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978-1-108-04686-2 - *Annales Monasterii S. Albani A.D. 1421–1440: A Johanne Amundesham, Monacho, Ut Videtur, Conscripti: Volume 2*

Edited by Henry Thomas Riley

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### Rolls Series

Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptorum, 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, 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 Henry VI. Volume 2 includes details of building projects, more of Abbot Whethamstede's verse, lists of the abbot's huge allowances of food and wine, and a detailed inventory of the monastery church's treasures (gold and silver crosses and reliquaries, candlesticks, thuribles, chalices, croziers, and rich vestments). The Latin text is accompanied by an English introduction and side-notes, a glossary of legal and ecclesiastical terms, and an index.

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

*A Johanne Amundesham,  
monacho, ut videtur, conscripti*

VOLUME 2

EDITED BY HENRY THOMAS RILEY



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RERUM BRITANNICARUM MEDII ÆVI  
SCRIPTORES,

OR

CHRONICLES AND MEMORIALS OF GREAT BRITAIN  
AND IRELAND

DURING

THE MIDDLE AGES.

25844.

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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.

a 2

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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.

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EDITED

BY

HENRY THOMAS RILEY, M.A. CAMBR. & OXF.,

AND OF THE INNER TEMPLE, BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

VOL. II.

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND VOLUME.

OF John <sup>1</sup> Amundesham, the presumed writer of the The little we know of John Amundesham derived from Bale. *Annals* of the twenty years of John Whethamstede's first Abbacy at St. Alban's, now for the first time printed, next to nothing seems to be known. For the very little in reference to him that has survived to us, with one trifling exception, we are, to all appearance, indebted to Bale. According to <sup>2</sup> that writer, Amundesham was Prior of Gloucester Hall, at Oxford. President of the Benedictine monks studying at Gloucester Hall, or College, in Oxford, was himself an accomplished scholar, and was so attached to Abbot Whethamstede, that, after his death,—“with accurate diligence he wrote “his Life, to put a curb upon his detractors.” Amundesham, he further says, was the writer of the *Acta* of His alleged writings. John Whethamstede, which we take to be the present work,—*A Shield for the same John; Verses of divers kinds; Epistles to divers persons.* The account of Amun-

<sup>1</sup> Agmondesham, Amersham, or Homersham, derived from Amersham, in Bucks., probably the place of his birth.

<sup>2</sup> John Bale, *Illustr. Maj. Brit. Scriptores*, p. 592, ed. Basle. Newcome, in his *History of the Church of St. Alban* (p. 308), thus expands this account:—“Gloucester College, though consisting of youths from divers Abbeys, was ruled by one head over the whole, called the Prior. In this headship was John Bostock, when chosen to be Abbot; and his suc-

cessor in the Priorate was John Amersham, his faithful friend and follower; for a few years after, he quitted the office of Prior, and went to live as a monk in this Abbey; and composed a history of the Life and principal events of Abbot John.” Newcome, it may be here remarked, professes to quote occasionally from Amundesham, but his excerpts in general are a mass of confusion and error, and, as is the case with most of his matter, no reliance whatever can be placed on them.

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Bale's account amplified, in words only, by Pits. desham given by <sup>1</sup>Pits is evidently an amplification of Bale's matter only in words; with the additional remark, that his writings were said to have been preserved in the Abbey of <sup>2</sup>Ramsey, until the time of the <sup>3</sup>Reformation.

Mistake probably made, as to Amundesham's work on Whethamstede, by Bale. In stating that Amundesham wrote a Life of Whethamstede after the Abbot's death, Bale founded his assertion probably either upon his own cursory examination of the work, or misinformation supplied him by others. The book is not a Life of Whethamstede, but only an account of his first Abbacy, from his election in A.D. 1420 to his resignation in 1440, he having been afterwards re-elected Abbot in 1452, and surviving until January 1464; added to which, the volume bears every appearance of having been written before the commencement of the second Abbacy.

