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978-1-108-04920-7 - *Chronicon Angliæ ab Anno Domini 1328 usque ad Annum 1388*: Auctore
Monacho Quodam Sancti Albani

Edited by Edward Maunde Thompson

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Chronicon Angliæ

ab Anno Domini 1328 usque ad Annum 1388

Thomas of Walsingham (c.1340–c.1422) was a monk of St Alban's abbey whose Latin chronicle of the years 1328–88 was long thought lost. It was rediscovered by chance and edited by Edward Maunde Thompson (1840–1929), whose edition, published in 1874 with English side-notes, is based on a Harleian manuscript he found in the British Museum, supplemented by Bodleian and Cottonian manuscripts. Walsingham's chronicle is notable for its scurrilous attacks on John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster and father of Henry IV. This scandalous material accounts for its suppression by the monks of St Alban's, who would have been fearful of offending the Plantagenet dynasty. Thompson's introduction provides a full history of the discovery and comparison of the manuscript sources, a discussion of the contents of the chronicle, and two later English texts based on it. A portion of Walsingham's *Polychronicon*, covering the years 1376–7, is provided as an appendix.

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Chronicon Angliæ

ab Anno Domini 1328
usque ad Annum 1388

Auctore Monacho Quodam Sancti Albani

EDITED BY
EDWARD MAUNDE THOMPSON



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RERUM BRITANNICARUM MEDII ÆVI
SCRIPTORES,

OR

CHRONICLES AND MEMORIALS OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND IRELAND

DURING

THE MIDDLE AGES.

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

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

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

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

He proposed that each chronicle or historical document to be edited should be treated in the same way as if the editor were engaged on an *Editio Princeps*; and for this purpose the most correct text should be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

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

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

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

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

*Rolls House,
December 1857.*

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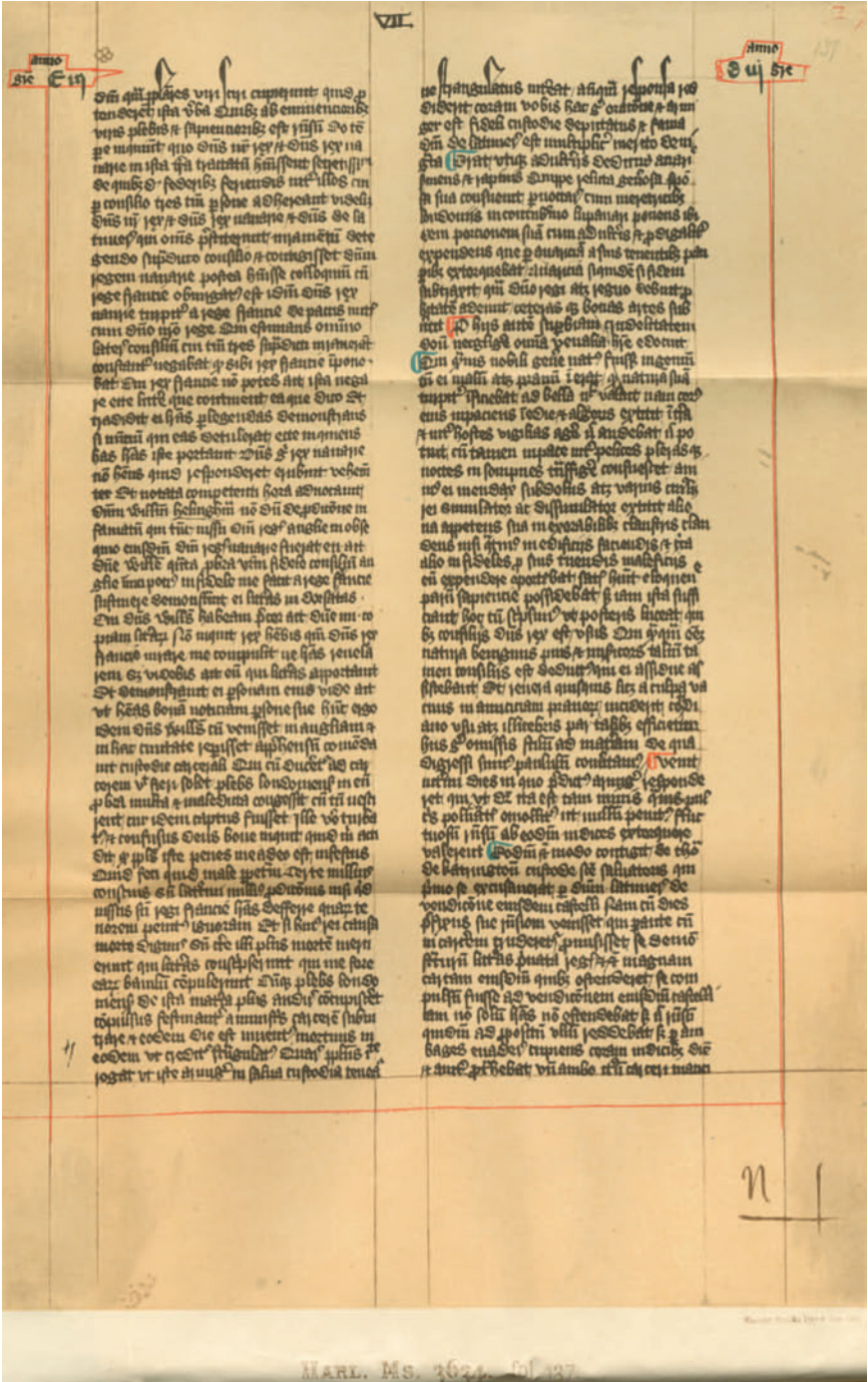
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1328–1388.

