The Old English Gloss to the Lindisfarne Gospels

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The Old English Gloss to the Lindisfarne Gospels

Language, Author and Context

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Seville and London, March 2015
Julia Fernández Cuesta and Sara M. Pons-Sanz

Abbreviations

a	left-hand column in a page
acc.	accusative
act.	active (voice)
Angl.	Anglian
b	right-hand column in a page
c.	L *circa* ‘around’
cent.	century
cp.	compare
caus.	causative
dat.	dative
e.g.	L *exempli gratia* ‘for example’
f.	folio
ff.	folios
fut.	future
gen.	genitive
Go.	Gothic
Gr.	Greek
i.e.	L *id est* ‘that is’
imp.	imperative
ind.	indicative
infl.	inflection
intran.	intransitive
L	Latin
Li.	Lindisfarne Gospels (Latin text or gloss)
lit.	literally
ML	Medieval Latin
MS	manuscript
MSS	manuscripts
n.	footnote
no.	number
nos.	numbers
NP	noun phrase
NSR	Northern Subject Rule
OE	Old English
OEN	Old East Norse
OFris.	Old Frisian
OHG	Old High German
OIc	Old Icelandic
OS	Old Saxon
part.	participle
pass.	passive (voice)
PDE	Present Day English
PGmc	Proto-Germanic
perf.	perfect

pl.	plural
pres.	present
PRO	pronoun
r	recto
refl.	reflexive
Ru.	Rushworth Gospels (Latin text or gloss)
Ru^1	Part of the gloss to the Rushworth Gospels attributed to Farman
Ru^2	Part of the gloss to the Rushworth Gospels attributed to Owun
sg.	singular
so.	someone
st.	strong
sth.	something
subj.	subjunctive
tran.	transitive
trans.	translation
v	verso
vs.	L *versus* ‘against’
wk.	weak
WS	West Saxon

Editorial conventions

In order to make this volume as cohesive as possible, we have followed a number of editorial conventions with regard to various formatting and transcription issues:

1. Given that most papers make use of the *Dictionary of Old English Corpus*, we have adopted its practice of giving Latin words and longer structures in italics. Old English is quoted in Roman characters, although Old English dictionary forms are given in italics in order to differentiate them from particular forms in their paradigm.
2. On the basis of the *Anglia* stylesheet, we use ampersand for L *et* in Latin quotations and the Tironian sign for OE *and*, except in cases where the manuscript, and not an edition, is specifically quoted.
3. We use various special characters as follows:
   - ( ) indicate editorial expansions of abbreviated forms in a manuscript;
   - [ ] indicate authorial comments or phonetic transcriptions;
   - < > indicate that the matter under discussion has to do mainly with spelling;
   - ` ´ indicate that the character(s) appear(s) above the text line;
   - ´ ` indicate that the character(s) appear(s) below the text line;
   - ' indicates an abbreviated form.
4. Vowel length in dictionary forms is not marked.

Illustrations

The images from the Lindisfarne Gospels and the Durham Collectar have been reproduced by kind persmission of the British Library and the Dean of Durham Cathedral, respectively.

Julia Fernández Cuesta and Sara M. Pons-Sanz

Introduction

The present collection on the Old Northumbrian gloss to the Lindisfarne Gospels contains some of the papers presented at a workshop on the Lindisfarne gloss held at the University of Westminster, London, in April 2012, as well as various additional papers. The aim of the workshop was to bring together scholars working on the Lindisfarne gloss from different perspectives (palaeography, glossography, history, linguistics and philology) in the belief that it is not possible to solve the problems posed by the language of one of the most intriguing Old English texts that have come down to us without carefully exploring the socio-historical context and the cultural and intellectual milieu in which it was produced.

Some of the contributors to this volume have dedicated a great part of their professional lives to the study of the Lindisfarne Gospels and its Old English gloss, and are experts in the linguistic features of the text and its context, while others have recently completed doctoral theses which are themselves already important contributions to the field. All of us share a fascination with the Lindisfarne Gospels, although our methodological approaches vary considerably.

Aldred's Old English glosses to the Lindisfarne Gospels (London, British Library, MS Nero D.iv) and to the Durham Collectar or Ritual (Durham, Cathedral Library, MS A.iv.19), and Ru[2], Owun's interlinear gloss to most of the Rushworth or MacRegol Gospels (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Auct. D.2.19), are the most substantial representatives of what has been traditionally labelled 'Old Northumbrian', more particularly, 'northern late Old Northumbrian'.[1] Apart from a few brief runic inscriptions, the first records that have been preserved in English were written in varieties of northern English.[2]

As is well known, in the seventh and eighth centuries the kingdom of Northumbria was one of the most important centres of learning in Europe, producing scholars of the stature of Bede and Alcuin, and spiritual figures such as St. Cuthbert. As the result of Viking attacks, which started in the late eighth century, the monastic community of Lindisfarne was compelled to leave the island and undertake a journey that would take them to Chester-le-Street (and eventually to

1 Owun's gloss is commonly referred to as Ru[2] in order to distinguish it from Farman's Mercian gloss (Ru[1]), which extends through all of Matthew's Gospel, Mark 1.1–2.15 and John 18.1–18.3.

2 Early witnesses of northern Old English include coin inscriptions, the runic inscriptions on the Franks Casket and the Ruthwell Cross, the northern versions of *Cædmon's Hymn*, the *Leiden Riddle*, *Bede's Death Song* and some 9,000 names contained in the early manuscripts of Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica* and in the Durham *Liber Vitae*, all from the seventh to the ninth centuries. The language in which they are written has been traditionally labelled 'early Old Northumbrian'.

Durham) in what has been described as a "move closer to the new seat of political power, which had shifted [...] to Viking-held territory and its power-base at York" (Brown, this volume: p. 21; see also Brown 2003: 85–90). It was at the community's new home in Chester-le-Street that in the tenth century a priest named Aldred furnished one their most valuable possessions, the Lindisfarne Gospels, with a continuous interlinear gloss in Old Northumbrian, producing the first extant translation of the Gospels into the vernacular and the most extensive text that has come down to us written in northern Old English. Given the scanty nature of the surviving texts, the Lindisfarne gloss is of inestimable value for the study of the language at a time when some of the most interesting changes in the grammar of English were taking place. Although the gloss has received a great deal of attention and has been widely studied in the past two centuries,[3] there are still numerous problems which remain unresolved. It was largely for this reason that the time seemed ripe for a new approach to the text from an interdisciplinary perspective, not only to revise and assess the work of our predecessors, but also because we believe that the application of modern methodologies (variationist approaches, quantitative analysis, statistics, linguistic archaeology) may shed new light on both the language of the text and its context.

The papers included in this collection have been organized into three parts. Those presented in the first section, "The Gloss in Context", aim to help us understand Aldred's goals and interests, as well as the cultural milieu he was working in. **Michelle Brown** offers further evidence in support of the idea, first put forward in Brown (2003), that the composition of the gloss must be understood against the background of the sociohistorical and political situation of tenth-century Northumbria, when the area was being integrated into the newly unified England and was also threatened by the ambition of the Viking kings of York. She offers a survey of the figure of Aldred the glossator in the context of the

3 The gloss was edited by Stevenson and Waring (1854–1865) and Skeat (1871–1887), and some excerpts are included in Sweet (1978). Various dissertations have been devoted to the study of individual Gospels: e.g. Foley (1903) on Matthew's Gospel; Lea (1894) on Mark's Gospel; Kellum (1906) on Luke's Gospel; and Füchsel (1901) on John's Gospel. Palaeographic studies of the text include Ker (1943) and Kendrick et al. (1960). With regard to the various levels of linguistic analysis, Foley (1903), Stolz (1908) and Hogg (2004) deal with the phonology of the gloss. The standard reference grammars of Old English (Campbell 1959, Brunner 1965 and Hogg 1992a) also refer to aspects of the phonology of the gloss, especially inasmuch as they differ from West Saxon; its morphology has been studied, amongst others, by Carpenter (1910), Kolbe (1912), Chadwick (1934), Ross (1934, 1937, 1960), Blakeley (1949–1950), Brunner (1947–1948), Berndt (1956), and Hogg and Fulk (2011); Bale (1907), Callaway (1918), Jones (1987) and Cole (2014) analyze its morphosyntactic features; Ross (1940, 1982), Thomson (1961), Wenisch (1979), Hill (1989) and Pons-Sanz (2000), amongst others, examine its lexis.

history of St. Cuthbert's community after their forced exile from Holy Island, followed by their negotiations with both the Danes and King Æthelstan in order to secure for themselves a new (and safer) home. In her view, Aldred, who joined the community one or two decades after Æthelstan's visit to Chester-le-Street in 934 and was later sent on a diplomatic mission to Wessex, played an important role in the reinforcement of the 'Englishness' and Christian character of the region. As regards the problem of the colophon, also discussed by Roberts (see below), Brown too reaffirms her belief in its historical reliability, arguing that the information offered (the names of the makers of the codex) is too accurate for it to have been invented by the glossator.

Jane Roberts's paper revisits previous work on Aldred's colophon in the light of recent research which has questioned its reliability as evidence for the connection of the manuscript with Lindisfarne (Newton et al. 2013: 133). She offers fresh arguments in favour of her discovery that the colophon makes use of a pre-existing poem, and of her translation of the hapax legomenon OE "gihamadi" as 'made himself at home', which she interprets as referring to Aldred's earning a place for himself in the monastic community of Chester-le-Street through the glossing of the first three gospels and generous gifts. She further argues in favour of interpreting OE *ora* as a 'monetary unit' rather than as 'border, edge, margin', as Newton et al. (2013) would have it. The second section of the article compares the use of some linguistic features such as runic letters and the possessive adjective *sin* in Aldred's glosses to the Lindisfarne Gospels and the Durham Collectar. The final section comments on other differences between the two glosses and speculates as to what books might have been available to Aldred in Chester-le-Street.

