

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-04808-8 - *Historia et Cartularium Monasterii Sancti Petri Gloucestriae*: Volume 1

Edited by William Henry Hart

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE LIBRARY COLLECTION

Books of enduring scholarly value

Rolls Series

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.

Historia et Cartularium Monasterii Sancti Petri Gloucestriae

The abbey of St Peter, which later became Gloucester Cathedral, had its origins in the seventh century and was re-established in the eleventh. It benefited considerably from Norman patronage, growing in importance, size and wealth. Henry III was crowned there in 1216, and it is where Edward II was buried. It subsequently became a place of pilgrimage, and received several benefactions from Edward III. Volume 1 of the abbey's records, edited by W.H. Hart and published in 1863, begins with a chronicle of the abbey's history from its foundation to the late fourteenth century. It also includes a comprehensive list of the lands held by the abbey. It is followed by the first 423 charters, arranged by location rather than date. The cartulary was compiled in the late thirteenth century, with some later insertions.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-04808-8 - *Historia et Cartularium Monasterii Sancti Petri Gloucestriae*: Volume 1

Edited by William Henry Hart

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press has long been a pioneer in the reissuing of out-of-print titles from its own backlist, producing digital reprints of books that are still sought after by scholars and students but could not be reprinted economically using traditional technology. The Cambridge Library Collection extends this activity to a wider range of books which are still of importance to researchers and professionals, either for the source material they contain, or as landmarks in the history of their academic discipline.

Drawing from the world-renowned collections in the Cambridge University Library and other partner libraries, and guided by the advice of experts in each subject area, Cambridge University Press is using state-of-the-art scanning machines in its own Printing House to capture the content of each book selected for inclusion. The files are processed to give a consistently clear, crisp image, and the books finished to the high quality standard for which the Press is recognised around the world. The latest print-on-demand technology ensures that the books will remain available indefinitely, and that orders for single or multiple copies can quickly be supplied.

The Cambridge Library Collection brings back to life books of enduring scholarly value (including out-of-copyright works originally issued by other publishers) across a wide range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences and in science and technology.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-04808-8 - Historia et Cartularium Monasterii Sancti Petri Gloucestriae: Volume 1

Edited by William Henry Hart

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Historia et Cartularium Monasterii Sancti Petri Gloucestriae

VOLUME 1

EDITED BY WILLIAM HENRY HART



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-04808-8 - Historia et Cartularium Monasterii Sancti Petri Gloucestriae: Volume 1

Edited by William Henry Hart

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Mexico City

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108048088

© in this compilation Cambridge University Press 2012

This edition first published 1863

This digitally printed version 2012

ISBN 978-1-108-04808-8 Paperback

This book reproduces the text of the original edition. The content and language reflect the beliefs, practices and terminology of their time, and have not been updated.

Cambridge University Press wishes to make clear that the book, unless originally published by Cambridge, is not being republished by, in association or collaboration with, or with the endorsement or approval of, the original publisher or its successors in title.

The original edition of this book contains a number of colour plates, which have been reproduced in black and white. Colour versions of these images can be found online at www.cambridge.org/9781108048088

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-04808-8 - Historia et Cartularium Monasterii Sancti Petri Gloucestriae: Volume 1

Edited by William Henry Hart

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

RERUM BRITANNICARUM MEDII ÆVI
SCRIPTORES,

OR

CHRONICLES AND MEMORIALS OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND IRELAND

DURING

THE MIDDLE AGES.

a

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-04808-8 - Historia et Cartularium Monasterii Sancti Petri Gloucestriae: Volume 1

