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<Text: Metrical Life of St Cuthbert>

<Tranche 1>

<fol. 18r>When þair lyues er ne3e forlorne
þai ansuerd heyriosly in laste
To pray for þaim we halde it waste
þai haue fordone our~ alde lawes
And broght in newe þat na man knawes
Were þai all deede it war na charge
þan myght we leue all at oure large
It semes þat time religiouse
To lawed men was full heyriyouse
On happ for þai þat lyf reproued
þat synfull lawedmen þat time loued
When þus he þaire countenance sees
he kneles doune on bathe his knees
And bowed his heued in to þe erthe
Prayed god to gif þaim better werde
þan þe wynd it chaunged belyue
And all þe bates agayne dryue
With all þair~ charge whare þai walde be
Come þe batemen with gamen and gle
When þe bewschirs þat þaim blamed
Saw þis þai were a-schamed .
For þai trowed before a-mys
And cuthbert faythe þai loue and blis
And eftirwarde þai walde no3t sees
Ay in his louyng to encrees
Þis tale to saint bede was tolde
Of ane of þaim þat case beholde
Þat was a trewe and symple man

Pat walde no3t lye ne feyn þan
 In þis forde chapitill
 þou sall wat gif þou rede will
 Before he was fourten 3ere elde
 he had his wittes wele in welde
 hende hirdmen he was sett amange
 he saw aungels with ioy and sange
 Bischoþ saule Aydane beere to heuen
 Of haly eland þe first men neuen
 When god þat gyues all grace <ill><rest of line></ill>
 Walde chaunge his cheson <ill><rest of line></ill>
 <fol. 18v>To *purpose* of strayter lyuyng
 him to blisse of heuen to bryng
 Jn hilles with hirdes bestis he kepid
 And on a nyght when þai slepyd
 He waked in prayers as he was wont
 He saw with in a schort stont
 Come fra heuen a+lufsom lyght
 And þat with many worthy wyght
 þai toke a saule was clere and clene
 And bare it to heuen þaim betwene
 he was conpuncte entierly
 þis syght when he saw sodanly
 And thoght mare gastely lyfe to lede
 A-mang gude men to gete him mede
 he loued and thanked goddis name
 And steryd his felaws to þe same
 Allas he saide we wafull wreches
 þat for our~ slepyng and mysteches
 With goddis seruande we lete to wake
 lyght and syght of heuen to take
 lo brethir a litil stounde
 J haue bene wakand on þis grounde
 heuen yate J . saw opyn
 And haly aungels lede þider in
 þe saule of some bischoþ it is
 þit with slyke lyght was ledd to blis
 þus þe hirdes hertes he moue
 þair~ god to wirschip to thanke and loue

On þe morne cuthbert knew
 Be tellyng of men þat were trew
 When he sawe aungels fra heuen glyde
 þe same oure saint Aydane dyed
 þat bischop of haly eland was
 his saule þat time to heuen it pas
 þe bestes to his kepyng betaught
 he 3elde to lordis þat þaim aught
 And went a mynster for to seke
 To lede his lyfe in monkhede meke
 Þis fyft chapter telles verray .
 <fol. 19r>How god sped him in his way
 Whils þat he purpose helde
 To chaunge his lyfe as it telde
 God walde shewe him be takenyng clere
 þat wha so sekys his kyngdome here
 And þar of þe ryghtwysnes
 God gyues lyuelade to mare and les
 It fell on a day he rade
 Towarde mailrose monke to be made
 he saw a toune stande o fer
 To bayte his horse he drew it ner
 he gestynd at a huswyf house
 Was deuote and religiouse
 þe woman gladly toke hir gest
 To ordayne mete sho was full prest
 And prayed him hertly to þe mete
 Bot þan on na wyse walde he ete
 For it was fryday day of fast
 þe thrid oure of þe day was no3t past
 3it þe gude wyfe for lykyng
 had deuocion~ of <?>costenyng .
 Made instance to him to habyde
 And saide þou hafe so ferr to ryde
 þat þe sonn sall be went doune
 Or þou come whider þou ert boune
 And in þe way fra þou be gane
 Mete ne herbery fondes þou nane
 þarfore J . pray þe ete beforne

