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978-1-108-04886-6 - De Gestis Pontificum Anglorum Libri Quinque

William of Malmesbury Edited by N. E. S. A. Hamilton

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### 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.

### De Gestis Pontificum Anglorum Libri Quinque

William of Malmesbury (c.1090–c.1142) was a prolific historian and a trustworthy chronicler, described by Professor R.M. Thomson as 'the most learned European of his day' and 'England's greatest national and local historian since Bede'. A Benedictine monk, he spent his adult life at Malmesbury Abbey, where he assisted the Abbot in founding the library, and devoted his time to writing. The Latin text presented here, originally published in 1870 as part of the Rolls Series, is based on the manuscript at Magdalen College, Oxford. It is described with confidence by N.E.S.A. Hamilton as 'no other than Malmesbury's own autograph' – a claim which the editor backs up in his comprehensive preface. Revised and added to over a period of ten years following its completion in around 1125, this early ecclesiastical history of England is as much a historical record as a primary source in its own right.

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De Gestis  
Pontificum  
Anglorum  
Libri Quinque

WILLIAM OF MALMESBURY  
EDITED BY N.E.S.A. HAMILTON



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RERUM BRITANNICARUM MEDII ÆVI  
SCRIPTORES,

OR

CHRONICLES AND MEMORIALS OF GREAT BRITAIN  
AND IRELAND

DURING

THE MIDDLE AGES.

18152.

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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.

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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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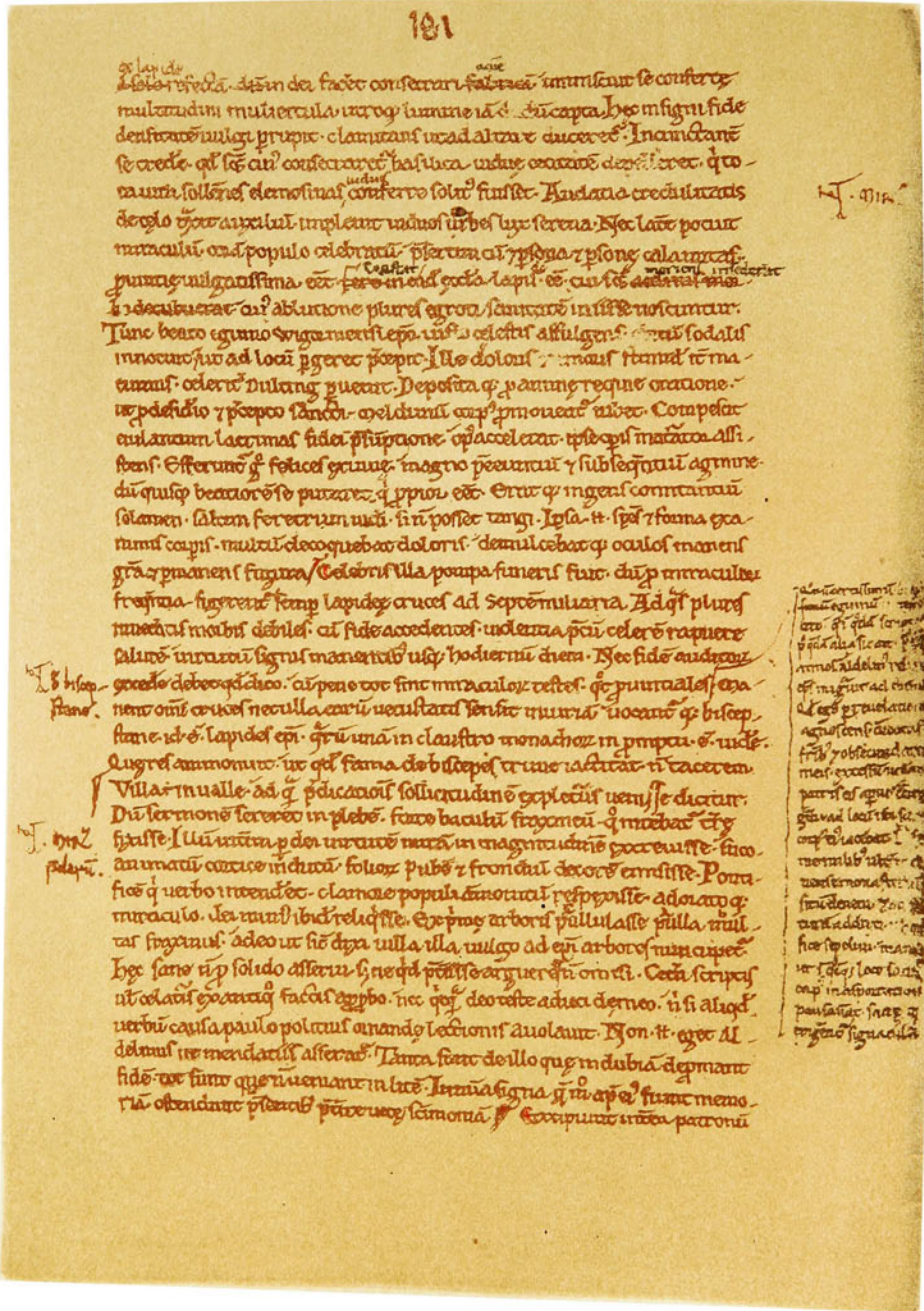
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WILLELMI MALMESBIRIENSIS MONACHI  
GESTA PONTIFICUM ANGLORUM.