No internal proof in these *Annales* who the writer was. As to internal proof in these *Acta*, or *Annales*, themselves, who their writer was, there is none. The commencing words of Amundesham's work, in its original state, "*Ne lux regiminis*," are preserved by Bale and Pits, but they are of no use now in helping us to identify these pages with that work, seeing that the manuscript is <sup>4</sup>mutilated in the earlier part, at least the first year of the Abbacy being lost. Two centuries ago, there does not seem, however, to have been any doubt entertained upon the matter; as, in a hand of that period, that of Sir Robert Cotton, to all appearance, a superscription is placed at the head of the (now) commencing folio, <sup>5</sup>33 of the volume, to this effect,—*Acta Johannis Sexti Abbatis per Johannem Amundishamum, monachum Sancti Albani*,—*vid. Pitzeum, fol. 646*. On what authority, if any, beyond that of Pits, this statement

Their commencing portion now wanting.

Identified by Sir R. Cotton with Amundesham's work.

<sup>1</sup> *De Illustr. Angliæ Script.*, p. 645.

<sup>2</sup> In Huntingdonshire.

<sup>3</sup> "*Apostasia Angliæ*," as the Romanist, Pits, calls it.

<sup>4</sup> See Vol. I. p. 73, Note 1.

<sup>5</sup> The first 32 leaves of MS. Cotton. Claudius D. I. are filled with copies of Epistles (about 70 in number) of Abbot Whethamstede to various communities and persons.

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was made, it is probably now impossible to say. To sum up,—though not a matter of absolute certainty, and no means apparently now existing by which certainty can be attained, the very strong probabilities are, that in these Annals we have the *Acta* of Amundesham, mentioned by Bale.

These Annals almost undoubtedly the *Acta* of Amundesham.

The general tone of the work throughout sufficiently indicates that the writer was a member of the house whose Annals he is relating; in addition to which, in at least<sup>1</sup> one instance, though affording no indication of his name or rank, he speaks of himself as such. There are grounds, however, afforded by the compilation for supposing that he did not enter upon his residence there until towards the close of the Abbacy, the acts of which he recounts. From the various<sup>2</sup> incongruities as to date, which not unfrequently occur, we may infer with some confidence that the narrative was written by one who had taken no part in the earlier events which he relates; and was compiled from notes and memoranda, some of them contemporary probably with the events described, but loosely jotted down in the first instance, others again written from memory long after their occurrence. In the same way, the ex-Abbot not improbably supplied the compiler with the sets of Latin verses, with which the moral of each year's transactions is usually pointed, at its close; but whether they were really written by him, as indicated in the text, on the termination of each year respectively, and then recited to the members of the house, or, on the other hand, composed by him after his retirement, solely for the purpose of insertion in these Annals (which were probably written by his order, if not under his inspection,) it seems impossible to say. As to the contents of the Annals themselves, in the aspect

Internal proof that the writer was a member of the Abbey of St. Alban's, but only at a late date in the time treated of.

How supplied, in all probability, with his information.

Acquaintance with

<sup>1</sup> “*trophæi spolio, quod . . . . dependet in hoc monasterio nostro,*” Vol. I. p. 363.

<sup>2</sup> See the mistake made (Vol. I.

p. 275) as to the Council of Basle, for example, which is put down under A.D. 1430. It began in July 1431.

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the facts  
and lan-  
guage of  
Scripture,  
shown by  
the writer.

of throwing any light upon the question of their authorship, the writer, though it must be confessed he has made a singular use of his knowledge, shews an intimate acquaintance with the facts and language of Scripture, a feature which we might fairly expect to characterize the qualifications of one who had theretofore held the office of Prior of the Benedictine scholars at Oxford.

Description  
of the MS.  
containing  
the *An-  
nales*.

The Cottonian MS. Claudius D. I. is a small folio, now containing 170 leaves of vellum. The *Annals* commence abruptly on the obverse of folio 33, and end at folio 168, the last two leaves being occupied with matter of a later date. The <sup>1</sup>writing and illuminations are in the same style throughout, though, on close examination, the hands perhaps of three or four different writers might be traced. The portion of the volume containing the *Annales*, is not only imperfect at the beginning, as already stated, but in two other places also; after folio 35, as now paginated (Vol. I. p. 84), a leaf or leaves are missing; and the same is the case after folio 135 (Vol. II. p. 112). In neither of these two cases, however, has this deficiency been noticed in the pagination (of the 17th century,) or in any way indicated. In all other respects the volume is in good condition, and bears marks of having been preserved with care.

In the  
former  
Chronicle,  
Abbot  
Whetham-  
stede seen  
mixing  
with the  
outer  
world, the  
noble and  
the great.

