

Jesse Harrington

**Henry Murdac**

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25716/amad-85464>

Lexikonartikel | Article in a reference book, 2023



**Empfohlene Zitierweise | Suggested Citation:**

Jesse Harrington, Henry Murdac, in: Dictionary of Cistercian Saints, hrsg. von Mirko Breitenstein, Jörg Sonntag und Alkuin Schachenmayr, Frankfurt am Main: AMAD, 2023.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25716/amad-85464>.



hebis.



BAVERISCHE  
AKADEMIE  
DER  
WISSENSCHAFTEN



**HEIDELBERGER AKADEMIE  
DER WISSENSCHAFTEN**  
Akademie der Wissenschaften  
des Landes Baden-Württemberg



Sächsische Akademie  
der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig

## Henry Murdac (\* early 12th c. – † 14 Oct 1153)

1. Name variants: Henri Murdac

2. Places: Beverley, Ripon, Clairvaux, Vauclair, Fountains, York

3. Biography: Born in Yorkshire, H. served Archbishop Thurstan of York and attained the title of magister, before entering Clairvaux at St. Bernard's invitation. From 1134, he served as founder abbot of Clairvaux's daughter house at Vauclair. In 1143 or 1144, H. was elected abbot of Fountains in Yorkshire, a position he held until his death. As the first archbishop elected and consecrated in England without royal consent since the Norman conquest, H. had difficulty entering York and had to reside at Beverley and Ripon, excommunicating his opponents and interdicting York. An energetic reformer, H. oversaw the foundation of eight daughter houses of Fountains and Newminster, introduced new statutes at Hexham and regular canons at Gloucester, deposed the abbots of Whitby and Selby, and ratified the new Gilbertine foundation at Watton. H. died in Beverley and was buried at York Minster. H.'s saintly reputation appears in Aelred of Rievaulx's story of the Nun of Watton, whose fetters he miraculously loosed in a posthumous vision. The monks at Fountains may have begun a vita to promote H.'s cause. His cult does not appear to have spread much beyond his own order, however, perhaps due to it being overshadowed by that of his rival William, canonised in 1226.

4. Cultus:

a. Relics: –

b. Liturgical commemoration: –

c. Patronage: –

d. Attributes: –

5. Fontes: Memorials of the Abbey of St. Mary of Fountains 1, ed. J. R. WALBRAN, Durham 1863, 180–181; The Letters of St Bernard of Clairvaux, transl. B. S. JAMES (1953); Symeonis monachi opera omnia 2, ed. T. ARNOLD, London 1882–85, 317–331; Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I, ed. R. HOWLETT, 1, London 1884–89; English episcopal acta 5: York, 1070–1154, ed. J. E. BURTON, Oxford 1988; The Priory of Hexham, ed. J. RAINE, Durham 1864; The Historical Works of Gervase of Canterbury, ed. W. STUBBS, London 1879–80; Aelredi Rievallensis opera omnia 6: opera historica et hagiographica, ed. D. PEZZINI, Turnhout 2017, 137–46.

6. Literature: J. BURTON, Murdac, Henry, in: ODNB 39, 2004, 805–7; E. JAMROZIAK, The Cistercians, Eugenius III, and the disputed York election, in: Pope Eugenius III (1145–1153). The First Cistercian Pope, ed. I. FONNESBERG-SCHMIDT and A. JOTISCHKY, Amsterdam 2018; C. NORTON, St. William of York, Woodbridge 2014; J. A. TRUAX, Aelred the Peacemaker: The Public Life of a Cistercian Abbot, Kalamazoo 2017; D. NICHOLL, Thurstan: Archbishop of York, 1114–1140, York 1964.

7. Illustrations: –

Jesse Harrington