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M.S. COLL. MAGD. OXON. N° 172.  
Fol. 90. a.

Vincent Brooks Day & Son, Lith.





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.9.

tubent ut cito de mundo specularer. si impatris nunti  
 tenui amiserit. Compro qd qd longinqtas fuge. compre  
 heridi illos difficultate parasset. cleru ppe cuocari us  
 fit. tota tgedig. integro 7 sermone 7 sensu expoficoe. Impo  
 fita qd p se Antiphona apux in portas iusticie. 7 cetera ui  
 uent se maufoleo composuit. pulcra 7 uenerabili morte  
 celu adept. Quid ideo pte materia exeri lecturil pfer  
 re. dicit n inuale. ut anglor depuxer gte. qd tras alienas dlu  
 .7.

Tant pagrinante etia fatate.

**C**vebertus p. xviii. annos epus. morbo tactus. 7 mori p  
 gent. iustic flul ut apud archiepiu copiu infoderet. Et q  
 Augustiniani monachi exantij consuetudine pin caces.  
 defunctoz archiepor corpa cu quadam rapetioe uolenti  
 a. luctuosos ululat pcuria 7 urbe cessare pcepit. fu  
 nebrei exequas pala fieri phiburo. Ita diuina cessante tu  
 mulcu alieni arcerentur aditu. cadaver pfulul. gote  
 pncipatit simo illatu. nec ab altis q se ingenio curam  
 scriptos uident repetati. Inuc bregum. iii. annis subiti  
 titul. sede Janbriho. su Augustini pui abbi uacuefecit.

De isto in primo libro diximus. 7 ne n taceat qd offerre  
 oneraz. conctas inuicuals cu canuaras. cu pmatu  
 spoliare conat. Simul regnu oneraz archiepatu in  
 fugate conat affectans. eptis ad adriani papa 7 fortas  
 sus munerib egit. ut pallio lucefeldense epin com more  
 ueteru offerret. Sciat hoc pueritas toto plulac et ipre  
 qruis nichille ut sumptib ut laborib omisitico. q digni  
 tate sedis offerret. q cupiditate puasoz conuideret.

**S**eo p. xxvii. annos defuncto. 7 in capitulo ap san  
 Augustinuu amulato. successit annis. xii. ethelard  
 Ancomensis epus. ur excellencis industrie potens

*[Marginal notes in smaller script on the right side of the page, including names like 'Althard' and 'Ethelard']*

MS. COLL. MAGD. OXON. N° 172.  
Fol. 5, a.

Vincent Brooks Day & Son Lith



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# WILLELMI MALMESBIRIENSIS MONACHI

## DE GESTIS PONTIFICUM ANGLORUM

### LIBRI QUINQUE.

EDITED FROM THE AUTOGRAPH MANUSCRIPT

BY

N. E. S. A. HAMILTON.

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P R E F A C E .

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## P R E F A C E.