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CHRONICON ANGLIÆ,

AB ANNO DOMINI 1328

USQUE AD ANNUM 1388,

AUCTORE MONACHO QUODAM SANCTI ALBANI.

EDITED

BY

EDWARD MAUNDE THOMPSON,

BARRISTER-AT-LAW, AND ASSISTANT-KEEPER OF THE MANUSCRIPTS IN THE
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INTRODUCTION.

THE Harleian Manuscript, No. 3634, from which the present chronicle is printed, came under my notice during a systematic examination of the historical MSS. in the British Museum. That it has hitherto escaped the attention of historians is doubtless owing to the fact that it is incorrectly described and indexed in the Catalogue of the Harleian MSS. as the *Hypodigma Neustriæ* of Thomas Walsingham.¹ The volume consists of the chronicle here printed, from A.D. 1328 to 1388, written on vellum towards the close of the 14th century, and supplemented in the 16th century with additions, written on paper, from the *Hypodigma* and the *Historia Anglicana* of Walsingham, so as to make up a continuous history from the year 1273 to 1422. It is only with the original part that we have to deal.

This volume
printed from
Harl. MS.
3634.

The interest of the chronicle is twofold. In the first place, it gives us, in a perfect form, and in its original Latin dress, the circumstantial history of the close of

Two-fold
interest of
the work.

¹ "Thomæ de Walsingham Hypodigma Neustriæ. Codex antiquus, membranaceus; et seriore manu super chartâ suppletus. Additamenta principium et finem occupant; et interpolantur etiam, in parte antiquiore, quædam a Ranulpho Cestrensi, et fortè aliis. Præmittitur, continuatoris manu, aut etiam recentiore, Historia brevis Thomæ de Walsingham. Hypodigma Neustriæ Historiam Normannorum continet, ab irruptione eorum in Neustriam, usque

ad annum tertium Henrici quinti. Non, ut perperam dicitur in primo codicis folio, ab anno tantum 1273 ad 1422. Codicis pars posterior desumpta est ex *Historia brevi Thomæ de Walsingham*, quæ edita est An. 1574 in fol. Aliæ sunt in codice hoc variationes (et defectus), quæ inspicienti erunt obviæ, sed in Catalogo vix possent enumerari." Cat. of Harl. MSS., vol. iii. p. 47. See the description of the MS. below, p. xxv.

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Edward III.'s reign, written at St. Alban's abbey, which has hitherto been considered lost ; and secondly, it brings to light the methods used in the compilation of the history known as Walsingham's *Historia Anglicana*, and at the same time sets on a proper footing the connexion of that work with other contemporary chronicles.

