *St David of Wales*, 274–81.

[431] James, "The Geography of the Cult of St David," 76–77.

[432] *VD*, 121.

the later *Vita* of Giraldus. Further complicating the picture, David's pastoral staff resided at the church of Llandewi Brefi in Ceredigion, where it drew praise from Gwynfarrd Brycheiniog as late as the 1170s.[433] Llandewi Brefi also provides the earliest reference to David in the archaeological record, from a now-lost inscription dated to the seventh century.[434] Between the ambiguous date of the archaeological evidence in St David's peninsula, the inscription referring to *Dewi* at Llandewi Brefi (where David was elevated to archbishop), and the frequent violent disruption of the cult by outside forces, it seems reasonable to suggest that the cult might have been dispersed between the seventh and eleventh centuries. A dispersed or multi-focal cult would have important implications for later hagiography. In addition, it was not until the later twelfth-century works of Giraldus (specifically the *Itinerarium* that the link between David's monastery at *Vallis Rosina* and the present site of the cathedral ("*ecclesia Menevensis sita est … Vallis Rosina"*) was made in any way explicit.[435]

Nonetheless, it cannot be doubted that the St Davids peninsula was the site of early medieval Christian activity, and potentially a saint's cult, once one considers the archaeological evidence of several early Christian inhumation cemeteries and early Christian monuments.[436] These are distributed across the peninsula, including nearby to the present cathedral close and several of the late medieval chapel sites (including St Patrick's and St Justinian's).[437] But the presence of a cult centre of St David is by no means the only explanation for early Christian activity on the peninsula. The similarity of the above-mentioned sites to early medieval Irish kin group cemeteries combined with the known presence of Irish settlement has been noted by Heather James.[438] It is also possible that David was not the first saint of *Dewisland* (Irish saints like Patrick and some version of Stinian are possible candidates) and that it was only by the tenth

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[433] James, "The Cult of St David," 11.

[434] Ibid., 5.

[435] *IC*, 107. Another account is given in *VSD*, 386–7.

[436] Nancy Edwards, "Monuments in a Landscape: The Early Medieval Sculpture of St David's," in *Image and Power in the Archaeology of Early Medieval Britain: Essays in Honour of Rosemary Cramp*, ed. H. Hamerow and A. MacGregor (Oxford: Oxbow, 2001), 53–77.

[437] James, "The Cult of St David," 13-15.

[438] Ibid, 14.

or eleventh centuries that the early settlements and their monuments were united with the cult of David, either by some institution dedicated to David at or near *Menevia* or out of hagiographical expediency beginning with the late eleventh-century *Vita* of Rhygyfarch.[439] A scenario like that at Glencolumbkille, where the eponymous saint seems to have been introduced to a prehistoric and early medieval landscape centuries after his death, and St Patrick's Purgatory, where a legend was created in the twelfth century by the new Augustinian canons, is quite plausible. Unfortunately, place-name evidence of the sort present at Dingle (where the name Kilmalkedar may preserve the name of the original saint of the area) does not come down to us, though both Rhygyfarch and later Giraldus Cambrensis supply a number of etymological explanations for certain old names.

By the time the first *Vita* was written, Bishop Sulien had restored the episcopal see of *Menevia*, and at the very least some relics and a shrine were present to be despoiled and destroyed by a major Viking raid in 1091.[440] This incursion was only the most recent upheaval in *Menevia*'s tumultuous and violent history: incessant attacks from Vikings, Saxons, the English, and local barons are recorded in the period between 810 and 1080, including two (999 and 1080) that resulted in the death of the bishop. In the later twelfth-century *Vita* of St Caradog (whose relics would be acquired by St Davids Cathedral shortly after his death) it is explicitly stated that one of these raids (perhaps either that of 1080 or 1091) left *Menevia* almost completely abandoned for seven years, to the extent that it could take up to a week to cut through the brambles and thorns to reach the *tumba.*[441] While this was probably an exaggeration, it seems very likely that the relics of David, or at least the shrine that held them, may have been lost by this time. That Rhygyfarch makes no mention of this (but does highlight the importance of David's secondary relics, including his bells and staff) is unsurprising if they were not recovered in his

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[439] J. Wyn Evans, "St David and St David's: Some Observations on the Cult, Site, and Buildings," in ed. Cartwright *Celtic Hagiograpjhy and Saints' Cults*, 10–25, 13-14.
[440] Evans, "Transition and Survival," 33.
[441] John of Tynemouth and John Capgrave, "De Sancto Caradoco Heremita," in *NLA*, 174–75.

lifetime.[442] Given the circumstances discussed above, it is therefore not necessary to prove the existence of two or more distinct eleventh-century communities to argue for the possibility of a fragmented cult within the institutional memory of St Davids Cathedral in *Menevia* when Giraldus composed his *vita* of David in the late twelfth century.

The first Norman bishop of *Menevia*, Bernard (bp. 1115-1148), and his successors took up the cause of both the cult of David and the canons' aspirations for metropolitan status. Such an initiative would have only heightened the importance of localizing the cult in the landscape around St David's, thus reinforcing its claims to antiquity.[443] The longevity and continuity of the cult had larger implications for *Menevia*'s metropolitan claims, and the importance of the (dubiously) unbroken line of 25 archbishops from David to Sampson of Dol was emphasized by Giraldus*.* It was this Samson (better known as Samson of Dol) who Giraldus claims was archbishop when "the pallium was taken away," with Samson fleeing to Brittany. [444] Giraldus is also the first to state unequivocally that St David's Cathedral in contemporary *Menevia* stands in the *Vallis Rosina* on the site of David's original foundation, and even attributes the cathedral's remote location to a desire for David and his predecessor, Bishop Dyfrid of Caerleon, to "remove themselves from the upsets of the world."[445] As the key to the metropolitan case was establishing the existence of an independent Welsh archbishopric before the arrival of St Augustine at Canterbury, it seems logical that being able to pinpoint where the cathedral of the see stood would be an important step to verifying the claim. Thus, it was essential that any confusion over the original site was conclusively resolved. This chapter argues that a religious programme in service of the cult and the metropolitan claim can be identified both in the revised contents of David's

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[442] John Reuben Davies, "Cathedrals and the Cult of Saints in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century Wales," in *Cathedrals, Communities and Conflict in the Anglo-Norman World*, ed. Paul Dalton, Charles Insley, and Louise J. Wilkinson (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2011), 102.

[443] Evans, "St David and St David's," 12–13. Bernard was also responsible for building the first stone church on the site, and to date no evidence has been found of a predecessor building of the same rank.

[444] *IC*, 101-104; *Pallium...est translatum.* (103); *DIS*. As mentioned in Note 384, this timeline is impossible, but the perceived continuity it creates is likely the reason for its inclusion.

[445] *IC*, 102: *ut populares strepitus subterfugiendo*.

Life by Giraldus Cambrensis, and in the evidence of post-Conquest ecclesiastical investment in the built landscape around the cathedral.

The Agenda of Giraldus Cambrensis

The ties of David to the landscape of Menevia and its environs were first suggested by Rhygyfarch's late eleventh-century *Life*, but they were only fully realized in the works of Giraldus Cambrensis, the archdeacon of Brecon and later contender for the see of St Davids, who revised the earlier *Vita* in the late 1190s. For the most part the *Vita S. Davidis Episcopi Menevensis* was simply a more polished version of Rhygyfarch's *Vita S. David*, as Giraldus himself suggested.[446] But there are key differences: Giraldus' most striking contribution, in both the *Vita* and the *Itinerarium*, was the promotion of a claim to unbroken continuity from the monastic settlement of David to the present cathedral. Any geographic confusion that may have existed previously was cleverly explained away. Giraldus rendered *Vetus Rubus*, the site of David's education as given by Rhygyfarch, as *Hen-meneu* or *Vetus Menevia*, and suggested that the Irish name for the *ecclesia Menevensis* was *Kil-muni* (with *muni* also meaning 'grove').[447] Crucially, he then suggested that *Vallis Rosina*, the site of David's original monastery (and the present cathedral) was nearby (*ad locum … Meneviam*), as he had previously stated in the *Itinerarium*.[448] Within the revised narrative, David's conception (as well as the vision of Ireland received by St Patrick) specifically took place in *Pepidiuac*, or 'Pembidiog', the cantref of the ancient kingdom of Dyfed (*Demetica*) in which St David's is located, in the *Vallis Rosina*.[449] Giraldus removed entirely the reference to the *Vallis Rosina/Vetus Rubus* being known locally as *Hoddnant*, which was one of the few geographic details given in Rhygyfarch's *Vita* beyond *Portu Magno* and the River Alun, and even these might have been added when the surviving manuscript (MS Cotton Vespasian A. XIV) was produced in

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[446] *VSD*, 377.
[447] Ibid., p. 384.
[448] Ibid., p. 387.
[449] Ibid., pp. 379–80. By contrast, Rhygyfarch's *Vita* gives the much less precise location of *Demetica* (Dyfed) (*VD* 111, 113).

the late-12th century.[450] An episode where a pregnant Non interrupts St Gildas's sermon is assigned to a church at Kanmorva.[451] Finally, Giraldus inserted *Portelais* (Porth Clais) as the site of David's baptism (and possibly his birth), firmly grounding David's entire childhood in Pembidiog and the St Davids peninsula, rather than nearby Ceredigion.[452] Rhygyfarch, author of the eleventh-century *Life*, was from Llanbardarn in Ceridigion, near *Fen Mynwy* or *Hen Meneu* (one of the proposed alternative cult centres of David and a more realistic rendering of *Vetus Rubus*).[453] By the time Giraldus revised the *Vita*, the Norman bishops (and aspiring archbishops) had accepted that *Menevia* was in fact the site of the modern St Davids, and Giraldus created an impression of unbroken continuity and success that is somewhat belied by the historical record.

Giraldus's own involvement and investment in St Davids' metropolitan case was far from straightforward; less than a decade after calling the Welsh 'poor and barbarous' and spurning the see of *Menevia*, he was visiting Rome to argue the cathedral's metropolitan case.[454] But while Giraldus's own advocacy for the pallium might post-date the accepted date of his *Vita* of David (*c.*1192 to the late 1190s), it seems reasonable to conclude that Giraldus's revision would have reflected the concerns and desires of his patrons at St Davids, and that a number of the changes

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[450] *VD*, 121; In his edition of the later Welsh Vita, D. Simon Evans a that that Vespasian contains "material not found in the [Digby, Nero, and Rouen U 141 recensions]," including "accretions and amplifications" relating to "the identification of persons and places in west Wales in the vicinity of St Davids … which were added to a Nero text by someone in St David's about the year 1190" (D. Simon Evans, *The Welsh Life of St. David* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1988), xli-ii). It is therefore plausible that the place-names were either corrected or added in the late twelfth century, when the location of St David's *Menevia* had been firmly fixed by Giraldus. Given the apparent interest in explicitly mapping David's life and career onto the landscape around St Davids, I would argue that such alterations would fit the broader pattern argued in this chapter. Paul Russell argues that Vespasian best represents Rhygyfarch's original text, and that the other surviving manuscripts are abridgments. He also concludes that the exemplar used by Giraldus was Nero-Digby, possibly supplemented by older sources.

[451] *VSD*, 381. This episode also appears in abbreviated form in the *Life* of St Gildas by Caradog of Llancarfan. Giraldus describes the site as *urbs maritima vel castrum*, and the late A.W. Wade-Evans asserted that "doubtless the 'Morva' intended by Giraldus is the well-known one, which lies south of the Cathedral between Porth Clais and St Non's Bay" (*Life of St David*, Translations of Christian Literature. Series V (London: SPCK, 1923), 72-3). The Harvey map of 1840 shows a feature labeled 'Carn warpool' on the site of the present-day Warpool House Hotel which could possibly be what Wade-Evans was referring to. (John Harvey, *Map of the Parish of St Davids, Pembrokeshire, in 3 Parts*, 1840).

[452] *VSD*, 383.

[453] Richard Sharpe, "Which Text Is Rhygyfarch's Life of St David?" in Evans and Wooding (eds.) *St David of Wales*, 99.

[454] *DISM*, 337-9.

he made represented subtle but important changes in the cult since Rhygyfarch's eleventh-century work. It is worth noting that of the works that Giraldus brought with him to present before Innocent III in 1199, the *Vita* was not among them. Rather than suggesting that the *Vita* post-dated this journey, it can instead be explained by the comparatively minor role the *Vita* gives to the Roman Church, as well as the account of David seeking the *pallium* not in Rome, but in Jerusalem.[455] The revised *Vita* is characterized by an informed acquaintance with local geography, also evident in the *Topographia Hibernica* and the *Itinerarium Cambriae*, something that Michael Richter found unusual in a hagiographic work.[456] But on the basis of what I would argue was geographic confusion surrounding the life and cult of David, such close attention to local details and place names is less surprising. Whether Giraldus's later conversion to the cause of Welsh 'nationalism' and ecclesiastical autonomy was motivated by personal ambitions and careerism, or whether his commitment was even genuine, is not particularly important. What is certain is that when Giraldus wrote the *Itinerarium* in *c.*1191, he not only stated that St Davids Cathedral stood in the *Vallis Rosina*, the site of Patrick and David's original monastery, but gave the full account of the Synod of Llandewibrefi, where David was declared archbishop.[457] At the very least, these choices suggest that Giraldus would have been viewed as sympathetic and skilled enough at this date to later produce a revision of Rhygyfarch's *Life* for the post-Conquest St Davids community. By this time, the community and the cult had become firmly located in what was then *Menevia*, and within Giraldus's work represented a successful, if temporarily displaced, line of sanctity and metropolitan dignity from David to the present day.[458]

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[455] Michael Richter, *Giraldus Cambrensis: The Growth of the Welsh Nation*, 2nd ed. (Aberystwyth: National Library of Wales, 1976), 385-6. As noted above, the most 'complete' version of Rhygyfarch's eleventh-century *Life* is MS Vespasian A.XIV (V), and that recension may date to around the same time as Giraldus's *Vita*.

[456] Richter, *Giraldus Cambrensis*, 383.

[457] IC, 102.

[458] Evans, "Transition and Survival," 31.

Dewisland: **Archaeological Evidence and Dating**

In addition to two chapels on Ramsey Island, the landscape around St Davids is primarily

organized around four chapels, several of them accompanied by nearby holy wells. [**Figure 5.2**]

Each of these mainland chapels is linked by historical evidence and tradition to either associates

of St David or key events during his life, and there is reason to suppose all of them were at least

rebuilt between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries. Post-Dissolution antiquarian accounts by

George Owen and Browne Willis make it clear that all six known chapels were made of stone, and

all were likely to be of more than one phase of building.[459] There is evidence to suggest that the

majority of the chapels had been abandoned for some time, corresponding with a known decrease

in Irish pilgrimage to Wales in the fifteenth century.[460]

Heather James has argued that prior to the twelfth century "no stone churches or chapels

are yet proven to have existed in Wales."[461] However, Aimee Pritchard has cast some doubt on

this question; beyond overall paucity of excavated evidence, it cannot be satisfactorily explained

why Wales (unlike England, Ireland, Brittany, and Scotland) would have lacked a 'native' stone-

built church tradition.[462] The earliest datable major stone church in Wales is Llandaff Cathedral,

built or rebuilt by Bishop Urban (bp. 1107-34), which "suggests the presence of stone churches

on at least some major ecclesiastical sites by the close of the eleventh century."[463] There also

exists a purported early architectural fragment housed at Bangor Cathedral, possibly a lintel or

part of an internal screen, dating as early as the tenth century.[464] It is entirely possible that the

supposition that there were no stone churches until the twelfth century is founded on incomplete

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[459] Browne Willis, *A Survey of the Cathedral Church of St David's and the Edifices Belonging to It, as They Stood in the Year 1715* (London: R Gosling, 1717); Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales, *An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments in Wales and Monmouthshire VII: County of Pembroke*, vol. 7, 7 vols. (Richmond: HMSO, 1925).

[460] A.B. Badger and F. Green, "The Chapel Traditionally Attributed to St Patrick, Whitesand Bay, Pembrokeshire," *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 80 (1925): 117-118.

[461] James, "The Cult of St David in the Middle Ages," 7.

[462] Aimee Pritchard, "The Origins of Ecclesiastical Stone Architecture in Wales," in *The Archaeology of the Early Medieval Celtic Churches*, ed. Nancy Edwards (Leeds: Maney, 2009), 246.

[463] Ibid, 248.

[464] Ibid, 255-7.

evidence. However, for the purposes of this study, it seems highly unlikely that small, peripheral chapels of this sort would have received such illustrious treatment. Accordingly, the 'rough' nature of their construction (uncut stones and rubble with little to no mortar), frequently cited by earlier archaeologists and antiquarians as evidence of their 'Celtic' antiquity, proves nothing of the sort. The main obstacle to accurately dating these sites is how unsophisticated the majority of the archaeology has been, with the exception of more recent excavations at the site of St Patrick's Chapel near Porth Mawr, as well as the lack of datable finds recorded in the earlier excavations.[465] In addition, a number of the sites have not been dug at all, and we must rely exclusively on antiquarian accounts or local tradition of what survived above the ground hundreds of years ago. All the evidence considered, the presence of stone buildings in such relatively remote locations is almost certainly proof of their post-eleventh-century origin, and their stone construction thus provides a rough *terminus post quem* for Norman use of the sites. It is entirely possible, in some cases even likely, that these chapels were preceded by wooden buildings, and a number of cist burials and other features suggest early medieval activity.[466] What follows will be a review of the known evidence for each site, followed by an analysis of their role in the broader sacred landscape of *Dewisland*. The sites that will be considered are St Patrick's Chapel at Porth Mawr, St Justinian's Chapel at Porth Stinian, St Non's Chapel and Well, Capel-y-Pistyll at Porth Clais, and a few other sites of interest including Ramsey Island and Gorid Chapel to the northeast of St Davids.

St Patrick's Chapel, Porth Mawr

The site of St Patrick's chapel lies approximately 1.5 miles (2.41 km) northeast of the city of St David's, though nothing remains but a mound known as '*Parc y Capel*.' [**Figure 5.3**] It is on a

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[465] K Murphy et al., "Excavation at St Patrick's Chapel 2014 Interim Report" (Dyfed Archaeological Trust, 2014); K Murphy, M Shiner, and H Wilson, "Excavation at St Patrick's Chapel 2015 Interim Report" (Dyfed Archaeological Trust, 2015); K Murphy et al., "Excavation at St Patrick's Chapel 2016 Interim Report" (Dyfed Archaeological Trust, 2016).

[466] A useful overview of the presence of cist burials in Wales is David Longley, "Early Medieval Burial in Wales," in *The Archaeology of the Early Medieval Celtic Churches*, ed. Nancy Edwards (Leeds: Maney, 2009), 106-111.

low cliff slightly above high tide level on the beach of Whitesands Bay (*Porth Mawr* in Welsh, *Portu Magnus* in Latin), one of the major landing sites for pilgrims traveling to and from Ireland during the medieval period.[467] *Porth Mawr* plays a major role in David's hagiography; it was the site of Patrick's departure after he was informed by an angel that Wales would be granted by God to the still-unborn David.[468] It lies opposite Ramsey Island (*Ynys Dewi*), a terminus for the shortest route between Wales and Ireland. While nothing remains above ground, a series of excavations carried out in 1924, the 1970s and 2014-16 have confirmed the presence of a substantial stone building on an E-W alignment, identified by antiquarian George Owen in 1600 as the "wholly decayed" ruins of St Patrick's Chapel.[469]

The excavation of 1924 measured the putative chapel at 9m E-W and 3.3m N-S. [**Figures 5.4** and **5.5**] While the dedication is not attested in any surviving source before George Owen in 1600, the association with Patrick seems historically plausible on the basis of the hagiographical record. St Patrick's Chapel is a multi-phase building: at least one phase consists of untrimmed boulders bound by a sandy clay, though traces of mortar were found on the interior walls of the east end. A pair of low ledges protruding from the interior northern and southern walls run to within 9 feet of the east wall, and 10 feet of the west wall respectively, possibly representing an original floor level, and a doorway with roughly faced jambs was found in the southeast corner of the building.[470] The 2014-16 excavations identified two possible phases for the western wall (with a repair of the northeast corner initially mistaken for a third phase), although the loose sandy soil and backfill from the 1924 excavation made stratigraphic dating difficult.[471] At the east end, 4ft 1in from the south wall, was a block of masonry of roughly-faced igneous rock and flaggy sandstone, measuring 3ft x 2ft 11in x 2ft 1in. Despite the absence of a covering, the excavators identified it as an altar.[472] They also noted a large collection of quartz pebbles, found throughout

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[467] James, "The Cult of St David," 7.

[468] *VD*, 112–13. This incident is not found in any extant *Lives* of St Patrick.

[469] Badger and Green, "The Chapel Traditionally Attributed to St Patrick," 87-95.

[470] Ibid., 92-3.

[471] Murphy, Shiner, and Wilson, "Excavation at St Patrick's Chapel 2015 Interim Report," 1-4. The 2016 excavation identified the repair (Murphy et al., "Excavation at St Patrick's Chapel 2016 Interim Report," 3).

[472] Badger and Green, "The Chapel Traditionally Attributed to St Patrick," 94-6.

the chapel, but concentrated around the south-east angle and the putative altar, as well as a burial immediately to the west.[473] The presence of quartz pebbles, long associated with 'Celtic' early medieval religious sites, combined with the somewhat crude construction and loose resemblance of the chapel to Irish examples outside of Ireland such as that as Heysham, Lancs., led W.D. Caroe to classify the building as an "Irish mission chapel," and the 1925 excavation report assigned it a sixth to tenth century date.[474] This early date is dubious, as are the traces of 'antae' (short pilaster-like exterior side wall extensions typical of early Irish churches) Caroe supposedly identified at the east end of the church.[475]

The interim report of 2014 dated the chapel to the late medieval period (thirteenth to sixteenth century), although it is of course possible that another building predated the stone chapel, possibly made of wood, although no trace of it was identified archaeologically.[476] The 2016 excavations clarified the stratigraphic sequence. [**Figure 5.6**] The chapel was built over a layer of rubble (88), within which was found an eleventh-century Hiberno-Norse ring pin.[477] [**Figure 5.7**] Below layer 88 was a series of burials, with radio-carbon dates between *c.*670 and *c.*1025.[478] Further down was Wall 42, which significantly predated the chapel and crossed at right angles to its west. Wall 42 could plausibly be the remains of an early medieval rectilinear funerary enclosure.[479]

Despite Caroe's 'Irish missionary' theory, the stone building is almost certainly a high to late medieval chapel, and thus occupies an important place in the history of the medieval ecclesiastical landscape of St Davids, along with the standing remains of St Justinian's Chapel and

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[473] Ibid, 103-4.

[474] Ibid, 96-7, 103-5.

[475] The chapels on the Dingle Peninsula, best demonstrated by the Gallus Oratory, are similar one-celled structures, though the comparison Caroe intended seems to be to early Irish shrine chapels like the Temple Ciaráin at Clonmacnoise. c.f. Tomás Ó Carragáin, "The Architectural Setting of the Cult of Relics in Early Medieval Ireland," *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 133 (2003): 130–76.

[476] Murphy et al., "Excavation at St Patrick's Chapel 2014 Interim Report," 1-4.

[477] Ibid., 5.

[478] Ibid., 3-4.

[479] Ibid, 3. Longley, "Early Medieval Burial in Wales," (120-1) notes that 'over 20 percent of the presumed early medieval cemeteries and burials in Wales [not including St Patrick's Chapel] are located at sites of prehistoric ritual and funerary activity," though this is more common in the north.

St Non's Chapel and Well. The ring pin and carbon-dating of the underlying burials gives a *terminus ante quem* of the mid-eleventh century for the chapel. The site of the chapel is at, or at least nearby to, the point of departure for St Patrick as detailed in David's *Lives*, and the presence of early medieval burials is consistent with the story of Patrick's resurrection of a priest before he took ship to Ireland. While it is possible that an earlier chapel occupied the site, no evidence for it has yet been found, and it is just as likely that burials took place for centuries before a permanent building was erected. The excavated chapel seems to have been relatively short-lived; in addition to the findings of recent excavations, it is not present in either the 1492 record of cathedral properties or the map of 1578 drawn by Christopher Saxton.[480] Its abandonment is explained by both the silting of the estuary mentioned by John Leland in the sixteenth century and a steady decrease in Irish pilgrimage activity by the end of the fifteenth century.[481] As for its beginnings, a twelfth- or thirteenth-century date could be proposed, which would coincide with the celebration of the hagiographical links between Patrick and David beginning in Rhygyfarch's late eleventh-century century work and subsequently repeated and localised by Giraldus's late twelfth-century *Vita*. There is a possibility that the dedication of the chapel could be linked to the tradition of Patrick's 'Seat' (*Sedes Patricii*), where Patrick was shown a vision of Ireland prior to his departure, though Rhygyfarch stated that it lay within the *Vallis Rosina* and Giraldus's account is ambiguous.[482] The burials underneath Parc y Capel could be linked to the possible monastic settlement (given as 'Rosnat' by the *Lives*) at the nearby farm of Ty Gwyn, proposed by Baring-Gould and Fisher, where several cist burials were recovered, as well as the now-vanished holy well of Fynnon Faidogg [see **Figure 5.2**], probably named after St Aedan, a known early follower of David.[483] Patrick seems to have been promoted as a monastic forefather of David by the time of Rhygyfarch's *Vita*, and between known pilgrim traffic from Ireland and Patrick's role as David's

[480] Badger and Green, "The Chapel Traditionally Attributed to St Patrick," 117; Christopher Saxton, *Penbrok Comitat Qui Inter Meridionales Cambriae Ytes Hodie Censetur Olim Demetia. L Dyfet B Hoc Est Occidentalis Wallia Descriptio Ano Dni 1578*, 1578.

[481] Badger and Green, "The Chapel Traditionally Attributed to St Patrick," 118.

[482] Sharpe and Davies, "Rhygyfarch's Life of St David," 111.

[483] "Porth Mawr," http://www.dyfedarchaeology.org.uk/HLC/StDavids/area/area286.htm, accessed June 16, 2017

mentor, the idea of a chapel dedicated to Ireland's patron saint is entirely plausible. The potential

links of this chapel to the existing ruins of St Justinian's Chapel and St Non's Chapel and Well, as

well as the significance of its location with relation to Ramsey Island, will be discussed below.

St Justinian's Chapel, Porth Stinian

St Justinian's Chapel stands above the cliffs of Porth Stinian about 2km south of

Whitesands Bay and the site of St. Patrick's Chapel, in full view of Ramsay Island. The standing

remains are substantial: a rectangular building 12m x 5m, oriented roughly east-west. The

building had three original doorways and a spiral staircase in the southwest corner.[484]

Unfortunately, this building postdates all of the hagiographical material under consideration:

while the chapel existed in some form by 1492 at the latest, the ruins are easily identified as that

of the chapel erected by Bishop Vaughn of St Davids (bp. 1509-1522).[485] It is not, however, the

first building on this site, as revealed by excavations in the 1920s carried out by E.J. Boake within

the interior of the ruins. While no evidence of any altar was located in the eastern part of the

chapel, traces of an earlier stone building were revealed: a rectangular structure 16ft 6in east to

west, and 13ft 6in north-south, with a single opening in the centre of the north wall, 2ft 1in wide.

[**Figure 5.8**] Further excavation revealed another wall running from the southwest corner of the

older building for approximately 25 feet before terminating just short of the footings of the

standing west wall.[486] The walls were built similarly to those found beneath Parc y Capel: rough

stones with roughly-dressed faces and bound with clay instead of mortar. The north-south wall

is 3ft wide and 2ft deep from the top of the first course to the footings, indicating a somewhat

substantial stone building, but at the west end of the wall no evidence was found of a turn towards

the north. It is entirely possible that the foundations were fully robbed when the building was

demolished, presumably in the sixteenth century. While Boake's excavators found no dating

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[484] E.J. Boake, "Report on the Excavation of the Chapel of St Justinian, St Davids," *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 81 (1926): 381–3.
[485] RCAHMW, 328-9.
[486] Boake, "Report on the Excavation of the Chapel of St Justinian," 381-3.

evidence, two burials were discovered in the rectangular structure within the east end of the ruins, a full adult in the southeast corner and the bones of several children near the centre of the older building. Subsequently, a slate-covered cist burial was discovered in the north-west corner, covered in a layer of white pebbles concentrated to the east of the tomb.[487] [**Figs. 5.9** and **5.10**] While a small quantity of medieval and later pottery was recovered, none of it was useful for dating the earlier building.

The name Justinian is one associated with St David, albeit neither in Rhygyfarch's eleventh-century nor Giraldus's late twelfth-century *Vita*. A mention of Justinian can be found in the fifteenth-century set of *vita et miracula* contained in BL MS Royal 13 c i, indicating that Justinian had been integrated into the legend of St David by that time.[488] According to the *legenda* compiled by John of Tynemouth in the fourteenth century, Justinian lived an ascetic lifestyle on Ramsey Island (*Ynys Dewi*), and his reputation for sanctity was such that he became David's confessor. Others were less enamoured with his holy calling: apparently possessed by demons, his servants killed him on the island and cut off his head. Where the head fell, a spring burst forth, and following the example of St Denis, Justinian's decapitated body arose, retrieved his head, and walked across the sound to Porth Stinian, where he was buried and a chapel was built over his tomb. Sometime later, David and his brethren brought the confessor's body to their church at *Menevia*.[489] The absence of Justinian from previous written accounts of David prior to the late medieval texts presents some difficulty in dating the chapel to the same twelfth- to sixteenth-century period that produced St Patrick's Chapel at Porth Mawr, though by the time that the legend was recorded in the fourteenth century Justinian had been firmly linked to David by the poems of Iolo Goch (*c.*1325-*c.*1400), as well as the fifteenth-century hagiography mentioned before.[490] In addition to the chapel at Porth Stinian, George Owen reported that a chapel and

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[487] Ibid, 387-8.

[488] BL MS Royal 13 c i, 173v. The subsequent text in the manuscript, a unique set of miracles of David, also contains a mention of St Justinian, describing him as a martyr and David's confessor (179r).

[489] John of Tynemouth, "De Sancto Iustiano Martire et Monacho," in *NLA*, ed. C. Horstman, vol. ii, 2 vols. vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1901), 93–95.

[490] Evans, "St David and St David's," 200.

associated well dedicated to Justinian (and another dedicated to the obscure Tyfanog) once stood directly opposite Whitesands Bay on Ramsey Island [see **Fig. 5.2**], though there are no standing remains or architectural evidence to verify his account.[491]

While the evidence is limited, it is within the realm of possibility that the small rectangular building found within the sixteenth-century walls was either a small chapel or even the mausoleum of Justinian himself, with the east-west wall representing the remains of an adjacent church or chapel. The *capel-y-bedd*, where the grave of a religious figure is marked by a small funerary chapel, sometimes but not always linked or adjacent to another church, is a known feature of some Welsh saints' cults, most prominently St Mellangel at Pennant Mellangel.[492] It is worth considering whether the legend and cult of Justinian (who was of Breton origin) existed independently from that of David before the two legends were linked in later hagiography. Justinian may have possessed a small shrine (perhaps a *capel-y-bedd*) and cult that was later subsumed by David's centuries later (at which point Justinian's relics were brought to the cathedral). While the earlier building uncovered by Boake's excavation seems mostly likely to be twelfth- to fifteenth-century in date (a 'Celtic' date on the basis of 'antae' suggested by W.D. Caroe seems highly unlikely), the stone building may not be the first to occupy the site (though no burials have been discovered outside the chapel).[493] As at Porth Mawr, the chapel at Porth Stinian was built above a known landing site - the closest to *Ynys Dewi* (Ramsey Island). The chapel was almost certainly an important part of the late medieval sacred landscape around St Davids Cathedral, though its precise role and connection to the cult of David is still unclear.

St Non's Chapel and Well

The standing remains and holy well located about a mile east from the harbour of Porth Clais have long been associated with St Non, the mother of St David, but a number of questions

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[491] RCAHMW, 340.

[492] Hurlock, *Medieval Welsh Pilgrimage, c.1100-1500*, 23. Other examples are discussed by Neil Ludlow, "Identifying Early Medieval Ecclesiastical Sites in South-West Wales," in ed. Nancy Edwards, *The Archaeology of the Early Medieval Celtic Churches*, 73-76.

[493] Boake, "Report on the Excavation of the Chapel of St Justinian," 387.

remain. To begin with, the building is oriented north-south, not east-west as would be expected, and its walls form an irregular rectangle of 38ft 9in x 21ft 8in (south end) and 19ft 2in (north end). It was built in up to three phases, with "very early and rude work" of larger stones at the base of the south end, topped by "medieval" work of smaller, flat stones bound with mortar; the southern wall is slanted down the hill, extending several feet to the south. [**Figure 5.12**] In 1898, Baring-Gould judged the north wall and the majority of the standing west wall to be entirely of medieval construction, while the east wall has been mostly demolished, but appears to be of a similar build to the lower stages of the north wall.[494] In the northwest corner of the building, Baring-Gould found what he identified as an altar-step and platform of flat stone laid in mortar that could represent the altar itself, as well as some unornamented floor tile. A small hole on the interior wall, 10 inches wide, is set 2ft from the north-west angle, though it lacks sill and footing. No pottery or small finds were recovered during the excavations (limited to within the ruins) that could date the site.[495] A cross-incised stone thought to date from anywhere between the late sixth and eighth centuries is today set against the south-west corner of the ruin, though its relationship to the 'chapel' and the cult more broadly is unclear.[496] Due to its north-south orientation and irregular shape, there are grounds to question whether the visible remains are of a chapel at all, though a grant of 1335 by Bishop Henry Gower mentions a "chapel of the Blessed Non."[497] It has been suggested that the ruins might be those of a priest's or well-keeper's house, and that the actual chapel lay closer to the well at a more conventional alignment.[498] St Non's Well is to the north-east of the ruins, formerly covered with a "plain dome of masonry" much restored during the 18th century.[499] The chapel and well also lie within the remains of a circular enclosure [**Figure**

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[494] S. Baring-Gould, "Exploration of St Non's Chapel Near St Davids," *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 15, no. 60 (1898): 345–47.

[495] Ibid, 347.

[496] Nancy Edwards, "Monuments in a Landscape: The Early Medieval Sculpture of St David's," in *Image and Power in the Archaeology of Early Medieval Britain: Essays in Honour of Rosemary Cramp*, ed. H. Hamerow and A. MacGregor (Oxbow, 2001), 56-8.

[497] *RCAHMW*, 327.

[498] Cartwright, "The Cult of St Non: Rape," 190. Baring-Gould noted that the nineteenth-century excavations found no evidence of charcoal or other signs of domestic activity ('Exploration of St Non's Chapel," 347-8).

[499] RCAHMW, 327.

5.11] visible on aerial photographs.[500] Between these earthworks, the incised cross (a Class II Early Christian Monument) found *ex situ*, and a number of stone coffins or cist burials reported by antiquarian Richard Fenton in the 1790s, it seems likely that the site has a much longer Christian history.

In the account of David's birth, both *Vita* authors described how David's pregnant mother was pursued by a Herod-like tyrant who feared her unborn child, and how she eventually gave birth shielded by a terrible storm that kept any human danger at bay. She was said to clench a stone in her birthing-pains, squeezing so tightly that it broke in half and her fingerprints were left "impressed as on wax."[501] On this spot, Rhygyfarch wrote, a church was built, with the broken stone hidden beneath the altar.[502] No specific location was given, and while a spring is said to have burst forth on the occasion of David's baptism, no such mention is made of a well being associated with the place of his birth. Rhygyfarch states that David's birth and baptism were at the same site, while Giraldus supplies the place name *Portelais* (Porth Clais) only for the second.[503] Nonetheless, on the basis of documentary references (including the 1492 issue that mentions St Justinian's Chapel), the identification of a building on the site as "St Nones" in the 1578 map of Christopher Saxon, and the relatively contemporary reports of George Owen, we can be relatively certain that the standing remains either represent or are in some way associated with the aforementioned chapel of St Non.[504] It is possible that the ruins began life as a chapel and it was later converted to a dwelling house (as is suggested by the valuation of the property in the *Valor Eccle* in 1557), though Baring-Gould noted his excavation found no trace of charcoal or other signs of domestic occupation.[505] The evidence for a chapel of St Non existing in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries is somewhat ambiguous due to the limited scale of Baring-Gould's excavation

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[500] Ludlow, "Identifying Early Medieval Ecclesiastical Sites in South-West Wales," 73.
[501] *VD*, 117. Wade-Evans, following Baring-Gould, reasonably suggests that the 'marks' made by Non might have been ogham writing (*Life of St David*, 291).
[502] *VD*, 117.
[503] *VD*, 117; *VSD*, 383.
[504] Saxton, "Penbrok Comitat Qui Inter Meridionales Cambriae Ytes Hodie Censetur Olim Demetia. L Dyfet B Hoc Est Occidentalis Wallia Descriptio Ano Dni 1578."
[505] Baring-Gould, "Exploration of St Non's Chapel," 347.

and the absence of documentary records prior to 1335. On balance, the first phase of stone walling in the 'chapel' is likely to date from around this time period, rather than being erected much earlier – the criterion of the 'rough' construction (often without mortar) frequently used by antiquarian and early archaeologists to date the chapels on the St Davids peninsula to the early medieval period seems, in fact, to be characteristic of these outlying structures well into the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, judging by the evidence of St Patrick's and St Justinian's.[506] If a stone with Non's supposed fingerprints did exist in this chapel, it is long gone, and there does not appear to be any link between this story and the cross-incised slab. It is possible that some sort of small burial plot or religious enclosure, potentially centred around or at least associated with a holy well, existed above St Bride's Bay in the early medieval period. Eventually, the site and its well became part of the hagiography of St David, possibly originating with the *Vita* of Rhygyfarch (though Llanon, in Rhygyfarch's native Ceredigion, is another possible site for both David's birth and baptism), and this association was cemented with the localisation of David's *Life* in the landscape around *Menevia* by Giraldus Cambrensis at the end of the twelfth century. In any case, the association of Non with both the ruin and the well seems to be authentically late medieval, and with the chapels of Justinian and Patrick, the holy well and any associated buildings would have formed a network of sites associated with key figures in David's life within walking distance of the saint's own cathedral.

Capel y Pistyll, Porth Clais

Nothing now remains of what is recorded as Capel y Pistyll (Chapel of the Well) on the 1908 OS Map, though the ancient harbour at Porth Clais has survived.[507] [**Figure 5.13**] The well

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[506] In an Irish context this building style has been referred to as 'cyclopean,' defined by Stevens Curl as "composed of irregularly shaped very large blocks, sometimes approximately to polygons, dressed sufficiently for them to fit tightly together, without mortar." (James Stevens Curl, *The Oxford Dictionary of Architecture*, Third edition. (Oxford: University Press, 2015). More recent scholarship agrees that such buildings in Ireland are generally datable to the tenth or eleventh centuries, and definitely not the 'Irish mission' period that early Welsh archaeologists suggested St Non's, St Patrick's, or St Justinian's might belong to. (Tomás Ó. Carragáin, "Habitual Masonry Styles and the Local Organisation of Church Building in Early Medieval Ireland," *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 105C, no. 3 (2005): 99–149).
[507] Ordinance Survey, *Pembrokeshire XX.NW*, 1908, 1:10560.