þat þou fast no3t whil to morne
 For all þat euer þe wyfe myght pray
 he rade fastand on his way
 And traueled whils þe somn was sett
 Mete ne drynk he nane gett
 Ne to þe place whare he walde lende
 With day-lyght he myght no3t wende
 So as he rade at euen tide
 he loked a litil him besyde
 hirdes holetts sowe he þare
 Of man and beste he fande þaim bare
 <fol. 19v>his horse vp be a wall he bande
 he had na hay to him at hande
 Bot of þe thak þat he þar~ fynde
 was blawen away with þe wynde
 þe whilk before his horse he layde
 And whils he ete he went and prayde
 When þe horse of þat had lakk
 he drow doune of þe house thakk
 Amange his mouthefull as it happed
 he drow doune a clathe samen lapped
 Cuthbert his prayer endyd
 he saw þe clathe and serchid it
 halfe a hate lafe and soule he fande
 þat to a male was suffyschande
 þan grete god he thankyd
 þat to him slike grace did
 þat syn he fasted for his luf
 þus helpid him at his behoue
 half his brede his horse he gaue
 And kepid to him self þe laue
 Aftir þis fastyng : he leued
 For be experyens he had preued
 þat god to him þat clathe spredd
 As Ely in desert he fedd
 Be briddes of heuen fele sithes
 þus our~ god his kyndnes kythes
 To þaim þat in his mercy trowes
 And to his bidding baynly bowes

A monke of Wermouth named Ingualde
 Of cuthbert þis tale to bede talde
 Of þis chapiter þe sext
 in þe rubryke is þe text
 how bosilus bare witnes
 Jn cuthbert *commyn*g of his gudnes
 And how he toke his abyte
 And lyued 3e sall here als tite
 he left all þe werlde's gude
 And to religioun he 3ode
 Noght to lyue as lust lyst
 <fol. 20r>Bot to thole hungre and thrist
 Jn haly eland kirke he knew
 haly men and wyse ynew
 þat couthe him monkes lare lere
 Bot him thoght better and mare dere
 For to leue in maylros
 For þe grete name and gude loos
 Of boisil þat haly man
 þat passand monk was halden þan
 When þat cuthbert come thidir
 his horse his hernays all-to-gydir
 he hade a seruand to take tent
 And to þe kirke sone he went
 Boisil stode þe 3ates besyde
 And saw cuthbert comen þat tide
 he sayde to þaim þat by him stande
 behalde and se goddis seruande
 As criste saide of anathael
 Se a trew man of israel
 þis talde a monk Gydfride his name
 þat he harde boisil say þe same
 Aftir at Jarow Gidfride was
 And þare oute of þis werlde he pas
 When cuthbert his prayer had done
 To boisil þe prior went he sone
 And telde his purpose and entent
 Boisil to him sone assent
 And ressayued him benyngly

And held him in his company
 Whils þe comyng of þe abbot
 For him behoued knyht þe knott
 Eata men þe abbot call
 he was a worthi man at all
 Aftir bischope of Elandschire
 And abbot of þe kirke and sire<?>
 he come hame to his abbay
 Bosyl come and to him say
 Of cuthbert purpose and his will
 And prayde him it to fulfill
 <fol. 20v>þe abbot assent þar to als tite
 And gaf him tonsour~ and habite
 To þe couent he him putt
 In religioun to proue his cutt
 þan his reule he lerid and did
 All obseruance þat þai him bid
 And gaf his bysynes þarto
 Mare straytely forto do
 In wakyng in redyng and praying
 In fastyng and othir thing
 Als did sampson þe forte
 kepid all licours fra his cors
 þe whilk myght him dronkyn make
 Als othir excès he forsake
 Neuer-þere-les as he had nede
 his kynde he couet forto fede
 þat he myght be conabill
 To serue god in strenth stabill
 he had ynogh of force and strenth
 Bodily trauell forto lenth
 In þis seuent chapter~
 And 3e will loke 3e may lere
 how cuthbert hade an aungel gest
 And him to serue he was prest
 With erdely brede and comonn store
 he left him heuenly brede þarfore
 Jt fell aftir 3eris tide
 þat a gude kyng alchfride

