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978-1-108-04685-5 - *Annales Monasterii S. Albani A.D. 1421–1440: A Johanne Amundesham, monacho, ut videtur, conscripti: Volume 1*

Edited by Henry Thomas Riley

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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.

Annales Monasterii S. Albani A.D. 1421–1440

Between 1863 and 1876, the Rolls Series published several works from or about the abbey of St Albans, edited by Henry Thomas Riley (1816–78) under the rubric *Chronica monasterii S. Albani*. These annals, and a short chronicle, whose attribution to the shadowy John Amundesham seemed doubtful even in Riley's day, appeared in two volumes in 1870–1. They describe events in the first half of the fifteenth century, during the first abbacy of John of Whethamstede, and record fascinating information about the early reign of the boy king Henry VI. Topics covered in Volume 1 include a deputation of respectable women complaining about the behaviour of the Duke of Gloucester, relations between the Pope and Byzantium, visits from dignitaries, the abbot's travels in Europe, disasters, drownings, and the suppression of certain systems of weights. The book also contains occasional verse written by the abbot. The Latin text is accompanied by an English introduction and side-notes.

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VOLUME 1

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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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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.

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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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ANNALES MONASTERII S. ALBANI,

A

JOHANNE AMUNDESHAM, MONACHO,

UT VIDETUR,

C O N S C R I P T I,

(A.D. 1421–1440).

QUIBUS PRÆFIGITUR

CHRONICON RERUM GESTARUM IN MONASTERIO S. ALBANI,

(A.D. 1422–1431.)

A

QUODAM AUCTORE IGNOTO COMPILATUM.

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CHRONICA MONASTERII S. ALBANI.

ANNALES MONASTERII S. ALBANI,

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EDITED

BY

HENRY THOMAS RILEY, M.A.,

OF CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE;
AND OF THE INNER TEMPLE, BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE *Annales* and the short Abbey Chronicle prefixed thereto, forming the contents of the present Volume, commence at about the same date,¹ A.D. 1421, 2, and extend, the first to 1440, the other to 1431. That they are, both of them, literary productions of the Abbey of St. Alban's, is a matter beyond doubt; the latter, the work of some² inmate of the Monastery whose name is now unknown, and probably must always remain so; the former, ascribed to the pen of John de Amundesham, or Amersham, a monk of that house. In reference to the last-named compilation, it must suffice for the present to remark, that there is sufficient evidence in the work to shew that it was written by a person who either was or had been an inmate of St. Alban's; but that John de Amundesham was the name of that person, there is perhaps at the present day no very conclusive proof:—this question must, however, of necessity be reserved for further discussion in the Introduction to the next and concluding Volume.

It has been well remarked by Mr. Luard, in his able and instructive Preface (p. lv.) to the Fourth Volume of the *Annales Monastici*, edited by him in the present Series, that—"The thirteenth century was certainly the " time during which the monastick Annalists produced

Nature of the works contained in this and the succeeding volume.

The point at which Monastic Annals end.

¹ See the *Annales Mon. S. Albani*, p. 73 in this Volume, and Note 2, in that page: also, p. 83, where the narrative reverts to an earlier date.

² The hands (though not the style) seem to vary somewhat at times; but this probably is only consequent upon the entries being made at intervals of considerable length.

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“ their best works. . . . Afterwards the
 “ monastick annals almost all come to an end. It is
 “ singular how generally this is the case about the time
 “ of the death of Edward I. Such compilations
 “ would be invaluable for the history of the 14th, and
 “ still more for that of the 15th, century. The few
 “ meagre entries that so many Chronicles contain, written
 “ all in one hand at a date long since the regularly kept
 “ annals of the Monastery have ceased, seem to shew
 “ that there was no one in the monastick body to carry
 “ on what had been for so long kept with such care.”

