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978-1-108-04249-9 - Chronica Johannis de Oxenedes
Edited by Henry Ellis
Frontmatter
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Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores, or The Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages, usually referred to as the 'Rolls Series', was an ambitious project first proposed to the British Treasury in 1857 by Sir John Romilly, the Master of the Rolls, and quickly approved for public funding. Its purpose was to publish historical source material covering the period from the arrival of the Romans to the reign of Henry VIII, 'without mutilation or abridgement', starting with the 'most scarce and valuable' texts. A 'correct text' of each work would be established by collating 'the best manuscripts', and information was to be included in every case about the manuscripts used, the life and times of the author, and the work's 'historical credibility', but there would be no additional annotation. The first books were published in 1858, and by the time it was completed in 1896 the series contained 99 titles and 255 volumes. Although many of the works have since been re-edited by modern scholars, the enterprise as a whole stands as a testament to the Victorian revival of interest in the middle ages.

Chronica Johannis de Oxenedes

Written around 1290, this Latin chronicle follows the pattern of similar texts in recording historical events through using earlier sources; but, by adapting and editing what he chose to include, the author, a Benedictine monk from Norfolk, produced a unique work. He is able to provide greater depth and detail to the descriptions of events closer to his own time, although the text finishes abruptly in a passage concerning the contemporary theologian Robert of Winchelsea. Published for the Rolls Series in 1859, the work was edited by Sir Henry Ellis (1777–1869), the librarian of the British Museum. Topics covered in the chronicle include Henry II's crowning of his eldest son as 'Henry the Young King' and their joint rule until the latter rebelled against his father; the 'extreme cruelty with which the Jews were treated in England'; and 'an occurrence which continued ... to our own time, namely, the inundation of Westminster Hall by the River Thames'.

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RERUM BRITANNICARUM MEDII ÆVI
SCRIPTORES,

OR

CHRONICLES AND MEMORIALS OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND IRELAND

DURING

THE MIDDLE AGES.

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[More information](#)

THE CHRONICLES AND MEMORIALS
OF
GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND
DURING THE MIDDLE AGES.

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHORITY OF HER MAJESTY'S TREASURY, UNDER THE
DIRECTION OF THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS.

ON the 26th of January 1857, the Master of the Rolls submitted to the Treasury a proposal for the publication of materials for the History of this Country from the Invasion of the Romans to the Reign of Henry VIII.

The Master of the Rolls suggested that these materials should be selected for publication under competent editors without reference to periodical or chronological arrangement, without mutilation or abridgment, preference being given, in the first instance, to such materials as were most scarce and valuable.

He proposed that each chronicle or historical document to be edited should be treated in the same way as if the editor were engaged on an *Editio Princeps*; and for this purpose the most correct text should be formed from an accurate collation of the best MSS.

To render the work more generally useful, the Master of the Rolls suggested that the editor should give an account of the MSS. employed by him, of their age and their peculiarities; that he should add to the work a brief account of the life and times of the author, and any remarks necessary to explain the chronology; but no other note or comment was to be allowed, except what might be necessary to establish the correctness of the text.

The works to be published in octavo, separately, as they were finished; the whole responsibility of the task resting upon the editors, who were to be chosen by the Master of the Rolls with the sanction of the Treasury.