In the preliminary Chronicle, printed in the preceding Volume, we have had various glimpses, though but slight and transient ones, of Abbot Whethamstede—as seen under what may perhaps be deemed his more favourable aspects—entertaining a succession of guests and visitors within the Abbey walls; his youthful Sovereign, the dowager Queens, the royal Dukes, and the Cardinal prelate of Winchester, in the number; taking his place in Parliament or General Chapter of his Order; and mixing

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<sup>1</sup> For a sample, see the facsimile at the beginning of this Volume.

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generally with the outer and fashionable world, the noble and the great.

In these Annals of Amundesham, on the other hand, we have him almost continuously before our eyes, but in another light:—for a season, as a traveller in foreign climes, among strangers, and hurrying from place to place; and then again, absorbed in the rule of his house and its Cells, in the midst of his obedientiaries and subject monks, regulating his tenants, and dealing with such of his neighbours as might chance to owe rent or other service to the Abbey, or to own domains abutting on the Abbey lands; in poetic mood at times, (according to his own ideas as to the laws and requirements of poetical composition), and ever ready to take up his pen to write a florid and circumlocutory epistle, if he could find pretext for writing one, whether on his own account, or on behalf of those who might think more highly of his abilities in that line than of their own; but, in general, somewhat of a counterpart of his less learned but more magnificent predecessor, <sup>1</sup>Abbot Thomas de la Mare, energetic, querulous, scheming, and litigious; accumulating wealth, and adding to the buildings and broad acres of his house, whether through the agency of money paid, or the promise of corrodies in this life and Obits and Anniversaries after death; or else engaged in suits at law, which, if a sort of supplementary nutriment to himself, must have brought little less than ruin upon some of the unfortunate objects of his pertinacious attack. Indeed, it is perhaps justifiable to say, favourably as the compiler evidently thinks he is writing of him throughout, that, so far as our judgment can receive any assistance from the context of these Annals, John Whethamstede, during the twenty years of his <sup>2</sup>first rule, was hardly securing for himself, in his capacity of Abbot, that

In these Annals, seen first as a traveller, and then as concerned in the duties of Abbatial life.

The account of him characterized by points not altogether favourable.

A certain want of high prin-

<sup>1</sup> See the *Gesta Abbatum*, Vol. III., Introd. pp. ix. x.

<sup>2</sup> After resigning, in 1440, he was re-elected to the Abbacy in 1452.

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ciple and amiable-ness of character.

Comparatively slight foundation of his alleged character for extensive popularity with the great.

This to be traced to the little that is said of him by Leland, amplified by other writers, Bale and Pits.

character for <sup>1</sup>high principle and amiableness of disposition, which, from the terms in which he has hitherto been spoken of by such of our writers as have had occasion to mention him, we should have been led to expect.

It seems, however, worthy of remark—entirely apart from the question of the extent of Whethamstede's acquirements as a scholar—on how comparatively slight a foundation the character that has been given him for extensive popularity with the great was based. The Cottonian MS., Nero D. VII., a St. Alban's compilation of the latter half of the 15th century, speaks of him, at considerable length, in terms of high praise. <sup>2</sup>Leland says little about him beyond the fact that, from his extraordinary love of learning, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, often visited St. Alban's, and used Whethamstede's services as a librarian (*tanquam bibliothecario*), or adviser on books. The account given of him by <sup>3</sup>Bale is evidently nothing but an expansion of the words of Leland; while <sup>4</sup>Pits again has done little beyond greatly expanding the already amplified account given by Bale. "Whethamstede," he says (tr.),—"was a man very celebrated in his time for his manifold learning, and his singular skill in languages. For he was a person of marvellous industry, the sharpest intellect, the most solid judgment, and incredible prudence in matters of business. By reason of which remarkable

<sup>1</sup> Pits (*De Illustr. Angliæ Script.*) though giving Abbot Whethamstede a character for extensive learning and popularity with the great, adds that—"He is said to have taken so much delight in his studies, and to have felt such an intense interest in reading and writing books, as almost to neglect the internal government and affairs of his monastery, and thereby at last to have aroused the grievous indig-

nation of his monks against him, and been summoned by them into a court of law." From the present work it seems very possible that he may not have been universally popular; but the context equally shews that it was for any reason rather than for neglect of the interests of his house.

<sup>2</sup> *De Script. Britannicis.*

<sup>3</sup> Ed. Basle, p. 592.