Edited by William Henry Hart

Frontmatter

[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.*

Cambridge University Press

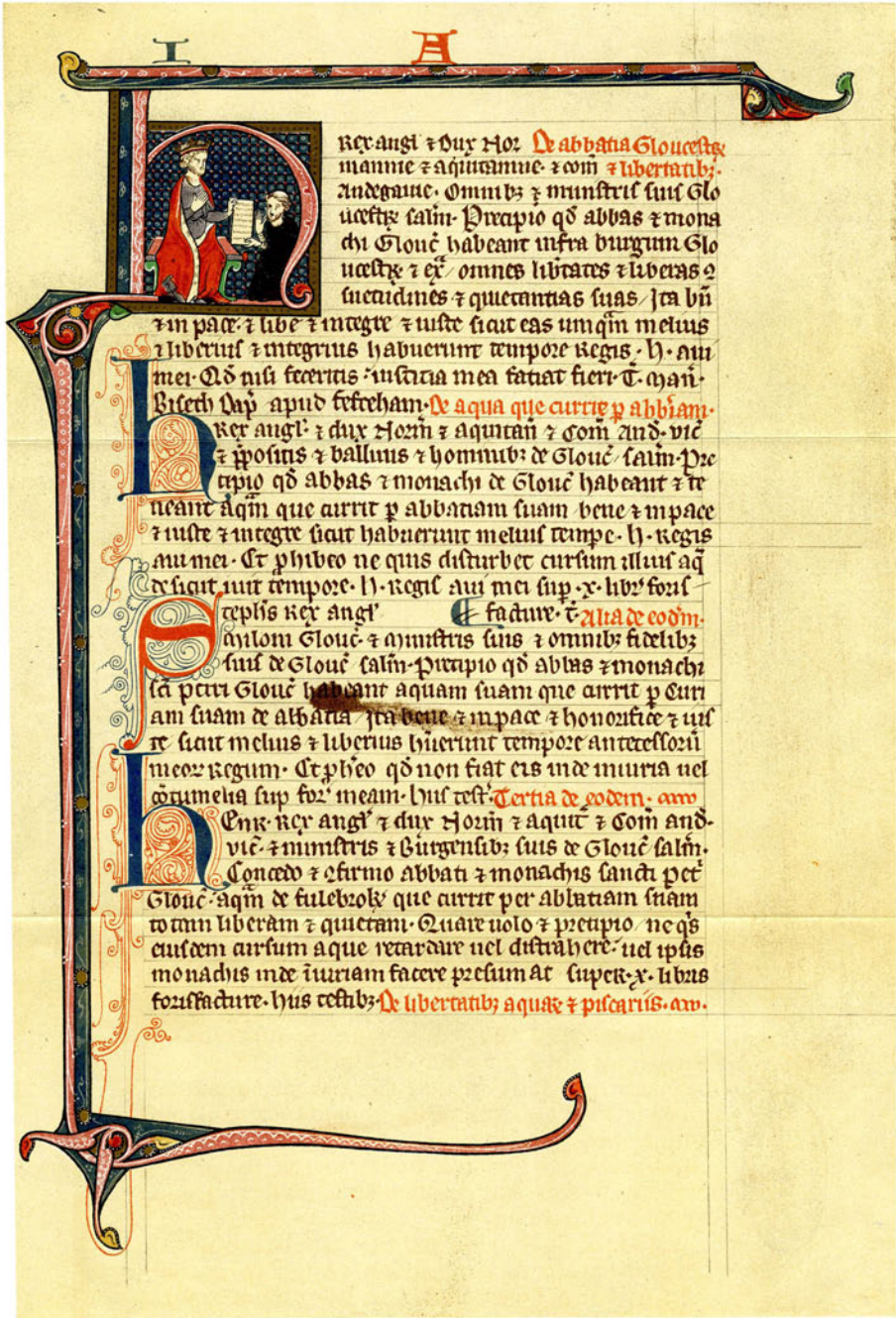
978-1-108-04808-8 - Historia et Cartularium Monasterii Sancti Petri Gloucestriae: Volume 1

Edited by William Henry Hart

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

HISTORIA ET CARTULARIUM
MONASTERII SANCTI PETRI GLOUCESTRIÆ.



From a MS. in the Public Record Office, London.

(See below p. 154.)

The material originally positioned here is too large for reproduction in this reissue. A PDF can be downloaded from the web address given on page iv of this book, by clicking on 'Resources Available'.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-04808-8 - Historia et Cartularium Monasterii Sancti Petri Gloucestriae: Volume 1
Edited by William Henry Hart
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

HISTORIA
ET
CARTULARIUM
MONASTERII SANCTI PETRI
GLOUCESTRÆ.

VOL. I.

EDITED

BY

WILLIAM HENRY HART,

OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE;
FELLOW OF THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF LONDON;
MEMBRE CORRESPONDANT DE LA SOCIÉTÉ DES ANTIQUAIRES DE NORMANDIE.

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

LONDON:

LONGMAN, GREEN, LONGMAN, ROBERTS, AND GREEN.

