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THE ENGLISH HISTORICAL REVIEW

EDITED BY THE

• REV. MANDELL CREIGHTON, D.D., LL.D.

DIXIE PROFESSOR OF ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY IN THE
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE, SINCE LORD BISHOP OF PETERSBOROUGH
(January—April)

BY

S. R. GARDINER, M.A., LL.D.

FELLOW OF ALL SOULS COLLEGE, OXFORD

ASSISTED BY

REGINALD L. POOLE, M.A., PH.D.

(July—October)

AMERICAN EDITOR, JUSTIN WINSOR, LL.D., Librarian of Harvard College, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

VOLUME VI.

1891



LONDON

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

AND NEW YORK: 15 EAST 16th STREET

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Notes and Documents

EDDI'S LIFE OF WILFRID

THAT Eddi's life of Wilfrid is the work of a partisan appears even from a cursory reading and is generally recognised, and yet his story still lies at the base of most modern judgments of his hero's place and character, though much difficulty must be found in reconciling the motives and actions of Eddi's Wilfrid with the conduct of his contemporaries, or even with his own as recorded by others. This is a matter of more importance than might at first appear, for on the question whether the Northumbrian opposition to Wilfrid at Whitby and at York was to his teaching or to his person depends to no small extent our judgment of the relations of the Scottish missionaries and their pupils in Northumbria to the clergy of Kent and afterward to Rome. It is well therefore to examine Eddi's story in those places where it can be collated with other early sources, and from the results so won to draw some inferences as to his credibility when he stands alone. It will be most convenient to take up the points in the order of his own narrative.

That Eddi should begin his story by copying several paragraphs from Herefrid's (*i.e.* the 'anonymous') life of Cuthbert is not particularly to his discredit. That he should take another's words that suited his purpose accorded with the use of his time, which had very undeveloped notions of literary property. It is on his own responsibility, however, that he asks his readers to leave *antiqui hostis millenos invidiae stimulos*, for Wilfrid had never lacked opponents in life,¹ and they would have good reason to except to some parts of this narrative while the controversy was still fresh.

Eddi begins his narrative by telling of a miraculous light that shone at Wilfrid's birth. No doubt he took the story as he found it. He was not likely to know that this was among the standing *mirabilia* of Scottish saints, whose birth is usually connected in some way with fire. His description of Wilfrid's youth contains the

¹ He says apologetically: *Semper enim in propatulo fortitudo aemulos habet. Feriuntque summos Fulgura montes.* Praef.

usual tales of infant sanctity, most of it probable enough ; but there is no collateral evidence for these years, since Bede, and of course all later writers, do but condense, copy, or extend Eddi. Bede, who alone concerns us here, wrote (*Hist. Eccl.* v. 19) a connected account of Wilfrid's career, with Eddi before him, as will appear frequently in the course of this study. In books iii. and iv. he is more, sometimes wholly, independent of him. Differences between Eddi and Bede's fifth book are therefore more significant, because certainly conscious, than those between Eddi and his earlier ones.

Wilfrid's history begins with his fourteenth year, and here already Bede differs somewhat from Eddi. The latter says Wilfrid determined *paterna rura deserere, iura coelestia quaerere*, for since his mother's death his home was *molesta et immitis*. He loved *arma et equos vestimenta que . . . in quibus regalibus conspectibus apte stare posset*, and so with his father's blessing he sought the court of queen Eanfled where because he was *decorus aspectu et acutissimi ingenii* he pleased her, and she *concessit ei quod petierat ut sub illius consilio et munimine Deo serviret*. It does not seem that he remained here as page or otherwise, for *eo tempore* an infirm courtier wished to retire to Aidan's monastery, so the queen commended the boy to him *ut sibi ministraret et Deo serviret*, and they came to Lindisfarne. But Bede takes him directly from home to Lindisfarne, though later on (v. 19) he says he was received there *consilio et suffragiis* of Eanfled. This is another reason for thinking that he did not stay long at her court as has been asserted. It is worth noting in passing that this spiritual daughter of Paulinus sent the boy to Aidan, not to the Roman James or Romanus, for his education.

Both writers agree that the brilliant boy was popular at Lindisfarne. Then, says Eddi (§ 9), *post circulum annorum, suggerente Spiritu Sancto* he desired *videre sedem apostoli Petri. . . . Hunc talem sensum domino suo* (Finan) *enotuit; qui statim, ut erat sapiens suggestum a Deo esse cognoscens, consensum dedit filio carissimo*. Bede gives a different and intrinsically less probable version (v. 19). *Animadvertit . . . minime perfectam esse virtutis viam quae tradebatur a Scottis, proposuitque animo venire Romam et qui ad sedem apostolicam ritus ecclesiastici sive monasteriales servarentur videre*. But the words that immediately follow in Bede show that this was at least not the avowed cause. *Quod cum fratribus referret laudaverunt eius propositum eumque id quod mente disposuerat perficere suadebant*, which they surely would not have done had he showed that he thought their way *minime perfecta*. The warm commendation of Finan and the convent is wholly consistent with Eddi's version, not with Bede's.

Bede copies Eddi in his account of the journey from Lindisfarne to Canterbury, Lyons, and Rome. He even copies the latter's mistake of Annemund for his brother Dalfinus (Eddi, § 4; Bede, v. 19),

but he omits the incident in St. Andrew's church and the papal blessing. In the account of the second visit to Lyons Bede tones down the wholly unjust accusation of queen Baldhild whom Eddi calls a Jezebel and *malevola regina*. Her countrymen regarded her as a saint. This error and the mistaken identity of Dalfinus suggest that the rest of the account may not be of meticulous accuracy.

