

**THE PUBLICATIONS
OF THE SURTEES
SOCIETY; VOL. LXX**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649474462

The Publications of the Surtees Society; Vol. LXX by Various

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

VARIOUS

**THE PUBLICATIONS
OF THE SURTEES
SOCIETY; VOL. LXX**

THE
PUBLICATIONS
OF THE
SURTEES SOCIETY.

ESTABLISHED IN THE YEAR
M.DCCC.XXXIV.



VOL. LXX.
FOR THE YEAR M.DCCC.LXXVIII.

P20 89.7.10² (79)



LONDON:
MITCHELL AND HUGHES, PRINTERS,
140 WARDOUR STREET, W.

DIALOGI
LAURENTII DUNELMENSIS
MONACHI
A C P R I O R I S.

Published for the Society

BY ANDREWS AND CO., DURHAM;
WHITTAKER AND CO., 13 AVE MARIA LANE;
BERNARD QUARITCH, 15 PICCADILLY;
BLACKWOOD AND SONS, EDINBURGH.

1880.

At a GENERAL MEETING of the SURTEES SOCIETY, held
in Durham Castle on Tuesday, June 3rd, 1879, the Rev.
J. L. Low in the Chair, it was ORDERED,—

“That the Historical Poems of Laurence of Durham
should be edited for the Society by the Secretary.”

JAMES RAINE,

Secretary.

P R E F A C E .

CHAPTER I .

WILLIAM CUMIN, THE PSEUDO-BISHOP OF DURHAM.

BEFORE we can be expected to understand the very remarkable episode in our Northern annals which this Poem gives us, it will be necessary to take a rapid view of the political history of the time.* The death of Henry I. took place in December, 1135, and then, as John of Hexham observes, robbery, murder, and arson burst forth like the flame from a long pent-up furnace. Henry's legitimate and pledged successor was his daughter the Empress Matilda, at that time the wife of Geoffrey, Count of Anjou. Before she could take possession of her inheritance, Stephen, Count of Boulogne, the nephew of the late monarch, was placed upon his uncle's throne. The party which supported him was a very considerable one, and was strengthened, no doubt, by the French feeling that no woman ought to ascend a throne. Still, there were many who would not disown the fealty which they had sworn to their old master's daughter, and continued to support her cause with energy and enthusiasm.

The foremost person in the North at this time was

* The chief authorities for this Preface are the account of Cumin in Symeon, and his Continuator, the Chronicle of John of Hexham, and the Poem of Laurence.

David, king of Scotland, the wisest ruler of that sturdy people. He had acquired from his relatives in England the Norman love of order and system, and in his endeavours to sow and foster the growth of religion and law among his people he was far in advance of his subjects and his time. The Empress Matilda was his niece, and he supported her with enthusiasm. But David had other reasons for taking an active part in the commotion which the intrusion of Stephen into the English throne was certain to produce. He was by no means devoid of personal ambition. Thoroughly English although he was in his education and feelings, he had a great longing to be the lord of those vast tracts of country beyond the Borders which had at any time been regarded as portions of his own narrow dominions, and he did everything in his power to acquire new rights and claims, as well as to strengthen the old. He regarded the earldom of Cumberland as his heritage, and resented the intrusion of an English sheriff and bishop into that district. The great earldom of Northumberland he also asserted was his own in right of his wife, who was the daughter of one of the official earls, and the grandchild of another. If David could have secured this in perpetuity for his race, Scottish influence would have extended as far as the Tees. Through his son Henry, and his nephew William Fitz Duncan, he gained power far away into the South, whilst in several great English barons who had fees in the North, such as Eustace Fitz-John, Robert de Brus, Bernard de Balliol, and Hugh de Moreville, he had friends and aiders who were bound to assist him when an emergency arose. By slow and cautious steps David had acquired a position of pre-eminence in the North which it was difficult to match.

A new power, however, was making itself felt in the North, and acquiring, by slow progression, a position which no official personage through a long succession of centuries could lessen or destroy. It is not my province to endeavour to trace the origin of the cluster of franchises which built up the greatness of the prince-bishop of Durham. Suffice it to say that the rulers of that lordly see acquired, in very early times, not only royal privileges and exemptions, but a territorial position from which the kings of Scotland were never able to dislodge them. The see of Durham was deprived indeed of Teviotdale and Carlisle, but as a warning against invasion from the North, Bishop Ranulf Flambard upreared, right in the gateway of Scotland, the strong fortress of Norham, which, with Wark, Bamburgh, and Alnwick held the Border-land in awe. The castle of Durham, which was erected by the order of William I., soon after the murder of his lieutenant, Robert Cumin, in 1069, to overawe the population, became the chief residence of the bishops, and was strengthened by one prelate after another until it became absolutely impregnable. The existence of the increasing power of the bishops of Durham in the North was a stumbling-block in David's way. It was inimical to the complete development of what he hoped to secure for his dynasty, the earldom of Northumberland, and he would have crushed, if he could, the privileges of the prince-bishop, or made him a client of his own. The bishop of the day, Geoffrey Rufus, with the rest of his order, was on the side of Stephen when David embarked on his chivalrous and ambitious adventures. The cause of his niece was the cloak which concealed many a burning aspiration of his own. It was in vain that he endeavoured to induce Bishop Geoffrey to transfer his