The History of Durham

Willem Peeters

For my granddaughters Masha and Dunya

In this City famous throughout Britain
steeply based, stones around (it)
finely formed. The Wear round-it-runs,
(with) river's currents strong, and therein live
many of-fish types in the current-among,
and there well-grown is forest-sector great,
exist in the area wild animals many,
in deep dales, of-animals-a-countless-number.

Durham Poem [1])

Translation: Bas Hendrix

Introduction

The town of Durham in northern England owes its existence to the River Wear. Thirty kilometres south of Newcastle, it meanders around a peninsula that forms a natural fortress, enclosed on three sides by water. Monks begin in the eleventh century with the construction of the cathedral that towers high above the surrounding landscape. William the Conqueror turns this place into a citadel that for centuries forms a stronghold against imposing Scots. The small settlement becomes a city where powerful bishops hold sway. In the Middle Ages Durham expands beyond the peninsula and creates the infrastructure still present today. The concern for education is growing, culminating in the foundation of the University of Durham.

Geography

If you look at a map of the United Kingdom, one thing immediately stands out: the northeast-southwest running line in the north of Scotland. It seems as if the country has put on a bonnet, and in a way it has. On that line lies the Loch Ness, a lake that fills a crack in the earth's crust, as it were. That crack is the *Great Glen Fault*, a huge horizontal fracture in the Earth's crust along which the bonnet has queued in from the northwest. This fault, which extends far beyond Scotland over 300 miles (480km), originated at the end of the Silurian geological period and the beginning of the Devonian (490 to 430 million years ago) during the so-called Caledonian mountain formation when two earth shoals collided. Of those once high mountains we find the remains in Scotland.

Further south there is another important line to be found in the landscape. This is the somewhat winding day edge of a limestone formation from the Jurassic period (190-140 million years ago) that forms the boundary of the old, hard, somewhat higher rocks in the north and the slightly lower, younger, and softer formations in the south. This boundary is erratic but is indicated by a straight line: the *Tees Exe Line* that runs from the mouth of the River Tees between Redcar and Hartlepool to that of the Exe in Devon. North of this line the landscape is less suitable for agriculture than for frequent cultivation, while to the south of it the soil lends itself perfectly to arable farming. It is believed by some historians that this geographical difference influenced the still existing socio-economic contradictions between the Northerners and the southern inhabitants of England.


Great Glenn Fault
Hadrians Wall
Durham
Tees-Exe Line

When you move from the far northwest of Scotland to the southeast of England, you travel through time. On the Isle of Lewis, you will find rocks that are 1.5 to 2 billion years old, while at Dover the chalk cliffs were formed about 100 million years ago. Before you reach the Tees Exe Line you pass another line – man-made – the east-west running *Hadrian's Wall*, once built by Roman soldiers on behalf of Emperor Hadrian who wanted to defend himself against what he called the barbarians from the north, from Caledonia. And there, between the Tees Exe Line and Hadrian's Wall, the River Wear makes its way through the ancient rock formations rich in coal, formed in the Carboniferous era (360 – 300 million years old). More on the operation of the Durham Coalfield later. Where Durham is now located, the river has formed a beautiful meander that encompasses a peninsula on which the first inhabitants settled a long time ago. Where do they come from?

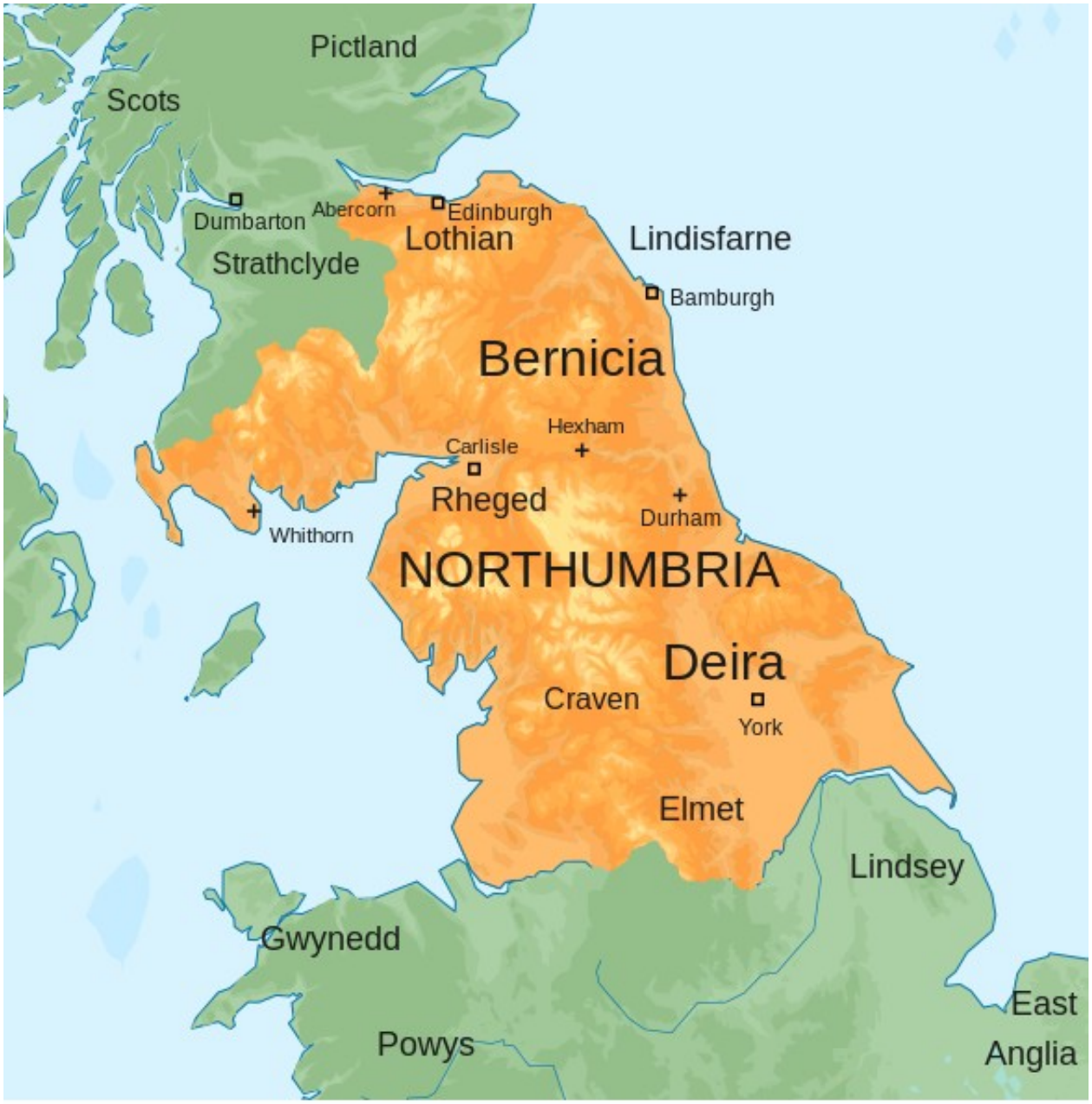
Prehistory and Romans

From the discovery of hand axes in Waverley Wood, southeast of Birmingham, we can infer that there were people walking around in England about five hundred thousand years ago. Not people like us – Homo sapiens – but an older species: Homo Heidelbergensis. At that time, the sea level was considerably lower than today, whereas England is not an island, but via a fixed connection, the so-called *Doggerland*, accessible to people from the east, what is now known as the European continent. After these first inhabitants, a new species of humans appears, the tough Neanderthal (Homo neanderthalensis), who left stone tools in the Creswell Crags south of Sheffield. These first inhabitants of England are extinct and make room for us, the human being: Homo sapiens. People who put images of animals, such as mammoths, horses, and reindeer on the walls of the same caves. At the end of the last ice age – about twelve thousand years ago – sea levels rise, and England is an island to this day. An island where the Brigantes live in the north before the arrival of the Romans. They control an area that includes the present-day districts of Yorkshire, Lancashire, Northumberland, and Durham. The Brigantes are descendants of the Celts who swarmed from Central Europe for hundreds of years BCE, to Spain and England. Their main location in England is Isurium Brigantium, now Aldborough.