(more accurately a spring) was still visible in 1921, "protected by a well-head of masonry and hidden beneath a dense growth of brambles," but is today hidden by undergrowth and disturbed by modern roadworks to the northwest of the National Trust carpark. According to Browne Willis (*c.*1715), the spring formerly ran underneath the chapel into a cistern beneath the east end, but unfortunately we have no details of the architecture or possible date of the building.[508] The place-name of Porth Clais could derive either from *clas*, meaning a "narrow trench or groove," or, more intriguingly, *clais*, a monastic community.[509]

Porth Clais has been the primary harbour for St Davids since Roman times and is mentioned in the Welsh epic *Mabinogion*. Most importantly for the purposes of this study, the insertion of the place-name *Portelais* by Giraldus Cambrensis in his late twelfth-century *Vita* firmly anchored the events of David's life in the area around the cathedral. According to Giraldus, this was the site of David's baptism and the miraculous spring which accompanied it – supposedly that running under the chapel, though Giraldus made no mention of a building on the site.[510] In the absence of any archaeological evidence, it is impossible to verify the accuracy of the account, but a chapel at this location directly associated with a well would at least suggest a link with the story as it was understood in the late twelfth century. Certainly any pilgrims arriving through Porth Clais would have had reason to visit the chapel and its spring (which may have been itself a source of cures), and its location within a mile of the cathedral would have made it easily accessible to pilgrims arriving by land.[511] A similar arrangement existed on the Dingle Peninsula pilgrimage road of St Brendan, with a church or chapel located near the main landing point of

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[508] Willis, *A Survey of the Cathedral Church of St David's*, 53.
[509] James, "The Cult of St David in the Middle Ages," 11.
[510] *VSD*, 383.
[511] Rhygyfarch relates that while carrying out the baptism, St Mobi of Glasnevin was cured of his lifelong blindness (*VD*, 117). Furthermore, the verse of Gywnfardd Brych acclaimed the curative powers of wells dedicated to St David. (James "The Cult of St David in the Middle Ages," 11).

Ventry. In the eleventh-century *Vita* of St Rumwold as well, the site of the infant saint's baptism is said to be an important place of veneration, though his relics reside at Buckingham.[512]

Ynys Dewi (Ramsey Island)

Beyond the cathedral itself, there are a handful of other sites that may have been of particular significance to the cult of David. As mentioned previously, there is evidence of monastic settlement on Ramsay Island, which plays an important role in the cult of David's erstwhile confessor, Justinian. In addition to a chapel of Justinian purportedly located at the site of his martyrdom (and a miracle-working holy spring), Ramsey Island may have been the location of an early monastic retreat. [**Figure 5.14**] Eighteenth-century antiquarians recorded a number of burials near Ramsay Island Farm in addition to an intriguing inscribed cross and sundial bearing the name *S[.]TVRNBIV* (possibly Saturnibu, d.831).[513] A ruined chapel dedicated to 'Devanok,' or St Tyfanog, is recorded by George Owen, though there is some confusion as to where it was located; it is shown on the 1908 Ordinance Survey map very close to Ramsay Island Farmhouse, and thus could be associated with the posited early medieval settlement.[514] [see **Figure 5.2**] The relationship between the chapel of Justinian at Porth Stinian (and its possible twin on the island) was also noted above, and could be compared to the Glastonbury Abbey-owned pilgrimage chapels of St Michael at Looe in Cornwall, one of which lay on the mainland and the other on an opposite island.[515] Glastonbury's own interest in sacred landscapes, both in Cornwall and closer to home, will be the subject of Chapter VII.

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[512] Goscelin of St Bertin, "Vita S. Rumwoldi," in *Three Eleventh-Century Anglo-Latin Saints' Lives: Vita S. Birini, Vita et Miracula S. Kenelmi, and Vita S. Rumwoldi*, ed. Rosalind C. Love, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford : New York: Clarendon Press ; Oxford University Press, 1996), 101-2.

[513] James, "The Geography of the Cult of St David," 50-1.

[514] RCAHMW, 340; OS, "Pembrokeshire XX.NW." St Tyfanog's Chapel does not appear on the 1889 OS map.

[515] Wessex Archaeology, *Looe, Cornwall: Archaeological Excavation and Assessment of Results* (Salisbury: Wessex Archaeology, 2009).

Other Sites of Interest on the Peninsula

Located off one of the main land routes into St Davids, Gorid Chapel (Capel y Gwyrd) once stood beside the River Alun, in a field known as 'Parcyeglwys'.[516] While there is little reason to believe that the site can be linked with any hagiography of David, it would have been the first encounter with 'Dewisland' for weary pilgrims arriving from the east and appears on the Saxton map.[517] The Welsh *Life* mentions two holy springs, *Ffynnawn Gwestlan* and *Ffynawn Eliud*, but neither of these appear in the Latin *Lives* or matches any site around the St Davids peninsula.[518]

Baring-Gould identified the farm of Ty Gwyn, just to the north of Porth Mawr, as the site of either 'Rosnat,' the monastery at *Vetus Rubus*, or the 'Monastery of the Deposit' where David's father Sanctus is said to have been instructed in a vision to go hunting and deliver a stag, a fish, and a hive of bees to the monastery of Maucannus.[519] Ty Gwyn is also suggested as the site of Gildas's church, identified by Giraldus as *Kanmorva*. Furthermore, Baring-Gould speculated that Patrick's 'Seat' was atop Carn Llidi, a rocky outcrop to the north of Porth Mawr where he said an early chapel and "extensive cemetery" had been located.[520] However, there is no evidence for medieval localization of Rosnat or *Vetus Rubus* at Ty Gwyn, which I suggest was not located on St Davids peninsula at all. Furthermore, *Sedes Patricii* is explicitly described by Rhygyfarch as being in the *Vallis Rosina* itself.[521]

St Davids Cathedral Close

While the focus of this case study is on sites located in the landscape surrounding the cathedral close and modern city of St Davids, there is evidence of both the continuity of sacred space and the existence and promotion of secondary sites within the vicinity of the cathedral.

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[516] James, "The Cult of St David in the Middle Ages," 12-13.
[517] Saxton, "Penbrok Comitat Qui Inter Meridionales Cambriae Ytes Hodie Censetur Olim Demetia. L Dyfet B Hoc Est Occidentalis Wallia Descriptio Ano Dni 1578."
[518] Simon Evans, *The Welsh Life of Saint David*, 50.
[519] John Fisher, Sabine Baring-Gould (eds.) *The Lives of the British Saints: The Saints of Wales and Cornwall and Such Irish Saints as Have Dedications in Britain*, vol. i, 4 vols. (London: CJ Clark, 1908), 288-290.
[520] Ibid., 288-289.
[521] *VD*, 111.

Very little is known about the building that preceded Bishop Bernard's cathedral (completed in 1131) and only fragments of his church survived the rebuilding by Bishop Peter de Leia (bp. 1176-1197). In terms of archaeological or material evidence, pre-twelfth-century sculpture has been discovered during reconstruction work in the nineteenth century.[522] These include a fragmentary cross-slab of possible ninth-century date and fragmentary cross-head and cross-carved grave cover of likely tenth- or eleventh-century date. Such survivals testify to the presence of a major ecclesiastical institution on the present site, though it may have been abandoned for some time prior to the restoration of the bishopric by Sulien in the eleventh century.[523] There are a few curious features of the existing cathedral that might have some links to its precursors. Appended to the north transept, the thirteenth-century chapel of St Thomas Becket skews several degrees to the north of the cathedral's alignment, and may preserve the orientation of an earlier church dedicated to St Andrew, possibly even the location of its west door, but this speculation represents the only evidence of a building pre-dating Bernard's cathedral. Evans argues that the ambulatory (which today gives access to the base of David's relocated thirteenth-century shrine) could have been originally designed in part to link to another building on the site of the present lady chapel. Such a building might have housed the holy well that lay exactly to the east of the thirteenth-century Lady Chapel, perhaps like the spring running beneath Capel y Pistyll at Porth Clais.[524]

There is no evidence for a substantial, permanent shrine for David's relics (or verifiable evidence of corporeal relics at all) until the miraculous *inventio* of 1275 at Ewenni Priory. The earlier shrine is frequently called a *feretrum*, implying that is was portable, and accounts from both before and after the Conquest suggest that a *feretrum* of some significance would ceremonially accompany the canons, and according to the Black Book of St Davids, even the

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[522] Edwards, "Monuments in a Landscape: The Early Medieval Sculpture of St David's," 61-72.
[523] James, "The Cult of St David in the Middle Ages," 17-18.
[524] Evans, "St David and St David's," 21.

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burgesses in times of war.[525] David was not the only or even the first saint whose relics resided in the Norman cathedral; the bones of the hermit and holy man Caradog Fynach of Rhos were acquired by Bishop Bernard in 1124, possibly following the fruitless search for David's relics recorded by William of Malmesbury.[526] Other secondary relics made have resided at a number of churches dedicated or associated with David; as mentioned before, his staff was said to be at Llandewibrefi. In his *Vita*, Rhygyfarch described a number of altars from the Patriarch of Jerusalem given by David to the church of Llangyfelach and the monasteries of St Padarn (Llanbardan Fawr) and St Teillo (either Llandeilo Fawr or Penally Abbey).[527]

The fourteenth-century walls surrounding the close were built by Bishop Gower as part of the same campaign that produced the nearby Bishop's Palace, but it is likely that they follow the boundaries of an earlier ecclesiastical enclosure. There were four gates – most notably, the western gate to Whitesands Bay and the lost chapel of Patrick was traditionally known as 'Patrick's Gate,' while the northern gate marked the end of *Meidir-y-saint*, or Saint's Lane, rising from the Bridge of Penitence spanning the River Alun.[528] Though the presence of modern buildings somewhat spoils the effect, on the western approach from the site of St Patrick's Chapel at Porth Mawr the cathedral tower appears to rise out of the horizon, growing larger and larger until the traveller reaches the slope of the valley, and the cathedral close is revealed; certainly an awe-inspiring sight for medieval pilgrims. To some extent, the same is true for the southern (from Porth Clais) and north-eastern (via Gorid Chapel) approaches, though the view is today even more obscured. It has been traditionally explained that the location of the cathedral at the bottom of a dried-up river valley (which has resulted in subsidence and the collapse of the tower in 1220) might have been intended to hide it from observation by seaborn raiders, though the long history of attacks and raids suggest that, were this the case, this strategy was somewhat flawed.[529] As I

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[525] James, "The Cult of St David in the Middle Ages," 18-19. This is another possible example of Irish influence.

[526] Ibid, 11.

[527] *VD*, 141.

[528] James, "The Cult of St David in the Middle Ages," 17.

[529] Evans, "St David and St Davids and the Coming of the Normans," 12-13.

have argued, it cannot be assumed that the present cathedral stands on the site of David's monastery. The height of the pre-collapse tower is not known, but a crossing tower of any significant height would probably have created the same effect. Curiously, none of the sacred sites noted above, save those on Ramsey Island (visible from Porth Mawr and Porth Stinian), is directly visible from any other – due to the topography of rocky cliffs and hills, each chapel is nestled in its own unique setting, and St Non's Chapel was even sited within its own enclosure.

Conclusion: *Dewisland*, in Review

Heather James was the first to publish an argument for a system of coastal chapels and wells linked to early medieval activity around the St Davids peninsula. It is my contention that while many of these sites can be seen archaeologically to have early medieval origins, their memorialization and integration into a pilgrimage landscape associated with the life of St David and his spiritual *familia* is a later development, initiated by the canons of the post-Conquest cathedral as part of an ideological programme to turn the peninsula into *Dewisland*. In so doing, the canons eliminated any doubts of whether their cathedral stood on the spot of David's first monastery and claimed exclusive ownership of his cult and sacred legacy. Another crucial aspect of this programme was the revision of Rhygyfarch's *Vita* by Giraldus Cambrensis in the last decade of the twelfth century, as part of an effort to prove the site's antiquity and to campaign for metropolitan status. In its 'Celtic' cultural context, St Davids is not so unusual; while perhaps the most elaborate example, the model of large Welsh institutions accompanied by secondary sacred sites is known from a number of other examples. These include the aforementioned standing cross of Maen Achwyfan and the nearby chapel located along one of the most popular routes to the major pilgrimage destination of St Winefride's Holywell, itself the possession of Basingwerk Abbey. While the evidence is scarce, it is possible that a similar arrangement could have existed along the path to Bardsey Island. The closest Irish parallels would be St Kevin's monastery at Glendalough, where a series of chapels also marks key points in the saint's monastic career, as well as Glencolumbkille, whose *turas* is arranged around a legend of Colum Cille (Ch. IV). Moving

outward geographically, the landscape around St Davids can also be compared to those that existed in Brittany, which also held secondary relics, healing wells, and other natural features in renown equal to cathedral shrines.

It is always risky to try to use archaeological evidence, particularly evidence that is incomplete or inconclusive, to validate the accuracy of notoriously unreliable hagiographical accounts. Our caution should be further heightened when the existing sources post-date the events they describe by several centuries. And as has been seen, it is vital to pay close attention to the manuscript traditions of surviving texts for minor but important alterations and variations over time. To take the Vespasian manuscript of Rhygyfarch's *Life* as the closest to the eleventh-century original requires accounting for the fact that not only does it survive in a thirteenth-century manuscript, but it was probably altered from a pre-existing copy around the same time Giraldus was writing his own revision of the *Life*. St Davids' institutional instability and discontinuity, which I argue was a motivating factor in the insertion of specific place-names into the revised *Vita* by Giraldus, further blurs the connection between these eleventh- and twelfth-century accounts and historical events of the distant past. It is therefore advisable to use these sources and different types of evidence to theorize about not what *happened*, but what the canons and keepers of the cult of St David wished to *believe* had happened, and the narrative they presented to outsiders, from pilgrims to the pope in Rome. Julia Smith's caution that our written evidence may only represent a fraction of the traditions surrounding a cult should be borne in mind: perhaps the links between St Justinian and St David considerably pre-dated the work of John of Tynemouth (a tradition which appears in the later *Miracula* of St David), but were excluded from the two earlier *vitae* of David for uncertain reasons. It is also important to recognize the limitations of the archaeological evidence for *Dewisland*. While relatively extensive, its trustworthiness is somewhat diminished by the reliance on much earlier archaeology and antiquarian accounts, though the more recent excavations at St Patrick's Chapel at Porth Mawr have provided a much more accurate stratigraphic timeline.

Giraldus Cambrensis claimed in his introduction to his revised *Life* that his revision of Rhygyfarch's Life was aimed more at elevating the language of the text than changing any of the details, and for the most part, this is true. However, even small changes can have major implications. As was the case with a number of revised hagiographies of the twelfth century, an innocent claim to merely be updating the style of the original could be used to serve a contemporary agenda. In this case, the insertion of the place-name *Portelais* into Giraldus's *vita* ends any confusion as to the place of David's birth and baptism, while the absence of it in Rhygyfarch's *vita* leaves open the possibility that the early stages of David's life might have taken place closer to his native Llanbardarn. Giraldus's own muddled motivations, which only seem to have fully crystalized in favour of the metropolitan argument when St Davids was the last opportunity for a bishopric left open to him, should be considered, though so should the wishes and attitude of his presumed audience: the keepers of the cult of St David. At the time, the canons, many of whom still seem to have been Welsh even in the late twelfth century, were probably engaged in a major building programme both at the cathedral and the coastal chapels, each of which could have drawn pilgrims either arriving at St Davids from Ireland, or those seeking closer contact with the saint and his life after hearing readings from the *vitae* or being encouraged to visit the secondary sites by the canons themselves. From the time of Rhygyfarch's *Vita* (or any lost predecessors) onward, the land of Wales and the sanctity of David have been bound up in one another – even the noble St Patrick was commanded to leave *Dewisland* to *Dewi*. That the keepers of his cult would not allow his domain to be confined to the cathedral close should perhaps come as little surprise.

VI: REMEMBERING CUTHBERT IN LIFE AND DEATH: THE SACRED LANDSCAPES OF DURHAM AND LINDISFARNE

Introduction: Durham Cathedral and the Cult of St Cuthbert

In the opening chapter of his *Libellus de Exordio Atque Procursu Istius Hoc Est Dunhelmensis Ecclesie* or *Tract on the Origins and Progress of the Church at Durham* (henceforth *LDE*), probably written between 1104 and 1107/15, Symeon of Durham lays out a powerful assertion of the institutional and spiritual continuity between Cuthbert's ancient monastic foundation on Lindisfarne and the present Benedictine community of the priory of Durham Cathedral:

> Although for various reasons the church no longer stands in the place where Oswald founded it, nevertheless by virtue of the constancy of its faith, the dignity and authority of its episcopal throne, and the status of the dwelling-place of monks established there by the king himself and by Bishop Aidan, it is still the very same church founded by God's command.[530]

The claim itself is fairly remarkable; despite the passage of hundreds of years, vast distances between Durham and Lindisfarne, the political upheaval of the Norman Conquest, and the significant architectural and material differences between the first wooden church built by Aidan in *c.*635 on the rocky shores of Holy Island and the great Norman cathedral then under construction at Durham, nothing that was truly important had changed. Such a claim being made of a set of holy relics, translated on multiple occasions, lost and found, moved from place to place is far more commonplace, and, indeed, a staple of medieval hagiography. Many religious foundations eagerly traced their roots back to their earliest days, and some like Glastonbury even preserved the physical buildings from their own antiquity. With the Abbey of Derry in Ireland (discussed in Chapter IV), we have already seen an example of an ecclesiastical foundation that sought to assert itself as the direct descendant of a great saint, in Derry's case the monastic

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[530] *LDE*, 16 (i.1): *Licet enim causis existentibus alibi quam ab ipso sit locata, nichilominus tamen stabilitate fidei, dignitare quoque auctoritate cathedre pontificalis, statu etiam monachice habitionis que ab ipso rege et Aidano pontifice ibidem instituta est, ipsa eadem ecclesia Deo auctore fundata permanet.*

founder Colum Cille. But Symeon and the monks of Durham went well beyond those accepted and conventional arguments that underpinned the legitimacy of many saints' cults and religious foundations, particularly after the institutional upheaval brought about by the near-complete replacement of the Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical hierarchy in the thirty or so years after the Conquest. Symeon could not and did not claim that the institution or community was the same as that which existed in the seventh century; Durham's historically complicated relationship with monasticism made breaking with the recent past essential to bolster the legitimacy of the Benedictine community that replaced a college of secular canons as guardians of Cuthbert's body and its resting place in 1083. What such a claim does reveal is the great power that the guardians of the cult of St Cuthbert - both at Durham and elsewhere, in the past, present, and future - invested in sacred place and space. The rhetorical emphasis of Symeon is mirrored by the activity of the cult in its intense interest in and promotion of places of significance to Cuthbert in life and death. The very presence of Cuthbert's remains for any length of time was generally commemorated, making them secondary sites of veneration.

The interest of the eleventh- and twelfth-century community of Durham Cathedral in the former resting sites of Cuthbert's body as well as those places frequented by Cuthbert during his life will be illustrated in several case studies, beginning with examples of architectural memorialization in and around Durham Cathedral. From there the focus will move to Lindisfarne and the post-Conquest activities there that can be attributed to the monks of Durham, both on Holy Island and at the site of Cuthbert's death, his hermitage on Inner Farne, as well as evidence of miracles and cult activity at those places. Following this, the chapter will explore two narratives related to sacred space and place promoted by Symeon of Durham and his successors – the flight and "wanderings" of Cuthbert through the north of England, and the foundation of the Benedictine priory of Durham Cathedral as the culmination of the restoration of northern monasticism. These narratives made individual sites in the landscape and the greater whole they represented of paramount significance, and as at Durham and Lindisfarne, there is evidence to suggest that their importance was promoted in part by architectural investment. Not only, as Symeon claimed, was

the church of Durham, both its physical building and its sacred presence, the same as that of the ancient church of Lindisfarne (*eadem ecclesia*), but the Northumbria of Cuthbert and his immediate successors was in a very real way still alive in the Northumbria of the post-Conquest period.

The Anglo-Saxon Predecessors of Durham Cathedral

If Symeon of Durham is to be believed, the final site of the ancient episcopal see of Lindisfarne was decided by Cuthbert himself. In 995, as the monks journeyed from Chester-le-Street en route to Ripon on the latest leg of a journey which began more than a century earlier: "the cart on which they were carrying the holy body could be moved no further … this occurrence clearly revealed to all that the saint did not wish to be taken back to his former resting place [at Ripon]."[531] The site chosen by the saint and his guardians was a rugged piece of elevated ground protected by the River Wear, and had to be cleared of trees before it was habitable. From some of these trees the first church of Durham was built, a simple church of branches [*virgis ecclesiola*].[532] It was eventually succeeded by a much larger church built by Bishop Ealdhun, as well as a smaller building, called the White Church, where Cuthbert's body was laid to rest for three years while Ealdhun's cathedral was completed, sometime after the bishop's death in 1018.[533]

Unfortunately, almost nothing is known of any of these churches beyond the descriptions given by twelfth-century historians. In his account, Symeon suggests that both Ealdhun's cathedral and the White Church were fairly large and well-crafted.[534] Going by the description provided by Reginald of Durham in his later *Libellus de Admirandis Beati Cuthberti Virtutibus Quae*

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[531] *LDE*, 144-7 (iii.1): *vehiculum quo sacri corporis theca ferebatur, ulterius promoueri non poterat*. Rollason notes that this is a common hagiographical *topos*. (Note 3).

[532] *LDE,* 146-7 (iii.1).

[533] David Rollason, "The Anglo-Norman Priory and Its Predecessor, 995-1189," in *Durham Cathedral: History, Fabric and Culture*, ed. David Brown (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015), 31. *LDE* 151 (iii.2). While there was evidently some later confusion, Symeon clearly distinguishes between the White Church that already stood and sheltered the body of Cuthbert and the Anglo-Saxon cathedral built by Ealdhun. It is likely that the White Church was somewhere nearby or under the Norman cathedral, but it might also have been the Anglo-Saxon predecessor of St Oswald's church, located across the River Wear from the cathedral close (*LDE*, Note 11).

[534] *LDE*, 152 (iii.4).

Novellis Patratae Sunt Temporibus (henceforth LBC), one or both churches may have had central and eastern towers, under the latter of which Cuthbert's shrine was erected.[535] Unfortunately, no traces of these churches have been archaeologically detected, though William St John Hope's excavations in the nineteenth century located the foundations of what might have been an earlier cloister.[536] The circumstantial evidence for the Anglo-Saxon cathedral is discussed below in the context of the architectural anomalies in the southern transept and their potential significance for the cult.

The Cloister Shrine

As had been the case with the construction of Bishop Ealdhun's cathedral (*c.*1018), it was necessary for the body of Cuthbert to be moved to a safe location while that cathedral was being demolished to make way for the nave of the new Anglo-Norman building (begun 1093). As the White Church had presumably been demolished, the monks instead erected a shrine which was later incorporated into the cloister of the Norman cathedral.[537] [**Figure 6.1**] According to the sixteenth-century *Rites of Durham,* the temporary resting place of the body of Cuthbert was memorialized by a "verye sumptuous tombe" against the east wall of the cloister garth up until it was demolished sometime during the times of Dean Horne (1551-3, 1559-60).[538] The tomb monument itself was dismantled at the Dissolution, but it has been noted that the first and sixth buttresses of the northeast cloister are much thicker than the rest. Meredith Bacola has suggested that these curious architectural anomalies could be the last traces of some sort of building butted

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[535] Reginald of Durham, writing considerably later, seems to contradict Symeon in implying that the cathedral was called the White Church, describing that building as having two great towers like those of Ealdhun's church (*LBC*, 29).

[536] Rollason, "The Anglo-Norman Priory and Its Predecessor, 995-1189," 31.

[537] Norman Emery, "The Contribution of Archaeology," in *Durham Cathedral: History, Fabric and Culture*, ed. David Brown (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014), 160.

[538] J. T. Fowler & George Bates, *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*, Publications of the Surtees Society ; 107 (Durham: Andrews, 1903); Allan Doig, "Sacred Journeys/Sacred Spaces : The Cult of St Cuthbert," in Margaret Coombe, Anne Mouron & Christiania Whitehead (eds.). *Saints of North-East England, 600-1500,* Medieval Church Studies, 39 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 311.

up aside the cloister garth, potentially William of St Calais's lost shrine.[539] The location within the cloister was significant: "the last journey of [the monks of Durham buried in the cloister garth] intersected with Cuthbert's journey in death, passing the same sanctified place, in the hope of the same final destination in heaven."[540] Other architectural details in the text suggest the path that the body of Cuthbert may have taken when it was translated from this temporary shrine in 1104. The eastern entrance from the cloister into the nave (which probably dates to Bishop Hugh le Puiset (bp. 1153-95)) [**Figure 6.2**] is marked by an elaborate portal with spiral cable moulding, the only example of this decorative style at Durham Cathedral. While the door itself is not contemporary with the translation, it has been argued that it is a later memorial of the path that Cuthbert's body took the first time it was brought into the Norman cathedral.[541]

The Anglo-Saxon Shrine and the South Transept

The interest that the monastic community had in asserting its continuity with the Anglo-Saxon past is clearly demonstrated; in addition to the cloister shrine and memorialization of the path taken by Cuthbert's body to its new resting place behind the high altar, there may also have been architectural decoration marking the place where Cuthbert had lain in Bishop Ealdhun's first cathedral. In the south transept there is an unusual break in the otherwise consistent decorative scheme of the piers of the cathedral. The southernmost pier is decorated with a deeply cut diagonal chevron pattern in contrast with the simple spiral of the northern pillar. Notably, this marks a divergence from its counterpart, the northernmost pillar of the northern transept, which like the adjacent pier is decorated with a simple spiral. Bacola has also noted a change in the chevron pattern of the southernmost pier. Four rows from the bottom the chevron pattern is broken and the line straightens out - she characterizes this as a "hybrid" between spiral and

[539] Meredith Bacola, "The Hybrid Pier of Durham Cathedral: A Norman Monument to the Shrine of Cuthbert?," *Gesta* 54, no. 1 (2015): 34..

[540] Allan Doig, "Sacred Journeys/Sacred Spaces: The Cult of St Cuthbert," in ed. Coombe et al, *Saints of North-East England*, 311.

[541] Bacola, "The Hybrid Pier of Durham Cathedral" 34-35. There is also some indication that the rood screen may have extended one bay into the south aisle of the nave, possibly to accommodate the grand portal of Hugh le Puiset.

chevron designs.[542] [**Figure 6.3**] The spiral piers may hold a particular symbolic significance as an iconographic reference to the marble columns of Old St Peter's Basilica in Rome, and it has been previously suggested by Eric Fernie that these marked the location of altars in the Norman cathedral.[543] Bacola argues that the irregular transept pier could mark the site of Cuthbert's shrine in Ealdhun's cathedral, a theory that finds some support from the plan of the Anglo-Saxon building drawn by the Victorian antiquarian and archaeologist William St John Hope, who uncovered rubble foundations running parallel to the cloister walls that he suspected could belong to a pre-Conquest cloister.[544] [**Figure 6.4**] The pier would then stand within the footprint of the eastern tower of the Anglo-Saxon church, under which the shrine was then located. The treatment of the two sites of Cuthbert's body prior to its installation behind the main altar is consistent with the way the White Church was built to house the body of Cuthbert during the construction of Ealdhun's cathedral, an event which is described in Symeon's *Libellus*.

If one accepts Bacola's arguments about the significance of the architectural anomalies in the cloister (larger first and sixth buttresses, uniquely decorated doorway into the nave) and the south transept (spiralling chevron design on the southernmost pier), then it is clear that the monks of Durham were deeply concerned with the historical whereabouts of Cuthbert's body even within the cathedral precinct itself. The presence of a shrine or cenotaph monument in the cathedral cloister until the sixteenth century to commemorate the place where Cuthbert's body lay for only a few years is remarkable, and it is difficult to find a comparable example. The designation of the possible location of Cuthbert's shrine in Ealdhun's cathedral is less unusual – for example, the cenotaph of St Swithun was preserved as an open-air altar after the destruction of Winchester's Anglo-Saxon Old Minster to clear space for the great nave of Winchester

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[542] Bacola, "The Hybrid Pier of Durham Cathedral," 27-8.
[543] Eric Fernie, "The Spiral Piers of Durham Cathedral," in *Medieval Art and Architecture at Durham Cathedral: The British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions for the Year 1977*, ed. Nicola Coldstream and Peter Draper, vol. 3, 1980, 50-1. The *Rites of Durham* specify that each of the eastern bays of the transept aisles housed altars, supporting Fernie's theory (Fowler, *Rites of Durham*, 112-13).
[544] Bacola, "The Hybrid Pier of Durham Cathedral" 31-2.

Cathedral.[545] According to Symeon there was an additional relic of Lindisfarne preserved at Durham: a lavishly decorated stone cross originally erected in the churchyard of Lindisfarne in honour of the bishop Æthelwald (died *c.*740). This cross was borne away from Lindisfarne along with the body of St Cuthbert when the community finally departed in the ninth century, and "down to the present day it stands loftily in the cemetery of [the church of Durham], and it exhibits to onlookers a monument to both bishops."[546] While not directly related to the holy remains of Cuthbert (though it seems to have served as an additional memorial of sorts), the presence of such an object creates a material link that supports Symeon's contention that the church at Lindisfarne and that at Durham are one and the same. Such a multiplicity of sites of veneration based on even the temporary presence of Cuthbert's body (or other aspects of Cuthbertine Lindisfarne) was to a great extent characteristic of the Durham community throughout its history, particularly in the period following the translation of 1104. In addition to those sites in and around Durham Cathedral, the cenotaphs of Cuthbert were memorialized and venerated at Chester-le-Street and the island of Lindisfarne itself, as discussed below.

Lindisfarne and the Cult of St Cuthbert

The origins of Cuthbert's cult of course lie not at Durham, but on Lindisfarne's Holy Island and its environs. According to Bede, the monastery at Lindisfarne was founded by St Aidan at the behest of King Oswald of Northumbria *c.*635.[547] It becomes likely that the tidal island "was not simply Oswald's gift but Aidan's choice" when the popularity of offshore or inshore islands as

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[545] J. Crook, "St Swithun of Winchester," in *Winchester Cathedral: Nine Hundred Years 1093-1993*, ed. J. Crook (Chichester: Phillimore, 1993), 57-9.

[546] *LDE*, 60-61 (i.12): *que etiam usque hodie in huius (id est Dunelmensis) ecclesie cimiterio stans sullimus utoromque pontificum intuentibus exhibit monimentum*. Michelle Brown (*The Lindisfarne Gospels: Society, Spirituality and the Scribe* (University of Toronto Press, 2003, 107) makes a link between this cross and one described by John Leland in 1530. Leland reported that at the head of a tomb in the church yard of Durham Cathedral there was "a crosse of a 7. Fote longe, that hath an inscription of diverse rows yn it, but the scripture cannot be red. Sum say that this crosse was brought out of the holy chirch yarde of Lindsifarn isle" (Leland, *The Itinerary of John* Leland, vol. 1, 74).

[547] *HE* (iii.3)

centres of monastic retreat is taken into account.[548] In particular, Lindisfarne bears a topographical resemblance to the monastic centre at Iona in the Western Isles, though O'Sullivan has questioned whether such similarities are more a function of the nature of early medieval monasticism as opposed to a conscious imitation or memorialization of Iona itself. The sanctity of Lindisfarne was assured even before Cuthbert's episcopal residence and eremitic withdrawal to a series of islands set apart from the island itself, but following his death *c.*687, Lindisfarne became host to one of the earliest and most influential saints' cults in Anglo-Saxon England. The cult's focus on the shrine and tomb of Cuthbert as a centrepiece for liturgical ceremonies (including the translation of Cuthbert's remains into a tomb-shrine in c.698) and miraculous cures, while common in a later medieval context, were more common to the cults of Merovingian Gaul than any Irish or Anglo-Saxon model.[549]

The form the earliest monastery took is uncertain; it is accepted that Cuthbert was buried in the wooden church built by St Aidan (which would become a powerful secondary relic in its own right). The proposed axial relationship between the Anglo-Saxon church of St Peter, traditionally believed to be on the site of the twelfth-century priory, and the standing parish church of St Mary could have existed as early as the seventh or eighth centuries, in an arrangement known from a range of other Anglo-Saxon monastic sites.[550] Excavations in 2016 and 2017 on the Heugh, the basalt ridge overlooking the site of Lindisfarne Priory to the south, have revealed a number of buildings of likely early medieval origin, including a substantial stone chapel dating from as early as the eighth century. The excavators also found the remains of a tower just to the west of the chapel and confirmed the presence of a medieval structure under the ruins of the post-Medieval 'Lantern Chapel.'[551]

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[548] Deirdre O'Sullivan, "Space, Silence and Shortage on Lindisfarne: The Archaeology of Asceticism," in *Image and Power in the Archaeology of Early Medieval Britain : Essays in Honour of Rosemary Cramp*, ed. H. Hamerow and A. MacGregor (Oxford: Oxbow, 2001), 36–7.

[549] Deirdre O'Sullivan and Robert Young, *Lindisfarne: Holy Island* (London: English Heritage, 1995), 50.

[550] J. Blair, "The Early Churches at Lindisfarne," *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 5th, 19 (1991): 51.

[551] Richard Carlton, "Archaeological Excavations on Lindisfarne Heugh," in *Peregrini Lindisfarne: An Anthology* (Peregrini Lindisfarne Landscape Partnership, Northumberland County Council, 2017), 117–25.

Another major aspect of Cuthbert's cult at Lindisfarne in the Anglo-Saxon period may have been a sacred landscape centring around the stages of Cuthbert's monastic and eremitic life. **[Figure 6.5]** In recounting the story of a paralytic boy cured by wearing shoes once worn by Cuthbert, Bede records that after the miracle the young man "went around the holy places [*circuivit loca sancta*] praying and offering the sacrifice of praise to his Saviour."[552] Both the monastic settlement at Lindisfarne and the cult of Cuthbert were irrevocably altered after the island became the target of Scandinavian raiders, beginning with the famous sack of 793. These attacks continued until *c.*875, when the community was forced to take up the body of their saint (and by some accounts even the wooden church in which he was buried, see below) and flee to the Northumbrian mainland. A seven-year journey eventually ended with the community settling for about a century at Chester-le-Street before finally re-establishing themselves at Durham *c.*995. But while the flight of 875 is presented as a watershed moment in later sources, the implication that it also marked the end of monastic or other religious activity on the island until the twelfth century is belied by the material record.[553] Both older and more recent excavations have discovered sculptural fragments dating from the late ninth- to the eleventh-centuries, after the community was said to have fled.[554]

Though part of the original monastic community of Lindisfarne may have remained after the departure of Cuthbert and a number of other relics, the traditional heart of the cult – the incorrupt body of the saint himself – would only grace the shores of Lindisfarne once more, in 1069, when it was taken out of Durham to escape the wrath of William the Conqueror.[555] In its absence, however, the cult of Cuthbert on Lindisfarne was not necessarily diminished. In place of the physical remains, the cenotaph became the primary point of veneration for the Lindisfarne

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[552] Emma J. Wells, "'And He Went Round the Holy Places," 224; *BVSC* 299-301 (§ 45): *circuit loca sancta orando, et suo Salvatori sacrificium laudis offerendo*.

[553] Blair, "The Early Churches at Lindisfarne," 51.

[554] Rosemary Cramp, "The Artistic Influence of Lindisfarne within Northumbria," in *St. Cuthbert,: His Cult and His Community to AD 1200*, ed. Gerald Bonner, D. W. Rollason, and Clare Stancliffe (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1989), 226; Rosemary Cramp, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture in England*, vol. 1, 12 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 196-200; 206-208; 243-244.

[555] *LDE* iii.15, 185-7.

cult, and it is possible that the 'loca sancta' referred to by Bede, as well as the sites of Cuthbert's eremitic life on the offshore islands, also gained a new importance as memorials of his life, and perhaps even witnessed some of the saint's later miracles. The exact situation of the cult on Lindisfarne after the flight of 875 is difficult to determine. It is certain that by the twelfth century the links between the cult of Cuthbert at Durham Cathedral and the site at Lindisfarne had been firmly re-established. The primary source for this part of Lindisfarne's history is the *Libellus* of Reginald of Durham, a monk in the priory who may also have been involved in other hagiographical works at Coldingham.[556] The *LBC* consists of 111 chapters and seems to have been first composed before 1167 as a record of the wide range of miracles worked by Cuthbert across multiple sites in Northumbria; a continuation of thirty chapters can be dated *c.*1172-4.[557] Writing roughly forty years after the fact, Reginald recorded that Edward, a Benedictine monk of the cathedral priory, oversaw the construction of a church on the site of Cuthbert's cenotaph.[558]

The first record of a sizable monastic community dates from the early 1170s; it is therefore likely that the priory church was not originally designed to serve a monastic cell, though its impressive size suggests that it was regarded as highly important by the Durham community.[559] Certain features of the church, discussed below, suggest that it may have been designed as a pilgrimage church. Perhaps beginning with the translation of 1104 at Durham, the cult of St Cuthbert, now under the custodianship of the post-1083 Benedictine priory, entered a new phase of its life. The apparent re-settlement of Lindisfarne by Durham in the 1120s would be in line with the expanding sphere of influence of the cathedral and its bishops, as well as reflecting the diffusion of the cult through much of Northumbria, with a particular focus on former or current possessions of Cuthbert's guardians and places with which he was associated during both

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[556] For the case for the attribution of St Æbbe's *Life* to Reginald see Robert Bartlett, *The Miracles of Saint Æbbe of Coldingham and Saint Margaret of Scotland*, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003), xvii-xx.

[557] Victoria Tudor, "The Cult of St Cuthbert in the Twelfth Century: The Evidence of Reginald of Durham," in ed. Bonner et al, *St. Cuthbert: His Cult and His Community*, 449-50. Sally Crumplin, "Modernizing St Cuthbert: Reginald of Durham's Miracle Collection," *Studies in Church History* 41 (2005): 179–91.

[558] *LBC*, 21-22.