The following three papers share an interest in Aldred's connection with Southumbrian practices. **Philip Rusche**'s contribution addresses the influence of the tenth-century Benedictine Reform on Aldred's work. He compares the methods of glossing employed in Southumbrian manuscripts with Aldred's practice and concludes that there are very few similarities, suggesting that there is no evidence to believe that Aldred was trained in the south. The interlinear psalter glosses, which predate the Reform, appear to provide a better model for the Lindisfarne glossing technique, in Rusche's opinion. His work supports Brown's (2003) and Jolly's (2013) contention that Aldred may have been keen to maintain his northern identity in spite of his political contacts and negotiations with Southumbria.

Paul Cavill examines Aldred's marginalia on the Beatitudes in Matthew's Gospel. He argues that Aldred's comments, expressed in the form of maxims, clearly show that he shared some of the concerns of the Reform movement, regardless of where he was formally trained. According to Cavill, Aldred used the

style of wisdom literature in order to encourage the members of his community to observe their religious obligations and conform to monastic ideals, laying special emphasis on material poverty and purity of heart.

In his analysis of the letter-forms in Aldred's interlinear gloss, **Stewart Brookes** suggests that the remarkable variation in script type is Aldred's creative response to variation in the Latin text of the Lindisfarne Gospels. Through study of Aldred's script choices and imitative tendencies, we are able to trace his deep connection to the manuscript's style and aesthetics. In addition, the paper challenges the prevailing notion that Aldred lived in a Northumbrian backwater, providing evidence that he was aware of the latest scribal fashions, including Square minuscule and Caroline minuscule.

From a linguistic perspective, the Lindisfarne gloss poses a series of problems concerning morphological simplification, such as the apparent confusion of the final unstressed vowels, which was eventually to lead to the merger of /æ/, /a/, /e/, /ɪ/, /o/, /u/ in one (or several) vowel(s) represented by <e>; the variation between verbal *-ð* and *-s* in the present indicative and imperative plural, and various processes of analogical extension, levelling and case syncretism; the analogical extension of *ð* to the nominative singular masculine of the determiner *se – seo – ðæt*; the extension of genitive singular *-es* and nominative and accusative plural *-as* from the masculine *a*-stems to other noun classes; the use of strong forms of the adjective in contexts that require a weak inflection; and the presence of etymologically masculine or neuter adjectival forms modifying feminine nouns. While all these processes have been amply studied, notably by Ross (1936, 1937) and the contributors to the Aldrediana series, many still await a satisfactory explanation. The gloss also presents examples of unetymological gender, thus anticipating the loss of grammatical gender, which took place in Middle English and which distinguishes English from the other Germanic languages.[4] Some of these problems have also been dealt with by past scholarship (see especially Ross 1936 and Jones 1987), but (again) no definitive solutions have been offered.[5]

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4 Grammatical gender, for example, is kept in Ru^2, and analogical extension processes are more limited in this text. On the other hand, there are also some differences between the language of the Lindisfarne and Ritual glosses which might be attributable to the earlier date of the former.

5 Ross (1936) put forward his "neutralization theory", according to which the language of the gloss reflects the beginning of the change from grammatical to natural gender. Other instances of unetymological forms are explained as a result of the influence of the Latin original on the gloss. Jones (1987), in his extensive study of grammatical gender in Lindisfarne, adopts a completely different approach based on Anderson's (1975) case grammar. Although in some instances he appears to be in agreement with Ross (acknowledging the influence of the Latin original and the drift towards natural gender), his approach is much more comprehensive. He sets out to account for almost every instance of unhistorical grammatical gender found in the gloss and argues that,

A range of linguistic aspects are addressed specifically in the six papers that make up the second part of this volume, "The Language of the Gloss". **Robert McColl Millar** explores the simplification of the nominal morphology reflected in the language of the gloss within the context of the evolution of English. His contribution, which draws on previous work on the morphology of the determiners (Millar 2000), sets out to demonstrate that many linguistic developments found in early Middle English, such as the loss of grammatical gender, which is directly related to the collapse of the deictic paradigms, are already found, at least in embryo, in the language of the gloss.

Marcelle Cole's paper addresses the still vexed question of authorship. Based on the results of her recent work on verbal morphology in the gloss (Cole 2014), she offers further evidence in support of the view that Aldred, who on palaeographic grounds has been generally regarded as the sole author (Ker 1943), relied on other pre-existing Gospel glosses which have not survived. Her findings strengthen the hypothesis that the language of the gloss cannot be taken as representative of a homogeneous dialect, but rather reflects features of different varieties of northern Old English besides Aldred's own idiolect.

Derivational rather than inflectional morphology is the focus of **Luisa García García**'s paper. It contrasts the results from her previous work on morphological causatives in Old English with the data obtained from Lindisfarne in order to assess whether the gloss differs from other Old English texts as regards the use and morphological status of causative verbs. After identifying all deverbal *jan*-pairs in the Lindisfarne corpus, she establishes the semantic value of each member of the pair in all attestations. Her main conclusion is that the language of the gloss is not particularly innovative in the use of the causative formation. Derivational morphology appears to behave differently from inflectional morphology, as the latter is clearly more advanced in Old Northumbrian than in the other dialects of Old English.

Mª Nieves Rodríguez Ledesma's contribution studies the genitive constructions in the gloss. While she also analyzes the syntactic structure of the noun phrases where the genitive forms appear (*pre*position of the genitive, characteristic of Old English, versus *post*position, characteristic of Latin), she focuses mainly on some morphological issues, such as zero genitives, a linguistic feature which links the gloss to later northern texts. She concludes that, although the gloss tends to follow the Latin text closely in terms of word order, it also exhibits features which are characteristic of the Northumbrian dialect.

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as a consequence of the loss of the lexical classification of nouns in terms of grammatical gender, the various forms of the determiners were "recycled" to indicate different discourse-internal relations between the nouns (anaphoric reference and case relationships).

Also in the field of morphosyntax, **George Walkden**'s paper claims that (with the appropriate caveats) the Lindisfarne gloss can be legitimately used as evidence for the study of Old English syntax. Although Aldred's attention is mainly fixed on the word unit (see also Jolly, this volume), Walkden shows that the gloss offers evidence for the analysis of syntax at the phrasal level. The omission of subject pronouns cannot be attributed simply to the influence of the Latin original, since null subjects only appear frequently in the third person. Walkden claims that the omission of subjects in the gloss is more likely to represent a genuine Northumbrian syntactic feature, as quantitative/statistical analysis reveals that the phenomenon is more frequent in Anglian or Anglian-influenced texts than in West Saxon. He concludes that Aldred's work may contribute to our understanding of the comparative syntax of Old English.

Finally, **Julia Fernández Cuesta** stresses the importance of returning to the original manuscript.[6] She shows that the collation of Skeat's edition with the Lindisfarne manuscript reveals aspects of his editorial practice (emendations, additions, and alteration of the manuscript, word-division and word-spacing) that can result in the loss of valuable material for linguistic analysis. These practices may also obscure possible cases of linguistic change in progress and linguistic variation, which are characteristic of the dialect of the gloss.

The final part, "Glossing Practice", brings together articles directed at exploring some of the (methodological) decisions facing Aldred and other fellow glossators when carrying out the task at hand. Two papers deal with the use of multiple glosses in the Lindisfarne text. **Christine Bolze**'s contribution analyzes the ordering principle underlying multiple glosses of present tense forms of OE *beon* and suggests that the various patterns reflect Aldred's attempts to convey both the grammar and the meaning of the Latin forms as precisely as possible in the English vernacular. **Sara Pons-Sanz** sets out more generally to identify what patterns, if any, underlie Aldred's ordering of double or multiple glosses. She demonstrates that the glossator has a preference for placing the interpretamenta which most frequently render the Latin lemmata in first position, although the practice is not fully consistent.

The aim of **Patrizia Lendinara**'s paper is to explore why some words are left unglossed, for the most part names of individuals, places and peoples, but also words for Jewish festivals, animals and everyday objects. She concludes that Aldred wanted to avoid overburdening his text with redundant glosses following consideration of both the page layout and the Latin text of the Gospel. The paper

6 The Lindisfarne Gospels are available online at <http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Cotton_MS_Nero_D_IV>. Those interested in the Rushworth Gospels can visit <http://bodley30.bodley.ox.ac.uk:8180/luna/servlet/s/4p8a54>.

points out that the number of unglossed words varies in the four Gospels, with Matthew's Gospel featuring the largest percentage of unglossed words and John's the lowest percentage. Another remarkable difference lies in the prefatory material and the *capitula*, where Aldred leaves a large number of words unglossed, possibly because he did not have another vernacular gloss to the biblical text at hand.

Karen Jolly's and Tadashi Kotake's papers link Aldred's gloss to the Lindisfarne Gospels with the two other major witnesses of late Old Northumbrian. **Karen Jolly** analyzes the process of glossing in Aldred's additions to the more modest (and less cohesive) Durham Collectar in order to explore the function of the gloss in this manuscript and potentially in the Lindisfarne Gospels. She offers compelling evidence in the form of Aldred's additions and corrections to the work of other scribes to show that Aldred's gloss to the Durham Collectar was a tool for reflection, communication, and instruction. His project was both a written and oral one, involving extensive conversation with members of the community about the interpretation of Latin words. Jolly argues that the written and oral, pedagogical and spiritual dimensions of Aldred's gloss cannot be separated from one another.

Jolly further suggests that the fact that the main purpose of the Durham Collectar gloss was bilingual reflection accounts for Aldred's preoccupation with individual word units (or even morphemes), as illustrated by examples of literal translations of the Latin terms, whose main aim seems to be to explain both the meaning of the words as well as their etymology. This last aspect is interesting because it reveals some of the differences between the two Aldredian glosses. The purpose of the additions to the Durham Collectar appears to have been more pedagogical; they were much more accessible to the community than the Lindisfarne gloss, which is not likely to have been used for study in the 'classroom'.

The relationship between the Lindisfarne gloss and Ru^2 is the focus of **Tadashi Kotake**'s contribution. Albeit possibly written in a more southerly variety of Old Northumbrian (but see Hogg 2004), Ru^2 has traditionally been assumed to be a direct copy of the Aldredian gloss. Through detailed analysis of the sections of Ru^2 which follow neither the Latin text of the Lindisfarne Gospels nor that of the MacRegol Gospels, Kotake suggests that, rather than Owun occasionally making use of other manuscripts, as received wisdom has it, both the Lindisfarne and the Ru^2 glosses could stem from a common (and now lost) source.