—
1863.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-04808-8 - Historia et Cartularium Monasterii Sancti Petri Gloucestriae: Volume 1

Edited by William Henry Hart

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Printed by
EYRE and SPOTTISWOODS, Her Majesty's Printers,
For Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

Cambridge University Press

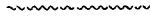
978-1-108-04808-8 - Historia et Cartularium Monasterii Sancti Petri Gloucestriae: Volume 1

Edited by William Henry Hart

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTENTS.



	PAGE
INTRODUCTION - - - - -	ix
HISTORY - - - - -	1
CARTULARY - - - - -	127



Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-04808-8 - Historia et Cartularium Monasterii Sancti Petri Gloucestriae: Volume 1

Edited by William Henry Hart

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-04808-8 - Historia et Cartularium Monasterii Sancti Petri Gloucestriae: Volume 1

Edited by William Henry Hart

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

INTRODUCTION.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-04808-8 - Historia et Cartularium Monasterii Sancti Petri Gloucestriae: Volume 1

Edited by William Henry Hart

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

INTRODUCTION.

THE formation and the rapid increase of monasteries and religious houses in England, which one by one were reared by pious hands in grateful remembrance of the inestimable blessings resulting from the appearance once more of Christianity amongst us, when Saint Augustine and his fellow-workers were sent to these shores, is assuredly not one of the least conspicuous or the least important events in the annals of the Anglo-Saxon period.

Not that the monastic system was then for the first time introduced into this country, for we are told that in every century after Christ there were many monasteries and congregations of monks living under settled rules, as well here in England as in other kingdoms;¹ but at the time of which I am speaking the British church, under whose auspices these monasteries sprang up, was waning and waxing weak; it was powerless to impress the Saxon invaders with the truths of the everlasting kingdom, and so was it reserved for the Augustinian mission to complete the work of evangelizing England, and thereby to reap for itself an undying fame.

¹ *Historia Monasterii S. Augustini Cantuariensis* (*Chronicles and Memorials*), p. 199.

And now with this marvellous revival of religion came also its firstfruits, the erection of churches and monasteries in places where never yet had been heard the footsteps of those who brought glad tidings; and in the year of grace 681, not long after the Saxon kingdom of Mercia had received the true faith, there arose at Gloucester, to the honour and glory of Almighty God, and to the memory of his blessed apostle St. Peter, the monastery whose cartulary and history are given to the reader in the following pages.

The short history which precedes the cartulary affords us an account of the monastery from its foundation to the early part of the reign of Richard the Second, when it closes during the abbacy of Walter Froucester (1381–1412).

The text here given of this history is founded upon a comparison of the two following manuscripts:—

A. A small quarto volume belonging to the library of Queen's College, Oxford, numbered CCCLXVII. It consists of sixty-four leaves, containing about twenty-six lines on a page, and is written in a uniform hand of the fifteenth century. It was once the property of Henry Jackson, C.C.C., rector of Mesey Hampton; afterwards of William Fulman; then of Timothy Halton, S.T.P., provost of Queen's College (1677); and lastly of Anthony Hall, fellow of the same College.¹

B. Cottonian manuscript, Domitian VIII., 21 and 22. This consists of thirty-six leaves, containing about thirty-six lines on a page, and is written in a uniform hand of the fifteenth century. The character is much smaller than that employed in the Oxford manuscript. Lansdowne MS. Brit. Mus. No. 426 furnishes an entire

¹ I have here to express my best thanks to the Provost and Fellows of Queen's College, Oxford, for the readiness with which they granted me the loan of this manuscript for the purpose of collation.

INTRODUCTION.

xi

transcript on paper of this manuscript made at a much later period, but I have not thought it necessary to notice any variations derivable from this source.

The text furnished by the Queen's College manuscript is undoubtedly the purest, and judging from the omissions which occur in the Cottonian manuscript, as well as the reproduction of clerical errors, it is most probable that the Queen's College manuscript is the original which the Cottonian scribe had before him, copying most of the blunders, and when puzzled with a doubtful or obscure word omitting it altogether. In the *Historia* (page 47) the following omission is noted in MS. Cott. "*confluentium omnes;*" now this forms exactly one line at the bottom of page 49 of the Queen's College manuscript, and such an omission furnishes tolerably strong evidence that of the two manuscripts the latter was the original, for this is just such an error as a transcriber is likely to fall into by prematurely turning over the leaf from which he is copying. Another instance may be found on page 60 of the *Historia*, there the omission "*De eodem unam hidam,*" noted as occurring in MS. Cott., forms the bottom line of page 66 of the Queen's College manuscript, which the Cottonian scribe has omitted in his transcript.

