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978-1-108-05231-3 - *Chronicon Abbatiae Ramesiensis a saec. X. usque ad an. circiter 1200*

Edited by William Dunn Macray

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Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores, or *The Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages*, usually referred to as the 'Rolls Series', was an ambitious project first proposed to the British Treasury in 1857 by Sir John Romilly, the Master of the Rolls, and quickly approved for public funding. Its purpose was to publish historical source material covering the period from the arrival of the Romans to the reign of Henry VIII, 'without mutilation or abridgement', starting with the 'most scarce and valuable' texts. A 'correct text' of each work would be established by collating 'the best manuscripts', and information was to be included in every case about the manuscripts used, the life and times of the author, and the work's 'historical credibility', but there would be no additional annotation. The first books were published in 1858, and by the time it was completed in 1896 the series contained 99 titles and 255 volumes. Although many of the works have since been re-edited by modern scholars, the enterprise as a whole stands as a testament to the Victorian revival of interest in the middle ages.

Chronicon Abbatiae Ramesiensis a saec. X. usque ad an. circiter 1200

Ramsey Abbey, Cambridgeshire, was founded in 969 and rapidly became one of the richest and most important Benedictine houses in the country, famous for its school and library. The *Chronicon* was compiled around 1170, with the addition of some later charters up to 1200. The author is unknown. Parts 1–3 cover the foundation of the abbey, the miracles of St Oswald, and a collection of charters relating to grants to the abbey prior to 1066. Part 4 is a register of legal documents dating from 974 to 1200. The contents are valuable not just for the history of Ramsey, but as illustrations of twelfth-century legal practice. The appendices include a list of abbots to 1471, the catalogue of the monastic library, and a continuation of the history of the abbey from 1285 to 1332. This edition was originally published in 1886, with a glossary, index and English side-notes to the Latin text. The abbey's three-volume cartulary is also reissued in this series.

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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Frontmatter

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Edited by William Dunn Macray

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

RERUM BRITANNICARUM MEDII ÆVI
SCRIPTORES,
OR
CHRONICLES AND MEMORIALS OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND IRELAND
DURING
THE MIDDLE AGES.

U R 5221.

2

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Edited by William Dunn Macray

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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Edited by William Dunn Macray

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.

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Edited by William Dunn Macray

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

4

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

978-1-108-05231-3 - Chronicon Abbatiae Ramesiensis a saec. X. usque ad an. circiter 1200

Edited by William Dunn Macray

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CHRONICON
 ABBATLÆ RAMESEIENSIS,

A SÆC. X. USQUE AD AN. CIRCITER 1200 :

IN QUATUOR PARTIBUS.

PARTES I., II., III., ITERUM POST TH. GALE, EX CHARTULARIO IN ARCHIVIS
 REGNI SERVATO,

PARS IV. NUNC PRIMUM EX ALIIS CODICIBUS,

EDITÆ.

CURÆ

W. DUNN MACRAY, A.M.,

SOC. ANTIQ. LOND. SOCI.

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 TREASURY, UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS.

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Edited by William Dunn Macray

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-05231-3 - Chronicon Abbatiae Ramesiensis a saec. X. usque ad an. circiter 1200

Edited by William Dunn Macray

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTENTS.

	Page.
PREFACE:—	
Appendix to Preface :	
i. Additional collations of Charters at Ramsey Abbey	lvii
ii. Goscelini Miracula S. Ivonis -	lix
iii. Fragment of a Catalogue of the Abbey Library	lxxxv
CHRONICON :—	
Præfatio -	1
Pars, sive tela, I. -	7
----- II. -	46
----- III. -	109
----- IV.	181
Narratio de Abbate Gualtero, temp. R. Stephani	325
APPENDIX :—	
i. Catalogus Abbatum, e Chartul. Scacc.	339
ii. ----- e cod. Cotton. Vesp. A. xviii.	347
iii. De Abbate Simone Eye, ex eodem cod.	349
iv. De Abbate Rob. Nassyngton, ex eodem cod.	353
v. Catalogus Librorum in Bibliotheca Abbatiae	356
vi. Epistolæ Abbatis Joh. de Sautre -	368
vii. Epistolæ Abbatis Simonis Eye	412
GLOSSARY -	421
INDEX -	431

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-05231-3 - Chronicon Abbatiae Ramesiensis a saec. X. usque ad an. circiter 1200

Edited by William Dunn Macray

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

P R E F A C E.