Stow's account of events in 1376-7 founded on contemporary history.

It has been long recognised that John Stow, the historian of the 16th century, had materials for his history of the end of the reign of Edward III., the sources of which were not known. The account given in his "Chronicle of England" of what took place at the meeting of the parliament of 1376, known as the Good Parliament, and of the subsequent events up to the king's death, is so exact and full of detail, that it could not be doubted that he derived his knowledge from contemporary authorities. Indeed, actual proof of this was not wanting ; for among his papers, now preserved in the Harleian Library, was found a chronicle, in English, of the period in question, 1376-7, which was clearly the one from which Stow had drawn his history of the time, and which bears internal evidence of being a translation from a Latin original.¹

Translation of an old Latin chron-

This translation now forms part of the Harleian MS. 6217, ff. 3-12, with the exception of the first leaf which

¹ The former existence of a Latin original for the translation has been generally admitted by historians. The only writer who has thrown any doubts upon it is the late Professor W. W. Shirley, in his edition of the *Fasciculi Zizaniorum* in this series. The translation being one of the authorities brought forward in support of a tradition that Wycliffe held the wardenship of Canterbury Hall at Oxford, Mr. Shirley rejects its testimony on the ground of its being a compilation of the 16th century. He remarks that "the language of the fragment has

" been observed to bear a close resemblance to that of Fabyan's chronicle, which was printed in 1512. Probably, therefore, the date [in the title, *i.e.* 1216,] should be 1516." He, however, admits that "the author has had before him one, or perhaps two, contemporary authorities, which he has indolently interwoven with his narrative, without changing one even of those expressions which most clearly reflect the image of passing events." Pp. 520, 521.

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at some time got astray and is now bound up in the Harleian MS. 247, f. 173. It is written principally in one hand, but some of the sheets are by other writers, one of them being Stow himself, who has re-written one page and also connected the separate sheets with catch-words, etc. He has also written at the head of the first page the following title:—

John
penned as it semithe by ^ the made

Liber S. Alban. ^ prior of Robart's bridge, after
abbot of Boxley, in anno 1216.

The date is in paler ink than the rest of the title, and appears to have been a subsequent addition; and it is so obviously written by mistake, that it need not be regarded. As to the probability of the authorship by John prior of Robertsbridge, all that need be said is, that not one word about that monastery occurs in the whole course of the piece, while St. Alban's is frequently mentioned; and that therefore, if we are to accept him as the writer, we must suppose this John to have been a monk of the latter house, and to have written the chronicle before being transferred to Robertsbridge. Such transference, however, would in itself be unlikely, although not impossible, at so late a time as the 14th century, St. Alban's being a Benedictine, and Robertsbridge a Cistercian, monastery. I think that the whole of the title, excepting the three first words, must be rejected as a mere blunder. The very way in which it is written makes it doubtful. Instead of being written off in a single line, it is built up as if from information obtained at intervals.¹ Stow made ample use of the translation. He not only worked the substance of it

¹ It is, however, worthy of notice that there was a John, abbat of Boxley, living at the close of the 14th century. He appears as a party to a bond, (Add. Charter 16,487, Brit. Mus.) dated 18 Ric. II. [A.D. 1395], not far from the period of the writing of the chronicle.

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into his Chronicle, but often borrowed its very words and in so doing introduced into his text the faults of mistranslation.¹ From this it may be fairly presumed that he never saw the original Latin. And indeed it will be presently shown that the translation was made from two MSS., so that we may conclude that it was sent to him in separate portions by perhaps two different persons. This supposition will further explain the disconnected way in which the translation is written by different hands.

Publication
of the
translation
in the *Archæologia*.