Between 48 and 79 CE, the Brigantes are overrun by the Romans who thus dethrone Queen Cartimandua. She is known to be the first British queen and is mentioned by the Roman historian Tacitus as a person of high birth, but otherwise portrayed as a woman of loose morality. A treatment that almost all women in the Roman Empire receive. An empire, in which no woman ever reaches the absolute top of the emperorship. In the third century, Roman England is divided into two areas: *Britannia Inferior* which stretches from the Hadrian's Wall to Lincoln and *Britannia Superior* (so-called because it is closer to Rome) which includes southern England and Wales. The capitals of these Roman provinces are York and London respectively. At the end of the fourth century, the Romans still seem to be firmly in control, but things soon go wrong. In the year 402, the flow of money from Rome dries up, after which the Roman armies leave England. In the year 409, the British declare themselves independent.

Northumbria

Initially, after the departure of the Romans, local rulers under the Romanized Celts (the Romano-British) take control of Northern England, but not for long. In the fifth century, Germanic tribes, the Anglo-Saxons from Germany, Friesland, and Denmark penetrate the north, expelling the Romano Britons to corners of the country, such as Wales and Cornwall. In doing so, they are also attacking the Christianity introduced by the Romans. A few kingdoms emerge, of which Northumbria is one of them. Northumbria is the most powerful kingdom that has ever existed in the north. It rises at the beginning of the seventh century, finding its end around 865 when the Danes invade Northumbria. During the short reign (634 to 642) of King Oswald, this empire reaches the height of its power. Oswald, a staunch Christian, widely regarded as one of the most important British monarchs ever, requests the Irish missionary Aidan (c.590-651) to establish a community of monks on the islet of Lindisfarne with the aim of Christianising the population. Oswald eventually dies in a battle against the "pagans" and dies as a Christian martyr. He is later canonized. His head is buried in Durham Cathedral. Aidan's name lives on in that of St Aidan's College of the Durham University.



Northumbria around 700 BCE (CC BY-SA 4.0 – Hogweard – wiki)

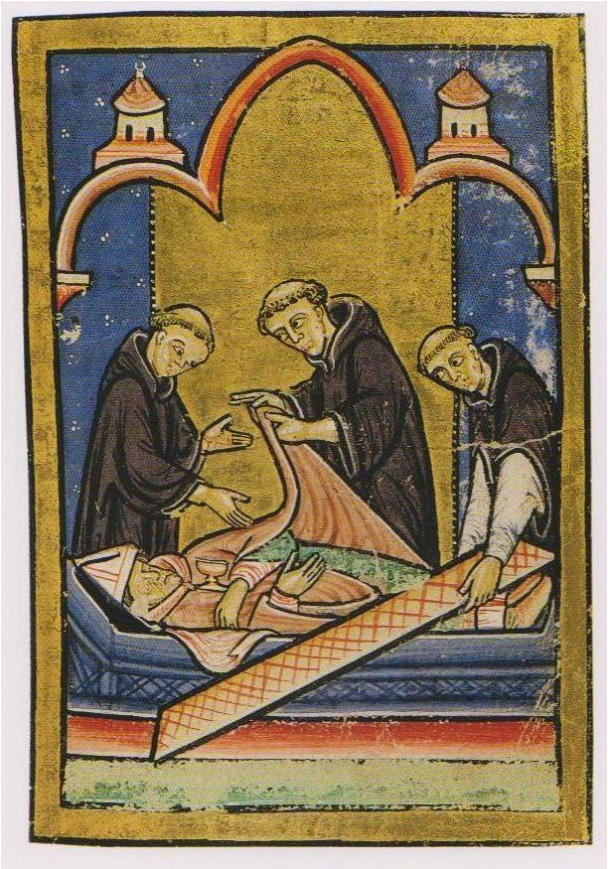
But even more than King Oswald and Aidan, Northumbria has become known for two clergymen and a book. They are bishop and hermit Cuthbert, the Benedictine monk and scientist Bede and the *Lindisfarne Gospels*. This richly illustrated Lindisfarne gospel was probably written as a tribute to Cuthbert in the monastery of the island with the same name, around the beginning of the eighth century. The work is attributed to the monk Eadfrith and is in the custody of the British Library. The legend of the origin of Durham is woven around Cuthbert's life.

The Legend of the Dun Cow

The history of many cities is often steeped in legends. One of the finest examples of it is the legend of Santiago de Compostela in north-western Spain. According to the story, the apostle Santiago – the Spanish name for James – who has been entrusted with the care of the Christianisation of the Spaniards lives there, but due to a lack of success he returns to Jerusalem in the year 44 where he is beheaded. His disciples, so the story goes, take his body to the seashore where they find a fully rigged ship without a crew. They embark and transport the apostle's remains by sea to Galicia in north-western Spain, where they bury him and erect an altar. The location of this place fell into oblivion until the year 813 when the hermit Pelayo notices a soft glow and hears songs at the very spot. A sanctuary is erected, and it is at the very spot that the famous cathedral of Santiago de Compostela is built later on. It has become a place of pilgrimage to which countless pilgrims have walked the long distance of hundreds of miles.

The legend of Cuthbert that tells of the origin of Durham is in no way less than the one of Santiago. Cuthbert is born around the year 634, and when he is about fifteen years, the spirit of Aidan comes to him. Aidan, the first bishop of the monastery on Lindisfarne Island, tells him that he was born to serve heaven and Cuthbert does not hesitate to heed that call. He realises that his task is not only behind the closed gates of a monastery, but that he must go out to proclaim the good news in the realm of Northumbria. A country in which many, of what he considers pagan customs are the most common thing in the world. The inhabitants of Northumbria worship the soul of the forest and the river and make offerings to sacred springs and trees. It is a dark world in which Cuthbert wants to bring a glimmer of light. Gradually he makes a name for himself as a preacher and healer and in the 665 he is appointed prior of the monastery of Lindisfarne. But Cuthbert seeks silence and solitude for meditation, so he builds a cell of rough stones on a tiny island off the coast of Lindisfarne. And even that is not good enough for him, because at low tide his cell is still accessible. He seeks even more solitude on Farne Island, thus following Aidan footsteps. Then, in 685, he is called to accept the office of Bishop of Lindisfarne, but during the two years that he has lived in this dignity, he never forsakes the ideal of the monk, nor the virtue of the hermit. Cuthbert dies in 687 and his body is buried at Lindisfarne. At the time it is customary to reopen the coffin of a venerable dignity like Cuthbert after some ten years to verify that he is still resting peacefully.

This so happens in 698, and to the delight of the community it turns out that Cuthbert's body remained completely intact! One couldn't ask for more proof of his holiness.



At the end of the ninth century the peace on Lindisfarne is threatened by the arrival of the Vikings. A seafaring people from Scandinavia, looking for loot and slaves all over Europe. They cross the Atlantic to Iceland where they expel Irish monks, establish colonies in Greenland and even reach America, which they call Vineland, because of the grape vines they have discovered there. But they also visit southern Europe where they rampage France, Spain, Italy and even the north coast of Africa. And that is what also awaits Lindisfarne around 875. The then bishop Eardulph consults the monks who decide to bring Cuthbert's remains to safety. With some relics, the Lindisfarne Gospels and his coffin that also contains the St Cuthbert Gospel, they leave the island in search of a haven. They wander all over Northumbria, reaching the Scottish border, to return to what is Yorkshire today. Then they go west, to the Irish Sea to cross into Ireland, but a violent storm prevents them from doing so. The monks interpret this as a sign from Cuthbert that he does not want to go overseas. They turn around and finally, after a seven-year wandering, the travelling party reaches the old Roman fortress of Chester-Le-Street where Cuthbert is granted a resting place for a period of one hundred and thirteen years. But then, around 995, the Vikings strike again in England and once more the monks set out with Cuthbert's coffin to reach Wrdelau, a hill presently known as Warden Law east of Chester-Le-Street. It is there that the saint's coffin becomes so heavy that it is almost impossible to lift it, as if Cuthbert is saying that he does not want to continue any further. It is also the spot that somebody has a vision of a lofty church, whereas a voice tells him that the monks are expected to look for *Dunholme* to provide Cuthbert a resting place there.

