

Annotated Bibliography - Cuthbert

Adam, David *Fire of the North: The Life of St. Cuthbert*
(London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1993) 274
[ISBN 978-0-281-06044-3]

This book is a fine little book. In it David Adam takes all of the most relevant scenes from the various lives of St. Cuthbert (relying most heavily on Bede's *Life*, but also using Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, the anonymous *Life of St. Cuthbert*, and other sources too) and stitching them together with his own imaginative prose to create a very readable little book. I like this book as an entry-way to the more difficult to read genre of hagiography. Adams softens some of what seems most odd in the original sources, and adds a narrative which roughly follows Cuthbert's life from childhood to death. That more familiar structure makes this easier to access. Having read several translations of the source-documents of the *Life of Saint Cuthbert* - I can say that Adams has done well in including all the most important moments in the original texts. I highly recommend this book.

Adam, David *Aidan, Bede, Cuthbert: Three Inspirational Saints*
(Great Britain: Bookmarque Ltd., 2006) 299 [ISBN 978-0-281-05773-3]

This too is a great little book. Adams offers three main sections in the book. One each for these three prominent figures in the history and faith of Northumbria. In the introduction Adams tells a bit of his own biography and how he came to love the saints of the region. Adams would, of course, go on to serve as Vicar at Holy Island for many years (retiring in the early 2000s). If you are looking for one small book to introduce you to three of the most important people to the region around Holy Island, this is an excellent book.

Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*
(London: Penguin Classics, 1968) 274 [ISBN 978-0-140-4465-7]

I have come to *love* the Penguin Classics collection of books. They are all created by well-known and respected scholars/translators, and yet they are inexpensive books which cover nearly all of the original source materials you could want relating to Celtic Britain. Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* is an essential resource from the middle ages about Christendom as it had evolved in Britain from the earliest stages. You have to factor in that Bede was "a company man," with regard to the Romanization of Christendom so he offers comments here and there highly critical of those saints who chose to remain oriented to Celtic calendars and habits. If you choose to not let that put you off, there is much in this original resource which is worth reading. To find Bede's writings about the saints of Holy Island and Iona you will need to use the index in the back of the book to find the relevant pages.

Bede, *Life of St. Cuthbert: in a Modern English Version* trans. Simon Webb
(Durham: Langley Press, 2016) 274 [ISBN 978-1-533-20841-5]

This new (2016) translation of Bede's *Life of Saint Cuthbert* is a fine addition to the library of anyone wanting to have an original-source of Cuthbert's life. The Introduction (roughly 25 pages) does several things worthy of note: 1) Webb describes both the traditional/standard translation (by Colgrave) and offers extensive comment on Webb's own translation practices. 2) He offers insight into Bede's agenda and intent in writing the *Life of Saint Cuthbert*. This can be very helpful as you read.

Colgrave, Bertram *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert* (A Life by anonymous monk of Lindisfarne and Bede's Prose Life)

(Durham: No Press Listed, 1939) [ISBN 978-1-493-51955-2]

It seems like this is the old standard translation. The copy I purchased was a facsimile-reproduction (which makes me think the original must no longer be in print). I am *not* a fan of this style of printing — much preferring that an accurate transcription be made and a new printing be offered. However, the photo-copying was done well and it is legible so I suppose I should not complain. This is a *scholarly* book. It has 60 pages of forward-materials alone, and many pages have more than 1/3 of the page eaten up by footnotes. Simon Webb's translation (noted above) is 113 pages. Colgrave's is 374 pages. You get the idea. This is a thick-tome of a book and while it is a classic in its own right, it may not be for the average reader.

Douglas, David & Deborah *Pilgrims in the Kingdom: Travels in Christian Britain* (Nashville: Upper Rooms, 2004) 263.04 [ISBN 0-8358-9872-5]

This is a fine book which might also be useful to you if you return to another part of Britain in the future. I have been pen-pals with Deborah Smith-Douglas since the 1990s (when I wrote her to seek permission to use some of her work in a play manuscript) and she is a fine writer. This book offers chapters of reflection by her and/or her husband as they visit holy places. Chapter 2 is "Iona and Saint Columba." Chapter 3 is "The Holy Island of Lindisfarne and Saints Aidan and Cuthbert." Chapter 4 is "St. Margaret's Chapel and Saint Margaret." This is an easy to read book and I recommend it.

Earle, Mary & Maddox, Sylvia *Holy Companions: Spiritual practices from the Celtic Saints* (New York: Morehouse Publishing, 2004) 274.1 [ISBN 978-0-8192-1993-0]

I am coming to like this book more the longer I use it. I typically like Mary Earle, though this book did not initially "wow" me. Each section offers a Celtic Saint and gives a brief history, a quote, and a few suggestions for reflection/spiritual practice. I feel sure that some of Earle and Maddox's suggestions will find expression in our *Peregrination Primer* for the pilgrimage.

Sellner, Edward C. *Wisdom of the Celtic Saints*

(Indiana: Notre Dame Press, 1993) 274.1502 [ISBN 0-87793-492-4]

This has been a book used by many since the early 1990s. Sellner is familiar with the stories of the saints and with the literature surrounding them. He begins with 42 pages of introduction to Celtic Spirituality in general and then spends another 150 pages offering 8 to 10

pages a piece on a long list of Celtic Saints. He covers Aidan (p.49), Columba (p.89), Cuthbert (p.101), and Hild of Whitby (p.136). For each saint Sellner offers a handful of vignettes (usually taken from a hagiographical source) and offers them with only a little of his own material to smooth the way.

Tristram, Kate *The Story of Holy Island*

(Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2009) 274 [ISBN 978-1-85311-945-3]

I like this book because it is a modern history of Holy Island written by someone who wants to not only cover the saints whose lives gave the place its “holy” moniker — but who also wants the reader to be in touch with the messy, complicated, beautiful, and quintessentially *human* character of the place and its inhabitants.

Ward, Benedicta *The Spirituality of St. Cuthbert*

(Oxford: Sisters of the Love of God, 1992) [978-0-7283-0133-7]

I bought this (though it is difficult to find and secure) because I *love* Benedicta Ward and thought that if she ever published anything on Saint Cuthbert — I wanted a copy. That said, this comes from her early days as an author/presenter, and it is a very thin monograph created from a set of notes for presentation at an interdisciplinary conference in Durham, England in 1987. I’ll loan you my copy if you want to read it, but this is not her best work and, in my view, is probably not worth your trouble and expense to have a copy of your own.