On the other hand there are entire sections in MS. Cott. which are not found in the Queen's College MS.; but as they occur in the list of donations, and not in the narrative portion, we may not be far wrong in concluding that the Cottonian scribe supplied them at his pleasure from the cartulary or some other source which was ready to his hand.

With regard to the authorship of this history, we have no sufficient data from which to form any certain conclusion. It is usually ascribed to Walter Froucester, the last abbot of whom it makes mention, but I can find no warrant for such a supposition. It

was most probably compiled from time to time by successive inmates of the monastery, as was commonly the custom with such histories, and consequently cannot be the work of a writer of the fourteenth or fifteenth century, Froucester's period. The account of Walter de Lacy's illness¹ is evidently the production of one who had been contemporary with the abbot, "*sicut ex ipsius ore audivimus.*" We are told that the registers of the church were compiled afresh in the time of Froucester,² and we may thence fairly assume that the scribe who acted under Froucester's directions took the materials at his disposal, re-arranged them at his pleasure, continuing the narrative to his own time, and so leaving us the history as it now stands.

Where the statements of well-known chroniclers have been followed verbally, I have indicated the same by printing such passages in smaller type, as is the custom in this series.

A document printed in Dugdale,³ entitled "*Memoriale Ecclesie Cathedralis Gloucestriae Compendiarium,*" tells us that immediately after the reception of Christianity by Lucius, king of Britain, a bishop and preachers were constituted at Gloucester in the year of our Lord 189, and that by the advice of Fugacius and Damianus, Lucius converted Gloucester into an archiepiscopal see, together with other particulars for which the writer says he can give no certain warrant; after which he tells us, with authority, that in the year 679, Wolphere, the first Christian king of Mercia, whom the Mercians had saved from persecution, enlarged and beautified the town of Gloucester, and laid the foundations of the monastery, but as he died before its completion, his brother Ethelred, who succeeded

¹ Historia, p. 16.

² Historia, p. 50.

³ Monasticon, ed. Caley and Ellis, vol. i. p. 563.

INTRODUCTION.

xiii

him, continued the good work, and for that purpose, in the first year of his reign, made Osric viceroy of the Huiccii, that he might undertake the care of the monastery during the progress of its erection.

Our history tells us that in the year 681, Ethelred granted to Osric and his brother Oswald land in Gloucestershire, and also gave licence to Osric to build a monastery in the city of Gloucester in honour of St. Peter the apostle.¹ This design Osric forthwith carried out under the auspices of Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, and Bosel, first bishop of Worcester, and at once constituted his sister Kyneburgh the first abbess. She was consecrated by Bosel, and after governing the monastery for twenty-nine years died, and was buried in the church before the altar of St. Petronilla in the year 710.

King Ethelred, after reigning thirty years, resigned his kingdom to his brother Kynred; and taking upon him a life of religion, assumed the tonsure at Bardney; he became abbot there, and in the year 716 went to his rest.

In the year 708, Kynred, king of the Mercians, and Offa, king of the East Saxons, having resigned their kingdoms, repaired to Rome in the time of Pope Constantine, and there became monks, in which condition they remained till their death. They were both benefactors to St. Peter's monastery.

Osric, who had succeeded to the kingdom of Northumbria, died on the ninth of May in the twelfth year of his reign, and was buried in St. Peter's, near to his sister Kyneburgh, in the year 729.

To Kyneburgh succeeded Edburga, widow of Wulphere, king of Mercia, who, resigning her kingdom

¹ Ethelred's charter is recorded in the register marked A. now in the custody of the Dean and Chapter of Gloucester; a copy will be found in the Appendix to this Introduction.

after the death of her husband, was consecrated abbess of this place, and after twenty-five years' good governance of the monastery was buried there near her predecessor Kyneburgh, in the year 735.

Eva, the wife of Wolfere, son of Penda, was next consecrated abbess; she held the office for thirty-three years, and was a great benefactress to the monastery; she died, and was buried there in the year 767.

After this period the abbesses pass from the scene entirely; war and tumult occupy the kingdom, and the nuns wander hither and thither to avoid the evils of the times; but, though dispersed and their house broken up, yet, wheresoever they travelled in search of security from lawlessness and sin, there were they living witnesses of the virtues which shone forth so brightly at St. Peter's, that neither time nor adverse circumstances could dim their lustre.