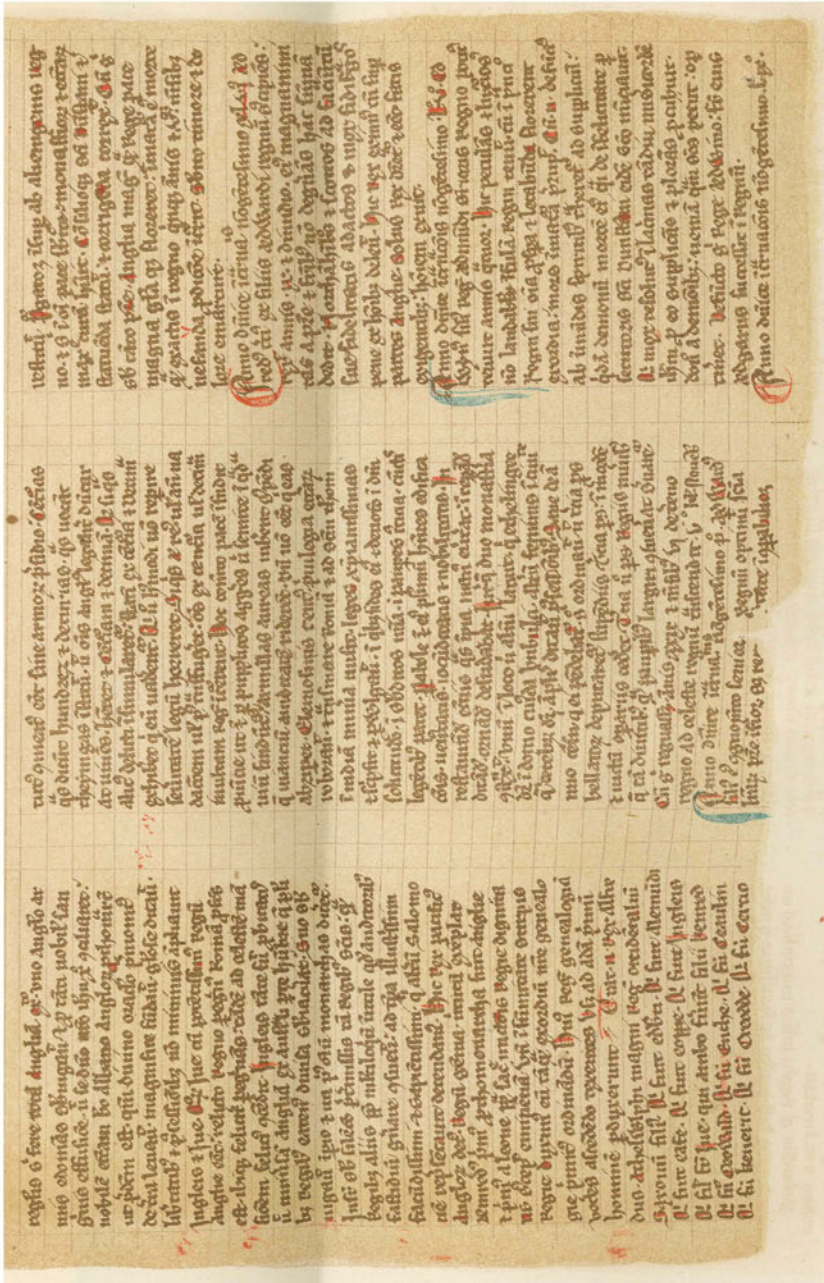
The Lords of Her Majesty's Treasury, after a careful consideration of the subject, expressed their opinion in a Treasury Minute, dated February 9, 1857, that the plan recommended by the Master of the Rolls "was well calculated for the accomplishment of this important national object, in an effectual and satisfactory manner, within a reasonable time, and provided proper attention be paid to economy, in making the detailed arrangements, without unnecessary expense."

They expressed their approbation of the proposal that each chronicle and historical document should be edited in such a manner as to represent with all possible correctness the text of each writer, derived from a collation of the best MSS., and that no notes should be added, except such as were illustrative of the various readings. They suggested, however, that the preface to each work should contain, in addition to the particulars proposed by the Master of the Rolls, a biographical account of the author, so far as authentic materials existed for that purpose, and an estimate of his historical credibility and value.

*Rolls House,
December 1857.*

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MS. BRIT. MUS. COPT. Nero. D. II

Page 4, verso, left; in the Queen.

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CHRONICA

JOHANNIS DE OXENEDES.

EDITED

BY

SIR HENRY ELLIS, K.H., F.R.S., S.A.

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF HER MAJESTY'S
TREASURY, UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS.

LONDON:
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EYRE and SPOTTISWOODE, Her Majesty's Printers,
For Her Majesty's Stationery Office,

P R E F A C E.

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No Manuscript of the Chronicle of John de Oxenedes but that which forms the text of the volume before the reader is at present known; nor have any particulars reached us as to the personal origin or history of the writer.

The Title of the Cottonian manuscript, which stands at the head of the Chronicle, and names John de Oxenedes as its author, is not in the original handwriting of the manuscript; but in a hand apparently of the middle of the seventeenth century. Smith, however, in his Catalogue of the Cottonian Collection, printed in 1696, gives it as it stands, with the name of John de Oxenedes as that of the author. The work is cited as his by Wharton in the *Anglia Sacra*, as well as by Bishop Tanner in the *Notitia Monastica*; and Bishop Tanner has expressly given him a place as the author of this Chronicle in his *Bibliotheca Britannico-Hibernica*. Wherever this Chronicle has been quoted, it has been referred to as the production of John de Oxenedes.

