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Henry Murdac

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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: –


7. Illustrations: –

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