However it may have been with the beginning and middle of the 14th century, by the close of that period even these meagre and spasmodic entries in the Monastic Annals will almost invariably be found to have come to a close. For the domestic history of this country during the first 20 years of the 15th century, we have hardly any materials¹ beyond the pages of Walsingham's *English History* and his sources; and after Walsingham ends in 1422, while we have still (as in the preceding reign) abundant sources of information as to our wars with France, down to the moment² when, our hold upon Calais excepted, the English were finally expelled from that country; we have for many years, to the time of the Wars of the Roses, at all events, the very scantiest of resources, if we should desire to become even moderately well acquainted with the passing events of the day within the length and breadth of our own land.

Our paucity of materials for the domestic history of this country, in the first half of the 15th century.

Our printed materials for the history of the first ten years of the

The printed materials for our domestic history during the first ten years of the reign of Henry the Sixth, have hitherto been mainly the entries in Fabyan's *Chronicle*, the contents of our *Rolls of Parliament* and the *Fœdera*,

¹ The prose *History* of Thomas de Elmham (published by Hearne in 1727), gives little more than the details of our wars with France. The latter part of Capgrave's *Chronicle*

is little more than a condensation of Walsingham.

² The battle of Castillon, in Guyenne, July 23, 1453.

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and a few fragments, perhaps, gathered by Stowe and our other early English Chroniclers from sources now forgotten. ^{reign of Henry VI.}

It can hardly be considered as singular, however, in spite of this paucity of materials, that the Chronicle now under notice,—the first in the present Volume,—of the first nine years of the reign of Henry the Sixth, should have been so entirely overlooked¹ down to the present day. The work itself is contained in a small unattractive quarto volume (MS. Harl. 3775), where it forms one of more than a dozen closely packed items,² most of them relating to St. Alban's; it is written throughout, on parchment of very inferior quality, in a cramped and minute hand, that is at all times uninviting, and occasionally all but undecipherable to even the well-practised eye; while the Latin in which the writer has clothed his entries is repeatedly found to violate the ordinary rules of grammar and orthography, words also being not unfrequently left out, and sentences left incomplete. In some few instances also, allusions are made to current events, of so faint and dubious a complexion, that it seems all but hopeless to attempt to discover with preciseness what the writer really means.³

The unknown writer of this Chronicle—the briefness of which, of all its shortcomings, is the one most to be regretted—was but a monastic Annalist at best, resident continuously, in all probability, within the walls of his Convent. The days of the Court Chronicler, so ably sketched by Professor Stubbs in his ^{Evidently a Monastic Chronicle, in its origin.} ⁴ Preface to the

¹ Newcome, in his *History of St. Alban's*, has collected a few facts from it, mostly bearing reference to the Abbey, or its august visitors. As to the general history of the day, he takes no notice of it; while its mere monastic details are dismissed in the following language:—“ My author records many trifling events about this time; which,

“ though not interesting at present, “ might be so to the body, and at “ that time.”

² Some of these entries will be found in the Appendix to the present Volume.

³ See, for example, the account of Thomas Fyschebourne and William Alnewyk, in pp. 27, 28.

⁴ Pp. xiv.-xix.

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Chronicle of Benedict of Peterborough, had long since passed, and he was known no more. And yet, from the circumstances alike of the writer's time and locality, the features of the present compilation are hardly less those of a Court Chronicle than of a Monastic one. Situate as St. Alban's was, at the end of the first day's journey from London, on the great North road, restless and ever on the move, whether for business, cabal, or amusement, as the great signally were in those days—days when England was but too bitterly experiencing the woes¹ denounced upon the land whose king is a child,—and popular as Abbot Whethamstede seems to have been alike with the leaders of the two great parties that were struggling for the reins of government, the Court of England ever and anon, during several successive years, was held before the narrator's eyes, and men and women of the highest station and most exalted rank were almost continuously partakers of the magnificent hospitality of the house of which he himself was an inmate. Items of information upon the current events of the day would of course flow in apace; and hence it is, that we find alike recorded in his pages the movements of the young King and his mother, the visits of the elder Queen Dowager, Johanna of Navarre, of the Protector, Humphrey Duke of Gloucester, of Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, and of other personages of noble or knightly degree; convocations and meetings of the higher clergy; victories gained abroad, and defeats or losses sustained; ceremonials and state processions; prosecutions of Lollards, with expressions of exultation at the expiation of their offences at the stake; raids of robbers and outlaws, traversing the country at large; accidents and misadventures; imposts, crimes, conflagrations, floods, and variations of the weather:—all these, in fact, form features to attract our notice, as we turn over the leaves of this curious, though