This brief summary introduces a number of salient themes running through the present volume. Aldred the priest (and later provost) emerges as a scholar and a teacher, as well as a diplomat and politician, who strove to maintain his Northumbrian identity and a heritage going back to Cædmon, Bede and St. Cuthbert in the face of both the Viking incursions and the pressures from the powerful

West Saxon monarchy. In this context, the Lindisfarne gloss could well represent, as Brown puts it, "a statement of local identity in the face of Scandinavian incursion against a backdrop of attempts to reassert an English identity throughout England" (2003: 100; see also Brown, this volume).

Palaeographic analysis of the gloss supports the above hypothesis. Brown (this volume: p. 35) only identifies occasional features in the Lindisfarne script which can be associated with "those working in 'reforming' circles in the mid-tenth century, prior to its fuller introduction as part of the Benedictine Reform of the 970s onwards" (see also Kendrick et al. 1960). In the same way, in her edition-cum-study of the Durham Collectar, Jolly (2013: 74–88) shows that the old-fashioned script employed is relatively free from southern influence and from the innovative features of later additions. However, it is important to emphasize that Brookes demonstrates that in his gloss to the Lindisfarne Gospels Aldred evinces some familiarity with innovative practices commonly associated with Southumbria.

Other contributions to this volume support the hypothesis that Aldred is relatively independent from southern practices and manages to adhere to his northern tradition. Although he shows clear concerns about some issues of contemporary monastic practice, which would associate him with the southern Benedictine Reform (as shown by Cavill's analysis of the marginalia to the Beatitudes), Rusche's study indicates that Aldred's work shows no signs of him having been trained in the Southumbrian tradition (cp. Jolly 2013).

The grammatical and lexical aspects of the glosses also reveal independence from 'standard' West Saxon. The gloss's language is Old Northumbrian, although its heterogeneity indicates that Aldred must have made use of other sources also written in varieties of northern English.[7] As shown by Millar (2000 and this volume) and Rodríguez Ledesma, the Old Northumbrian dialect represented in the Lindisfarne gloss is in the vanguard of linguistic processes of change which took place in more southern dialects much later, during the Middle English period. In the same way, Walkden's and Cole's contributions show that there are syntactic patterns of the gloss, such as zero subjects and the Northern Subject Rule, which appear to be characteristic of the grammar of Old Northumbrian.

As suggested in Jolly's paper, one of the possible reasons for the 'resilient' use of the northern dialect in Lindisfarne is that Aldred was writing for a limited and local audience (see also Millar 2006: 61). Contact with Southumbria later in his life, as evidenced by his diplomatic mission to Wessex with bishop Ælfsige, could explain the southern/West Saxon influence observed in the Durham Collec-

7 The idea that there is a demarcation at the beginning of Mark's Gospel (Brunner 1947–1948) has found support in van Bergen (2008) and Cole (2014).

tar (see Pons-Sanz 2013: 253–257, 265–269; and Fernández Cuesta, forthcoming). As is the case in the Early Modern English period, the spread of northern English verbal morphology southwards (and also the adoption of features of the London standard in the north during the same period) cannot be explained if the social and cultural context is not taken into account. Language drift and inherited tendencies (whatever is meant by those terms) cannot by themselves explain the direction of language change. It is people as agents (speakers/writers and listeners/readers) who make histories of languages, even though they are not aware of doing so.

With regard to the sources of the gloss, some of the contributions to this volume corroborate the existence of a demarcation at the beginning of Mark's Gospel already noted by previous studies (Brunner 1947–1948, van Bergen 2008, Kotake 2012, and Cole 2014). Rodríguez Ledesma argues that the section of the gloss corresponding to Matthew's Gospel stands apart from the others regarding the distribution of the genitive singular inflections of kinship and other proper nouns, which present variants that are not attested elsewhere in the gloss, while Lendinara shows that Matthew's Gospel also differs from the rest of the gloss in that it contains the largest percentage of unglossed words.

What finally remains is the question of the purpose of the continuous gloss. From the discussion above, it seems clear that Aldred's major preoccupation was the word (Jolly) or the phrase unit (Walkden), rather than sentential or textual levels (but see Pons-Sanz), which indicates the interest of the glossator in clarifying (to himself as well as to others) the sense of individual lexical items in the sacred text. In this sense, Aldred's is a work of scholarship (cp. Robinson 1973: 466). Aldred was aware of the significance of the fact that he was translating the Latin Vulgate into English, which in the mid-tenth century was beginning to be explored as a valid vehicle to transmit the sacred word to the Christian community. This is possibly why he strives to achieve a high level of precision in his glossing, with multiple glossing (Bolze and Pons-Sanz) and occasional comments (Cavill), which can be interpreted as an attempt to clarify the Gospel text and apply it to the needs of his community.

The aim of this collection then is to offer the reader a fresh approach to the Lindisfarne gloss, one that stresses the importance of interdisciplinary work in the field of Old English studies, the history of English, and linguistic change in general. It also emphasizes the need to return to the original manuscripts, and recognizes the dangers of relying exclusively on corpora of edited texts, without taking the 'physical' context into consideration. As Brown (2013: 31) rightly states, the forensic study of books, *l'archéologie du livre*, is useful and even necessary. The original manuscript cannot be replaced, as it may be (and often is) obscured and contaminated in the editorial process.

We hope that the present volume will represent a solid contribution to the study of the language and context of the Lindisfarne gloss. Nevertheless, we are well aware that there are many aspects which remain unexplored. Aldred's work continues to offer many intriguing avenues of research for scholars interested in the sociohistorical and cultural context of early Anglo-Saxon England, his language and his glossing practices.

Part I: **The Gloss in Context**

Michelle P. Brown

‘A Good Woman’s Son’: Aspects of Aldred’s Agenda in Glossing the Lindisfarne Gospels

Abstract: This paper examines Aldred’s gloss and colophon from the perspective of how his work is to be situated in relation to the Lindisfarne Gospels’ original manufacture and its subsequent role as a focal point of the cult of St. Cuthbert. Aldred’s motivation in ‘completing’ the work and the cultural and political circumstances in which he was operating are discussed, as is his role in establishing the credentials and credibility of the English vernacular as a suitable medium for transmitting Scripture and consolidating cultural cohesion. Aldred, the community of St. Cuthbert, the cult and cult book emerge as key components in attempts to forge a united nation, whilst acknowledging the crucial role of northern England within it.

1 The making of the Lindisfarne Gospels, community tradition and Aldred’s place within it

I have previously suggested that, at the time that the Lindisfarne Gospels was made, it was thought in ecclesiastical circles that the scribe could become a channel between God and humanity, like the evangelists themselves (Brown 2003 and 2011a). Writing and painting sacred texts were absorbing acts of meditation, during which the scribe might glimpse the divine. Our artist-scribe undertook his physically and intellectually demanding labours on behalf of all Creation as a hermit, the book becoming his ‘desert’, like Christ in the wilderness and Cuthbert on Inner Farne. Cassiodorus said that each word written was a wound on Satan’s body. This was the spiritual front-line. Such was the tradition within which Aldred was placing himself when he glossed the Lindisfarne Gospels and commemorated his contribution, along with that of others who had laboured on the book previously, in a colophon.

Remarkably, the initial manufacture of this complex book was, essentially, the work of one outstandingly gifted, committed individual. For those dedicated to God’s service, to be entrusted with the transmission of his Word, as preachers and scribes, was amongst the highest of callings. A few Insular Gospel books, notably the Lindisfarne and MacRegol Gospels, are remarkable amongst western tomes in being by single artist-scribes – a primarily eastern phenomenon (Brown 2003, 2006, 2011a and forthcoming a; Rapp 2007). Undertaking such an heroic

feat of patience alongside the monastic duties of the Divine Office (celebrated eight times each day and night), prayer, study, and manual labour, suggests that making the Lindisfarne Gospels may have taken closer to five years, depending on how much exemption was granted from other duties, such as that accorded to anchorites. For if, as I have proposed, Bishop Eadfrith of Lindisfarne (698–722) both conceived the vision for its great Gospel book and physically made it himself around 715–720, overseeing one of the largest dioceses in Britain, embracing much of northern England and southern Scotland, would have made such work additionally challenging. Some of the back aching, eye straining work was probably undertaken on 'Cuddy's Isle', a windswept tidal islet near the monastery on Holy Island, where during Lent and Advent the bishop retired on retreat – a wild northern wilderness (Burns 1969; Cramp 1981; Brown 2003). Combining fasting, study and copying during Lent was a practice also favoured by Byzantine churchmen, as recounted in the *vitae* of Euthymius, patriarch of Constantinople (died 912), and patriarch Methodius (died 847), who copied a complete psalter during each of the seven weeks of Lent (Rapp 2007: 209).

I have suggested that such solitary scribal activity formed part of a distinctive 'Celtic' response to the eastern eremitic tradition in which the writing of Scripture could be undertaken as a living act of prayer, somewhat like icon writing (Brown 2000 and 2003). Whereas copying other texts was the communal work of the scriptorium, transmitting Scripture was entrusted only to the most senior community-members. The Irish saint Columba and his friend, the hermit St. Canice, were acclaimed as hero-scribes (Brown 2000 and 2003; Gameson 2001a), the latter writing a Gospel book single-handedly, in the manner of both male and female eastern precursors. In accordance with the teachings of Cassiodorus and others, such scribes became evangelists and, by study, contemplation, and meditation upon the text (*ruminatio, contemplatio* and *meditatio*), might actually glimpse the divine (*revelatio*; Brown 2003: 397–399).

This was a book to be seen, a shrine of sacred text and its role in the public prayer life of the Church, and a cult focus. It would have been seen on the altars, successively, of Lindisfarne, Norham, Chester-le-Street and Durham and used during important services (hardpoint crosses in the margins indicating its liturgical use during Christmas, Easter and the feast of St. Cuthbert). The monks presumably had access and guests were probably given privileged 'private views'. Ordinary people would have been able to see it in performative use at key points in the liturgical year and at other times on display, as pilgrims to the shrine. Glimpsing its candlelit pages or covers could change their lives, such relics being famed for their powers of healing body and soul. It symbolized hope and a colourful foretaste of a better existence to come amidst the coarse earthenware fabric of everyday life.