That the writer was a monk of the Abbey of St. Benet Holme is obvious, not only from the particulars enumerated throughout his history regarding the Abbey itself, the progressive rise of its buildings,

and the series of its abbots and their characters; but more especially from a passage<sup>1</sup> in which the minute circumstances are detailed attending King Edward the First's grant in the year 1286, in confirmation to St. Benet Holme of all its previous charters of endowment. Again, the writer's exultation, as regarded his abbey, at the favourable issue of a suit in relation to the church of Aylesham in 1289;<sup>2</sup> and in the very last page but one of his work, where the manor of Ludham Ferding was claimed in a suit for the king, under the advice of one Robert de Rose; but upon the production of Edward the Confessor's charter, and the passage of the Domesday Survey, in which the manor was entered as belonging to the abbey, the claim made before the lords justices became invalidated. These confirm the connexion of the author with the Abbey of St. Benet. The monk says in the summary of his satisfaction: "Et sic  
 " Domino volente, et Sancto Benedicto protegente,  
 " actum est ut, remanente manerio prædicto in statu  
 " pristino, prædictus Robertus de suo maligno plane  
 " deficeret proposito."

OXNEAD, the place from which our chronicler is presumed to have obtained his name, is a village situated about ten miles from the Holme; though it appears never to have had any connexion with the abbey, nor is its name mentioned in any of the abbey's Cartularies. We have proof that the estate of Oxnead has continued to be the property of private families from the time of the Saxons to the present hour. The presumption can only be that John de Oxenedes received the additional appellation to his christian name, like a large portion of our best

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<sup>1</sup> p. 244.

| <sup>2</sup> p. 250.



## PREFACE.

v

Chroniclers, from the town or village of his birth. Adam de Neteshirde, one of the abbots of St. Benet Holme, who lived but at a short distance from our author's time, received his name from Neteshirde, one of the manors belonging to the monastery, and of which he probably was a native.

We have now to describe the Chronicle itself, as placed before the reader.

The fac-simile which stands at the opening of the present volume sufficiently indicates the age and condition of the manuscript which has supplied the text. The writing is in the smallest character of its period; the age, that of the very opening of the fourteenth century. It is written upon vellum, in small pages, arranged upon a larger one, like columns, varying as to number upon the quarto page; in most instances containing six, in others eight, and two of them containing twelve of the smaller pages upon the quarto. The total number of the quarto pages is thirty-nine; of the smaller pages or columns, two hundred and seventy-six.

The early history of the Monastery of St. Benet, to the year 1275 inclusive, precedes the general history which forms the Work, like a detached tract. It is written on small pages, in the manner of the history itself, upon the two sides of a single separated leaf; and in the hand unquestionably of the same scribe. Many of its details are essential to portions of the History; it has, therefore, received its place as an accompaniment, and forms the first article in the Appendix to the present volume.

Among some mutilated Scraps which have been selected within the last few years from the remains of the Cottonian fire, some imperfect fragments have been found, in which one or two historical events are

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noticed relating to St. Benet Holme, and which have led to the conclusion that these fragments must once have formed a volume belonging to the Abbey. They are also upon vellum, in a hand nearly contemporary with our present Chronicle, and are now bound with it in the same Book of the Cottonian Collection. These fragments form the second article in the Appendix to the present volume.

We now come to the contents of John de Oxenedes' Chronicle.

It was the practice from the settlement of England after the Norman Conquest, as well as in the countries immediately neighbouring, for persons of leisure, both in the greater and lesser abbeyes and monasteries, to collect Annals relating as well to previous times as to their own. Brevity and compression were at first the chief features of these chronicles; but in our own country, about or soon after the time of Henry the First, more extended narratives appear, which, in many instances, led to the more elaborate composition of History. Few, however, of these annalists aspired to the character of original writers. They took the most approved texts of their times as their foundation, added something of their own, and abridged or omitted what they thought less interesting, inserting such new facts as they relied upon with confidence, or which fell within the scope of their own personal knowledge, or related to the circumstances or localities of the religious houses to which they belonged or had reference. Such Registers of events, moreover, were expected, from authority, to be preserved in our monastic establishments. When Edward the First, as John de Oxenedes relates, claimed to be the superior lord of Scotland, he sent for certain religious of the English monasteries to meet him at Norham with their