[559] O'Sullivan and Young, *Lindisfarne: Holy Island*, 70.

his life and death. The re-founded church and eventual priory on Holy Island and the Norman cathedral at Durham were envisioned as linked not merely by their shared association with Cuthbert but also the very architectural features of the two buildings.[560] A similar phenomenon can be observed at work in the illustrations of two twelfth-century copies of Bede's *Life*, in Oxford University College MS 165 and BL Yates Thompson 26, where Cuthbert's Farne hermitage is depicted with features reminiscent of much later buildings, discussed later in this chapter.[561]

The volume of recorded miracles at both the shrine in Durham (which may not have been immediately accessible to pilgrims in the original design of the Norman eastern arm) and the outlying sites of Lindisfarne and Farne increased dramatically in the twelfth century.[562] Of those miracles recorded by Reginald, however, few took place at the site of the cenotaph and the priory; the most prominent site of cures and interventions were at and around Inner Farne, site of Cuthbert's final hermitage and his death.[563] That island was also the dwelling place of a series of eleventh- to fourteenth-century hermits, most notably Bartholomew (the subject of Geoffrey of Durham's *Vita Bartolomei*) who is mentioned among others in a miracle collection of *c.*1199.[564] Reginald records seventeen miracles on Inner Farne; some of the beneficiaries were wayward mariners, but there were a considerable number of pilgrims seeking cures. The implication is that Farne was a fairly busy pilgrimage centre, and the existence of a guesthouse (discussed below) would seem to confirm this impression.[565] By the time of the addition of thirty-three chapters to the *Libellus* in the 1170s, the epicentre of the saint's miraculous deeds had shifted back to Durham, though as shown by the production of the *Miracles of Farne* (*De mirabilibus Dei modernis*

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[560] Marner notes the deliberate similarities between the description of Cuthbert's 698 translation by Bede and that recorded in the twelfth century of the 1104 translation at Durham. See Dominic Marner, "Measuring Time and Topography in the Cult of Saint Cuthbert at Durham," in *Saints of North-East England, 600-1500*, 141-44.

[561] Heidi Stoner, "The Architecture of a Life: An Iconography of Architectural Images in Oxford University College MS 165," in ed. Bolton and Hawkes, *The Art, Literature and Material Culture of the Medieval World*, 218-9, 227.

[562] Tudor, "The Cult of St Cuthbert in the Twelfth Century," 451.

[563] Wells, "'And He Went Round the Holy Places," 215.

[564] H.H.E. Craster, "The Miracles of Farne," *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 29, 4 (1951): 93–107.

[565] Sally Crumplin, "Rewriting History in the Cult of St Cuthbert from the Ninth to the Twelfth Centuries" (PhD Thesis, University of St Andrews, 2005), 236-7.

temporibus in Farne insula declaratis) *c.*1199, the *praesentia* of Cuthbert remained at his former abode.[566] It is possible that two distinct centres of Cuthbert's cult served different constituencies: a considerable number of the recipients of cures at Lindisfarne and Farne came from north of the Tyne; the opposite was true for those cures recorded at Durham where a place of origin is specified.[567] The shift back to Durham in the 1170s has been assigned a variety of causes, most notably the emergence of competition both far (Thomas Becket at Canterbury) and near (Godric of Finchale).[568] Perhaps the fame of Farne's hermits, including Bartholomew, had grown to the point where they began to overshadow their forbear. A final dimension of the cult in the twelfth century is related to Cuthbert's perceived misogyny. Bede's treatment of Cuthbert's relationship with women is not particularly damning (outside of his attribution of the destruction of the mixed community at Coldingham to the monastery's depravity).[569] But the emphasis on Cuthbert's monasticism in the later Durham-associated texts was accompanied by admonitions that women were not to be allowed in Cuthbert's immediate vicinity, including within Durham Cathedral and the churches on Lindisfarne and Farne (though they were allowed in the churchyard), and the implication given by later accounts is that it reflected ancient tradition. The cult of Godric of Finchale, only miles from Durham, held no such apparent antipathy towards women, and Tudor had noted that the majority of the pilgrims who are recorded as visiting that shrine were female.[570]

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566 Tudor, "The Cult of St Cuthbert in the Twelfth Century," 455. This *miracula* was bound together with Reginald's *Libellus* and the *Vita* of Bartholomew in BL MS Harley 4843.

567 Ibid, 465.

568 Wells, "'And He Went Round the Holy Places'" 215-6. Crumplin questions this line of argument, particularly given the close links between Godric's cult, the Durham cathedral priory, and Reginald himself (who also wrote a *Life* of Godric). Crumplin, "Rewriting History in the Cult of St Cuthbert from the Ninth to the Twelfth Centuries," 180-3.

569 *BSVC* includes passages detailing Cuthbert's cordial relationship with Ætheldreda of Ely and the healing of one of her nuns (§ 23-24) and the miraculous cure of a women suffering from pain in her side (§ 30).

570 Tudor, "The Cult of St Cuthbert in the Twelfth Century," 457.

The Priory Church of Lindisfarne

It has been historically accepted that the priory church of Lindisfarne as it currently stands ruined is the same church that was begun by the monk Edward with help from the local people, but there is certainly some reason to question this.[571] The most significant problem is that the scale of the priory church – a cruciform building with an aisled nave of six bays, a crossing tower, and twin apsidal transept chapels in addition to the lost eastern arm – seems hard to reconcile with the meagre resources in terms of both building material and civilian manpower at the disposal of Edward, who twice had to beseech Cuthbert for help. It has been previously assumed that the church that Edward began was the standing Romanesque priory church, which has been dated on stylistic grounds from anywhere from *c.*1093-1104 to *c.*1140, but this interpretation is not sustainable.[572] The earlier date, preferred by McAleer, is evidently based upon a pair of purportedly eleventh-century Durham charters (1083 and 1093) attributed to Bishop William of St Calais (bp. 1080-1096).[573] There is convincing evidence to suggest that these charters are forged, dating from closer to 1195, making it almost certain that the standing ruins cannot be earlier than 1120 if they represent a replacement for Edward's (considerably more modest) building.[574] Furthermore, an eleventh or early twelfth-century date makes little sense with the history of Lindisfarne or the cult of Cuthbert at Durham. The higher end of the architectural dating for the standing ruins is *c.*1140 or 1150, the most likely date for the 'hanging' rib in the crossing.[575] [**Figure 6.6**] The general consensus is that the west portal was built after the east end, possibly *c.*1135-1140, though some stylistic details could move the date further

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[571] Blair, "The Early Churches at Lindisfarne," Note 10, argues that "such language [as that which Reginald uses] must surely refer to an ambitious Romanesque building" and also dismisses the possibility that it refers to St Mary's parish church.

[572] J. Philip McAleer, "The Upper Nave Elevation and High Vaults of Lindisfarne Priory," *Durham Archaeological Journal* 2 (1986): 49; Eric Fernie (*The Architecture of Norman England*, 177) agrees with this early dating.

[573] H. S. Offler, ed., *Durham Episcopal Charters, 1071-1152*, Publications of the Surtees Society ; 179 (Gateshead: Northumberland Press, 1968), No. 3 and 7, 6-9; 53-54.

[574] David R. Bates, "The Forged Charters of William the Conqueror and Bishop William of St Calais," in D.W. Rollason, Margaret Harvey & Michael Prestwich (eds.) *Anglo-Norman Durham: 1093-1193* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 1994), 111–24.

[575] McAleer, "The Upper Nave Elevation and High Vaults of Lindisfarne Priory," 49.

back.[576] If Edward's church is not the one that survives today, it must have been quickly replaced; its replacement would have required significant financial investment as well as manpower, and it must have been completed before 1150 on the basis of the hanging rib.[577] It is worth recalling the example of the chapel at Abb's Head in Coldingham, where a rudimentary building constructed by a pious layman was quickly demolished and under the direction of the monks a new chapel was built in its place.[578]

A possible solution might be found in the priory church's oft-remarked similarities to the Norman cathedral at Durham. This resemblance reflects not merely logistical concerns and a shared workforce, but also served an important role in emphasizing the continuity between Cuthbert's original community at Lindisfarne and the new Benedictine priory of Durham.[579] The alternating piers of the nave are obviously inspired by those at Durham, even if they are not a perfect copy.[580] **[Figures 6.8 and 6.9]** The same could also be true of the three-storied elevation and the elaborate treatment of the west front.[581] **[Figure 6.7]** J.P. McAleer has argued on the basis of surviving architectural elements and antiquarian drawings that the nave of the church was covered by groin vaults, while the aisles may have had rib vaults (as did the crossing arches on the basis of the surviving rib).[582] He has further suggested that this arrangement might have been derived from the model of Durham Cathedral's choir.[583] From a stylistic perspective, all of these features would be more consistent with an earlier building date, so as to make them closer in date to the developments at Durham (the east end of which was completed by 1104). But there is another possibility: the architectural style of Lindisfarne's priory church could be misleading, perhaps even deliberately so. It is possible that a church built between roughly *c.*1125 and 1150

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[576] Ibid, 51.

[577] O'Sullivan and Young, *Lindisfarne: Holy Island*, 67.

[578] *VME*, 27-31.

[579] A.J. Piper, "The First Generations of Durham Monks and the Cult of Cuthbert," in ed. Bonner et al, *St. Cuthbert, His Cult and His Community*, 437–46.

[580] McAleer, "The Upper Nave Elevation and High Vaults of Lindisfarne Priory," 49.

[581] O'Sullivan and Young, *Lindisfarne*, 68-9.

[582] Ibid, 44.

[583] J. Philip McAleer, "Encore Lindisfarne Priory and the Problem of Its Nave Vaults," *The Antiquaries Journal* 74 (March 1994): 169–210.

might have been designed and decorated to better resemble the existing Romanesque building at Durham, rather than reflecting the subsequent developments in architectural design during the intervening twenty years. A scheme of this sort would have been a powerful form of "architectural propaganda," cementing the links between the two centres of Cuthbert's cult.[584] As will be shown in a following section, the illustrators of two twelfth-century *Lives* of Cuthbert chose to portray Cuthbert's hermitage, vividly described by Bede, as resembling the Anglo-Norman buildings at Durham. As will be discussed in Chapter VII, the monks of Glastonbury, also greatly concerned with memorializing their own past, may have employed a similar approach when building the Lady Chapel on the site of the famed *Vetusta Ecclesia*, reduced to ashes by the fire of 1184.[585]

If this is not a case of 'architectural propaganda' and deliberately anachronistic design, then the accuracy of Reginald's account of Edward's activities, or at least the date of the 1120s which is generally accepted by historians, if not architectural specialists, is completely called into question. If so, the reasons that such a story would have been fabricated are not entirely clear – while there was certainly a desire to portray Lindisfarne after Cuthbert as an abandoned wasteland in need of monastic restoration, it is not clear why the story of Edward could not have been placed further back in the narrative. There are therefore two plausible solutions: either the church at Lindisfarne was built in a convincingly archaic style to better reflect its model at Durham, or the activities of Edward must be re-dated to the last decade of the eleventh century or the first decade of the twelfth. On the basis of the charter evidence, the later date is preferred, making a deliberately archaic building a compelling explanation for these anachronistic features.

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[584] Piper, "The First Generations of Durham Monks and the Cult of Cuthbert," 444-5; O'Sullivan and Young, *Lindisfarne*, 68-9. The desire to link past events on Lindisfarne with contemporary developments in Durham may have also been expressed in the hagiographical material produced in the twelfth century.

[585] Gilchrist and Green, *Glastonbury Abbey*, 434. In these acts of anachronism and *imitatio*, the monks of Durham and Lindisfarne were of course not the first; the phenomenon is evident in several periods, including efforts by Carolingian church builders to recall the form of early Christian basilicas. C.f. Richard Krautheimer, "The Carolingian Revival of Early Christian Architecture," *The Art Bulletin* 24, no. 1 (1942): 1–38.

The Cenotaph

Regardless of when it was constructed, the design of the priory church at Lindisfarne does not appear to have been well-suited to monastic life. The only entrances into the church besides the west end were in the south aisle and south transept. The monastic buildings were eventually built to the south.[586] The existence of the parish church of St Mary means that the building must have been initially primarily devoted to pilgrims who came to visit the empty grave, or cenotaph, about which very little is known. The location of Cuthbert's original grave is now lost, but it seems certain that the priory church (and potentially Edward's earlier church) was built to contain it. In chapters xxi and xxii of Reginald's *Libellus* the cenotaph itself plays an important role. Back in the eighth or ninth centuries, during a major Viking attack on Lindisfarne (possibly that described by Bede), the remaining monks fled *ad Beati Cuthberti tumbam*, where they were cut down by the Vikings.[587] At least three hundred years later, the monk Edward leaves a feast thrown for the workers helping to build his church to go to *Beati Cuthberti tumbam quae infra ecclesiam est*, giving thanks to the saint and beseeching him for enough stone to complete the church and enough food and drink to see to the needs of the labourers.[588] In a later chapter, he repeats this action to find enough bread to feed the crowds at Cuthbert's feast day.[589] While there is no description of the twelfth-century cenotaph itself (most of the subsequent miracles near Lindisfarne take place on the site of Cuthbert's hermitage on Inner Farne, below), these references make it clear that the site of Cuthbert's former grave was known in the years after the Conquest, and sixteenth-century inventories indicate an image or monument on the site of the cenotaph remained until at least 1535.[590]

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[586] O'Sullivan and Young also suggest that the presence of up to three altars in the church might suggest the opposite; that there was some sort of monastic community of Durham at Lindisfarne Priory in the first half of the twelfth century (*Lindisfarne*, 70).

[587] *LBC*, 19 (i.13).

[588] *LBC* 48-49 (i.22).

[589] *LBC*, 58-60 (i.26).

[590] Raine, James. *The History and Antiquities of North Durham, as Subdivided into the Shires of Norham, Island, and Bedlington Which, from the Saxon Period until the Year 1844, Constituted Parcels of the County Palatine of Durham, but Are Now United to the County of Northumberland.* (London: John Bowyer Nichols, 1830), 125.

As it is possible that the priory church was not originally designed as a monastic building, or meant only to serve a small community, despite its grand scale and decorative scheme, the church could have been built with pilgrims in mind. The blocked doorway in the north aisle of the fourth bay of the nave, located across from the site of the possible holy well inside the church, may have served as an access point for pilgrims, as it would have led right to the east end of the nave where the cenotaph may have resided.[591] [**Figures 6.10** and **6.11**] The only traces of an earlier church, perhaps that containing the original tomb, were found during twentieth-century clearance work. Under the direction of Peers, workers uncovered a foundation underlying the north aisle wall, belonging to a "plain rectangular building, whose east wall was a little to the west of the east end of this aisle." [**Figure 6.12**] The foundations could potentially represent the eighth- or ninth-century church of St Peter by Bishop Eadberht, possibly itself a replacement of St Finan's church (discussed below).[592] Bede describes the body of St Cuthbert resting on the south side of the church of his day, "to the right-hand side of the altar."[593] If this positioning held true for the church Peers found, the cenotaph would have been located almost exactly on the central axis of the twelfth-century priory church, which could in turn explain the re-alignment of the church to the south if it placed the cenotaph at the centre of the east end of the nave, making it easily accessible to pilgrims entering through the doorway in the north aisle wall.[594] The importance of the places where Cuthbert's body previously resided is demonstrated elsewhere – a cenotaph at Chester-le-Street is noted by Leland in the sixteenth century and the two possible monuments to previous sites of Cuthbert's remains at Durham were discussed previously. The cenotaph at Lindisfarne would have been consistent with the model of a cult that placed great significance on where a saint's relics had been, not just in the shrine that presently held them. Furthermore, there is another story from Bede's *Vita* worth referencing when considering the relationship of the priory church to its predecessor. After the saint had died and been buried, a boy cursed by

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[591] Wells, "And He Went Round the Holy Places," 225-6.
[592] O'Sullivan and Young, *Lindisfarne*, 43-44.
[593] *BVSC* § 40: *atque in ecclesia beati Apostoli Petri in dextera parte altaris petrino in sarcophago repositum*.
[594] Blair, "The Early Churches at Lindisfarne," 51.

madness was cured when he consumed a small amount of dirt from the spot where the water that had been used to wash Cuthbert's body had been thrown. [595] After this miracle, Bede states that "they show to this day the pit in which that memorable water was thrown, of a square shape, surrounded with wood, and filled with little stones," describing it as in "the church in which his body reposes, on the south side."[596] While this particular pit is not referenced in any later works, it demonstrates a certain degree of continuity in terms of interest in sacred space and contact relics between the monks of Cuthbert's day and the Benedictines of the twelfth century.

St Mary's Church

Located to the west of the priory church is the parish church of St Mary, the fabric of which dates primarily to the thirteenth century. A church of St Mary definitely existed by the time of a miracle during the episcopate of Hugh de Puiset (1153-1195), when Cuthbert and his entourage processed from St Mary's into the main church, celebrating the mass before they returned.[597] This may be the parish church referred to in a papal confirmation of 1146.[598] There are, however, some surviving features that bear testament to an older building on the site. Scarring on the west face of the wall above the current pointed chancel arch preserves the traces of a rounded chancel arch, and above that a rectangular doorway and the scars of a previous roof line. [**Figures 6.13** and **6.14**]. The arch itself is not easy to date, but it may have been built during the twelfth century, if not the Anglo-Saxon period; it may also be itself an insertion into primary fabric.[599] Further evidence of an early date is found in the exterior junction between the north wall of the nave and the chancel and north aisle – the large quoin stones of an earlier corner are arranged in the traditional 'long and short' pattern, characteristic of, if not entirely limited to, Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical architecture. [600]

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[595] *BVSC* § 41: *ad locum, ubi noverat effusam fuisse aquam, qua corpus eius defunctum fuerat lotum*.

[596] Ibid.: *ostenditur usque hodie fossa illa, cui memorabile infusum est lavacrum, quadrato schemate facta, ligno undique circumdata et lapillis intus impleta; est autem juxta ecclesiam, in qua corpus eius requiescit, ad partem meridianam*.

[597] *LBC*, 49.

[598] Blair, "The Early Churches at Lindisfarne," 48.

[599] Ibid., 49.

[600] O'Sullivan and Young, *Lindisfarne,* 44-5.

The dimensions of the nave (19.5m x 5.8m x 7.5m) are comparable to the original western church at Jarrow (20m x 5.5m). There is also the roof line of a previous chancel approximately a metre higher than the thirteenth-century one visible on the east side of the wall above the chancel arch. Taken together, it is very plausible that St Mary's has eleventh-century, if not earlier, origins. It could be associated with the community that produced a number of the sculptural fragments dating from the period after the body of Cuthbert was taken from Lindisfarne in 875.[601] Furthermore, it is in an axial alignment with the priory church, and presumably the earlier church of St Peter, a relatively common arrangement on Anglo-Saxon monastic or minster sites.[602] While the church itself was probably not a cult site, it was clearly important to the community, and the retention of the alignment between the rebuilt priory and the earlier parish church suggests that the monks from Durham were keen to preserve aspects of the topography of the ancient monastery.[603]

The Heugh: Watchtower and Chapel

The basalt ridge known as the Heugh overlooking the medieval priory and modern village of Lindisfarne is one of the most dramatic topographical features on the relatively flat tidal island, and unsurprisingly appears to have played a significant role in the development and memorialization of the first monastery. In addition to having potential topological significance — Deidre O'Sullivan suggests that it could have been an "embodiment" of Mount Nebo in Jordan, which overlooked the plains and provided a view of the city of Jerusalem — it has been long suspected that the Heugh is the site of multiple buildings with dates ranging from the earliest days of the monastery through the medieval period.[604] Several antiquarian scholars drew

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[601] See Note 529, above. While the bulk of the tenth-century material is fragmentary, the eleventh-century cross heads (nos. 45 and 46 in CASSS I are easily datable.

[602] O'Sullivan and Young, *Lindisfarne*, 44-5. Furthermore, Bede refers to a *basilica maior* when describing where Cuthbert's body rested, suggesting the presence of at least one other church. (*HE* iii.17) Blair speculated that the slight mis-alignment south of St Mary's Church to the priory church might be explained by the fact that the former was built to align with the location of the cenotaph, which the latter placed in the traditional location for a shrine (Blair, "The Early Churches of Lindisfarne," 51).

[603] A document of 1395 from the Priory refers to a churchyard of "St. Columb," though its location is unknown. This could be further evidence of the medieval priory's interests in its antiquity (O'Sullivan and Young, *Lindisfarne*, 45).

[604] O'Sullivan, "Space, Silence and Shortage on Lindisfarne: The Archaeology of Asceticism," 37.

attention to the visible earthworks on the ridge, though these observations and sketches were not published.[605] Some excavation was carried out by Brian Hope-Taylor in the 1960s (also unpublished), and most notably, the Lindisfarne Research Project of 1985-6 surveyed the top of the Heugh, carrying out a resistivity survey of the entire ridge [**Figure 6.15**].[606] A number of features of possible significance were identified, but until recently, interpretations of their form and function were purely speculative.

Excavations in 2016 and 2017 revealed that structure 'C' was likely to be some sort of tower (as suggested by its massive foundations and 2.5m thick walls); this could potentially be the same or related to the watchtower (*specula*) mentioned by Bede in his *Life* of Cuthbert as used by the monks to receive word of the death of Cuthbert on Farne, an association that could have made it part of a biographical sacred landscape based on the life and death of the saint.[607] The walls were constructed from "closely-packed, deeply-set cobbles" faced with roughly cut stones, suggesting an early-medieval origin.[608] This building, by one estimation eight metres square and standing at an estimated twelve metres tall, may have also served the more mundane function of enabling communication with the Anglian royal centre of Bamburgh. Feature 'D', located to the east of the watchtower, was of even greater historical significance: it is probably the earliest religious building yet found on Holy Island. **[Figure 6.16]** The excavations in 2016 and 2017 also revealed a two-chambered building 17-20m in length on the south side, with a large western chamber and a much narrower and slightly irregular eastern chamber. The dressing marks indicated the use of pecking or linear pick-mark tooling. A break in the double-lined sandstone blocks on the north wall could represent a doorway.[609] Crudely-dressed worked stones were found that were interpreted as the frames for windows, as well as a small stone trough that might have served as a piscina, but no other worked stones were present to suggest any kind of carved

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[605] O'Sullivan and Young, *Lindisfarne*, 14.
[606] Ibid, 46.
[607] *BVSC*, 284-7: *quod cum videret frater, qui in specula Lindisfarnensis insulae*.
[608] Carlton, "Archaeological Excavations on Lindisfarne Heugh," 3-4.
[609] Ibid.

decoration.[610] The building was constructed of reflective white sandstone which would at times have given the impression that "it was quite literally radiating the purest white light," and its presence on the 20m high ridge of the Heugh would make it visible to much of the Northumberland coast, including the fortress of Bamburgh.[611]

The presence of a massive stone church atop the Heugh, separate from the apparent site of the Anglo-Saxon monastic church under the current priory, invites additional speculation as to the layout of the pre-Conquest monastery.[612] There was evidently more than one church on Holy Island, perhaps as early as Cuthbert's own day. In the *Historia Ecclesiastica*, Bede referred to a *basilica maior* on Holy Island, dedicated to "the Prince of the Apostles" (St Peter), into which the body of Aidan would later be translated from the monk's cemetery.[613] Blair suggested that if this building, in which both Aidan and Cuthbert were buried, is the predecessor to Lindisfarne's priory church, that could imply the existence of another, earlier church, perhaps associated with the graveyard in which Aidan was first buried.[614] Discussing the works of Aidan's successor, Finan, Bede wrote that he "built a church in the Isle of Lindisfarne suitable for an episcopal see, building it after the Irish method, not of stone, but of hewn oak, thatching it with reeds."[615] Later, Bishop Eadberht "removed the reed thatch and had the whole of it, both roof and walls, covered with sheets of lead."[616] It is possible that this grand wooden church of Finan was replaced by the *basilica maior* of St Peter, though Bede is not explicit on this point. But the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, a text of uncertain date but no earlier than the mid-ninth century, includes a rather remarkable claim that that during the bishopric of Ecgred (bp. 830-875) the monks of Lindisfarne

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[610] Ibid., 6.

[611] Keys, "One of Britain's Oldest Churches Discovered on Holy Island of Lindisfarne."

[612] See D. Petts, "'A Place More Venerable than All in Britain' : The Archaeology of Anglo-Saxon Lindisfarne.," in *The Lindisfarne Gospels : New Perspectives.*, ed. R. Gameson (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 1–18. Petts' analysis predates the discovery of the Heugh chapel.

[613] *HE* iii.17.

[614] Blair, "The Early Churches at Lindisfarne," 47. It is of course possible that the 'lesser' church was the predecessor to St Mary's Church, but that would not explain the chapel on the Heugh.

[615] *HE*, iii.25: *qui in insula Lindisfarnensi fecit ecclesiam episcopali sedi congruam, quam tamen, more Scotorum, non de lapide, sed de robore secto, total composuit atque arundine texit.*

[616] Ibid.: *ablata arundine, plumbi laminis eam totam, hoc est, et tectum et Ipsos quoque parietes eius, cooperire curavit.*

translated the wooden church erected by St Aidan (not Finan) on Holy Island and then re-erected it in Norham.[617] Assuming that this account is accurate and not merely a misattribution of the church's builder, it is unlikely that this church, while presumably also made of wood, is that referred to by Bede (who makes no mention of any specific church built by Aidan, and says the first bishop of Lindisfarne was buried in the monks' cemetery). Returning to the stone church found on the Heugh, it is not likely to be either of the two mentioned by Bede, and clearly cannot be the one transported to Norham. It is, however, possible that it was built on the site of Aidan's original church, and it might even be speculated that it was erected as a protective casing for the original church of St Aidan, which by the account of the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* had become a relic in its own right. As will be discussed in Chapter VII, the monks of Glastonbury preserved the original wattle-built *Vetusta Ecclesia* within a lead covering until its destruction in 1184 and, of course, Bede said that Finan's church was given similar treatment.[618] The church rebuilt at Norham presumably could have been covered with lead if it was so easily translated, but an alternative form of protection is plausible. The large stone chapel on the Heugh might have served as a kind of reliquary to preserve the oldest building on Holy Island from the elements, particularly if Aidan's first church was built on the Heugh. Regardless, the Heugh chapel, Finan's church, and the *basilica maior* of St Peter (as well as the predecessor to St Mary's Church) could make up some of the *loca sancta* referred to by Bede, not only as monuments to St Cuthbert, but

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[617] *HSC*, 49 (§ 9): *qui transportavit quondam ecclesiam olim factum a beato Aidano tempore Oswaldi regis de Lindisfarnensi insula ad Northham, ibique eam reaedificavit.* Johnson-South argues that the surviving *Historia* might be either an eleventh-century revision of a tenth-century composition, or possibly even an altogether original late eleventh-century text, reflecting the need to solidify the Durham community's claims to Cuthbert's patrimony at that time (25-35). Johnson South emphasized that "it is remarkable how much of the traditionally accepted history of the pre-Conquest community of St Cuthbert, including major events like the transition from Lindisfarne to Chester-le-Street, can be traced no further back than the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* itself...clearly one of our author's main goals is to strengthen his community's property claims by placing them in a convincing historical context." Indeed, as Johnson South says "it can be unsettling to realize how much of the traditionally accepted history of the community of St Cuthbert after the time of Bede, as presented by Symeon of Durham and other twelfth-century authors, depends on this one source" (11).

[618] There has also been speculation about the implications of the lead-covered churches in the visions in Æthelwulf's *De Abbatibus* (dedicated to Egbert, bishop of Lindisfarne 803-821). C.f. H. M. Taylor, "The Architectural Interest of Æthelwulf's 'De Abbatibus,'" *Anglo-Saxon England* 3 (1974): 163–73.

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in the case of the Heugh chapel a carefully preserved memorial to the monastery's founder, St Aidan.

It is more difficult to assess what the role of these buildings might have been after the twelfth-century foundation of Lindisfarne Priory, or if indeed to know if there were any visible remains to suggest their presence. There is no evidence of later rebuilding work or post-Conquest pottery to indicate occupation.[619] The buildings are not specifically mentioned in any of the hagiography of Symeon, Reginald or Geoffrey of Durham. Nonetheless, it remains a distinct possibility that the sites on the Heugh remained important. It is clear from the sculpted stones (mostly from standing crosses) that there was continuity of ecclesiastical activity well after the departure of Cuthbert and his guardians in 875, and the fact that the location of Cuthbert's cenotaph was known to Edward suggests that there were at least some in the area or in the pre-Norman community that could identify parts of the Saxon monastic site.

Excavations in 2017 and 2018 added to the picture of building activity on the Heugh from the medieval period. The so-called 'Chapel of the Lamp' (Feature B in **Figure 6.16**) is a post-medieval building that nonetheless appears to incorporate significant amounts of medieval masonry, including mouldings from a pilastered doorway and the plinth of a small column.[620] [**Figure 6.17**]. Three possible walls of an early church or chapel were found to underlie the standing ruins, along with the remains of at least 11 human burials, 7 of which were at least partially *in situ* within grave cuts.[621] [**Figure 6.18**] Most intriguingly, a small piece of carved sandstone with an intricate interlace design was found in one of the two rock-cut voids holding several other burials, probably from a cross-shaft dating from the later eighth or ninth century. Its positioning within a probably tenth-century burial greatly suggests a deliberate 'special'

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[619] Richard Carlton, Personal Communication. 28 July 2017.
[620] Wells, "'and He Went Round the Holy Places,'" 225.
[621] Richard Carlton, "Excavations on Lindisfarne Heugh in 2018" (The Archaeological Practice Ltd., 2018), https://www.academia.edu/38065729/Excavations_on_Lindisfarne_Heugh_in_2018: 5. Accessed April 22, 2019.

deposit of an ecclesiastical nature at some point a century or more after the removal of Cuthbert's body from the island.[622]

It is fair to question whether the Saxon chapel and watch-tower, or potentially their ruins, were perceived as particularly noteworthy by the post-Conquest community from Durham, but the obvious attention paid to other points of Cuthbertine significance, as well as the striking prominence of the Heugh and the use of stone construction, argues that this idea should not be easily dismissed. While it is possible that the buildings discussed here were demolished or robbed either before or after the Conquest and the resettlement of Lindisfarne Priory in the 1120s, it seems just as plausible, if not more so, that they remained visible on the Heugh in the later medieval period, even if just as ruins or as a navigational marker. Given the interest in the topography of the Anglo-Saxon monastery clearly demonstrated before, it would be quite surprising if the Durham monks failed to take notice of these extraordinary early medieval buildings in telling the story of Cuthbert's Lindisfarne.

St Cuthbert's Island

Just offshore of Holy Island and reachable by foot during low tide is Thrush Island or Hobthrush, more commonly known as St Cuthbert's Island. It has been accepted that the island can be identified with the site of Cuthbert's first hermitage before he relocated to Farne, even further from the monastic community on Holy Island. Subsequently, Cuthbert's successor Bishop Eadberht also used the island for a place of seclusion and prayer, and it is described as being "some distance from the church in a place surrounded by the sea."[623] Unlike the Heugh, the significance of the site in the medieval period is easily recognizable. The T-shaped building [A] (probably a single-celled chapel with a perpendicular domestic building against the west end) can be identified with the chapel of St-Cuthbert-on-the-Sea, which appears in Dissolution-period documents. [**Figure 6.19**] The inventory of 1535 specifies a set of liturgical robes (kept in the

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[622] Ibid., 6.

[623] *HE* (iv.30): *in remotiore ab ecclesia loco refluis undique pelagi*.

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priory vestry) as well as altar cloths, and images of St Cuthbert and St Thomas, suggesting the chapel was in regular use at the end of the medieval period.[624] Crossman also identified what he thought were features of the hermitage: a low, circular mound north of the chapel [C] representing the foundations of a possible cell (maybe even that of Cuthbert himself), and an additional set of rectangular walls to the south-east of the chapel [B], representing the ruins of another cell or a residential building). [**Figure 6.20**] While the ruins of the T-shaped building still stand, and the circular mound is also visible as an earthwork, nothing now remains of the "ancient walling" recorded by Crossman in the southeast corner of the island.[625] Another visible feature is what appears to be a shallow ditch and bank forming an enclosure around the T-shaped building [D] (interpreted by Crossman as a breakwater). The possibly circular cell would be of the same type found at many Irish monastic or hermitage sites, including Glendalough. The foundation and walls of the T-shaped building are certainly post-Conquest in date based upon the consistency and precision of their construction, and a date of the thirteenth century has been proposed. Crossman's own excavations in the nineteenth century led him to suggest that the ruins stood on top of an earlier structure within a separate enclosure.[626] No inhabitants of the island are recorded after Eadberht, in striking contrast to the continuously occupied hermitage at Farne. It is therefore possible that the site was restored or rebuilt as an attraction for pilgrims or the site for liturgical commemoration of Cuthbert on the island where he had spent his days in prayer. The presence of an evidently medieval building, potentially datable to the thirteenth century and in use as late as the Dissolution, indicates a sustained interest and investment in the site by the post-Conquest monastic community. The north-south building could have been a residence for a priest or a shelter for visitors, suggesting that activity on the site went beyond occasional liturgical ceremonies or commemorations. The island is less than an acre in size and exposed to the elements, but also fully accessible from the shore of Holy Island at low tide. [**Figure 6.21**] Further excavation will be needed to more precisely determine the form and date of the T-shaped

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[624] Raine, *The History and Antiquities of North Durham*, 125.
[625] O'Sullivan and Young, *Lindisfarne*, 14-15.
[626] Wells, "'and He Went Round the Holy Places,'" 218.

structure, which appears to be the most active site of pilgrimage or reflection for modern visitors judging by the presence of flowers and stones recently placed there. The use of a former hermitage site as both a cult site and possibly a site of further ascetic occupation can find a parallel with the use of St Kevin's Church at Glendalough (Ch. IV).

Inner Farne

Even more than Holy Island, Inner Farne demonstrates the interest that the post-Conquest community held in memorializing, and to an extent appropriating, the sacred terrain once blessed by the presence of St Cuthbert. Inner Farne is one of fifteen to twenty small islands (depending on the tide) located two to three miles from the Northumberland coast and around seven miles by boat from Holy Island itself. [**Figure 6.22**]. Bede records that, after residing on the tidal rock known as St Cuthbert's Island, the saint "joyfully entered into the remote solitude which he had long desired," departing only once to serve as Bishop for two years before he returned to Farne.[627] His accommodations on the island eventually included a large circular cell, an oratory, and a guesthouse located closer to the main landing point.[628] Cuthbert was apparently the first to use Farne as a spiritual retreat, but he was by no means the last – as at St Cuthbert's Island, several of his successors followed his eremitic example.[629] While the first concrete evidence we have of a monastic cell on Farne dates from 1255, when the names of two monks are recorded, it is readily apparent that less structured but nonetheless officially recognized monastic or eremitic activity was taking place for centuries after Cuthbert's death.[630] Æathilwald and Fergild inhabited the island into the eighth century, in the process acquiring holiness of their own.[631] This included at

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[627] *BVSC*, 214-215: *quaesita, ac petita solitudinis secreta*.

[628] *BVSC*, 217.

[629] Furthermore, Cuthbert was, consciously or not, imitating the practice of his predecessor Columba of Iona, who may have used a hut near the small foundation at Himba as a similar kind of retreat that afforded him an ascetic existence while still allowing him to serve as an institutional leader. (Aidan MacDonald, "Seeking the Desert in Adomnán's Vitae Columbae," in *Listen, O Isles, unto Me: Studies in Medieval Word and Image in Honour of Jennifer O'Reilly*, ed. Elizabeth Mullins and Diarmuid Scully (Cork: Cork University Press, 2011), 192).

[630] Victoria Tudor, "Durham Cathedral and Its Hermits in the Twelfth Century," in ed. Rollason et al, *Anglo-Norman Durham: 1093-1193*, 67–78.

[631] Wells, "'and He Went Round the Holy Places'," 219.

least five monks of Durham after the refoundation of Lindisfarne Priory, among them Aelfric (before 1150), Aelwin, and most famously Bartholomew, who joined the latter on Farne around 1150.[632] The two attempted to coexist but eventually Aelwin departed Farne, leaving Bartholomew, who gained a reputation for holiness that would pave the way for a cult after his death in 1193.[633] In the years following his death, the island became the site of a formal cell belonging to Durham Cathedral, an arrangement that carried on until the Dissolution.

The importance of Farne as a cult centre for not only Cuthbert, who famously lived there, but also the men who followed his example, like Bartholomew, is readily apparent in the hagiographical literature attributed to Reginald of Durham, and a later set of miracles of *c.*1199 focused entirely on Farne, which coincided with the formal canonization of Cuthbert by the Roman church.[634] In addition to those miracles worked on Farne during Cuthbert's lifetime, a range of posthumous miracles were recorded from both the time after Cuthbert's death and after the restoration of monastic life at Lindisfarne in the twelfth century. These were in turn compiled into *miracula* that served the purpose of authenticating and promoting Farne as a cult site.[635]The resettlement of Farne as an eremitic retreat may have been made possible by the end of the threat of Scandinavian raids in the twelfth century, though life on the island was by no means easy.[636] There are other indications of the relative importance of the small cell on Farne; according to Raine's reading of the Rolls of the fourteenth century, the library at Farne Island was impressive, possibly even more so than that at the Priory itself, and included a number of important theological works as well as Bartholomew's *Vita*, a book of "Meditations and Prayers" said to belong to St Cuthbert himself (and as such a possible secondary relic), and "a red book containing

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[632] Raine, *The History and Antiquities of North Durham*, 341*.* The *Vita* of Bartholomew describes the site as being "long deserted by religion" at the time of his arrival, with the oratory of Cuthbert and his successors reduced to a sheepfold. Despite the apparently decrepit and unsanitary state of the island, Bartholomew nonetheless finds another hermit, Elwin, in residence. (Geoffrey of Coldingham, "Vita Bartholomaei Farnensis," in *Symeonis Monachi Opera Omnia: Historiae Ecclesiasie Dunhelmensis*, ed. T. Arnold, Rolls Series 75 1 (London, 1882), 295–325).
[633] Tudor, "Durham Cathedral and its Hermits," 67-8.
[634] Wells, "'And He Went Round the Holy Places'," 215.
[635] Crumplin, "Rewriting History in the Cult of St Cuthbert from the Ninth to the Twelfth Centuries." 236-7.
[636] Tudor, "Durham Cathedral and Its Hermits in the Twelfth Century." 72-3.

the miracles of St Cuthbert," which could refer to the collections written by Bede and/or Reginald of Durham.[637] What remains on the island is a small chapel of the fourteenth century dedicated to Cuthbert, the much-altered remains of a possible second chapel of indeterminate date located parallel and to the south of it, which now houses the National Trust information centre, and the imposing bulk of Prior Castell's Tower, first built in 1494 as a fortified residence. **[Figures 6.23 and 6.24]**

The accounts of 1360 to 1363 include references to repairs made on the "churches of Farne," as well as the construction of a "Hall of St Cuthbert," likely the medieval guest hall.[638] The most interesting building is certainly the fourteenth-century chapel of St Cuthbert. Earlier masonry, possibly belonging to a phase of the twelfth or thirteenth centuries, is built into the standing walls.[639] There are also the remains of a small room on the western wall of the chapel, (marked as 'F' in **Figure 6.25**]) which Peter Ryder has suggested could be the lower story of a pilgrim annex under a possible western tower.[640] There is no sign of the twelfth-century guesthouse or its supposedly ancient foundations (discussed below), though it is possible they were obliterated by the construction of the complex of buildings around Prior Castell's Tower in the late fifteenth century, after the cult appears to have petered out. John Speed's (geographically imprecise) sixteenth-century map depicts the two chapels being joined by a transverse building leading into a forecourt and the tower of Prior Castell, as well as a building on the south of the island identified as the "Fishe House" and a cross on a pedestal of four steps nearby.[641] **[Figure 6.26]** Raine's account of his visit to Farne in 1818 adds the presence of "a humble shed built by Cuthbert, its first monarch, of turf and unhewn stones," but locates this "*ad portam*" at the main harbour. There is no evidence of such a building today. Drawings by S.H. Grimm depict broken

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[637] Raine, *The History and Antiquities of North Durham,* 132; 346*.*

[638] Ibid., 345.