For this was a time when Christianity was a radical, transforming force. A time when warriors might be induced to adopt pacifism and kings to forgive enemies and free slaves, thereby risking assassination for reforming the fabric of society. The margins of some of the great Gospel books penned in England during the eighth century (such as the Lichfield Gospels) carry the earliest medieval written records of such manumissions (Brown 2007b). Christianity certainly helped to transform Anglo-Saxon society, but also preserved its traditions, and its books and their liminal spaces played a key part in inspiring, signalling and enacting both clerical and secular social transactions. Writing in the sacred space of Scripture, as Aldred would later do, was seldom undertaken lightly and placing oneself in the ongoing process of biblical transmission was an honour indeed.

The translation of St. Cuthbert's relics to the high altar of Lindisfarne in 698, eleven years after his death, marked the beginning of the creation of a cult that was to serve as a rallying point for the emerging identity of the North – which survives to this day. In the post-Whitby period there was a need for reconciliation between the various peoples and traditions that had prevailed and it was under Bishop Eadfrith, who came into office later that year, that the work of elevating Cuthbert as a social and spiritual role model began. During the twenty-three years of Eadfrith's leadership three lives of St. Cuthbert were written: one by an anonymous monk of Lindisfarne and two by Bede. The shrine on Holy Island became a focus for pilgrimage, featuring stations of the Cross marked by stone crosses at key points on the island and by the saint's coffin (resembling a painted Egyptian sarcophagus of the sort in which the eastern desert fathers might be enshrined) set adjacent to the high altar in the main church, upon which liturgical metalwork and relics were probably displayed, alongside the Word of God in the form of a Gospel book. This complemented the stone crosses in the Holy Island pilgrimage landscape by initials marking lections for the stational Good Friday liturgy, newly introduced into Roman liturgical books c. 715, a development which may have helped to spur production of the Lindisfarne Gospels (Brown 2003, 2011a and forthcoming a).

In my view, the spiritual, cultural and political agendas and strategies underpinning this complex book suggest that it was Bishop Eadfrith himself who was probably responsible for conceiving and making this focal cult book (perhaps to replace an earlier volume), which could rival the purple codex that graced St. Wilfrid's shrine in Ripon from c. 710. Lindisfarne's great book, by contrast, was to bring together not only elements from Rome and the Mediterranean (including a fine version of the Vulgate text copied from a Neapolitan book available as a model via Wearmouth/Jarrow) but visual motifs redolent of the range of local cultures and of those stretching across the Christian ecumen, as far as the Christian Orient. My recent research has indicated that, at one level, the Lindisfarne Gospels

were intended to embody a statement of the conformity and a contribution of the Insular churches to the international orthodoxy of Chalcedon and to celebrate the reintegration of several schismatic (or potentially schismatic) parts (including Columban Iona) into this whole around 715–716 (Brown, forthcoming a).

St. Cuthbert's shrine soon became one of the most significant pilgrimage sites of medieval Britain and his relics found several resting places during their journey – not least the old Roman fort of Chester-le-Street, where they sojourned for a century (Jolly 2012). It was there that, around 950–970, the great cult book of St. Cuthbert was glossed in Old English by a monk who had newly joined named Aldred, who also added a colophon at the conclusion of John's Gospel associating his work with that of the original evangelists and with those who were thought to have made the book originally. It is assumed to have come there having accompanied the monks on their travels in search of a new home after they were forced to leave Lindisfarne because of Viking attacks. Aldred was working sometime before 970 when he glossed another book, the Durham Ritual, and had been promoted to the role of provost.[1] Aldred's colophon in the Lindisfarne Gospels occupies the remainder of a column that was largely left blank at the end of John's Gospel (f. 259r; this volume: p. 45) – the sort of blank yet significantly sited space in which manumissions and other important documents were added in the Lichfield Gospels, the Bodmin Gospels (London, British Library, MS Add. 9381) and London, British Library, MS Royal 1.B.vii earlier in the tenth century. It attributes the making of the volume to three figures: the writing (and by implication the decoration) to Eadfrith, bishop of Lindisfarne; the binding (sewing and covering) to Aethilwald, bishop of Lindisfarne (721–740); and the metalwork cover (a treasure binding or book-shrine) to Billfrith the Anchorite. This statement, and a subsequent version of it reiterated by Symeon of Durham in the twelfth century, cannot be taken at face value, however, and Aldred's methods and motives in writing it need to be assessed to determine its reliability. If the book's original manufacture was so bound up with the social and political realities of its day, and with spiritual aspirations for eternity, then might not Aldred's intervention have been similarly motivated?

Scholars would not usually accept an inscription added some 250 years after manufacture as reliable or conclusive evidence alone of origins, but those inclined to accept it have also argued, in different ways, in favour of contextual historical, palaeographical and archaeological evidence supporting a Lindisfarne origin (Kendrick et al. 1960; Brown 2003 and 2011a; Roberts, this volume). The reliability of Aldred's colophon statement about manufacture was first ques-

1 See, however, Roberts's paper (this volume) for a different interpretation of Aldred's status.

tioned by McAlister in 1913, when he claimed it as a ninth-century Irish work (McAlister 1913: 299). This was rebutted by Baldwin Brown and his acceptance of the colophon was repeated in the volume edited by Kendrick et al. (1960) and by most other commentators. It has subsequently been challenged again by O'Sullivan, Dumville and Nees (Brown 1903–1937: V, 337–341; O'Sullivan 1994; Dumville 1999; Nees 2003). Nees backs his comments with a proper discussion of the colophon as an historical document.[2] He suggests that Aldred manufactured the colophon in order to stress his own role as the fourth in a quartet of 'makers' of the book, as a reference to the four evangelists and to the continuing process of evangelistic transmission of the Gospels, this 'quadriga' also reflecting other symbolic quartets such as the four elements, the four rivers of Paradise, the four cardinal virtues, the ages of man and the four compass directions. His choice of the three other latter-day 'evangelists' who made the Gospel book was guided, so Nees maintains, by the references to the two bishops in the works of Bede and by the inclusion of Billfrith's name in the list of anchorites in the Durham *Liber Vitae* (London, British Library, MS Cotton Domitian A.vii, f. 18r).[3] This does not explain why a metalworker should have occurred to Aldred as one of the quartet, why a

2 See Nees (2003), where he states that the scholarly choices "are not simply between accepting or disregarding the evidence of Aldred's colophon. The evidence needs to be investigated". Prior to this he cites my statement in my Jarrow lecture (Brown 2000: 21): "To dismiss Aldred's colophon out of hand is to challenge the value of provenance evidence as a whole, something which may be done when there is good reason, but which is counter-productive as mere iconoclasm." (Nees 2003: 337). The context in which he cites me seems to suggest that I was tacitly accepting the colophon, which was not the case. Later in his own text he says: "In comparison to other important early manuscripts with impressive illumination, its [the Lindisfarne Gospels] early history is more secure than many [...]. The manuscript known as the Lindisfarne Gospels was in the possession of the community of St. Cuthbert by the mid-tenth century, as we know from Aldred's colophon, and that colophon's claims for its early history must have been thought at least credible, and support a view that the manuscript had already been in the possession of the community of St. Cuthbert for a considerable, if indeterminate time" (Nees 2003: 377). This is, of course, what I meant when I said that to discount the value of the colophon (regardless of its claims concerning the original production of the book) as provenance evidence, linking the book to the community of St. Cuthbert from quite an early stage, that is the tenth century, was not consistent with usual scholarly approaches.

3 At the end of his examination Nees concludes that "The story that Aldred tells of its early history could actually be true, could reflect a remarkably accurate oral tradition, although without the evidence of the colophon it seems to me that on grounds of script and decoration scholarship would put the manuscript later, not in the first but in the second quarter, even toward the middle of the eighth century" (Nees 2003: 377). Whilst agreeing with much of this conclusion I have presented my evidence (Brown 2003 and 2011a) for seeing the stylistic context, as well as the historical context, as favouring a dating for planning and manufacture somewhere between 710 and 725, with the lections marked suggesting that the layout may have been determined around 715.

'random' name for such should have been selected from a list of anchorites as opposed to another ecclesiastical category, or why this particular name should have been selected from the long list in which it occurs. Billfrith is 21st in the list of anchorites on f. 18r of the *Liber Vitae*, and is separated by 19 intervening names from that of Bishop Aethilwald, also an anchorite, who was thought to have commissioned him. Furthermore, if Aldred simply plucked a name from the community's book of life, why did he not preserve the spelling adopted in the *Liber Vitae*, using two 'l's rather than the one found in the name as it appears in the list? It is perhaps more likely that he encountered the name in another context. Jane Roberts's proposal that the colophon incorporates a vernacular poem would support this (Roberts 2006), as does the mixed use of Old English and Latin elements.