Thus far Bede seems to have depended in the main on Eddi. After Wilfrid's return to Northumbria he draws from more independent sources. Eddi tells us that Alchfrid, who was governor of a province, *cum Oswiu patre suo regnabat* (§ 7), and repeats the exaggeration in sec. 10. This prince *audiens . . . talem seruum Dei . . . de apostolica sede venisse et verum Pascha praedicantem et S. Petri apostoli ecclesiae disciplinam multiplicem didicisse quam maxime rex diligebat, suadente Coenowalcho* (of Wessex) . . . *ad se venire iussit* (§ 7). In Bede this is: *Coniunctus est amicitiiis Alchfridi regis qui catholicas ecclesiae regulas sequi semper et amare didicerat*. Both imply that Alchfrid was disposed to aid Wilfrid before he saw him, but though he showed later a disposition to foster opposition to his father and to the national church, a strong preference for continental peculiarities before his association with Wilfrid is inconsistent alike with probability and with his gift of Ripon to Eata the year before. It is more likely that the brilliancy and talents of the travelled courtier won the prince's support to his own ambitious schemes. Eddi tells us however that when Wilfrid *finiuit praedicationis verba humiliter rex prosternens se ante pedes servi Dei electi et petiuit ab eo benedictionem. Videbatur enim ei quasi angelus Dei loqueretur* (§ 7).

Eddi and Bede agree in the donation of Stanford, but the truth in regard to Ripon appears from Bede alone (iii. 25, v. 19; Vit. Cuthb. 7, 8). Eddi must have known that Eata was expelled to make room for his fellow pupil at Lindisfarne, for he was himself a monk at Ripon. It is not unjust therefore to infer that he did not think it part of a biographer's duty to tell discreditable truths. Bede too glosses over the transaction, especially in v. 19, for the *optio* given the monks was more apparent than real. To accept it would have been to cut themselves off from Lindisfarne and to make themselves monks of Wilfrid. His conduct was more shrewd than generous, yet Eddi assures us (§ 8), *Omnis populus, nobiles et ignobiles, eum habebant quasi prophetam Dei, ut erat*.

Another suggestive instance of Eddi's 'inaccuracy' immediately follows. We know from Bede iii. 7 that Agilbert, a Gaul, who had studied *non parvo tempore* in Ireland, and as it seems had been made bishop there, had refused to share the episcopate of Wessex with Wini, and on his way from Ireland to Gaul visited Alchfrid (v. 19); but Eddi knows him only as *episcopus transmarinus*

(§§ 9, 10), and implies that he came directly from the continent and visited Oswy also. They agree, however, that at Alchfrid's request Agilbert made Wilfrid priest at Ripon. Agilbert's training, and perhaps his orders,² though Scottish, were no obstacle to Wilfrid. Eddi apparently thought best to be silent of this. Alchfrid showed here, as with Eata, his determination to break with the national church by ignoring Colman's diocesan rights.

In his connected account of Wilfrid's life (v. 19), Bede passes from the ordination with the words *non multo post* to his nomination to the episcopate, omitting all mention of Whitby, which fills so large a place in his third book. Eddi too makes Wilfrid's part at Whitby comparatively subordinate, and the words attributed by him to Wilfrid and Colman accord with none of the six speeches given by Bede. Yet Eddi suppresses the fact that Oswy called, not on Wilfrid, but on Agilbert, who put the young priest forward *vice mea* and as *discipulus meus* (Bede, iii. 25; Eddi, § 10). Bede makes Oswy ask Colman of Peter's primacy. In Eddi *subridens interrogavit omnes*, and the synod proceed to recite *una voce* the *Tu es Petrus*, with which Bede closes Wilfrid's speech. Eddi here is both less artistic and less natural. It is clear that he has coloured details in Wilfrid's interest. Yet he gives him less prominence than Bede, and in this preserves a truer perspective. Wilfrid's part in the agitation that preceded the council and in the synod itself was essentially subordinate. He had been away from the court, where the case was practically decided by the calling of the council. To discuss this question was to decide it, and in his opening plea for uniformity Oswy practically settled the question. In what followed Wilfrid was the spokesman of others, advocate not principal. There was no vigorous opposition before or afterward to the reform. Colman found few and unimportant imitators, while the government of the church remained in the hands of his pupils. These things must be remembered in order to a right understanding of the opposition to Wilfrid during the next forty years. His advocacy of the Roman Easter, tonsure, and ritual, were not the cause of it; but the question is too large to be more than touched on here. The spirit of the two writers appears in their mention of Colman. Bede (iii. 26) says, *Videns spretam suam doctrinam sectamque esse despectam . . . Scotiam regressus est*; Eddi (§ 10), *Audiens quid esset faciendum tonsuram et Paschae rationem propter timorem patriae suae contempsit ut secederet et alii meliori sedem suam occupandam relinqueret*. Wilfrid, not Tuda, appears to be the *alius*; the *melior* hardly

² Bede, iii. 7, says of Wini *et ipsum in Gallia ordinatum*, but a Gallic diocesan bishop could not have lingered as Agilbert did in Ireland and Wessex, and he seems to have been consecrated bishop of Paris, and not translated to that see. If he had been in southern Ireland he would naturally share its jealous opposition to Hy and oppose its missionaries in Northumbria.

accords with Bede, iii. 26; but the *occupanda* might almost seem ironical. Bede implies that Colman felt personally insulted, and if the tone of Wilfrid's speeches is preserved he had cause to feel so.

His success at Whitby closes the first period of Wilfrid's career. Almost immediately those personal antagonisms begin that fill the rest of his long life and divide the church into his partisans and his opponents. Into the merits of the controversy I shall enter here as little as possible, but the question cannot always be avoided, for while hitherto the discrepancies between Eddi and Bede have been of minor importance they are now often radical, and their silence is sometimes more eloquent than their words.