[639] Wells, "'And He Went Round the Holy Places'," Note 23. A church is mentioned in *LBC*, so these remains may represent the first church built by the monks of Durham on Farne sometime after 1120.

[640] Ibid., 219.

[641] John Speed, "Holy Island" "Farne" "Garnsey" "Jarsey," *The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine: Presenting an Exact Geography of the Kingdomes of England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales* (London: William Hall, 1611).

walls on the east side of St Cuthbert's chapel that could belong to either the proposed 'pilgrim's annex' or part of the gatehouse seen in Speed's map. [**Figure 6.27**] The Chapel of St Mary was also reduced to fragmentary ruins in the nineteenth century, to the extent that there were no datable architectural features remaining.[642]

One connection made between the Anglo-Saxon legacy of Cuthbert and the post-Conquest priory concerned the description and depiction of the hermitage described in some detail by Bede. In addition to an oratory and a guesthouse, Bede's *Vita Prosaica* describes "a structure almost round in plan, measuring about four or five poles from wall to wall; the wall itself is higher than a man standing upright."[643] As for its construction "the living rock…[was] not cut of stone nor of bricks and mortar, but just of unworked stone and turf."[644] Further emphasizing the primitive construction of Cuthbert's cell, these unworked stones, it is said, were too heavy for a man to lift, and were raised up and put in place by angels. At least one subsequent visual treatment of Cuthbert's cell seems to have disregarded Bede's detailed description almost entirely; in the *c.*1100 Oxford *Life of St Cuthbert* (Oxford MS 165), produced at Durham at the time that the cathedral was being rebuilt, the hermitage is depicted as being built of dressed stone, possibly even ashlar.[645] [**Figure 6.28**] A later illustrated version of the same *Life*, BL Yates Thompson MS 26 (loosely dated *c.*1189-1212), follows the twelfth-century illustration, not the eighth-century text they are both based upon. [**Figure 6.29**] As Heidi Stoner notes, dressed stone (like that of the monasteries at Bede's own Monkwearmouth and Jarrow built by Benedict Biscop) was not only associated with *romanitas*, but by the end of the eleventh century was emblematic of the great monolithic cathedrals then under construction across England. Unlike the Anglo-Saxon churches which preceded them, which were generally added onto, repaired, and rebuilt

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[642] Raine, *The History and Antiquities of North Durham,* 341; 360*.*
[643] *BSVC*, 216-217 (§ 27): *est autem aedificium situ paene rotundum, a muro usque ad murum mensura quatuor ferme, sive quinque, perticarum distentum; murus ipse deforis altior longitudine stantis hominis.*
[644] Ibid.: *quem videlicet murum, non secto lapide, vel latere et caemento, sed impolitus prorsus lapidibus et cespite, quem de medio loci fodiendo tulerat, composuit.*
[645] Malcolm Baker, "Medieval Illustrations of Bede's Life of St. Cuthbert," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 41 (1978): 16–49. Both Oxford MS 165 and Yates Thompson 26 are believed to have been copied and illustrated at Durham, but only the latter can be identified in the cathedral library records; the former might have been written for a private patron or another monastic house.

over the course of centuries, these were for the most part regularly planned buildings erected in a few consecutive phases. Durham Cathedral, where both the *Lives* were produced, was built from the ground up in just over twenty years. The audience of the Oxford and Yates Thompson *vitae* would have been made to associate the sacred site of Cuthbert's hermitage at Farne with the new Norman building at Durham, and its later cousin, built deliberately in Durham's own image, on Holy Island itself.[646] But while the Oxford and YT *Lives* took deliberate and calculated liberties with the history as passed down by Bede, other Durham sources were (apparently) more faithful. In his collection of miracles, Reginald of Durham describes the later twelfth-century *hospitium*. Specifically, he explains that the lower courses of the contemporary building were "*beati Cuthberti manus fabricando fundavit.*"[647] Following Bede, Reginald also states that the stones were of such size and weight that they required angelic assistance to lift into place. What would seem to be implied was that the foundations of the twelfth-century guesthouse (of which nothing survives) were much older, and that tradition held that they were built of the great stones described by Bede, potentially indicating that the later guesthouse was built on the foundations of Cuthbert's cell, rather than on the site of the original *domus* nearer to the landing area. This earlier guesthouse is possibly that described by Raine, though it is highly unlikely to be the same building and based on his account he must be referring to what is called the 'Fishe House' on Speed's map. Visitors to the site, as well as anyone who read the *miracula* or heard them read aloud, might therefore have understood that the stones of the *hospitium* had not only been touched by the hands of Cuthbert, making them effectively secondary relics, but by the angels themselves. Like the cenotaph inside the priory, the stones of the guesthouse would have served as a secondary relic and focus of veneration, even though Cuthbert's corporeal relics were far

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[646] Stoner, "The Architecture of a Life," 221-2. Magdalene Carrasco also considers this interpretation, though her analysis primarily focuses on the allegorical and exegetical significance of the iconography (Magdalena Elizabeth Carrasco, "The Construction of Sanctity: Pictorial Hagiography and Monastic Reform in the First Illustrated 'Life of St. Cuthbert' (Oxford, University College MS 165)," *Studies in Iconography* 21 (2000): 47–89).

[647] *LBC*, 102.

away in Durham. The book of Meditations and Prayers in possession of the cell's library supposedly owned by Cuthbert could have been another example of a 'touch' relic.

Instead of the saint's death and afterlife (represented by the cenotaph on Holy Island and the shrine of Cuthbert at Durham), the pilgrimage activity on Farne would have centred around the events of Cuthbert's earthly life, not unlike the proposed network of chapels which told the story of St David's life through the landscape around *Menevia* in Chapter V, as well as the Irish example of St Kevin's monastery at Glendalough discussed in Chapter III.[648] Reginald's account makes it clear that, whatever exegetical meaning Bede might have imparted into his description of the large, uncut stones, by this time the account was taken literally, and the presence of large stones supposedly put in place by Cuthbert and his angelic helpers was seen as evidence of the miraculous event, as well as a physical reminder of Cuthbert's sanctity in life. It is also worth emphasizing that, rather than the cenotaph, which seems to have been the centre of devotion and even an early source of miracles for Cuthbert's pre-875 cult, it is at Farne Island that Reginald records the most miracles. In one of the accounts of *the Miracles of Farne*, St Cuthbert even tells a man seeking relief from dropsy that "my home is Farne."[649] Despite the danger of its waters and its distance from the priory, pilgrims from many locations north of the Tyne set out in search of cures.[650] Some may even have set out directly from the Northumberland coast, not Holy Island.[651] The important role that the island of Inner Farne played in the cult of Cuthbert beyond Durham in the twelfth to fourteenth centuries is undeniable, and it is rare that we have such direct evidence of memorialization and physical description in the context of pilgrimage and miracle accounts.

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[648] A.J. Piper, "The First Generations of Durham Monks and the Cult of Cuthbert," in *St. Cuthbert, His Cult and His Community to AD 1200*, ed. Gerald Bonner, D. W. Rollason, and Clare Stancliffe (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1989), 445.

[649] Craster, "The Miracles of Farne," 100: *domus mea Farne est.*

[650] Tudor, "Durham Cathedral and Its Hermits in the Twelfth Century." 69-70. Tudor also suggests that Farne may have been the preferred or at least more frequent destination for pilgrims living north of the Tyne as compared to Durham Cathedral.

[651] The man suffering from dropsy is sent to Bamburgh castle before taking ship to Farne.

Holy Island and Inner Farne are thus saturated with potential points of veneration and memorialization, but as at Durham, I would argue that these are just two examples of a wider phenomenon and preoccupation with sacred place and space by the community of Durham Cathedral in the twelfth century. In addition to these more localized landscapes, the interests of the Durham monks in the landscape that Cuthbert inhabited in life and death seems to have extended to a much broader scale, particularly within the narratives created to justify and legitimize the post-1083 Benedictine community by Symeon of Durham. The following sections will examine two of these: the memorialization of the flight from Lindisfarne in 875 and the narrative of the foundation of 1083 as the restoration of Northern monasticism.

St Cuthbert's Way: Memorializing the Flight from Lindisfarne in 875

The Lindisfarne raid of *c.*793 has been viewed as a cataclysmic turning point and the beginning of the Viking Age in England, but the evidence suggests that for the monks of Cuthbert's community at Lindisfarne it was only a setback.[652] Eventually, as the later Durham sources explained, the death of King Edmund (*c.*869) and the encroaching threat of the Danes prompted the community to permanently flee Holy Island in *c.*875, taking with them not only Cuthbert's body but the relics of St Oswald and St Aidan and a decorated stone cross from the Lindisfarne churchyard.[653] The (purportedly) tenth-century *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* adds to this sacred collection a wooden church erected by St Aidan, which could possibly have been housed inside the chapel on the Heugh as an architectural relic akin to the *Vetusta Ecclesia* at Glastonbury, as will be discussed further in Chapter VII.[654] The monks and their precious cargo would take a circuitous route through a number of the monastery's possessions, including Norham and Crayke,

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[652] *LDE*, 90-91 (ii.5). "So the church of Lindisfarne was ravaged and despoiled of its ornaments, but nevertheless for a long time afterwards an episcopal see remained there with the holy body of the blessed Cuthbert and those monks who had been able to escape from the hand of the barbarians." (*Taliter ecclesia Lindisfarnensi uastata et suis ornamentis spoliata, nichilominus tamen in ea sedes episcopalis et qui barbarorum manus effugere poterant monachi apud sacrum corpus beati Cuthberti multo post tempore permanserunt*)

[653] *LDE*, 101-103 (ii.6); 60-61 (i.12). As discussed below, the story told by the *Libellus* and the *Historia* omits a number of important contemporary political developments.

[654] Blair, "The Early Churches at Lindisfarne," 47. *HSC*, 49 (§ 9).

en route to Chester-le-Street, where the community and the bishopric would remain until 995, when Cuthbert and his see ultimately relocated to Durham. This tumultuous period in the cult's history would have repercussions for centuries, and there is reason to suspect that Durham may have called upon the Cuthbertine connections of several of these sites to justify their possessions and privileges centuries later. As David Rollason observed, the post-Lindisfarne accounts describe "not so much the removal of a church and a community but rather the translation of a saint's relics."[655] But Rollason has also questioned the way the community of Cuthbert was portrayed as desperate and destitute during their seven-year odyssey in the 'wilderness' of Northumbria. In addition to their apparent ability to successfully transport numerous treasures and precious relics across significant distances, the stops taken along the way, particularly after the aborted crossing to Ireland, correspond remarkably well with the extent of Lindisfarne's ancient episcopal estates (and later those of the Bishops of Durham). [**Figure 6.30**] Rather than a desperate flight just ahead of 'rampaging' Norsemen, we might see the 'wanderings' of the Cuthbertine community as a planned series of visitations to key holdings in order to maintain their claim over these territories by gracing them with the presence of the saint himself.[656] Johnson South goes so far as to argue that "the community seems to have been little diminished by the transition from Lindisfarne to Chester-le-Street, [continuing] to exert control over a substantial amount of property, as the (supposedly tenth-century) [*Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*] records."[657] In the following sections, the Cuthbertine associations of a number of these estates, as well as their continued importance in the post-Conquest period, will be examined.

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[655] D. W. Rollason, "The Wanderings of St Cuthbert," in *Cuthbert, Saint and Patron* (Durham: Dean and Chapter of Durham, 1987), 46.

[656] Rollason, "The Wanderings of St Cuthbert," 50. The resonance between the story of the Israelites in exile, bearing the tabernacle containing the holiest of relics, and the journey of Cuthbert's community, bearing his incorrupt body within his reliquary, would not have been lost on later monastic historians. Chapter IV discussed the tradition of portable relics in Ireland, though there are fewer examples of the entire body being transported for an extended period of time for the same purpose of consolidating territorial claims.

[657] Ted Johnson South, *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto: A History of Saint Cuthbert and a Record of His Patrimony*, Anglo-Saxon Texts ; 3 (Woodbridge, Suffolk: D.S. Brewer, 2002), 3. According to that account, Guðfrið's ascension to kingship had begun with a peace treaty sworn over the remains of St Cuthbert. (*HSC*, 53 (§ 13)).

Norham

Norham is located ten miles upstream from Berwick along the River Tweed. The Cuthbertine community (and possibly the episcopal see itself) at Lindisfarne had previously relocated to Norham at least once before, at some point during the episcopate of Bishop Ecgred (830-875), possibly as part of a realignment of episcopal sees related to Guðfrið's election to the kingship of Bernicia.[658] Either on this occasion, or when the Cuthbertine community and its relics travelled through the town en route to the Irish Sea (and ultimately Chester-le-Street) after the flight from Lindisfarne in 875, the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* records that a wooden church, perhaps that built by St Aidan, was transported from Lindisfarne (along with the bodies of Cuthbert and King Ceowulf, who had joined the monastery at Lindisfarne before his death) and the entire edifice was re-erected in Norham.[659] While Symeon does not credit Norham as hosting the body of St Cuthbert (unlike the earlier *HSC)*, recording only the aborted attempt to bring Cuthbert to Ireland and then his arrival at Chester-le-Street following a brief stay at Crayke, the purported diploma of the first Benedictine bishop and founder of Durham Cathedral Priory, William of St Calais (probably dating to the end of the twelfth century rather than the given date of 1083), references this tradition.[660]

It is certain that Norham was historically a possession of the see of Anglo-Saxon Lindisfarne (and possibly the site of the see itself in the mid-ninth century, as testified by the

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[658] Alex Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba, 789-1070: Scotland, 789-1070* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 81-82.

[659] *HSC*, 49 (§ 9). Woolf suggests that Aidan's church was treated as a relic akin to the body of Cuthbert, and thus symbolically accompanied the transfer of the diocese from Lindisfarne to Norham (Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba*, 80-81). If this is the case, it implies that Aidan's church was preserved for centuries and not directly replaced by the *basilica maior* mentioned by Bede in *HE* iii.17.

[660] Catholic Church. Diocese of Durham, *Durham Episcopal Charters, 1071-1152*. No. 3, 8: *Norham quam ipse ibi corpore quiescendo illustrauerat*. The lengthy and circuitous journey of the community and its relics is detailed in *LDE* ii 9-13. The omission by Symeon is perhaps telling – his narratives rests on a direct continuity between the monks of Cuthbert at Lindisfarne to the Benedictine priory at Durham, represented by the presence of Cuthbert's body and interrupted only by necessity between 875 and 1004; discussing political maneuvering that relocated the see of St Cuthbert (and his relics, the ultimate symbol of that episcopate) to Norham *before* the final flight of 875 serves to somewhat undermine both his major narratives: a harrowing escape from Vikings necessitating the departure of Cuthbert in the first place, and an assertion of direct continuity between Lindisfarne and Durham. C.f. E. Craster, "The Patrimony of St. Cuthbert," *English Historical Review* 69 (1954): 187-188.

HSC), and in 1121 a great castle was begun there by Bishop Ranulph Flambard (1099-1128). The keep was damaged and rebuilt following the Battle of the Standard in 1138 by Bishop Hugh de Puiset (bp. 1153-1195).[661] The parish church of Norham is dedicated to St Cuthbert and its foundation is dated to the ninth century according to Symeon.[662] While the standing fabric is late medieval, it is clearly built on an earlier, high-status ecclesiastical site, evidenced by the presence of a number of ninth- to tenth-century sculptural fragments, including a rare example of figural representation.[663] Another purported charter of William of St-Calais claims it was granted to the monks of Durham in 1082 or 1083, and the church is mentioned once more in 1093.[664] Long after the body of Cuthbert had departed, Norham remained a site of veneration for the northern saint; the church was said to possess a cross fashioned from a wooden table at which Cuthbert had once eaten, upon which the locals swore their judicial oaths in the twelfth century, and the town was the site of a minor miracle involving the recovery of the church's keys from the gullet of a fish.[665] In addition to being an important strategic site, Norham thus appears to have been a secondary site of the cult of St Cuthbert in the post-Conquest period, where his presence was still felt three hundred years after his relics had left.

Crayke

Like Norham, Crayke was an ancient possession of Cuthbert and the bishops of Lindisfarne, granted along with "a circuit of three miles around it, so that on [Cuthbert's] journeys to and from York he might have a staging post (*mansionem*) where he might rest."[666] Crayke is next mentioned in the aftermath of the failed attempt to bring Cuthbert's body to Ireland from

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[661] Philip Dixon and Pamela Marshall, "The Great Tower in the Twelfth Century: The Case of Norham Castle," *Archaeological Journal* 150, no. 1 (1993): 413-4.

[662] *LDE,* 93 *(ii.5).*

[663] *CASSS* I, 208-214.

[664] *LDE*, 93. (ii.5) Note 33; Raine cites these documents but does not address their questionable authenticity (*The History and Antiquities of North Durham,* 259)*.*

[665] *LBC*, 57; 73.

[666] *LDE*, 47 (i.9): *villam quoque Crecam et tria in circuitu ipsius uille militaria ei dederunt, ut haberet Eboracum iens uel inde rediens mansionem ubi requiescere posset.* Cambridge suggests that this claim of personal association with Cuthbert with the grant of King Ecgfrith (d.685) and Archbishop Theodore of York may be a later development, best preserved in *HSC*, 47 (v). Eric Cambridge, "Why Did the Community of St Cuthbert Settle at Chester-le-Street?" in ed. Bonner et al. *St. Cuthbert, His Cult and His Community*, 367-386.

the mouth of the River Derwent, thwarted, it is suggested, by the saint himself. At some point Crayke became more than a *mansionem*: when the Cuthbertine community arrived sometime before 883 there was an Abbot Geve there to greet them.[667] The itinerant community remained his guests for four months before the body of Cuthbert, together with a number of his guardians, were moved to the new episcopal see of Chester-le-Street, where they remained for over a century. But this would not be the end of Cuthbert's institutional links to the site. *HSC* claims that Cuthbert himself "installed a congregation of monks there and ordained an abbot."[668] A forged charter in the twelfth-century Durham archives supposedly records a seventh-century grant of Crayke to Cuthbert himself, highlighting the significance of the estate to the community of that time.[669]

Outside of these textual references, evidence for either the *mansionem* or the reputed monastic community at Crayke is slim: only two fragments of Anglian sculpture, decorated with plant scroll and from an early ninth-century cross shaft, have ever been recovered, though the quality of the carving is worth noting and suggests a high-status patron.[670] The parish church of Crayke is dedicated to St Cuthbert and located at the foot of the castle. While the standing fabric of the church dates to around 1490, it too is probably on a much earlier site: limited archaeological investigations near the modern churchyard wall uncovered a small cemetery of thirty-one men, women and children, with one individual returning a radiocarbon date of AD 770-

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[667] Crayke's earlier history is somewhat unclear – there was a hermit (Echa the anchorite) on the site by 767, and possibly a late-seventh- or early eighth-century community under Eanmund (mentioned in Æthelwulf's *De Abbatibus*, II) c.f. Thomas Pickles, *Kingship, Society, and the Church in Anglo-Saxon Yorkshire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 129; Note 11. Pickles also suggests that Crayke may have been granted as part of a circle of miles (141).

[668] *HSC*, 46-47 (§ 5): *ibi sanctus Cuthbetus congregationem monachorum posuit et abbatem ordinauit*. The same chapter mentions the community at Carlisle that seems to have been linked with Guðfrið's Bernician patronage of Norham and Chester-le-Street, discussed further below, as well as the status of Eadred, abbot of Carlisle, as the head of the *familia* of St Cuthbert in the mid-ninth century (Woolf, *From Alba to Albion*, 81). The uncertain date of the *HSC* precludes the use of this passage as definitive evidence that Crayke had a Cuthbertine monastery (particularly given how little corroboration exists), but regardless, a later date for this account would only further emphasize the importance of the site to the Durham community.

[669] Ibid., 141-2. Pickles notes that Crayke was also topographically well suited as a Northumbrian monastic retreat.

[670] Cambridge, "Why did the Community of St Cuthbert Settle at Chester-le-Street?" 380-2. Cambridge also raises the possibility of related monastic sites at Northallerton and its chapelry Brompton (both of which produced significant quantities of Anglo-Saxon sculpture), but no firm evidence exists (382; 385); for the Crayke fragments, c.f. *CASSS* VI: 88-89.

1020, that might have been accompanied by a small church, or even associated with the monastery itself.[671] Overall, the association with and interest in the site by the Durham community and the Prince-Bishops in the post-Conquest period was obvious – as late as the nineteenth-century Crayke was a detached part of County Durham, and as at Norham, the bishop of Durham built a castle in the town in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, probably a motte-and-bailey earthwork and timber fortification later replaced by stone.[672] In addition to serving its original purpose of offering an episcopal residence close to York, the castle also featured a large deer park.[673] While Crayke does not seem to have been a site of veneration for Cuthbert, and no miracles or relics are recorded, it was a valued possession of the Prince-Bishops, and its supposed Cuthbertine heritage was surely a significant factor in their desire to hold onto it for so long.

Chester-le-Street

The long journey of the Lindisfarne community and the incorrupt body of St Cuthbert finally came to an end in 883, when the episcopal see was re-established at Chester-le-Street. There is some reason to suspect that the choice to settle there was not by chance – the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* records a vision of Cuthbert to the abbot of Carlisle, implying that "all the land between the Tyne and the Wear" would be given to the (still transitory) community of Cuthbert in exchange for political support of the recently converted Bernician King Guðfrið (r.883-895).[674] Guðfrið's patronage might explain why the community chose to settle at Chester-le-Street instead

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[671] Pickles, *Kingship, Society, and the Church in Anglo-Saxon Yorkshire*, 133. Other possible archaeological evidence recovered in the relatively limited excavations carried out to this date are a bronze ring and an ironwork hoard; it should be noted that industrial activity has been linked with Anglo-Saxon monasteries. c.f. Kenneth A. Adams, "Monastery and Village at Crayke, North Yorkshire." *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 62 (1990): 35.

[672] Jennifer Kaner, "Crayke and Its Boundaries." in *Yorkshire Boundaries.* eds. H.E. Jean Le Patourel, Moira H. Long, & May F Pickles (Leeds: Yorkshire Archaeological Society, 1993), 103–11. Crayke was also recognized as a sanctuary in the post-medieval period; given Durham Cathedral's own history as a sanctuary, this might be significant.

[673] Andrew Miller, "Deer Parks and Masculine Egos," in *Princes of the Church: Bishops and Their Palaces*, ed. David Rollason (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), 134-6; Jennifer Kaner, "Crayke and Its Boundaries," 103–11.

[674] Rollason, "The Wanderings of St Cuthbert," 51; *HSC*, 53 (§ 13): *totam terram inter Tiniam et Wyrram.*

of returning to Lindisfarne, which remained under the control of the English nobleman Eadwulf at Bamburgh.[675]

According to Symeon, it was only in the time of Bishop Æthelric (1041-1056) that the wooden church at the time of the community's arrival in 883 was demolished and rebuilt in stone, and thus it has been suggested that the site at Chester-le-Street may have only been intended as another temporary refuge.[676] In fact, the community remained at Chester-le-Street for nearly a century, when the threat of new Viking attacks caused the community to once again evacuate, this time to the church at Ripon.[677] Intended to be temporary or not, the Chester-le-Street community seems to have had a number of powerful patrons in addition to Guðfrið, including Athelstan of Wessex.[678] Returning to Symeon's account, it is suggested that the community meant to return to Chester-le-Street, but along the road from Ripon a miraculous intervention by the saint led the community to instead settle at Durham.[679]

The church of St Cuthbert at Chester-le-Street which now stands was built primarily from the thirteenth century onwards, excepting a few remnants of earlier masonry in the chancel and nave piers, but it seems reasonably certain that it is on the site of the community's wooden church and its mid-eleventh-century stone replacement.[680] While there is no archaeological evidence of the Anglo-Saxon or eleventh-century church, certain aspects of the architecture of the later building appear to mirror the lost building. The nave is unusually narrow for a building of its date, with its length 5.5 times its width; the best explanation for such an arrangement is that the

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[675] Gerald Bonner, "St Cuthbert at Chester-Le-Street," in ed. Bonner et al, *St Cuthbert, His Cult and Community*, 387–95.

[676] *LDE* Note 43. *LDE*, 171 (iii.9); Cambridge, "Why did the Community of St Cuthbert Settle at Chester-le-Street?" 372. Specifically, it is unusual that such an important church as one that housed the body of St Cuthbert for over a century would not be rebuilt in a fashion befitting its status and importance, particularly considering that the church was built within a Roman fort and stone and stone masons were available in the tenth century (370-1).

[677] *LDE*, 145 (iii.1).

[678] Bonner, "St Cuthbert at Chester-Le-Street." 390-391.

[679] Ibid. Rollason notes that the peninsula was cleared of trees with the help of Uthred, the Earl of Northumbria, which does raise the question of whether the land had been granted by the Earl and the story of the stuck cart was a later addition. Rollason, "The Wanderings of St Cuthbert," 52.

[680] Cambridge, "Why Did the Community of St Cuthbert Settle at Chester-Le-Street?" 368-70.

nave was built on the footprint of an earlier building and preserved its dimensions.[681] [**Figure 6.31**] A break in the sequence of construction visible in the changing architecture of the nave (the three easternmost bays of the nave are separated by a rectangular compound pier rather than cylindrical columns) could correspond with a previous church being gradually demolished as the work progressed westwards. [**Figure 6.32**] But the strongest evidence of post-Conquest cult activity derives from John Leland's record of 1530 of "a Tumbe with the Image of the Bishop token that S Cuthberth ons was buried or remained in his Feretre there"; in other words, a cenotaph marking Cuthbert's resting place during the time the community stayed at Chester-le-Street.[682] Where exactly this cenotaph monument was in relation to the existing church is not known – it would presumably have been at the east end of the timber church and probably in the easternmost part of the nave of the later stone replacement. The cenotaph monument at Chester-le-Street was one of at least three recorded by late medieval sources, the others being at Lindisfarne and Durham Cathedral itself (as well as a possible fourth site under the irregular south transept pier, discussed above). It is not clear whether the Chester-le-Street cenotaph was itself a place of miraculous cures and cult activity, as was the case for at least some time at Lindisfarne.[683] However, the absence of *recorded* curative miracles at the cenotaph should not necessarily be taken as evidence that the site was of lesser importance than those places where miracles were attested. The presence of a tomb monument on the site of Cuthbert's former resting place demonstrates the interest of the Durham community in memorializing this important chapter of their history.

Cuthbert after the Conquest

In 1069, threats from the new Norman king forced the monks to once more take up the body of St Cuthbert and flee until the danger had passed, returning this time to Lindisfarne from Durham. The journey took three days, and the body of Cuthbert thus spent an evening at each of

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[681] Ibid., 370.
[682] Leland, *The Itinerary of John Leland the Antiquary*, 1: 77.
[683] *LBC*, 48-49 (i.22); 58-60 (i.26).

Jarrow, Bedlington, and Tughall, before arriving at the shore of Lindisfarne on the fourth night.[684] Given the pattern of commemoration present both within the cathedral precinct of Durham as well as the width and breadth of Northumbria, it is worth looking at the contemporary building activities on these sites. And indeed, there is reason to believe that in addition to Jarrow, Norman churches were built in the eleventh and twelfth centuries at Bedlington and Tughall. The almost entirely demolished building in the deserted medieval village of Tughall, formerly a chapel of ease for Bamburgh Castle, was noted by Raine as being among the first post-Conquest churches to be built in Northumbria, on the basis of an ornamented Norman arch and semi-circular apse, the former of which can be clearly seen in S.H Grimm's eighteenth-century sketch.[685] [**Figure 6.33**] Unlike the site at Tughall, Bedlington's Norman church seems to have been built over a Saxon predecessor, and the town itself was part of the County Palatine of the Bishops of Durham until the sixteenth century.[686]

In any case, the odyssey of Cuthbert's incorrupt body was only the first of two grand narratives and their associated religious landscapes promoted by Symeon of Durham and his successors. From the perspective of the Benedictine community, it would not be until 1083 that the monastic heritage of Cuthbert was fully restored. An entirely different sort of narrative, one that also stretched across the length and breadth of Northumbria, was devised to explain the centuries between the flight from Lindisfarne and the creation of Durham Cathedral priory.

A (Re)foundation Legend: 1083 and the Renewal of Northern Monasticism

It is relatively clear from Durham's historical sources in the post-Conquest period that the Benedictine community established at Durham in 1083 sought to distinguish itself from what had

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[684] Raine, *The History and Antiquities of North Durham,* 72; *LDE*, 185-7 (iii.15)*.*

[685] Raine, 72; "Pastscape - Detailed Result: TUGHALL CHAPEL," accessed April 9, 2019, https://www.pastscape.org.uk/hob.aspx?hob_id=8206. The other possibility is that the eastern part of the chancel and apse were earlier in date than the rest of the church, which was subsequently enlarged to the west.

[686] Raine, *The History and Antiquities of North Durham*, 366; "Pastscape - Detailed Result: CHURCH OF ST CUTHBERT," accessed April 9, 2019, https://www.pastscape.org.uk/hob.aspx?hob_id=25429.

come before at Durham Cathedral.[687] Specifically, this meant the monks of the new priory

resolving the problem of a lack of continuity between themselves and the secular canons they

replaced who had previously acted as guardians of St Cuthbert since the foundation of the

cathedral in 995. Durham historians, and first among them Symeon, the author of the *Libellus de

Exordio*, showed a keen interest in linking the new Benedictine community with the older

traditions of Northumbrian monastic practice associated with St Cuthbert.[688] Sources associated

with Durham (including the purportedly tenth-century *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*) stressed

that St Cuthbert was a monk (and monastic founder) as well as a bishop, and it seems to be in this

period that a particular misogyny or anti-female sentiment entered into the cult, perhaps in part

due to the fact that some of the deposed secular canons had been married.[689] As Meryl Foster

observed, the first post-Conquest collection of miracles created by the new community, spanning

the departure from Lindisfarne to the present day, included a number of ahistorical but explicit

references to Durham as a monastery and the guardians of Cuthbert as monks, perhaps meant "as

part of a campaign to convince St Cuthbert's devotees that there had been no real change in his

church, because no change was necessary."[690] But the effort to cast Cuthbert as a monk, thus

making his Benedictine successors of the post-1083 community the true heirs to his legacy and

cult, went beyond revising the saint's *vitae* and *miracula* to serve the community's interests or

simply eliding the differences. Perhaps following the author of the earlier *Historia de Sancto

Cuthberto*, Symeon constructed an ahistorical narrative around the foundation of the 1083 priory,

tying Cuthbert together with the Northumbrian (and continental) monasticism of Bede and the

monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow, de-emphasizing the importance of Lindisfarne's own

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[687] William M. Aird, *St Cuthbert and the Normans: The Church of Durham, 1071-1153*, Studies in the History of Medieval Religion ; v. 14 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1998), 138-141.

[688] Rollason, "The Anglo-Norman Priory and Its Predecessor, 995-1189," 27-37.

[689] Tudor, "The Cult of St Cuthbert in the Twelfth Century," 457. Margaret Coombe has suggested that this culture of misogyny could have been introduced by William of St-Calais. Margaret Coombe, "Reworking Corporate Memory: St Calais (Carilefus) and St Cuthbert" (International Medieval Conference, Leeds, 2018).

[690] Meryl R. Foster, "Custodians of St Cuthbert: The Durham Monks' Views of Their Predecessors, 1083-*c.*1200.," in *Anglo-Norman Durham: 1093-1193*, 54-56; the inclusion of an instance of Cuthbert founding a monastery at Crayke (*HSC*, 47) is further evidence to support Johnson South's argument that the *Historia* is at best a late eleventh-century rewriting of an earlier source, if not a complete fabrication by the post-Conquest community (Johnson South, *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, 11-12).

Ionan origins from its foundation by St Aidan. But Symeon's text went much further into historical anachronism, as he creatively adapted the character of Bishop William Walcher (d.1081), presenting the continentally-trained cathedral canon as an enthusiastic patron of Benedictine monasticism who paved the way for the triumphant return of monks to Cuthbert's side two years after the bishop's untimely death at the hands of a mob. [691] The following section will examine the way that Symeon used a landscape of Northumbrian monastic sites to prefigure, and to an extent re-enact, the monastic foundation at Durham Cathedral in 1083.

The story of the (re)foundation of Durham Cathedral Priory as told by Symeon began not in the north but in the ancient kingdom of Mercia, when three Benedictine monks were inspired by reading the lives of the northern saints and were given leave to depart their monasteries at Winchcombe and Evesham. One of them, Aldwin, "desired to visit the places of [the Northern saints], in other words their monasteries, although he knew that they had been deserted."[692] Upon their arrival, Symeon relates, "[Bishop Walcher] gave them the monastery of the blessed Paul the Apostle, which had been built at Jarrow, which had been built by the former abbot Benedict [Biscop]. Its walls alone were standing roofless, and it had preserved hardly any sign of its former antiquity."[693] Shortly thereafter, Walcher also granted to the growing community of Benedictine monks at Jarrow their counterpart site of St Peter's at Wearmouth, which was in a similarly ruined state. The monks restored both monasteries, first living in wooden shelters, then rebuilding the stone churches themselves. In "the third year of the pontificate of Walcher ... Aldwin came into this province and monastic life began to revive in it."[694]

The motivations of Walcher are clear in both Symeon's account (which tells of his unspoken desire to become a monk) and a later addition which describes the bishop as "more

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[691] Aird, *St Cuthbert and the Normans*, 133-36; Foster, "Custodians of St Cuthbert," 58.
[692] *LDE*, 201 (iii.20): *Quorum loca (uidelicet monasteria) licet aim in solitudinem sciret redacta, desiderauit inuisere.*
[693] *LDE*, 203 (iii.21): *Dedit ergo eis monasterium beati Pauli apostoli a Benedicto quondam abbate constructum in Gyruum, quod stantibus adhuc solis sine culmine parietibus, uix aliquod antique nobilitatis seruauerat signum.*
[694] *LDE,* 209-11 (iii.22): *usque tercium annum presulatus Walcheri quado per Aldwinum in ipsam prouinciam uenientem monarchorum in illa cepit habitatio reuiuiscere.*

joyful than he had been accustomed to be" at the arrival of Aldwin and his compatriots from Mercia.[695] Symeon also describes how Walcher had begun to lay the foundations for monastic buildings around the Anglo-Saxon cathedral before his untimely death in 1080. His successor, William of St-Calais, supposedly continued his work transforming Durham Cathedral into a Benedictine house. Finding that "the place which the saint renders illustrious by the presence of his body was shamefully destitute and provided with a degree of service inappropriate to his sanctity," the new bishop investigated and found that in ancient times Cuthbert and his monks had lived by the Benedictine rule. In order that these traditions might be restored, he sent for the now-thriving communities at Wearmouth and Jarrow and brought them back to found a Benedictine priory at Durham.[696] Thus the monastic heritage of Cuthbert's cult was restored using monks drawn from two of the most famed sites of Northumbrian monasticism. Correspondingly, the secular canons were expelled, ending an awkward period in the community's history which was later explained as being the result of only the novice monks surviving the attacks on Lindisfarne in the ninth century, leading to slips in discipline.[697] In the words of the *Epitome* added to Symeon's *Libellus*, "and thus it was that [William] had not introduced a new monastic order, but, by God's help, he re-established an ancient one that God was renewing."[698]

Some aspects of this narrative are contradicted by known facts, and others are poorly supported by the evidence. To begin with, William Walcher was an unlikely champion for Benedictine monasticism. Walcher was originally a secular canon from Liège, and when examined more critically, his actions with regards to Aldwin and the abandoned sites at Wearmouth and Jarrow seem to be less benevolent gifts or opportunities in service of a monastic agenda, and more

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[695] *LDE*, 211; 263: *Letior solito fit episcopus*. This 'epitome' was added, in Foster's view, to "prejudice the reader's interpretation of the *Libellus de exordio*" and draw a hard line between the secular clerks and the monks who replaced them. It first appears in a hand of the 1120s or 1130s. (Foster, "Custodians of St Cuthbert," 61-62).

[696] *LDE*, 225-7 (iv.2): *terram illius pene desolatam inuenit, locumque quem sacri corporis sui presentia illustrat, negligentiori quam eius deceret sanctitatem seruitio despicabiliter destitutum conspexit*. The "degree of service" William of St-Calais supposedly found so lacking was the absence of "monks of his own order…[or] regular canons."

[697] *LDE*, 261.

[698] *LDE*, 264-5: *Sicque ad illud monachice conuersationis ordinem non nouum instituit, sed antiquum Deo renouante restituit*.

of a convenient way to satisfy the latter-day disciples of Bede and Cuthbert while keeping them under strict episcopal control. Twice Aldwin and his companions tried to settle at locations of their own choosing before being overridden by the bishop: first at *Muneceastre* or Monkchester (near Newcastle) before they were directed to the ruined abbey at Jarrow, and again in 1076, when Aldwin was ordered to abandon his unauthorized cell at Melrose in the Scottish borders and instead renew the monastic site of Monkwearmouth.[699] Aldwin's initial goal might not even have been the establishment of a monastic community; his greater desire for an ascetic existence, which threatened political complications with Malcolm III of Scotland in his attempted settlement at Cuthbert's original monastery of Melrose, seems to have been largely ignored by Symeon in favour of presenting Aldwin as an advocate of the restoration of a coenobitic Benedictine monasticism. The three named monks (Aldwin, Turgot, and Reinfrid) would end up moving on from Jarrow and Monkwearmouth, with Reinfrid being involved in the re-foundation of Whitby Abbey and Hackness.[700]

Not only Walcher's but William of St-Calais's own devotion to Cuthbert and his cult was by no means as straightforward or faithful as Symeon presented it decades after the fact. The translation of 1104 was evidently a controversial affair, though it ultimately cemented Durham's status as the institutional successor to Lindisfarne. With its patron at last fittingly enshrined, the church at Durham was that much closer to being the same church as its ancient predecessor.