It therefore remains possible that Aldred was drawing upon an existing source (or sources) and incorporating material into his own colophon. This may have taken the form of an inscription upon a metalwork cover or shrine or an earlier written account which might even have been included in the volume itself.[4] Any such earlier nucleus for the contents of Aldred's colophon proper would not necessarily have come any closer to relating fact concerning the circumstances of the book's manufacture, but the likelihood of its existence does

4 Such an account of the book's makers may have been written into one of the community's books, rather like the anonymous account of its 'wanderings' which was included in Durham's 'Liber Magni Altaris'. The latter (or the 'liber de reliquiis' attached to St. Cuthbert's shrine, which some scholars think may have been the same volume) may even have been the Lindisfarne Gospels itself, which once included extraneous matter, to judge from the codicological evidence. Craster (1954: 177–199) identified the 'Liber Magni Altaris' with the 'liber de reliquiis', remarking that a notary writing at Durham in 1433 states that he was shown "various writings concerning the condition of the cathedral church" entered in an ancient hand near the middle of a book kept on the high altar (the 'Liber Magni Altaris') and that around the same time passages from the same book were copied into London, British Library, MS Cotton Claudius D.iv, notably those on ff. 94v, 95v and 96r–97v. It can be deduced thereby that the added matter within the 'Liber Magni Altaris' included the *Chronica monasterii Dunelmensis*, which extended the *Historia de sancto Cuthberto* to the reign of William I and attempted to place information concerning the community's possessions within an historical context. I am deeply indebted to Simon Keynes for drawing my attention to this information. The unlikelihood of such a substantial chronicle being entered into a Gospel book such as we know the 'liber de reliquiis' to have been, inclines him against identifying the references to this and the 'Liber Magni Altaris' as appertaining to the same book. It is worth adding, however, that marginal notes probably added to MS Cotton Claudius D.iv in the sixteenth century (such as that on f. 94v) say that grants made by Kings Edward the Elder and Æthelstan during the early tenth century were confirmed on the 'Liber Magni Altaris', indicating that this volume was of an earlier date. The parallels for the writing of documents into books to confirm their legitimacy, and for guaranteeing legality by swearing upon a book all point to such a book containing a sacred text. The likelihood is, therefore, that the 'Liber Magni Altaris' was a Gospel book which pre-dated 900. This could have been the Lindisfarne Gospels.

suggest that there was a pre-existing tradition of such within the community. Furthermore, the historical and contextual circumstances that I have advanced for the production of the Lindisfarne Gospels suggest that it is likely to have been made at Lindisfarne during the period of the floruits of the bishops whose names continued to be associated with the book (Brown 2003, 2011a and forthcoming a). Both Bishops Eadfrith and Aethilwald rapidly achieved saintly status within the community. Symeon tells us that their bones accompanied the community when it left Holy Island in 875 (Arnold 1882: 57). They were certainly reported to have joined Cuthbert in his coffin when it was opened in 1104 (Miracle 7, see Arnold 1882: 252, 255). A particularly enthusiastic custodian of the shrine, Alfred Westou, had acquired Billfrith's bones for Durham in the mid-eleventh century, along with those of Bede and Cuthbert's teacher, Boisil (Battiscombe 1956: 113–114).

As an anchorite, or hermit, Billfrith had less of a career structure and might be expected to have left little mark on the historical record, and this is indeed the case. His name occurs in a list of anchorites in the Durham *Liber Vitae* (London, British Library, MS Cotton Domitian A.vii, f. 18r), made initially at Lindisfarne or Norham (or less probably Wearmouth/Jarrow, although it includes material relating to all of these communities) around 840, by which time Billfrith was evidently deceased. Aldred's colophon gives no indication of when Billfrith may have contributed his metalwork to the adornment of the Lindisfarne Gospels, but Symeon, quoting a source probably other than the colophon itself says that he was commissioned by Bishop Aethilwald to produce it (Arnold 1882: 67–68). This implies that they were contemporaries, intent upon further honouring and embellishing a Book of St. Cuthbert (presumably the Lindisfarne Gospels) soon after its production by Bishop Eadfrith.

To my mind, these figures named in the colophon are indeed likely to have been involved in the making of the Lindisfarne Gospels, as the place and period of their activities accord well with other historical, textual and stylistic evidence for its manufacture. In the 1956–1960 facsimile commentary, and in much subsequent scholarship, it was argued that Eadfrith and Aethilwald could not have worked on the Lindisfarne Gospels in their busy mid-life, but rather before they achieved major ecclesiastical positions at the end of the seventh century (Brown and Bruce-Mitford 1960: 12–13, 19). I would suggest, however, that Eadfrith would have planned and undertaken the writing and illumination from around 715, spurred on by contemporary events which led him to incorporate the marking in the book of liturgical readings for Good Friday that were only then being absorbed into the liturgy in Rome's liturgical books. The artwork was left unfinished in places, a month or two short of the project's completion, and it may be that this was interrupted by Eadfrith's death in 721. As one of the *seniores*, a leading, experienced member of the community, this remarkable offering

of labour and prayer would have formed his own particular *opus dei*, contributing to his own acclaim as a saint, in accordance with Columban and eastern eremitic tradition. It was evidently deemed inappropriate that others should finish it, for the colouring of the opening carpet-page's interlace and the laying on of gold was left unfinished, although another hand was entrusted with the tasks of adding the marginal numbers (or Eusebian sections) marking the passages referred to in the canon tables, in order to make this system for the celebration of the Gospel harmony work. Aethilwald, his successor as bishop and a skilled book producer in his own right, was entrusted with the task of binding the book and Billfrith was then, or sometime over the next century, instructed to adorn it with metalwork covers or plaques or to enshrine it in a *cumdach* 'book shrine'. Irish cumdachs of the late eighth century onwards provide a particularly good context and many of them carry inscriptions naming those responsible for making, commissioning and enshrining the books that they contained. If Billfrith did indeed supply metalwork embellishment (either a treasure binding or a cumdach) it may have carried a litany of names, including that of the metalworker (in accordance with contemporary Irish practice), to which Aldred added himself.

The names cited by Aldred in his colophon therefore correspond in terms of their floruits to the stylistic and historical context which I have proposed for the making of the Lindisfarne Gospels. The rubrication and correction of the volume post-dated the disappearance of the artist-scribe, Bishop Eadfrith, in the final stages of illumination and so would the act of binding and any metalwork adornment, which may have been added any time prior to c. 840, when Billfrith's name was inscribed in the *Liber Vitae*. The close stylistic relationship with the one dated artifact of the period, the coffin of St. Cuthbert, made at Lindisfarne for the translation of 698, would tend to pull the dating of the manuscript back towards 700 rather than propelling it further towards 750, as some scholars might wish. If Aldred concocted the account of the book's manufacture in his colophon he must have been either a good historian or a remarkably 'good guesser' to have hit upon names which mesh in their historical inter-relationships and which correlate with the likely stylistic and historical contexts for production.

The brethren of Lindisfarne do not seem to have been easily deterred in their attempts to preserve the early history of their foundation. Eadberht virtually enshrined the wooden church in sheets of lead and the original wooden church of Aidan, which may even have been itself enshrined within this larger church (like the Holy Sepulchre), was physically moved to Norham in the ninth century (Cramp 1989: 218). The sculpted cross erected by Bishop Aethilwald around 740 was also taken with the community, along with Cuthbert's coffin and associated relics, when it was displaced by Viking attacks later in the ninth century (Cramp 1989: 223–225, 228). Preserving the recollection of association with important

figures within the history of such cult-orientated communities seems to have been an important feature and may have some bearing upon the ascription preserved in the colophon. Such relics and, as Rosemary Cramp has suggested, the distinctive nature of their Insular ornament, continued to serve as a rallying point for identity in the North East into the twelfth century (Cramp 1989: 220–221). Indeed, they continue to do so today.

2 Aldred, Chester-le-Street and the community's role in tenth-century England

In 793 Lindisfarne was the first victim of Viking raids. Cuthbert's shrine was desecrated and many monks killed. The community never fully recovered from the blow, and the number of monks within a progressively secular community remained as low as two or three until the Benedictine Reform of the later tenth century. In the 840s, as raids escalated, the monks and laypeople associated with the monastery ('the people of St. Cuthbert') moved temporarily northwards to Norham on Tweed. In 875 they quitted Lindisfarne as their principal house – although the assembly of ninth- and tenth-century sculptures on Holy Island indicate a continuing ecclesiastical presence there – and went walkabout, carrying Cuthbert's coffin, relics and the stone cross commemorating Bishop Aethilwald. The twelfth-century historian Symeon of Durham says they headed for Ireland but were prevented by the Book of St. Cuthbert 'jumping' overboard, thereby indicating that the community still had work to do in Britain (and avoiding the future academic assumption that the book was made in Ireland). Symeon records that one of the bearers of St. Cuthbert's coffin, Hunred, was shown the volume's whereabouts in a vision and the monks accordingly found it unharmed in the sands of the Solway Firth and went first to St. Ninian's foundation of Whithorn on the Galloway coast (with which they had traditionally had relations). They then turned south, travelling via Carlisle (where they were joined by members of their fellow monastery there) and into what is now County Durham and, for a while, into Yorkshire.

I have suggested that this 'flight', rather than being (as it is usually represented) the aimless wandering of refugee monks in search of sanctuary, in fact represented an astute move to avoid marginalization and move closer to the new seat of political power, which had shifted from Bamburgh, some ten miles from Holy Island, to Viking-held territory and its power-base at York. They confirmed old allegiances and authority as they went by displaying Cuthbert's relics – a recognized means of asserting legal ownership by processing the relics through a church's patrimony. Symeon's account is couched in a way that was probably

intended to compare them to Moses (Cuthbert) and the Israelites (the People of St. Cuthbert) seeking the 'promised land' (in their case Durham, where the community eventually settled and where Symeon's own affiliations lay), with the book's survival of immersion in water symbolizing Moses's parting of the Red Sea (Brown 2003 and 2011a). The ability of books to survive 'trial by drowning', as a proof of their status as relics and of a saint's power, was well-known in early medieval Britain and Ireland: the cult of St. Columba boasted many such manuscripts during the Middle Ages.

The community headed straight for Viking territory – a strange thing to do if fleeing from them – moving to their daughter-house of Crayke, only a few miles from York. They then staged a bloodless coup, deposing the Viking leader in favour of a Dane, Guthred/Guthrith (see Cavill, this volume: n. 17), whom they had redeemed from slavery. The way was paved for King Alfred of Wessex to open negotiations with the more amenable Guthred and begin reclaiming England from Viking rule. Tradition concerning King Alfred's resistance movement even includes an account that around this time St. Cuthbert began appearing to him in a vision while he was hiding out in the Athelney marshes in Somerset. In accordance with the Gospel's injunction to be "wise as serpents and gentle as doves" (Matthew 10.16), the community of St. Cuthbert was perpetuating its role of intervening in politics in order to safeguard the survival and stability of Christian society, just as I have suggested its earlier bishops, such as Aidan, Cuthbert and Eadfrith, had (Brown 2003 and 2011a).