## PREFACE.

vii

Chronicles.<sup>1</sup> Knighton, in his “*Compilatio de Eventibus Angliæ*,” enumerates the chronicles which were produced on this very occasion.<sup>2</sup> Edward and his council are stated to have examined them, and upon their evidence it became clear to all, both the English of the council and the Scotch claimants themselves, that the “*Jus supremum*” of that country was his right. The deed of settlement also, then drawn up, vesting the superiority in King Edward, (accompanied by a deed of seisin, delivered on the part of the several competitors for that crown,) were finally sent to the Abbey of St. Edmund, as well as to various other abbeys, with the king’s order for the insertion of them in their Chronicles. The instruments here referred to appear in the manuscripts and chronicles of various monasteries, in some of them in Latin, and in others in the French language. John de Oxenedes, who appears to have obtained them from the Abbey of St. Edmund,<sup>3</sup> has given them in Latin.

After Horsa and Hengist’s arrival, John de Oxenedes’ history, with slight notices of Offa and St. Alban’s, Ingleis and Ina, passes, (probably on account of the confused story which the heptarchic portion of our history affords,) to the reign of Alfred, where his Narrative substantially begins. He gives Alfred’s pedigree in the style of sacred genealogy, and finally considers him as the first monarch of the whole of

<sup>1</sup> See p. 255.

<sup>2</sup> Twysd. *Scriptores*. See also Thorn. col. 1962.

<sup>3</sup> There seems to have been a very early connexion between the monastery of the Holme and St. Edmund’s Bury.

When the clerks were ejected

from St. Edmund’s, and monks substituted for them by Canute, the latter, twelve in number, were transferred together with their books and ecclesiastical ornaments, from St. Benet’s to begin the new foundation.

England; possibly as the first of our monarchs who received papal consecration. He enumerates Alfred's actions and character in a few sentences; and particularly mentions his monastic foundations at Athelney and Shaftesbury.

From this time the course of his history, however short the form in which the facts may be stated, goes on unbroken.

Edgar is another of our sovereigns of whom the Author stops to give a particularly favourable notice, as one whose great deeds deserved proportionate admiration from the reader.

It may be proper in the next place to say something of the sources from which John de Oxenedes drew different portions of his history.

In reference to the story of the Emperor Henry the Third, his sister, and the clerk, in the time of Hardecnut, he says: "Iste invenies in libro W. de Malmesbirie."<sup>1</sup> In p. 43, under the year 1129, he notices the Chronicle of Hugh de St. Victor: "Hucusque magister Hugo de Sancto Victore Chronica sua scripsit." In p. 49, recording the death of Eustace, the son of king Stephen, he says: "De hoc Polycratice Carnotensis, libro vj. capitulo xxvii.;" and in p. 50, as will again be mentioned, he refers to the "Veteres Historiæ Hibernienses."

Subsequent to the period of the Norman Conquest, he follows the general thread of Roger de Wendover's text as an outline; using similar but more condensed language; interspersing new facts and passages in particular parts, and at greater length in the reigns of Richard the First, John, and Henry the Third; and to the end of his Chronicle in these later reigns en-

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<sup>1</sup> See W. Malmesb. edit. Hardy, lib. ii. § 190, p. 323.

larging the details; differing, nevertheless, in various instances from Wendover's text. A remarkable example occurs under the year 1102, when archbishop Anselm, in the Council held at London, caused the marriage of ecclesiastics to be prohibited. Wendover says: "In hoc Concilio sacerdotes *concupinarios* excommunicavit, nisi eas de cætero amoverent." Oxenedes' difference in his text is material. He says: "Anselmus archiepiscopus Cantuariensis celebravit Concilium Londoniis, in quo prohibuit *uxores sacerdotibus* Anglorum, *antea non prohibitas.*" The proof of this, if required, may be seen even in the Domesday Survey, where, in the account of Lincoln, i. 336, "*uxor* Siuuardi presbyteri" occurs; and again in the second volume, in the notice of Blafelda, in Norfolk, fol. 195, where it is said, "hoc manerium accepit Almarus *cum uxore sua* antequam esset episcopus."

