

Jesse Harrington

Walter Daniel

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Walter Daniel (12th c.)

1. Name variants: Master Walter, Magister Walterus, Walterus Rievallensis

2. Places: Rievaulx

3. Biography: W. was a monk and theologian of Rievaulx from 1150 until his death, having followed the example of his father Daniel, who joined Rievaulx by 1147. The date and place of W.'s birth are unknown. Before entering Rievaulx, he had been educated, possibly at Durham or York. He later described himself as a medicus, perhaps referencing his work as infirmarian of Rievaulx. He is best known as the helper and then biographer of his abbot, Aelred of Rievaulx. He is named as a participant in the dialogue 'De spirituali amicitia'. W.'s *Vita Aelredi* is a classic of Cistercian literature; it reveals its author's capacity of friendship and his full devotion to Cistercian life. The later medieval vitae of Aelred are ultimately conflation of W.'s works. An effective rhetorician, W. was the most prolific writer of Rievaulx besides Aelred. The antiquarian John Leland (†1552) recorded an additional nine works, all theological, by W., then held in the library of Rievaulx. Apart from his *Vita Aelredi*, only his 'Centum sententiae' and four sermons survived. His memory was deeply respected at Rievaulx. John Bale († 1563) reported that W. died and was buried at Rievaulx.

4. Cultus:

a. Relics: –

b. Liturgical commemoration: –

c. Patronage: –

d. Attributes: –

5. Fontes: John Rylands Library, Manchester, Latin MS 196, partly printed in C. H. TALBOT, *The Centum sententiae of Walter Daniel*, in: *Sacris erudiri* 11 (1960), 266–383; Jesus Library, Cambridge, MS Q.B. 7 fol. 63r–74v, printed in: *The Life of Ailred of Rievaulx by Walter Daniel*, ed. and trans. F. M. POWICKE, Oxford 1950, and partly reprinted with additional translation in: *The Life of Aelred of Rievaulx*, ed. M. DUTTON, Kalamazoo 1994; J. BALE, *Scriptorum illustrium maioris Britannie catalogus*, Basel, 1559, 213; *Commentarii de scriptoribus Britannicis*, auctore Joanne Lelando, ed. A. HALL, 1, Oxford 1709, 200–201.

6. Literature: D. N. BELL, *Daniel, Walter*, in: ODNB, 2004; D. N. BELL, *An Index of Authors and Works in Cistercian Libraries in Great Britain*, Kalamazoo 1992, 145; A. LAWRENCE, *English Cistercian Manuscripts of the Twelfth Century* in: *Cistercian Art and Architecture in the British Isles*, ed. C. NORTON / D. PARK, Cambridge 1986, 284–298; F. M. POWICKE, *Ailred of Rievaulx and his Biographer Walter Daniel*, Manchester 1922; *A Companion to Aelred of Rievaulx (1110–1167)*, ed. M. L. DUTTON, Leiden 2017.

7. Illustrations: –

Jesse Harrington