THE important work of one of our most trustworthy chroniclers of which a new edition is now offered to the public, has many claims to attention. Not only was the author<sup>1</sup> distinguished among monkish his-

<sup>1</sup> The little that is known of William of Malmesbury's life may be summed up as follows :—

It is generally conjectured that he was born about 1095. The first historical mention of him is his own statement that he aided abbot Godefrey in forming the library at Malmesbury. Abbot Godefrey died in 1105; before this period William had therefore arrived at man's estate. His lineage was partly Norman and partly English. He received a good education from his father, and forsook for literature other pursuits. He enjoyed the particular friendship of Robert, earl of Gloucester, natural son of Henry I., and warmly espoused the cause of the empress Matilda against Stephen.

In the year 1120 he completed his great work the *Gesta Regum*. In 1125 he finished his *Gesta Pontificum*, the present work. He became librarian and precentor of his monastery, in what year does not seem to be known. In 1140 he was offered and declined the abbacy of Malmesbury. In 1141 he was personally present at the council of Winchester, held against king Stephen. His last work, the *His-*

*toria Novella*, terminates abruptly in 1142, and from this fact it has been inferred that that was the year of his death.

The year (1095), usually assigned as the date of William of Malmesbury's birth, appears difficult to reconcile with the fact that he assisted abbot Godefrey in founding the library. His assertion that he did more than any one else in the work, implies that he was fully of adult age at the time. Godefrey was abbot during twenty-four years (1081–1105), and it is quite unlikely that he deferred the gratification of his literary tastes till the end of his life. The year 1100 would appear to be the latest date at which this formation of the library took place, and William of Malmesbury could hardly have been younger than twenty-five at the period. This would throw back his birth to A.D. 1075. In any case the date 1095 must be considered untenable, as no boy of ten could have taken a prominent part in forming a library.

I add the statement prefixed by Malmesbury to his *Expositio Threnorum Jeremiæ* (MS. Bodl. 868), as it contains the mention of a fact,

torians by a rare elevation of judgement, but this particular portion of his labours has the merit of being

although one hard to reconcile with the other known dates of his life and writings:—"Olim enim cum historias lusi, viridioribus annis rerumque lætitiæ congruebat rerum jocunditas. Nunc ætas progressior et fortuna deterior aliud dicendi genus expostulant. . . . Quadragenarius sum hodie; ad movique pedem medietatem metæ, quam divinus psalmista ponit hominum vitæ," etc.

His *Histories*, therefore, or at least some of them, were written before he was forty years of age.

*List of the works ascribed to William of Malmesbury, arranged in the order in which they appear to have been written.*

1. "Miracula Sanctæ Dei genetricis et perpetuæ Virginis Mariæ." Written between the years 1088 and 1108. See the autograph MS. of the author, Brit. Mus. MS. Cott. Cleopatr. c. x., f. 144. Identified here for the first time.

2. "De Miraculis Beati Andreae," probably one of his early works.

3. "Gesta Regum Anglorum." The first edition was issued in 1120. The second edition brings the work down to 1128, and some subsequent additions to 1140. Dedicated to Robert, earl of Gloucester.

4. Autograph transcript of Anselm's works. See p. xii. MS. Lambeth, 224.

5. Metrical Life of St. Ælfgifu, quoted in the "Gesta Pontificum."

6. "Vita Sancti Wlstani episcopi [Wigorniensis] et confessoris." Dedicated to Warin, prior of Wor-

cester. In this work mention is made of the "Gesta Regum."

7. Commencement of an autograph letter from the author to his friend Peter [Baldwin, monk and afterwards abbot of Malmesbury]. The letter, which appears not to have been completed, gives, in reply to Peter's request, some account of Johannes Scottus. It is to be found in Brit. Mus., Reg. Append. 85, f. 25, b. Here identified for the first time.

8. "Gesta Pontificum Anglorum." The first edition completed in 1125.

The second edition brings the work down to 1140.

9. "Vita Sancti Dunstani archiepiscopi." Dedicated to Henry, abbot of Glastonbury (1126-1171), and written probably at the very commencement of his abbacy. This work is mentioned in the author's Prologue to the "De Antiquitate Glastoniensis Ecclesiæ."