Its features
those of a
Court
Chronicle,
almost as
much as a
Monastic
one.
Reasons
for this.

The gene-
ral nature
of its con-
tents.

¹ *Eccles.* x. 16.

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apparently uninviting, journal; while at the same time, hardly anything, to all appearance, in which the inmates of the House were interested, either in the way of amplification of its numbers or resources, or of ¹quarrels with its neighbours, whether rich or poor, is overlooked.

From the very humble and unpretending appearance of the compilation, and the slovenly and often careless way in which the entries are made, it has perhaps the semblance rather of being a private journal of events kept by one of the monks for reference or amusement, than of being an Abbey Chronicle, entered up from time to time on behalf, and for the use, of the whole of the community. If, however, it is to be looked upon as an Abbey Chronicle, it is probably ²among the very latest of this class of writings that have come down to us; unless, indeed, we consent to acknowledge the ³Second and Third Continuations of the *History* of the Pseudo-Ingulfus as such; a character, however, which they are hardly competent to maintain, from the doubtfulness of their ⁴origin, and the historical form which their context assumes.

Possibly a private journal kept by one of the monks.

If an Abbey Chronicle, probably among the latest of the class.

To limit our attention for the present to this, the smaller of these works; in the way of elucidating some few of its obscurities and distant allusions, and passing in review some among the more interesting passages of its contents.—

Proposed elucidation of some of its obscurities.

Between the closing page of the *Gesta Abbatum* and

¹ This feature, however, of its history, under the rule of Abbot Whethamstede, will be found much more extensively enlarged upon in the *Annales*.

² The *Register* of Robert Blake-ney (preserved at the College of Arms), containing the so-called "Whethamstede's *Chronicle*," with an account of his second Abbacy, is, of course, of later date.

³ A mutilated compilation, ending A.D. 1469; the Third Continuation ends A.D. 1486.

⁴ In the Third Continuation it is stated that it was written by a member of the Council of King Edward IV., a Doctor of Canon Law. Though perhaps originally a member of the Monastery of Croyland, the probabilities are, that he was not an inmate of it when he wrote.

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John Whethamstede now Abbot of St. Alban's. the commencement of the present Chronicle there is a lapse of about twenty years: Abbot William Heyworth had been promoted to the ¹See of Lichfield and Coventry, and John Whethamstede was now ruling the Abbey in his stead.

He attends at the Council of Pavia, or Sienna, A.D. 1423. Abbot Whethamstede set out from St. Alban's on his mission to the Council of Pavia, (afterwards transferred to Sienna), as one of the representatives of the English nation, on St. Cuthbert's Day (March 20) 1423. His route, his sickness, almost unto death, and his manifold adventures while on his travels, are fully set forth in the *Annales*; nor do we in general find the narrator, whoever he may have been, backward in enlarging upon the mishaps that befell the worthy Abbot more than once.

Mishap, near Pavia, that befell some of his retinue. There is one fact, however, mentioned in the present Chronicle (p. 4), which, from ignorance or inadvertence on part of the writer of the *Annales*, is not there ²noticed; in reference to the perils then, as now, not uncommonly attendant upon travel on Italian soil. On the morrow (August 3), of the Invention of St. Alban the Abbot, finding his retinue too large for his requirements,—the more especially, as the plague was then threatening, which necessitated a removal of the Council to Sienna, — dismissed five of his attendants, with injunctions to return to England forthwith. Hardly, however, had they got beyond the walls of Pavia, when they were attacked by brigands, thrown into duress, and their baggage carried off, ³ letters home from the Abbot included. Under what circumstances they regained their liberty, and with what redress, if any, we are not informed.