Undeterred, the party sets off, revealing that the coffin has become considerably lighter. But where is Dunholme? Coincidentally, the monks run into two milkmaids, of whom one of them has lost her cow. When she asks the other milkmaid if she has seen the animal, the answer is yes, I have seen it on Dunholme. The milkmaid then leads the travellers to a high rock which is on three sides surrounded by the river. The wanderings of the monks have come to an end and Cuthbert has found his final resting place. Upon arrival, the monks begin work on a shelter for their relics, probably at the site where the Durham Heritage Centre is now.

Towards the end of the first millennium, a small stone church had been built and the settlement begins to expand, a settlement that attracts pilgrims who bring in money. Cuthbert is interred in Durham Cathedral in 1104 and the Cuthbert Gospel is removed from the coffin. The legend of the Dun Cow has been kept alive and chiselled into one of the cathedral's walls. A sculptured group in Millennium Square also testifies to Cuthbert's arduous journey.

Bede

The name Northumbrians first appears in the masterpiece of the theologian and scientist Bede who publishes his book *Ecclesiastic History of the English People* in 731. And it is through this work that we are familiar with the history of Northumbria. Bede is born around 673 and grows not only into a devout Christian, but also into an astute observer of the world around him. He speaks and writes fluent Latin and reads the Greek language. No doubt he provides priests and monks with texts translated into the regional language, but none of it has survived. We only have the last words of his so-called Death Song attributed to him. In modern English:

For the enforced-walk ‖ none comes to be
wise to malice ‖ more than him that must
with mindfulness think back, ‖ before his going hence,
/ on what his breath's ‖ bad, good, right, or evil,
after death-day's ending, ‖ on judgement comes to be. [2])

Shortly before his death, Bede begins a translation of the Gospel of John from Latin into Old English and writes a commentary on a work by the seventh century Visigothic scientist Isidoro of Seville: *The Natura Rerum*, or the *Liber rotarum* (The Wonders of Nature), in which treatises occur on the time reckoning in days, weeks, months, and seasons, on the cosmos and celestial bodies and on atmospheric and telluric phenomena as thunder, lightning, the rainbow, earthquakes, etc. These are phenomena that also concern Bede. He writes for example *Temporum Ratione*, a work on reckoning of time, in which he wonders why the same calendar days differ in length from each other in different places in the world. He explains that this is because the earth is shaped like a ball and not a flat disc. He also writes about the tides, a phenomenon that has never been described by classical scientists, because tides are hardly visible in the Mediterranean Sea. Bede observes tides along the British coast, notes that there is a correlation between these tides and the position of the moon and draws the conclusion that the moon is apparently pulling on the water. Bede dies on Ascension Day, in May 26 in the year 735. His remains are in a tomb in the Galilee Chapel of Durham Cathedral.

Canute the Great

The Vikings who invade England towards the end of the eighth century are after loot and slaves rather than the conquest of territory. But in 865 things changes when the Great Pagan Army invades the Anglo-Saxon Empire and conquers large parts of the country, including Northumbria. But they cannot withstand the English king Alfred the Great. This monarch, who is lord and master in the south, defeats the Vikings in 878 and reaches an agreement with the Danes that creates the so-called *Danelaw*, an area in which Danish laws apply. Northumbria with its capital York turns into the Nordic empire Jorvik.

In 954, the Danes reign is over, at least for the time being, when their last king Eric I of Norway, better known as Erik Bloodax, is defeated. Danelaw disappears and Northumbria becomes a county under the sovereignty of the English king Edred, a grandson of Alfred the Great. It's a year after Erik Bloodax brings gifts and pays tribute to Cuthbert in his resting place Durham. But the Danes return during the reign of King Ethelred II under whose rule the English Empire fell into disrepair. To prevent the Danes from taking up arms against him he pays them huge sums of money, the so-called Danegeld. Ethelred is nicknamed the *Unconsidered*, meaning that he either has bad advisers, or disregards advice. His decision in November 1002 to kill all Danes living in England may be evidence of ill-advised behaviour. A massacre ensues in which, as the story goes, the sister of King Sven Gaffelbeard of Denmark also dies. True or not, Sven doesn't hesitate a moment and in 1013 he deals a devastating blow to the British who then recognize him as their king. Sven dies in January 1014, after which Ethelred returns, to die on 23 April 1016. Between his heir Edmund and Sven's son and successor Canute, a battle for the English throne unfolds that is settled in favour of the young Dane. In 1016, at the battle of Assundun, perhaps now Ashdon in Essex, he defeats the armies of Edmund. His coronation as king of all Britons follows a year later. Canute maintains a good relationship with the Roman Catholic Church leaders and shows his piety by setting sail for Durham to honour Cuthbert in 1027, after a pilgrimage to Rome. At that time, Durham Monastery is very prosperous, both in terms of money and estates, because of the pilgrim donations and local landlords. Now it is the turn of Canute, who according to the traditional story, on his journey to Durham in nearby Trimdon, permits himself to be shaved, to get rid of all the evidence of his royal status and, dressed in penintential clothes, approaches Durham barefoot where he is respectfully received by the impressed population.

As might be expected, Canute is very generous in remembrance of the saint. Numerous estates pass into the hands of the monastery, including the Manor of Staindrop, a personal villa of the king. It is suggested that the monks of Durham, who do not ask for alms, but for large tracts of land, manage to manipulate Canute, actually Canute provides generously to demonstrate his piety and humanity, something in which he apparently finds delights, but he definitely wasn't stupid.

There is a legend attached to this, a legend that tells how Canute puts an end to the myth that haunts about his ability to withstand the waves of the ocean. At some point, Canute asks his followers if they agree with a decision he has made, to which one of the flatterers in the company replies that the king has made a wise decision as you would expect from someone so capable and loved by his people and who will soon be able to command the waves of the ocean. Canute then allows himself to be taken to the shore and sitting in his chair in front of the rising water, he shouts in a loud voice against the waves: "I Canute the Great, king of England, Denmark and Norway, command you to retrace your steps." When he sits up to his ankles in the water, he repeats this command, while his entourage moodily look on. Then Canute, siting high and dry in his chair, orders them to be carried home. He has achieved his goal of showing that even a king is not omnipotent and that he understands his minions. Canute rules England until his death in 1035, after which the great Nordic empire begins to crumble. Another descendant of the Vikings, who once occupied northern France looms, in the person of the Duke William of Normandy who thirty years later invades the internally divided England.

Willem the Conqueror

The English king Harold II is killed during the battle of Hastings in which William of Normandy, better known as William the Conqueror, destroys the British army in 1066. This marks the end of a long series of Anglo-Saxon monarchs. With the king, countless Anglo-Saxon nobles disappear from the scene. William the Conqueror is not a man who takes half measures, killing any enemy he can get hold of. Their possessions are handed down to William's comrades-in-arms from Normandy. Because the new king needs a lot of money, he imposes heavy taxes on the Britons, which of course causes anger, especially among the northerners who do not want to bow to Norman tyranny.

A first revolt in 1068 ends in failure, but when William learns that he is once again being conspired to in the North, he sends the Norman nobleman Robert de Comines to subjugate the northerners. Robert de Comines reaches Durham with his army of seven hundred men on 30 January 1069, where he is advised by Bishop Æthelwine not to enter the city, because of the vindictiveness of the inhabitants, but de Comines ignores this warning, whereupon his soldiers, plundering and murdering, take hold of the city. Almost all the men get drunk and in this state, they are attacked by most of the Durham population who had concealed themselves before in the surrounding forests. The Normans are pushed back, taking refuge in the bishop's residence where de Comines has established his headquarters. The house is set on fire and all the soldiers inside, including de Comines, are killed. This success encourages the northerners to move to the South where they besiege York Castle, whereupon William the Conqueror responds to send an army underway that gets lost in a rising fog. A fog that the monk and historian Simeon of Durham attributes to Cuthbert's wish to protect his followers and to demonstrate the Normans his miraculous strength. But then William’s patience has run out, he leads his army to the north where he acts ruthlessly. This campaign is known as *Harrying the North*.