When the synod was over, *reges deinde consilium cum sapientibus suae gentis post spatium inierunt quem eligerent in sedem vacantem qui voluisset sedis apostolicae disciplinam sibi facere et alios docere*. Unanimously they chose Wilfrid and the kings consented. Wilfrid declined but at length accepted. Thus Eddi (§ 11), who adds a long account of Cuthbert's virtues from Herefrid's life, attributed bodily to his patron though far from apposite to him. Yet he says, *Qualem ergo illi tunc eum intellexerunt, talem et nos adhuc viventes novimus*. Comment seems unnecessary. He continues (§ 12): *Locutus est (Wilfrid) . . . necessarium est . . . considerare quomodo . . . sine accusatione catholicorum virorum ad gradum episcopalem . . . venire valeam. Sunt enim hinc in Brytannia multi episcopi quorum nullum meum est accusare, quamvis veraciter sciam quod quatuordecimanni sunt ut Brittones et Scotti ab illis sunt ordinati quos nec apostolica sedes in communionem recipit neque eos qui schismaticis consentiunt*. Therefore he asked to be sent to Gaul for ordination. Now Wilfrid had been made priest by a man of Scottish training, and perhaps of Scottish orders; if he knew what quartodecimans were he knew that the Scots were not such; the apostolic see certainly received in communion the legates of Cumman in 681, and Popes Honorius and John had addressed letters of friendly counsel apparently to the clergy of all Ireland and to Hy (Bede, ii. 19). It will be observed that Eddi ignores Tuda's existence. The only other bishops of Celtic orders were Jarumnan and Cedd. He had no ground for such sweeping condemnation of Wini or Boniface, still less of Damian or Deusdedit, who were not yet dead, or at least known to be dead, at York. This part of Eddi's story is self-convicted. Bede helps us to reject the rest. He says (iii. 28), *Aldfrid misit Wilfridum ad regem Galliarum qui eum sibi, suisque, consecrare feceret episcopum*. In v. 19 he adds, in deference to Eddi whom he was then consulting, *cum consilio atque consensu patris sui*, but repeats *episcopum sibi rogavit ordinari*. In neither passage does Bede hint that Wilfrid was to be made bishop of York or for all Northumbria. He states twice, and once with Eddi before him, that he was to be made a bishop for Alchfrid and his province, and having

told of Tuda's nomination and death (iii. 26, 27), he says (iii. 28) that Oswy *imitatus industriam filii misit Cantiam virum sanctum* (Chad) . . . *qui Eburacensis ecclesiae ordinaretur episcopus*. The title of this section points to the same conclusion: *Ut defuncto Tuda Wilfrid in Gallia, Ceadda apud Occidentales Saxones in provincia Nordanhymbrorum sint ordinati episcopi*. Furthermore on his return from Gaul Wilfrid made no claim to York, and got it finally not because Chad was an intruder, but because he was not *rite consecratus* (Bede, iv. 2).

Whether sent by Alchfrid to Agilbert (Bede, v. 19), or by him to the Gallic king who sent him to Agilbert (Bede, iii. 28), or by the king's council to Gaul (Eddi, § 12); he was consecrated *statim* (Eddi, § 12), and yet Wilfrid was still *in transmarinis partibus propter ordinatione demorante* (Bede, iii. 28) when Oswy appointed Chad to York, so that Chad's consecration, which Eddi seems to think was in Northumbria (§ 14) may have preceded Wilfrid's.³ Yet Eddi says Wilfrid's consecrators did not send him *ad sedem episcopalem Eboracae* till *post spatium temporis*. This interval after his consecration was at least a year, and he had been away at least two, for Eddi (§ 15) says he returned three years before 669. Had Wilfrid supposed he had a claim to the episcopate of Northumbria, it is little to the credit of his zeal or his discretion that he should leave it so long to those whom he could not think well disposed to him.

But there was no struggle on his return. Eddi (§ 18), after telling of adventures in Sussex omitted by Bede, says that though *res ut male acta non latuit*, Wilfrid *revertens quippe ad sedem coenobialem abbatis, humiliter in Hripis tribus annis resedit*, with mission journeys to Mercia and to Kent, whence he returned *cum regula Sancti Benedicti*. Bede says of these years (iii. 28): *veniens quoque Brittaniam Wilfrid iam episcopus factus et ipse perplura catholicae observationis moderamina ecclesiis Anglorum sua doctrina contulit*, where the *et ipse* suggests rather co-operation with Chad than antagonism to him. In iv. 2 Bede tells of Wilfrid's work in Kent, *quoniam ante Theodorum rediit, ipse etiam in Cantia presbyteros et diaconos, usque dum archiepiscopus ad sedem suam proveniret, ordinabat* and made Putta priest at Rochester, implying that the work in Kent followed that in Mercia. Eddi (§ 14), makes Wilfrid come to Mercia at Wulfhere's invitation, and adds that he brought from Kent masons and cantors, among them Eddi himself. It is not probable, however, that Wilfrid became there first acquainted with the Benedictine rule, as Eddi's local pride makes him assert.