A Landscape of (Re)foundation

While some aspects of Symeon's narrative of the restoration of Northumbrian monasticism can certainly be called into question, particularly the motivations of the individual actors, other parts are firmly backed up by material evidence above and below the ground. This section will examine the evidence for activity at a set of sites related to Cuthbert or Northumbrian monasticism in general (in addition to Lindisfarne, discussed above) that seem to have been of

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[699] Aird, *St Cuthbert and the Normans,* 134.
[700] Ibid.*,* 136.

particular interest to the Durham community in the late-eleventh and early-twelfth centuries. The later twelfth-century *Epitome* of Symeon's *LDE* states that the goal of Bishop Walcher in sending Aldwin and his companions first to Jarrow and later to Wearmouth was to rebuild "the habitations of the saints which had been destroyed [*destructa sanctorum habitacula*]."[701] It is entirely plausible that in the late twelfth century this sacred mission was seen as exceeding the original mandate of Aldwin and encompassed a much larger range of ancient sites of Northumbrian monasticism.

Wearmouth and Jarrow

While it is perhaps implied by Symeon that the ruinous state of the buildings at Wearmouth and Jarrow dated back to the Viking raids which had struck so many Northumbrian monasteries beginning with Lindisfarne in 793, in reality the damage was far more recent, likely the result of contemporary Scottish incursions in 1069 and 1070.[702] Just what Aldwin and his monks found when they arrived first at St Paul's Church at Jarrow and several years later at St Peter's Church at Wearmouth is unclear, particularly given that Jarrow had apparently hosted the body of Cuthbert and a group of his guardians during the evacuation to Lindisfarne in 1069. Symeon also relates the story of a certain Durham monk named Alfred, who may have been responsible for acquiring the relics of the Venerable Bede from St Paul's Church at Jarrow and bringing them back to Durham, indicating that the church was still active, or at least accessible, in the early eleventh century.[703] St Peter's Monkwearmouth also suffered the indignity of losing its most illustrious saint, as the remains of Benedict Biscop, the founder of the double monastery, were supposedly taken to Thorney Abbey during the tenth century.[704] While Symeon's account is quite specific as to the ruinous conditions that Aldwin found at both sites, it should be emphasized

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[701] *LDE*, 262-3.

[702] Sam Turner, Sarah Semple, and Alex Turner, *Wearmouth and Jarrow: Northumbrian Monasteries in a Historic Landscape* (Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press, 2013), 200.

[703] *LDE*, 164-7 (iii.7). According to Symeon, Bede's relics were hidden in Cuthbert's coffin in a separate linen bag, and were discovered at the time of the 1104 translation of Cuthbert.

[704] Turner et al., *Wearmouth and Jarrow*, 200. Of course, it is also implied in *LDE* ii.15 that the body of Cuthbert had rested at Jarrow in 1069 en route to Lindisfarne. It thus seems likely that the site was not completely abandoned.

that his description was an aspect of a greater story of the restoration of Benedictine monasticism from the 'ruins' of the ancient past.[705] Aldwin's journey north and the subsequent restoration of monastic observance at these *sanctorum habitacula* is represented as "akin to the reestablishment of Christianity itself."[706] Traditionally, the stone churches at the two sites have been assigned an Anglo-Saxon date.[707] Considering the evidence of *furta sacra* well after Bede's time, in addition to finds of tenth- or eleventh-century sculptural fragments (including two relief-carved crosses in the tower of St Peter's Wearmouth), it seems likely that the foundations were still active in the late Saxon period, however diminished from their glory days.[708] But upon examination of the surviving fabric, they are clearly multi-phase buildings, primarily dating from the eleventh century on both sides of the Conquest, though some architectural elements are considerably earlier.

St Paul's Church at Jarrow has a central tower of possible pre-Conquest or Saxo-Norman date, with a Victorian nave and north and west porches, and a chancel of an early date that at one point appears to have been a separate building (the 'Eastern Church') before the construction of the tower. [**Figure 6.34**] The Victorian nave obliterated its Anglo-Saxon or medieval predecessor (the 'Western' Church).[709] [**Figure 6.35**] An arrangement of two axially-aligned chapels is entirely consistent with an early Anglo-Saxon monastic site, but the purpose of the Eastern Church is not entirely clear. It may have been a funerary chapel, perhaps the setting of the relics of Bede, but

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[705] There is evidence of a gap in occupation between the late-Saxon buildings and Aldwin's rebuilding in the form of pollen evidence from a well shaft, which demonstrates "a considerable amount of waste ground around the site" at the time of deposition." (Rosemary Cramp, *Wearmouth and Jarrow Monastic Sites*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Swindon: English Heritage, 2005), 116-17.) Cramp notes that Symeon's description of the clearing of the site at Wearmouth is considerably more detailed than the corresponding account for Jarrow. (see *LDE* iii.22)

[706] Aird, *St Cuthbert and the Normans*, 110. Aird argues that "Symeon's description of the companions constructing a covering of branches and hay beneath which they restored the divine service to Bede's monastery begins to read more and more like a *fundatio* myth rather than a strictly accurate historical account" (134; Note 149).

[707] Harold McCarter Taylor and Joan Sills Taylor, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 344-7; 432-56.

[708] Excavations around St Peter's Wearmouth showed that some burials were within or on top of the Anglo-Saxon monastic buildings, suggesting that some had gone out of use as the community had diminished in size. (Cramp, *Wearmouth and Jarrow*, 78; 117).

[709] Ibid., 139-145.

by the time of Aldwin it seems to have been joined to the eastern tower of the Western Church by a junction building that may have necessitated the demolition of the east end of the Western Church and the west wall of the Eastern Church. The tower of St Paul's Church at Jarrow is more likely than its counterpart at Wearmouth to be of a pre-Conquest date, perhaps even a successor to Benedict Biscop's church as early as the eighth century, though it may well be later, and was clearly heavily modified in the Norman period onward.[710] There is more concrete evidence of Aldwin's and later post-Conquest building activity in the extant ruins of the monastic buildings. The first phase of the standing remains would have been built between Aldwin's arrival *c.*1074 and the foundation of the Durham Cathedral priory in 1083; Cambridge considers a date of *c.*1076-1080 to be the most likely.[711] A most intriguing feature is the triangular-headed opening of a doorway in the western interior wall of the cloister (a form more associated with Anglo-Saxon work), opposite a more conventionally Norman arrangement of shafts and cushion capitals on the opposite doorway closer to the church which appears to be of the same date. [**Figures 6.36** and **6.37**]

St Peter's Church at Wearmouth has a western tower, unlike the axial tower at Jarrow, making it more easily comparable to a range of late-Saxon and Saxo-Norman buildings in the north of England, including St Mary Bishophill Junior in York (dated by Stocker to the third quarter of the eleventh century), and to an extent other Yorkshire churches of the period.[712] [**Figure 6.38**] This would suggest that the tower and belfry, built of local sandstone with large irregular quoins on top of a porch of a demonstrably different period, belonged not to the Anglo-Saxon period as a defensive structure against Viking raids, but rather to the eleventh century, either in the aftermath of the foundation of the cathedral at Durham or possibly after the Conquest, when Aldwin and his compatriots arrived and reportedly rebuilt the church from

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[710] Ibid., 1; 167-8.

[711] Eric Cambridge, "Early Romanesque Architecture in North-East England," in *Anglo-Norman Durham: 1093-1193*, 149-150.

[712] Leslie Peter Wenham, *St. Mary Bishophill Junior and St. Mary Castlegate*, Archaeology of York; 8/2 (London: Council for British Archaeology, 1987). See also Michael Shapland, "In Unenvied Greatness Stands: The Lordly Tower-Nave Church of St Mary Bishophill Junior, York," *Church Archaeology* 14 (2012): 1–14.

ruined walls.[713] The only pre-nineteenth-century fabric is the tower, the porch, and west wall of the nave; the nave and chancel were completely rebuilt. The interior and exterior of the tower do bear some signs of fire damage, and it is tempting to speculate that this is evidence of the burning of the church by the Scots of King Malcolm in 1070, but the lack of securely datable features in the tower complicates this interpretation.[714] The only architectural feature which can be confidently assigned to Aldwin's rebuilding is the bulbous base of the south pier of the chancel arch. [**Figure 6.39**] It is also possible that a more conventional Norman chancel arch (similar to that which survives at Jarrow) survived until the rebuilding of the nineteenth century.[715] There is probably no simple solution to the dating problem – the church and tower at Wearmouth are certainly multi-phase constructions and interpretation is further complicated by late- and post-medieval work. Nonetheless, it is reasonable to conclude that significant amounts of the work date from the time of Aldwin (*c.*1075), even if Symeon's claims that the buildings were merely ruined walls cannot be entirely substantiated. In terms of monastic buildings, unlike at Jarrow, no standing remains can be dated back to the eleventh or twelfth century, and what was located archaeologically cannot be easily disentangled from the period of reconstruction that can be dated by ceramic evidence to the late-thirteenth or early-fourteenth centuries. Regardless, the degree of investment in restoring one of the glories of the Northumbrian monastic past is fully evident. Within the context of Symeon's narrative, Wearmouth, like Jarrow, became a kind of proving ground for the monks who would eventually make their triumphant return to Durham to become worthy guardians of Cuthbert.

Wearmouth and Jarrow had little association with Cuthbert during their heyday, and indeed were established in a different, continental and 'Roman' tradition, in contrast to Lindisfarne's own Irish-derived practices (via Aidan and Iona). Nonetheless, their monastic heritage was unparalleled and well-known through the works of Bede. When attempting to

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[713] *LDE* iii.21-2; Cramp, *Wearmouth and Jarrow Monastic Sites*, 71-2.
[714] Ibid., 72.
[715] Ibid., 117.

restore a strict form of Benedictine monasticism to replace laxer traditions of the secular canons at Durham, they were an obvious choice to lend credibility and legitimacy to the efforts of the cathedral priory. By re-settling the sites at Wearmouth and Jarrow, Durham was laying claim to their monastic heritage, even as it possessed the relics of Jarrow's most famous son, the Vernable Bede. Symeon's narrative of rebuilding and restoration is to an extent borne out by the physical evidence – both sites were the subject of significant material investment in both their churches and their monastic buildings, and it seems likely that each was, as reported, in some degree of disrepair.

Cuthbert and Durham Beyond Northumbria

There is one other site that draws together both of Symeon's central narratives. Cuthbert's own monastic career began at *Mailros*, or Melrose, in the Scottish borders, and it became a site of interest to Aldwin and Turgot. [**Figure 6.40**] While their initial attempts to settle at Melrose in 1076 (after the re-establishment of the church at Jarrow) were opposed by Bishop Walcher, within a few decades the site of Cuthbert's first monastery had become an important possession of Durham Cathedral priory.[716] A stone-built chapel of the late eleventh or early twelfth century was present on the site by 1133, when it was given to the monks of the new Cistercian Abbey to the west of the old site by David I.[717] Unfortunately, little is known of this building, and Melrose is not mentioned by Symeon as a place of interest, perhaps because these events did not support his narrative of cooperation between Walcher and Aldwin in re-establishing monastic life at Wearmouth and Jarrow (and eventually Durham). [**Figure 6.41**] Nonetheless, as both an important site in Cuthbert's life as well as the history of monasticism in early Northumbria, the presence of a stone chapel in the possession of Durham Cathedral priory and its implications for

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[716] Aird, *St Cuthbert and the Normans*, 134-5.

[717] Ian Borthwick Cowan, *Medieval Religious Houses, Scotland: With an Appendix on the Houses in the Isle of Man*, 2nd ed. (London, etc.: Longman, 1976), 51. See also Ronan Toolis and Glasgow University Archaeological Research Division, "Old Melrose," 2009, https://doi.org/10.5284/1008785, accessed October 13, 2018; James King, "Old Melrose," The Corpus of Romanesque Sculpture in Britain and Ireland, accessed October 13, 2018, https://www.crsbi.ac.uk/site/3741/; Mark Brennand, "Old Melrose, Scottish Borders- Desk-Based Assessment," Monograph, December 2007, https://library.thehumanjourney.net/2204/, accessed January 14, 2019.

the cult of St Cuthbert are worth considering. Excavating the site of the chapel might shed light on this early phase, but as yet there has been no archaeological activity at Old Melrose, apart from some geophysical surveys which have tried without success to locate traces of the Anglo-Saxon monastery.[718] Reginald of Durham's *Libellus* refers to miracle stories, told to him by Aelred of Rievaulx, occurring in 'Lothian' in the area of Melrose Abbey, the latest of which dates from around 1165, though these seem to be examples of Cuthbert defending his patrimony, rather than miraculous cures.[719] While it cannot be positively identified as the chapel of St Cuthbert at Old Melrose, there are no other obvious candidates.

Conclusion: The Importance of Place in the Cult of St Cuthbert

The keen interest that the guardians of the cult of St Cuthbert held in places of significance to their saint is repeatedly demonstrated in several different sacred 'landscapes,' ranging in size from the confines of Durham Cathedral precinct to the length and breadth of Northumbria. A consistent feature of the post-Conquest hagiography and historiography is a pre-occupation with places that Cuthbert lived or that hosted his incorrupt remains in the centuries after his death. Durham sought to control and invest in these sites as points in a sacred map that legitimized their foundation as the rightful successors to Cuthbert's monastic legacy. Their objectives and methods varied across the extent of Durham's historical and contemporary possessions, but the unifying factor was the concern with demonstrating continuity between the original monastery of Cuthbert at Lindisfarne and the new resting place of Cuthbert's incorrupt body at Durham Cathedral. Not only was Lindisfarne itself used and promoted as a secondary cult site, but a range of features on Holy Island may have formed a landscape that told a story of Cuthbert's life and death, not unlike the use of the former dwellings of St Kevin at Glendalough (Ch. IV). The site of

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[718] Christine Rennie and Fiona Jackson, "Old Melrose Geophysics Surveys" (Guard Archaeology Limited, 2013), http://onlineborders.org.uk/community/mha/old-melrose-geophysics-survey-report-2013, accessed October 18, 2018.

[719] *LBC*, 88. The cult of Cuthbert has a long history in Scotland from the very beginning, and a number of Reginald's miracles take place in that kingdom, including a set of six miracles at a chapel at Slitrip in former Roxburghshire. (*LBC*, 136-41). Sally Crumplin, "Cuthbert the Cross-Border Saint in the Twelfth Century," in *Saints' Cults in the Celtic World*, ed. Stephen I. Boardman, John Reuben Davies, and Eila Williamson, Studies in Celtic History 25 (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2009), 119–29.

his former hermitage and the place of his death, Inner Farne, became a pilgrimage centre in its own right, with a series of *miracula* composed to testify to its effectiveness as a point of access to the power of its most famous resident. On a much larger scale, monastic historians like Symeon sought to rewrite the history of the community of St Cuthbert by tracing it across the Northumbrian landscape. His efforts can be compared to those of the Abbey of Derry to lay claim to the legacy of Colum Cille and the sites blessed by his presence by creating a historical landscape that traced the movement of the centre of the cult, discussed in Chapter IV. The late eleventh and early twelfth century also saw the historians of Durham resolve the difficult problem of claiming continuity after a wholesale replacement of the religious observance and clerical personnel in 1083. As demonstrated through the work of Symeon, the community alternately demonstrated continuity between Cuthbert's monks and the secular clerics, while also emphasizing the restoration of Northern monasticism by the creation of two communities of Benedictines at Bede's famed double monastery of Wearmouth and Jarrow. These communities were then used to repopulate a new community at Durham, making them 'heirs' of both Cuthbert and Bede, the two greatest monastic figures in early medieval Northumbria. Following these historical narratives, there is abundant evidence of substantial material and financial investment by the priory of Durham Cathedral that could be related to the cult and its activities. While not every site or development might have been expressly intended to serve the interests of the cult, the summation of them laid out in this chapter leaves little doubt as to how important such narratives were.

VII: Saints in the Marsh: The Sacred Landscape of Post-Conquest Glastonbury

Introduction

When one thinks of English landscapes imbued with history and sacred significance, one of the first that comes to mind is that of Glastonbury. From the alleged site of the first church built in England to the Arthurian mythos of the Isle of Avalon, Glastonbury has fascinated, frustrated, and inspired countless generations of historians, mystics, and storytellers. Such flights of fancy are not entirely modern inventions, and while the legends have only grown more elaborate over time, among the most prominent promoters of such legends were the monks of Glastonbury Abbey. Their most famous (and lucrative) evocation of Glastonbury's legendary past was the 1191 *inventio* of a pair of skeletons identified as King Arthur and his queen, Guinevere, the timing fortuitous indeed given the dire straits of the Abbey following a catastrophic fire in 1184.

In previous chapters, I have explored the creation and promotion of sacred landscapes during the eleventh to thirteenth centuries in England and Wales, with a primary focus on the landscape of chapels around St David's Cathedral (Chapter V) and the macro- and micro-landscapes of monastic heritage and saintly power promoted by Durham Cathedral and its dependent cell on Holy Island, Lindisfarne (Chapter VI). In addition, I have demonstrated the existence of similar landscapes of dispersed chapels and sacred sites in Ireland, particularly at Glendalough, the Dingle Peninsula, and Glencolumbkille (Chapter IV). With these models established, this chapter will make the case that a very similar situation may have existed at Glastonbury, both before and after the fire of 1184. The construction of this speculative landscape is based upon the more concrete, better preserved examples already discussed. The evidence available for Glastonbury is fragmentary, and the textual record plagued with difficulties of interpretation and dating due in no small part to the tireless ambitions and limitless creativity of

the medieval monastic community. Nonetheless, this chapter will make the case that the monks of Glastonbury utilized the unique topography of their surroundings as part of an effort to enhance the sanctity and perceived antiquity of the monastery itself. This sacred programme, like those at St Davids, Lindisfarne, and other sites, can be deduced from contemporary textual sources as well as archaeological, architectural and antiquarian evidence. The dating of such a landscape is imprecise, but there is enough evidence to support its existence and even its expansion both before and after the Norman Conquest, though the latter period is the primary focus of this study. Crucial to the case is what might be accurately called the monks' obsession with the antiquity of their foundation, and the lengths they went to record and as well as re-imagine it in historical texts and even in the buildings themselves. As will be demonstrated here, the same motives were at work in the broader landscape in the Levels around the abbey.

Glastonbury and the Levels

As striking as the landscape surrounding the ruins of Glastonbury Abbey are to the modern visitor, with the Tor rising above the low plains cut by the canalized River Brue and a series of weirs, the landscape that now exists is very different from the one that would have been encountered by the medieval pilgrim. While the process of transforming the North Somerset Levels from intertidal salt marsh to arable land using a complex system of water management began as early as the Roman period, the inland landscape around Glastonbury lagged significantly behind.[720] Considerable debate surrounds the degree of inundation by the sea in the Levels over its history, though there is some consensus that drier conditions in the Roman period gave way to severe flooding during the early medieval period.[721]

Glastonbury is sited on a west-facing promontory. During the medieval period, it was bounded to the west by a then much wider River Brue running north-south, which flooded the

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[720] Stephen Rippon, *Landscape, Community and Colonisation: The North Somerset Levels during the 1st to 2nd Millennia AD*, CBA Research Report, 152 (York: Council for British Archaeology, 2006), 97. The large-scale draining of the Levels, an enormous, long-term project undertaken primarily by the owners of the land, is a good example of Jerram's argument about how only the very powerful can overcome the 'obduracy' of space on such a large scale ("Space: A Useless Category for Historical Analysis?")

[721] Philip A. Rahtz and Lorna Watts, *Glastonbury: Myth & Archaeology* (Stroud: The History Press, 2009), 13.

marshy wetlands of the Brue Valley to the north and west. To the east it is connected by a spit of land to the 150m rise of Glastonbury Tor, and prior to the draining of the levels the site of the Abbey and modern town would have been surrounded on three sides by water, accessible either by boat or a narrow causeway crossing the River Brue linking Glastonbury to what is now the modern town of Street.[722] [**Figure 7.1**] Within this once-watery landscape are a series of bedrock 'islands' of Blue Lias and Burtle Beds which now appear as small hills and rises in the relatively flat terrain of the Levels.[723] [**Figure 7.2**] These islands are known to have played a significant role in the Abbey's history, and by their frequent appearance in both genuine and fraudulent charters their importance to the community is readily apparent.

The description of these points of higher ground as 'islands' is somewhat misleading – while at times they have been surrounded by water, significant amounts of the marsh surrounding Glastonbury were used as agricultural land as early as the fourteenth century, when is it recorded that a failure of the dykes and walls led to the 'drowning' of "1000 acres of corn, barley, beans, pease and oats" for two years.[724] More recent paleoenvironmental evidence suggests that as early as the tenth century (coinciding with the reform and restoration of the Abbey by Dunstan) the land around the 'islands' of Meare and Godney began to be exploited.[725] Nonetheless, with the exception of the medieval causeway of roughly 600m linking Glastonbury and Street (now covered by the A39), it would seem that many of these outlying 'islands' would have only been accessible by boat.[726] When the water level was at its highest (around 7.6m above Ordinance Datum), the site of the chapel and early Saxon monastic complex at Beckery might have also served as a landing point for travelers coming from the Bristol coast via the River Brue.[727] [See **Figure 7.1**] In the centuries after the Conquest, the abbots of Glastonbury constructed and

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[722] Philip Rahtz, "Pagan and Christian by the Severn Sea," in *The Archaeology and History of Glastonbury Abbey*, ed. Lesley Abrams and James Carley (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1991), 3–38; 19-21.
[723] Rahtz and Watts, *Glastonbury,* 15.
[724] Ibid., 19.
[725] Stephen Rippon, "Making the Most of a Bad Situation? Glastonbury Abbey, Meare, and the Medieval Exploitation of Wetland Resources in the Somerset Levels," *Medieval Archaeology* 48 (2004): 91–130; 111.
[726] Rahtz and Watts, *Glastonbury*, 144-145.
[727] Rahtz, "Pagan and Christian by the Severn Sea," 19-21.

operated their own navigation and water management systems. These efforts included rebuilding the Anglo-Saxon causeway and bridge from Street and either constructing or re-using a Saxon-period canal running along the north side of Wirall Hill to Northover near Beckery and the old course of the River Brue.[728] These increasingly complex systems of water management were developed over the course of the medieval period, and included the creation of a great fish pond at the former site of St Benignus's hermitage at Meare (where the fourteenth-century manorial complex of church, manor house, and 'fish house' are still extant), but the landscape was not "comprehensively drained" until the eighteenth century.[729]

While understanding the 'true' topographical reality of medieval Glastonbury is important, particularly for evaluating how the landscape has changed, the myths and legends surrounding Glastonbury and its environs have also had a profound impact on the way this distinctive landscape seems to have been *understood* by contemporaries. Catherine Clarke analysed the descriptions of the 'islands' surrounding the abbey in texts originating from them, such as the twelfth-century *De Antiquitate Glastonie Ecclesie* of William of Malmesbury (henceforth *DA*) and the fourteenth-century *Chronica* of John of Glastonbury. She found that these frequently echoed the medieval trope of the quasi-Edenic *locus amoenus* (the 'pleasant place').[730] What is particularly interesting about these literary descriptions, which seem to have grown all the more panegyric over the centuries as the mythology of the abbey and its foundation legends developed, is the striking absence of the *human* activity we know from other sources. Cultivation and transformation of the landscape are alluded to, but almost exclusively in a spiritual sense.[731] In light of these observations, while there were probably some changes in the use and physical appearance of the Glastonbury landscape between the time of Dunstan and the 1120s when William of Malmesbury was producing hagiographical and historical works for the post-Conquest

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[728] Rahtz and Watts, *Glastonbury*; 144-147; Richard Brunning, "Taming the Floodplain: River Canalisation and Causeway Formation in the Middle Anglo-Saxon Period at Glastonbury, Somerset," *Medieval Archaeology* 54, no. 1 (November 2010): 319–29.

[729] Rippon, "Making the Most of a Bad Situation?" 92.

[730] Catherine A.M. Clarke, *Literary Landscapes and the Idea of England, 700-1400* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2006), 68-70.

[731] Ibid., 74.

monastic community, it does not necessarily follow that the community would have viewed these changes as particularly spiritually or ideologically significant, especially considering their strong preoccupation with demonstrating and often enhancing the antiquity of their foundation. The continuing use of the word 'islands' to describe a number of key sites even through the fourteenth century (including in forged charters of the supposed distant past) would therefore be a more accurate representation of how the community perceived their surroundings in the historical sense. The apparent 'timelessness' of many of the most important Glastonbury texts from the medieval period presents a major challenge to the modern scholar. Successive chronicles are written as additions to existing texts (primarily the *DA*), which have themselves survived only with later interpolations, at the same time retaining details that were effectively outdated at the time they were written. To make sense of this requires close comparison between datable sources and some informed guesswork.

The sacred sites of the Glastonbury landscape can be read according to Lefebvre's conception of the "interpenetration" of space, where newer sites inherit and acknowledge those that came before, but the former space never truly vanishes.[732] The example of Meare, where a hermitage and cult site associated with St Benignus was transformed into a manorial complex, an evolution which goes unmentioned in the contemporary *Chronica* of John of Glastonbury, is perhaps the best example of this phenomenon and the complexity and contradictory nature of the monks' 'mental map' of the surrounding area, as will be discussed later in the chapter.

The Twelve Hides of Glastonbury

Numerous Glastonbury sources, ranging from the pre-Conquest period (or forged documents purporting to date from it) up to the time of the Dissolution, refer to the 'Twelve Hides' of Glastonbury. A hide was technically a unit of land which could sustain a single household, but such a precise definition was not applicable in this instance.[733] While the boundaries of the

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[732] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 164.
[733] Rahtz and Watts, *Glastonbury,* 147.

Twelve Hides can be reconstructed from sixteenth-century sources detailing the ceremonial procession that asserted historical rights to the land, we do not know the names of the Hides themselves, and the term is not used in any sources before the Conquest. A 'villa' of twelve hides is detailed in Domesday, including the 'islands' of Meare, Panborough, and Andresey (Andrewsey or Nyland), and the whole of Glastonbury's properties is recorded as never having paid geld.[734] These names are first mentioned alongside *Beokerie* (Beckery), *Godenie* (Godney), and *Martinsey* (Marchey) in the likely spurious 'Great Privilege of King Ine' (from a claimed date of *c.*706/7) contained within the *DA,* as well as the later *Liber Terrarum* (*c.*1247), which itself reaffirms the gifts of King Cenwalh of the West Saxons in *c.*670.[735] In both the fourteenth-century *Chronica* of John of Glastonbury and later interpolations to the *DA*, it was suggested that the Twelve Hides could be identified as the location of the hermitages of the twelve disciples of the apostles St Phillip and St James, who according to later-developing legend were credited with the construction of the first church at Glastonbury.[736]

The islands and possessions that would become the Twelve Hides are also grouped together in a genuine charter of King Edgar (*c.*971), which also mentions "chapels" on each of the islands.[737] [**Figure 7.3**] A much later interpolation in the *DA* manuscript gives the details of the boundaries of the Twelve Hides, as well as providing a description of the 'islands' themselves:

> Firstly, there is the island of Glastonbury itself with the fields, woods, meadows and marshes belonging to it. Then the island of Hearty with its splendid and ample alder grove, its meadows and its very rich pasture lands…/…Next the island of **Beckery** with its appurtenances…then the islands of **Meare** (*Mere*) and **Westhay** with its fields, meadows, woods and marshes. Then the island of **Godney** with its lands and substantial marshes. Next the island of **Marchey** with its adjoining lands. Then the island of **Panborough** and *Norhthilade* with the lands, meadows, pastures, marshes and broad woods belonging to them. After these the island of **Nyland** (*Andrewesye*), which surpasses the rest in its location and beauty, with its lands, woods, meadows, and very broad marshes. This is so named from **St Andrew whose chapel is located there**, just as **Godney** is so named on

[734] C. Torn and F. Thorn, *Domesday Book 8: Somerset* (Chichester: Philimore, 1980), 8, 1.
[735] *DA*, 91 (§ 36); 99 (§ 42). The six islands are also mentioned in a charter of Henry I *c.*1121 (Rippon, 'Making the Best of a Bad Situation?" 99).
[736] *JG,* 63 (§ 25).
[737] *DA,* 123-5 (lx).

account of the **chapel of the Holy Trinity** and **Marchey** on account of **St Martin, whose chapel is there**.[738]

While they did not represent the full extent of the Abbey's historic holdings, the Twelve Hides and the islands within them formed a "dryland 'core' around Glastonbury itself."[739] Their value seems to have been two-fold; in addition to their wetland resources, it is implied in the charter of King Edgar (*c.*971) that each of these 'holy islands' possessed a chapel, though later descriptions are not as explicit. Chapels dedicated to St Martin, St Andrew, and the Holy Trinity, at Marchey or Martinsey, Andrewsey (Nyland) and Godney respectively, are consistently identified, though Meare, Westhay, and Panborough are generally described in the context of their natural resources. Beckery is referred to as 'Little Ireland' and while we have archaeological evidence of ecclesiastical activity from well before the Conquest, and a chapel is described in the accounts of St Brigid during her time at Glastonbury, no chapel is specifically mentioned in the charters.[740] While the archaeological evidence is unambiguous, Beckery's absence from this part of the historical record opens up the possibility that chapels or some other kind of religious monument, such as a standing cross, existed on a number of 'island' sites after the time of King Edgar's charter but went without mention. One further chapel site might be added to this list: one dedicated to St Cuthlac or Guthlac at Clewer, a small bedrock promontory near Nyland.[741] There are a few other sites of notable significance which may have been a part of this historical sacred landscape, including the nearby village of Shapwick, which by the time of John of Glastonbury was believed to be the site of the martyrdom of St Indract and his companions.[742] Finally, there is the Tor itself,

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[738] *DA*, 151-3 (§ 72). Emphasis mine.

[739] Rippon, "Making the Most of a Bad Situation?" 99.

[740] Previous excavations of the Beckery site are detailed in J. Morland, "St Bridget's Chapel, Beckery," *PSANHS* 35, no. 2 (1889): 121–26; and Philip A. Rahtz and S.M. Hirst, *Beckery Chapel, Glastonbury* (Glastonbury: Glastonbury Antiquarian Society, 1974). Radiocarbon dating of burials found during excavations in 2016 returned a result of 406 to 544, which would make the foundation at Beckery the oldest monastic site known in Britain. Elizabeth Friend, "2016 Excavations at Beckery," *Axbridge Archaeological and Local History Society* (blog), January 15, 2018, http://www.aalhs.co.uk/2018/01/15/2016-excavations-at-beckery, accessed May 18, 2018.

[741] Rippon, "Making the Best of a Bad Situation?" 100-101.

[742] Michael Winterbottom and Rodney M. Thomson, eds., *William of Malmesbury: Saints' Lives: Lives of SS. Wulfstan, Dunstan, Patrick, Benignus and Indract*, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 310.

with its ruined tower of a fifteenth-century church dedicated to St Michael the Archangel; by the time of John of Glastonbury (fl. 1340), this later church was claimed to be on the site of a structure "not built by human hands," discovered by SS Phagan and Deruvian as far back as the second century, but its role in Glastonbury's foundation legends may date back much further.[743]

Making the Case for a Sacred Landscape at Glastonbury

The antiquarian interests of the community at Glastonbury are well known (and will be discussed in greater depth below). Two particular focal points within the monastic precinct have dominated scholarship on the Abbey: first, the *Vetusta Ecclesia*, replaced after the fire of 1184 by the present Lady Chapel, and secondly the *inventio* of King Arthur and Queen Guinevere and their shrines within the Abbey Church. I would argue that Glastonbury's sacred locales expanded well beyond the promontory into the surrounding wetland landscape and its bedrock islands. In addition to the chapel sites mentioned in the charter evidence discussed previously, the island of Meare played a major role in the legendary sacred history of the monastic community as the site of the hermitage and initial burial place of one of its early abbots, St Benignus (sometimes called Beonna), before his translation to the abbey in 1091. Glastonbury's own interest in Irish saints (Patrick, Brigid, Benignus, and Indract among others) and records of Irish pilgrims would make a comparison to a landscape like the Saint's Road of Dingle Peninsula (Chapter IV) or the Irish-influenced network of chapels at St Davids (Chapter V) all the more appropriate. These chapels, together with sites of ancient significance such as the *Vetusta Ecclesia* and quite plausibly the Tor itself, would have formed a sacred landscape which combined individual pilgrimage sites with the medieval idea of the *locus ameonus*. As was the case for Lindisfarne and St Davids, evidence for this theory can be found in both hagiographical and historical literature of the time, as well as in surviving or excavated archaeological remains, though in the case of Glastonbury very few sites have been thoroughly explored. The following section will explore the antiquarian interests of

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[743] *JG*, 57-9 (§ 22).

medieval Glastonbury and their efforts to memorialize and promote the antiquity of the foundation within the abbey precinct before and after the fire of 1184, after which the specific sites of interest in the broader landscape of the Levels will be examined.

Glastonbury Abbey and its Antiquarian Interests

From the unlikely discovery of King Arthur and Queen Guinevere in the grounds of the abbey to the truly impressive collection of relics to the increasingly anachronistic legends of Glastonbury's apostolic origins, the keen interest of the community in its own history, as well as the prestige and other benefits that could be gained from such associations, is fully evident in surviving sources. The most complete treatment of these interests and activities is probably still Antonia Gransden's 1976 essay, but it is worth discussing how Glastonbury's lucrative obsession with its own past played out beyond the production of histories and hagiographies even prior to the events of 1191.[744] It should also be emphasized that while the bulk of scholarship on the historical writing and myth-making of Glastonbury Abbey tends to focus on the events after the 1184 fire, in many ways the 'discovery' of Arthur and Guinevere was merely the most recent evolution of the established traditions of the Glastonbury monks. While perhaps exceptional in a broader historical context, to the monks it would have been nothing particularly innovative.

One of the most striking indications of the concern to record and celebrate the abbey's storied past is the volume of historiographical and hagiographical material that was generated as part of this effort. The most important source for the immediate post-Conquest period at Glastonbury is undoubtedly William of Malmesbury's *De Antiquitate Glastonie Eccleisie* (*c.*1129) as well as a number of saints' lives he wrote for the community, including those of Dunstan, Patrick, Indract and Benignus (the latter three are lost, but can be reconstructed to some extent from later sources). William was commissioned by the abbey in part to answer the challenge of the Canterbury hagiographer Osbern, who had erroneously described Dunstan (b.909) as Glastonbury's first abbot.[745] The text that was produced may not have been what William

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[744] Gransden, "The Growth of the Glastonbury Traditions and Legends in the Twelfth Century."
[745] Ibid, 342.

originally planned – John Scott suggests that what had initially been a contract to produce a new, Glastonbury-centric *Life* of Dunstan to rival Osbern's led to a much more extensive work at the urging of the monastic community.[746] While William perhaps falls short of modern ideals of historical objectivity and appropriate skepticism in the face of poorly documented traditions, it should be noted that by the often imaginative standards of his contemporaries such as Geoffrey of Monmouth (author of the *History of the Kings of Britain*, an alternative history based upon dubious legend and tropes of the emerging genre of romance), he stands out as a professional of his day. William's work can be described as both cautious and scholarly, to the extent that he refused to endorse certain traditions if they lacked convincing evidence to support them.[747] The conflict between the monks' desires and William's scruples poses a problem for historians, as the earliest surviving manuscript with a full copy of *De Antiquitate* (preserved as a prologue to Adam of Damerham's own chronicle) does not appear to be entirely William's work – significant sections have been amended or interpolated, including multiple chapters narrating events that happened long after William's book was completed, often recording some of the more grandiose and controversial claims which he originally omitted. William's original text can be partly reconstructed by comparing the earliest manuscript to his *Gesta Regum* and *De gestis Pontificum Anglorum* of around the same period, and excluding passages which reference traditions that had not yet fully developed during the early twelfth century, among these the alleged *furta sacra* of Dunstan from Canterbury, the Arthurian *inventio*, and the legend of an Apostolic foundation. Another major insertion was the so-called Charter of St Patrick, given the date of 430 CE but almost certainly dating to *c.*1220, laying out a much more elaborate and detailed version of the foundation legend than is present in William's original text.[748] *De Antiquitate* as it survives is thus a problematic text that in some ways better reflects the perspective of the community after the

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[746] John Scott, ed., *The Early History of Glastonbury: An Edition, Translation and Study of William of Malmesbury's "De Antiquitate Glastonie Ecclesie"* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1981), 4-5.

[747] Gransden*, "The Growth of the Glastonbury Traditions and Legends in the Twelfth Century,"* 202. Perhaps the best evidence of his caution is the sheer number of later interpolations 'correcting' the record, as it were.

[748] Scott, *The Early History of Glastonbury*, 34-5; Gransden, "The Growth of the Glastonbury Traditions and Legends in the Twelfth Century," 258.

fire of 1184 than it does when it was originally written in the second decade of the twelfth century. In addition to late thirteenth- to early fourteenth-century *Libellus* of Adam of Damerham, John of Glastonbury produced his own *Chronica sive Antiquitates Glastoniensis Ecclesiae*, dated by James Carley to the 1340s.[749] As a continuation of Adam of Damerham, it creatively expands upon William of Malmesbury's original text as well as the various interpolations of *DA* probably dating from the late twelfth/early-to-mid thirteenth centuries.[750] As the last major work on Glastonbury's history to be produced by a member of that community, it thus offers an uncensored treatment of Glastonbury's antiquarian traditions, including those thought too dubious, or developing too late, to be included in *DA*. As a source for the late-eleventh to early-thirteenth centuries (the time frame for this study) it is obviously problematic, but it also seems reasonable that many of the later Glastonbury traditions may have existed in some form considerably earlier, even if they were not recounted by William in his more disciplined rendition of events. The sheer number of saints revered at Glastonbury is remarkable in and of itself. A perusal of a *c.*1247 relic list (Cambridge, Trinity College R 5.33 (724), fols. 104r-105v) reveals a collection that is all the more impressive given the likely loss of some relics in the 1184 fire (though in the case of Patrick, Indract, and Gildas, Adam of Damerham claims their survival).[751] There are also a number of reasons to doubt the authenticity of the relics described; on multiple occasions it is implied or outright stated that Glastonbury possessed the entire bodies of certain saints who are known or credibly claimed to reside elsewhere.[752] The names of many of the saints whose relics appear in the list are given by William of Malmesbury in *DA*, though the detail used in the Trinity manuscript to describe the collections of bones in each feretory suggests that the list was compiled to allow the monks to identify and catalogue their enormous collection of sacred

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[749] James Patrick Carley and David Townsend, eds., *The Chronicle of Glastonbury Abbey: An Edition, Translation and Study of John of Glastonbury's {Cronica Sive Antiquitates Glastoniensis Ecclesie}.* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1985), xxx.

[750] Like any monastic chronicle, Adam of Damerham's text had its own biases, in this case tending to downplay the accomplishments of the 1190s, and centring itself around the feud with Savaric fitzGeldewin, Bishop of Bath (d.1204). (Adam Stout, "Savaric, Glastonbury and the Making of Myths: A Reappraisal," *The Antiquaries Journal* 96 (2016): 101–15.

[751] *AD*, 47.