The history is then silent as to the fortunes of this house for two centuries and more, but from the *Memoriale* in Dugdale, before referred to, we learn that for a period of fifty years from the death of Eva there was no abbess, and the house was deserted and desolate; but when Beornulph, King of the Mercians, came to the throne, he, seeing so deplorable a state of things, rebuilt the monastery and changed its form. He placed there secular clergy, for the most part married, and differing but little in their food and dress from laymen, and gave them certain prescribed rules of life, endowing them with the former possessions of the nuns.

In the year 862 our history tells us that Burgred, king of Mercia, confirmed all the donations which his predecessors had made, and freed St. Peter's and all its dependencies from all lay service or exaction on condition only that night and day for ever there should not cease to be offered up prayers for him and his descendants.

INTRODUCTION.

xv

This arrangement continued until the year 1022, when the secular clergy were ejected and Benedictine monks were introduced, or when, as our history tells us, Wolstan, bishop of Worcester, by permission of King Canute, placed the monastery and its clergy under the protection of God, and of the apostles Saints Peter and Paul, and imposing upon them the Benedictine rule, consecrated Edric their first abbot, who for thirty-seven years fulfilled his office.

Prior to Edric's appointment he had sold certain manors belonging to the monastery, in order to redeem the remainder of its possessions from the exaction of heregild then imposed upon the whole of England, and immediately upon his consecration he notified this fact by a deed, no doubt under the directions of Wolstan, who, though he had since been elevated to the archbishopric of York, yet concerned himself with the welfare of this monastery.

But, according to the *Memoriale*, the substitution of the new Benedictine rule for that of the secular clergy was not pleasing to the people of Gloucester; the monks found hatred and persecution at their hands, nay, violence was even resorted to, for seven of them were killed in the neighbourhood of that city by a wealthy nobleman, Wulphin le Rue; but as an atonement for this crime he was compelled to maintain at his own cost seven monks in the monastery.¹

To Edric, who was buried elsewhere, succeeded Wilstan, a monk of Worcester; he was consecrated in the year 1058, but concerning him we have no particulars except that he performed a journey to Jerusalem, and died on his travels.

The *Memoriale* here tells us that these Benedictine monks were imbued with no saving knowledge, nor

¹ See also *Historia*, p. 67.

were they under the restraint of a just conscience, but were blinded with a worse than Cimmerian darkness, not heeding Christian faith and duties; and so the Almighty, in vindication of His own glory, permitted them to be extirpated, and their house to be consumed by fire and destroyed.

The monastery was now rebuilt by Aldred, bishop of Worcester; he constructed it anew from its very foundations, and dedicated it to its former patron Saint Peter; but he appropriated several of its possessions to his own use, and when made archbishop of York annexed them to his new church.

The *Memoriale* says that Aldred rebuilt the monastery a little nearer the bounds of the city than heretofore, and that it was completed in the seventh year of Edward the Confessor, and consecrated to the glory, not of Christ, but of St. Peter. The monks were restored, but their numbers were diminished because of the possessions appropriated by Aldred as a species of security, according to the *Memoriale*, for the repayment of the expenses he had been at in building the new church and monastery. The *Memoriale* tells us that at the time when the Danes were expelled from this country, Edward the Confessor sojourned at Gloucester, and held a parliament in the old part of the monastery there.

But fortune smiled not on the infant days of this Benedictine house; its first abbot Edric seems to have acted in the performance of his sacred trust under the force of external pressure; his heart was plainly not with his work, and as it were, openly to proclaim his indifference to the place which had cherished him, he shortly before his death retired elsewhere, and was buried away from the monastery; his successor, perhaps, disgusted at the wrong done to his church by the spoliations of the bishop of Worcester, goes on a journey to the "golden city," in those days a work

INTRODUCTION.

xvii

of no small toil and risk, and there ends his days ; no wonder then that St. Peter's, thus neglected and uncared for, should decline and its numbers dwindle so that, as we are told, it could at last boast only of two monks and eight young boys.

In such grievous state then was the monastery found by its new abbot Serlo, who, in the year 1072 was, by the advice of Osmund the chancellor, appointed by William the Conqueror to guard over its destinies. And thus was a new element introduced, and new life infused into the concerns of this house, for to the vigorous judgment and active exertions of its first Norman abbot its future splendour was justly due, and from the time of his abbacy must be dated its steady progress among the great religious houses of England.