Ultimately, in the area between York and Durham, nothing remains but a barren wasteland of destroyed lands, smouldering villages, and dead bodies. Historians estimate the number of people killed at hundreds of thousands. After this horrific success, William decides to make Durham the military and administrative centre of the northern part of his empire. According to Willem, the location of the city lends itself perfectly to this and he orders the construction of a fortification that will eventually become Durham Castle. To emphasize his power, William resolves to confront the spirit of Cuthbert and orders the coffin to be opened, assuming that all stories about the intact corpse are based on nonsense. He wants to verify that with his own eyes. The clergy try in vain to dissuade him from this plan and all that remains for the clergy is to beg Cuthbert not to disappoint them. On All Saints' Day, November 1, 1072, the coffin is to be opened, but then, as the story goes, King William is suddenly seized by a severe fever. Panic-stricken he flees the church, saddles his horse and rushes past what is today Dun Cow Lane, out of the gate, away from the city. The name of this port is very appropriately called Kingsgate. William the Conqueror has found his equal in Cuthbert. He dies because of an accident in Normandy in 1087.

The County Palatine of Durham

The diocese of Lindisfarne is founded in 635 by Aidan, the bishop who, as we have seen, calls on Cuthbert to proclaim the Christian message. Around 882, the seat of the diocese is relocated to Chester-Le-Street and in 995 to Durham. The bishops of Lindisfarne and Durham are not only spiritual leaders of their community, but also act as civil administrators in the region that is part of Northumbria. In 1070, after William the Conqueror brutally plundered the country, Bishop Æthelwine tries to flee with several Northtumbrian valuables, but he is caught and imprisoned. His death leaves a vacant bishop's seat that William fills by Walcher, a priest from near Liège. But Walcher, full of good intentions, shows himself to be an incompetent administrator. He is murdered in 1080. King William Rufus, successor of the Conqueror, divides the county into two pieces in 1087, the land north of the rivers Tyne and Derwent are from then on ruled by the Counts of Northumberland. The southern part, known as the *County Palatine of Durham*, is controlled by the Bishop of Durham who also holds the title of Earl and is de facto vested with royal power. He appoints all local officials, including judges, levies taxes, mints his own currency and maintains his own army. It is Walcher's successor, William de Caliph (William de St-Calais) who is the first to take this position in Durham, a position that goes down in history under the name of *prince-bishop*. The prestige of this title, the autonomy and the wealth of the diocese make the office of prince-bishop an attractive function for ambitious and powerful people who are not always particularly pious. Such an ambitious man is the earlier mentioned Ranulf Flambard, the successor of Caliph, who rules Durham from 1099 to 1128. In addition to his building activities in the city, he is known as *Chief Justiciar* (Prime Minister) of King William Rufus, but he is imprisoned in the Tower of London by William's successor Henry I, as an easy scapegoat for the financial mess Rufus has left behind. Ranulf is the first prisoner to escape from the Tower. He goes into exile in Normandy only to return to his post later. He dies in 1128. A second influential bishop is Hugh de Puiset who holds the seat from 1153 to 1195. He is Chief Justiciar to King Richard I and, like Flambard, shows himself to be a passionate architect by having Elvet Bridge and the Galilee Chapel built on the west side of the cathedral. The Puiset is not a pious man and fathers three children. John Cosin, Bishop of Durham from 1660 to 1672, is the one who discovers that Auckland Castle in the village of Bishop Auckland is empty and neglected. He has it renovated, and the castle has been the residence of the bishops ever since.

Except for a brief period during the English Civil War (1642–1651), the diocese retains the combination of spiritual and temporal power until this situation ends in 1836 with the *Durham (County Palatine) Act* transferring secular power to the crown. A reminder of the once powerful position of the prince-bishop is the episcopal coat of arms, adorned with a crown and a mitre, as well as a cross of two swords, and a bishop's staff. The Bishop of Durham still holds a seat in the House of Lords. William Van Mildert is the last Prince-Bishop of Durham, and he plays an important role in the founding of Durham University. He is the son of the London gin-distiller Cornelius Van Mildert, a descendant of a Dutch merchant who moves from Amsterdam to London around 1670. He is honoured with a statue in the cathedral.

Durham expands

There is no archaeological evidence of the existence of a settlement on Durham before the arrival of the monks carrying Cuthbert's coffin. However, remains of economic activity have been found around the year 1000 in Saddler Street and from then on Durham's growth begins. The construction of the castle starts in 1072 and that of the cathedral in 1093, which is completed in 1133. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Durham is little more than a stronghold in which the prince-bishop was firmly entrenched. To protect him, the cathedral, and the Benedictine monastery from attacks from the north, a wall is erected from the castle to the east where the North Gate is built, the only gateway to the peninsula which in turn is connected to the wall that runs along the embankment of the Wea and in which two other gates are built in. To the east the Kingsgate and the Watergate to the south. To separate ecclesiastical and secular matters, there is also a wall - in which the Owengate, that runs from the castle along the Palace Green to the cathedral and from there to the Kingsgate. This wall is integrated with the façade of the church St Mary-le-Bow, now the Heritage Centre.

Durham Cathedral (mattbuck - CC BY-SA 4.0)

Durham Castle (Carla Brain - CC BY-SA 2.0)

Within this stronghold of ecclesiastical and secular power, a community develops in the Middle Ages, finding protection under the umbrella of the Bishop of Durham to engage in trading activities on the spot where Palace Green is now. Activities that gradually shift to the citadel-oriented marketplace, on the still existing Market Place. Trade is unthinkable without roads and bridges over which goods are transported between the citadel and the outside world. An outside world that in the immediate vicinity of the peninsula consists of several so-called *Boroughs*, or communities of people grouped around a church or country house. There are four: the *Old Borough, Bishop's Borough, Elvet Borough* and *St Giles Borough*. Conclusively, there is the *Barony of Elvet*. The latter community probably arises before the arrival of the monks in 995 around St Oswald's Church, next to a ford in the Wear. Nothing remains of the first St Oswald's Church, the current church dates from the twelfth century. Elvet Borough is located on the Old Elvet road that used to be a flat agricultural area in the Middle Ages. The word elvet means swan, derived from the old English elfetu. The Swan and Three Signets pub recalls this old part of Durham.

In 1160, under the leadership of Bishop De Puiset, Elvet Bridge is built which connects Elvethall Manor, located on what is now Hallgarth Street, to the peninsula via the north-south running road. An interesting part of the current Elvethall Manor is a barn, the Great Barn with its stone walls and wooden roof whose beams are accurately dated about the autumn of 1448 [3]). Durham's oldest bridge is not Elvet Bridge, but the Framwellgate Bridge built around 1120 by Bishop Flambard to connect his Borough and the Old Borough. In 1400 the bridge is swept away by the waters of the Wear, but soon restored by Bishop Langley. Market Place with St Nicholas Church are important elements of the Bishop's Borough. Nothing remains of the original church, which is believed to have been founded before 1130 by Bishop Flambard. It is demolished around the middle of the nineteenth century. The Old Borough, located west of the peninsula is also known as Crossgate and is one of the oldest parts of Durham with the eponymous street, Allergate and South Street. This area almost coincides with the parish of St Margaret of Antioch, a church whose construction begins around 1150. Finally, there is St Giles Borough which develops around St Giles Church, founded by Bishop Flambard in 1112 as the chapel of the nearby St Giles' Hospital.

Godric’s story

Reginald of Durham (???? - c.1190), a Benedictine monk, who belongs to the priory of Durham has recorded the life story of Godric (c. 1065-1070 – 1170), the hermit of Finchale who, after many years of wandering, receives authorisation from Bishop Flambard to set up a hermitage on the banks of the Wear. Born at the time of the capture of England by William the Conqueror, young Godric lives in a period of uncertainty and repression by the despotic Normans. In his younger years he earns a living as a peddler, but blood runs thicker than water and he sets out as a pilgrim to Jerusalem. When he returns, he chooses to live as a sailor, buying shares in ships and eventually he becomes a captain of his own ship with which he trades well. But the life of a sailor is hard, and Godric gradually becomes known as an adventurer, as a Pirate of the Kingdom of England. In 1101, he goes on a pilgrimage to the Mediterranean where he accommodates as a passenger, none other than Baldwin I, crusader, and king of Jerusalem. On his way back he visits Spain where he is the first Briton to make the long pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. As a sailor, Godric visits the sacred island of Lindisfarne where he hears of Cuthbert's wondrous narration. After a second visit to Lindisfarne, Godric's desire for a life in solitude grows. In 1105 he disposes of all his possessions and starts the life of a hermit. Two years later, when he longs for Jerusalem again, he has a vision that Cuthbert will provide a place for him in Finchale upon his return from the Holy Land. During his last trip to Jerusalem, he washes his feet in the Jordan River and from then on, he continuous his life barefooted. Once he has found calm and reflection in his hermitage at Finchale, known as Godric's Garth, Godric gains fame as a healer and clairvoyant. The area is teeming with snakes, but it does not bother the hermit, he cherishes all animals. Countless pilgrims make their way to the place now known as a sanctuary, and in 1150 a chapel dedicated to John the Baptist is built. Godric's fame transcends national borders, even Pope Alexander III informs him in a letter that he sets his simplicity and austerity as an example to everyone. On May 21, 1170, Godric dies at a very high age. After his death, the Finchale Priory is founded in 1196 and destroyed in 1536 when the monasteries, due to Henry the VIII’s abolition law and thus appropriated their wealth. The ruins of the priory can still be seen.

