



Durham

Dunholm

Cathedral Treasury

Grid ref .... NZ 273 421

Vestments

Coffin

Cross-head

Portable altar

Comb

Pectoral cross

MSS

### Fragments of cloth

c. 1066–90. silver gilt thread in underside couching, on silk. English. Decorated with lions and foliage ornament. Two fragments of work, called "*Opus Anglicanum*", taken from the grave of Bishop St Calais.

### Sandals

C11. Leather, English. Taken from the grave of Bishop St Calais

### Stole

early C10. Length 182.9cm. Gold thread and coloured silks on a silk foundation with a silk lining. Stem and split stitch, surface couching in alternate bricking. English. Depicts Old Testament Prophets on either side of the *Agnus Dei* with the figure of a Saint on each terminal panel. Inscribed with the names of: at centre, AGNV(S) DI; on one side, ESAIAS (Isiah), ABA BACVC (Habakkuk), IOHEL PRPHETA (Jehel), OSE PROPHETA (Hosea); end panel obverse, IACOBAS APU (St James), reverse, ÆLFLÆD FIERI PRECEPIT. On other side: (JERE)MIAS PROPHET, DANIEL PROPHETA, AMOS PROPHETA, AB(D)I(A) (Obadiah), IONAS PROPHE(T)A, ZACHA(RIAS), NAVVM PROPHETA (Nahum); end panel, obverse. THOMAS AP(OS)T, reverse, PIO EPISCOPO FRIDESTANO.

### Maniple

early C10. Length 82.2cm. Gold thread and coloured silks on a silk foundation with a silk lining. Stem and split stitch, surface couching in alternate bricking. English. Depicts a pope and attendant deacons on either side of the *Dextra Dei*. Inscribed with: at the centre DEXTRA DI. on one side the names of SCS GREGORIVS PAP (Pope Gregory I, died 604), PETRVS DIACONUS; end panel obverse, JOHANNES B (John the Baptist), reverse PIO EPISCOPO FRIDESTANO. On the other side, SCS SYXTUS EPISCP (Pope Sixtus II,

died 258?). LAVRENTIUS DIACONVS; end panel, obverse IOHANNES EVG (John the Evangelist), reverse ÆLFLÆD FIERI PRECEPIT. The inscriptions on the end panels of both vestments inform us that they were made at the command of Queen Ælflæd (died 916) for Fripestan, Bishop of Winchester from AD 909.

### Girdle

early C10. Length 62cm. Gold thread and coloured silks on a silk foundation. Stem stitch with surface couching in alternate bricking. English. Decorated with foliage designs based on a tripartite leaf with a flower growing out of it. This motif is very similar to the acanthus ornament developed in manuscripts decorated at Winchester in the C10. However it has been argued that the Durham motif may derive from the palmette of Byzantine art of the C9. The stole and maniple appear to display a simplified version of this motif and for this reason the girdle may have been made at the same time as the other vestments. Apart from a fragment among the relics of San Ambrogio basilica, Milan, these vestments are unique examples of C10 embroidery where the human figure is the principal element in the design.

### Braids

early C10. Three fragments described as "a girdle" and "two bracelets".

The Girdle. Length 61cm. Silk warp in two shades of red or brownish red; silk and gold thread pattern weft. A braid with the border in plain tablet weave and the centre in a diagonal double-face weave with the pattern in reverse. Brocaded with gold, in the front. Decorated with four patterns based on two types of floreated cross and two types of acanthus spray.

Two Bracelets. Length 20cm. Silk warp and weft in red., now brown, for the tablet weave and gold

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thread brocaded on the surface. Two braids in tablet weave, decorated with two birds facing a scroll pattern; on the left and right are vines and vases.

All the braids show a strong resemblance to the vestments and for this reason they may be contemporary. The bracelets are best interpreted as wrist-bands such as might have been worn on, for example, the sleeve of an alb. The girdle may have been used as ornament on a garment and need not have been worn round the waist.

### Coffin

late C7. Length 168.9cm. Oak. English. With incised decoration of figures and symbols identified by inscriptions. The Twelve Apostles: PETRUS, PA(ULUS), ANDREAS, ?, IOHANNIS, THOMAS, IA(CO)BUS, (PHILIP)PUS, BAR(THOLOMAEUS), MATHEÆ, ....NUS, ?, The Virgin and the Child: (M)AR and runic inscriptions his xps

The Seven Archangels: (S)CS MICH(AEL), (SCS G)ABRIEL on the end panel; (SCS) RAP(H)AEL, SCS URIA(EL), SCS ?, the fourth and fifth are missing but a fragment UMIA may be for Rumiel. Christ surrounded by the symbols of the four Evangelists: an angel, m/atheus and a lion, m/arcus; an ox, LUCAS and eagle, Iohann(is). Recent observations of the coffin has enabled several newly discovered fragments to be placed in position. Removal of the coffin from the oak mounting provided in the 1930s allowed each piece to be cleaned, consolidated and examined before being fixed to a more stable support.