In 1828 Mr. Thomas Amyot communicated Stow's translation to the Society of Antiquaries, and it was printed in the 22nd volume of the *Archæologia* (pp. 204–284), in 1829.² Mr. Amyot in his introductory letter notices the use made of the history by Fox in his "Acts and Monuments," and by Bishop Lowth in his "Life of William of Wykeham." Lowth made use of Stow's translation, but Fox had access to a Latin original. He uses it in his account of Wycliffe, and refers to it as "Chronicon Monasterii Albani," and by other titles, and in one place he gives the name of the owner: "Historia monachi D. Albani, ex accommodato D. Matth. Archiepisc. Cantuar."³ The manuscript then belonged

The original
Latin used
by Fox;

¹ For example, the passage "Quod ut asseruit, in tempore Willelmi Rufi, fuit in Anglia practizatum. Pro quo, sicut pro aliis regibus Angliæ, non obstante quod tulit bona ecclesiæ, orat ecclesia Anglicana; quæ, si talia fecit licite, bene facit orando pro ipso, si illicite, errat: quod dicere est absurdum" (p. 116 below), is translated, "That (as he affirmed) in the tyme of William Rufus yt was practysed in Englande, for whom, as for other kynges of the realme (notwithstandynge he took away the church goodes) the

"church of England praieth, which yf she doe lawfully, then she dothe well in prayeinge for the bishopp, and to say she doth yt unlawfully were absurde." Stow copies the translation word for word, except "in prayeinge for the bishopp."

² "Transcript of a Chronicle in the Harleian Library of MSS., No. 6217, entitled 'An Histori-call Relation of certain passages about the end of King Edward the Third, and of his Death.'"

³ Fox, *Acts and Monuments*, 2 vols. fol. 1570, vol. i. pp. 525, 526.

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to Archbishop Parker, and the proper place to look for it was the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, where Parker's collection of MSS. was deposited. Lowth accordingly, although he did not recognise in the MS. quoted by Fox the original of the translation which he himself used, seems to have made some enquiries, but fell into the error of supposing that Malverne's Chronicle in continuation of the *Polychronicon* had been the one used, since it contained certain incidents also related in the "Acts and Monuments."¹ Mr. Amyot again instituted a search for the missing MS. both at Cambridge and in the British Museum, but without any satisfactory result. We are now so fortunate as to have recovered not only a single copy of the long lost Latin original, but also to have a second one, in a fragmentary state it is true, but still of great value. And, strange to say, both the MSS. once belonged to Archbishop Parker.

owned by
archbishop
Parker, but
subsequent-
ly lost.

Two copies
recovered;
both once
owned by
Parker:

Among the MSS. of the Cottonian Library which were burnt in the disastrous fire at Ashburnham House, in 1731, was the MS. marked Otho C. ii. This volume contained originally a short chronicle of a few pages, followed by the *Flores Historiarum* of Matthew of Westminster, with a continuation to the year 1379.²

(1.) Cott.
MS. Otho C.
ii., burnt
and partly
restored.

It is only in recent times that the charred remains of the burnt MSS. were collected, the fragments of leaves separated and inlaid, and such as could be identified restored to their places. Of the MS. Otho C. ii., a large portion of the *Flores Historiarum* was recovered, and fortunately the greater part of the continuation. The end of this continuation now consists of twenty-one

¹ Lowth, *Life of Wykeham*, 1759, p. 145 *note*.

² It is thus described in the Appendix to the Report on the Cottonian Library, 1732:—

Otho C. ii. 1. Brevis descriptio

Angliæ et Chronicon Regum usque ad Edw. 3. f. 1.

2. Matthæi Westmon. *Florum historiarum* fragmentum. f. 9.

3. Continuatio ejusdem Matthæi usque ad annum 1379; non impressa. f. 224.

b

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leaves, written in a different hand from the rest of the piece, and beginning with the meeting of the Good Parliament in 1376. These leaves were identified by Mr. Bond as containing the original Latin of Stow's translation. The MS. had, however, suffered so much from the effects of the fire, the leaves being shrunken and burnt round the edges and in many places blackened and rendered illegible, that it was useless for the purpose of a satisfactory restoration of the text. And this was to be the more regretted, as the history extended in date beyond the translation, and contained notices of incidents not to be found in other chronicles of the period. Its value was also enhanced by the fact of its being written in a hand of the 14th century, close to the time of its compilation. Parker's handwriting appears in numerous notes written in the margins of the volume.¹

(2.) Harl.
MS. 3634.