The Battle of Neville's Cross

At the beginning of the fourteenth century, it is the Scottish King Robert I - better known as Robert the Bruce - who causes Durham a lot of trouble and hence the inhabitants asks the bishop to erect a wall protecting Market Place and the Bishop's Borough. New city gates are created: Walker Gate, Clayport and the gates on Elvet Bridge and Framwell Gate are reinforced. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, the North Gate is rebuilt under the guidance of Bishop Langley. The North Gate probably stood in a spot on Saddler Street where a small elevation is still to be seen. Old masonry in the basement of the current Library bar is perhaps a remnant of the fortification and bears witness to the size of the North Gate with a stronghold in a back street. France and Scotland conclude the so-called *Auld Alliance* in 1296, intended to fight together against attacks by the English. This agreement serves the French well, when in 1346 King Edward III inflicts a significant defeat on the French army on home soil at Crécy. The French king Philippe VI needs help, which he gets from his Scottish colleague David II, son of Robert I. David II is already planning an invasion of England and now he sees an opportunity in the absence of King Edward III.

The wife of the English king understands the imminent danger, recruits an army that she puts under the command of the Archbishop of York and the British nobleman Ralph Neville of Raby Castle. Full of confidence, the Scots march south towards Durham where they make quarters at Beaurepaire (Beau Repaire = beautiful retreat), the prior's country house. This residence is destroyed in the seventeenth century and its remains are located just north of the current village of Bearpark, whose name is probably a corruption of Beaurepaire. The Scots have no idea that not far from them the English troops are stationed at Bishop Auckland. After an initial skirmish at Thinford, known as *Butcher's Race*, in which a Scottish cavalry unit is cut to ribbons, the armies meet on 17 October 1346 at the Battle of Neville's Cross.

The story goes that preceding the battle, the prior of Durham is ordered in a dream to send out four monks to stab a spear in the ground near the battlefield with the banner attached to it, the corporal (Holy Corporax Cloth) that Cuthbert used during mass. The monks are also expected to remain in prayer until the battle is over. The British achieve a glorious victory, after which Ralph Neville goes to Durham Cathedral to make his sacrifices. As a reward for his heroic deeds in battle, he is awarded the highest honour that can be bestowed upon him. As the first layman since the construction of the cathedral, he will be buried in this church after his death. His tomb and that of his son are still there. King David II initially manages to escape, but his hiding place under a bridge is discovered and he is imprisoned in the Tower of London until a high ransom is paid by the Scots after eleven years. Not long after the battle a cross is erected in memory of the battle. It is an inconspicuous monument now located on the A690 on Monument Court.

The Rising of the North

In 1517, after Martin Luther published his ninety-five theses, Protestant ideas begin to spread across Europe, much to the chagrin of the Pope and ardent defenders of Roman Catholicism, such as Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, and King of Mighty Spain. Charles aunt, Catherine of Aragon, marries the English king Henry VIII in 1509, who sadly looks on to see that his Spanish wife bears him three sons who dies shortly after birth and three daughters, only one of whom survives: the future Queen Mary I of England who reigns from 1553 until her death in 1558 [4]). Henry therefore has no male successor and asks Pope Clement VII to dissolve his marriage to Catherine. That puts Clemens in a difficult situation because he is held captive by Charles V who is vehemently opposed to the dissolution of this marriage. It would make his aunt an adulterer and her daughter Maria a bastard child. Clemens responds to Charles V's wish and refuses to comply with Henry's request.

Henry then breaks with the Roman Catholic Church. It is not that he embraces the Reformation, but simply out of a personal motive. With the Act of Supremacy, King Henry VIII of England appoints himself as the head of the Anglican Church in England on 3 November 1534, seizing all the possessions of the Roman Catholic Church. In response the Pope excommunicates Henry.

In 1536 it begins to stir in the north of England. People are infuriated by the way Henry robs the Roman Catholic Church of property and it is the jurist Robert Aske, once employed by the Earl of Northumberland, who marches behind Cuthbert's banner towards York at the head of an insurgent army and takes the city. Aske announces that he wants to go to London to ask the king to reverse his steps. This revolt is known as the *Pilgrimage of Grace* and does not end in an open battle, but through deception of the king. Henry VIII sends Aske a message saying that he understands the rebels' objections and wants to consult. The gullible Aske responds, disbands his army and leaves for London where he is arrested and hanged in July 1537. From that moment on, the Council of the North rules the north of England with an iron hand. On November 13, 1569, a large number of nobles gathers at Raby Castle to discuss the possibility of getting rid of the Protestant English monarch Elizabeth I and putting the Scottish Queen Mary on the English throne to restore Roman Catholicism. But Charles Neville, descendant of the mighty Ralph Neville, the victor of the battle of Neville's Cross who poses as leader of the revolt does not have the status of his illustrious ancestor, and the army he has at his disposal is weak.

The nobles hesitate but persevere under the motto that they do not turn against the queen as a person, but against the disorderly behaviour of her closest associates and favoured ones. Then their army sets into motion, growing on the way to Durham to four-thousand-foot soldiers and sixteen hundred horsemen. With their entering the cathedral, the Rising of the North begins. Elizabeth, who gets wind of the rebellion, is furious and the Scottish monarch is put under arrest. The insurgents begin to work in Durham Cathedral, English Bibles and prayer books are burned and replaced by the ancient Roman Catholic ones. On November 30, 1569, a traditional Roman Catholic mass is celebrated. It is time to act, the insurgent army leaves Durham and heads south, but once underway the leaders are getting aware that the population is not enthusiastic. The troops promised by Spain neither show on the scene.

The rebels then besiege Barnard Castle, where Georges Bowes, a toughened soldier and loyal to the queen, resists the rebels long enough, until Neville is told that a large army is approaching from the south, which he will not be able to compete with. The rebellion comes to an end, the rebel army is disbanded and many of them are executed in Durham, York, and London. Neville manages to escape and flees to Flanders where he stays in solitude and has to make do with a meagre allowance from the Spanish king until his death in 1601. With his demise, the Neville house has vanished from the map. His land and property are relinquished to the English crown.

Durham during the English Civil War

King Charles 1 ascends the English throne in 1625 in the belief that his authority over the people is legitimized by divine right. An insight he shares with all the absolutist Christian royals at the time. He wallows in opulence, maintains a huge court at his expense, and he is completely unaware of the impending tidal wave of discontent in the country. Parliament can be stolen as far as he is concerned and when the parliament refuses to accept his tax proposals Charles dissolves the parliament in 1629, and from then on rules by royal decree. In 1633 the king visits Durham for the first time, where he is welcomed with pomp and circumstance by the bishop who has a magnificent mass celebrated in the cathedral. After the religious ceremony, the king visits the tombs of Cuthbert and Bede. The next day, the king is showered with tributes and gifts. There is a price tag attached to this visit for the diocese of fifteen hundred pounds a day.

Charles I is constantly in need of money and therefore introduces all kinds of taxes that the population has to pay or else risk imprisonment. His measure in 1635 to introduce the so-called *Ship Tax* for all districts is the climax. The Ship Tax is intended to strengthen the Navy in times of war and was imposed only on coastal districts. Anger is everywhere, but the king does not care and commits the unforgivable blunder of forcing the Scottish Presbyterian Church to use the new Anglican prayer book. The Scots do not accept this and unite under *The Covenant*, a document underlining their independence from the English king. This is clearly not just about religious independence, but also about political independence. The king responds by dissolving the Scottish Assembly, an act that is ignored, after which the Scots prepare for battle and assemble an army of twenty thousand strong near Berwick on the border. The cash-strapped king can't compete with that, and he knows it.