<sup>4</sup> *De Illustr. Angliæ Script.*

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“ gifts of mind, it can hardly be said in what esteem he was held among princes and nobles. Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, a singular favourer of literature and literary men, held him in high esteem, and not unfrequently visited him, and held familiar conversation with him on various matters, and by his counsel and exhortation did many things worthy of so great a prince.”

It is these statements which have been passed from pen to pen, and have been echoed by various <sup>1</sup> writers, without any thoughtful examination of the basis upon which they were founded. To what extent Whethamstede, (who seems to have read more extensively than judiciously), merited the amount of credit for great learning which he no doubt enjoyed, has yet to be ascertained,—a result which can only be arrived at with exactness by a more thorough examination than has hitherto been made of such of his works (of an encyclopædical character) as still <sup>2</sup> survive in manuscript. The <sup>3</sup> History of his second Abbacy (1452 to 1464), which <sup>4</sup> Hearne has somewhat arbitrarily published under his name, it is perhaps hardly necessary to remark, is a collection of excerpts from a compilation by another hand, and written after his death.

The exact extent of Whethamstede's learning yet to be ascertained.

The History of his second Abbacy, published by Hearne.

The commencing portion of these Annals, as already mentioned, is no longer in existence, and we consequently are at a loss to know precisely under what circumstances <sup>5</sup> John Bostock—more generally known as

The circumstances unknown, under which Whetham-

<sup>1</sup> See Warton, *Hist. of English Poetry*, Vol. II., for example.

<sup>2</sup> A short notice of the three Parts of his *Granarium*, preserved in the British Museum, will be found at the end of this Introduction.

<sup>3</sup> Contained in the Register of St. Alban's, known as “*Blakeney's Register*,” and in the possession of the College of Arms.

<sup>4</sup> *Chronica Johannis Whethamstede*, Oxford, 1732, published with Otterbourne.

<sup>5</sup> All the particulars that have come down to us in reference to Abbot Whethamstede's descent and parentage, will be found carefully collected in Dugdale's *Monasticon* (ed. Ellis).



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stede was elected Abbot of St. Alban's. Had been Prior of the Benedictine scholars at Oxford.

“John Whethamstede,” from the place of his birth—was elected to succeed William Heyworth, as Abbot of St. Alban's, on his appointment to the Bishopric of Lichfield. Before attaining that dignity, he had been head of the Benedictine students at Oxford, as Prior of Gloucester <sup>1</sup> College there, a house originally founded by the Abbey of St. Peter at Gloucester, but to which at a later period the inmates of the Benedictine Monasteries in general, and those of St. Alban's more particularly, resorted. It was while still holding this office that he was elected to the Abbacy of St. Alban's; at a comparatively early age, probably, as he had not yet become an inmate of that place, in <sup>2</sup> November, 1401, the date of the election of his predecessor, William Heyworth.

Many passages of these Annals written in imitation of the figurative language of Scripture.

Of John Amundesham, as already stated, his position, or his acquirements, hardly anything is known; but it is certainly not one of the least curious features of these Annals of Whethamstede's first rule as Abbot, that in those portions, in the earlier part more particularly, where the context is not occupied by prolix details of legal matters, much of it is written, when setting forth the story of the Abbot's grievances, trials, or perplexities,

<sup>1</sup> Or Hall. On the site of the Worcester College of the present day.

<sup>2</sup> See the list of monks at St. Alban's, in the years 1396 and 1401, in the *Gesta Abbatum*, Vol. III. pp. 425 and 480. The John Whethamstede there named as Prior of Tynemouth, was uncle to Abbot Whethamstede, on the mother's side; see Vol. I. of this work, pp. 215, 220. The Note in Vol. III. of the *Gesta Abbatum*, p. 425, must therefore be corrected, so far as the name of John Whethamstede is concerned. This mistake, of confounding the name of Abbot

Whethamstede with that of his uncle, has also been committed in the text of the *Monasticon* (Ed. Ellis, Vol. II. p. 199), where he is said to have been ordained priest by Bishop Braybrooke at St. Paul's, London, in 1382; his uncle, afterwards Prior of Tynemouth, being the person meant. Hearne, in his Preface to Otterbourne, remarks that this could not well be a man who lived till 1464; but he appears to share in the erroneous notion that it was the Abbot (and not his uncle) who was Prior of Tynemouth in 1396.