I now return to the Harleian MS. 3634. This MS. also belonged to Parker, being easily identified by the hand in which the numeration of the leaves is written, and by other peculiarities, such as red pencil marks; these being similar to such as are found in the archbishop's MSS. But in addition, the record of such a volume as this having been in Parker's library is still to be found in the *Catalogus Historicorum* of John Josceline, his secretary, thus: "Anno Domini 1388 claruit quidam Monachus, ut apparet, Sancti Albani innominatus, cujus extat historia ab anno Domini 1330² ad annum Domini 1388. Habet eam Archiepiscopus Cantuariensis. In ea multa continentur de Wicliffo, Papali Scismate, et de magna Rusticorum rebellione, quæ facta fuit per id tempus. Incipit: *Rex Edwardus fecit tres Comites.*"³

Reference
to the Harl.
MS. by
Josceline,
Parker's
secretary.

Extracts
made by
Josceline.

If further proof were wanting it might be sought in

¹ For a detailed description of the MS. see p. xxvii. | *Historicorum* (printed in Hearne's edition of Avesbury, 1720, pp. 269-298), p. 295.

² He should have said, 1328.

³ Joannis Joscelini *Catalogus*

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the Cottonian MS. Vitellius E. xiv. (a volume which also narrowly escaped destruction by fire), in which, at ff. 131–147, are extensive extracts, taken, to all appearance, from this same Harleian MS., in the handwriting of Josceline. They are chiefly drawn from those portions of the chronicle which relate to Wycliffe. For critical purposes they have proved to be of no value, Josceline having turned the obscure passages apparently by phrases of his own composition.

The chronicle in the Harleian MS. proceeds regularly from 1328 to 1370, but owing apparently to a fault of the scribe the history for the years 1371–1375 has been omitted. Immediately after the death of Sir John Chandos in 1370,¹ the text proceeds with the chapter “De quodam in carcere strangulato,” etc.,² which takes us at once into the midst of the events of the year 1376, as narrated in Stow’s translation, and thence it continues without break to 1388. Here at length, then, is the Latin original (or rather the greater part of it) in an uninjured form.

The satisfaction experienced at the discovery of this historical piece in a serviceable form was much diminished when a comparison with the translation and with the fragments preserved in the MS. Otho C. ii. showed that some chapters had been omitted at the beginning. The Otho MS. could indeed supply those chapters, but only in a very fragmentary and imperfect shape. Under these circumstances there were but small hopes of having the means of restoring the early chapters in their original words. However the occurrence of the running title “Liber VII.,” at the top of some of the leaves of the MS., indicated that they had originally formed a part of some continuation to Higden’s *Polychronicon*, it being the practice to incorporate all such continuations into the last, or seventh, book of that

Defect in
the Harl.
MS.

¹ P. 68 of this volume.| ² P. 81.

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Missing
portion of
Harl. MS.
found in
Bodl. MS.
316.
Harl. and
Bodl. MSS.
originally
one.

work. An examination of all copies of Higden in the British Museum and other libraries followed, and by rare good fortune the search resulted in the discovery, at Oxford, of five out of six of the missing chapters. They were found at the end of a copy of the *Polychronicon* in the Bodleian MS. 316. In addition, the handwriting of the whole of this MS. proved to be the same as that of a large portion of the Harleian chronicle, and a more minute examination finally showed that the two MSS. were originally one.

The copy of the *Polychronicon* in the Bodleian MS. ends at f. 150, and the chapters in question follow immediately, beginning with the one entitled, "De parliamento facto Londoniis,"¹ and terminating abruptly at the end of f. 151 *b*, with the words, "de diversis regni provinciis tam."² Then follows a chronicle of English history, from 1328 to 1388, the text of which is to some extent the same as that printed in this volume. To create a fictitious connexion between the preceding fragment and this chronicle, the original catchword at the foot of f. 151 *b* has been erased, and replaced with "Rex Edwardus," the opening words of the latter. But there is also a note written with the plummet, "reverte ad tale signum ☉," which is all important. Now turning to the Harleian MS., the leaf numbered 137, and beginning with the words, "domini quam populus lares viri," is found to fit on exactly to f. 151 *b* of the Bodleian MS., the writing of both MSS. also, at this point, being by the same hand. And finally there is the corresponding mark ☉ at the top of the page.³

Method of
formation
of the two
MSS.