Serlo, chaplain to William the Conqueror, had previously been a canon of the church of Avranches, and afterwards a monk in the church of Mont St. Michel in Normandy, so that he brought with him ample experience, which he soon made use of in the administration of the affairs of St. Peter's, for, with the assistance of the king, he succeeded in recovering the possessions which had been unlawfully annexed to the see of York ; Thomas, the archbishop, was compelled to attend in the chapter-house on Palm Sunday, in the year 1095, and with much humiliation he made due reparation in the presence of Serlo and all the monks.

During the first years of Serlo's rule, St. Peter's, which was then in an impoverished condition, found a ready friend in the neighbouring abbey of Evesham ; for Agelwy, abbot of that house, who had received his consecration at Gloucester in 1059, often relieved its necessities on the humble petition of Serlo.¹

¹ *Chronicon Abbatiae de Evesham* (*Chronicles and Memorials*), p. 90.

We are told¹ that William the Second, being seized with a violent illness at Gloucester, gave to the abbey of St. Peter's a church and lands there named. This appears to have taken place in the year 1093. We learn from Florence of Worcester that the king fell sick at a place called Alwestan, and hastening to the city of Gloucester, he remained there during the whole of Lent in a weakly state, and thinking that he was rapidly approaching his end, as his barons told him, he resolved to amend his life, and not to sell or give in pledge any more churches, but rather to give them his protection, together with other good resolutions which the fear of death readily suggested.

This illness seems to have bowed down the king during a great part of the year, for the 24th of August still found him at Gloucester, when Malcolm, king of Scotland, came to that city for the purpose of an interview with the king of England.²

On Sunday, the 15th of July, in the year 1100, was celebrated by the bishops of Worcester, Rochester, Hereford, and Bangor, with much pomp and magnificence, the dedication of the new church of St. Peter's, which had been entirely rebuilt by Serlo, and the first stone of which had been laid by the bishop of Hereford on the 29th of June in the year 1089.

Immediately after this ceremony, Gerard, bishop of Hereford, seeing that the new church stood greatly in need of funds wherewith to provide all things necessary for the due and reverent performance of divine service, bestowed upon it certain possessions by means of an instrument which is printed in the cartulary.³

About this time, we are told by Ordericus Vitalis,⁴

¹ *Historia*, p. 102.

² *Florence of Worcester* (English Historical Soc. ed.), vol. ii. pp. 30, 31.

³ *Vide post*, p. 250.

⁴ *Duchesne, Historiæ Normannorum Scriptores Antiqui*, p. 781

INTRODUCTION.

xix

that while the king was waiting to sail on his expeditions, terrible visions were seen respecting him in the monasteries and cathedrals by the clergy of both classes, and they were so talked of by everybody that the king himself could not fail to hear of them. Among them there is an instance at Gloucester, for a monk of good repute, but of still better life, who belonged to the abbey of St. Peter's, related that in the visions of the night he had a dream to this effect. "I saw," said he, "the Lord Jesus seated on a lofty throne, the glorious host of heaven and the company of the saints standing around. But while in this ecstasy. I was lost in astonishment, and my wondering attention was fixed on such an unaccustomed spectacle; behold! a most resplendent virgin cast herself at the feet of the Lord Jesus, and humbly besought him with these prayers: 'O Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of mankind, for whom Thou, when hanging on the cross, didst shed Thy precious blood, look mercifully on Thy people who are miserably groaning under the yoke of William. Thou avenger of wickedness and most just judge of all men, take vengeance, I beseech Thee, for me on this William, and deliver me out of his hands; for, as far as lies in his power, he has polluted and cruelly afflicted me.' The Lord replied: 'Bear with him patiently; wait a little, for you will soon be sufficiently revenged of him.' On hearing this I trembled, and doubted not that the divine anger would shortly be visited on our king; for I understood that the cries of the holy virgin, our mother the church, had reached the ears of the Lord, by reason of the robberies, the foul adulteries, and other the intolerable crimes which the king and his courtiers cease not daily to commit against the divine law."

On hearing this, Serlo, in a friendly spirit, wrote

letters and despatched them from Gloucester to the king, setting forth distinctly what the monk had seen in his vision.