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in figurative language of a very peculiar character, being in fact a studied imitation of the words of Holy Writ. That the writer was a diligent student of the Scriptures there can be no doubt, and that the adoption of their language was resorted to in a spirit, not of levity, but of devoutness, we have as little right to doubt; in many instances, however, as will again come under observation in the sequel, these narratives are so utterly wrested from the simple form which would have best befitted their recital, in order to make them tally with the facts and language of some part of Scripture story, to which, in the writer's mind, they bore a fancied resemblance, that they absolutely degenerate into what few persons would hardly hesitate to call "parody," and, in however serious a spirit they may be read, must of necessity provoke a sense of absurdity by their very grotesqueness.

The result being, that this language, as so used, can hardly be called any other than parody.

From the Second Volume of the *Gesta Abbatum* (p. 416) we learn that in 1383 several of the younger brethren of the Cells belonging to the Abbey of St. Alban's, whether inspired by martial ardour or in a mere spirit of restlessness and adventure, seized the proffered opportunity of abandoning their respective houses to join Henry le Spenser, Bishop of Norwich, surnamed "the Warlike," on his wild Crusade, undertaken against the followers of the Anti-Pope, the Clementists, in Flanders. What however with the intense summer heat, the fatigues of the march, and the various diseases entailed by having nothing but putrid water to drink, they soon found it the wiser alternative to retrace their steps, and return to their former homes. From the writer of the *Gesta* we further learn, that those who had the comparative good fortune to survive <sup>1</sup> never after regained their former health: that of William Shepeye, however, whom we are about to trace at a later date by about forty years, must, we may presume, have formed an exceptional case. Him-

Crusade of Henry le Spenser, Bishop of Norwich, against the Clementists in Flanders.

W. Shepeye, of Hatfield, one of those who accompanied him.

<sup>1</sup> "*nunquam postea potuerunt gaudere pristina sanitate,*" Vol. II. p. 416.

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On his return, Shepeye enters St. Alban's. self a member of the Cell at Hatfield, he accompanied his Prior, William Eversdon by name, to the new Crusade. The Prior died in Flanders, the Cell, for a time probably, was closed; for Shepeye, on his return, appears to have been admitted as an inmate at St. Alban's.

Sale of appointments as Pope's Chaplain. It was just about this time, also, as we learn from the same work, that Pope Urban the Sixth suddenly found himself in want of funds for continuing the war against the supporters of his rival, who had the powerful aid of the King of France. The honorary office of "Pope's Chaplain" to members of the Regular Orders was something more than a sinecure; for it secured to the lucky recipient, not only exemption from monastic rule, but, at least in some instances, liberty, if he could only meet with the offer, to accept a rich rectory as well.

Shepeye purchases the appointment, as Pope's Chaplain, from Walter Disse. Accordingly, Walter Disse, a Carmelite monk, and confessor to the Duke of Lancaster, was despatched to England with a commission by Bull to raise money for the Pontiff, and, as one of the means of doing so, to sell fifty of these honorary Chaplaincies to such as could and would afford to buy them. Bidders among the clergy, both regular and secular, were not wanting, and, among them, several monks of St. Alban's, who, penniless themselves, "<sup>2</sup>privily begged money wherever they could." Second in the number of these would-be Pope's Chaplains, recruited within the Abbey walls, <sup>3</sup>appears the restless William Shepeye, "young," the Chronicler says, "and light of head." These youths, it appears from the context, Abbot Thomas de la Mare, brooking their presence no longer, with his usual high hand, ordered out of the Abbey forthwith.

Leaves the Abbey.

At the end of near 40 years, Shepeye returns to St. Alban's. Near forty years have passed away; Abbot Thomas has long since been gathered to his fathers, Abbot John Moote also; William Heyworth, after a rule of near twenty years, has resigned the Abbacy for a Bishop's

<sup>1</sup> *The Gesta Abbatum.*

<sup>2</sup> *Gesta Abbatum*, Vol. II. p. 417.

<sup>3</sup> *Gesta Abbatum*, Vol. II. p. 418.