¹ Frequently mentioned as the Bishopric of Chester, in the course of the present Chronicle.

² It is merely stated (p. 131) that the Abbot sent four of his servants home, and nothing further; his re-

tinue still amounting to twenty in number: see p. 134.

³ Copies however, of, at least, some of these Letters, are given in pp. 131-4.

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From the time of Henry Beaclerk and good Queen Maude, the Abbey of St. Alban's seems to have been a favourite resort for royalty, alike in its fits of devoutness and its moments of leisure; but people of royal lineage or high connexion probably never flocked to it more continuously, or in greater numbers, than in the first seven years of the reign of the infant King, Henry the Sixth. Abbot Whethamstede evidently had as high a reputation for courtesy and worldly wisdom as for book-learning, and his counsels seem to have been sought with equal eagerness by the two great heads of the antagonistic parties in the politics of the times, the intriguing and ambitious Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, and his rash and impetuous nephew, the Duke of Gloucester, the "Good Duke Humphrey" of after-days. Indeed, the singular attachment of the latter to the Abbey and its inmates can hardly be said to have ended with his life: the same spot which had found him hearty welcome and right royal entertainment on many a festive day, gave him a resting-place after death; and his canopied tomb, still to be seen at the verge of the Saint's Chapel, in the old Abbey Church, is one of its comparatively few relics of higher art in the Middle Ages, which have been allowed by the combined agencies of time, greed, ignorance, and neglect, to survive to the present day.

In page 4 we have the earliest notice of these visits. Accompanied by his adventurous but luckless ¹ wife, the Duchess Jacqueline of Hainault—here styled "Jacoba, Duchess of Holland"—and attended by a train of no less than 300 followers, a mixture of English and ² Teutonic, the Duke passed the Christmas of A.D. 1423 at St. Alban's. Abbot John not having as yet returned from his mission to the Council of Pavia, the honours of

¹ Or quasi-wife, as Pope Martin V. would have it; who refused to annul her previous marriage to her cousin, the Duke of Brabant.

² Probably meaning Dutch, Flemings, and perhaps Germans, combined.

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the house were done by the Prior in his absence, who accordingly received his royal guests with solemn procession on Christmas Eve. Mishap, however, seems to have attended this overwhelming accession, (probably, in many instances, of rough and roistering characters) to the inmates of town and Abbey: the coneyes in Eywode were soon hunted down, and roebucks and hinds were slaughtered and flayed without remorse. The impetuous Duke, however, seems to have taken an early opportunity of giving his people a more than gentle hint as to the unlawfulness of such excesses. One of the offenders, whose ill luck it was to be caught, was set in the stocks; and then, in a spirit savouring perhaps less of high-souled valour than of retributive justice, his indignant master stepped up to him, and literally—¹“broke his head,” the Chronicler tells us, with a ²mattress-beater; at the same time ordering his greyhound, the companion and instrument of his offence, to be hanged. We can very well believe the writer (p. 5) that, by a mode of treatment so effectually carrying conviction as this, was “—set at rest this evil appetite for sporting, on part “ of his servants.”

Deer-stealing by the Duke's servants; one of them punished by the Duke's own hands.

Visit to St. Alban's of Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March.

At the preceding Feast of the Eleven Thousand Virgins (October 21) another personage of royal descent had paid (p. 5) a visit to the Abbey, but intent upon a more serious errand than to be received with wassail and good cheer; Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, great grandson of Lionel Plantagenet, and, strictly speaking, rightful heir to the English throne. The illustrious invalid came to the Monastery in search of health; he slept there but a single night, and took his departure after due offering made to the Blessed Martyr, of a golden noble and a ring set with a sapphire; which latter he ordered, in common with the multitude of gems and jewels which during the lapse of ages had been already

His offering at the Shrine.