[752] Martin Howley, "Relics at Glastonbury Abbey in the Thirteenth Century: The Relic List in Cambridge, Trinity College R.5 33 (724), Fols. 104r-105v," *Medieval Studies* 71 (2009): 197–234, 205.

remains rather than as a public document.[753] That these claims did not go unchallenged is most notably demonstrated in the letter of Eadmer of Canterbury in 1123 which condemned and refuted the alleged *furta sacra* of St Dunstan after the Danish sack of 1011 - a claim which was 'supported' by a fully-developed *inventio* after the 1184 fire.[754] About thirty years earlier, Eadmer's fellow Canterbury hagiographer had visited Glastonbury, and found that the monks there had preserved the cell that Dunstan had lived in when he was visited by (and repulsed) a demon.[755] The claim to Dunstan's relics surfaced on and off again until the Dissolution, including the construction of elaborate shrine by Abbot Richard Beere at the beginning of the sixteenth century.[756]

Both before and after the 1184 fire, Glastonbury was "close-packed" with shrines and reliquaries, and it was said of the *Vetusta Ecclesia* that "no part of the church is without the ashes of the blessed" and "deservedly indeed is the repository of so many saints said to be a heavenly shrine on earth."[757] In additions to great shrines of St Patrick (buried on the right hand side of the altar in a decorated stone "pyramid"), St David (according to a later interpolation, Glastonbury housed one of the stone altars given to David by the Patriarch of Jerusalem), St Indract and his companions (to the left of the altar and beneath the stone floor, marked by another "pyramid"), the relics of a host of Northern saints rescued from the Vikings were placed above the altar.[758] After the fire of 1184, these were translated to the new abbey church.[759] They were joined by the shrine of Dunstan following the post-1184 *inventio*, as well as the arm of St Oswald.[760] Another

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[753] Ibid, 207.
[754] *DA,* 73-77 (§ 23-24). See Richard Sharpe, "Eadmer's Letter to the Monks of Glastonbury Concerning St Dunstan's Disputed Remains," in *The Archaeology and History of Glastonbury Abbey* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1991), 205–15.
[755] Osbern of Canterbury, "Vita Sancti Dunstani Auctore Osberno," in *Memorials of Saint Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury*, ed. William Stubbs (Longman & Co., 1874), 69–129, 82.
[756] Julian M. Luxford, "Auro et Argento Pulcherrime Fabricatum: New Visual Evidence for the Feretory of St. Dunstan at Glastonbury and Its Relation to the Controversy over the Relics," *Antiquaries Journal* 82 (2002): 105–24.
[757] *DA,* 67 (§ 18): *nec a beatorum cineribus vacat ullus fani ambitus … merito ergo dicitur celeste in terries sanctuarium tot sanctorum reconditorum*.
[758] *DA,* 69, (§ 21).
[759] *JG,* 179-81 (§ 97)
[760] *DA,* 79 (§ 25).

piramide located in the monks' cemetery was inscribed with the names of a large number of bishops and other holy men, many of them northern in origin, and William was willing to "hesitantly" suggest that they contained the relics of those who were named.[761] Sixty years after *De Antiquitate* was composed, the bodies of Arthur and Guinevere were supposedly discovered between two other pyramids.[762] A significant number of kings and important ecclesiastical figures were also said to be buried in and around the abbey church, many in ornate tombs or shrines.[763]

One of the most prevalent trends in the history of late Anglo-Saxon and arguably early Anglo-Norman Glastonbury was its association with 'Celtic,' specifically Irish, saints. The precise nature and origin of these connections, which were alleged in much later sources to be a key feature of the foundation's early centuries, are only recorded beginning in the twelfth century by William of Malmesbury, who seems to have accepted many at face value, including the ambitious claim that one of the earliest abbots of the community was none other than the Irish evangelist St Patrick.[764] While the alleged Charter of St Patrick (*c.*1220) would later elaborate upon the earlier foundation legend of Glastonbury recorded by William, the cult itself may be no earlier than the late tenth century in origin, first appearing in the earliest Life of St Dunstan (*c.*995x1004), which alleges that in Dunstan's youth Irish pilgrims flocked to Glastonbury and its shrine of St Patrick (including the ill-fated Indract and his companions).[765] The saint (as "*Sancti Patricii senoris*")

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[761] *DA*, 85 (§ 32). These "*piramides*" were most likely tapered stone shafts, perhaps similar to the high crosses such as that found at Bewcastle or in Irish contexts. See Rahtz and Watts, *Glastonbury*, 114 and also Jane Hawkes, "Creating a View : Anglo-Saxon Sculpture in the Sixteenth Century," in *Making Histories : Proceedings of the Sixth International Conference on Insular Art, York 2011*. ed Meg Boulton & Jane Hawkes (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2013), 372–84. But Michael Lapidge has argued that the Glastonbury *piramides* might have been something different, more resembling house-shaped shrines in Ireland (Michael Lapidge, "The Cult of St Indract at Glastonbury," in *Ireland in Early Mediaeval Europe: Studies in Memory of Kathleen Hughes*, ed. D. Whitelock, R. McKitterick, and N. Dumville (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 211). The absence of any similar monuments in England makes this possibility somewhat less likely.
[762] *DA,* 83-5 (§ 31).
[763] Ibid.
[764] *DA* 55, (§ 8). Aside from the obvious incompatibility of the Glastonbury traditions with the Irish (and, as seen in Chapter V, Welsh) hagiography of Patrick, there is additional confusion resulting from the possibility that there were in fact *two* Patricks, an elder and a younger, and that the split in the Irish tradition could itself be a reaction to Glastonbury's claim. c.f. Lesley Abrams, "St Patrick and Glastonbury Abbey : 'nihil Ex Nihilo Fit?,'" in *Saint Patrick, AD 493-1993.* ed. Lesley Abrams & D.N. Dumville, Studies in Celtic History, 13 (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1993), 238-9. *JG* § 22-24 anticipates this problem, stating that the Glastonbury Patrick was in fact the elder, the famed apostle to the Irish.
[765] Abrams, 'St Patrick and Glastonbury Abbey,' 235.

appears under 24 August in the tenth century calendar appended to the 'Leofric Missal' (*c.*979x987).[766] Patrick is also present in the calendar of the 'Bosworth Psalter' (*c.*988x1006) as "*Sancti Patricii senioris in Glaestonia.*"[767] The tenth century is also the date of the earliest evidence for the veneration of Brigid (associated with the chapel site at Beckery), also in the 'Leofric Missal.'[768] [see **Figure 7.4**] According to later Glastonbury traditions present in *De Antiquitate* and John of Glastonbury, Patrick was succeeded by another Irish figure, Saint Benignus (or Beonna), but his name does not appear in the 'Leofric Missal,' suggesting that his cult developed sometime between the end of the tenth century and the translation from Meare to Glastonbury in 1091.[769] St Indract and his companions, allegedly martyred somewhere in the vicinity of Glastonbury on pilgrimage to Patrick during the ninth century, were the subject of a twelfth-century *Life* (now lost) that may have been based on a tenth-century Old English text.[770]

The case of the *inventio* of Arthur and Guinevere is, besides the dispute with Canterbury over Dunstan's relics, perhaps the most striking example of the Glastonbury community's desire to acquire a more conventional institutional sacred asset: a patron saint and associated cult. Despite the remarkable number of saints whose relics were said to bless their churches, none of them truly 'belonged' to the Glastonbury itself, as they were either more closely associated with other sites or their ownership was contested. As will be shown below, this problem was partly addressed by treating the *Vetusta Ecclesia*, dedicated to the Virgin Mary and supposedly of the most ancient date, as an architectural relic. But the staging of the events of 1191, as well as the effort taken to record the events using outside witnesses, is proof that this was not judged

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[766] MS Bodley 579, folios 39r, 39v, 40r.
[767] Abrams, "St Patrick and Glastonbury Abbey," 237. To make matters more confusing, Finberg suggests that Glastonbury may have, deliberately or otherwise, confused the Irish Patrick with the Cornish saint Petroc. See H. P. R. Finberg, "St Patrick at Glastonbury," in *West-Country Historical Studies* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1969): 78-9.
[768] Scott, *The Early History of Glastonbury*, 192 n. 38; J.L. Robinson, "St Brigid at Glastonbury," *Journal of the Royal Society of Ireland* 83, no. 4 (April 1953): 97–99.
[769] Carley and Townsend, *The Chronicle of Glastonbury Abbey*, xxxviii-xxxix. Finberg suggests that the cult of Benignus may have originated with an otherwise unknown Anglo-Saxon holy man named *Beonna*, who spawned both the cult of Benignus at Glastonbury and also an Irish tradition which identified him as St Benen, Patrick's episcopal successor ('St Patrick at Glastonbury,' 82-3).
[770] Carley and Townsend, *Chronicle,* xl-xli.

sufficient. The bones of Arthur and Guinevere, figures drawn not from hagiography or the history of Bede, but rather the genre of romance, occupied the place of traditional royal patron(s). After they were discovered and exhumed, the royal remains were enshrined before the high altar in the rebuilt abbey church.[771] Antonia Gransden also suggests that the events of 1191 were foreshadowed by the *inventio* of the relics of St Dunstan, supposedly contained within a box inscribed with 'S' and 'D' (not unlike how Arthur and Guinevere were found with an inscribed cross identifying the remains).[772] There can be no doubt that the report of the events of 1191 were meant to reach a wide audience: no less a literary figure than Giraldus Cambrensis produced what seems to be an eyewitness account of the dramatic proceedings, including a suggestion that a Welsh bard first told Henry II exactly where and how deep to dig.[773] Gradually, the association of Glastonbury with the Arthurian legend of Avalon was also established; while twelfth-century writers Geoffrey of Monmouth and Caradoc of Llancarfan did not connect Arthur or Avalon to Glastonbury, by the mid-fourteenth century the identification of Glastonbury as Avalon was regarded as fact.[774] A further development was the legend of the apostolic foundation of Glastonbury, hinted at in William of Malmesbury but only later fully developed to involve the apostles St James the Lesser and St Phillip. Finally, roughly fifty years after the discovery of Arthur and Guinevere, the relatively obscure biblical figure Joseph of Arimathea became part of the Glastonbury founding mythos.[775] By the time of John of Glastonbury, the legend of Joseph's crucial role as a religious patron for the abbey was fully developed, with a lengthy account featured in John of Glastonbury's *Chronica* and the inclusion of a triptych representation of the deposition of the cross on the rebuilt church of St Michael atop Glastonbury Tor.[776] But while some of these

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[771] Gransden, "The Growth of the Glastonbury Traditions and Legends in the Twelfth Century," 342; Gilchrist and Green, *Glastonbury Abbey*, 61. At the same time, Canterbury was cultivating the cult of Thomas Becket, a symbol of resistance to the monarchy.

[772] Gransden, "The Growth of the Glastonbury Traditions and Legends in the Twelfth Century," 350.

[773] Recorded in *JG,* 181-83 (§ 98); Gransden, "The Growth of the Glastonbury Traditions and Legends in the Twelfth Century," 354.

[774] *JG*,11-13 (§ 2).

[775] V.M. Lagorio, "The Evolving Legend of St Joseph of Glastonbury," in *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition.* Ed. James Carley, Arthurian Studies, 44 (Woodbridge: D.S. Brewer, 2001), 55–81; 58-59.

[776] Lagorio, 'The Evolving Legend of St Joseph of Glastonbury,' 66. *See also:* Aleksandra Walsham, "The Holy Thorn of Glastonbury: The Evolution of a Legend in Post-Reformation England," *Parergon* 21, no. 2 (2004):

traditions were almost certainly developed much later than the post-Conquest period, the notion of an apostolic foundation was probably much older, possibly even dating back to Anglo-Saxon Glastonbury.

While the extensive hagiographical and historical record concerning Glastonbury and its antiquarian traditions has been well studied, it is only more recently that scholars have recognized that the same preoccupation with antiquity can be found within the architectural and archaeological record drawn from the abbey precinct and its environs. In the absence of explicit evidence for investment in and cultivation of most of the sites I have proposed as composing a sacred landscape, it is important to demonstrate the extent of the antiquarian interests of the Glastonbury community and the marks they left on built structures and the wider landscape. The study of this evidence, however, has been at times plagued by similar problems of poor process, flights of fancy, and even outright invention that characterized the former community. Much of the work of previous antiquarians and archaeologists responsible for excavating and cataloguing the Abbey has been found to be flawed, from the Spiritualist Frederick Bligh Bond, (abbey excavation director from 1908-1922) who reportedly consulted a long-dead monk in his search for the ancient monastery, to the archaeologist C.A. Raleigh Radford, who despite his well-earned reputation seems to have been somewhat biased in his conclusions by a personal fascination with Arthurian legend and an admiration of St Dunstan.[777] This study, and all future work on Glastonbury Abbey, is heavily indebted to the efforts of Roberta Gilchrist and Cheryl Green, who subjected the archaeological evidence of Glastonbury Abbey from over one hundred years of excavations to the rigorous scholarly criticism it had long required, as well as more rigorous work of Philip Rahtz on the Tor and outlying areas of the monastic precinct.[778]

1–25. The first mention of the Holy Thorn comes in a vernacular poem of c.1520. The similarities between the flowering staff legend of Benignus at Meare (discussed below) and the story of Joseph at Glastonbury might represent an ideological shift as one cult rose and the other fell (3-4).

[777] C.R. Radford, "Glastonbury Abbey before 1184, 1908-64," in *Medieval Art and Architecture at Wells and Glastonbury*, ed. Nicola Coldstream, (British Archaeological Association, 1981), 110–74; for criticism of Radford's approach and interpretations, see Gilchrist and Green, *Glastonbury Abbey*, 7-17.

[778] Rahtz, "Excavations on Glastonbury Tor, Somerset, 1964-6."

The *Vetusta Ecclesia*: An Architectural Relic?

The preservation and promotion of the earliest buildings on Glastonbury formed a major part of the monastic community's efforts to assert the antiquity of their foundation, and the clearest demonstration of this preoccupation was the treatment of the *Vetusta Ecclesia*, the ancient wattle or wooden church dedicated to the Virgin Mary, first built sometime before the death of St Patrick (the elder, d.472 and supposedly buried in the church). Following the legends from the cult of St David, it was thought to have been erected by that saint during his campaign of monastic foundation in Wales and western England.[779] Even at the time of William of Malmesbury's work, it was believed that the *Vetusta Ecclesia*'s construction could be traced back to the legendary mission of Pope Eleutherius to King Lucius in *c.*166, though the explicit statement that the missionaries found "an ancient church, not built, they say, by human skill" is probably the work of a later interpolator.[780]

A pre-*c.*472 date is considerably more plausible, if still somewhat unlikely after the evidence of fifth or sixth century burials were found at the Beckery Chapel site.[781] In *De Antiquitate*, William describes the structure as first built of wattle and brushwood before it was strengthened by being encased in wooden boards and covered in lead by Paulinus, Archbishop of York (d. 644), and implies that it remained in this state, drawing many pilgrims, until its destruction in the fire of 1184.[782] The community seems to have taken the uncommon approach of preserving the entire structure as a kind of architectural relic throughout the Anglo-Saxon

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[779] Rahtz and Watts, *Glastonbury*, 95. William's *Life* of St Patrick is lost, but the version preserved by John Leland claims that Patrick was buried in the old church, potentially creating a *terminus ad quem* that William was more comfortable asserting as fact, as opposed to the more confused and unverified legends of an apostolic foundation (*VP*, 341-343).

[780] Scott, *The Early History of Glastonbury*, p. 187, n. 18; *DA*, 46 (§ 1): *antiquam … ecclesiam, nulla hominum arte, ut ferunt, constructam*. This formulation appears in *JG*, 8-9 (§ 1).

[781] Friend, "2016 Excavations at Beckery," January 15, 2018.

[782] *DA*, 53-55 (§ 6); 67 (§ 18). This claim is at odds with *Gesta Regum* § 36, where William wrote that the monastery was founded by King Ine (b. 688), but does not appear to be the work of an interpolator; it might be possible that it was added to appease the monastic community, who were at times unsatisfied by William's defence of their foundation's great antiquity. See: Scott, *The Early History of Glastonbury,* p. 4-6.

period (not unlike the possible treatment of Aidan's church by the monks of Lindisfarne in Chapter VI), including the extensive rebuilding and expansion of the abbey buildings under St Dunstan in the ninth century, the scale of which has been confirmed by modern excavation.[783] Dunstan's church replaced the later building dedicated to St Peter to the east of the *Vetusta Ecclesia*, built by King Ine in the eighth century.[784] The only evidence we have of the appearance of the *Vetusta Ecclesia* comes from a seal of 1171-1181, and while architectural representations on such items are usually schematic, the resemblance of the rectangular chapel with a large rounded window and flanking 'pepper-box' capped turrets to the Lady Chapel which succeeded it is remarkable.[785]

Replacing the *Vetusta Ecclesia*, which could not be miraculously 'rediscovered' as many of the abbey's relics subsequently were, was clearly a priority for the community, on par with rebuilding of the abbey church itself, which was laid out along the lines of the twelfth-century church of Herluin, albeit extending much further to the east.[786] The Lady Chapel was begun as soon as a year after the fire and consecrated around two years later, and built directly over the site of the *Vetusta Ecclesia*.[787] In its twelfth-century form it was a rectangular build of 21.21m x 12.22m. [**Figure 7.5**] There are a number of reasons to believe that it was more than simply a replacement for an important liturgical space of the abbey. The Lady Chapel is often cited as an example of 'transitional' church architecture, and to an extent this is an accurate if incomplete assessment.[788] The slim, rounded arches of the portals, blind arcading, and windows are characteristic of buildings that anticipated the lighter features of English Gothic. But to look at the architecture alone is misleading. The Lady Chapel was lavishly decorated and painted (traces of

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[783] Gilchrist and Green, *Glastonbury Abbey,* 102-4. Such was the regard the *Vetusta Ecclesia* was held in that "if anyone thought to place any building nearby which by its shade interfered with the light of the church that building became a ruin." *Si quis e uicino aliquod edificium locandum putasset, quod obumbracione sua lacem inuideret ecclesiae, partuit ruine.* (*DA*, 67 (§ 18)).

[784] Rahtz and Watts, *Glastonbury*, 91; *DA*, 95 (§ 40).

[785] Rahtz and Watts, *Glastonbury*, 95-96; A. Watkin, "The Earliest Glastonbury Seal," *Proceedings of the Somerset Archaeological & Natural History Society* 94 (1949): 158–59.

[786] Gilchrist and Green, *Glastonbury Abbey*, 406.

[787] Malcolm Thurlby, "The Lady Chapel of Glastonbury Abbey," *Antiquaries Journal: Journal of the Society of Antiquaries of London* 75 (1995): 107–70, 112.

[788] Thurlby, "The Lady Chapel of Glastonbury Abbey," 107.

which survive) with a program of foliate designs and two highly decorated portals in the north and south walls (the iconographic program of the former was never completed). The advanced figural carving of these portals was initially believed to date from as late as 1220, though it was certainly original to the construction of the Lady Chapel and thus executed between 1185 and 1189.

There can be no doubt that Glastonbury, at this time enjoying the patronage of Henry II, would have employed some of the most talented masons and stone carvers in the country. The Romanesque interior and exterior blind arcading **[Figure 7.6]** and window tracery **[Figure 7.7]** is decorated throughout by what are called "diagonally set chevrons" by Thurlby, but might be interpreted as a three-dimensional rendering of the 'dog tooth' pattern of eleventh- and twelfth-century Norman architecture, and they are also present throughout the thirteenth-century abbey church.[789] **[Figure 7.8]** The use of a quasi-Romanesque architecture for the chapel itself, which may have borne a significant resemblance to the later stages of the lost *Vetusta Ecclesia*, can only have been a deliberate choice. Many post-Conquest churches in England, including some major sites such as Worcester (the slype and possibly the crypt shafts and capitals), Hexham and Ripon (early Anglo-Saxon crypts), and Monkwearmouth and Jarrow (the priory churches of the re-established foundations) retained Anglo-Saxon architectural features or even preserved integral parts of Anglo-Saxon churches, at least in part to emphasize their antiquity during the transition from Anglo-Saxon to Norman control. Julian Luxford has argued that this was a trait particularly characteristic of English Benedictine foundations.[790] The difficulty of creating the "diagonally-set chevrons" in high relief is a further evidence for both the exceptional skill of the craftsmen who built the Lady Chapel, and the desire to recall the chapel's ancient predecessor through architectural decoration. The construction of the Lady Chapel as a replacement for what was effectively an architectural relic "can be understood as a form of architectural hagiography" which

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[789] Thurlby, "The Lady Chapel of Glastonbury Abbey," 114.

[790] Julian M. Luxford, *The Art and Architecture of English Benedictine Monasteries, 1300-1540: A Patronage History* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2005).

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also created an "associative" or second-degree relic in the form of the chapel itself, built on the sacred ground of the *Vetusta Ecclesia*.[791] The abbey church at Glastonbury was rebuilt in two post-Conquest phases, though one was found to have completely superseded the other. The first phase of construction was characterized by institutional upheaval: a violent confrontation between the monks of the abbey and Abbot Turstin (1078-1096) is recorded by William of Malmesbury in three of his works, though the DA account seems to have been altered to paint the Glastonbury monks in a better light.[792] Construction of Turstin's church was evidently begun but due either to the instability of his abbacy or a lack of funds, it was demolished before the eastern arm was complete.[793] Turstin's successor Abbot Herluin (1100-1118) began a much larger church, which Radford reconstructed with a five-bay eastern arm capped by an apsidal east end, flanking apsidal chapels *en echelon*, and a nine-bay nave.[794] The cloisters and ranges were built at great expense by Henry of Blois, with the work largely completed before 1150.[795] The significance of these phases of building relate to what can be concluded about the financial and institutional stability of Glastonbury in the post-Conquest period, and what might be expected in terms of investment and building activity on sites beyond the precinct. The tumultuous abbacy of Turstin is unlikely to have witnessed significant activity on outlying chapels or other secondary sites, whereas the resurgence of the abbey's fortunes under Herluin would have made rebuilding older chapel sites much more likely as the abbey tried to regain the splendour and fame it had achieved under Dunstan. Furthermore, the abbacy of Herluin and his successors Seffrid I (1120-1125) and Henry of Blois (1126-1171) corresponds with evidence of one of the bolder claims made before the fire of 1184: the 1123 letter of Eadmer to Glastonbury disputing their possession of the former abbot and archbishop's body. The exceptional quality of the sculpture of Henry of Blois's cloister suggests a major improvement in the abbey's fortunes that might have enabled the restoration

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[791] Gilchrist and Green, *Glastonbury Abbey,* 434. Another feature of interest is 'St Joseph's Well,' today framed by a Romanesque arch. Rahtz and Watts, *Glastonbury*, 107.

[792] *DA*, 157-159 (§ 78); Scott, *The Early History of Glastonbury*, 209 n. 165. The bloodshed was also mentioned by the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (1083) and Orderic Vitalis.

[793] Gilchrist and Green, *Glastonbury Abbey*, 397.

[794] Ibid, 399.

[795] Ibid.

and renewal of a pre-existing sacred landscape based around the historic Twelve Hides of Glastonbury. While this theory is somewhat speculative, evidence in support of it exists at Beckery, discussed below.

Moving Beyond the Precinct: Chapels and Holy Islands in Glastonbury's Sacred Landscape

Glastonbury Tor

Glastonbury Tor is one of the most dominant features in the landscape of the Somerset Levels, and can only have appeared even more so during the time before they were drained. The Tor rises out of the landscape from the peninsula to a height of 158m (521ft), and from its summit the entire landscape making up the Twelve Hides is visible, even in poor weather, including all of the holy 'islands' and the chapel sites proposed below. **[Figure 7.9]** Furthermore, if one looks past the modern trees and hedges that are features of the post-medieval landscape, the Tor is clearly visible from any point within the traditional Twelve Hides. It has been a site of human activity, if not occupation, long before the advent of Christianity, as archaeological excavations by Phillip Rahtz recovered Neolithic and a handful of Roman finds from the summit.[796] The steep banks of the Tor appear to have been cut away at some point in the past, creating a series of horizontal terraces, theorized to be anything from a prehistoric ritual maze to the product of natural erosion to remnants of strip lynchet farming possibly using the topography left by the either of the first two.[797] While the earliest changes to the Tor cannot be known with any certainty, Rahtz's excavators did find conclusive evidence of human occupation in the sixth or possibly fifth centuries. The earliest structures were timber, their foundations cutting into the bedrock at the summit.[798] A number of interpretations have been proposed, including a pagan temple, a hermitage, or a 'Dark Age' stronghold, but Rahtz argued that the sixth- and seventh-century

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[796] Rahtz, "Excavations on Glastonbury Tor, Somerset, 1964-6."; Rahtz and Watts, *Glastonbury*, 71.
[797] Philip Rahtz, "Glastonbury Tor: A Modified Landscape," *Landscapes* 3, no. 1 (2002): 9-13.
[798] Rahtz and Watts, *Glastonbury*, 76.

settlement was "the pre-Saxon religious nucleus of Glastonbury" whose fame and reputation subsequently "attracted major support from the incoming Anglo-Saxon rulers of Wessex," a development which may have led to a move to a new site (the present abbey).[799] The next phase of occupation, from the late seventh century possibly up to the Conquest, can be more securely identified as ecclesiastical in nature, particularly from the recovery of a wheel-head cross dated to the eleventh century.[800] **[Figure 7.10]**

A cross-base was the only sign of occupation on the summit in the mid to late Saxon period, but on the 'shoulder' of the Tor, on the west flank, excavations uncovered two squarish 'cells' cut into the rock, covered by timber frames, along with a larger timber building oriented roughly north-south, along with a hearth and several pits nearby. **[Figure 7.11]** The identification of the timber building as a church is complicated by its orientation – it seems more likely to have been some sort of communal building.[801] The evidence supports the idea of the Tor serving as an adjunct hermitage or retreat for the monastery, and the late date of the cross head indicates the continued importance of the site through the tenth and eleventh centuries. Somewhat puzzlingly, around the time of the Conquest, there is a gap in the archaeological and textual evidence of the site's occupation. The Tor is not mentioned at all in William of Malmesbury's works, and the earliest post-Conquest church dates at the earliest from the mid to late twelfth century (the standing tower belongs to its fourteenth-century replacement) on the basis of a handful of Romanesque architectural fragments, including a chevron moulding. The presence of thirteenth-century features may indicate more than one phase of construction, but the church was reportedly demolished in an earthquake in 1275.[802] The second church was built by Adam of Sodbury (1323-34) and evidence of stained glass windows and decorated floor tiles was recovered, as well as a portable altar of Purbeck marble. Only two relief panels survive on the tower, showing St Michael holding the scales, and an image of a woman milking a cow, possibly

[799] Ibid., *Glastonbury*, 77-8.
[800] *CASSS* VII, 158-9.
[801] Rahtz and Watts, *Glastonbury*, 78-9.
[802] Rahtz, "Glastonbury Tor," 80-82.

St Brigid, who was associated with the abbey's holding at Beckery. **[Figure 7.12]** The foundations of an additional stone building were found to the west; this may have been a kitchen or bakehouse, suggesting that the site was no longer an isolated hermitage, but rather a small cell of Glastonbury Abbey itself.[803]

In contrast to William's silence, both the later interpolators of his text and John of Glastonbury emphasize the role of the Tor in the ancient history of the abbey. Central to the forged charter of St Patrick (*c.*1220) is an account of the saint coming across "an old oratory, almost destroyed yet suitable for Christian devotion and, it seemed to me, chosen by God."[804] There, Patrick and his companion allegedly discovered an ancient book which detailed the apostolic foundation of the church at Glastonbury, including the building of a church of St Michael the Archangel, "so that he who would lead men to eternal honour at God's command would there be honored by men," as well as the deeds of SS. Phagan and Deruvian, key figures in the more ambitious foundation legend of Glastonbury.[805] The saints allegedly secured an indulgence of thirty years for pilgrims to the church of Michael at the summit of the Tor from the similarly historically-dubious Pope Eleutherius. The story was given credence a century later by John of Glastonbury, who specifically tied the offer of indulgence to both the *Vetusta Ecclesia* and the ancient church of St Michael on the Tor.[806]

A dedication to Michael is common for a church located on high ground – other examples include Mont St Michel in Normandy and St Michael's Mount and Brent Tor in Cornwall, as well as the Burrow Mump less than 15 miles southwest. In addition, Glastonbury held one or possibly two chapels of Michael at Looe in Cornwall by the thirteenth century (one on the island and one directly opposite on the mainland), which have been dated by archaeology to the eleventh or

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[803] Rahtz and Watts, *Glastonbury*, 81-82.

[804] *DA,* 56-57 (§ 9): *oratorium unum uetustum et fere dirutum, habile deuocioni Christiane, et, pro ut mihi uidebatur, a Deo electum.*

[805] *DA*. 56-59 (§ 9): *quatinus ibi ab homnibus haberet honorem qui homines in perpetuos honores iubente Deo est introducturus.*

[806] *JG*, 63-5 (§ 25).

twelfth centuries.[807] By the time of the forged Charter of St Patrick, the church of St Michael on the Tor had assumed major significance in the history of the abbey; its absence in William of Malmesbury's works is all the more puzzling considering the presence of an Anglo-Saxon monastic complex and the eleventh-century stone wheel-head cross. It is possible that due to its links with the more outlandish parts of Glastonbury's mythmaking, William omitted the traditions surrounding the Tor; nonetheless, it is reasonable to assume that it formed part of the broader sacred landscape, particularly as it was visible to and in sight of all the proposed holy islands or chapels detailed later in this chapter.

St Benedict's Church, Glastonbury

Directly west of the Lady Chapel and roughly on its axis and alignment is the late medieval parish church of St Benedict, dating from the fourteenth century with a sixteenth-century tower. [See **Figure 7.13**] The church had much earlier origins as it was originally built on the occasion of the translation of St Benignus (its former dedication) from the site of his hermitage on Meare in 1091, accompanied by a miraculous display of lights that formed "a sort of arched roof [*porrectam*] of different colors shading the whole monastery."[808] The relics were brought to a place "half-way between [the] river [Brue] and the monastery, where a sermon was preached to the surrounding masses." [809] Afterwards, "one of the holy bones was brought forth and used to make the sign of the Cross over the bystanders," at which point the *Vita* described a number of miraculous cures, later elaborated upon by John of Glastonbury and the *Nova Legenda Anglie*.[810] Subsequently, a church was built and dedicated to Benignus, and his bones were eventually brought to reside in the "larger church" or *maiorem ecclesiam*; this presumably refers to the abbey church of Glastonbury, either the Saxon church or the church of Abbot Turstin then under

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[807] Wessex Archaeology, *Looe, Cornwall: Archaeological Excavation and Assessment of Results*.

[808] MSB, 358-361: *Nocte uero dominicam translacionis diem precedente, duo uiri per flumen contiguum remigantes columpnam lucis in celum usque porrectam super oratorium sancti uiderunt ac eciam multis aliis ostenderunt.*

[809] Ibid., 366-9: *media fere uia inter flumen et monasterium, ex eminencioris stacionis edito de sancti uiri uita et translacionis causa ad circumstantem plebem factus est sermo.*

[810] Ibid., 360-364: *Et in fine sermonis prolato uno ex ossibus sanctis Illo uero die abbas unum de ossiae supra astantes signo crucis ex bus sanctis arripiens, et signum eo facto, tanta diuine liberalitatis crucis super populum cum eo in populum.*

construction.[811] The church of St Benignus would have been located near the western approach to the peninsula, beside the old course of the River Brue.[812] It does not appear that Benignus's relics ever resided in this church. Nonetheless, the fact that at least by the fourteenth century the site was regarded to be a place of miracles, and that the church was built on the spot the body had lain, is more than enough reason to envision it forming part of a landscape of pilgrimage with physical ties to Glastonbury's ancient past.

Other Sites of Interest in Glastonbury Town

Antiquarian accounts and early ordinance survey maps make reference to a chapel of St Dunstan at Edgardley at the foot of the Tor. **[Figure 7.13]** Its age is unknown, though it was converted into a barn after the Dissolution.[813] A 'slipper chapel' of St James, so-called because penitents would remove their travelling footwear and complete the last part of the journey barefoot, is the only one of the original three that can be identified; it was converted into a cottage.[814] Its date is uncertain, though there is a blocked-up pointed window in the east wall.[815]

Holy Islands and Island Chapels

The example of Monaincha (Co. Tipperary), discussed in Chapter IV, is here taken as a model for the putative chapels located on each of the islands associated with Glastonbury's twelve hides. As would appear to be the case at Beckery and Godney, a church or chapel was built on an area of higher ground within a wetland context, perhaps originally as an eremitic retreat, but eventually a broader component of the ecclesiastical landscape of the Mendip valley. [**Figure 7.14**] While the large church at Monaincha cannot be matched in scale by any of the known or

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[811] *JG,* 161-3 (§ 86).
[812] Rahtz and Watts, *Glastonbury*, 130.
[813] John Collinson and Edmund Rack, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Somerset: Collected from Authentick Records, and an Actual Survey Made by the Late Mr. Edmund Rack. Adorned with a Map of the County, and Engravings of Roman and Other Reliques, Town-Seals, Baths, Churches, and Gentlemen's Seats* (London: R. Cruttwell, 1791), II, 265.
[814] "Pastscape - Detailed Result: JACOBY COTTAGE," accessed September 7, 2018, http://www.pastscape.org.uk/hob.aspx?hob_id=196712
[815] Nikolaus Pevsner, *South and West Somerset* (London: Penguin Books, 1958), 182.

suspected chapel sites, it is plausible that given the foundation's interest in Irish saints, the resemblance was not coincidental.

Beckery

Today, Beckery, also known as St Bride's Hill, is a low slope to the north of the west-ward projecting bulk of Wirral Hill, located on the outskirts of the modern town of Glastonbury. Before the diversion of the River Brue, Beckery would have been one of the primary landing points for travelers coming from the west by boat, and stood above the surrounding marshes, even becoming an 'island' when the water table was high.[816] [See **Figure 7.1** and **Figure 7.13**, above]. The Beckery ridge now extends to the modern embankments of the Brue, and probably represents its greatest extent prior to the draining of the Levels. It is also located near Northover Bridge, the end of an ancient causeway between Glastonbury and Street. The bulk of Wirral Hill and the draining of the levels have made the site considerably less visually distinct from the surrounding landscape, but during the early to high medieval period any buildings on the summit of the hill would have been visible for some distance across the Brue and the marshes.[817] At some point, St Bride's Well entered the site's traditions; by the twentieth century it was identified with shallow basin among the brambles, marked by an inscribed stone that has since been moved, and the exact site has been lost.[818] The summit of the island (rising 12.04m above sea level) is just visible from the site of St Michael's Church on the Tor, looking out over the town of Glastonbury, emerging from behind the bulk of Wirral Hill, which obscures most of the surrounding landscape.

Unlike the other sites that will discussed, Beckery is afforded a wealth of both textual and archaeological evidence. Beckery has a prominent place in all the earliest charters of Glastonbury, including the forged charter of King Ine and the genuine charter of King Edgar, which describes it as exempt from the jurisdiction of the bishop of Wells. In these early references, Beckery is

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[816] Philip A. Rahtz and S.M. Hirst, *Beckery Chapel, Glastonbury* (Glastonbury: Glastonbury Antiquarian Society, 1974), 16.
[817] Ibid, 18-19.
[818] Ibid, 16.

referred to as *Parva Hibernia* ('Little Ireland') on the basis of its historical association with St Brigid of Kildare, the Irish abbess and monastic founder who was said to have followed her compatriot Patrick to the thriving monastic community at Glastonbury in the fifth century.[819] Expanding off a brief account in the *Gesta Regum*, William wrote in *De Antiquitate* that Brigid came to Glastonbury in 488, adding that, "having tarried for some time on the island called Beckery, she returned home but left behind certain of her ornaments, namely a bag, a necklace, a small bell and weaving implements, which are still preserved there in memory of her."[820] In Adam of Damerham's account of the deeds of Abbot John of Taunton (d.1291), the abbot is said to have repaired and restored the chapel there (as well as that at Godney) with *sumptuoso opere* ('costly work') "such as the nature of these places demanded."[821] Additional details were later added to the legend in the fourteenth century by John of Glastonbury, who specified that Brigid had visited an *oratorium* built in honor of St Mary Magdalene, which was subsequently re-dedicated. At this chapel, "on the south side, there is an opening (*foramen*) through which, according to the belief of the common folk, anyone who passes will receive forgiveness of all his sins."[822] Beckery would also play a role in the Arthurian mythos of Glastonbury, as its chapel of Mary Magdalene (described by John of Glastonbury as a hermitage) was the setting for a vision of King Arthur of the Virgin Mary and Christ.[823]

Beckery was first excavated by John Morland in 1887/8, who recovered the layout of two chapels, one within the other, as well as a later dwelling house on the summit of the hill.[824] **[Figure 7.16]** Rahtz's excavations subsequently confirmed multiple phases of the stone chapels as well as evidence of a wooden structure (Chapel I) – a church or shrine – evidenced by the presence of a

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[819] Lesley Abrams, *Anglo-Saxon Glastonbury: Church and Endowment*, Studies in Anglo-Saxon History, 8 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1996), 56. Iconographic representations of Brigid are still visible on the tower of St Michael's Church on the Tor (Figure 7.4) as well as the north portal of the Lady Chapel (Figure 7.12).
[820] *DA*, 60-61 (§ 12): *illuc uenerat post aliquantulum moram quam in insula que de Beokery fecerat, domum reversum, relictis ibidem quibusdam insigniis suis, uidelicet pera, monuli, nola et textrillibus armis, que ibidem ad eius memoriam reseruauntur.*
[821] *AD*, 518.
[822] *JG*, 66-67 (§ 28): *in cuius parte australi foramen habetur per quod qui transieriet iuxta uulgi opinionem omnium peccatorum suorum ueniam optinebit.*
[823] *JG*, 76-79 (§ 33).
[824] Morland, "St Bridget's Chapel, Beckery."

number of post-holes as well as some burnt material recovered from pits. The activity seems to have been centered around a single grave with lining slabs which alone of those in the earliest levels had not been disturbed by later activity. It was possibly that of a founding figure or leader of a religious community (there is no evidence it was ever claimed to be Brigid).[825] Excavations in 2016 provided a much earlier date for some of the burials around the chapel site (believed to number at least a hundred): some of the bones were radiocarbon dated to as early as the fifth or early sixth centuries, making them the oldest evidence of monastic activity ever found in the Britain.[826] This finding casts some doubt on Phillip Rahtz's theory about the settlement on the Tor being the original ecclesiastical nucleus of Glastonbury, though it is possible that several outposts of the same foundation existed at the same time. Based on the radiocarbon results the associated monastic community seems to have disappeared by the ninth century, and it may have been after this that Chapel II was begun. It is entirely plausible that the importance of Brigid, or at least an Irish monastic figure(s), has a longer history than was suggested in the discussion of the liturgical evidence. While Rahtz was the first to suggest a monastic community at Beckery, possibly based around a hermitage once inhabited by the individual in the stone-lined grave, he also argued that the first mention of Beckery in the charter evidence (*c.*670) did not "necessarily imply that it was already a religious site."[827]

The first stone phase of Chapel II was dated by Rahtz to the tenth century. Morland judged the work to be of a single phase, two-celled plan, and the "extremely massive walls would be compatible with Saxon work."[828] The chapel measured 10m (33ft) overall, based on Rahtz's findings, with entrances in the north corner of the chancel and another in the north-east corner of the nave, evidenced by a separate foundation for a stone door-sill.[829] The dating of Chapel II as Saxon would be relatively uncontroversial if not for the single Norman chevron voussoir found in

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[825] Rahtz and Hirst, *Beckery Chapel,* 27-9.
[826] South West Heritage Trust, "Earliest Monastery in the British Isles Discovered in Somerset," South West Heritage Trust, May 30, 2017, https://www.swheritage.org.uk/earliest-monastery-discovered, accessed June 6, 2017.
[827] Rahtz and Hirst, *Beckery Chapel*, 37-9.
[828] Morland, "St Bridget's Chapel, Beckery," 121-6.
[829] Rahtz and Hirst, *Beckery Chapel,* 40.

the 1.2m wide entrance of the nave, suggesting the presence of post-Conquest portal into an older building. [830] A substantial number of sherds of Saxo-Norman pottery (*c.*950-1150) indicate some form of occupation, possibly domestic, at the site into the late-Saxon and probably Anglo-Norman periods.[831]

It is possible that Morland's assessment of Chapel II as being of a single, pre-Conquest phase was mistake and a chancel or nave was added in the eleventh or twelfth century, or it could be evidence of an older building being refurbished in the post-Conquest period. In all, the nave measured 4.95 x 3.45 m internally and 6.7 x 4.95 m externally. Additionally, Morland reportedly found a chamfered plinth of Bath Oolite on the north wall of the later chapel, which might have originally come from the Chapel II build or rebuild.[832] Chapel II is most likely to be the building mentioned in the *c.*971 charter of King Edgar, but the evidence suggests that it continued in use up until the construction of its successor, spanning the tenth to mid-thirteenth centuries. It seems likely that the building would have been standing at the time of the Conquest, and that as part of the program of renewal and re-investment in Glastonbury and its surrounding landscape, additions or alterations were made, explaining the presence of the voussoir and possibly of the chamfered plinth. The more defined foundations of Chapel III surround the earlier phases entirely and between architectural features and the reference of Adam of Damerham this phase can be comfortably dated to *c.*1275, possibly reaching into the fourteenth century on the basis of the finds evidence. More puzzling is the stretch of wall, apparently contemporary to the building or rebuilding of Chapel II, which runs parallel to the south wall of the nave for about ¾ of its length, with about a metre gap between the two.[833] [**Figure 7.16**] It could merely be a buttress to support the chapel wall – the lower courses of the south nave wall showed some signs of slipping. But there are other, more intriguing possibilities. The first is a base for a staircase to a gallery

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[830] Rahtz and Hirst, *Beckery Chapel*, 43.