His account of the death of Richard the First is peculiarly deserving of attention. It is nearly identical with the account given by Ralph de Coggeshale in his "Chronicon Anglicanum ab anno M.lxvi. ad M.cc.," preserved in the eighteenth volume of the "Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de la France," of Dom. Bouquet, p. 85, with no mention either of Bertram de Gurdun, or Peter Bazil, or John Sabraz, as the cross-bow man who discharged the shaft; but simply as "quidam armatus."<sup>1</sup>

With Matthew Paris's history he was well acquainted. In p. 166 he finishes a reflection upon the incidents which brought the twenty-fifth half century of the Christian era to its completion, with the words: "Si quis ea inspicere desiderat, quærat in chronicis domini Matthæi Parisiensis apud Sanctum Albanum

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<sup>1</sup> A contemporary anonymous account of Richard's death is also to be found in Labbe's Bibliotheca MSS. tom. ii. p. 302.

“ in anno scilicet M.ccl. Hic enim terminavit prædictus Matthæus Parisiacensis, monachus Sancti Albani, Chronica sua.” In a subsequent page, speaking of the council held by Otto, the pope’s legate, he says : “ In hoc quoque Concilio privavit omnes illos beneficiis suis ecclesiasticis qui successerant patribus suis immediate. Cætera autem quæ in hoc Concilio statuit in Chronicis Sancti Albani scribuntur.”

He refers again to Matthew Paris (p. 197) in relation to the “Psalterium de Vita et Moribus Tartarorum,” in a manner as if Matthew Paris’s history was laid open to inspection at St. Alban’s; “quod qui inspicere desiderat apud sanctum Albanum in libro Additamentorum poterit reperire.”

There are several passages in John de Oxenedes’ history to which it may not be improper to draw the reader’s particular attention.

The ravages of the Northern Pirates upon every part of the English coast in the tenth and eleventh centuries afford the first passage on which the editor of the present volume would make a short Remark.

Even at this day large hoards of the Coins of our Saxon monarchs, from the time of Edgar, it is to be particularly observed, to that of King Edward the Confessor, are found buried in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden.

M. Bror Emil Hildebrand, in a quarto volume printed at Stockholm in 1817, of considerable thickness, has given a Catalogue of those at present preserved in the Royal Collection at Stockholm; a similar though less extensive catalogue of Saxon coins, ranging through the same period, preserved in the Museum of the Royal Academy of Upsala, was published there in a thinner Quarto in 1846, by Prof. J. H. Schröder.

Hildebrand, in remarking upon the Swedish Royal Collection, observes that Anglo-Saxon coins have been

found in other provinces on the eastern shores of the Baltic, but that the discoveries are of small importance compared with those of Sweden. After Sweden, however, he says, the greatest finds have been in Denmark, and it must be observed that the Swedish provinces of Gothland and Scania, in which the richest discoveries of this class are made, belonged to Denmark at the time when these Anglo-Saxon coins were buried.

Hildebrand observes, and which is, no doubt, correct, so great must have been the plunder, that the finds of buried Anglo-Saxon coins, struck during the period already described, are far more numerous at the present day in these northern Countries than such finds which can be discovered in England.

In these Collections the coins of Edgar, in whose reign the series begins, are few in number. Æthelred the Second's coins are immensely numerous in the Royal Collection, and not insufficiently extensive in the Collection of the Academy. Æthelred the Second, it will be remembered, to save his kingdom consented to pay Dane-geld, a tribute which Hildebrand estimates at the sum of 167,000 pounds of silver.

This was the time when the piracies of the Danes had been extended into a continual war for the conquest of our country. The extension of their ravages, as far as the absorption of coined money went, is singularly shown upon the reverses of the very coins recorded in these Catalogues; upon which the names of almost every city and town in England, where coins had been struck, stand recorded. Denmark and her armies may be said at that period to have exhausted England. The coins of Edward the Confessor in these northern cabinets are comparatively few, tending to the belief that the types are of the early part only of his reign. The Danes had been driven out from England; their ravages had ceased; and we

hear of no finds of coins in Sweden or Denmark of or belonging to the Norman princes.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The reader will not be displeased to have a few short extracts laid before him in a Note, from the "Chronicon Roffense," a chronicle hitherto unprinted; preserved in the Cottonian MS. Nero D. ii. fol. 89. These detail the ravages of the Northmen upon the coasts and over the whole of England between the years 993 and 1010, through the exact period of time in which these very coins are conceived to have been placed in interment.