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See, and John Whethamstede now occupies his place. William Shepeye, like the repentant Prodigal, knocks at the Abbey gates. To continue the story, translated from the writer's own words (I. p. 86):—

“ Humbly and perseveringly knocking at the gates,  
 “ with a flood of tears, he cried aloud to the father of the  
 “ Monastery, and said,—‘ Father, I have sinned against  
 “ ‘ heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to  
 “ ‘ be called thy son ; wherefore, I beseech thee, deign  
 “ ‘ in mercy to receive me, now returning from the  
 “ ‘ world, and make me at least as one of thy hired  
 “ ‘ servants.’ But the father, moved with compassion,  
 “ fell on his neck, and, giving him the kiss of peace, or-  
 “ dered to be brought forth the robe of the monastic  
 “ habit, and the ring ; the frock, that is, and the hood.  
 “ And having the fatted calf of greeting killed, he caused  
 “ a banquet of the Chapter to be held ; where sitting in  
 “ the midst of the brethren, he thus cheered them, and  
 “ said :—‘ You must now eat, my sons, and be merry ;  
 “ ‘ for your brother, who was dead, is now alive again,  
 “ ‘ he who, averted from us, went his way, hath now  
 “ ‘ returned converted and contrite, and standeth at the  
 “ ‘ door, urgently and humbly seeking admittance. Will  
 “ ‘ ye therefore that he enter ?’ And although, there-  
 “ upon, the sons were a little while angry, and said at  
 “ first,—‘ Lo, father ! these many years have we served  
 “ ‘ thee, neither have we transgressed at any time thy  
 “ ‘ commandments ; but as for this offender, who hath  
 “ ‘ spent all his substance in no manner befitting a  
 “ ‘ monk, he is no longer worthy to be called our bro-  
 “ ‘ ther,’ still, after that, and forthwith, appeased by the  
 “ kindly words of their father, they changed their indig-  
 “ nation into mercy, and, throwing open the gates,  
 “ granted entrance to the brother who begged it.”

To abbreviate the sequel ;—formal application, begin- He is re-  
 ning—“ In the name of God, Amen,” is made (I. p. 87), admitted to  
 by the repentant brother ; he then delivers his Bulls of which he

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abandoned.

Exemption to the Abbot, who, after briefly addressing him, readmits him to the status which he had abandoned nearly forty years before. This returning Prodigal must have been probably a man from sixty to seventy years of age; he died in about the third year after his re-admission, while Abbot Whethamstede was in Italy; in the full odour of sanctity, it is to be presumed, as we are told<sup>1</sup> elsewhere, that he was buried in the Abbey Church beneath a marble stone, with an epitaph thereon, “as his devoutness demanded.”

His death,  
during the  
Abbot's ab-  
sence in  
Italy.Fresh com-  
motion,  
from the  
fact of a  
brother  
migrating  
to Christ  
Church,  
Canter-  
bury.

Hardly has the commotion subsided, caused by Shepeye's unlooked-for return, and the community is now thrown into renewed excitement by another case of desertion, comparatively innocent in itself, according to our thinking, but an offence of deepest dye in Abbot Whethamstede's eyes: a youthful member of the house (I. p. 89), “—waxing fat with the fatness of music, no less anomalously than apostately, migrated to Christ Church at “Canterbury.” The narrative is a lengthy one, but the earlier portion of it, the Abbot's singular Epistle (I. pp. 91–97) being omitted, is to the following effect:—

The story  
of his apos-  
tasy, as  
told in the  
Annals.

“Out of the clay of the earth and out of the dust of poverty was this man created, and placed in a Paradise of contemplation, that there he might work according to rules, and keep guard over it in monastic form; it being granted to him freely to enjoy all claustral delights, and indifferently to eat of every tree of religion, provided only that he should keep one commandment, that is, faithfully abstain from the tree of knowledge, which tendeth to evil. Now a certain one, who was a crafty serpent, seeing this, who had theretofore himself departed from this cloistered heaven (*claustrali cælo*), and who was now enjoying a life at Christ Church more musical than monk-like, envied the happy state of this man, and, seeking the Paradise

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. I. p. 439, the Account of the Monuments in the Abbey.

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“ from which he had taken his departure, transformed  
 “ himself into an angel of light, and offered this flexible  
 “ brother a threefold (*triplarium*) apple, for him to  
 “ taste ; an apple, that is, of sweet<sup>1</sup> refectation, as touch-  
 “ ing the stomach, an apple also of pecuniary profit, as  
 “ touching the chamber, an apple too of free conversation,  
 “ as touching recreation ; and further made promise to  
 “ him of a knowledge of the art of music, which would  
 “ make him equal with the gods therein, if he would but  
 “ taste thereof.