From the late ninth century the community of St. Cuthbert extended their authority in southern Northumbria, as well as the northern parts of the territory and southern Scotland, which they had come to administer when the kingship had been based at Bamburgh, near Lindisfarne. In 883 Guthred, presumably rewarding the community for its part in his rise to power, gave it the sizeable Roman fort of Chester-le-Street, lying upon a major Roman road, as its new caput, along with property formerly owned by Wearmouth/Jarrow. The community was now strategically placed to control access to the rivers Tyne and Wear and a part of a key overland route linking North and South. The wealth of sculpture in the Anker's House at Chester-le-Street bears witness to the importance of the shrine there, which was visited by Anglo-Saxon rulers, notably Alfred's grandson, King Æthelstan (924–939), who presented prestigious gifts, including books and embroidered vestments, to the saint during his visit in 934. I have raised the possibility that, rather than being closed and only occasionally opened to receive such prestigious gifts, Cuthbert's incorrupt body may have been more regularly made visible in its coffin – like Lenin's tomb or that of Padre Pio, whose intact body has recently been put on public devotional display some forty years after his death (Brown, forthcoming a).

Æthelstan's visit to the shrine formed part of his strategy for reintegrating the Danelaw into English England, under a single West Saxon monarchy. In this he recognized the role of the cult of St. Cuthbert and the enduring influence of his community in securing the allegiance of the North (Brown 2003, 2011a, and forthcoming a). This policy was evidently perpetuated after Æthelstan's reign. One of the tenth-century cross-shaft fragments at Chester-le-Street depicts a mounted warrior identified by an inscription as Edmund, perhaps recording continued royal West Saxon patronage by the king of that name who ruled from 939–946. By the time that we encounter Aldred as glossator of the Durham Ritual he is in Wessex, as a Cuthbertine representative at the negotiations to establish a border between the kingdoms of England and Scotland.

3 Aldred's background and the nature of his work

Within a decade or two of Æthelstan's visit, Aldred had joined the community as a monk and was accorded the tremendous privilege of translating its great cult-book into the English language to establish his credentials upon entering the community, dedicating his work of each of the Gospels to the saint, the bishop, the monks and the good of his own soul, with the accompaniment of a monetary dowry,[5] thereby securing his reception into the community.

Although the gloss is essentially a word-by-word translation in Northumbrian dialect composed in the fashion of a schoolroom exercise, rather than continuous prose, Aldred cannot resist occasionally adding comment on the text. These

5 I find the suggestion (Newton et al. 2013: 101–144) that the volume once contained silver borders implausible, for although there are signs that the Lindisfarne Gospels once contained additional documents and materials and was 'tidied up' in the post-medieval period, the tendency of silver to tarnish and bleed make it highly unlikely that such borders would have left no trace in the volume, even if they were trimmed off (see also Roberts, this volume). Another possibility might be that the silver mentioned in the colophon referred to silver used to cover or inlay the binding boards (rather than the borders of pages). This brings to mind the inscription in Old English added in the eleventh century to f. 4r of the Thorney Gospels (London, British Library, MS Add. 40000) referring to the former binding of the manuscript: "+ Aelfric ⁊ Wulfwine, Eadgife goldsmiðes geafen to broþerraedenne twegen orn weghenes goldes þæt is on þis ilce boc her foruten gewired" ('Ælfric and Wulfwine, goldsmiths of Eadgifu, gave for the confraternity two oras of weighed gold which is wired without upon this same book'). This would appear to refer to the external embellishment of the volume. But whatever his gift of silver was to be used for, it remains that Aldred's inscription records a donation for the good of his soul and recalls the Old English inscription commemorating the redemption of the Stockholm Codex Aureus from Vikings by Ealdorman Alfred and his wife in the mid-ninth century.

lengthier, more expansive passages of the gloss reveal a concern with monastic reform and abuses of clerical power of the sort espoused by the great reformers of the Anglo-Saxon Church at this time: St. Dunstan, St. Æthelwold and St. Oswald, and their supporter, King Edgar (959–975). This may reflect the ecclesiastical affiliations of the community per se, and/or Aldred's own concerns.

Might Aldred have been recruited from the North (given his use of the Northumbrian dialect), perhaps having studied in southern England or on the Continent (see Rusche, this volume), and have been placed in the influential community of St. Cuthbert by the West Saxon monarchy and its reforming ecclesiastics, where he practised his skills as a vernacular glossator as a visible and symbolic testimony to the reassertion of the 'Englishness' of the cult and the region? I shall return to this below, but any such backing might explain the extraordinary privilege of adding to the prized cult-book which was accorded by the community to a new member. Promoting English, which was not the first language of the Danish settlers, and affirming its statuts as one of the biblical 'sacred languages' (*linguae sacrae*) in succession to Hebrew, Greek and Latin, certainly would have assisted in the reunification of England and would have formed an assertion of a new English identity in which the Scandinavian presence was subsumed. By 970 Aldred's career had flourished and he had become provost of Chester-le-Street. It is in this capacity that we encounter him glossing in English the Durham Ritual, an early tenth-century West Saxon liturgical manuscript.[6] This gloss is datable to 970, when Aldred tells us that he was writing in a tent on Oakley Down, Wiltshire, where he was serving as a member of a diplomatic mission accompanying the king of Scotland in order to negotiate the Anglo-Scots border – the community of St. Cuthbert once more working to safeguard Christian continuity of life in the face of political tensions, and Aldred was evidently playing a significant part in this process.

The colophon and other inscriptions by Aldred on f. 259r are often termed collectively 'the colophon group', acknowledging that it is formed of several components.[7] Aldred is obviously struggling to fit everything he wishes to include into the ruled area into which the colophon is set, and has to add some components

6 A third example of Aldred's work as a glossator occurs in a mid-eighth-century copy, made at Wearmouth/Jarrow, of Bede's commentary on Proverbs (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 819).

7 See the excellent and full treatment of the language of the 'colophon group' by Ross et al. 1960). The following transcription varies somewhat from theirs, but only in small details, such as the possibility of a Caroline question mark (*punctus interrogativus*) following Aldred's statement of humility. For an insightful recent discussion see Roberts (2006). For a counter view, see Newton et al. (2013), whose arguments are addressed in Jane Roberts's contribution to this volume. Transcription of Aldred's Colophon (based on Brown 2003: 102–103):

of his text, including that concerning his lineage, in the margins. Adjacent to the display capitals of the original text's Explicit rubric, in the outer margin and preceded by a cross, are written the following Latin hexameters:

+ Lit(er)a me pandat
sermonis fida
ministra
Omnes alme
meos fratres
voce salvtaꝫ

This may be translated as:

> 'May the letter, faithful servant of speech, reveal me; greet, O kindly [book], all my brothers with thy voice'.

The subject of these may be intended to be either the text of John's Gospel, Aldred's gloss, or both.

Embedded within the first part of the Old English colophon is the Latin text known as the 'Five Sentences', which is of uncertain origin but may derive in part from the *Plures fuisse* prologue, included in the Lindisfarne Gospels (commencing at f. 5v). These may be translated as:

ðe ðrifalde ⁊ ðe anfalde god ðis godspell/ aer vorvlda gisette + Trinus et unus d(eu)s evangelium hoc ante / saecula con stituit ærist avrat of mvðe crist(es) + Mathevs ex ore c(h)r(ist)i scripsit of mvðe petres avrat + Marcus ex ore Petri scrips(it) of mvðe paules avrat + Lvcas de ore Pavli ap' scrips(it) in deigilnisi ł i(n) f(ore)esaga siðða rocgetede ł gisprant + Ioh(annes) in prochemio deinde ervctavit þord mið gode gisalde ⁊ halges gastes 'ł mið godes geafa| ⁊ halges gastes verbum d(e)o donante et sp(irit)v s(an)c(t)o scrip(it) |mæht avrát ioh(annes)'

+ Eadfrið biscop/b lindisfearnensis æcclesiæ he ðis boc avrát æt frvma gode ⁊ s(an)c(t)e cvðberhte ⁊ allvm ðæm halgvm. ða. ðe `gimænelice´in eolonde sint. ⁊ eðilvald lindisfearneolondinga `bisc(op)´hit vta giðryde ⁊ gibélde sva hé vel cuðę. ⁊ billfrið se oncrę he gismioðade ða gihríno ða ðe vtan ón sint ⁊ hit gihrínade mið golde ⁊ mið gimmvm ęc mið svlfre' of(er)gylded faconleas feh:- ⁊ (ic) Aldred p(re)`s´b(yte)r indignus ⁊ misserim(us)? mið godes fvltv(m)mę ⁊ s(an)c(t)i cuðberhtes hit of(er)glóesade ón englisc. ⁊ hine gihamadi:. mið ðæm ðríim dælvm. Mathevs dæl gode ⁊ s(an)c(t)e cvðberhti. Marc' dæl. ðæm bisc(ope/um?). ⁊ lvcas dæl ðæm hiorode ⁊ æht `v´ ora seo`v´lfres mið tó inláde.ꝫ ⁊ sci ioh(annes) dæl f(or) hine seolfne `i(d est) f(or)e his savle´ ⁊ feover óra seo`v´lfres mið gode ⁊ s(an)c(t)i cvðberhti. þ(æt)te he hæbbe ondfong ðerh godes miltsæ on heofnv(m). séel ⁊ sibb on eorðo forðgeong ⁊ giðyngo visdóm ⁊ snyttro ðerh s(an)c(t)i cvðberhtes earnvnga:,

+ Eadfrið. oeðilvald. billfrið. Aldred. hoc evange(lium) d(e)o ⁊ cvðberhto constrvxer(vn)t:, ´ł ornavervnt`..

> God, three in one, these Gospels have since [the dawn of] the age consisted of:
> Matthew, who wrote what he heard from Christ;
>
> Mark who wrote what he heard from Peter;
> Luke, who wrote what he heard from the Apostle Paul;
> John who willingly thereupon proclaimed and wrote the Word given by God through the Holy Spirit.[8]

There then follows:

> (Sign of the Cross, followed in Old English by:)
> Eadfrith, Bishop of the Lindisfarne Church, originally wrote this book, for God and for St. Cuthbert and—jointly—for all the saints whose relics are in the island. And Aethilwald, Bishop of the Lindisfarne islanders, impressed it on the outside and covered it—as he well knew how to do.[9] And Billfrith, the anchorite, forged the ornaments which are on it on the outside and adorned it with gold and with gems and also with gilded-over silver—pure metal. And (I)[10] Aldred, unworthy and most miserable priest? [He] glossed it in English between the lines with the help of God and St. Cuthbert. And, by means of the three sections, he made a home for himself: the section of Matthew was for God and St. Cuthbert, the section of Mark for the bishop[/s], the section of Luke for the members of the community (in addition, eight ores of silver for his induction) and the section of St. John was for himself (in addition, four ores of silver for God and St. Cuthbert) so that, through the grace of God, he may gain acceptance into heaven; happiness and peace, and through the merits of St. Cuthbert, advancement and honour, wisdom and sagacity on earth.