On 29 April 1639, Charles I again visits Durham and is again received royally, and then footmen and horsemen are recruited to march on Berwick. In the face of defeat, the king makes a few concessions to the Scots: the so-called *Pacification of Berwick* that saves him some time, but it is in vain.

On 25 August 1640, the Scottish army expells the royalist opponents who, after sacking Durham, flee further south. The Scots then rule the north of England, and although the nobles remain loyal to the king, people are toasting to the health of the Scottish Covenanters in the pubs of Durham. Still, there are many residents of the city who don't trust the Scots and flee the town that turns Durham into a kind of ghost town. And in that ghost town the Covenanters' army moves in on August 30, immediately making financial demands on what is left of the city population. They ask the king to free them from the occupiers, but that falls on deaf ears, because Charles I is dead broke himself. Charles I has no choice but to reconvene the parliament, which is installed on 3 November 1640, after which a very unfavourable armistice is reached for both the king and parliament. The Scots are retroactively demanding an amount of eight hundred and fifty pounds a day, which they take on for the time being. In 1641 they make their retreat. The king then confronts the parliament again with taxes, which leads to great divisions. When Charles I enters parliament on 4 January 1642 with great power to arrest his chief opponents, they appear to have flown, which causes him a lot of embarrassment. In response to the king's rash act, the parliament, backed by the city of London, rebels. Charles I then flees the capitol, hiding himself at Nottingham Castle.

The schism in the English society between royalists and parliamentarians leads to an armed conflict. The English Civil War breaks out and the first battle takes place on 23 October 1642 at Edgehill in Warwickshire, ending undecided. Initially, there doesn’t seem to be that many problems for the king and the formation of the *Association for the King's Service*, a partnership between the districts of Northumberland, Durham, Cumberland, and Newcastle that creates the infamous *Whitecoats' regiment*, strengthens his position in the north. But the tide is turning for the king when the Scots secretly join the parliamentarians in September 1643 to fight against the tyrannical king. In January 1644, Scottish troops attempt to capture Newcastle and when that fails, they head south towards Durham, which they seize with all the military equipment stored there.

Then, on July 2 of that year, the battle of Marston Moor, a little west of York, and due to a devastating charge by Cromwell's cavalry, the royal troops are defeated. That results into the loss of the north for Charles I. It is the beginning of the end for the king whose army is decisively defeated in 1645 at the battle of Naseby north of Northampton. He is captured in 1646, and the last time he visits Durham is in 1647 on his way to his trial and execution.

Cromwell's star rises since his victory in Marston and when moderate members of the Scottish church attempt to reinstall Charles as King of the Scots, parliament sends him to the north to put things in order. With his New Model Army, he marches through Durham and Newcastle, to arrive in Edinburgh without significant opposition where he deals with the royalist troublemakers. After Charles I has been executed, the moderate party recognizes his son Charles II as their king and to reinforce their wish they raise an army. Once more it’s Cromwell, but now in the capacity of Captain General of the Army of Parliamentarians, to go north, arriving in Durham on 14 July 1650 where he deploys a number of garrisons from the city to strengthen his army. At the battle of Dunbar, Cromwell beats the Scots. Thousands of them die and many are forced to head to the south. About three thousand Scots reach Durham where they are interned in the cathedral to get through the winter. They demolish everything that can burn, in doing so many medieval carvings are lost for ever. Together with the partial destruction of the tombs of Ralph Neville and his son John, the Scots take revenge on the victors of their ancestors at the battle of Neville's Cross.

After leaving Durham, Cromwell makes a remarkable gesture, asking parliament to establish a university or school there, which request is granted and in 1657 Cromwell, in his capacity as Lord Protector, formally confirms the establishment of Durham University. However, the universities of Oxford and Cambridge oppose the establishment, which causes delays, and as such this matter is not successfully concluded before Cromwell's death in September 1658. After the restoration of the Thousand Year Monarchy in 1660, Cromwell's initiative falls into oblivion, and Durham needs to be patient for another two hundred years before England's third oldest university sees the light of day.

Canals and railways

On Market Place in Durham is a statue of Neptune, armed with his traditional trident. Why is the god of the sea in the middle of the city that far from the coast? He owes that place to the fact that several attempts have been made to make Durham a seaport city, accessible from Sunderland for ships through a channelled Wear. The first plan dates back to March 1717 when the so-called Wear men, a group of wealthy landowners and merchants, proposes dredging the Wear and providing it with a number of locks. In their views, factories would occur along the banks of the Wear. But the Tyne men who see their trade in coal via the Tyne jeopardized if Sunderland is given a more important position as a supply port from Durham, consider it to be a bad idea. Nor does the channelling of the Wear have the approval of the Bishop of Durham who sees himself as patron of the river. But these objections do not prevent the Wear Men from getting permission to carry out their plan.

However, nothing comes of it, it is all too expensive and technically unfeasible. In 1754 history repeats itself, but even then, it arouses a storm of protest, especially from the local chapter of the church, pointing out that transport of coal by water may be much more expensive than by land as it happens from Chester-Le-Street. The most promising plan to transform Durham into a seaport city dates back to 1796, to provide a connection of the Wear with the North Sea, as well as the Irish Sea. It seems a promising plan at a time when canal digging is in vogue [5]), but the plan fails before it's worked out.

It wouldn’t take long before the steam train replaces the transport of coal by water. What remains in Durham is the lead statue of Neptune that is installed in 1729 as a symbol of the aspirations of the Wear men across the spring that has supplied Durham with water since the Middle Ages. In 1923, when the well has to make way for a traffic control house, the statue of Neptune is moved from Market Place to Wharton Park where it oversees the city from its spot above the station and gradually threatens to deteriorate. In 1979, a lightning bolt delivers the final blow, whereupon the badly damaged statue is removed. But then, in 1986 Neptune is reinstated. The statue gets a place in the Town Hall, but shortly before the statue is to be placed and unveiled during a festive occasion, it is pointed out that the heavy “God of the Sea will most certainly sink through the floor and perish”. So it remains in the shop window until Neptune is restored in 1991, when the traffic house, as well as the traffic disappeare from Market Place, and thus regains its former location.

In 1836, the first section of the Durham-Sunderland railway is built. This section, from Sunderland to Ryhope is extended a year later to Sherburn and ends in 1839 at Shincliff station, about five kilometres from the Durham town centre. At the time, trains are pulled on a rope, until the first locomotives appear on the scene around 1857. In 1893 the railway branches off in Sherburn to the new Elvet Station in Durham itself. About forty years later, the line is closed due to a lack of interest, but the station is still popular for some time among the miners who arrive there on the occasion of the annual Durham Miners' Gala. In 1954 the station is permanently closed and a few years later demolished. The spot of the station near Whinney Hill now houses Durham Magistrates' Court and the university's Parsons Field buildings. Where the railway once crossed the Wear, the remains of a bridge can still be seen. Elvet Station is not the first station within Durham's city limits.

As early as 1844, more than half a century before Elvet Station is put into operation, St Giles Station rose across the Wear, from where the Newcastle and Darlington Junction connects Durham via Belmont to Gateshead on the south bank of the Tyne opposite Newcastle. But this connection does not last long, due to the unfortunate location of the station and therefore closes for passenger traffic after only thirteen years. However, it is still in use for the transport of goods until it is finally closed in 1996. The building is now a Travelodge. The rails have disappeared, but there is still the Brasside or Belmont Viaduct where the trains crossed the Wear.

Although Durham has two stations in 1857: St Gilesgate Station and Elvet Station, the North Eastern Railway Company (NER) decides to build a new station on the site of the current Durham station, which would be connected to Bishop Auckland via The Durham to Bishop Auckland Line. This line is opened in 1856 for freight and a year later for passengers. This line requires the construction of the conspicuous Durham Viaduct south of the station, which is two hundred and forty metres long, thirty metres high and consists of eleven arches. In 1871, the NER develops a new railway through Durham from Tursdale which run via Chester-Le-Street to Newcastle, the occasion of which Durham Station is rebuilt. This line soon becomes the main link between London and Edinburgh, the East Coast Main Line. In 1923 the station comes under the management of the London and North Eastern Railway (LNER). A major improvement for the rail link is the electrification in 1991 and the highlight for Durham Station is the 2006-2008 renovation, which is awarded with a prize.