“ The brother, acting the <sup>2</sup> woman’s part, seeing how  
 “ honeyed was this apple to the taste, how golden to the  
 “ sight, how honeyed, how golden, and how silvery, to  
 “ the smell, gave heed unto the serpent’s hissing, and,  
 “ with the woman’s impulse, seized the apple, bit it full  
 “ in the mouth, and yielded unto the tempting snake  
 “ his full consent to migrate. Consent therefore being  
 “ given, and the sin of transgression<sup>3</sup> in the matter of  
 “ a covering being committed, it was devised and con-  
 “ trived on either side, with all possible clandestine  
 “ craftiness, how that the fallen brother, throwing off  
 “ the hood of immortality, might, by the act of migra-  
 “ tion, put on the coat of mortality, and, throwing aside  
 “ the habit of original justice, be able to proceed unto  
 “ his fallen state, and leave his primæval grade of inno-  
 “ cence. Wherefore, so arduously was this dubious mat-  
 “ ter plied, that at last the Archbishop<sup>4</sup> came to be  
 “ made a mediator therein, and proffered his prayers

<sup>1</sup> The meaning of this is, that the food was of a superior character at Christ Church ; that the brethren there could let a portion of their chambers at a rent ; and that they could enjoy intercourse with the outer world without restraint.

<sup>2</sup> In allusion to Eve, *Genesis* iii. 6.

<sup>3</sup> “*in habitu*,” *Genesis* iii. 7 ; a play upon the word is probably intended in reference to the change of the Conventual habit.

<sup>4</sup> Henry Chicheley. He does not seem to have ever been on terms of cordiality with Abbot Whethamstede.

“ for leave to be given to the brother, and even more  
 “ urgently entreated. The pastor of this Paradise, per-  
 “ ceiving this, and well knowing beforehand that in the  
 “ Rule<sup>1</sup> it is written,—‘ If one who is unfaithful wish to  
 “ ‘ depart, let him depart, lest he contaminate the whole  
 “ ‘ flock,’ made for this brother the coat<sup>2</sup> of skin for his  
 “ migration, and, sending him forth from Paradise, gave  
 “ him leave in form as follows, to till the ground of the  
 “ church at Canterbury, and inhabit it:—

Leave to  
migrate,  
granted  
him by  
Abbot  
Whetham-  
stede.

“ ‘ John, by the Divine forbearance, Abbot of the  
 “ ‘ Exempt Monastery of St. Alban’s, *etc.*, to his beloved  
 “ ‘ son in Christ, William<sup>3</sup> Poverse, of the same place,  
 “ ‘ monk and professed, greeting in Him who hath put  
 “ ‘ his hand to the plough, and not looked back. Foras-  
 “ ‘ much as, most ungracious son, and vexatious, thou  
 “ ‘ dost cry aloud at the gates of our rule, that, for the  
 “ ‘ advantage of a better life, and in the hope of living,  
 “ ‘ as thou dost assert, more in quiet, we may indulge  
 “ ‘ thee with leave to migrate to the Church of Christ at  
 “ ‘ Canterbury; we, by reason of thy importunity, open-  
 “ ‘ ing at length the door unto thee, do yield the favour  
 “ ‘ so asked for, and, so far as in right we may, do most  
 “ ‘ freely give thee leave, that, for the causes which thou  
 “ ‘ dost allege, thou mayst be received into the same  
 “ ‘ church freely and quietly, without question or re-  
 “ ‘ vocation on our part. . . . Given, *etc.*’

“ After making this coat of skins for covering his  
 “ nakedness, the letter of leave, that is, written upon a  
 “ skin, the shepherd then subjoined his state, as he con-  
 “ ceived it to be, how that this brother was to eat bread  
 “ in the sweat of his face, in writing . . . . this  
 “ epistolary composition.”

Objurga-  
tory Epis-

The Epistle to the recalcitrant son then follows (pp. 91–  
 97), much too lengthy for the pages of an Introduction,

<sup>1</sup> Of St. Benedict.

<sup>2</sup> The parchment on which the

leave to depart was written.

<sup>3</sup> The surname (I. p. 90) is doubtful.