But though Eddi places his work in Mercia before that in Kent, this seems due rather to the propinquity and importance of the

³ In iii. 28, Bede places Wilfrid first; in v. 24, Chad. See note in Haddan and Stubbs, iii. 108.

former kingdom than to actual precedence. For he would naturally withdraw from Kent when he was passed over even by Oswy in the choice of Wigheard as archbishop (667), and Jarumnan was still living and bishop in Mercia in 667. Indeed Bede, who knows nothing of Wilfrid's work there, makes Chad accept Mercia 'on Jarumnan's death' (*mortuo Jarumnano*) in 669. If Wilfrid had been asked to settle in Mercia he must have declined, for the coming of Theodore gave him the prospect of a richer prize and found him on the watch at Ripon. Chad's ways dissatisfied him as was natural (Eddi, § 15), and he had good reason to think that he could turn the reforming zeal of Theodore to his purpose. The archbishop would naturally prefer to the Scotch monk a Roman pilgrim, a pupil and *protégé* of Agilbert, and one whose labours had been already brought to his notice in Kent.

So when Theodore came to Northumbria he came with such prejudice that *primo ingressu regionis illius rem contra canones male gestam a veris testibus* (? Wilfrid) *audivit, quod, praedonis more, episcopus alterius episcopi sedem praeripere ausus sit; indigneque ferens Ceaddam episcopum de sede aliena iussit deponi. Then Chad peccatum ordinandi a Quartodecimanis in sedem alterius plene intelligens poenitentia humili secundum iudicium episcoporum* (i.e. Theodore and Wilfrid) *confessus emendavit et cum consensu eius in propriam sedem Eboracae civitatis sanctum Wilfridum episcopum constituit. But Wilfrid knew that Wulfhere was disposed to give the Mercian see aut sibimetipsi aut alio cuicumque valuisset, and as Chad was in omnibus rebus episcopis obediens, per omnes gradus ecclesiasticos ad sedem praedictam eum ordinaverunt* and sent him to Mercia (Eddi, § 15).

Thus Eddi, who, it will be seen, asserts that Theodore and Wilfrid acted in concert, that Chad's orders were not recognised, and that he owed his Mercian see to Wilfrid, though it is significantly admitted that Wilfrid received York with Chad's consent. Now this story is not only intrinsically improbable, but it is contradicted by Bede in nearly every detail. He says (iv. 2) that Theodore told Chad he was not *rite consecratus*, perhaps in the same way that Finan's church at Lindisfarne was not satisfactorily dedicated (Bede, iii. 25). Chad's answer shows that he thought whatever fault there might be was in himself. *Si me nosti episcopatum non rite suscepisse, libenter ab officio discedo; quippe que neque me unquam hoc esse dignum arbitrabar, sed obedientiae causa iussus subire hoc quamvis indignus consensi.* There is no trace here of Eddi's *peccatum intelligens*. Then Theodore, touched with his humility, *dixit, non eum episcopatum dimittere debere; sed ipse ordinationem eius denuo catholica ratione consummarit.* A man cannot *dimittere* what he never had, therefore Theodore recognised Chad's *episcopatum*. Of Wilfrid's co-operation Bede knows nothing, nor yet of ordination 'through all grades.'

Of the substitution of Wilfrid for Chad at York, Bede is significantly silent. In v. 19 we learn only that Chad *ad monasterii sui, quod est in Lestinghau, curam secessit, accipiente Wilfrido episcopatum totius . . . provinciae*. In iv. 3 Wulfhere on Jarumnan's death asked Theodore to give him a bishop *sibi quoque suisque* and Theodore asked Oswy to give them Chad, who then in *Lestingau quietam vitam agebat, Wilfrido administrante episcopatum Eboracensis ecclesiae*. Chad was therefore still a Northumbrian bishop, since Oswy's consent was necessary to his translation to Mercia.

Wulfhere naturally turned to Northumbria for a successor to Jarumnan, and it accorded with Oswy's policy to leave the choice to the new primate, whose power he wished to be as unquestioned in the church as he hoped to make his own in the state. He therefore would consent to Theodore's wish to substitute Wilfrid for Chad. Through his whole archiepiscopate Theodore never hesitated to remove any subordinate. He knew as yet nothing of the personal character of either bishop. The prestige of his Roman journey, the influence of Agilbert, and his work in Kent secured for Wilfrid Theodore's hasty decision. But though quick to act he was keen soon to see that Chad could ill be spared, and he welcomed a field for his activity in Mercia. Bede's story therefore involves no improbability, and the motives for the conduct of each actor in it are clear and sufficient. But the sudden change of subject in iv. 2, the abrupt return to the accomplished fact in iv. 3, and the prudent silence of v. 19, show that Bede chose not to tell all he must have known. Perhaps he thought the matter discreditable to Theodore or to Wilfrid. He seldom spoke ill of a churchman; but he was always honest and would not wrench history to his purpose. We have seen already too much reason to think that Eddi had no such scruples. Where one of them must have erred we shall suspect the biographer rather than the historian.

Eddi tells us that Wilfrid found the cathedral at York so dilapidated that *horruit spiritus eius in eo quod domus Dei et orationis quasi speluncam latronum factam agnovit* (§ 15). Bede knows nothing of this, and the whole is clearly an exaggerated statement of the contrast between Chad's severe simplicity and Wilfrid's continental ideas. The account of Ripon (Eddi, 16), which he compares to the Tabernacle, is bombastic, though the dedicatory feast contains a touch of nature, as does the elastic claim to the endowments of the British church, which could not then be identified and seem to have been among the causes of his expulsion in 691. It is significant that Eddi thought worthy of a place in his panegyric (§ 18), the tale of a resuscitated child whom the mother promised to make a monk at seven years, but *malevolo suadente marito videns elegantem puerum contempsit fugiens de terra sua*. The bishop's prefect found the fugitive among the Britons, *coacte abstraxit, episcopumque*

contulit, who made him a monk at Ripon. Of all these things Bede is silent; on the other hand he alone tells of Oswy's asking Wilfrid to guide him to Rome *promissa non parva pecuniarum donatione* (iv. 5).