10. "Vita Sancti Patricii," mentioned in the Prologue to the "De Antiquitate Glastoniensis Ecclesiæ."

11. "Miracula Sancti Benigni," mentioned in the Prologue to the "De Antiquitate Glastoniensis Ecclesiæ."

12. "Passio Sancti Indracti martyris," mentioned in the Prologue to the "De Antiquitate Glastoniensis Ecclesiæ."

13. "De Antiquitate Glastoniensis Ecclesiæ," addressed to Henry of Blois, bishop of Winchester (1129-1171). This work is mentioned in two MSS. of the second edition of the "Gesta Regum."

devoted largely to contemporary history. It is not going too far to say that it is the foundation of the

14. "Chronica tribus libellis," mentioned in the Prologue to the "Historia Novella." A fragment probably of this work, hitherto supposed to be lost, exists in Brit. Mus., MS. Lansd. 436, ff. 2-11.

15. "Historia Novella." This work extends over the period 1126-1142, and, like the "Gesta Regum," is dedicated to Robert, earl of Gloucester.

16. "Liber super Explanationem "Lamentationum Yeremiæ prophetae."

An autograph MS. of this work, much damaged by fire, exists in the Brit. Mus., MS. Cotton, Tib. A. xii. At the conclusion of the work is the following biographical notice of William of Malmesbury by a monk of the same monastery. The handwriting of this note is the same, apparently, as that of the 13th century notes in the A. MS.

"Explicit liber Willelmi Meldunensis monachi super Explanationem Lamentationum Yeremiæ prophetae.

"Iste Willelmus, monachus Meldunensis, monachus fuit Malmesburiae, sic enim vocabatur quondam locus ille a quodam Meldone solitario, qui religiosus Christianus olim locum illum prius inhabitavit, cujus crux lapidea in medio claustrum stetit ad prædictam solitarii memoriam, sicut per inquisitionem comperit frater Walterus de Cliue prior hujus loci, anno Domini m.c.c. septuagesimo. Hoc etiam innuit ipse idem in principio prologi hujus operis, ubi mentionem facit de historiis Anglicanis

"quas quondam juvenis edidit. "Quod etiam Angli . . . . . ipse in quarto hujus operis libro exponens istum textum 'sed et lamiae nudaverunt mammam,' loquens de natura struthionis qualem se vidisse . . . ."

The following is the passage referred to in the fourth chapter: "Ista autem strutio, avis membrorum grandium, pennas quidem habens, sed volatu carens, qualem in Anglia vidimus tempore regis Henrici, externorum monstrorum appetentissimi." MS. Bodl. 868.

17. "De Serie Evangelistarum," xv. lib. No copy known.

18. "Itinerarium Johannis abbatis." An account of the journey to Rome of John, abbot of Malmesbury, A.D. 1140. This work was written by Malmesbury from information derived by him from his friend Peter Baldwin, who accompanied John in his journey and succeeded him in the abbacy. Leland, Collect. iii. 272. Although Leland gives extracts from this work, no copy of it is now known to exist.

19. "Abbreviatio Librorum Amalarii De Divinis Officiis."

The Prologue, addressed to Robert earl of Gloucester, states that the work was undertaken at his request, during the period that Malmesbury was writing his histories, "in historicis nos narrationibus occupatos detorsit a proposito tua, Rodberte amice, voluntas."

20. "De Dictis et Factis Memorabilibus Philosophorum."

At the conclusion of this work is

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early ecclesiastical history of England on which all writers have chiefly relied.

It is not a little singular that so remarkable a work should have had so little critical labour bestowed upon it. It may indeed be said to have had none at all. The edition of Sir Henry Savile, printed in the "Scriptores post Bedam," London, 1596, is full of errors, amounting at times to downright unintelligibility. After the manner of editors of that day Savile appears not to have been sensible of the importance of first discovering a good MS., and of then adhering to it, but to have made his text as he went along. This remark applies equally to Gale's and Wharton's editions of the Fifth Book which Savile had omitted. Strange as it may seem, his edition has been the only one offered to historical students. The reprint of Frankfort (1601) has added only errors to Savile's own, and Migne makes no pretension in his cheap and convenient reprint (*Patrologiæ Cursus Completus*, vol. 179) to a critical revision of the text. It is considered therefore that no apology is needed for the work undertaken by the present editor.