The Durham coal mines

Even more than Neptune, the man on horseback dominates Durham's Market Place. The high-seated figure is an effigy of Charles Vane Stewart, third Marquess of Londonderry who plays an important role in coal mining near Durham and not least in breaking the great mine strike of 1844. Coal mining in England is very old, and already in Roman times coal seams are excavated outcrops in Northumberland.

Later, from the thirteenth century, it is monks and inhabitants of Newcastle who receive permission from King Henry III to mine coal. For their own use, but also to trade by sea via the Tyne. This form of mining has disappeared, but it has certainly contributed to the development of northern England. Merchants and the Bishop of Durham too, earn a lot from the exploitation of coal.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, there is a belief that there is no coal under the thick lime layer in the Durham district, a view that is mainly supported by coal operators who do not dare to investigate. This in spite of findings from geologists who have indications that there is indeed coal to be extracted in Durham, but of course you have to drill through the lime layer and to pump out a lot of groundwater.

In 1822, it is Arthur Mowbray, an ex-associate of Sir Henry Vane-Tempest, the father-in-law of the man on the horse, who accumulates funding to start deep mining in Hetton. The Hetton Coal Company sees the light of day. Henry Stephenson develops his first railway that marks the beginning of a new era for northern England.

When in 1819 Charles Stewart marries Frances Anne, the daughter of Sir Henry Vane-Tempest, he not only inherits the name Vane, which he adds to his surname, but he also comes into the possession of the huge estates and mines in the Durham district of which his wife is heiress.

In search of means to provide for his luxurious lifestyle, he digs through the financial statements of the mines and smells his chances. At the height of his career as a miner, Stewart owns eleven mines, two railroads, limestone quarries, and twelve thousand acres (nearly five thousand hectares) of land. He then employs two thousand employees [6]). Although Stewart likes to present himself as a generous entrepreneur, his miners live in miserable poverty, and in the pit, it’s hell. Stewart blames the countless accidents, often fatal, on the reckless behaviour of the miners and it is not until 1844, also the year of the great mine strike, that he decides to improve the living conditions of the miners and their families, but it is marginal and in stark contrast to his extravagant way of life. Stewart always opposes social legislation, and he shows himself to be an exploiter pur sang when he breaks the strike of 1844, not only by depriving the miners of their wages, but also expelling them from their humble houses. The third Marquis of Londonderry starves the strikers to force them back to work. In 1858, four years after Stewart's death, his wife donates the statue that stands now on Market Place to the city in memory of Durham's "benefactor." But many, unquestionably the miners' wives, will not have appreciated this gesture.

1869 is an important year in the history of coal mining in Durham and after some preliminary discussions by delegates from the mines in the vicinity of the city, the Durham Miners Association (DMA) is finally established on 20 November at the Market Hotel, today’s Market Tavern on Market Place in Durham. In 1875, the first Miners Hall opens on the North Road. Towards 1911, the Association already has more than two hundred thousand members and sufficient financial resources to house the pitman's parliament in a new building, Redhills, which has been the headquarters of the miners' organisation since 1915. It is a building of and for the miners, radiating the strength of the DMA. But it's more than that.

Redhills emerges as a place where the DMA builds a welfare state avant la lettre for the people of the district by providing education and housing for retired miners. In Redhills, but also in buildings built elsewhere, the members of the DMA engage in all kinds of cultural activities (music, theatre, and debate). A culture that still lives on in the region, even though the number of ex-miners who are members of the DMA has shrunk to a fraction of what it once was. In 1947, the mines that were still in use are nationalised, which benefits the safety of the miners. This is desperately needed after more than sixteen hundred miners died in the two hundred and fifty years before, a figure that does not include the many individual deaths caused by the inattention of the miners themselves, according to the owners. In 1993, the last mine is closed, ending not only an important industry, but also a way of life for people in the Durham district who have built their existence and society around the mine shafts. In the meantime, there is virtually nothing left of mining activities. Rails have given way to walking and biking trails and the Wear, once a black sewer, is clean again.

The process of the rise and fall of the mining industry has also taken place in the south of the Netherlands. The author of this article once went down into the Maurits pit, in the late sixties one of the most modern coal mines in the world. Eight hundred meters down and then a ride in a twenty-minute train to the coal face where the coal was mined mechanically. The pillars in which the miners supervised and moved the struts were one and a half meters high and dust was everywhere. But it certainly was a paradise compared to the environment in which Durham's miners worked around the end of the nineteenth century.

Urban development after the Middle Ages

When, after the English Civil War, Durham as a citadel against the Scots declines in importance, the position of the prince-bishop weakens, the old nobility loses much of their authority and the city changes from a centre of power to an ordinary provincial town, a new elite is announced, that of craftsmen, traders, and mine owners. They replace the old, mostly wooden houses with stone houses in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Gradually, as the urban population increases, there's also need for new construction that requires urban expansion. This process is mainly driven by the *Paving Commissioners* in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a company created by the Durham Paving Acts of 1773 and 1790, which for the first time in Durham's history, provides a central management organisation responsible for the pavement, sewers, drainage channels, watercourses, footpaths, thoroughfares, and lighting. The Paving Commission provides numerous innovations and there's no doubt that many buildings that have disappeared, we would today consider picturesque. An example of this is the demolition of the North Gate in 1820, which then serves as a prison, an action that contributes to a more open character of the city. Earlier in 1778, the Watergate is enlarged as a result of the built of the Prebends Bridge. Elvet Bridge is widened in 1804, followed by expanding the capacity of Framwell Bridge in 1859. The accessibility of Market Place is improved by a partial demolition of St Nicholas' Church in 1841. From 1860, when the city has been provided with railways, stations and thoroughfares, more and more construction take place in the open fields outside the familiar surroundings of the peninsula. Houses appear in the form of terraced houses with their own place or garden. Colpitts's Terrace from 1856 is an exception to this with its communal garden. Until 1920, Durham expands westward near Great North Road and the station. Later, in the interbellum period, the construction of semi-detached houses on Whinney Hill, Northend and Gilesgate Moor take place.

Thomas Sharp, born in Bishop Auckland, plays an important role in the development of urban renewal plans and he is particularly interested in Durham. In the mid-thirties he becomes a member of the *North-East Durham Joint Planning Committee* and publishes his bestseller *Britain and the Beast* in which he complaines about the decline of Durham as a result of industrialisation. He opposes the philosophy of the *Garden City movement* that advocates building completely new garden cities [7]) and he wants to give the city a new look from within.

He warns against too rigorously clearing hovels, particularly in Old Elvet, and opposes a plan by the municipality to build a thoroughfare over the neck of the peninsula.

In 1944, his plan Cathedral City is published: *A Plan for Durham* which is followed by numerous other plans after the war. Coincidentally, another plan appears in 1944 for the construction of an electricity plant at Kepier, just north of the city. That plan with tall chimneys and cooling towers is welcomed by the local authorities, but Thomas Sharp, and with him many others oppose it strongly. It would seriously detract from the Durham skyline with the cathedral's familiar towers. The plan vanishes into the trash bin. The City of Durham Trust, formed as a pressure group in 1942, has reason to be pleased.