Egfrid, *rex religiosus* (Eddi, § 19), and the virgin queen Æthelthryth were now *in omnibus obedientes* to Wilfrid Wulfhere, who in sec. 14 was *mitissimus*, is now *superbo animo et instabili corde*, and wages war *non regente Deo* (§ 20). In his greatly enlarged diocese Wilfrid was now *omnibus gentibus carus* and *in omnibus locis presbyteros et diacones . . . abundanter ordinavit*. Secular princes gave him their sons to educate, abbots and abbesses (we know of none save in Scottish foundations) *aut sub suo nomine secum substantias custodientes aut post obitum suum haeredem illum habere optantes voto voverunt*. And yet *haec omnia facem invidiae et odii in pectoribus multorum, flante diabolo, accenderunt* (§ 21). Still the queen's generosity enabled him to build Hexham, where his sanctity was shown by a cure, though he was helped in it, *medici alligantes pannis ossa confracta* (§ 23). At last the devil, *consueta arma arripiens, vasa fragilia muliebria quaesivit*, namely Irmenburga, Egfrid's second wife (though how he came by her and was obliged to forgo Æthelthryth Eddi is constrained to ignore), who then *invidia torquebatur*, though afterward she became *de lupa agna Dei et perfecta abbatissa materque familias optima* (§ 24). Now, however, she was a *venefica* who shot poisoned arrows, like impious Jezebel, into the king's heart, telling of Wilfrid's *gloriam saecularem et divitias*, and of his great retinue. Then both, intent on plundering the church, *ad auxilium suae vesaniae archiepiscopum Theodorum cum muneribus, quae excaecant etiam sapientium oculos, contra Dei voluntatem invitarunt*. *Veniente vero archiepiscopo ad eos quid mente agerent in contemptu eius patentes et sine aliquo culpandi piaculo inique damnare quod absit consensit*. *Nam tres episcopos aliunde inventos et non de subiectis illius parochiae in absentia pontificis nostri in sua propria loca episcopatus sui noviter inordinate ordinavit* (§ 24). Wilfrid objected, and they answered: *Nullam criminis culpam in aliquo nocendi tibi ascribimus sed tamen statuta de te iudicia non mutamus*. *Ille vero episcopus noster tali iudicio fraudabili (non) contentus cum consilio coepiscoporum suorum* (who can these have been?) *iudicium apostolicae sedis magis elegit* and, prophesying evil, prepared to leave the country, no one hindering him. Thus far Eddi. It is worth noting that he says nothing of Wilfrid's sending legates to Hertford (Bede, iv. 5), whose ninth canon would have compromised his hero's position, while their presence there acknowledged Theodore's primacy. In sect. 30, Wilfrid is made to state that Theodore acted *absque consensu cuiuslibet episcopi . . . me humilitate non acquiescente*, but there was no other bishop in Northumbria.

The conduct of the king and bishop as given here lacks due motive. Bede and the biographer of Æthelthryth suggest the truth and serve to correct Eddi's errors of fact. In iv. 12 Bede says: '*Orta inter . . . Egfridum et . . . Wilfridum dissensione, pulsus est, Bosa and Eata being made bishops of Deira and Bernicia with Eadhed for Lindsey. All these were Northumbrian monks, not aliunde inventi.* In iv. 19 he tells how the whim of the fantastic queen so annoyed Egfrid that he *promiserit se ei (sc. Wilfrido) terras ac pecunias multas esse donaturum si reginae posset persuadere eius uti conubio quia sciebat illam nullum virorum plus illo diligere.* Wilfrid must have approved of her going to Coldingham for he gave her the veil there, and of her flight to Ely, where he often visited her and was present at her first exhumation (Bede, iv. 19; Vit. Ethel. 15, 18, 22, 29). Surely this might excuse the king's *invidia*, and if Wilfrid refused to recognise the second marriage during Æthelthryth's life, Irmenburga's dislike would be explicable. Theodore needed no 'bribe' to second the king's wishes. His declared policy was to divide all the dioceses; York was the largest of all, and he was but pursuing his own policy in gratifying the wish of the king. He had put Wilfrid in his seat and felt as free to deprive him of it as he did to deprive Winfrid or Tunbert or Chad. Egfrid would be a meeker man than Bede or Eddi paints him had he consulted Wilfrid, and Theodore was not used to advise where he could command. He was too judicious, however, to use the *famosum verbum* that Eddi attributes to him and to the king (§ 24). Courtiers would naturally laugh at Wilfrid's discomfiture; but if his popularity was such as Eddi represents (§ 21), it is strange that none espoused his cause. The *multa millia monachorum suorum* might weep and lament (§ 25), but they did nothing to help him then or later.

Bede ignores Wilfrid's Frisian adventure in iv. 13, saying only *multa diu loca pervagatus Roman adiit, Britanniam rediit.* In v. 19 he seems to be condensing Eddi (§ 26), but he says nothing of the *inimici* (Eddi, § 25) who sent from England to Theodoric, Ebroin, and Bertharius, offering them bribes to detain him, though they might without difficulty have prevented his departure, (Eddi, §§ 25, 28). As far as the French were concerned there was no need of such inducements. Both had old scores to settle with Wilfrid on account of Dagobert (Eddi, § 28). This, or Bede's unfavourable wind, would account for his landing in Frisia. Bede moderates somewhat the obvious exaggeration of Eddi's account of his success there. Willibrord did more than 'complete' (Bede, v. 19) the work of Wilfrid. It is less than a half-truth however to represent the former as *filius eius in Hripis nutritus* (Eddi, § 26), for Willibrord though born near Ripon, left it at twenty, passed thirteen years in Ireland, and, as his life testifies, found in Frisia little trace of Wilfrid's work or influence. (Vit. 6, 8, *seq.*).