¹ *capite fractus.*

| ² *petilione mattras.*

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bestowed upon it, to be set in the outer covering of the Saint's shrine. Indeed, the Martyr would seem to have been in luck just then; for in the succeeding paragraph we find it added (p. 6) that another sapphire ring was also attached to the shrine, which had been picked up in the Refectory by W. Britt, one of the brethren, and for which, it is to be presumed, no owner could be found. In the mention of this visit an ungrammatical passage occurs, that deserves some notice,—“*et aliud (nobile) plicans secum deferens* ;” words obscurely used in reference either to a cure prayed for, or to a cure effected, through the agency of the Saint. It may be here remarked, in explanation of this allusion, that when a sick person hoped to be cured of his malady through the intervention of some particular Saint, it was the custom to bend (*plicare*) one or more coins of silver or gold in honour of such Saint, in juxtaposition with the body of the patient; and it was deemed all the more satisfactory, if the process of bending could be performed over the sick man's body at the Saint's shrine. On recovery, the coin seems to have been sometimes given as an offering to the church or shrine of the favouring Saint, while in some instances it was retained as a ¹ memorial of his cure by the person so favoured. In the present instance it would seem that the suffering nobleman carried the bent coin away with him (*secum deferens*). It availed him but little, however; for Edmund Mortimer died in the following year, his earldom became extinct, and eventually Edward Plantagenet (as Edward the Fourth), the grandson of his sister Anne, wife of Richard Plantagenet, Earl of Cambridge, (beheaded in 1415), became his representative as the rightful heir to the English crown.

Another accession to the Shrine.

Custom of bending coins over the sick.

Death of Edmund Mortimer.

¹ As to the connexion of these bent coins of the Middle Ages with what is known as “lucky money” at the present day, see *Notes and Queries*, 4th S. III., p. 370.

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Wooden
cross
erected
near Mar-
ford
Bridge.

It was in the third year of Henry the Sixth, either A.D. 1424 or 1425, that one William (p. 6), a tenant of the Abbot, living at ¹ Marford, in the parish of Sandridge, near St. Alban's, being afflicted with blindness, in a spirit of devoutness caused a wooden cross to be erected on the right hand side of the high road leading to Codicote, over Marford Bridge; a statue of the Virgin Mary, in alabaster, being also placed near it. Such memorials of the piety of former ages are still plentifully in existence in Roman Catholic countries, but with us probably they have nearly all passed away.²

Leave
given to
cut turf
and erect
archery-
butts, on
certain
conditions.

On Tuesday in Whitsun week, A.D. 1426 (p. 6), at the request of one Thomas Heyne, Abbot Whethamstede granted permission to the people dwelling in the street, or lane, of Halywell, at St. Alban's, to cut turf in that part of the heath (*brueva*) of Barnet Wood which was then known as the "field of Monkdych," and ³ belonged to the Abbey Almoner's department. The plea on the part of the townsmen was, that they might have the opportunity of erecting two *besselles*, or archery-butts, on the ground so cleared. On referring to the Appendix, however (p. 428), a passage will be found, in which it is suggested that this was done with the view of encroachment only, and that it was in a ⁴ captious spirit that all this was devised and worked out; it evidently being, according to the anonymous writer there, (who expresses himself in language that only just misses being utterly unintelligible), the intention of the townspeople at once to encroach upon the Abbey property and curtail the

¹ The "Stream of Marford" is mentioned in the *Gesta Abbatum*, Vol. I., p. 134.

² On Radcote Bridge, in Oxfordshire, the socket of the ancient cross which stood there, still exists. It may possibly have been erected in remembrance of the victory gained there in 1387 by the English Barons

over De Vere, Earl of Oxford, the favourite of Richard II. The statue seated on Crowland Bridge is supposed to be an erection of earlier date. It is intended, not improbably, for Æthelbald, King of Mercia.

³ See the Appendix (C.) to this Volume, p. 428.