[831] Elizabeth Friend, "2016 Excavations at Beckery," Axbridge Archaeological and Local History Society, 2018, http://www.aalhs.co.uk/2018/01/15/2016-excavations-at-beckery/.

[832] Rahtz and Hirst, *Beckery Chapel*, 51 n. 97.

[833] Ibid, 41-43.

over the west end of the nave, possibly a place where the aforementioned relics of Brigid were displayed. Another concerns the legend passed on by John of Glastonbury, of the *foramen* that could grant forgiveness of sins to those who passed through the opening.[834] Too much damage has been done to the walls of Chapel II to be able to conclusively resolve their relationship, but the southernmost foundation does not seem to be a later repair or shoring up – the build and mortar is identical to that of the original south wall.[835] The possibilities are exciting regardless, but the presence of monastic and possibly cult activity at Beckery is highly suggestive for what may have been happening on or around the other 'holy islands' customarily named with Beckery: Ferrameare (and Westhay), Godney, Panborough, Martinsey, and Andresey (one later charter adds the promontory of Clewer (near Wedmore)).[836] [**Figure 7.14**, above] Beckery is the only one of the named 'islands' to have been excavated, and no standing remains survive from this period at any of the sites in the study (a church at Meare dates to 1323). However, between the textual evidence of activity at Meare, possible surviving parallels from Irish contexts, and the references in charters, hagiography, and historical texts, a much broader landscape of holy islands, some of which may have been the site of chapels both in the pre- and post-Conquest eras, can be proposed to have existed in the Levels around the abbey.

Meare

The bedrock island of Meare has long been one of the most important possessions of Glastonbury. A nearly intact late medieval manorial complex – a fourteenth-to-fifteenth-century church, fourteenth-century manor house, and a fourteenth-century 'Fish House' (more likely a summer residence for a monastic official) adjacent to the dried up fishponds – is the most obvious medieval presence in the village. **[Figure 7.17]** The island was named after the mere (or meare) pool – a natural water basin – and it was likely exploited for its natural resources beginning early in Glastonbury's history. As the middle ages progressed more and more of the land was drained

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[834] Rahtz and Watts, *Glastonbury*, 155; *JG* 67 (§ 28).
[835] Rahtz and Hirst, *Beckery Chapel,*41-43.
[836] Ibid, 11.

and used for agriculture and pasture, particularly for cattle; in the period of 1274-1315, 56.7 calves a year were born in Meare and Godney.[837] The island first appears as *Ferlingmere* in a dubious charter of King Cenwealh (*c.*670/72, allegedly), and a genuine charter of 680, when it is recorded in as part of a grant to Glastonbury. The most obvious indicator of its importance in the Anglo-Saxon period is the forged charter of King Ine (probably tenth-century) which confirms Glastonbury's rights to the surrounding 'islands,' including Meare.[838] It continues to be included as one of Glastonbury's 'core' properties in a series of confirmation charters through the thirteenth century, most preserved in Adam of Damerham and the *Chronica* of John of Glastonbury, and is listed under the *villa* of Glastonbury in Domesday Book.[839] Meare was also at the center of a major dispute in the thirteenth century with the Bishop of Wells, when it was appropriated by the bishopric before eventually being restored to Glastonbury's control.[840] While its economic value is very clear, the island was of some significance to both the legendary antiquity and contemporary cult activity of Glastonbury Abbey after and possibly before the Norman Conquest. As the legend goes, an Irish bishop named Benignus (sometimes rendered as Beonna) came to Glastonbury in 347, eventually succeeding St Patrick as Glastonbury's abbot. Not long afterwards, he took up residence on the island of *Ferramere*, in search of the isolation he so craved. Among his first acts was to plant his staff in the ground, at which point it "straightaway began to sprout green leaves and flowers," which according to his reconstructed *Vita* he took as a sign that he was meant to remain there in a life of prayer. According to the *c.*1130 *vita*, "the very tree that signifies his sanctity can be seen standing by the saint's chapel, its leaves spreading wide."[841] Benignus frequently crossed a bridge or causeway he built himself to pray at the church of St Mary (the *Vetusta Ecclesia*), but eventually the reed-bed [*calmecum*] was flooded, and he henceforth "contented himself with life in his tiny cell, never wanting to go back to Glastonbury

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[837] Rippon, "Making the Most of a Bad Situation?" 127.
[838] *DA,* 99 (lxii).
[839] Abrams, *Anglo-Saxon Glastonbury*, 170-1.
[840] Ibid, 171.
[841] *MSB,* 348-9: *Nam usque ad nostra tempora sanctitatis eius signifera ipsa arbor, sparsis late frondibus, iuxta beati uiri oratorium stare uidetur.*

or anywhere beyond the bounds of his home. After immeasurable sufferings, he died a happy death on the island."[842] According to reconstructed *Vita Benigni*, "his earthly remains are buried in the church there, to the south by the altar, with the epitaph: Within this tomb Beonna lays / was father here of monks in ancient days."[843] A number of miracles subsequently served to "make the saint's merits obvious."[844] The saint was translated with great acclaim in 1091 (see above in the discussion of St Benedict's Church in the town), an event that Rippon characterized as looking "suspiciously like an attempt to bolster 'cult activity.'"[845] It is difficult to know whether there was any historical basis to the cult of Benignus and his association with Meare or, as Rippon suggests, it was a cult manufactured centuries later.[846] There may have been a separate holy man of the name of Beonna who was then linked with the Irish abbot as Patrick's successor in later years. The liturgical evidence that survives suggests that the feast of Benignus may not have been celebrated before the end of the tenth century.[847] In terms of the potential role that Meare might have played in the post-Conquest cult, it does not particularly matter. Indeed, I would argue that a later developing cult, combined with the focus on Meare evident in the literary evidence, would make a manifestation of the cult on Meare in the eleventh and twelfth centuries all the more likely. A comparison can be made once again to Monaincha, first used as a hermitage by St Cronan before it became the site of small community and place of pilgrimage (Chapter IV).

While the surviving church of St Mary was built by Abbot Sodbury *c.*1322, there is a reference to a *capella cum cellario* in an account relating to the restoration of Meare to Glastonbury's control during the abbacy of Michael of Amesbury (d.1252), indicating at the least

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[842] *MSB*, 354-5: *uir beatus cellule tantum sue inhabitacione contentus, de reliquo nec Glastoniam reuisere nec extra ipsius cellue terminus uspiam uoluit exire. Et post immensos agones in dicta insula fine quieuit.*
[843] Ibid: *Hoc patris in lapide Beonne sunt ossa locata, Qui pater extiterat monachorum hic tempore prisco. Hunc fore Patricii quondam fortasse ministrum Fantur Hybernigene et Beonnam de nomine dicunt.*
[844] Ibid: *set nec defuere miracula quibus Deus ostenderet sancti merita.*
[845] Rippon, "Making the Most of a Bad Situation?" 102.
[846] Winterbottom and Thomson, *Saints' Lives*, 355 n. 5. It should be noted that John Leland recorded the presence of a great tomb in St Mary's Church c. 1530: *nam eius tumulus adhuc ostenditur propter lacum Feranium*; he did not, however, make the connection to Benignus, it may thus be unrelated to the cult (John Leland, *Commentarii de scriptoribus Britannicis*, ed. Antonius Hall (Oxford: Sheldonian Theatre, 1709), 39.
[847] Carley and Townsend, *The Chronicle of Glastonbury Abbey*, xxxviii-xxxix.

a previous building near the site, if not a church with more direct links to the cult.[848] It might be speculated that as the island became increasingly the private province of the abbot and as more land was drained and exploited Meare's cult significance may have waned, especially with the cult of Benignus likely overshadowed by later developments. Nonetheless, considering the activity at Beckery, where another Irish saint associated with the early history of the abbey was venerated, the existence of a chapel built around the former tomb of Benignus, perhaps accompanied by a tree that pilgrims might be told was that planted by Benignus upon his arrival, is entirely plausible. The construction of a large manorial complex at Meare (entirely unmentioned by John of Glastonbury) in the fourteenth century is suggestive of the changing nature of the site. In the absence of excavation, the idea of Meare as a late-Saxon to early Norman cult site which only later became an abbatial manor will remain hypothetical, but it would fit a model of the development known both in Ireland and elsewhere in Britain.[849]

Godney

Nothing is known about the medieval church or chapel on this site, but its existence seems certain from the documentary record, and an older building of undetermined age is recorded having been restored in 1737.[850] In the same passage, Collinson records a specific if somewhat underwhelming miracle: the church on the site was never once fouled by birds even as it was surrounded by a thick grove of trees. That Godney had miraculous associations into the early modern period is suggestive of its medieval sacred significance. Adam of Damerham records that a chapel at Godney was restored with *opera sumptuoso* by Abbot John of Taunton (d.1291).[851] Notwithstanding its miraculous immunity from the menace of bird droppings, it is hard to know if Godney was a specific place of pilgrimage, but it would have been an important early possession

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[848] *AD*, 211. The earlier phase of the manorial complex may also date to this time. See: M.C. Siraut, A.T. Thacker, and Elizabeth Williamson, "Parishes: Meare," in *Glastonbury and Street*, ed. Robert W Dunning, vol. 9, *A History of the County of Somerset* (London: VCH, 2006), 120–42.

[849] Another small chapel was reportedly in ruins at Westhay, half a mile to the west, but nothing else is known about it or its dedication (Collinson and Rack, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Somerset*, II, 273). Collinson also records a "old stone cross" in the churchyard. Its significance and age are unknown.

[850] Collinson and Rack, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Somerset,* 273.

[851] *AD*, 518.

of Glastonbury, lying three miles north of the abbey as distinctive 'island' rising out of the marshes.[852] [**Figure 7.18**] The presence of a rectory appropriated to Glastonbury is recorded in 1332.[853] A seal recovered in 1754 shows St Dunstan as a Bishop, and was inscribed with *S. Tome Capellani Dei Insula:* Collison suggests that this was Thomas, chaplain of Godney (or God's Island).[854] Godney is clearly visible from the Tor and a chapel located there would have been among the more distinctive features in the landscape north of the abbey. The recurrence of the explanation of Godney as holding a chapel in the *DA* and John of Glastonbury would seem to imply that some sort of religious building still stood in the post-Conquest period, perhaps similar to that at Beckery.

Panborough

Panborough is implied to have a chapel in the charter of King Edgar (*c.*971)[855] but elsewhere is referred to as "vine-bearing"[856] and particular emphasis is placed upon its "lands, meadows, pastures, marshes, and broad woods."[857] While it has been suggested that it could be named for St. Padan,[858] the absence of any later reference to a chapel makes it more likely that Panborough is a combination of the Old English *patha* ('wayfarer') and *beorg* ('hill'), perhaps a reference to its important strategic location next to a gap in the chain of hills between the Axe and Brue river systems.[859] It may thus have been acquired early in Glastonbury's history for its causeway linking the rivers. But its importance in later years may have been more due to more than its location or agricultural resources; a later record of Glastonbury's possessions records a sizable vineyard and a cottage, but no chapel.[860] Panborough might also be seen as an example of the *locus amoenus*, a quasi-Edenic natural paradise in the midst of the marshes. Such a model is

[852] Abrams, *Anglo-Saxon Glastonbury*, 132.
[853] Siraut, Thacker, and Williamson, "Parishes: Meare."
[854] Collinson and Rack, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Somerset*, II. 273.
[855] *DA*, 123-5 (§ 60).
[856] *JG*, 17 (§ 4).
[857] *DA* 153, (§ 53).
[858] Rahtz and Hirst, *Beckery Chapel*, 11.
[859] Abrams, *Anglo-Saxon Glastonbury*, 193.
[860] Collinson and Rack, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Somerset*, 244.

one used frequently in a variety of 'wetland' monastic sites, including Ely and Ramsey Abbey.[861] Whatever trees or overgrowth are referred in the medieval sources have been subsequently cleared to make room for pasture. Panborough is a striking sight from the Levels, rising above the otherwise low terrain. It would have stood out in the landscape, perhaps visible even from the abbey site itself. **[Figure 7.19]**

Martinsey

The first reference to a chapel on the island of Martinsey (later Marchey) is in a charter of 712 recording the gift of Bishop Forthhere of Sherborne of *ecclesiasm beati Martini confessoris* to Ealdberht, Abbot of Glastonbury.[862] *DA* explains the name of Marchey as being "on account of St Martin, whose chapel is there," which is repeated by John of Glastonbury.[863] Nothing more is known of the chapel, though the island probably formed part of the abbey's core-estates and the area seems to have become a fishery by the end of the twelfth century. Earthworks surveys have detected what could be the *vallum* of early monastic site, with a ditch and bank surviving to the south, and field-walking and the cleaning of the drainage ditches turned up a substantial collection of pottery fragments from the Roman period through the present, including Saxon and medieval sherds, suggesting continuous occupation up through the construction of Marchey Farm.[864] A rectangular platform on the northern part of the former island might be the site of the chapel of St Martin mentioned in the charters, but to date no archaeological investigation has been carried out on the site, and it proved difficult to identify and photograph on a site visit.

Andresey (Nyland)

The tree-ringed hill of Nyland, formerly known as Andresey, marks part of the western boundary of the Twelve Hides of Glastonbury, and thus plays a key role in delineating the abbey's

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[861] Clarke, *Literary Landscapes and the Idea of England, 700-1400,* 68-70.

[862] Abrams, *Anglo-Saxon Glastonbury*, 165-6.

[863] *DA*, 153, (§ 73): *Martenesie a sancto Martino cuius ibidem est capella*; *JG*, 13 (§ 2).

[864] Rahtz and Watts, *Glastonbury*; Historic England, "Early Christian Settlement and Monastic Site at Marchey Farm, Wookey," accessed May 24, 2019, https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1011266.

ancient holdings from those of the Bishop of Wells or other lords.[865] The *DA* and *Chronica* both explain the name as referring to "St Andrew, who has chapel there."[866] It is possible that it actually can be parsed as "Eadred's Island," but by the time of William of Malmesbury the connection with Andrew seems firmly established; the place-name 'Nyland' is not used in any medieval source.[867] There is no physical trace of any earlier building or settlement on the hill, but like most of the sites under consideration, it has not been investigated archaeologically. As one of the higher peaks in the area, it was undoubtedly as prominent in the landscape as Panborough. [**Figure 7.20**]

Other Sites of Interest: Glastonbury Environs

Shapwick

One of the minor Irish saints associated with Glastonbury by the tenth century was Indract, who along with his companions was said to have been martyred by thieves on a pilgrimage to Glastonbury, possibly to visit Patrick. The location of the incident ('*Hywisc*') is unclear in the *GR* (§ 27) ('*iuxta Glastoniam*') and *DA* (§ 12) ('*ibidem*'), and the original *Life* of Indract has been lost. The *NLA* of John of Tynemouth gives 'apud Shapwike,' probably taken from John of Glastonbury, and Lapidge prefers Huish Episcopi.[868] It is possible that it refers to Withy, "a detached part of Shapwick parish on the coastal marshes of the Somerset Levels, where there is a large oval enclosure," possibly evidence of early reclamation.[869] In the reconstructed *Life*, the site of the martyrdom is marked out to King Pedred, residing nearby, by a column of light.[870] He came out to the site and found the bodies (*reliquas cultu*) and brought them on to Glastonbury.[871] The original parish church of Shapwick was demolished and moved into the center of the medieval village, but there is no evidence that either structure was a site of cult activity, and the

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[865] Abrams, *Anglo-Saxon Glastonbury*, 46-7.
[866] *DA,* 152, (§ 73): *hec sic cognominatur a sancto Andrea cuius ibidem habetur capella*; *JG*, 13 (§ 2).
[867] Abrams, *Anglo-Saxon Glastonbury*, 47.
[868] Winterbottom and Thomson, *Saints' Lives,* 310 Note 2.
[869] Rippon, "Making the Most of a Bad Situation?" 102.
[870] VI, 375.
[871] VI, 377.

written sources agree that the bodies did not remain long at the place of their martyrdom.[872]

Nonetheless, the later attempts to associate Indract's martyrdom and the nearby village of Shapwick may be significant in the broader scheme of Glastonbury's sacred landscape.

Clewer

There are some antiquarian traditions and readings of the documentary evidence to suggest the existence of a chapel of St Guthlac or 'Cuthlac' at Clewer, a rocky promontory near Cheddar.[873] [see **Figure 7.14**, above] Clewer is possibly first mentioned in connection with Glastonbury as early as the eighth century, in a gift of Bishop Wilfrid, and *DA* records that Wilfrid was given a hide at Clewer by King Centwine, who passed it onto the abbey, though the claim is not mentioned in Domesday.[874] While there is no mention of a chapel at Clewer in the *c.*1263 record of the Twelve Hides, it does appear in the *c.*1510 perambulation of the bounds.[875] A number of explanations have been offered to explain the dedication to 'Cuthlac' (or Guthlac), including a confusion between the East Anglian saint of Crowland Abbey and a Glastonbury abbot (824-851).[876] But it is entirely possible that this 'confusion' was not so innocent. The topographical setting of Crowland Abbey and Glastonbury was quite similar, and the monastic community of the latter was, as we have seen, more than willing to borrow or steal the saints of other foundations in search of their own powerful cult. The Abbey possessed three *Lives* of Guthlac by 1247, and Henry of Blois is recorded to have given some of the saint's relics to the abbey.[877] While the lack of any mention of Guthlac or Clewer in the existing histories makes this claim tenuous, and the 1510 record could reflect a later association, it is possible that Clewer was of some sacred significance in the medieval landscape around Glastonbury.

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[872] Christopher M. Gerrard, *The Shapwick Project, Somerset: A Rural Landscape Explored*, Society for Medieval Archaeology Monograph; 25 (Leeds: Society for Medieval Archaeology, 2007), 967-8.
[873] Rahtz and Hirst, *Beckery Chapel*, 12. From Collison.
[874] Abrams, *Anglo-Saxon Glastonbury*, 90.
[875] Rippon, "Making the Most of a Bad Situation?" 102.
[876] Carley, *The Chronicle of Glastonbury* Abbey, 275 n. 31.
[877] Clarke, *Literary Landscapes and the Idea of England*, 77-79.

Conclusion: The Holy Islands of Glastonbury: Fact or Fiction?

The documentary sources for Glastonbury Abbey during both the pre- and post-Conquest periods provide abundant evidence of a range of cults and cult sites which extended well beyond the abbey precinct into the surrounding marshes of the Levels. A number of these bedrock 'islands' occupied a conspicuous place in the legends of Glastonbury's foundation and antiquity, appearing repeatedly in charters, both forged and genuine, and featuring prominently in the community's history and hagiography. At various times, the sources explicitly mention chapels which at least existed on some of the named 'islands' during the pre-Conquest period, and their continued importance in the post-Conquest sources, including the *Chronica* of John of Glastonbury, is highly suggestive that the sites and their chapels remained or were rebuilt well into the later Middle Ages, even as the landscape itself was transformed to become more agriculturally productive. What form these chapel sites may have taken is suggested by the excavated remains at Beckery as well as the surviving site at Monaincha (Co. Tipperary), which might be seen as a model of a fully developed marshland island ecclesiastical site. Morland and Rahtz's excavations revealed a multi-phased building on the summit of St Bride's Hill at Beckery which may have been the site of cult activity organized around St Brigid, some of which may actually be archaeologically visible in the form of the unusual wall to the south of Chapel II.

It is also possible that the chapels only existed in the pre-Conquest period, or even that they were fictitious creations that provided a physical 'fabric' in Glastonbury's rhetoric of its own antiquity. By the thirteenth century, chapels existed at Godney and Meare, though their relationship to a broader sacred landscape is less clear. The Glastonbury historical sources are difficult, as they represent at once both the contemporary and ancient Glastonbury – John of Glastonbury in particular presents his work as a continuation of *De Antiquitate* (and to an extent the *Libellus* of Adam of Damerham); he may have seen no need to 'update' the earlier text (and the later interpolations) to reflect the reality of Glastonbury and its landscape as it was in the fourteenth century. In the case of Meare, John of Glastonbury's explanation of the island and its

connection to Benignus would seem to be outdated – what may have once been a cult site had become an important manorial complex belonging the officials of the monastery, with a manor house, newly-built church dedicated to St Mary, and a building known as the Fish House (another high-status domestic residence).[878]

If the islands and their chapels (as well as the Tor itself) are viewed as points in a sacred landscape, meant to demonstrate the antiquity of the monastery as well to attract pilgrims, Glastonbury's affinity for Irish saints is important to consider. In addition to the multi-site sacred complex as sites such as Glendalough and Inishmurray, and the isolated island chapel of the type surviving at Monaincha, the model proposed here for Glastonbury is inspired by another potentially Irish-influenced site: the coastal chapels surrounding St Davids' Cathedral. In the case of St Davids, the case for a sacred landscape, marked by chapels dedicated to figures associated with David and his life, is relatively straightforward, as laid out in Chapter V. The chapels themselves survive and/or have been the subject of archaeological investigation which provides at least rough dating evidence. I argue that the importance of these sites and the direct links between events in David's life and individual locations on the peninsula is made explicit in the late-twelfth century *Vita* of David by Giraldus Cambrensis, as part of a campaign to end any uncertainty as to the antiquity of the cathedral site itself. To construct a similar model at Glastonbury, encompassing the islands and perhaps the Tor, requires a fair bit of speculation and inference. Nonetheless, I would argue it is more than plausible when the vast scope of Glastonbury's antiquarian interests is considered. To put it bluntly, there was very little that the monastic community of Glastonbury would *not* do to reinforce the case for the antiquity of their foundation and to draw pilgrims – an objective made more difficult by the absence of a single famous saint to call their own. As at Glendalough's Temple-na-Skellig and Monainchia itself, some of these sites would have only been accessible by boat, though they may have been visible from the abbey site in the medieval period. The mix of 'universal' saints in the dedications recorded is

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[878] Edward Impey, "A House for Fish or Men? The Structure, Function and Significance of the Fish House at Meare, Somerset," *English Heritage Historical Review* 4 (2009): 30-31.

consistent with Glastonbury's more ambitious pretensions – rather than saints whose holiness was adjunct to David, like Non or Justinian, Glastonbury claimed connections to St Andrew, St Michael, St Martin, the Holy Trinity, the Virgin Mary, and St Patrick (and through him Brigid, Benignus, and Indract). It is also important to recognize that even if these islands were either never the site of chapels (i.e. Panborough) or the chapels were long gone, they retained the spiritually significant quality of the *locus amoenus* as unsullied spots of natural beauty amidst the marshes, prime examples of Lefebvre's 'absolute' spaces. In far more recent New Age traditions, the island sites of Glastonbury are suggested to represent points on the Zodiac, possessing a variety of pre-Christian associations. As farfetched as the idea might seem, it seems certain that the modern authors of Glastonbury's legendary past are merely following in the footsteps of their monastic predecessors.

VIII: Discussion: Modelling Sacred Landscapes and their Cults in Anglo-Norman England and Wales

The preceding three case studies have laid out my case for the creation and promotion of sacred landscapes by ecclesiastical institutions in St Davids, Durham and Lindisfarne, and the environs of Glastonbury Abbey. Another section delved into examples of the better-surviving Irish tradition of sacred landscapes, laying out a set of models that could be used to both identify and interpret features in the main case studies. In this chapter I will aim to approach this material thematically, identifying and drawing together four specific aspects of the broader phenomenon of sacred landscapes in the Anglo-Norman world: the biographical landscape, landscapes of institutional myth, the re-use and adaptation of prior landscapes, and the dispersed 'pilgrimage' landscape.

The Biographical Landscape: In the Footsteps of the Saints

Biographical landscapes are centred around a particular saint, incorporating a range of sites of importance to the saint or their spiritual *familia* in both their lifetime and in some cases after their death. Identifying and interpreting this particular kind of landscape is thus highly dependent on either written sources (usually hagiography) or from recorded local tradition. Frequently, key moments in the life and afterlife of the saint and his or her *familia* are memorialized at specific sites, often but not always where tradition holds the events took place. Generally, biographical landscapes are smaller in scale than larger, more diffuse pilgrimage landscapes, and in Ireland many of them are circumnavigated on their saint's feast day in a *turas*, or pilgrimage round. In more than one case, such landscapes seem to have been created and promoted to create a secondary focus of veneration in the absence of corporeal relics, as was the case at St Davids, Glencolumbkille, and Lindisfarne.

The landscape of St Kevin at Glendalough represents one of the best preserved of this group, as many buildings of the period survive, along with hagiographical accounts from several different periods. [see **Figure 4.2**] As discussed in Chapter IV, the site of Kevin's monastic life can be observed to 'move' from the chronologically earliest of old Irish texts (*Betha Coemgen II*) to the latest (the twelfth-century *Vita* of Kevin, likely written by the canons of St Saviour's Priory), and a similar move can be seen between the emphasis on Kevin's hermitage near the Upper Lake to St Kevin's House in the Lower Lake monastic complex.[879] The landscape at Glendalough, though much altered through the post-medieval period, nonetheless still illustrates two separate phases of Kevin's life. To the west, around the Upper Lake, are sites associated with Kevin's ascetic life ('Kevin's Bed,' 'Kevin's Cell' and the church of Temple-na-Skelig, located across the lake beneath the cave of 'Kevin's Bed'). To the east of these is the main monastic complex – the site of Kevin's coenobitic life - as well as St Kevin's Church or 'House,' which probably held his relics.

It is plausible that Glendalough was treated as a model of how to commemorate a saint through the use of landscape and dispersed sacred sites which structured yearly processions (a common feature of early Irish pilgrimage). It is also possible that such an arrangement existed in the Anglo-Saxon period on Lindisfarne after St Cuthbert's death in *c.*687. In the *Life* of Cuthbert, there is an account of the penitent who went "around the holy places, praying and offering the sacrifice of praise to his saviour."[880] Emma Wells identified a number of plausible "holy places" the penitent may have visited, including the watchtower on the Heugh where the monks first received word of Cuthbert's death on Inner Farne, the site of Cuthbert's first eremitic retreat on St Cuthbert's Isle offshore from the priory, the recently excavated stone church on the Heugh, which might have contained the first wooden church built by St Aidan, and of course Cuthbert's grave in the monastic church, at the time the resting place of his relics.[881] [see **Figure 6.5**] Further excavation revealed the presence of a possible watchtower like that mentioned in Bede's *Vita*

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[879] Lacey, "Monster and Monastery: St Kevin's Lives and the Expansion of Glendalough"; Ó Carragáin, "Recluses, Relics, and Corpses: Interpreting St Kevin's House."
[880] *BVSC* § 44.
[881] Wells, "'And He Went Round the Holy Places."

Prosaica (referred to as *BVSC*), as well as medieval foundations under the post-medieval 'Chapel of the Lamp.'[882] A classic example of the 'western isles' model of Irish pilgrimage site is Inishmurray, with its main enclosure and a number of satellite altars and *leachta.* [**Figure 4.22**] While it is far from impossible that Lindisfarne's own Irish origins might have led to a reproduction of this kind of landscape later continued and restored by the monks from Durham, what is notable about these sites (which probably represent only a fraction of the *loca sancta* referred to by Bede), is that they are united by their significance to the life and death of St Cuthbert. The former hermitage of Farne Island, where Cuthbert had lived out his last days, was re-occupied by other hermits, including Æathilwald and Fergild, who achieved saintly reputations of their own, as might have also been the case at Glendalough with Carpre mac Cathuil. The continued development of these sites up to and after the Conquest, when Lindisfarne became a cell of Durham Cathedral Priory in the twelfth century, testify to the ongoing importance of these satellite sites to the religious life of the priory and potentially to their use as pilgrimage stations. These developments occurred in spite of the fact that the body of Cuthbert had been moved to Durham Cathedral in the late tenth century, and Victoria Tudor has speculated that whether pilgrims visited Lindisfarne or Durham could depend on their geographical origin or perhaps even their gender.[883] Several *miracula* from Inner Farne demonstrate the presence of a thriving pilgrimage centre in the later Middle Ages.[884] Another example from roughly the same period was the sacred topography of Iona, the subject of Colum Cille's biographer Adomnán's *De Locis Sanctis*, which drew comparisons between the surroundings of Colum Cille's monastery and the sacred topography of both Rome and the holy city of Jerusalem.[885] According to Adomnán, crosses and other markers indicated sites of particular spiritual significance, including sites associated with

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[882] Carlton, "Archaeological Excavations on Lindisfarne Heugh"; "Excavations on Lindisfarne Heugh in 2018."

[883] Tudor, "The Cult of St Cuthbert in the Twelfth Century," 437–46.

[884] Craster, "The Miracles of Farne"; "The Miracles of St Cuthbert at Farne."

[885] David H. Jenkins, *"Holy, Holier, Holiest": The Sacred Topography of the Early Medieval Irish Church*, Studia Traditionis Theologiae. Explorations in Early and Medieval Theology; 4 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 36. For example, Colum Cille's blessing of the monastic community on a hill overlooking the monastery is likened to Christ's own Sermon on the Mount.

Colum Cille himself, such as the saint's 'pillow' (compared to that of the Old Testament's Jacob) and the remnants of an ancient building on Torr an Aba, reputed to be St Columba's Cell or writing house.[886]

But while the development of these biographical landscapes can be traced back to well before the arrival of the Normans to England, Wales, and Ireland, other sacred landscapes and cults did not develop until much later. In my chapter on the biographical landscape of St Davids in Wales (Ch. V), I proposed that the full development of the network of chapels (a number of which were built on early medieval sites) and their relationship to one another and the cult based in the cathedral was a later twelfth-century development, part of an institutional programme of cult promotion which was bolstered by written works such as the revised *Vita* of David by Giraldus Cambrensis. [**Figure 5.2**] In addition to a chapel at the supposed site of David's baptism (*Capel-y-Pistyll* near Porth Clais), there are the standing or excavated remains of chapels dedicated to Non, his mother (perhaps believed to be the site of his birth), Justinian, his confessor, and Patrick, his evangelical predecessor. Additional sites existed on Ramsey Island, including the supposed site of Justinian's martyrdom (though this episode is not featured before the compilation of John of Tynemouth in the fourteenth century and a fifteenth-century *vita et miracula*). The stone buildings which are known either from standing remains or archaeology were mostly built between the eleventh and sixteenth centuries, though a number of them occupy the site of early medieval enclosures and inhumation cemeteries.[887]

The mostly intact pilgrimage landscape of Glencolumbkille, Co. Donegal, may offer another example of a late-developing biographical landscape in the vein of St Davids. While most of the features which survive to this day are early, even prehistoric in date, their association with Colum Cille, or Columba, may be much more recent, and reflect a similar program of cult promotion on an existing sacred landscape. There is no convincing evidence of a connection between the area now known as Glencolumbkille and its historical namesake, but there are vivid

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[886] Kirsty Owen, "Iona Island and Abbey," *Archaeological Journal* 164, no. sup1 (January 1, 2007): 52–54.
[887] Ludlow, "Identifying Early Medieval Ecclesiastical Sites in South-West Wales," 71-76.

traditions of Columba's presence and activities at the site from the late Middle Ages (notably the 1532 *Life* of Colum Cille by Manus O'Donnell), as well as physical monuments linked to him – Colum Cille's 'chair' and 'well' on the high ground above the hill-top monastic enclosure being two, and the 'bed' of Colum Cille within the primary chapel of that enclosure being another. There is also the story of Colum Cille's battle with the demons in the glen, where it is said that Colum Cille cast his bell into the midst of the enemy horde, scattering and driving them from the area, leaving the bell embedded in the ground where it became a source of protection. The 'Townland of the Demons' is today the twelfth pilgrimage station of the Glencolumbkille *turas*: a standing stone embedded in what could be the entrance of a collapsed souterrain. These stories and their association with the much older features in the landscape may originate with the efforts of the Abbey of Derry and its abbot Flaithbertach Ua Brolcháin (d.1175), discussed below.

With the exception of Glendalough and St Davids, a common thread between these sites with biographical sacred landscapes is the absence of corporeal relics (and even in the case of St David, the relics of the saint were only 'discovered' in the mid-thirteenth century, after the composition of Giraldus's *Vita* and at least some of the building and investment in the coastal chapels).[888] Glendalough, of course, also presents the best documented and preserved example of a biographical landscape, even if it was apparently an addition to, rather than a substitute for, the relics of St Kevin themselves, which seem to have been kept in St Kevin's Church, rather than the adjacent cathedral.[889] The accepted wisdom that corporeal relics served a secondary function in both the pre- and post-Conquest church in Wales has been challenged in recent years.[890] However, a strong case can still be made for the development and promotion of biographical landscapes as a substitute for corporeal relics in certain instances. This was certainly the case at Lindisfarne, where the centre of the Cuthbertine cult was the empty grave, or cenotaph, as well as the site of Cuthbert's final monastic retreat on Inner Farne, where a number of miracles are recorded. The

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[888] James, "The Cult of St David in the Middle Ages," 18.

[889] Ó Carragáin, "Recluses, Relics, and Corpses: Interpreting St Kevin's House"; Moss, "Architectural Sculpture at Glendalough."

[890] Hurlock, *Medieval Welsh Pilgrimage,* 21-22.

development of the *turas* at Glencolumbkille can be plausibly explained as the attempt of the community at Derry Abbey to create a physical link between their church and Colum Cille's life when they began to promote themselves as the institutional heirs of Colum Cille's authority. This authority was descended from Iona, which despite the eventual loss of its relics continued to promote itself as a place of Columban pilgrimage. The particular circumstances that may have led to the creation and promotion of a sacred landscape of David and his spiritual *familia* around the present site of St Davids Cathedral will be reviewed in the following section.

Landscapes of Institutional Myth: Crisis and Continuity

The events of the Anglo-Norman invasions of England and Wales in the eleventh century, and the gradual Anglo-Norman encroachment on Ireland in the late twelfth century, led to dramatic institutional upheaval and ecclesiastical reforms. In England, the last Anglo-Saxon bishop (Wulfstan of Worcester) died in the last decade of the eleventh century, and the replacements for the native clerics were overwhelmingly drawn from the continent. In a related development, Continental church reforms resulted in the displacement or conversion of pre-Conquest institutions to Benedictine or Augustinian foundations. For those institutions that held the relics of saints and or were traditionally the caretakers of a saint's cult, there was often great concern with both legal and ideological institutional continuity; despite the sometimes wholesale replacement of prior communities, the new or reformed institutions sought to inherit the legitimacy and authority of their predecessors.

As documented by a range of scholarship beginning with Susan Ridyard, the most common response of Anglo-Norman institutions was to appropriate native cults and promote them as a source of financial gain and prestige, sometimes reviving moribund cults or in other cases inventing either new saints or associations between known saints and their own foundations.[891] The 'problems' of legitimacy facing individual institutions could vary greatly. For example, Durham's new Benedictine priory had to explain the expulsion of the secular canons

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[891] Ridyard, "'Condigna Veneratio.'"

who had acted as Cuthbert's guardians for more than a century, while Derry sought to exploit the decline of the monastery of Iona by laying claim to Colum Cille's monastic legacy. At St Davids, I have argued that there was some degree of uncertainty as to the original location of St David's monastery by the late eleventh century, which became a liability as the community of St Davids' Cathedral pursued its ambitions to become a metropolitan see.

One of the many tools used by these institutions was the appropriation, reinterpretation, and promotion of sacred landscapes, on both a larger (covering an entire region, as with Durham or Derry) and smaller (satellite chapels such as those at St Davids) scale. The concept of 'walking in the footsteps of the saints' was a powerful and foundational notion of early Christian pilgrimage, one with particular resonance in Ireland, but also found in Durham's stewardship of the cult of St Cuthbert. The advantage of using landscapes was to create a sacred geography that 'bound' the cult to a particular location or series of locations, sites which could be all the more easily controlled and exploited by institutions in search of unquestionable legitimacy after periods of upheaval. Such practices in Ireland can be found to derive from the phenomenon of *dindshenchas*, or the lore of places, but the idea of associating points in the landscape, whether it consisted of a physical or mental topography, was far older. In the form of the veneration of the Holy Land and Rome, such practices were an important component of early Christian religion. As shown in the preceding case studies, in the absence of corporeal relics or ancient buildings, the intent was to turn a landscape, consisting of a series of individual sites, into a kind of contact relic substitute, using both text and material investment to record and memorialize these associations.