Bede (iv. 6) seems to contradict Wilfrid's continental adventure (Eddi, § 25), and knows nothing of Theodore's legate, Coenwald, at Rome. Both are silent of a synod (Haddan and Stubbs' 'Councils,' iii. 131-135) held at Rome after Wilfrid's arrival, which fixes Theodore's relations to the English bishops, but says nothing of Wilfrid. It shows that some dissension had arisen over Theodore's reorganisation of the bishoprics, so that Coenwald's presence at Rome need have had no reference to Wilfrid. Haddan and Stubbs (l. c.) suggest that this may perhaps have been the version accepted at Canterbury of the synod described in Eddi (§§ 29-31). If Eddi's version be accepted, Wilfrid's plea (§ 30) was somewhat disingenuous, and the synodal decision which he reports (§ 32) is contrary to that on Theodore's authority ('Councils,' iii. 131). Bede says only: *universorum iudicio absque crimine accusatus fuisse et episcopatu esse dignus fuisse* (v. 19). Eddi says nothing of an 'accusation,' and makes the synod say: *episcopatum quem nuper habuerat recipiat* (§ 32). Here Eddi's version is probably to be preferred. It is worth noting that Wilfrid here confessed the catholic faith of Britons, Scots, and Picts (Eddi, § 51; Bede, v. 19).

As to what happened on Wilfrid's return Bede is circumspectly silent. *Propter inimicitias memorati regis in patria sive parochia recipi non potuit* (iv. 13) is all that stands for Eddi 33-40. In v. 19 he says only: *reversus Britanniam provinciam Australium Saxonum . . . convertit*. Eddi says Wilfrid returned after adventures by the way (§ 33), *vexillum victoriae ferens* (§ 34), but Egfrid and his council said *pretio redempta essent scripta*. It is surprising how large a part bribes play in Eddi's story. Then follow the imprisonment, ill-treatment, and miracles; of course to be received with great caution. Irmenburga, the friend of St. Cuthbert, is compared to the Philistines, *arcam Dei captantes*, because she kept a reliquary he had brought from Rome always by her. She seems to have been already a devout woman. In § 34 Eddi tells us *nullum ad se ex amicis eius audire . . . percepit*; in § 35 the imprisoned Wilfrid makes a set speech to his companions. In § 36 the king tries to bribe him with part of his episcopate *et dona alia non mediocriter* if he would deny that his canons were genuine and *iussionibus et censuris eius acquiescere*, which seems to show that Egfrid was willing to yield all he could without sacrificing what had been gained and the support of more useful bishops. Abbess Ebba is authority for the miracle in § 37, and it is probable that she, rather than any *daemon*, was responsible for the nocturnal chastisement of the queen at Coldingham, which she used to secure Wilfrid's release. The story smacks of pious fraud, but it may be an invention of Ebba or of Eddi. She had been a partisan of Wilfrid in Æthelthryth's case.

No doubt the king was glad to get Wilfrid out of the country and to see him pushed on from Mercia to Wessex and Sussex, by no

means because *non tamen ab evangelizandi potuit ministerio cohiberi*, as (Bede, iv. 13) charitably supposes. Bede passes over his mission here in v. 19, and in book iv. has an independent account apparently from Acca. Neither seems wholly trustworthy. According to Bede king and queen were already Christian, and there was a small Scottish mission at Bosham. Wilfrid baptised the chief men only; four priests the *caeteram plebem*, then or afterwards (iv. 13). Eddi implies that Wilfrid converted the king. *Primum regi et reginae verbum Dei . . . leniter suadens praedicare coepit*, and afterwards *quidam voluntarie, alii vero coacte regis imperio . . . baptizati sunt* (§ 41). The appeal to Benedict II (§ 46) must have fallen in this interval. Bede is silent about this and the persecution; Eddi knows nothing of Bosham, or of the fishers, or of the manumission of serfs at Selsey.

A more curious contrast is afforded in their accounts of Caedwalla. Bede, in essential accord with the Chronicle, knows nothing of his connexion with Wilfrid save that he, *quamvis necdum regeneratus*, promised a fourth part of Wight and of his booty to God and gave them to Wilfrid. He tells us how this *iuvenis strenuissimus interfecit regem Aedilulach ac provinciam illam saeva caede ac depopulatione atteruit* before he became king of Wessex, and afterwards reduced it *graviore servitio*. In Wight *omnes indigenas exterminare . . . contendit*, killing two noble christian youths (iv. 15, 16). It is with some pain therefore that one learns from Eddi that during all this time Caedwalla *sancti parentis nostri amicitiam diligenter proposcens ut ei esset in doctrina et auxilio pater fidelis et ille ei filius obediens voto rovens promisit, quo pacto initio, teste Deo, veraciter compleverunt. Nam sanctus antistes Christi in nonnullis auxiliis et adiumentis saepe anxiatim exulem adiuvavit* (§ 42). If it were true that these were his relations to Wilfrid when he killed Ethelwath (Bede, iv. 15), Wilfrid might seem guilty of ingratitude and treason to his royal patron. It is safer to justify him at the expense of his biographer, though it is certain that he enjoyed great favours from the triumphant Caedwalla, who *in omne regno suo excelsum consiliarium mox illum composuit, sicut rex Egypti Ioseph de carcere educto . . . constituit eum dominum domus suae*, presenting him with *innumeris terrarum partibus et muneris donorum* (§ 42). Doubt is cast on the accuracy of Bede's informant by the statement that there had been no rain in Sussex for three years (iv. 13). Eddi too was not present and relied on hearsay. He does not so much as mention Wight. It is hard therefore to judge of Wilfrid's success here, but Bede implies in iii. 16 and iv. 15 that Caedwalla's raids, followed by Ine's, and the absence of a bishop, caused a relapse on Wilfrid's departure.