⁴ *sensu cavillatorio*.

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boundaries of their neighbours at Sandridge. However this may have been, the Abbot put them strictly upon terms on this occasion, by granting the required permission, but only on condition that in future they should refrain from cutting turf or erecting butts on ¹Barnet Heath, without the express permission of the owner of the soil.

We have some curious particulars in page 6 of this Chronicle, in reference to the untimely fate of Sir John Mortimer; a man evidently of some mark in his day, and who not improbably was regarded with suspicion and jealousy by the House of Lancaster from ²his connexion with the Earl of March, the rightful heir to the English crown:—"On the morrow of St. Matthias the Apostle (February 24), Sir John Mortemore, Knight, " was hanged, who had once craftily made his escape " on being brought out of the Tower for the sake of " exercise, and had a second time traitorously escaped : " being taken, however, in Tower Lane, and horribly " mutilated, on the following Saturday he was drawn " and ³beheaded, and his body divided into four parts ; " and in this way did he breathe his last. His corpse " lies buried in the Hospital of ⁴St. John in London, " and his heart at the ⁵Friars Minors." His fate would be all the more likely to be recorded in a St. Alban's Chronicle, from the fact that he had been a near neighbour of the Abbey, residing at ⁶Bishop's Hatfield, in the same county. He would seem, however, to have

Circumstances attending the execution of Sir John Mortimer.

¹ Also known as "Bernard's Heath." It was on this heath that the second Battle of St. Alban's was fought, A.D. 1461, in which the Lancastrians were victorious.

² Grafton, in his *Chronicle*, styling him "Sir Roger Mortimer," says that he was cousin to the Earl of March. Stowe (*Annals*) is probably the only other writer who mentions his second attempt to es-

cape. He says that Mortimer—"was taken on Tower Wharf, sore "beaten and wounded."

³ After being hanged, as above stated.

⁴ St. John of Jerusalem, Clerkenwell.

⁵ Near Newgate.

⁶ He is not noticed in Clutterbuck's *History of Herts.*

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been a man of a restless and turbulent disposition ; for in the reign of the late King, Henry the Fifth, he had been committed to the Tower on suspicion of treason. In the first year of the succeeding reign he made his escape ; the first escape, no doubt, that we find mentioned in the preceding extract. On being again apprehended, as we learn from the *State Trials*, he was indicted and convicted under the Statute of Escapes, and, after sentence, executed at Tyburn. He was accused also of various other offences, though not tried upon those charges. It was alleged by one King, who bore witness against him, a servant of Sir Robert Scot, Keeper of the Tower, that he had agreed to give him forty pounds for assisting him to escape, with the promise of a future earldom ; and that he had further told King that, after his escape, he would go to the Earl of March in Wales, raise forty thousand men there, re-enter England, and cut off the head, as well of the Duke of Gloucester, the then Protector, as of the Bishop of Winchester. Also, that he had further alleged that the Earl of March was the rightful heir to the crown, and that after him the next heir was himself : and that in case the Earl should recover his right, he himself would assume the regal power as his due. Lastly, that if the Earl should refuse to accept his services, he would fly to France, and aid the French King against England. A slight outline of the particulars of Mortimer's indictment before a London Jury, at Guildhall, is to be found in the printed *Rolls of Parliament*, Vol. IV., p. 202 ; but without any reference (beyond mention of a " Schedule " annexed") to the charges above quoted.

Execution of an impostor, pretending that he is an ambassador from the Emperor.

In page 7 we meet with a singular story of a spurious ambassador, who had the impudence to present himself at the English Court. In his double capacity of impostor and imperial envoy, he could not dispense with a title, of course ; and accordingly, the " Baron de Blakamore " he styled himself ; under which name were

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intended, no doubt, to be implied the length and breadth of the broad acres which formed his ancestral domain:—"About the Feast of St. Barnabas (June 11) there came to London a knave, who pretended that he was sent as ambassador from the Emperor to our Lord the King, Henry the Sixth, then a child; and that he was the Baron de ¹ Blakamore, and the principal physician in all the kingdom. But his craft and roguery becoming known, he was seized and beheaded, and ²hanged and quartered: after which, his head was placed upon stakes on the Tower of London, and the four quarters of his body were hung up at so many of the London Gates, so as to strike terror into such impostors."