"An. 993. De gravi tributo Danis soluto. Suanus rex Danorum et Anlafus rex Norwegensium in die nativitat̄is beat̄e Marīe, cum cogonibus xciiij. Londonias advehuntur, quem mox acriter invadentes eam subjugare disponunt, sed a civibus cum magno suorum detrimento repulsi, ad Essexīa, Cant̄īa, Suthsaxon̄īa, et Suthampton̄īa provincias furorem suum convertentes eas spoliaverunt, et c̄asis populis graviter contraverunt. Tunc rex Ethelredus consilio suorum dedit eis pensionem de tota Anglia collectam xvi millia librarum ut a rapinis et c̄adibus hominum innocentium cessarent. Tunc rex Ethelredus Elfegum Winton. episcopum et ducem Ethelwardum ad regem Anlafum destinavit, quem ad villam regiam ubi rex Ethelredus tunc erat, pacifice perducentes et ad ejus petitionem sacro fonte intingentes, ab episcopo confirmati fecerunt. Quem rex in filium adoptionis susci-

piens regiis eum muneribus honoravit, et deinde, æstate superveniente, ad suam patriam pacifice remeavit.

"A.D. 997. Defuncto Sygardo Wellensi pontifice, Alfwinus successit. Eodem anno septentrionalis Wallia, Dorsetensis, Cornubiensis, provincīa, nullo obstante a Danis igne et ferro cum c̄adibus et rapinis desolata sunt.

"A.D. 999. Paganorum exercitus nefandus Cant̄īa occidentalem plagam ferme totam demoliti sunt. Unde ad Roffensium urbem devecti, eam obsidione vallaverunt. Contra quos Cantuarienses destinati asperum cum eis conflictum inierunt. Sed hinc inde multis interfectis Dani tandem victoriam reporterunt. Contra quos Ethelredus exercitum dirigens parum vel nihil profecit.

"A.D. 1000. Classis Danorum præfata Normanniam hostiliter petivit. Quo audito Ethelredus rex Anglorum interim Monīa Insulam sibi potenter subjugavit.

"Anno Mj. Memoratus Paganorum exercitus de Normannia rediens Exoniensem urbem obsedit. Sed civibus viriliter resistentibus recesserunt. Contra quos Devonienses, Somersetenses, Dorsetenses, congregati in loco qui Penho dicitur certamen cum hostibus commiserunt: ubi Dani multa ex Anglis illata strage victoriam habuerunt. Inde pagani ad Vectam insulam cursum dirigentes, illam totam cum



## PREFACE.

xiii

The extreme cruelty with which the Jews were treated in England in early times is carefully recorded by Oxenedes in successive pages of his Chronicle. Usury and the clipping of the current money were the chief charges against this unhappy people. The persecution of them was marvellous—almost incredible; but the statements of our chronicles on this point are fully supported by the numerous entries of fines and punishments regularly entered against them in our public Records.

The earliest mention of the Jews in England, which can be relied upon, is that inserted in the Canonical Excerptions published by Ecgbrigt, archbishop of York, in the year 740; chronicled under that year by Johnson in his Ecclesiastical Canons. That they were here in the early Norman time seems unquestionable. In the reign of Henry the Second the strong persecution of them probably began; followed, as it was, by the massacre of them at the coronation of Richard the First. John, as we know by his letter to the mayor and barons of London, printed by Tovey, except as far as his own personal

“ vicinis provinciis, nullo obsis-  
 “ tente, rebus omnibus spoliarunt.  
 “ Anno Miiij. Johannes sedit  
 “ in cathedra Romana annis v.  
 “ quo utique anno Dani exar-  
 “ serunt crudelitate inaudita. An-  
 “ gliam totam sicut locustæ co-  
 “ operientes, omnia spoliantes,  
 “ homines neci tradentes, nec fuit  
 “ inventus quisquis qui hostibus  
 “ obviaret.  
 “ Anno Mx. Novus Danorum  
 “ exercitus apud Gypeswicum veni-  
 “ ens in die Dominicæ Ascensionis  
 “ prædis idem vacabat et rapinis.  
 “ Congregati sunt contra eum ad

“ pugnam dux Ethelstanus sororius  
 “ regis, Oswy, et Eadwy, et  
 “ Wliferus consules, et multi cum  
 “ eis bellatores. Sed Anglis fugam  
 “ non meditantibus, Turketillus,  
 “ patre Danus, fugam primus in-  
 “ cepit. Unde Dani, victoriam  
 “ adepti, East Angliam et Grante-  
 “ brege cum paludibus pervagantes  
 “ rapinis quæque sibi obvia et in-  
 “ cendiis devastabant. Dein versus  
 “ Occidentem divertentes, provin-  
 “ cias Huntendonensem, Bedefor-  
 “ densem, Bukingehamensem de-  
 “ populatione misere contreverunt.”

extortions might go, was favourable to them ; but the odium they were popularly held in continued unabated till their expulsion in 1290.