### Comb

C11 (?). 11.9cm x 16.3cm. Ivory. A single slab with teeth cut out on both sides, 40 thin teeth and 16 thick teeth. Sides of the comb are slightly bowed and the plain area separating the two sets of teeth is pierced by a hole 3.1cm diam. Decoration is restricted to the simple outlining of the plain area. Traditionally the comb is said to have been used in tending the corsaint, and as such was made in the C11. Has been argued that the comb is an early prototype of the highly decorated combs of the C10-C12. The crude workmanship need not necessarily indicate a C7 date; decorated combs are known in Coptic Egypt from the C4-C7. In its simplicity the object is functional and it need not be a liturgical comb.

### Pectoral Cross

c. 640-670. Width 6cm. Garnets set in individual gold cells on a gold, cross-shaped base plate. The central garnet is mounted on a white shell of Mediterranean origin. English.

The arms are decorated with beaded wire, dog-toothing and dummy rivet heads. The suspension loop is secondary. Repairs show that the cross was not new when buried in the grave in 687. A number of decorative elements and the general concept of a cloisonné cross show an awareness of Kentish jewellery of the C7. But the shape of the cross and the use of dummy rivets may place the piece in a Northumbrian milieu.

### Portable Altar

C7. 12.8cm x 12.2cm. Oak encased in silver plates bound with silver strips at the edges and held in place by small pins. One face of the wooden altar is inscribed: + IN HONOR(EM) S PETRV. Decorated with five crosses, one at each corner and one in the centre.

The silver casing is decorated on both sides but the evidence for the design is fragmentary. One side bears the lower folds of a garment and the remains of an inscription: S...P.R.OS...A...S. The other side has an inscription in a central roundel (OMN)IA S EC ERA(NT)... Decorated with a pelleted border on all four sides with a foliage design at the four corners. The central medallion contains an equal armed cross with semi-circular terminals, in which are scrolled patterns. Between the arms there is fine interlace.

The portable altar may well have been used by St Cuthbert. The silver covering is a later enshrinement, possibly C8, and the central medallion is a repair covering the original design which is now lost. Has been argued that the work has a Northumbrian context.

### Commentary on the Psalms

by Cassiodorus Senator, C8. 41.9cm x 29.3cm. An abridged copy in one volume. Northumbrian. Simple decorated initials in red, some outlined with red dots. Two surviving frontespieces for the three main divisions showing David the Musician and David the Warrior within the decorated borders of interlace and key-patterns; vermilion, green, yellow and purple.

The MS was written in several hands and in its decoration it displays the same Mediterranean influences that are to be seen in the Lindisfame

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Gospels. It has recently been argued that the "Cassiodorus" might have come from the Anglo-Saxon monastery of Jarrow, home of the Venerable Bede.

Commentary on the Book of Revelation, by Bede, C11. 14cm × 8.5cm. Perhaps originally used unbound. It is written in red-brown ink by several scribes working simultaneously. No ornament except for some capitals touched in red. The simplicity of this MS contrasts sharply with the size and rich decoration of the "Cassiodorus". The "Commentary" was essentially a manuscript used for everyday study and it is heavily abbreviated. Both MSS were part of the mediæval monastic library.

### Cross-Head

late C10. 21.5cm × 21cm. Fragment of a single arm; sandstone. Northumbria. Decorated with interlace ornament

Found in the Chapter House foundations, 1874, the fragment may be associated with the settlement of the community of St Cuthbert at Durham (998–1083). The use of fine interlace draws upon the earlier traditions of MS illumination and sculpture.

Rule of St Benedict. Late C11. 21.2cm × 17.8cm. A collection of works relating to the life of the monastery, including a Latin and an Anglo-Saxon text of the "Rule". Canterbury (?). The Latin text is decorated with capitals in red and purple, and ornament in purple, green and yellow. Given to the monks of Durham by Bishop St Calais. A chapter was read aloud each day when the monks assembled in the Chapter House. The Latin text is accented and there are notes in the margin for the reader.