



## FROM MY DIARY

Back in March I was working on making an English translation of the hagiographical *Life* of St Cuthman. At the same time I was working on adding syntactical help to my QuickLatin tool.

But then by the mercy of God I was able to get a contract and earn a living, at a time when most people were unable to do so. I was and am profoundly grateful. All the same I was also glad to stop after six months of daily Zoom meetings, as the pressure at work began to increase. The dynamics of a team that work from home, where most people have never met, can be peculiar.

This week I have started to work again on the Cuthman. Thankfully I left it obvious where I was. In fact the task is much more advanced than I had remembered. I've now resolved all the issues in all 12 chapters of this little work. But there is another task to do.

My translation is/was made from the 17th century *Acta Sanctorum* text. After I had made the first draft, I learned that a critical edition does exist, made by John Blair and published in a local journal in 1997.<sup>[1]</sup> So I have tonight started to go through the files and compare the text that I have with Blair's edition. The differences are not great, so far.

The old Bollandists worked from two now lost manuscripts, labelled A and B by Dr. Blair. The modern Bollandist database tells us that two manuscripts exist today. I had assumed that these were the same as those used for the *Acta Sanctorum*; but it turns out that this is not so. The new manuscripts are labelled G and R by Blair.

I'm not entirely convinced by all of the choices in Blair's edition, although it is a marvellous work of collation. For instance at one point he conjectures that the author drops into the second-person singular - "you...", without any manuscript evidence, and when the rest of the text is entirely third-person. I have followed the Bollandists here.

But I daresay Dr B. knows much more Latin than I do. So I have decided that I will follow his choices, except when I really feel that the Bollandist editors were right. I will footnote where I deviate. I'd like to hope that my work will be useful to others, and the best way to ensure that is to follow the edition that they will have to follow.

Of course I need some kind of excuse to myself, at least, for ignoring Blair at points. Currently I am muttering to myself that, "of course the Bollandist editors of the 17th century knew far more Latin than any modern editor, especially ecclesiastical Latin." Let's hope that I am right!

But I will include the text that I translate as an appendix.

On the other hand I've not yet got back to working on QuickLatin and reading grammars. I'm very grateful for what I did in this area earlier in the year. The syntax facilities are really helpful, even as far as I have gone. But I will need more time to get back up to speed with this. I have also changed PC, so not everything is ready to hand as yet.

It's good to have a project to take me into the winter months.

1. <sup>[1]</sup>John Blair, "Saint Cuthman, Steyning and Bosham", in: *Sussex Archaeological Collections* 135 (1997), 173-92.↩
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