Walde in Ripon a mynster make
 For hele of saule and goddis sake
 To Eata he it gane geue
 him and monkes þar to leue
 þan Eata as says þe buke
 Certayn monkes of maylros tuke
 Among þe whilk cuthbert was ane
 vnto Ryponn samen þai gane
 þe same obseruance þar þai avysed
 Before at mailrose þan had þai vsed
 Cuthbert was made hosteler~
 <fol. 21r>To gestyn commers fra ferr and nere
 And þare as þe story tell
 Cuthbert herberd an aungell
 In a mornyng of a wynter day
 To þe gest hall he toke þe way
 þar þan he fand a gest sitte
 him semed a 3onge man to his witte
 þat all þat nyght had trauailde
 hongyr and calde it semed him aylde
 Als he gane thurgh harde and nesche
 And þider come him to refresche
 Cuthbert welcomed him with manhede
 And broght him water with gude spede
 To wasche his handes cuthbert his fete
 Waschid and wyped away þe wete
 In bosom he putt his handes to hete
 And sithen he prayed him to þe mete
 Bot he excused him þat nobil heyn
 And saide his duellyng was ferr þeyn
 Bot slyke instance to him he made
 þe time of mete þat he habade
 Be goddis name he him adiured
 þan as compelled he bade to burd
 When þe oure of terce was done
 Cuthbert sett a burde sone
 And sett mete þar opon
 And prayde his gest he walde ete on
 J sal ga fet a lafe hate

For it is baken wele J . wate
 When þat cuthbert come agayne
 his gest was gane he was vnfayne
 he soght and loked aftir his trace
 he fandē na takyn in þat space
 What way he went he couthe no3t knawe
 þof all þe erde were hilde with snawe
 Cuthbert was gretly stonyed
 And he him selfe bisily stedyed
 he bare þe bordeclath to þe spens
 þar felde he odour~ past encens

<Tranche 2>

<fol. 34v>In þis chapiter telles saint bede
 wha so will þarto take hede
 Now þat cuthbert many men
 Gastely techings gon þaim ken
 And how þe deuel with whayntise
 was aboute þaim to suppryse
 In england in þe ferrest syde
 þe fame of cuthbert lyfe gon glyde
 Diuers folk þat of him here
 þai drew to him bathe ferr and nere
 What disees . þai had or pyne
 þai hoped of him to gete medecyne
 And þair hope was no3t in vayne
 For nane vnconforthe went agayne
 þaas þat war heeuy and tryst
 he couthe comfort þaim in crist
 he walde þaim tell of heuens blisse
 And what angyr in þis werlde is
 And how þe deuel oft tyme disees
 þaim þat studys god to pleese
 þaas þat er no3t in charite
 In þe fende bandes bonden be
 Also he walde oft tymes declare
 how freele is werldly welefare
 Also þat he þat god loues

And to his neghbure nane euell controues
 And his treuth standes stabill
 him thar not drede þe deuels cabill
 Also oft him self he talde
 how þe feendis laide on him halde
 And ouer a he roche putt hym doune
 And some tyme casten at him stanes
 For to breke and bryst his banes
 And send him fandynge many ma
 To compell him fra farne to ga
 Neuer-þe-less harme he nane had
 Na drede bot stode in treuth sad
 Also he spak oft to his brethir
 þat of his leuyng þai suld no3t wondir
 <add>To breke h<ill><other ink or hand?></ill></add>
 <fol. 35r>Na halde it haly all þof it ware
 Solitary fra þe sekyll fare
 Bot leuyng in mynster it is to prays
 Whare religiouse nyghts and days
 er subiects and redy in all thinges
 To do þair abbots biddynge
 To wake to pray to faste to wirke
 And of þair~ trauail þai er no3t yrke
 Slike lyfe he saide is gude and fyne
 And mare perfite þan now is myne
 Slyke monkes haue J . knawen and sene
 þat were þan in saule mare clene
 And had mare grace of prophecy
 þan euer hiderto had J .
 Amang þe whilk boysil was ane
 þe maste wirschipful man in wane :
 When he was an alde man
 And J . 3ong he noryscht me þan
 In Mailros mynster many 3ere
 And þare he talde me wordes clere
 And prophet before thinges all
 þat sulde eftir to me be-fall
 Of whilk 3it a thinge sall be
 Wald god þat neuer J . it suld se