The final element of the colophon (+ Eadfrið. oeðilvald. billfrið. Aldred. | *hoc evange*(*lium*) *d*(*e*)*o* ⁊ *cvðberhto constrvxer*(*vn*)*t*:, *´ł ornavervnt`..*) mixes Old English and Latin elements and seems not to belong with the rest of the text, repeating the names of the 'makers' within a Latin infrastructure. If this was copied from an earlier source it would have been enough to have provided Aldred with the names to which he appended his own and to have formed the core of his text.

Against the mention of his own name (in the first line) Aldred tells us something of his parentage, asserting his legitimacy and good reputation, adding in

8 The following translation, closer to Aldred's own, has been proposed by Roberts (2006): '+ God, three and one, established this Gospelbook before the world.+ Matthew wrote from the words [lit. mouth] of Christ.+ Mark wrote from the words [lit. mouth] of Peter.+ Luke wrote from the words [lit. mouth] of Paul the apostle.+ John thereafter poured forth 'in the beginning'; he wrote the word given by God and the holy spirit'.

9 The wording is evocative of the decorative treatment of the binding of the St. Cuthbert Gospel and its unusual sophisticated 'Coptic' sewing technique.

10 The reference to the first person singular is erased, presumably to de-personalize the character of the inscription, or because it conflicted with the use of the third person singular in the remainder of the text.

the margin the rhythmic couplet: *Ælfredi natvs aldredvs uocor: bonæ mvlieris filivs eximivs loquor*, which I would translate as:

> 'Aldred, born of Alfred, is my name:
> a good woman's son, of distinguished fame'.

An inveterate fiddler, he then glosses the reference to his mother with the words "*i*(*d est*) til þ'", "til wif" meaning 'good woman' (Ross 1943: 321; Ross et al. 1960: 10; Brown 1969: 24).

On f. 89v he added a related prayer in Old English, confirming his intent of associating his own contribution with the original project and its offering up to God: "Thou Living God, remember Eadfrith and Aethilwald and Billfrith and Aldred, a sinner; these four, with God, were concerned with this book."[11] Thus the four latter-day evangelists perpetuate the work of the Gospel writers in a line of transmission stemming from Christ, the Holy Spirit and the chief Apostles, Peter and Paul.

Nees asserts that the context of extant colophons and dedication inscriptions points to the ninth or tenth centuries being the time at which Aldred's colophon, or any original core text that it may have incorporated, is likely first to have been composed and highlights the possibility of the particular influence of dedications in books presented by King Æthelstan to the community of St. Cuthbert in the 930s (Nees 2003). The practice of applying such inscriptions to books certainly increased somewhat in that period, but is not unknown earlier. Ceolfrith's dedication inscription in the Codex Amiatinus is one such example, as is the colophon copied from an earlier exemplar into the Echternach Gospels.[12] Original colophons also occur prior to the ninth century, such as the behest to *ora pro uuigbaldo* 'pray for Wigbald' in the late eighth-century Barberini Gospels.[13] There is, however, no doubt that Aldred actually compiled the colophon as it now appears on f. 259r of the Lindisfarne Gospels, and he was probably doing so within a tradition of Carolingian and tenth-century English practice, but it remains possible that part of his text was based upon earlier material. The language and layout of Aldred's compilation would tend to suggest that this was indeed the case. Its layout is curiously erratic, with Aldred glossing his own text for the 'Five Sen-

11 A better sense of which may be 'were devoted to this book'.

12 Gameson (2002: 33).

13 F. Henry intriguingly proposed an identification with a contemporaneous Bishop Hygebald of Lindisfarne (Alexander 1978). I recently proposed an identification with Wigbald, archdeacon or anchorite of Peterborough, who attested charters there around 800 (Brown 2007a: 89–116). On colophons in general, see Gameson (2002).

tences' and adding marginal inscriptions (the *litera me pandat* and the verse concerning his parentage), and includes indentation of the lines mentioning the manufacturing team. Indentation was an established form of indicating a quotation (Lowe 1928: 43–62). Another prominent feature of the inscription is that its major component parts, the clauses of the 'Five Sentences' and the incipit of the colophon proper, are marked by large crosses of the sort that often mark the beginnings of inscriptions on metalwork and stone, which could reflect a source. A linguistic feature might also suggest that the colophon was not a single, new composition. The name of Bishop Aethilwald is given in different orthographical forms: <Eðilvald> and <Oeðilvald>, and on f. 89v it takes the form <Æðilwald>, with an *e* caudata and a *wynn*. This might indicate that Aldred copied the name from various sources as well as using the form with which he was familiar. Likewise, as we have seen, the name Billfrith differs from the <Bilfrith> in the Durham *Liber Vitae*, whence Nees argues that he derived the name, and Eadfrith also occurs therein with the spelling <Eatfrith>. The inclusion of Latin elements within the Old English text (*hoc evange*(*lium*) *d*(*e*)*o*, *lindisfearnensis æcclesiæ* and *constrvxerv*(*nt*):, *´ł ornavervnt`*..) might also reflect the copying of parts of the text from another source. Furthermore, Jane Roberts has advanced the important suggestion that there may be a previously unnoticed poetic verse embedded within the part of Aldred's 'colophon group' concerning the manufacturing team. It is as if he were reworking an earlier verse, amplifying and extending it to include the passage relating to himself and thereby corrupting the poetic form.[14] On balance the evidence conspires to suggest that Aldred was adapting an earlier source or sources for his statements concerning the 'makers' of the Lindisfarne Gospels as part of his intent to associate his own contribution with theirs.

Aldred may have thereby effectively corrupted an earlier vernacular verse naming the makers of the Lindisfarne Gospels. He did, however, preserve or possibly compose some Latin verse as part of the 'colophon group'. Next to the original explicit to the Gospel of St. John on f. 259r he has written a Latin verse (+ *Lit(er) a me pandat* ...) which may be translated as: 'May the letter, faithful servant of speech, reveal me; greet, O kindly [book], all my brothers with thy voice'. In this verse writing is acclaimed as the servant of speech. The statement concerning

14 This previously unnoticed feature was first pointed out to me in 2003, when I was writing the commentary to accompany the facsimile of the Lindisfarne Gospels issued that year (Brown 2003), by Jane Roberts, to whom I am deeply indebted for sharing her thoughts and preliminary text. If she is correct only one word needs to be altered in order to make an original meter scan (Roberts 2005 and 2006). For Jane Roberts's further thoughts on the subject, and her response to subsequent comment, see her significant contribution to the present volume.

Aldred's parentage likewise takes the form of a Latin rhyming couplet indicating that Aldred himself harboured aspirations as a poet.

Aldred's continuous interlinear gloss is written in the Northumbrian dialect. A further Anglo-Saxon translation is preserved in the form of later (twelfth-century) manuscript copies and is known as the West Saxon or Wessex Gospels, being written in the West Saxon dialect.[15] Another gloss, added during the tenth century to an early ninth-century Irish Latin Gospel book, the MacRegol Gospels, by Farman, a priest from Harewood (either that lying in West Yorkshire or that near Ross-on-Wye or Lichfield),[16] relies upon Aldred's gloss, or a shared source, and is in the Mercian dialect.[17]

The Lindisfarne Gospels may contain the earliest extant translation of the Gospels into English, but we know that work on disseminating the biblical texts in the English vernacular had commenced earlier. Bede was engaged in translating John's Gospel, for the good of his soul and those of all people, on his deathbed (dictating to an assistant) in 735. The Vespasian Psalter (London, British Library, MS Cotton Vespasian A.i), a Kentish work of around 730, was also given an interlinear Old English gloss during the second quarter of the ninth century (probably at Canterbury by one of the scribes who also worked on the Royal Bible, London, British Library, MS Royal 1.E.vi, some time between 820 and 840 – perhaps under the reforming archbishop Wulfred; Brown 2005; Budny 1985). The spirit of evangelization that engendered such an openness to spreading the Word by any means was very different to the official intolerance encountered by Wycliffe and Tyndale in the late Middle Ages. There was, of course, a background of glossing as part of the learning experience as practised, for example, in the Canterbury school established by Theodore and Hadrian. And around the time that the Vespasian Psalter was translated, the Book of Cerne (Cambridge, University Library, MS Ll.1.10) also received a planned interlinear Old English gloss to one of its prayers, the Lorica of Laidcenn/Loding, in the hand of the book's scribe who wrote the book for Bishop Æthelwald of Lichfield (818–830; Brown 1996 and 2011b). This pre-exist-

15 Brown (2003: 96).

16 Proximity to Chester-le-Street would favour the former location and the use of the Mercian dialect the latter. Farman was assisted, or more probably sponsored, by one Owun who is also named in inscription. See also Coates, who argues for a location for Harewood near Lichfield (Coates 1997: 453–458).

17 A synoptic edition of both glosses and of the Latin text of the Lindisfarne Gospels is given by Skeat (1871–1887). Skeat considered that Farman's gloss was based upon the Latin version of the Vulgate in the Lindisfarne Gospels as well as the original text of the Irish Gospel book he was glossing, implying that he was consulting the Lindisfarne Gospels itself. This hypothesis might repay closer investigation and testing. Aldred's gloss may, in any case, have been available in another form. See further Kotake's paper in this volume.

ing Insular tradition, along with the Carolingian scholarly use of glossed texts, provide something of a background to the community of St. Cuthbert's decision to permit Aldred to gloss their prized cult-book.