There is a curious passage relating to them preserved in one of the Hargrave Manuscripts in the British Museum,<sup>1</sup> formerly copied from a volume, once the Cottonian MS. Otho B. iii., but of which the fire of 1731 left but some poor fragments. It states that in the third year of Edward the Second a few Jews endeavoured to feel their way toward a return to England: "Anno Domini 1310, et regni Regis tertio, ut dictum est. Eodem anno, circiter festum Sancti Johannis Baptistæ, sex Judæi venerunt Londoni. eo quod voluerunt impetrare licentiam a rege in Anglia commorare. Unus eorum fuit Medicus." That the application was unsuccessful there can be no doubt. The occurrence, as far as the present editor has been able to discover, is unnoticed in any other Chronicle.

In the account of the reconciliation between King Stephen and Duke Henry at Wallingford, in 1153, after the death of Eustace, Oxenedes makes particular mention of St. Patrick's purgatory, and especially of the entry into it of one Sir Owen, a knight of King Stephen's army. "Concordia itaque facta, miles quidam, Oenus nomine, qui sub Rege Stephano multis annis militaverat, in Purgatorio Sancti Patricii vivus intravit. De hoc quoque Purgatorio, et ejus origine et vita, tradunt Veteres Historiæ Hybernenses."

The chronicles here alluded to are, no doubt, those which have since been embodied into what is called the "Annals of Ireland, translated from the original Irish of the Four Masters ; published in 1846 by

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<sup>1</sup> MS. Hargrave, 179, fol. 295.

“ Owen Connellan, Esq., with annotations by Philip “ MacDermott, Esq., and the translator,” in a large quarto volume.

The Purgatory of St. Patrick was a Cave in an island of the lake of Lough Dirgh, in Donegal, in the diocese of Clogher, where, according to popish doctrine, souls were purged from carnal impurities before they were received into heaven. It is mentioned by several of our chroniclers, and especially by Giraldus Cambrensis. This Island, it is said, was of great wildness, and of remarkable physical character, containing caverns from which strange evaporations issued; and was considered even to be the abode of demons.

At the end of the fifteenth century the Purgatory of St. Patrick fell into disgrace. A monk of Eymstadt, in Holland, undertook a pilgrimage to Lough Dirgh; when he arrived at the lake, he applied to the prior of a neighbouring monastery, who had the charge of it, who referred him to the bishop of Clogher, who demanded a certain sum of money, which the bishop said was due to him from every pilgrim who sought the cave. The monk pleaded his poverty, and the bishop at last grudgingly gave his licence. The monk subsequently made complaint to the Holy See at Rome, when Alexander the Sixth ordered the destruction of the Purgatory, which was carried into effect upon St. Patrick's day, A.D. 1477.

The Cave, however, or another for it, was subsequently renewed, and pilgrimages are still continued to it at a certain period of the year by devotees from all parts of Ireland; and many from England and Scotland. The annual number of late years has been estimated by one writer at from ten to fifteen thousand persons. Much relating to it may be read in Gough's edition of Camden's *Britannia*, and more extensively in “St. Patrick's Purgatory; an Essay on “ the Legends of Purgatory, Hell, and Paradise

“ current in the Middle Ages, by Thomas Wright, “ Esq. 8vo. Lond. 1844.”

A more immediate illustration, however, of this notice by John de Oxenedes will be found in a very curious MS. in the Harleian Collection, in a hand of the fourteenth century: “ Narratio cujusdam Monachi de “ Purgatorio Sancti Patricii tempore Regis Stephani,” written by Henry, a monk of Saltrey in Huntingdonshire, addressed to the abbot de Sartis; the second division of which is devoted to the visit of King Stephen’s knight, Sir Owen. Other MSS. of this narrative exist in our libraries, one or two as old as John de Oxenedes’ own time.