þis saide he for boisil telde
 With cure of bischop he suld be melde
 And þat he couet to eschew
 þar-fore to farne he him drew
 In þis chapiter says saint bede
 how an abbas called Elflede
 Als a mayden þat with hir duelt
 þai were bath heelyd thurgh cuthbert belt
 þof all he dwelt farr fra men
 3it grete god slik grace him len
 In myracles of heelyng to haue fame
 þar was an abbas Elflede hir name
 Sho was halden a woman gude
 A virgyne and of kynges blode
 passandly sho loued cuthbert
 <fol. 35v>And liked to think him in hir hert
 A preste of Eland calde herefride
 Teld þis tale to bede oft tyde
 how þis abbas so seke was
 þat sho was likly hethin to pas
 þar couthe na leche hir bale bete
 Bot goddis grace þat is so swete
 Abated somewhat of hir bale
 Bot sho was no3t all hale
 þe werkenes of hir sekenes with-in
 Began to debate and blyn
 Hir body wax som-what strang
 Bot sho myght nouthir stande na gang
 Bot als a beest on all foure
 Sho was benomen all at oure
 Sho had sorow and heuynes
 for drede of lastyng sekenes
 As on a tyme sho lay and thought
 What wondirs god for cuthbert wroght
 Wald god sho saide som-what J . had
 Of cuthbert thinges þat wald me glad
 For J wate wele J . were sure
 þat J . suld me sone cure
 Sone eftir sho had hir entent

A belt of lynclathe he hir sent
 Sho was glad for þat presand
 And in hir thoght sho vndirstand
 þat cuthbert hir desire knewe
 Be inspiracion it was trewe
 Sho beltid þe belt hir aboute
 Sho was sone hale with-in and with-oute
 Apon þe morne sho stode vp-ryght
 With-in thre days all hale dyght
 Sone aftir-warde it be-fell
 þat a virgyne þat with hir gun duell
 had slyke sekenes in hir hede
 Sho moght noght stere hir o þe stede
 For to dy scho semed in plyte
 þe abbas come hir to vysite
 <fol. 36r>Sho saw hir deed semed nere at hande
 þe belt aboute hir hede scho bande
 Als sone with in þe same day
 All hir hedewerk went away
 þe belt was lokked in a kyst<?>
 þe abbas aftir sho it myst
 It was neuer aftir sene na fonne
 Jn na place vndir sonne
 It semyd all goddis ordenance
 þai þare suld fare slik a chaunce
 þa þat were trew men and sage
 Moght haue opyn knowlage
 Of þe halynes of þat gude man
 Be þe myracles þat he wroght þan
 And þat schrewes suld na doute haue
 Bot þat moght seke saue
 For had þe belt bene þare still
 Seke men walde haue drawen þar-till
 And gif a schrew of heele vnworthy
 On hap had no3t helpid þar-by
 Cuthbert halynes he wald bak-byte
 And of faute of his heele him wyte
 þarfore þe belt was withdrawen
 þat cuthbert halynes myght be knawen