Here, then, we have two manuscripts made up out of a single one within the 14th century, and therefore not long after the compilation of the history. The writer

¹ P. 68 of this volume.

² P. 82.

³ See the facsimile at the beginning of this volume. It may be

further added that the original signatures of the quires of the two MSS. also correspond.

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of the original manuscript, after finishing the *Polychronicon*, proceeded with a history beginning with the meeting of the Good Parliament, which he probably intended to continue to the year 1388. But when he had reached the year 1382 he stopped, and rejecting nearly the whole of the latter work, completed the Bodleian MS., as it now stands, with the chronicle of 1328–1388.¹ The accident of the opening chapters of the rejected chronicle being left in the MS. is no doubt owing to the fact of their having been written on the last pages of the last quire of the *Polychronicon*, from which they could not be conveniently detached, at least without cutting the vellum. The plummet reference was probably written only for temporary purposes. The rejected portion was then taken in hand by a scribe some years later, who prefixed to it a transcript, as far as 1370, of the 1328–1388 chronicle, and the opening of the chapter, “De quodam in carcere strangulato,” which was wanting to connect his additions with the original rejected leaves, and added at the end the history for the years 1382–1388 from the same chronicle. Thus was produced the 1328–1388 chronicle of the Harleian MS.

The motives of the original scribe for thus re-arranging his work could now be only conjectured, were it not that the record of the name of the original owner of the Bodleian MS. affords means for solving the question. This owner was Thomas of Woodstock, duke of Gloucester, sixth son of Edward III., and younger brother of John of Gaunt.

Reasons for
rearrange-
ment of the
original MS.

Now it can hardly be supposed that Thomas of Woodstock would order a manuscript to be written for his own use, containing such scurrilous attacks upon, and such grave charges against, his brother John of Gaunt, as the Harleian chronicle does. Nor, may it be presumed, would the writer of such a manuscript care to risk the displeasure of the two princes by disposing of

¹ For a detailed description of the Bodl. MS. see p. xxvi.

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such a work to one of them. It seems therefore more than probable that the scribe, discovering the compromising nature of the chronicle which he was copying, stopped short in his work from fear of the consequences, and replaced the objectionable piece by one of a more harmless nature.

One chapter
missed in
the other
MSS., sup-
plied from
Otho C. ii.

After the recovery of the portion in the Bodleian MS., there remained only one chapter of the history in Stow's translation to be accounted for; and here the burnt Cottonian MS. was happily of use. The chapter is printed¹ from that MS., which at this particular place, had escaped great damage, only a few words, and those easily replaced, having been reached by the fire.

The older
version in
Cott. MS.
Otho C. ii.

Of the two texts recovered in the Cotton and Bodley-Harleian MSS., that of the former is the older. It is rather more detailed in some places, and even more outspoken in its abuse of the duke of Lancaster. The titles of the chapters are also different. Which of the two MSS. belonging to Parker, the Cottonian or Harleian, it was that Fox borrowed cannot now be accurately determined.

This MS.
probably
used by Fox.

But from the internal evidence of some of his expressions I think it more probable that he made use of the Cottonian MS. Indeed it is very doubtful whether Parker had possession of the Harleian MS. at the time that Fox wrote his work; for he did not use it for his edition of Walsingham's History published as late as 1574, and it can hardly be supposed that he would have neglected so important a manuscript, had it been in his library at the time.

Probable
originals
used for
Stow's
translation.

With regard to Stow's translation, the first part seems to be made from the Cottonian text; but it falls in with the Harleian MS., as soon as it takes up the story. Indeed, in some places the translation follows the latter text so closely in the rendering of corrupt or imperfect passages, that one would be inclined to believe that it was made from this very manuscript, were it not that

¹ P. 74.

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there are certain discrepancies which cannot well be reconciled.¹ It is therefore more probable that a transcript of the Harleian MS. was used. The translation itself has no great merit. There has been scarcely any attempt made to extract the meaning of involved or difficult sentences; and punctuation is disregarded to the utter confusion of intelligibility. It will be noticed that the vision of Thomas de la Hoo, a member of the Good Parliament, which is omitted in the translation, is given at length in the text.