Shortly after this, on the solemn celebration of the festival of St. Peter ad Vincula [August 1] in the monastery, immense crowds of people of all ranks were assembled together, when Fulchered, a zealous monk of Seez, and first abbot of Shrewsbury, an eloquent expositor of the Holy Scriptures, being chosen as one of the oldest clergy, ascended the pulpit, and addressed a sermon to the people on the word of salvation. He openly denounced offenders against the divine law, and, as it were, filled with a prophetic spirit, spoke thus earnestly: "England is given as a heritage to
 " be trodden under foot by the profane, because the
 " land is filled with iniquity. Its whole body is
 " spotted with the leprosy of a universal iniquity, and
 " from the crown of the head to the sole of the feet
 " is it occupied by unseemly wickedness. For un-
 " bridled pride soars everywhere, and, if I may say
 " so, spurns even the stars of heaven. Dissolute lust
 " pollutes not only vessels of clay, but those of gold,
 " and insatiable avarice devours everything. But lo!
 " a sudden change of affairs is at hand. The libertines
 " shall not long have the dominion, the Lord God will
 " come to judge the avowed enemies of His spouse;
 " He will strike Moab and Edom with the sword of
 " His signal vengeance, and will overthrow with a
 " terrible convulsion the mountains of Gilboa. The
 " anger of the Lord will no longer spare transgressors,
 " and the vengeance of heaven will rage against the
 " children of unbelief. The bow of divine wrath is
 " bent against the reprobate, and the swift arrow is
 " taken from the quiver to inflict wounds. Quickly
 " will this be done, but every wise man by correcting
 " himself in time will avoid the blow."

This and many other similar discourses were ad-

INTRODUCTION.

xxi

dressed to the people in St. Peter's church on the Wednesday, and suddenly, as Ordericus tells us, did the scourge begin to be exhibited, for the next day was the last which the king was destined to see. In the morning, having dined, he prepared himself for the diversion of hunting in the New Forest, and on the armourer presenting to him six arrows, he kept four of them himself, and held out the other two to Walter Tirel, saying, "It is but right that the sharpest " arrows should be given to him who knows best " how to inflict mortal wounds with them."

But while the king was engaged in these preparations, his household and attendants being assembled around him, a monk of Gloucester presented himself, and delivered to the king a letter from his abbot. On reading it the king was excited to laughter, and he said merrily to Tirel, "Walter, do what I told you." Tirel replied, "I will, my lord." Slighting then the warnings of the elders, and forgetting that before a fall the heart is lifted up, he said respecting the letter, "I wonder why my lord Serlo has been minded " to write thus to me, for he is, I believe, a good abbot, " and a judicious old man. In his extreme simplicity " he sends to me, busied with so many affairs, the " dreams of his snoring monks, and from a long " distance has even sent them to me in writing. " Does he suppose that I follow the example of the " English, who will defer their journey or their " business for the dreams of wheezing old women?"

Thus speaking, he rose hastily, and mounting his horse, rode at full speed to the forest, but the day's sport was soon put an end to by the sharp arrow of Tirel, and the king ceased to live.

Two years after this a calamitous conflagration destroyed the whole of the city and the church which had been so recently rebuilt. Respecting this fire, Fos-

brooke, the historian of Gloucester, in his account of St. Peter's,¹ falls into a singular mistake, which not merely perverts the truth, but also gives him an opportunity of casting an unmerited imputation upon the abbot and monks of St. Peter's. Though it is not my province here to play the advocate on the one hand, or on the other hand to correct the mis-statements of topographical writers, yet in vindication of historical truth, as well as in defence of my own version of the text, I will for once step aside from the beaten track. Our history, in treating of this fire, says, "Et anno " millesimo centesimo secundo ecclesia Sancti Petri " Gloucestriae cum civitate, igne cremata est, *postquam* " venerandæ memoriæ domnus abbas Serlo, per in- " dustriam suam et laborem, terras multas et pecunias " acquisierat, videlicet Ledene, &c.;"² but Fosbrooke, in printing this passage, for *postquam* substitutes *post quod*, thus not only setting at defiance all correct ideas of grammar, but making the acquisition of these lands subsequent to the fire, which he afterwards suggests³ was a mere trick to augment the revenues of the church. The text, as I have printed it, will not bear such an interpretation, and we learn from the calendar of donations the dates when St. Peter's acquired these possessions, all of which were bestowed upon the monastery prior to the conflagration, thus proving that Fosbrooke's accusation is totally groundless.

The benefactions which this monastery owed to Serlo were numerous indeed; Odo also, who after serving his office as cellarer, took upon him the religious habit, and became in all things the friend

¹ History of the City of Gloucester (London, 1819), p. 161.

² Historia, p. 12.

³ Fosbrooke, p. 165.