One of the most common institutional challenges that the keepers of a saint's cult had to overcome was the physical relocation of the saints' remains from one place, usually their original grave, to a site with significantly less claim to antiquity. The most obvious example of this phenomenon among those ecclesiastical institutions that were interested in creating and promoting sacred landscapes is Durham Cathedral priory, which not only faced the challenge of a site move, but also the complete replacement of the 'original' guardians of their saint with

continental monks. This new community, however, sought not to break from the past, but instead to claim it for their own. Writers such as Symeon of Durham (possibly building off the work of the author of the misleadingly-dated *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*) manipulated events to draw a direct line between Cuthbert, who was imagined as a monastic bishop above all else, and the Benedictine monks of Durham. As detailed in Chapter VI, this was a complicated and diverse effort, using both the writing of new histories and the acquisition and promotion of important sites in Cuthbert's afterlife, as well as establishing a cell and pilgrimage church on Lindisfarne itself. Cuthbert became a saint of the wider North, with his cult even reaching into Scotland, including Durham's ownership of Old Melrose during the early twelfth century. The landscape of northern monasticism, encompassing those sites associated with the most famous Benedictine monk of Britain, the Venerable Bede, was repurposed to lend legitimacy to Durham as the spiritual successor to the great monastery of Lindisfarne. The most comparable example to the activities of Durham in the post-Conquest period are the expansionist ambitions of Derry Abbey in Ireland. As had been the case at Lindisfarne, persistent Viking raids had diminished the monastery of one of the most prominent saints in the region. The abandonment and desolation of Iona was perhaps overstated by contemporary sources (as it was at Lindisfarne, and to a lesser extent Wearmouth and Jarrow), but there was little doubt that the mantle of successor to Colum Cille, the *comarba*, had left the island, first re-established in Kells. But Kells' own decline in the eleventh century would leave the door open for Derry and its ambitious bishop a century later, leading to an entirely different narrative that placed Derry at the centre of Colum Cille's legacy.

In Wales, St Davids also sought to widen their area of control by reaching back into their past. It is clear from the textual evidence of the twelfth century, particularly the work of Giraldus Cambrensis, that at least some in the community of canons sought to assert a claim to metropolitan status, to rank alongside Canterbury itself. But there are hints that St Davids' own claims to institutional continuity may have been even more tenuous than Durham's. As discussed in Chapter V, the early medieval centre of David's cult might not have been where the cathedral was built at all, but rather up the Welsh coast in Ceredigion, at *Hen Fynwy*, before it was scattered

by centuries of raiding in the area by various parties, culminating in the destruction of David's shrine in 1090. [**Figure 5.1**] If the cathedral was going to appeal for metropolitan status on the strength of its association with David, the apostle of the Welsh, it would have been vital to secure their claim as the site of David's original monastery. Building chapels at a number of sites around the peninsula where *Menevia* had developed and associating them through hagiographical accounts with the life of St David was one way to do this. A keen interest in local geography and place names is evident in Giraldus's *Life*, by contrast to the *Life* of Rhygyfarch (whose own origins and loyalties were closer to Ceredigion than modern day Pembrokeshire). The largest difference between St Davids and Durham, however, was certainly the absence of St David's body, which was said to have been lost around 1090 during the period of raiding prior to the establishment of the Norman episcopal see, though it would be miraculously 'discovered' in the thirteenth century, after this landscape had taken shape.

The case of Derry Abbey can be more closely compared to the examples from England and Wales than most of the Irish case studies discussed in Chapter IV. As at Durham, a twelfth-century effort to lay claim to a wide swath of ecclesiastical properties by appropriating the legacy of an important saint was accompanied by the creation of a new history that legitimated these claims. The *Betha Colum Cille* (or 'The Irish *Life of Colum Cille'*) was composed between 1150 and 1169 and served a very similar purpose to Symeon's *Libellus* (and the earlier *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*) by furthering the interests and ambitions of Derry Abbey. As with Symeon's *Libellus*, the Irish *Life* began by building off well known hagiographical and historical works, in this case the influential hagiography of Columba by Adomnán. But from the beginnings of Colum Cille's monastic career, the Irish *Life* diverges dramatically from Adomnán's account. According to the Irish *Life*, Colum Cille's first foundation after Iona was at Derry, following which he traveled around Ireland on a campaign of monastic settlement, founding Raphoe, Durrow, Kells and Clonmore. [**Figure 4.36**] The Irish *Life* also records the saint visiting a number of important monasteries established by others and leaving gifts or secondary relics at each site, not unlike the way that the presence of Cuthbert's body at a number of sites around Northumbria was used to

tie them to Durham in the aftermath of the departure from Lindisfarne in 875.[892] The only one of these sites mentioned in Adomnán's *Vita S. Columbani* is Durrow, and there is no evidence at all of Columban foundations at Swords, Moone, or Drumcliffe. As was the case at Durham, where Symeon made the ancient monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow a crucial part of a (re)foundation narrative of Durham Cathedral Priory that emphasized continuity with Lindisfarne and Cuthbert (despite the fact that there was no historical link between Cuthbert and Wearmouth/Jarrow) the monks of Derry rewrote history. The Irish *Life* upended the commonly accepted sequence of Columba's monastic career to give the institution where it was written the prestige of first foundation. This rhetorical effort is best seen in the context of a concerted effort by Flaithbertach Ua Brolcháin to claim the legacy of Colum Cille for Derry Abbey. In 1150, the abbot claimed the title of Colum Cille's *comarba* from the heads of the beleaguered foundation at Kells. From 1151 to 1153, Flaithbertach carried out a series of circuits through the northern territories of Derry, including parts of the itinerary of foundation laid out in the *Betha Colum Cille*, and ultimately secured the tribute of the churches of Colum Cille in Meath and Leinster. These circuits in the twelfth century can be compared to the historical 'circuit' made by the body of St Cuthbert in the centuries following the flight from Lindisfarne. In both cases, twelfth century institutions used them to back their claims to legitimacy centuries later.

In general, the twelfth century seems to have been a time of institutional reconsolidation and appropriation. Through institutional reform and political developments, many continental clerics found themselves in charge of much older foundations at various points after the conquests of England, Wales, and Ireland by the Norman and then Anglo-Norman kings. As laid out by Susan Ridyard (though in a primarily eleventh-century context), many of these institutions under new management found it advantageous to renew their sometimes-moribund cults, using them as sources of institutional legitimacy and continuity, as well as a draw for new pilgrims in an increasingly competitive environment. In some cases, these efforts continued beyond the

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[892] Overbey, *Sacral Geographies*; Herbert, *Iona, Kells, and Derry*, 181-4.

twelfth century, even after the reformed institutions found their feet, as was the case at Durham and Lindsifarne. Unlike Durham, however, Derry's twelfth-century efforts were not successful over the long term, and by 1166 Derry had lost its foremost patron and the institutional *familia* of Colum Cille began to fall apart in the face of the Norman invasion. The Prince Bishops of Durham, on the other hand, maintained one of the most important saints' cults in the north of England, and retained control of most of the lands that were associated with Cuthbert. St Davids ultimately encountered mixed success: the cult of David was fully established at the site of the Norman cathedral in *Menevia*, and the bones of the saint were even miraculously 'discovered' at Ewenny Priory in 1275. However, the metropolitan ambitions of Giraldus Cambrensis and the canons ultimately went unrealized.

One continental parallel is worth discussing in the context of Durham and Derry and their rewriting of history and use of a saint's presence to assert territorial claims. As was the case at Lindisfarne, Viking attacks drove out the monks of Stavelot-Malmedy and St Remacle in the Ardennes from Remacle's foundation at Stavelot in 884-85. The second book of the *Miracula Remacli* recounts the journey of the monks and their precious cargo through a series of towns and properties controlled by Stavelot-Malmedy, during which a number of miracles are recorded.[893] The *Miracula*'s telling of the events served "to link territorial control to pastoral protection, and to promote the entire territory that Stavelot controlled."[894] This narrative is remarkably similar to that of the flight of Lindisfarne's monks in 875. The cult of St Remacle also provides a rare parallel to the veneration of an empty cenotaph of a saint, with the *inventio* of the saint's original tomb in 1042 and subsequent construction of the 'grotto of St Remacle' at Malmedy.[895]

At Glastonbury, the monks also enlisted their ties to early saints in pursuit of their case for unquestioned antiquity. In the twelfth century, the community employed one of the foremost historians of his age, William of Malmesbury, to compose several histories and revised and

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[893] Arnold, *Negotiating the Landscape: Environment and Monastic Identity in the Medieval Ardennes*, 193-5.
[894] Ibid., 195.
[895] Ibid., 187.

updated saints' *vitae*, a work which was continued by numerous interpolators of the surviving text as well as the fourteenth-century *Chronica* of John of Glastonbury. Glastonbury found itself as a competitive disadvantage to sites of similar antiquity and wealth by its lack of a primary saintly founder, and even the custody of its most famed abbot, Dunstan, was contested with Christ Church, Canterbury. In the period before and after the Norman conquest, Glastonbury had begun to advertise its links to a number of Irish saints, including Brigid, Beonna, and even the great Patrick himself. While the monks claimed that Patrick had been buried in the *Vetusta Ecclesia*, Beonna and Brigid became linked with the marshland islands of Meare and Beckery, respectively. These sites seem to have formed the centre of their cults, rather than the monastery itself (even though Beonna or Beningnus was translated in 1090). The Irish monastic site of Monaincha, with its Romanesque church set on an island in the since-drained marshes of Co. Tipperary, might provide some insight into what Beckery and its sister islands might have looked like. [**Figure 4.25-4.27**] It is possible that other 'islands' mentioned in the documentary records, including Martinsey, Andresey (Nyland), Godney, and perhaps Clewer, also represented pilgrimage locations to a variety of different saints beyond the bounds of the monastery itself, although there is less evidence, both textual and archaeological, of the other sites. The fire of 1184 that destroyed Glastonbury Abbey led to further changes in the mythologizing and legend-building of the community. The destruction of the *Vetusta Ecclesia*, preserved as an architectural relic, as well as the presumed loss of a bevy of other relics, necessitated the *inventio* of Arthur and Guinevere, as well as the miraculous rediscovery of Dunstan. The islands themselves, as well as the Tor, were fitted into new legends: Beckery became associated with Mary Magdalene, while Meare seems to have become estate center of the abbot, and the Tor was said to be the earliest religious site in the area, dating back to the time of the earliest evangelists in Britain, and by the late Middle Ages Glastonbury celebrated its links to none less than Joseph of Arimathea.

The changing dedications and saintly associations between the islands around Glastonbury, as well as the monastery itself, find some parallel with developments in the Dingle Peninsula, but the greatest concern of the monks, like the community at Durham, seems to have

been institutional legitimacy and continuity. Glastonbury had no patron saint of Cuthbert's renown, but as with Durham and the Cuthbertine sites in Northumbria, the claim made to the islands (which framed the legendary Twelves Hides of Glastonbury) might have been used to solidify a legal property claim. As Durham competed for control of the manor at Crayke with York, Glastonbury and Wells competed over the estate at Meare in the thirteenth century.

Reinvented Landscapes: *Inventiones* and Superseded Saints

The kind of institutional cult building discussed in the previous section took a number of different forms, but in a few key examples the new or reformed institutions took over not only a site or cult but a pre-existing sacred landscape with its own history and associations. The phenomenon can be best observed in Ireland in places like Lough Derg (which is known to this day as St Patrick's Purgatory) and the Dingle Peninsula, mostly on the basis of place-name evidence and tracking the development of certain traditions through the textual record. I have argued that the association between St David and the settlement formerly called *Menevia* is one that was only developed in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, but based on the presence of early ecclesiastical sites, it is reasonable to speculate that this may be another example of landscape re-use. While in some cases features in the landscape may have been granted significance in Christian worship which they might not previously have possessed, the more common and likely scenario is one of re-use, where we simply do not have evidence for the traditions that came before. What is known from Dingle, Lough Derg, Glencolumbkille and potentially St Davids, as well as later developments at Glastonbury, is that older, frequently local, saints could be displaced by newer, better known saints with established cults.

Glencolumbkille, a coastal valley in County Donegal, was likely also part of the story of Derry Abbey's ultimately thwarted ambitions. There is no convincing evidence that ties Colum Cille to the site, previously known as *Senglenn*, before the fifteenth century, and not even the revisionist twelfth-century account of the *Betha Colum Cille* corroborates the claim. However, there are reasons to suspect the hand of Derry nonetheless. Despite its distance from Derry, the

lands around Glencolumbkille, including the present day pilgrimage stations, were owned by the abbey as late as 1603.[896] As discussed above, Derry's fortunes took a turn for the worse between 1166 and 1175 when the abbey lost its primary secular patron, its rebuilt abbey church, and the architect of their ambitions, Flaithbertach Ua Brolcháin himself. Nonetheless, it is likely that Derry continued to promote its association with Colum Cille, even if it could neither claim relics nor effectively assert the ownership of the *coarb* of the saint himself. The sacred landscape of Glencolumbkille would have been exploited as a pilgrimage destination under the control of Derry Abbey, as was the case with SS Peter and Paul, Armagh and their ownership of the site at Lough Derg.

What is certain about Glencolumbkille is that its spiritual and perhaps ecclesiastical significance has a much longer history than its direct association with the saint. One of the major monuments in the Glencolumbkille *turas* [**Figure 4.37**], the elaborately carved standing stone on high ground to the west of the Protestant church of St Columba, can be dated to *c.*800, and several of the stations incorporate prehistoric monuments, including the first station, which features the remains of a Neolithic passage tomb, as well as the 'well' of Colum Cille, within the ruins of what is probably another prehistoric structure. [**Figure 4.38**] The oldest site in the glen is associated not with Colum Cille, but with a lesser known figure, St Fanad. It is entirely plausible that the prehistoric landscape was appropriated for an early cult of a local holy figure, only for that local saint to be overridden themselves by Colum Cille, perhaps through the efforts of Derry Abbey.

The legend of St Patrick's Purgatory purports to date back to the missionary career of the Apostle to the Irish, but there is good reason to believe that the first time Lough Derg was associated with Patrick was after the establishment of an Augustinian community on what is called Saints Island in the mid-twelfth century. The first account of St Patrick's Purgatory, where it was said that the Apostle of the Irish convinced several pagan kings to accept Christ upon their witnessing the torments that awaited them in hell, was written in the twelfth century, with the

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[896] Price, "Glencolumbkille, County Donegal, and Its Early Christian Cross-Slabs," 81.

Tractatus de Purgatorio Sancti Patricii of *c.*1184, followed by a detailed description of the Purgatory by Giraldus Cambrensis in 1186. The form of the Purgatory is not consistent across the following few centuries' worth of accounts, raising the possibility that the Augustinian canons who first settled on Saints Island after 1132 were altering the site to adapt it to the needs of the pilgrims. As at Glencolumbkille, there is evidence that St Patrick might have been taking the place of a more local figure, as Lough Derg is referred to in the Irish annals as the 'Termon of Daveoc' in 1070 and 1111. The motivation for the creation of this legend could lie in the circumstances of the Augustinian community at SS Peter and Paul, Armagh, to which the Saints Island foundation was dependent, who had lost control of another major Patrician pilgrimage site at Croagh Patrick with the formation of the diocese of Tuam. At the same time, the translation of Patrick's relics to Downpatrick in 1186 may have created the need for a competing site.

The Dingle Peninsula has been known for centuries, and up to the present day, as the site of a pilgrimage to Mount Brandon. The cult site at the summit was reconstituted in the nineteenth century, and the new structure on the summit probably contains rubble from medieval buildings.[897] Mount Brandon also provides one of the most explicit examples of Irish pilgrimage sites a destination for penitent sinners, as record of 1542 specifies that a murderer was assigned to visit Mount Brandon as well as the famous island monastic site of Skellig Michael, off the west coast of the Dingle Peninsula.[898] According to legend (but not the existing *Lives* and accounts of St Brendan the Navigator and his journey), Brendan ascended the mountain to pray for good fortune in his upcoming voyage. Along the way to the summit from the traditional landing site at Ventry, southwest of Dingle, are a wide range of early Christian monastic or ecclesiastical enclosures that survive better than most comparable sites in England or Wales. There is also the twelfth-century Romanesque church at Kilmalkedar, not far from the famous Gallarus Oratory, a well-preserved eighth- or ninth-century one-celled church. Despite being the most recently built of the sites along the route, the place-name of Kilmalkedar is the best evidence (along with the lack of evidence for

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[897] Cuppage, *Archaeological Survey of the Dingle Peninsula*, 263-264.
[898] MacDonogh, *The Dingle Peninsula*, 185-6.

a contemporary connection between Dingle and St Brendan) that St Brendan may not have been the first saint to lay claim to these lands. Kilmalkedar incorporates the name of Maolcethair, a local Irish saint of the seventh century, and within the modern churchyard are a range of early medieval carved stones, notably including a sundial and an alphabet stone. There is also a possibility that the place name of the enclosure at Kilcolman, closer to the landing point at Ventry, might not refer to 'Colman the Pilgrim,' as has been assumed based on the ogham inscription on a cross-inscribed stone, but rather St Colmán Oilither, also known as Colman the Pilgrim of Ross – the landscape might have been associated with either Colman or Maolcethair, or perhaps even both before the nearby peak became associated with St Brendan the Navigator. The enclosures can be dated to the early medieval period on the basis of diagnostic carved stones, and may have grown up from proprietary churches which developed into small religious communities.[899] While it is possible that the route was promoted by the diocese of Ardfert, which was in competition with the traditional site of Brendan's cult at Clonfert, the case for institutional patronage is considerably weaker than the other case studies discussed here. Nonetheless, the phenomenon of a more universally known saint (Brendan) replacing a lesser-known, more local saint (Maolcethair or possibly Colman), would parallel the development of the Irish sites at Glencolumbkille, Lough Derg, and potentially Glastonbury, where some sites were (re)associated in line with later-developing legends and institutional needs.

Glastonbury also saw a dramatic reuse and reimagining of its sacred landscape after the fire of 1184 created the need for new sources of income. The *inventio* of Arthur and Guinevere, as well as the revival of the cult of St Dunstan, may have shifted the focus of the pilgrimage tradition from a number of secondary relics and sites to the more traditional shrines in the rebuilt abbey church. The landscape and its islands remained a valuable asset to Glastonbury, however. As part of a broader campaign of draining the wetlands, Meare was transformed from the site of St Benignus's hermitage into a medieval estate centre, of which the church, manor house, and a

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[899] Thomas, *The Early Christian Archaeology of North Britain*.

domestic residence known as the Fish House survive to this day. Beckery, formerly associated with St Brigid, may have become more linked to Mary Magdalene. The thirteenth-century "Charter of St Patrick" designated the Tor, which was surprisingly absent in the eleventh and twelfth-century accounts of Glastonbury's history, as the site of the purported earliest church in Britain, founded by legendary saints on the instruction of the apostles themselves. In the later Middle Ages, Glastonbury would associate itself with Joseph of Arimathea, with a well in the crypt of the Lady Chapel and a thorn tree representing his presence in the landscape.

The Pilgrimage Landscape: The Saints in their Multitude

While the model of a reformed institution exploiting a native saint is the most frequent scenario in the case studies discussed in the preceding chapters, there are cases where the development of a sacred landscape was more decentralized. This was either because there was no single saint (and his or her life and *familia*) associated with a series of sites in a broader landscape (thus distinguishing this class of landscape from the biographical landscapes discussed at the beginning of the chapter) or because the landscapes may have developed over a longer period of time, perhaps even driven by local patronage rather than that of a large ecclesiastical foundation. Nonetheless, these landscapes are also dominated by a single point which marks the apex of holiness and the ultimate destination for the pilgrim. At Glastonbury, there seem to have been a wide variety of dedications to the 'island chapels' that made up the landscape of the Twelve Hides as discussed in foundational charters and institutional histories. Some of those dedications were themselves flexible, switching from a saint that had gone out of fashion to one more relevant to the present era. A 'pilgrimage landscape' as defined here is not necessarily mutually exclusive with a biographical landscape; the key distinction is the strength and specificity of the surviving textual sources and traditions. The Saint's Road of Dingle Peninsula culminates with the summit of Mount Brandon and its medieval chapel of St Brendan the Navigator. While this route passes almost a dozen ecclesiastical sites, only a handful of them have dedications which are known today.

Another example of a pilgrimage landscape that is less well understood is the series of sacred sites leading along the Llyn peninsula in Wales to the 'Island of 20,000 Saints,' Bardsey. Like the legend of St Patrick's Purgatory, the renown of the site was probably at least partially an invention by a post-Conquest Augustinian community.[900] That Bardsey was a site of religious significance in the early medieval period seems highly likely; its location on an island which was close to the mainland, but which also presented a challenge to reach, is typical for a monastic or eremitic community such as the Culdees.[901] Eventually, it would be claimed that two journeys to Bardsey Island by an Englishman were worth the same in terms of spiritual salvation as one journey to Rome. As was the case of the Saint's Road to Mount Brandon, the pilgrim would have encountered a range of ecclesiastical sites or ancient features along his or her path, including prehistoric monuments and chapels, some of which may have been dedicated to saints associated with the legendary founder of the monastery on Bardsey Island, St Cadfan, before arriving at Aberdaron and the church of St Hywyn, another follower of the saint. Several of the sites have monuments linked with churches, such as the churches of St Bueno in Clynnogfawr (associated with a Neolithic burial chamber at Bachwen) and Pistyll, as well as a standing stone at Llangwnnadl Menhir, not far from St Gwynhoydl's Church. All of these would have been logical stopping points and wayside attractions for a pilgrim progressing down the peninsula to Bardsey. As at Glencolumbkille and Dingle, distinctly pre-Christian sites and features may have been repurposed for Christian veneration and pilgrimage.

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[900] Hurlock, *Medieval Welsh Pilgrimage*, 22. The first mention of 20,000 saints being buried on the island is from the *Book of Llandaff*, probably written between 1120 and 1140 at Llandaff Cathedral near Cardiff. On 7 May 1120, the bishop of Llandaff translated the relics of St Dyfrig from Bardsey Island to his cathedral, and the legend may have begun as a way to build the renown and prestige of the Cathedral's newest acquisitions. (Wells, *Pilgrim Routes of the British Isles*, 115-116; Hurlock, 18-19).

[901] Inishmurray and Skellig Michael are among the two best known Irish examples, but Ramsey Island near St Davids probably served the same function (Ch. V). The journey from the mainland to the shore at Looe in Cornwall was also known to be perilous (Wessex Archaeology, *Looe, Cornwall: Archaeological Excavation and Assessment of Results*). On the east side of the Llyn Peninsula there was also a former hermitage and eventual monastic cell on Tudwal Island (Karen Stöber and David Austin, "Culdess to Canons: The Augustinian Houses of North Wales," in *Monastic Wales: New Approaches*, ed. Janet Burton and Karen Stöber (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013), 39–54).

The comparison to Dingle is a strong one and has been made by Kathryn Hurlock. As at Bardsey, the final destination was not a shrine or relic, but rather a sacred locale associated with a saint (or saints in the case of Bardsey), cut off from the surrounding landscape by natural barriers and accessible only through a perilous journey. The sites at Dingle survive to a far greater extent than those posited on the Llyn Peninsula, or indeed the island chapels which I have argued existed in the levels at Glastonbury. On the Dingle Peninsula, a pilgrimage route to the summit of Mount Brandon has been reconstructed based on a map of 1840, leading from the harbor at Ventry (the site of a medieval church), past a number of early medieval ecclesiastical enclosures and ruined chapels, as well as past the better preserved chapel of Gallarus Oratory and the twelfth-century church at Kilmalkedar. [**Figure 4.29**] The surviving place-names indicate a variety of associations for the enclosures, including St Brendan's Oratory as well as Templemanaghan (Church of St Manchan), although the majority cannot be identified with individual figures. It is plausible that there were particular associations with particular individuals for these sites during the Dingle Peninsula's use as a pilgrimage route during the early and later Middle Ages. Other than the excavations at Reask (*Riasc*), located well off the main route of the pilgrim road as it has been reconstructed, not enough archaeological investigation has been done on these sites to establish whether they continued in use as ecclesiastical foundations throughout the medieval period, or whether they were abandoned after the early medieval period and left in a ruined state for the following centuries (which given their state of preservation seems somewhat unlikely). That few of the sites appear to have been extensively robbed for stone would suggest that they were at least respected as sacred sites for centuries thereafter, even if they were no longer active ecclesiastical sites. Even more so than Glendalough or Glencolumbkille, which are relatively compact in scale, the Dingle Peninsula most strongly recalls the contemporary Indian example of the Maharashtra pilgrimage to Signapur.[902] There, the pilgrims stopped at a number of way stations, performing rituals and meditation as a means of preparing themselves to reach their final sacred destination. The range of enclosures with their carved stones and small

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[902] Feldhaus, *Connected Places: Region, Pilgrimage, and Geographical Imagination in India*.

stone buildings could very conceivably have served a similar purpose to these sites, where it is likely that medieval Irish pilgrims also performed circumambulation of certain stones or mounds with particular religious significance. This type of ceremony would be consistent with the surviving practices known from places like the *turas* of Glencolumbkille and other sites such as Innishmurray.

Reconstructing a sacred landscape in the Somerset Levels around Glastonbury requires more imagination and informed speculation, but there is substantial evidence to suggest that the bedrock 'islands' rising out of the marsh were used as sites of worship, and perhaps even served as an attraction for pilgrims. [**Figure 7.14**] The most specific associations between saints and individual sites around the Abbey are a pair of Irish figures – St Brigid of Kildare at Beckery and St Beonna (or Benignus) at Meare, who along with St Patrick, whose remains Glastonbury Abbey claimed possession of in the pre-Conquest period, represented the closest thing to a primary saint's cult that the venerable abbey could claim. However, it is possible that other islands might have been dedicated to more universal figures. The place-names of Martinsey and Andresey (now called Nyland), as well as the charter references to chapels, are suggestive of small religious buildings with a specific focus of veneration. The chapel at Godney was additionally dedicated to the Holy Trinity. Finally, there was a possible chapel at Clewer, west of Cheddar and Nyland, dedicated to a St Guthlac (or Cuthlac), which might have been the famous St Guthlac of Crowland, an early abbot, or more likely a deliberate conflation of both, perhaps creating an intellectual link between the topographically similar Somerset Levels and the Fens of East Anglia. There is no real evidence of a chapel at Panborough, as the most common description of the island in the charter evidence refers to its natural beauty and resources, though it is plausible that there was some sort of marker or monument. When these sites developed is unclear due in part to the later interference of Glastonbury's monks, who forged and altered a number of ancient charters after the devastating fire of 1184. Beckery, at least, was being restored and maintained in the post-Conquest period through the fourteenth century, though the chapel there was eventually rededicated to St Mary Magdalene. A potential model for Beckery, or indeed any number of these

chapels, is the mostly surviving arrangement of the Romanesque church at Monaincha, still distinct in the landscape even after the draining of the marshes in the post-medieval period.

Unlike the possible pilgrimage circuits or satellite sites at Lindisfarne, St Davids, Glencolumbkille and Glendalough, these islands would not have all been accessible by foot under normal circumstances and might instead have had to be reached by boat. Nonetheless, influence or inspiration for a sacred landscape encompassing what became known as the Twelve Hides of Glastonbury, which formed the core of the Abbey's ancient estates, could have come from Ireland or Irish pilgrims, due to the presence of Irish saints' cults and the proximity of Glastonbury to the Irish Sea. Beckery's position at the outer edge of the 'island' where Glastonbury Abbey was established made it a likely landing point for boats approaching Glastonbury from the west, and according to the *Life* of Benignus, Meare was also mostly cut off from the main abbey by floodwaters. Beginning in the late Saxon period, the Levels began to be drained, and eventually Meare went from a remote and most inaccessible retreat to one of the most important and lucrative of the Abbey's estates, with a new church, manor house, and summer residence (the 'Fish House') built during the fourteenth century, even as the legend of Benignus continued to be recorded in the Abbey's chronicles. Gradually, Glastonbury may have moved away from a decentralized pilgrimage landscape demarcated by island chapels and a mix of specific and universal dedications in an Irish-inspired model to a more conventional shrine and relic-based cult in the new Abbey Church itself. At the same time, places like Meare, once the center of cults, were becoming productive and valuable land. Glastonbury's development may represent a hybrid of traditions, showing evidence of a decentralized, satellite-site-based sacred landscape along the lines of those seen in Ireland, eventually giving way to a more conventional shrine-cult in closer accordance with the majority of post-Conquest religious centers. Glastonbury's 'grab bag' approach to acquiring and promoting sacred sites and objects in their quest for an unquestionable central cult, from the contact relics of Brigid to the preservation of the *Vetusta Ecclesia* as an architectural relic (testified by its subsequent influence on the Lady Chapel built to replace it) may give us strong evidence for the dynamic nature of these sacred landscapes.

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These four models are far from exclusive, and there is abundant space to qualify and re-categorize them, particularly given the number and variety of recognized sacred landscapes in Ireland. As will be covered in the conclusion, the ultimate aim of this project is to argue for the recognition of sacred landscape-building as a phenomenon of the Anglo-Norman period and to identify other possible examples to create a more comprehensive understanding of the medieval pilgrimage experience. It cannot be doubted that the great shrines within the great cathedrals were generally the centres of saints' cults, but this does not mean they were the only places that pilgrims went, or indeed, as was explicitly the case at Coldingham, even the primary site of healing miracles.

IX: CONCLUSION: REVIEW OF FINDINGS AND NEXT STEPS

As set out in the introduction, the goal of this project was to challenge a major assumption about saints' cults and patterns of veneration and promotion in the post-Conquest period – that the centre of any cult – the primary source of miraculous energies, the ultimate destination of any pilgrim seeking heavenly aid, the space most tightly designed and controlled and manipulated by the keepers of the cult – was the shrine and its setting. John Crook, Ben Nilson, Tim Tatton-Brown, and Eric Fernie are among the many scholars who have published major works focusing on the shrine and its setting, and the majority of individual site monographs have devoted most of their attention to either the architectural design of churches or the phases of building.[903] More recently, there has been increased interest in thinking about the dynamics of space within large churches and ecclesiastical precincts more broadly by Roberta Gilchrist, Allan Doig and Peter Fergusson.[904] The phenomenon of medieval pilgrimage itself has been extensively studied, including important work by Kathryn Hurlock on pilgrimage in a specifically Welsh context, which does address the issues of place and space.[905] However, specific study of the material evidence of pilgrimage beyond pilgrim tokens has been limited, with only a few more recent publications looking closely at pilgrimage roads and routes outside of Ireland.[906] Religion-driven landscape studies, such as those by Turner and Stocker and Everson, have tended to focus less on the physical form of the landscape and individual features and how they relate to one another than on the patterns of land ownership and patronage, utilizing specific techniques for studying larger areas such as Historic Landscape Characterization.[907] Attempts to examine smaller-scale landscapes around ecclesiastical sites within England and Wales have been limited, and as yet there has been no

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[903] Crook, *The Architectural Setting of the Cult of the Saints*; Nilson, *Cathedral Shrines of Medieval England*; Fernie, *The Architecture of Norman England*; Tim Tatton-Brown, "Canterbury and the Architecture of Pilgrimage Shrines in England," in *Pilgrimage: The English Experience from Becket to Bunyan*, ed. Colin Morris and Peter Roberts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 90–107.

[904] Gilchrist, *Norwich Cathedral Close*; Allan Doig, *Liturgy and Architecture from the Early Church to the Middle Ages*, Liturgy, Worship, and Society (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008); Doig, "Sacred Journeys/Sacred Spaces : The Cult of St Cuthbert"; Fergusson, *Canterbury Cathedral Priory in the Age of Becket*.

[905] Hurlock, *Medieval Welsh Pilgrimage*.

[906] Locker, *Landscapes of Pilgrimage in Medieval Britain*; Candy, *The Archaeology of Pilgrimage on the Camino de Santiago*; Wells, *Pilgrim Routes of the British Isles*.

[907] Turner, *Making a Christian Landscape*; Everson and Stocker, *Custodians of Continuity?*.

comparative study of multiple sites of this type, though Richard Morris' *Churches in the Landscape* and a series of essays edited by P.S. Barnwell addressed these questions to an extent on a site-by-site basis. [908]

The introduction of this thesis introduced and defined two important terms for identifying and understanding the way exterior space was used by the medieval cult of saints - *secondary cult site* and *sacred landscape*. While the former was most explicitly demonstrated in the case of St Æbbe's chapel on Kirk Hill near Coldingham Priory (Ch. III), this thesis has identified a number of examples of a much broader phenomenon driven by keen awareness of the spatial dimensions of a saint's life and afterlife, particularly the places where they were born, observed the religious life, worked miracles, and where their bodies rested after they passed into the next life. A particular concern with identifying, memorializing, and promoting sites of significance to a saint before and after their death can be identified across different ecclesiastical traditions and regions throughout the Anglo-Norman world. Such initiatives have been recognized and studied in the context of hagiography and miracle collections. They have shed light on a period of transition between 'native' religious traditions and the Continental practices and attitudes of the Anglo-Norman ecclesiastical elite, and the way that old traditions and cults were appropriated and exploited to create a sense of institutional continuity and as attractions for pilgrimage (Chapter II).[909] However, these previous studies have been limited by disciplinary divides as well as a perception that interest in landscapes and multi-focal pilgrimage destinations were phased out with the imposition of Norman reforms. While the phenomenon has been identified and accepted in Irish scholarship (Chapter IV), the implications of its survival and presence on the larger island so close by have not been properly considered. This thesis has demonstrated that such a divide between 'Irish' or 'Celtic' traditions and Anglo-Norman reform of 'native' saints' cults (focused around the shrine and the great churches that housed them), whether based on

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[908] Morris, *Churches in the Landscape*; Barnwell, *Places of Worship in Britain and Ireland, 300-950*.

[909] Yarrow, *Saints and Their Communities*; Koopmans, *Wonderful to Relate*; Susan Ridyard, "'Condigna Veneratio'"; Antonia Gransden, *Legends, Tradition and History in Medieval England*.

geography or differing ecclesiastical contexts, can be unhelpful and limiting, and that while it is difficult to prove a diffusion or dissemination of these ideas and strategies of cult promotion from Ireland to England and Wales, the possibility cannot be discounted.

In addition to challenging the paradigm that held the shrine and the cathedral that housed it as the most important and even exclusive *locus* of sacred power for the cult of saints in Anglo-Norman England and Wales, this thesis has argued for the existence of at least three examples of the institutions serving as the guardians and promoters of sacred bodies or legacies utilizing features in the landscape and its relationship to their own foundations in both the present and perhaps more importantly the past to enhance their own prestige (Ch. V-VII). In the case of St Davids (its coastal chapels and geographic centring of the life of St David), Durham Cathedral Priory (interest in the resting places of Cuthbert at Durham, Lindisfarne, and the broader Northumbrian landscape) and Glastonbury Abbey (a putative network of island chapels), all three institutions primarily sought to assert and reinforce perceptions or claims of their antiquity for contemporary advantage. All three can be argued to have installed, restored, promoted, or re-shaped secondary cult sites to serve not only as attractions to pilgrims but as physical evidence in their ideological programmes. It is important to note the significance of the Anglo-Norman (or Anglo-Welsh) transition in all three cases. The three case studies are also linked by the production of new or revised hagiography or *historia*, as well as examples of satellite buildings and material investment at sites of sacred significance either controlled by or linked to their institutions. Needless to say, these three sites are in no way unique in witnessing these dynamics or developments; indeed, they are more common to the full body of foundations impacted by the Norman transition than not (see the end of Chapter II for a number of examples). It therefore is worth investing in future research to see if the same phenomenon of secondary cult sites and sacred space can be identified elsewhere.

This thesis was necessarily limited in scope, and so was not able to explore examples of secondary cult sites and sacred landscapes in Scotland (aside from that of Iona, discussed by

Overbey and Jenkins); there may be other island monasteries north of the English border, even up into the Orkneys, that integrated the landscape into their foundation legends and hagiography.[910] Perhaps the most enticing candidate within England is Ely, which preserved a number of place-names in the twelfth-century *Liber Eliensis* related to St Ætheldreda's flight from the north, and is situated in a similar wetland landscape to Glastonbury, and also its sister fenland foundation of Crowland Abbey.[911] The network of surviving chapels on the island of Lerins on the French Mediterranean coast also invites further research on the phenomenon of sacred landscapes on the continent, both in the context of ecclesiastical reform and cult promotion and the process of conversion during the Northern Crusades.[912] The relationship between the recognition of the sacred topography of a saint's life and death to most famous instance, the sites associated with the life and death of Jesus Christ in Jerusalem, is another potential avenue of further research.

The medieval world was, despite the all-consuming awareness of the divine presence and the otherworldly in the minds of those who inhabited it, strongly grounded in the observation and understanding of their earthly surroundings, and where the places they lived their everyday lives in the mundane world intersected with the world to come. The spiritual geography these places of intersection created was manifested in shrines and churches but also in secondary sites, often natural features given new significance by the *praesentia* of holy men and women. While set apart in their virtue and deeds, saints were nonetheless viewed as accessible to the medieval believer, certainly more so than the Godhead itself. By the grace of God and a favourable moral character, any man or woman could, technically, join the ranks of the saints, and even those who could not achieve such lofty goals could at least share in their grace and ask them to serve as

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[910] Beatrice Widell, "The Monastic Lifeworld: Memories and Narratives of Landscapes of Early Medieval Monasticism in Argyll, Scotland," *Landscapes* 18, no. 1 (January 2, 2017): 4–18.

[911] Fairweather, *Liber Eliensis*, 38-43; 52-53.

[912] Codou and Lauwers, *Lérins, Une Île Sainte de l'Antiquité Au Moyen Age*; Yann Codou, "Iles de Lérins: Ile Saint-Honorat, Les Chapelles Du Saint-Sauveur et de La Trinité," *Congrès Archéologique de France* 168 (2012): 77–84; Rosa Maria Dessì and Michel Lauwers, "Désert, Église, Île Sainte. Lérins et La Sanctification Des Îles Monastiques de l'Antiquité à La Fin Du Moyen Age," in *Lérins, Une Île Sainte de l'Antiquité Au Moyen Age.* Ed. Codou, Yann & Lauwers, Michel. Collection d'études Médiévales de Nice, 9 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), 231–79.

intercessors and conduits of God's power. The myriad expressions and rituals of the medieval cult of saints and Christian worship more broadly, and how it played out across larger and smaller landscapes, is essential to understanding the medieval Christian worldview. The range of evidence for such practices is scattered and often buried in other details, but with an interdisciplinary approach it may be possible to access the world where men and women walked in the footsteps of their holy forebearers.

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