The very great scarcity of manuscripts containing this most interesting piece of contemporary history cannot be a matter for surprise when we consider its character. The violence of the attacks contained in it on John of Gaunt and his party would be sure some day to bring down the vengeance of the Lancastrians upon the luckless monastery that might happen to have such compromising works in its library. A careful search for other MSS. of this class has brought scarcely anything to light; for, not taking account of Josceline's comparatively modern extracts, I have found only one MS. containing a small portion of this history. The Additional MS. 12,118 in the British

Reasons for the scarcity of MSS. containing the scandalous history of 1376-7.

¹ The following are instances of close rendering:—Lord Latimer's character is thus drawn, "In warres he was nothyng worthe, for his bodye was impatient of hunger, and of greate chillishnes upon earthe, and he never durst, nether yet colde, keape watch," etc.; the Latin of Harl. MS. being, "Ad bella nihil valuit, nam corpus ejus impatiens inediae et algoris exstitit. In terra et inter hostes vigilias agere nec audebat nec potuit," in which the scribe has carelessly omitted the word "hostili" after "terra," (p. 84 below). Again, the words "fluctuosum responsum" (for "fructuosum")

are translated "doubtful answere" (p. 85); "nusquam est hostis (i.e. istis) temporibus tuta fides," "at no tyme the faith of the enemy ys to be trusted" (p. 106); "a galeis (i.e. Gallis) intercepti," "intercepted by the galleys" (p. 141). On the other hand, the translation omits one or two sentences in the Harl. MS., although this might be by accident; but it also states that Sir Peter de la Mare was sent prisoner to "Newercke," while the text reads Nottingham, and it gives the name of Thomas Wynton o one of the duke of Lancaster's retainers, whom the Harl. MS. calls Thomas Swintone.

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Museum, containing the *Polychronicon* with one of the ordinary continuations to the year 1377, and written in the 15th century, has incorporated into its text the chapter on the death of the Black Prince.

Few MSS. noticed after the dissolution of the monasteries.

Very few MSS. of it seem to have come to light after the dissolution of the monasteries; for most of the writers of the 16th century, who have occasion to notice any of the facts put forward in the chronicle, refer to Fox's quotations. Some few however may have seen an original MS.; and Thomas Martin, the author of a Life of Wykeham, was certainly acquainted with more than one. He often quotes the "Liber Albanus," "Codex Albanus," and in one place seems to indicate the Cottonian and Harleian MSS: "At hic specta, quæso, quorundam ex nostratibus historicorum fidem, qui, ut commentum hoc triplicem auctorem præ se ferret, quasque tricipiti Cerbero communiretur, chronicon illud Albanense nunc *Flori historiarum*, nunc *Ra-* " *dulphi Polychronico* appenderint."¹ It will be remembered that the Cottonian text is appended to the *Flores Historiarum* of Matthew of Westminster, and the Bodley-Harleian text to the *Polychronicon* of Ralph Higden.

Reference, in Martin's Life of Wykeham, perhaps to the Harl. and Cott. MSS.

Suppression of the scandalous chronicle at St. Alban's.

The scandalous chronicle was in fact suppressed at St. Alban's, the place of its birth; and we probably owe the existence of the only copies of it that we have to the accident of their speedy removal beyond the reach of the revision which afterwards took place. By the fortunate circumstance of so many of the MSS. of St. Alban's Abbey having descended to us, we are enabled to disclose very completely the history of this revision, or rather suppression.

¹ "Historica Descriptio, complectens vitam ac res gestas beatissimi viri Gulielmi Wicami quondam Vintoniensis Episcopi." By Dr. Thomas Martin, chancellor of

the diocese of Winchester. First printed in 1597; and reprinted by Dr. Nicholas, warden of Winchester, 1690. Ed. 1690, p. 124.