The Queen Dowager, Johanna of Navarre, widow of the late King, Henry the Fourth, was at this time the tenant of the royal palace at King's Langley, which had been built by Edward the Third. Like most of the other royal residents at that place, she no doubt was in general on good terms with her neighbours at St. Alban's; though for a moment there would seem to have been a risk of such good neighbourship being interrupted. The passage (p. 8) bearing reference to this circumstance is perhaps not very clearly expressed, but it seems to imply that one William Eyle, a tenant of ³Langley, was caught fishing in the pond of Bedefunt, water in which the Queen had a "several" right of fishery, as occupant of the royal demesne. His nets were seized by John Hatfeld, acting ⁴apparently in the Queen's behalf. Johanna shewed some signs of indignation upon this untoward occurrence; the Abbot, however, skilful courtier as he always proved himself, promptly waited upon her Majesty, and,—whether by

Queen
Johanna
a resident
at King's
Langley.

Offence ac-
cidentally
given to
her; but
satisfaction
made for it.

¹ Newcome, in his *History of St. Alban's*, with his usual tendency to blundering, reads this word as "Clacmare," (p. 310).

² So in the original; the hanging after the beheading.

³ Probably, Abbot's Langley is meant.

⁴ There was also, at this time, a John Hatfeld, high in office in the Abbey of St. Alban's: see p. 182 *post*.

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the aid of money, or only with good words, we are ¹ not informed,—made full and ample satisfaction for the trespass.

Visit of
Jacqueline
of Hai-
nault, and
of the Duke
of Glou-
cester, to
Queen
Johanna, at
Langley.

On the Day of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (September 14),—"just after Vespers sung in the choir" (p. 8), probably about five in the afternoon, Jacqueline of Hainault, with an escort of four-and-twenty horse, passed through the court-yard of the Abbey on her way to pay a visit—a last visit, no doubt,—to Queen Johanna at Langley: and two days after, on the morrow (September 16) of the Day of St. Nicomedes, the Duke of Gloucester, attended by Sir John Robessart and ten other horsemen, passed through the court-yard on the same route. It was in the year 1425 that Gloucester ceased to appear in arms against Jacqueline's arch-enemy, Philip Duke of Burgundy, and, contenting himself with sending a few troops to her relief, abandoned her to struggle single-handed against him, as best she might. The passage, therefore, though apparently intended to come under the year 1426, must belong to an ² earlier date.

The Duke
of Gloucester
visits
St. Alban's,
on his re-
turn from
the Parlia-
ment at
Leicester.

On the morrow (March 22) of St. Benedict, A.D. 1426 (p. 8), the Duke of Gloucester again passed through St. Alban's, on his way from the Parliament, which had been sitting at Leicester, and had just been adjourned to the 29th of the following month. The inmates sallied forth to escort him, in solemn procession, as usual, on his way to Barnet. But while they were thus intent on the combined duties of religion and hospitality, the

¹ *finem fecerunt*, p. 8.

² It seems doubtful if it can even apply to 1425: for, according to general authority, Jacqueline was left by Humphrey at Mons, in the earlier part of 1425, from which place she never returned to England, but soon afterwards fell into the hands of the Duke of Burgundy. See Mr. J. Stevenson's Preface

to *Letters and Papers, Reign of Henry IV.*, Vol. I. p. lv. If, on the other hand, 1425 is the correct year, Jacqueline must have paid a last visit to England at a later date than has hitherto been known; probably to make a last appeal for assistance. *L'Art de vérifier les Dates* is apparently wrong in its chronology as to this part of Jacqueline's life.