The accounts of Wilfrid's return from Sussex differ even more widely than those of his mission there. In v. 19 Bede says:

secundo anno Aldfridi . . . sedem suam et episcopatum ipso rege invitante recepit. In iv. 15: revocato domum Wilfrido. Bede did not tell all he knew, but it would be unsafe to fill the gap from Eddi, who says (§ 43) that Theodore auctoritatem apostolicae sedis . . . metu agitante honorificans cum beato episcopo nostro . . . amicitiam inire diutius moratus non distulit. Nam cum . . . frequenti infirmitate anxiatu est ad Lundoniam . . . Wilfridum et Erconwaldum . . . ad se invitavit, and made a confession to them of his whole life, saying: et hoc maxime scrupulum me premit quod in te, sanctissime episcopo, commisi consentiens regibus sine causa peccati propriis substantiis spoliatis te et moerentibus subiectis tuis in longum exilium terminantibus, heu, pro dolor, omnis mali. Then he called God, St. Peter, his co-bishops, and all his regal and princely friends, to witness ad amicitiam tuam pro remissione peccati mei, for he knew that he would soon die. Et ideo te adiuro per Deum et S. Petrum mihi consentire ut in sedem meam archiepiscopalem superstitem et haeredem vivens te constituam. But this Wilfrid declined, reminding Theodore that his successor should be chosen in maiori concilio. He made his demand imperative. Et modo mitte nuntios cum litteris ubique ad amicos tuos ut . . . partem aliquam substantiae meae restituant. Eddi gives Theodore's letter to Ethelred, and says he wrote also to abbess Elfled and King Aldfrid who invited his return (§§ 43-44). The letter to Ethelred, however, says nothing of a meeting with Wilfrid and confesses no penitence, for which indeed he could have seen no cause in the good estate of the Northumbrian and Mercian sees. He says: Pacem me in Christo habere cum . . . Wilfrido; et idcirco te . . . admoneo ut eius sanctae devotione quantum vires adiuvant . . . patrocinium sicut semper fecisti quamdiu vias impendas; quia longo tempore propriis orbatus substantiis inter paganos pro Domino multum laboravit (§ 43). Eddi attributes the favour of Ethelred to this letter and auctoritatem . . . Agathonis . . ., Benedicti, Sergique; but Sergius was not yet pope in 686. Aldfrid recalled Wilfrid secundum praeceptum archiepiscopi (§ 44). That supplies a motive for his action, which is wanting in Bede; and this may be accepted, though the account of the interview at London is disproved by the tenor of the letter. It seems probable that the aged legate, wishing to smooth his successor's path and finding Wilfrid brought into prominence by Caedwalla's success, embraced the occasion of Egfrid's death to arrange for his return and met him on his way northward to agree with him on its conditions.

Of the *multos annos* (Eddi, § 45), that is five years, that followed his return, Bede says only: *sed post quinque annos denuo accusatus ab eodem rege et plurimis episcopis* (i.e. Eadbert, John, and Bosa) *praesulatu pulsus est* (v. 19). Eddi (§ 44) says he got the monastery at Hexham and after a time *propriam sedem episcopalem* at York and the monastery at Ripon, *expulsis de ea alienis episcopis*. But he

got Hexham because Eata was dead, and was obliged to surrender it to John when Bosa made way for him at York. Eadhed, who left him Ripon, had been expelled from his diocese in 679, and exercised no territorial jurisdiction there (Bede, iv. 12). Bosa alone was 'expelled,' or rather forced to resign; for both he and Eadhed remained in the kingdom, and Wilfrid recovered but a fragment of his diocese; but we should look in vain for a hint of this in Eddi. He knows nothing of what Wilfrid did during the next five years, save that *iterum in concordia et iterum in discordia . . . viventes manebant*, and we learn from Bede only that he administered Lindisfarne after Cuthbert's death for a year that brought such a 'breeze of trial' to the monks that 'many thought to leave their home rather than dwell there at the risk of expulsion.' (Vit. Cuthb. 40; cp. de Mirac. Cuthb. 37 and Bede, iv. 29.) It is curious to note that both Bede and Eddi tell the more of Wilfrid's good deeds the further he was from Northumbria and their own observation.

In 691 he was again expelled. Bede gives no reason and no excuse. Eddi gives three (§ 45). The king had confiscated lands, perhaps those claimed from the British church; he wished to make Ripon an episcopal see, perhaps to provide for Bosa or Eadhed and the better administration of the church; and demanded that Wilfrid should obey the decrees that Theodore *mediis temporibus suis quando discordia inter nos in Brytannia exorta fuerat statuit*. There was no reason why he should not, unless he was aiming at a coordinate primacy. Perhaps the king thought to check his restless ambition by pushing the division of his still vast see.