Our old manuscript records afford numerous entries relating to St. Patrick’s Purgatory. It is clear that at the beginning of the thirteenth century it had become famous through Europe. In a patent of Edward the Third, A.D. 1358, the king gives testimonials to two foreigners, one a noble Hungarian, the other a Lombard, Nicholas de Beccariis, of their having faithfully performed this pilgrimage; and still later, in 1397, King Richard the Second granted a safe conduct to visit this place to Raymond, viscount of Perilhus, knight of Rhodes and chamberlain of the king of France, with twenty men and thirty horses.<sup>1</sup>

Froissart records a conversation between himself and Sir William Lisle on this subject, which is thus given by Lord Berners:

“ On the Friday, in the morning, Sir William “ Lysle and I rode together, and on the way I demanded of hym if he had been with the kynge in “ the voyage into Irelande. He answered me Yes. “ Then I demaunded of hym the maner of the Hole “ that is in Irelande, called Saynt Patryke’s Purga-

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<sup>1</sup> See Rymer, Foed., vol. iii. part iv. p. 135.

“ torie ; if it were trew that was sayde of it or not?  
 “ Then he sayde, that of a suretie such a hole there  
 “ was, and that he hymselfe and another knyght of  
 “ Englande hadde ben there whyle the kinge laye in  
 “ Duuelyn, and sayd howe they entred into the hoole  
 “ and were closed in at the sonne goynge downe, and  
 “ abode there all nyght, and the nexte mornyng  
 “ issued out agayne at the son risyng. Then I de-  
 “ maunded if he had any suche strange sightes or  
 “ vysions as were spoken of? Than he sayd, howe  
 “ that when he and his felowe were entred and past  
 “ the gate that was called the Purgatorie of St.  
 “ Patryke, and that they ware discended and gone  
 “ downe thre or four paces, discending downe as  
 “ into a cellar, a certayne hote vapure rose agaynst  
 “ them, and stroke so into their heades, that they  
 “ were fayne to syt downe on the steeres, which are  
 “ of stone ; and after they had sytte there a season,  
 “ they had great desyre to slepe, and so fell aslepe,  
 “ and slepte there all nyght. Then I demaunded,  
 “ that if in their slepe they knewe where they were,  
 “ or what vysions they had? He answered me, that  
 “ in slepyng they entred into great ymaginacyons  
 “ and in marvelous dremes, otherwyse than they were  
 “ wont to have in their chambres ; and in the  
 “ mornyng they issued out, and within a shorte  
 “ season clene forgate their dremes and visyons,  
 “ wherfore he sayde he thought all that mater was  
 “ but a fantasy. Than I leftte spekyng any further  
 “ of that mater, bycause I wolde fayne have  
 “ knowen of hym what was done in the voyage in  
 “ Irelande.”<sup>1</sup>

In the reign of Henry the Second two periods of

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Berners' Froissart, Utterson's edit., vol. ii. p. 611.

Coinage are mentioned, not only by John de Oxenedes, but by most of our historians, in the briefest manner. Of the first, under the year 1158, it is said “*Nova moneta fabricata est in Anglia.*”<sup>1</sup> Of the second, under the year 1180, “*Nova moneta fabricata est.*”<sup>2</sup>

Benedict, abbot of Peterborough, who lived at the time, is the only writer who gives a rather more extended notice of this last coinage. He says: “*Eodem anno, scilicet ab Incarnatione Domini 1180, Henricus rex Angliæ fecit in Anglia novam monetam fieri, et præcepit quod a festo Sancti Martini non caperetur alia moneta in Anglia quam illa nova; vetus namque moneta corrupta fuit, et rex monetarios redemit; id est ad redemptionem coëgit.*” The coins of former sovereigns were entirely withdrawn from circulation.

The type of the first of these coinages there can be no doubt was that of the great hoard found at Tealby, in Lincolnshire, in the year 1813, described by the late Taylor Combe, Esq., in the *Archæologia* of the Society of Antiquaries.

The second type is equally unquestionable. Its obverse representing the full portrait of the king, bearing a sceptre of pearls in his right hand, with a chaplet of pearls instead of a crown upon his head, and moreover a short cross within a circle on the reverse, a reverse which all our Chronicles state to have been so reprobated by King Henry the Third when he issued his coinage of 1247, and extended the cross on the reverse to the outer edge.

Henry the Second, it will be remembered, publicly laid aside his Crown immediately after his second coronation at Worcester, in the year 1158.

The coinage of 1180, therefore, might fairly represent him in the aged appearance depicted upon this

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<sup>1</sup> p. 52.

| <sup>2</sup> p. 61.