I need not detain the reader with a history of my tedious researches among the various MSS. of William

a collection of the five following authors *De Orthographia*: Cassiodorus, Caprus, Agretius, Albinus (Alcuin), Beda; the two last being mere abridgements. In the epilogue, or notice containing a plan of the work, the author describes himself as "Ego Guillelmus Malmesbiriensis."

21. "Epitome Historiæ Haimonis Floriacensis abbatis, a Justiniano ad Carolum Magnum." Besides the above, this work consists of abbreviations and transcripts of various historical and legal writers. The autograph copy (now identified for

the first time) exists in the Bodleian Library, Selden, B. 32 (now B. 16).

22. Brit. Mus., MS. Lansd., 436. Apparently an imperfect copy (with certain additions) of the collected Lives of the English Saints, which the author frequently mentions in the "Gesta Pontificum," as a work upon which he was engaged.

In addition to the above, Bale ascribes the following, but upon what authority does not appear:—

23. "Genealogia Henrici II."

24. "De Gente Vuydenorum."

25. "De Virtutibus Sanctorum."

26. "Sermones, atque alia plura."

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of Malmesbury when I first undertook my task. How much my labours in this respect were facilitated by the admirable *Descriptive Catalogue of English History*, by Sir Thomas Duffus Hardy, will be best appreciated by those who, like myself, have had occasion to use that invaluable work. It suffices me to say that after mature consideration I have convinced myself that I have discovered a text which deserves the completest reverence from an editor. This is no other than Malmesbury's own autograph.<sup>1</sup> As I am fully sensible of the grave import of this assertion, and how justly I am called upon to make it good, I offer the following considerations to the reader.<sup>2</sup>

1. The MS. on which I found my text is No. 172, in the possession of Magdalen College, Oxford. And I here beg leave to offer to that Society my grateful thanks for their courtesy in allowing me to take it away, and use it at my leisure. It is a small quarto consisting of 103 folios (206 pages),<sup>3</sup> written in a

<sup>1</sup> During the period occupied in the preparation of this edition, no fewer than five other MSS. in the author's handwriting have been identified. See the list of Malmesbury's works, p. viii.

<sup>2</sup> For the sake of clearness in what follows, it may be as well here to state that Malmesbury finished the first recension of the *Gesta Pontificum* in A.D. 1125, and this is the parent of B. and the other MSS. of that class. But between this date and his death he kept on elaborating, adding to and altering his work, and produced the result which we see in the Magdalen MS. From this are taken D. and its class. Thus, during Malmesbury's lifetime two families of MSS. arose which may be called the first and second recensions.

<sup>3</sup> On the first folio is a shelf mark C 4, written in a hand of the fourteenth century. A number of MSS. formerly belonging to Bury St. Edmunds, and now among the Royal MSS. in the British Museum, contain shelf marks precisely similar to it in date and character. (Cf. MSS. Reg. 8 C. iv., and 11 D. iii.), and it therefore seems a reasonable inference that in the fourteenth century the MS. belonged to that monastery, although Leland does not mention it in the list of MSS. seen there by him in 1533. It does not occur in the *Ecloga Oxonio-Cantabrigiensis* by Th. James, 1600, but occupies its present position as MS. Coll. Magd. Oxon. No. 172, in the *Catalogus MSS. Angliæ et Hiberniæ*, 1697. As the name "Malmesbiriensis" occurs on the first leaf in the

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singularly clear but somewhat cramped hand of the earlier portion of the twelfth century. The date which I have assigned to it will I think be contested by no competent palæographer. But closer proof is at hand, the writing being unmistakeably identical with that of the Lambeth MS. 224, to which Malmesbury has affixed his name.<sup>1</sup> However, as the formal hands of that period are wanting in the marked characteristics which often render modern handwriting irrefragable evidence of authorship, it will be as well to proceed to other means of identification. The ink of the MS. frequently varies in colour, and the coarse vellum is disfigured throughout by erasures, interlineations, transpositions, and marginal additions in the same hand as the body of the MS. Of these various appearances the reader will obtain an accurate notion by referring to the coloured photographs prefixed to this work. Now it is to be remarked that such interlineations and marginal additions are most unusual, not to say unknown, in the carefully written MSS. which were made for the use and adornment of the great monastic houses. No transcriber would have ventured on anything of the kind. They are not scholia, but precisely such corrections as are made by an author on second thoughts. For instance :

p. 16. The long passage of fourteen printed lines from *omnes* to *Selesiensis*, inserted on the margin<sup>2</sup> after a fashion which shows it to be an addition by the author, not an omission of the transcriber.