This work may have been Aldred's way of establishing his credentials and making a contribution to the community which he seems only recently to have joined, his work being sponsored by the community and perhaps by the monastic reformers associated with the West Saxon court and its rulers. Aldred glossed Matthew, Mark, Luke and the beginning of John in a neat, tiny pointed cursive hand using black ink. From 5.10, and in mid verse, John's Gospel is glossed in the same hand, but using red ink. The Prefaces are also in red, up to the beginning of the *Plures fuisse*, as are some further glosses added to Matthew. There are also a few additional glosses in red on f. 140v (Luke 1). The change in ink may simply have resulted from some unpredictable change in Aldred's circumstances, or it may be that he decided to accord John's Gospel the particular distinction that it often seems to have attracted, especially in the context of the cult of St. Cuthbert (who studied it with his master, Boisil, and who was interred with a copy of it), by glossing it in a higher grade ink. It is tempting to wonder whether Aldred's model for the gloss on John might even have been indebted, if only in part, to the translation to which Bede devoted his last days on earth and that the red ink might honour such a source. Boyd (1975a) outlined the sources to which Aldred may have had access,[18] including Bede's Old and New Testament commentaries and his homilies upon the Gospels. However, in his 'gloss 62' (to John 19.38) Boyd (1975a: 52) notes that Aldred glossed the passage "*post* / .i. *est* in die examinis iudicii. Districti iudicis. ðus beda ðe bróema bóecere cućð"[19] ('thus said Bede, the famous scribe'), and states that

18 See Boyd (1975a: 56–57), where he lists Aldred's possible sources as Jerome's *Liber interpretationis hebraicorum nominum*, his *Commentarii in Esaiam, in Ezechielem, in euangelium Matthaei, in iv epistulas Paulinas (ad Galatas, ad Ephesios, ad Titum, ad Philonem)*, his homilies and perhaps his correspondence; Pseudo-Jerome, *Interpretatio alphabeti hebraeorum*, and *Commentarius in euangelium secundum Marcum*; Augustine's exegesis on the Gospels, such as his *De sermone Domini in monte, Tractatus in euangelium Ioannis* and his De *consensu euangelistarum*; Isidore's encyclopaedia, *Etymologiarum sive originum*, and perhaps his De *ortu et obitu patrum*; Gregory the Great's *Moralia sive expositio in Iob, Homiliae in Ezechielem, Homiliae in euangelia* and his *Registrum epistularum*; Pseudo-Chrysostom, *Opus imperfectum in Matthaeum*; Bede's Old Testament commentaries, including his *In Samuelem prophetam allegorica expositio, In Esdram et Nehemiam prophetas allegorica expositio, In librum patris Tobiae allegorica expositio* and his New Testament *In Marcum et Lucam expositio, Super Acta Apostolorum expositio, Explanatio apocalypsis* and *Homeliarum euangelii libri ii*.

19 The *Dictionary of Old English Web Corpus* has "cuæð" as the final word here, which is to be preferred.

> it has proved impossible to pin down the precise reference in Bede. Aldred may have derived his explanation from Bede's *Explanatio Apocalypsis*.[20] The great value of this marginal explanation is that Aldred confirms Bede as one of the sources of his scholarship.

Might this, alternatively, represent a Bedan gloss on his otherwise lost translation of John's Gospel, signified by the use of red ink? Later in the Middle Ages *de luxe* volumes would often be ruled in red or purple ink as a sign of status, and the popular expression *red-letter day* derives from the practice of grading liturgical feast-days by the use of different coloured inks in calendars; might Bede's contribution to the gloss be signalled here by the use of the higher grade red ink? Aldred might then have gone on to gloss the ancillary, prefatory texts and have decided to make a few additions to Matthew and Luke, correcting/supplementing his initial gloss and still using his red ink.[21]

Aldred seems to have been building a reputation as a glossator/translator and his hand can also be observed in the Durham Ritual (Durham, Cathedral Library, MS A.iv.19; Brown 1969; Ker 1943; Temple 1976: no. 3), where he glossed some of the collects interlinearly and added red initials to the text, and in Latin glosses to Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 819, a late-eighth-century copy of Bede's commentary on the Proverbs of Solomon written at Wearmouth/Jarrow (which probably passed to the community as part of its absorption of Wearmouth/Jarrow's properties in the late ninth century; *CLA*: II, 235). He emerges as something of a champion of the written English vernacular in northern England at a time when it was being reintegrated into the new, unified England. This process had been initiated by Alfred and considerably forwarded by his successors, Æthelstan effectively reclaiming the North. It was not, however, an inevitable one and encountered much opposition. At around the time that Aldred was glossing the Lindisfarne Gospels Eric Bloodaxe (died 954), ruler of Viking York, was advancing his 'kingdom' in Northumbria. Alba (Scotland) and Strathclyde also posed a threat to English control of the North. The community of St. Cuthbert seems to have been 'doing its bit' to keep the region 'English' and the promotion of Old English may have been part of this. The use of the vernacular would also, of course, have served to further enhance the popularity and accessibility of the cult of St. Cuthbert and to have strengthened Christianity in the region. The visits

20 In which Bede on Revelation 1.7 writes: *In eadem illum forma videntes judicem potentem, in qua velut minimum judicaverunt, sera semetipsos poenitentia lamentabunt*. This is translated by Weinrich as 'When they see him as a powerful judge in the same form in which they had judged him as someone insignificant, they will lament for themselves with a repentance that will be too late'; see Weinrich (2011: 115).

21 Such a possibility is also implied in Elliott and Ross (1972: 49–72).

of Kings Æthelstan and Edmund to the shrine of St. Cuthbert over the preceding decades can also be viewed in the light of fostering the process of reintegration and may have helped to stimulate Aldred to perpetuate King Alfred's agenda of translation as an essential adjunct to unification and national spiritual wellbeing and an earlier Insular tradition of glossing texts. This may subsequently have been reinforced by Aldred's own visit to southern England as a scribal notary in the train of his bishop in 970, during which time they may have obtained the Durham Ritual, made in southern England earlier in the century, for the community (Brown 1969; Ker 1943). Indeed, the visit may have been partly motivated by diplomacy to ensure the stability of the North, Bishop Ælfsige and Aldred accompanying Kenneth, King of Alba, to Wessex, perhaps as diplomatic mediators and presumably with the intention of safeguarding the community of St. Cuthbert's interests in negotiations concerning the English/Scottish frontier zone (Miles 1898: 247–250).[22]

Aldred's explanatory glossing of certain passages evinces a concern with celibacy and simony, which may suggest an interest in a reforming celibate monastic agenda.[23] Like most English monasteries at the time, that at Chester-le-Street would have been largely secular (Boyd suggested that it may have contained as few as two or three monks, and pointed out that its abbots were not monks from the time following the flight from Holy Island until the early eleventh century). According to Boyd, Aldred's 'colophon group' and parts of his gloss indicate that he may have had to purchase his ordination into the community, paying eight ores of silver for his induction (and glossing Luke's Gospel for the community), whilst he is at pains to point out that his other qualifications – his reputable, legitimate parentage, his humility, his priestly status, his scholarship and his

22 King Edgar appears to have ceded Lothian to Kenneth, perhaps to ensure an amenable balance of power in the North.

23 See Boyd (1975a: 4–5). See also pp. 8–10 (gloss to Matthew 1.18, concerning celibacy): 'to take care of, by no means to have as wife' and 'Abiathar the leader (?) was at that time High Priest in Jerusalem. He entrusted Mary to Joseph to take care of, and to deal with in purity'; pp. 22–23 (gloss to Matthew 7.6, concerning abuse and reform): 'those are the pearls, those are the commandments of the Gospel. *Ante porcos* before swine, those are the fatted swine, those are the men in holy orders and the good men and the proud men. They despise the commandment of God and the Gospel'; pp. 24–31 (glosses to Matthew 10.8 and 10.14, concerning simony): 'He said to the apostles and bishops foremost after him. You received orders gratis; give [them] gratis without any price to those who are worthy in learning and in habits and in purity and in virtues and in health of body. For the bishop must test and teach the priest eagerly, unless he has learnt beforehand' and 'A bishop is commanded to receive a newly-arrived priest, and to consecrate him quickly. Let him teach him first and eagerly prove him and ask those who know him what kind of a man he is … [and] examine his doctrine unless he have a good person who will bear witness for him'.

dedication to *opus dei* in the labour of glossing the Gospels – are in accordance with the Church's teaching which demanded that the Bishop ordain, freely, the worthy candidate. The additional, voluntary payment of four ores of silver which he makes, accompanying the glossing of John for his own soul's sake, along with the labour, perhaps served to demonstrate that he was transcending the simoniacal demands of the contemporary episcopacy. This raises the question of Aldred's background. Where had he acquired such high monastic ideals and the learning to back them (see Rusche, this volume)?

His command of the Northumbrian dialect of Old English would tend to suggest that Aldred had a northern birthplace and/or training, and Millar has pointed to mistakes and variants in the gloss which he takes as indicative of a "seepage up of originally low status usages", which he interprets as exhibiting a familiarity with more recent, local linguistic trends (Millar 2000: 61). He goes on to say that

> before the Norman Conquest, the position of late West Saxon as *Schriftsprache* led to the at least partial submersion of most other written dialects at the time, except, as with the glosses to the Lindisfarne and Rushworth Gospels and the Durham Ritual, where the primary purpose of the written product appears either to be for personal use only, or at the very least for a limited group.

Brunner (1947–1948: 32), however, in a discussion of the frequent occurrence of variant linguistic forms in the Lindisfarne gloss, outlined two explanatory views. The first, favoured by Bouterwek 1858, Waring 1854–1865 and Skeat 1871–1887, was that the gloss was by two or more scribes who spoke different dialects, a theory belied by the palaeography, which indicates only one hand. The second view, favoured by the palaeographers (including Thompson 1873–1883; Warner 1873–1883; Ker 1943; and Brown 1969), that it was written by one scribe who spoke 'a language admitting many variants in its morphology' (Brunner 1947–1948: 32). This supports the possibility that, although Aldred's gloss is essentially his own composition, written directly into the Lindisfarne Gospels and based upon its text, he also consulted one or more pre-existing translations and preserved their linguistic and orthographic forms alongside those of his own sections (see also Cole, this volume). Aldred's approach to language and its variant forms was as fluid as his approach to script, his hand, as analysed by Ker, exhibiting an exceptionally wide range of letter-forms and styles, again perhaps reflecting in part the influence of his exemplars.

So, it would appear that Aldred's gloss was the work of someone from Northumbria for local use, composed directly for the Lindisfarne Gospels and written in it by one hand (Aldred's) which was familiar with writing both Old English and