Of the twelve years following the expulsion, Bede says not a word in v. 19. He brings Wilfrid immediately to Rome. Yet he knew that Wilfrid was in Mercia, for he mentions the consecrations of Offfor and Swidbert by him (iv. 23, v. 11). Eddi tells us that Wilfrid succeeded Saxulf at Leicester (in 691), but knows nothing of Offfor, Swidbert, or Hedda ('Mon. Hist. Brit.' 624; Eddi, 45). Nor does he explain how it happened that in 702 Northumbrian legates should have come to him *rogantibus humiliter ut eorum obtutibus dignaretur praesentari promittentes . . . statuta canonica de antiqua fraude rationem se redituros* (Eddi, § 46). The course of the synod shows that the summons was not *humiliter*. Eddi himself says that the king and some abbots fostered the opposition of the 'avaricious' bishops, namely Bosa, Eadfrid, and John, to whom Wilfrid responded *multis et duris sermonibus* (§ 46), and though the bishops *totius paene Britanniae* were there he found no clerical support. This alone would have induced a person of his disposition to refuse to recognise their jurisdiction without the secret warning of which Eddi tells (§ 47). They threatened to deprive him of all his possessions in Northumbria and Mercia, and finally offered him Ripon under somewhat humiliating conditions. When he appealed to Rome the king

Aldfrid, offered to enforce his obedience, and the archbishop thought his action *culpabilis*. The bishops, restrained by their safe-conduct, let him depart.

Such terms could not have been offered to Wilfrid if he had been sure of Mercian support. They proposed to take from him all his endowments there, but said no word of the see of Leicester, and when he returned to Mercia it was to ask the king not about the bishopric, of which there was no further question, but *qualiter decrevisset de possessione terrarum propriarumque facultatum quae ab ipso donata sunt ei*, and the king's answer was lukewarm (§ 48). Eddi does not confine the bitter feeling of which he tells in § 49 to Northumbria. There seems therefore to have been no party in England urging Wilfrid's cause. Either papal intervention, which one may connect with Sergius' letter to Ceolfrid ('Councils,' iii. 248), or a desire to deprive Wilfrid of what remained to him in Northumbria can alone account for the calling of the council. The former is more probable. The English clergy would obey the letter of the papal wishes, but would contradict their spirit where Wilfrid was concern'd.

It must have been on his way to Rome that Wilfrid met Willibrord; where, Bede does not say (iii. 13). Eddi, though mentioning Willibrord in § 26, is silent as to this; but he has little to say of the journey, perhaps because it was *pedestri gressu* (§ 50). Bede's account of the transactions at Rome seems condensed from Eddi 50-54, though he corrects Eddi's *xl et eo amplius annos* of Wilfrid's episcopate to *quadraginta prope annos* (v. 19), essentially moderates Boniface's zeal, and is careful to qualify with *nonnulla in parte the falsas contra eum machinasse calumnias*. There seems no reason to doubt the general correctness of Eddi's report, coloured though it be. But if he received the decision *triumphali gaudio* (§ 53) he would not have been so reluctant to return to England (§ 55). Eddi's story of the return is condensed by Bede, who omits parts of the vision. (Eddi, § 56; Bede, v. 19). According to Bede the archbishop received Wilfrid *libentissime*. This is not likely, but quite as much so as Eddi's version that he was *coactus et per nuntios scriptis directis territus est et tremebundus*. No doubt he wished to stand well both with pope and king. That Aldfrid should have been at first disposed to receive Wilfrid, though stated only by Eddi (§ 58), accords with his peaceful disposition and declining strength. When at last he refused, it was with a courtesy to which Wilfrid was little used in England (§ 58). It is probable, therefore, that he desired some amicable settlement during his last days, though Bede ignores this, and the abbesses, Elfled and an unknown Ethelburga, or Eddi for them, could embellish these edifying sentiments to their purpose. The accession of a strong king immediately restored unbending opposition (Eddi, § 59).

The successful conspiracy which raised the boy Osred to the throne brought Wilfrid's friends to power, and may not have been wholly without his complicity. We know that Wilfrid hastened to Ripon on Aldfrid's death (Eddi, § 59) and that Osred was *pontifici nostro filius adoptivus*, though he did little credit to his spiritual father. But though the regent was his partisan, the synod at the Nidd brought Wilfrid only a Pyrrhic victory. Eddi's account (§ 60) cannot conceal the opposition to him which clergy and people must have shared. Elfled acted in the interest of peace, but this pupil of Hilda, who had sent messengers to Rome *ad eum accusandum* in 679 (§ 54), can hardly have been his warm ally, and the result of her mediation and the archbishop's (§ 60) shows that all were disposed to minimise his claims, deferring in appearance to the papal wishes but allowing him in reality little more than he had rejected at Austerfield. Nothing in Eddi's account of Wilfrid's last years and death seems inconsistent with his former life. Here Eddi had too many fellow witnesses to make important errors, though perhaps the promise of Ceolred *omnem vitam suam meo iudicio disponere* (63) should be received with caution, unless Wilfrid wished a third pupil like Caedwalla and Osred (cp. Bonifatii Ep. 55, ed. Jaffé). Eddi omits the episode that called out Bede's letter to Plegwin.⁴ The miracles and *mirabilia* of Eddi 65-67 are the usual ones and call for no comment.

In looking back over the whole course of Eddi's narrative, the conclusion seems to me justified that while he had ample sources of information, great admiration for his subject, and some talent as a writer, he was not a conscientious historian. He did not hesitate to suppress and to distort inconvenient facts. He was uncharitable, and sometimes certainly unjust in attributing evil motives to others. Throughout he is advocate, not judge, and pleads his patron's cause with more zeal than discretion. If this conclusion be accepted, the received view of the character of Wilfrid and of his place in Northumbrian history may perhaps be found to require material modifications.

BENJAMIN W. WELLS.

⁴ The *Dict. of Nat. Biogr.* asserts, iv. 10, that the Wilfrid who suffered Bede's orthodoxy to be aspersed was Wilfrid II of York (718-732), but Bede's letter was written five years after the shorter chronology, which ends with 702 and cannot be placed as late as 713. Moreover before 718 Bede's reputation as a theologian was too firmly established to be called in question, and he had less reason to justify himself in the eyes of the bishop of York, who was not his diocesan, than in those of the bishop of Hexham who was.