p. 16, last line. Here *ejus* has been replaced by *Jambrihti*, the pronoun occurring in no other MS.

handwriting of archbishop Ussher it is probable that the MS. at one time formed part of the Collection of that prelate, and that after his death in 1656, and the subsequent dispersion of his library, it found its way to its present resting place.

<sup>1</sup> " Disputat Anselmus, p̄sul  
" Cantorberiensis,  
" Scribit Willelmus, monachus  
" Malmesberiensis ;  
" Ambos gratificæ complectere,  
" lector amice."  
MS. Lambeth, 224.

<sup>2</sup> See photograph.



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## PREFACE.

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p. 99, l. 17. *Quæstione* turned into *quæstionis necessitate*, the reading of all other MSS. Such corrections could not have proceeded from the blunder of a copyist. They evidently arose as the author, in the act of composition, from some reason of taste or propriety, preferred one mode of expression to another.

Another form of corrections belonging to this head is occasioned by a rhetorical regard to the order of words and sentences. Two instances out of numerous others may be selected.

p. 333, § 189. *Parens ergo, qui pro conscientia nobilitatis nichil abjectum saperet, non degeneris magistri scolæ tradidit filium primis imbuendum elementis, sed Adriano, abbati Sancti Augustini, quem in arce scientiæ*<sup>b</sup>  
*stetisse, qui Anglorum Gesta perlegit, intelligit. Cumque jam majusculus a Cantia in Westsaxones remeasset, religionis habitum in Meldunensi accepit cenobio; quod situm est in civitate quæ antiquo vocabulo, sicut ex scriptis Elfredi regis accepimus, Mailduberi, nunc*<sup>c</sup>  
*Malmesberi vocatur. Id quidam Meldum, qui alio nomine vocatur Meildulf, natione Scottus, eruditione philosophus,*  
*professione monachus, fecerat. Ibi pusio, Græcis et*<sup>a</sup>  
*Latinis eruditus litteris, brevi mirandus ipsis enituit*<sup>d</sup>  
*magistris. Qui cum natali solo voluntarie carens illuc devenisset, nemoris amenitate, quod tunc temporis in immensum eo loci succreverat captus, heremiticam exercuit.*

The author afterwards became dissatisfied with this order and, by the help of an arbitrary sign and alphabetical letters, transposed it into the form indicated by the letters a, b, c, d.

p. 334, l. 14. *Dictorum testimonia consequantur*<sup>a</sup> *tenorem.*<sup>b</sup> *consequantur*<sup>c</sup>

This order seems to have displeased the author's ear, and he transposed it also by the same means.

b

The notes throughout the volume will show how frequently such transpositions occur.

2. Further, the MS. abounds with supplementary additions written on the margins. Many of these refer to events which occurred subsequently to the period at which we know Malmesbury finished the first composition of his work, viz., 1125. Thus,

p. 266, l. 9. The death of Turstan, archbishop of York, is recorded on the lower margin of the MS. f. 67, b. Now this event occurred on the 5th of February, 1140,<sup>1</sup> a date fifteen years subsequent to the first recension of the book.

p. 304, § 169. A paragraph written on the lower margin of f. 74, a., and giving, among other particulars, the succession of Robert, prior of the canons of Lantoni, to the see of Hereford, which did not take place till A.D. 1131.

p. 310, § 174. *Ei successit—Anglia nominis*. This section is added on the lower margin of f. 75, a. It records the death of Robert Peche, bishop of Lichfield, which took place A.D. 1127. This paragraph is remarkable on another account, namely, that it occurs only in A., and must consequently have been added after the transcription of the MSS. of the second edition.