Education

In 1083, the Benedictine priory is founded in Durham, creating a singing school. The current Choristers School is rooted in this singing tradition. Outside the monastery walls, about the middle of the fourteenth century, the Almoner's School prepares children for entry into the monastic community. In 1414, Bishop Langley founds two grammar and music schools on the Palace Green that are destroyed by the Scots in 1640 but are restored by Bishop Cosin in the late sixties of the seventeenth century. Both schools are built on both sides of the poorhouses, as if they were bookends. Earlier, Cosin had the grammar school, the continuation of Almoner's School, rebuilt in 1661, also on the Palace Green. From the moment Henry VIII expropriates the monasteries in 1541, the school receives support from the king to be re-established in 1844 as Durham School in Quarryheads Lane. Cosin is a passionate collector of books and that is reflected in his library on Palace Green which he opens to the public. Education in Durham in earlier centuries is not exclusively a matter for the church, private schools are also founded, but little remains of the buildings. Only the Durham High School for Girls of 1884 and Bow School of 1885 survived. In 1825, the Durham Mechanics Institute see the light of day, gradually paying attention to a wide range of subjects such as art, history, and astronomy. The highlight of the educational tradition in Durham is of course the university founded in 1832, whose first college, University College, moves to the castle in 1840 after a short stay at the Archdeacon's Inn, todays Cosin's Hall. A second college from the early days is the Bishop Hatfield College, located in the building with the same name on Palace Green.

During the nineteenth century and thereafter, a large number of lectures are added [8]) including the Van Mildert College from 1965, named after one of the founders of the university. In 1963, the university administration incorporates the vacant Shire Hall (a hotel as of 2012) in Old Elvet, creating a second centre of university activity on the other side of the Wear. In 1962/63, near the spot where the Bow Bridge once connected the banks of the Wear, the impressive Kingsgate Bridge is built, connecting both university campuses high above the river. This bridge is constructed in two parts on both sides of the river, then turned and connected to each other.

Cuthberts Mist

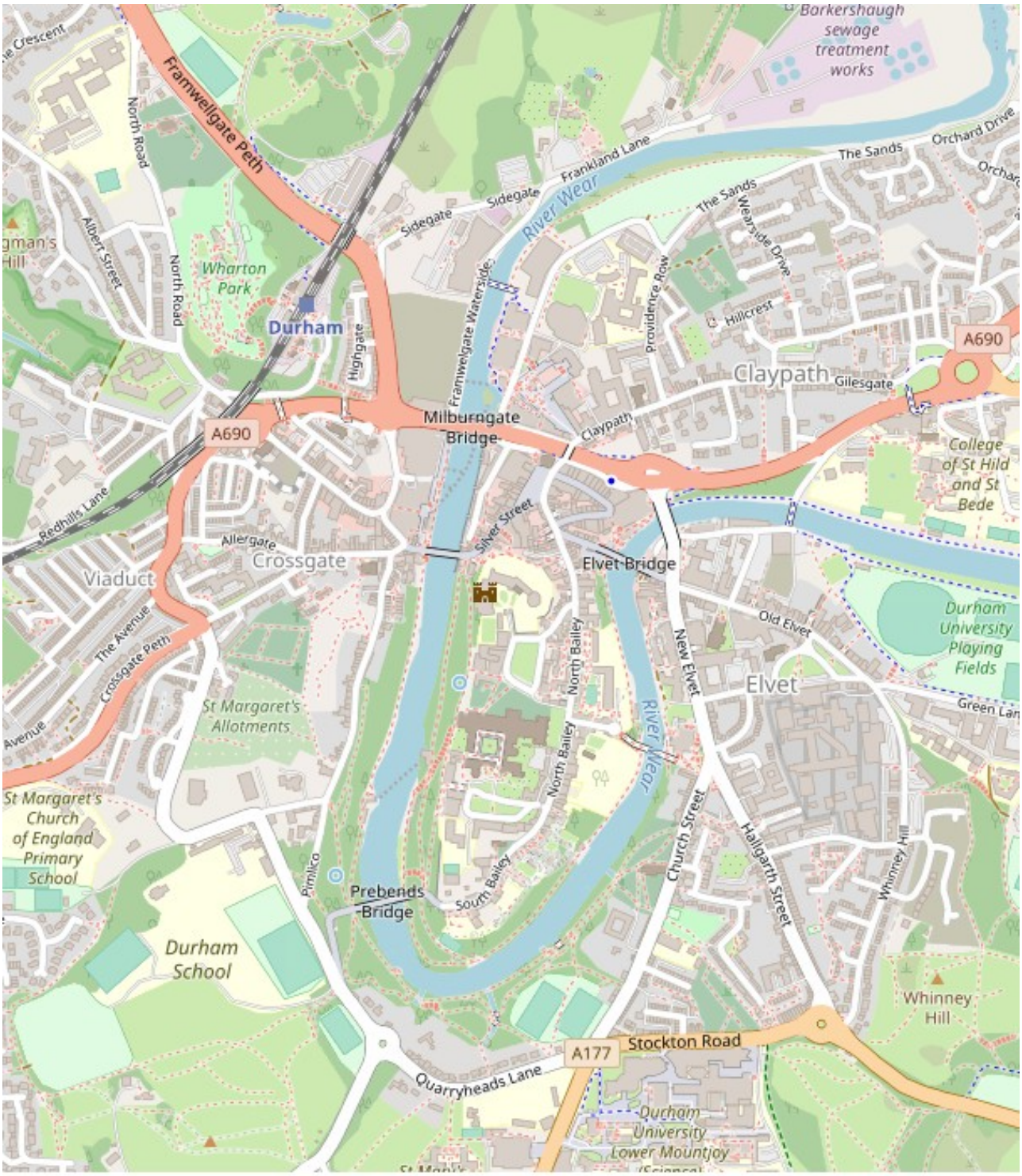
In March 1942, the British bomb the medieval city centres of Lübeck and Rostock largely off the face of the earth, the cathedral of Lübeck is in ruins. As can be foreseen, Hitler wants revenge. With the Baedeker guides in hand, it is not difficult for the Luftwaffe to choose from the numerous beautiful and often unprotected historical cores. These attacks, starting with Exeter and Bath, are known as the *Baedeker Raids.* The city of Durham is holding its breath, because its cathedral which rises high above the landscape is not only a splendid landmark for a fighter pilot, but also an easily recognisable target.

In the early morning of May 1, 1942, the sky is crystal clear and the roar of the engines of a bomber announces the end of the construction works on the peninsula. But then something unexpected happens. All of a sudden, a thick fog ascends from the Wear, hiding the castle and the cathedral from the pilots' view. For a moment they circle around, searching for their goal, but then they turn around unsuccessful. An unknown writer notes in 1945 that a miracle has taken place here, entirely due to the spirit of Cuthbert who, from his grave behind the high altar, orders the Wear to raise a curtain of fog, as he did nine hundred years ago to block William the Conqueror's way, as the legend goes. There is no doubt that the fog did indeed form rapidly on that morning in May, a meteorological phenomenon that is very explainable that prevented Durham, like other English cities, to pay a high price for the British bombing in Germany.

Epilogue

After a visit to the cathedral, I descend to the river to walk via the Prebends Bridge on the other side towards Framwell Bridge via the lovely footpath along the Wear. I take a picture of the inscription in the balustrade of the bridge and continue my walk along the path. A bench in the sun is tempting and from there I look at the high towers of the Cathedral. On the water, rowing boats glide by. Durham at its finest.

Recent Map of Durham



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g) Jewell, H. M., *The North-South Divide, The origins of Northern consciousness in England,* Manchester University Press 1994.

h) Roberts, M., *Durham, 1000 years of history*, Tempus Publishing, Stroud, Gloucestershire 2003.

Notes

1. Griffith, B., **(d)** p. 45-46. See also *Old English Poetry Project:* https://oldenglishpoetry.camden.rutgers.edu/durham/ and https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Durham_(poem)
2. https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Bede's_Death_Song
3. Arnold, A and Howard, R, *The Tith Barn Elvethall Manor, Three-Ring Analysis of Timbers*, English Heritage, Research Department Report Series 59-2010.
4. Mary I - known as Bloody Mary - marries Philip II, eleven years younger, son of Charles V and Spanish heir to the throne, in 1554. Philip II thus becomes King of England. Mary is a staunch Roman Catholic and a marriage to Philip is a good opportunity to promote the restoration of Roman Catholicism in England. The marriage produces no children and ends with Mary's death in 1558.
5. A good example is the Caledonian Canal that connects Inverness on the Scottish east coast with Corpach, at Fort William on the west coast. https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Caledonian_Canal.
6. Dufferwiel M., **(c)**, p. 145.
7. The philosophy behind the garden cities has flourished in particular thanks to Ebenezer Howard who publishes his book *Garden Cities of To-morrow* in 1902.
8. https://www.durham.ac.uk/colleges-and-student-experience/colleges/#d.en.467132