And to remow occasioun
 Fra shrewes of wrange suspicioun
 Þis chapiter twenti and foure
 Wha so will rede it oure
 Cuthbert telled a meruaile thing
 To elflede of Egfride þe kyng
 how lang tyme here lyf suld he
 And how him self suld be
 Elfled þat honorabil abbas
 To whaim cuthbert sa special was
 Sho sent to him and him prays
 On goddis name þat be any ways
 þat he walde come to hir
 Sho had grete nedes at him spir
 <fol. 36v>He toke a shipp and brethir samen
 vnto koket jle þai come
 Of monkes þar was an abbay
 To mete þai were sett þat day
 Fra þat cuthbert come þider
 þar þai spake lang to-gyder
 What sho walde of him sho leryd
 When many thinges sho had speryd
 Sho knelyd sodanly to þe grounde
 And adiured in þat stounde
 Be his name is maste of myght
 And be all his aungels bryght
 þat some takyn he will hir geue
 how lang kyng Egfride suld leue
 he was hir brothir þarfore sho walde
 þat he þe kyngdome lange suld halde
 Sho saide to cuthbert wele wate J .
 þou hase þe spirit of *prophecy*
 Gif þou will þou may me wysse
 how lang þe kyngdome sall be hyss
 Cuthbert gretely was astonyd
 Of hir coniuracion~ þat tyde
 Neuer-þe-les he walde no3t
 Tell hir openly þat sho soght
 Bot to hir askyng he ansuerd þus

To me it es meruaylous
 And þou a woman of hy witt
 <mrg>and well lernyde *in* haly wrytt</mrg>
 þat þou will calle lang lyf of man
 Sen þou dauid sange can
 All oure 3eris he says playn
 Sall be thoght as an yrayn
 All his webb þat he weues
 A puft of wynde away reues
 Also þou may think þar on
 For þus says salamon
 Gif a man leue many 3ere
 And as him lykes he glad here
 3it him awe to haue in mynde
 <fol. 37r>þat all his dayes sall be fyned
 And think on þat tyme so myrk
 When onhappe his saule sall yrke
 In þas dayes when þai sall come
 Thinges þat er past some
 Sall he halden bot vanyte
 þus men suld think in all degre
 Sen mannes lyf is shorte
 Be it neuer so wele here conforte
 It semes be ryght resoun
 he sall leue bot schort sesoun
 þe whilk sall dy þis 3ere within
 And na langer his wirschip wyn
 When sho þir wordes wit hir eeris
 herde sho fell in gretand teeris
 And when fra gretyng sho hir contende
 3it forthir to him sho mende
 And asked him with gude espaire
 Wha suld be kyng Egfride ayre
 Brethir na sonnes hase he nane
 Na ayre to rewle his kynges wane
 Cuthbert a litil while stode still
 And þan he spak þe abbas till
 And tellyd hir of ^[his] successour~
 þat suld be kyng in honour~

Jn whaim hir loue sho suld sett
 As brothir þat hir fader gett
 Sho prayed him þat he walde hir tell
 Jn what place þat man he dwell
 Cuthbert sayes þou sees þis se
 þat many jles þarin be
 þat may happ on ane of þaim
 And ayre sall come þe rewme to clayme
 þan þe abbas vndirstode
 þat of alfride mened his mode
 þe whilk was hir fader soʒn
 And in scotlande at scele foun<?>
 Forthir-mare þis abbas wist
 <fol. 37v>þat it was king Egfride list
 Cuthbert a bischope to make
 Cure of saule on him to take
 þe abbas couet o wyse all
 To witt gif it suld befall
 As a woman war vnwyse
 þus sho spird him hir d<?>uyse
 Sir sho saide J . haue meruaile
 Slyke varyance mennys herts assayle
 Some loues synnes ay whare and whare
 Some loues ryches and beggars are
 And þou refuse all werdes ioi
 And haldes þat warldely men foy
 To bischop state þou moght atteyn
 To sitt in honour in kirk and seyn
 Bot it semes þou ert mare fayn
 To leue in cloyster or solayn
 J . am vnworthy says cuthbert
 Slike hy degre to come toward
 Neuer-þe-les goddis ordenaunce
 For to eschew . J . haue na chaunce
 And gif god put me to þat charge
 J hope sone to be fre at large
 J trow sone aftir twa 3ere space
 J sall ryst in ankir place
 Of goddis behalue . J . þe defend



þis speche þou no3t speke no spend
Nouthir in tawne no in stede
Or þe time þat J . be deede
Fra he had teld hir þat sho wald spir
he went agayn to his mynstir
his solayn lif he had begonn
he vsed forth als he was wonn
It fell sone aftir þat tide
Jn presence of gud kyng Egfride
A gedryng of a seyn was made
Arsbischop theodir þe reulyng hade
þe diocise of haly eland