3. Other alterations consist of rhetorical amplifications, reconstruction of sentences, or the toning down of such asperities of style and statement regarding the character of contemporaries, as the author on consideration deemed expedient.

I foresee the objection that these are merely the additions of a subsequent scribe to a mutilated or imperfectly copied MS. But I do not fear contradiction in saying that such alterations and liberties, extending to paragraphs and pages, could never have occurred in the

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<sup>1</sup> See photograph.

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painstaking work of a monastic transcriber. It is to be observed that they consist by no means merely of additions, but largely of erasures and excisions; and the character of the matter suppressed, often conveying severe reflections upon living or recently deceased persons, supplies us with the reason why they were suppressed. It seems probable that as age and responsibility grew upon him, Malmesbury deemed it wise to prune off many of the exuberances of his somewhat sarcastic style.

The following instances afford evidence but little short of demonstrative of my position.

p. 313. We have a short and rather dry account of Robert Bloet, bishop of Lincoln, on the whole favourable. By turning to the notes, the reader will find a long and truly vehement attack upon the same person, charging him with manifold evil-doing. These passages are erased in A. (MS.), but not so completely that the expunged words cannot be read in parts. In B. and its class they appear at length; that is, in those MSS. which were made from Malmesbury's first recension. But he subsequently regarded them as too severe, or impolitic, and substituted the brief account given in the text, and reproduced by D. and the other MSS. of the second recension. His object was clearly to suppress offensive personalities. The harmless portions of the original composition are left intact, while the acerbities are carefully removed. He seems even at the first composition to have doubted whether he had not gone too far in his invective, as shown by his remark (p. 314, n. 1.) "*sed hoc quomodocunque legentes ferant* ——" He doubtless found that they did not bear it well, and expunged the obnoxious passages.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The italics show the suppressed passages.

His name was Rotbert Bloet, [who never hesitated at the guilt or

*infamy of any form of lust. The holiness of monastic life he held in contempt, and this led him to order the monks to be removed from Stow*

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Again, at p. 274 the process is repeated. Ralph, bishop of Durham, is the occasion. He is not, indeed, let off so easily as Robert Bloet, and some sharp things are said of him even in the revised composition. But the passionate censures of the first recension are carefully erased, especially such as reflected on the morality

and settled at Eynsham. Wicked from wantonness, and through envy of his illustrious predecessor, he pretended that he was inconvenienced by the neighbouring monks; therefore if the monks of Eynsham, by God's gift, were favoured with a happy increase, small thanks to him, for whom he boasted he had done more than enough if he only allowed them to live.] He lived to enjoy the bishopric a little less than thirty years, and died far from his see, at Woodstock, cut off by a sudden fate, while riding out at the king's side in company with a certain other bishop. To his inferiors he was sufficiently condescending, but wanting in authority withal. Pre-eminently a man of the world, he was an inferior churchman. He decorated his cathedral with the most costly ornaments. After his death his body was disembowelled that it might not pollute the air with its offensive odours; his viscera were buried at Eynsham, the remains at Lincoln; for during his lifetime he had caused the monks of Stow to remove to Eynsham. [And there it is well-known that the warden of the church were disturbed by nightly visions, in order that they might purify the place by masses and almsgiving. For the rest, I have not the heart to recount the visions which were currently reported, lest I should seem too hard upon one who had been

an enemy of monks: as, for instance, at the time when he drove the monks from Stow, the Blessed Mother of Our Lord, appearing to one of them in his sleep, threatened to visit the bishop with no slight vengeance; and again, the same Blessed Lady appearing to the same monk upon the night preceding the day of his decease, complained to her Son of the injurious acts of the bishop. The next morning as the monk was relating his vision to his fellows news was brought in of bishop Rodbert's death.

The manner of his death had been foretold him in an ambiguous prophecy by a holy hermit named Roger, who dwelt in the forest near St. Albans, and led an austere life, seldom heard of in our times. On a certain occasion, the bishop, in his usual insolent manner, demanded why he harboured a virgin who having forsaken her suitor for the sake of celibacy, had sought refuge with him. The hermit gave a fitting reply, when the bishop broke out, "Bold and insolent is your answer; your cowl alone sustains you." To which the hermit with equal point retorted, "Despise the cowl as you will, a day will come when you will sorely wish to have one, and words shall be wanting to you in which to ask for it." But [however readers may bear this,] it is known that the monks of Eynsham were devoted to our Lady and loved by her.