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It will be seen that the text of the present chronicle very soon falls into agreement with that of Walsingham's *Historia Anglicana*. Mr. Riley, the editor of that history in the present series, correctly traced back the origin of the work, as it is printed, to the Old Royal MS. 13 E. ix. in the British Museum; a large portion of that volume being occupied by a text from which was derived the Arundel MS. No. vii., in the College of Arms, the foundation of Mr. Riley's edition. The Royal MS. is a large folio written at St. Alban's at the beginning of the 15th century, and contains, among other matter, various chronicles compiled at that monastery down to the end of the 14th century.¹ It is this MS. which furnishes us with the key to the history of the suppression of the more compromising portions of the present chronicle.

The agreement is complete between the texts of the Harleian and Royal MSS., beginning at the point where they fall in with Walsingham's History, to the year 1369. But under that year, in the account of the duke of Lancaster's expedition into France, there are certain alterations in the text of the Royal MS., which a reference to the Harleian text at once explains.² For it is found that reflections, cast upon the conduct of the duke and his officers in the older copy, are toned down in the altered text. This is the first place in which John of Gaunt comes prominently forward in the history, and from this point the corrections in the Royal MS. are numerous. The next alteration is more decisive, and points out clearly the motives for the revision. The year 1373 opens with the duke's second invasion of France: "Johannes dux Lancastriæ, filius regis et frater principis," etc.³ The last five words are written over an erasure, and a warning note in the margin, in the hand of the reviser, "cave quia offendiculum," tells us

Proved by a comparison of the Harl. MS. with Royal MS. 13 E. ix., the foundation of Walsingham's *Hist. Anglicana*.

Alterations in the Royal MS. in passages relating to John of Gaunt.

¹ For a description of this MS. see p. xxix.

² See p. 63.

³ Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.* i. 315.

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that the alteration was not made to correct an ordinary error. As already stated, the Harleian MS. omits the history of the years 1371–1375, and we must therefore seek elsewhere for the original reading of the erased passage. For this we have two texts ready at hand. The Bodleian MS., as I have already stated, contains a perfect chronicle for 1328–1388, a great part of which is the same as the one in the Harleian MS. The Cottonian MS. Faustina B. ix., also contains the same chronicle, but beginning imperfectly at the year 1360, in a slightly modified form. Both these copies supply the history of 1371–1375, and, not having been tampered with, give the original reading of the passage in question as, “cui hactenus non arrisit fortuna bellica.”¹

Comparison
of the Royal
MS. with
texts in
Bodl. MS.
316, and
Cott. MS.
Faust. B. ix.

For 1376–7, the compiler of the Royal MS. has substituted an account of a mild form in place of that followed by the Harleian MS., and Stow’s translation;² but at the beginning of Richard II.’s reign, the

¹ As the history for the years 1371–1375 is not printed in the following pages, the text of the MSS. being that followed by Walsingham, I here give the corrected passages of the Royal MS. within that period, accompanied with the original readings, supplied from Bodl. MS. 316, and Faust. B. ix:—
 (A.D. 1373.) “Sed in hac expeditione modicum vel nullum dampnum Francis intulit* nisi quia redemptionem diversis villis et locis imposuit.” †
 “Tandem ingressus est Aquitaniam mestus de infortunio, et sic pervenit Burdegaliā. Nam qui in ingressu Franciæ apud Kalesiam triginta et amplius millia

“ equorum in suo comitatu habu-
 “ erat, *perpaucos*,* ut fertur, equos
 “ Burdegaliā secum vivos ad-
 “ duxit.” (Wals. Hist. i. 315.)
 (A.D. 1375.) “Johannes dux
 “ Lancastriæ ordinatus fuit per con-
 “ cilium † ad eundem in Flandriam
 “ ad tractandum de pace.” (*Ibid.*
 i. 317.)

² The following alterations occur in the text of the Royal MS. for these two years:—

(A.D. 1376.) “In progressu
 “ vero plura fuere delata de regis
 “ familiaribus.” ‡ (Wals. Hist. i.
 320.)

“ Qui illico contra statuta parlia-
 “ menti permisit § regem recipere in

* *inferri permisit*, B. F.

† *a diversis, etc. accepit*, B. F.

‡ *et cum illaudabili satis pompa*, B.;
et cum notabili satis turba, F.

* *quadraginta*, B.; *quingenta*, F.

† *semel optulit*, B. F.

‡ *de duce Lancastriæ*, B.; *de regis consiliariis*, F.

§ *coegit*, B.