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and chastity of the prelate. A calmer judgement, or policy, led to their suppression.<sup>1</sup>

4. A fourth argument for the pretension of my MS. to be considered the archetype is founded on peculiarly minute but significant errors, in which all MSS. but that of my text agree; errors which evidently sprung from some indistinctness in the shape or position of a letter in the archetype which had misled the transcribers. Thus:—

p. 304, l. 7. In the name *Cliva*, bishop of Hereford, the *l* is written so closely on the *c* in the Magdalen MS. that the word might easily be mistaken for *diva*, and so

<sup>1</sup> The italics show the suppressed passages.

This is Rannulf, formerly chaplain of king William, of doubtful origin, but advanced by reason of his craft and eloquence to the chief place, and made procurator of the whole kingdom. Whenever a royal edict went forth taxing England at a certain sum, it was his custom to double it. [*He was the plunderer of the rich, the destroyer of the poor, the confiscator of inheritances. He was unsurpassed as a mercenary advocate, exceeding all bounds both in his actions and language, and treating suppliants with a violence fit only for rebels.*] Whereupon the king would laugh and say that he alone could set his wits to work in such a fashion, and that he cared not for the hatred of others so long as he pleased his master. [*At his instigation the holy preferments of the church were put up to auction.*] By these acts he won the bishopric of Durham, [*and justified his pretensions to the see by the payment of a thousand pounds.*] He came then to Durham, and in the first instance bore him modestly, fearing to offend

the Saint (Cuthbert), who is especially renowned as a reprover of evil doers. But, when he found his first and second misdeeds remained unavenged by the Saint, he boldly proceeded to tear suppliants from the shrine, and commit a crime unknown in former ages. [*Need I relate how he caused his unwilling monks, who were most devout, often to dine in his hall, placing openly before them forbidden viands, and, the more scandalously to set at nought their sacred vows, how he would order comely damsels of wanton form and feature, with garments revealing their figures and hair falling down their backs, to serve them with liquor. Then was there, I say, a mockery to be seen. For whether you cast your eyes modestly to the ground, or rivalled the bishop in the broadness of his jokes, you were at all events rebuked, and charged in the one case with hypocrisy, in the other with irreverence. But the doer of these and similar things in mundane affairs was indolent in spirituals, and strove to bury or cast into shade the ornaments of his church.*]

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in fact it occurs in all the MSS. But the proof that the Magdalen MS. is right and all the others wrong may be seen at this day in Hereford Cathedral, where a monument to bishop Clive still exists ; and we know from other sources that the name was Cliva and not Diva.

p. 181, l. 1. We have the word Ramesberiensis. This was the name of an old see, which was subsequently transformed into that of Salisbury. Here again the MSS. agree only in being wrong, though their errors are different, some reading Salesberiensis, some Samimesberiensis. But at the time referred to no see of Salisbury existed, and my MS. is unquestionably right in reading Ramesberiensis, although the word is indistinctly written.

p. 297, l. 22. We have an apostrophe to St. Wistan, son of Wimund and grandson of Wihthlaf, king of Mercia, a thoroughly well-known character, an account of whose martyrdom occurs in the *Gesta Regum*. The Magdalen MS. stands alone in correctly giving this name, the others corrupting it into Wlstan, a more recent and equally famous saint.

Instances of a similar kind, in which the Magdalen MS. contains the correct reading, while at the same time the blunders of the other MSS. are manifestly traceable to some indistinctness or ambiguity in the penmanship of the archetype, may be seen at pp. 181, n. 1 ; 272, n. 1 ; 277, n. 4 ; 291, n. 8 ; 301, n. 9, and 310, n. 4. Many more will be found in the notes. In these various examples the Magdalen MS. alone furnishes the correct reading, and not only clears up the errors of the other MSS., but shows the cause of their occurrence.

Each of the above proofs taken alone will be acknowledged to possess considerable weight, but their cumulative force appears to put the fact beyond question that in the Magdalen MS. we possess Malmesbury's own autograph.