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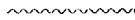
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Edited by William Dunn Macray

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

P R E F A C E.



WHILE in the general chronicles of the kingdom we find the records of the conquest of race by race, and the establishment of an individual sovereignty, in the chronicles of the earliest religious houses we trace continually, on the other hand, the record of the gradual consolidation of the several races in one people, the spread of civilization, as well as of religion, from common centres, the establishment of law and custom, and the formation of national life. It is almost a truism to say that it is from the side lights thrown on the general history by biographies and hagiographies, by charters of foundation and gift, by ecclesiastical decrees as well as civil, that we can often best understand how through the midst of wars and wastings the English nation in its earliest days grew on and grew up. Because the centre of unity in the religious life was maintained, therefore the national life waxed strong.

And although the great abbey of Ramsey stood in point of time very low down in the long list of Saxon monasteries, the share which its narrative contributes to this work of illustration, especially for the days of Danish occupation, is by no means the least. The abbey rises in a time when the worst of the invasions of the heathen Northmen are past, but, being fixed in that East Anglia where, only some century before, Ely and Medeshamstede had been burned by them, and the whole province laid waste by their inroads, there was the same work now to be renewed afresh, which had

been begun aforetime, of enlightenment and civilization. And they who chose their solitary homes in the districts of marsh and fen, till then undrained, untilled, uninhabited, or (as at Evesham and at the Thorneys of Cambridgeshire and Middlesex) in places overgrown with brushwood and briar, were not at least chargeable with great greed of gain or gross indulgence of self-pleasing.¹ The speeches which are often put in the mouths of founders and benefactors are not, of course, any more than those which are found in Livy and the like, to be taken as historical; but nevertheless in that of Oswald to Ailwin which is given so fully, as "by our own reporter," in the twenty-second (or, as in the margin, eighteenth) chapter of the ensuing narrative, we may see a true statement of the objects which must have been had in view in the foundation of many a religious house on a site remote from the noise of tumultuous times. There, where men have renounced the world and its cares, says the archbishop, "the air becomes "salubrious, the fruits of the earth are gathered in "abundance, famines and pestilences disappear, the "State is duly governed, prisons are opened and captives set free, those wrecked at sea are relieved, the "sick are healed, and the weak find means for their "convalescence." We can easily understand how amidst a people sorely wasted by their fellow-men, ignorant, unskilful, half or wholly heathen, the marvellous results that came from skill in draining and embanking and tillage, from the study and practice of medicine, from the teaching and practice of the principles of justice and right, and of charity to the suffering and the weak, seemed to be, as Oswald is made to represent them, the directly miraculous outpouring at first hand of a blessing from on high.

¹ Nor even with regard only to personal security in their isolation, as said *infra*, p. xvi.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-05231-3 - Chronicon Abbatiae Ramesiensis a saec. X. usque ad an. circiter 1200

Edited by William Dunn Macray

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PREFACE.

ix

The Ramsey story as here printed appears in this its complete shape for the first time. It is divided into four parts, called in the first and third parts, in the artificial phraseology which the writer too often, after the fashion of his time, affects, "webs" (*telæ*) spun with the "spindle" (*liciatorio*) of a pen. Of these the fourth together with the preface to the first, have not previously been printed. But before noting what portions have appeared in print and where, it will be most in order to describe the manuscript sources from which the contents of the volume have been drawn.

I. For the primary authority for the text of the first three parts, and of the narrative of abbot Walter's abbacy which is attached as a kind of supplement to the fourth part, the chartulary of the abbey which is preserved in the Public Record Office has been adopted. This is designated in the notes as "A." It is a MS. of (as concerns our portion) the early part of the 14th century, and the chronicle occupies ff. 103–132*b*. For fuller details respecting this volume it is only necessary to refer to the edition of the rest of its contents which, under the editorial care of Mr. Hart and Rev. Ponsonby Lyons, is included in this series.¹

An earlier MS., which belongs to the close of the 13th century, is referred to in the notes as "B." This is a very important MS.; it is the only one which contains the fourth part complete, and it is also one which has been frequently used. It is now Rawlinson MS. B. 333, in the Bodleian Library. Its earliest known owner after the Dissolution was Sir Henry Spelman, who quotes

¹ The name of Ramsey, whether in substantival or adjectival form, is written in the Exchequer MS. always in a contracted way, and the extensions are taken from the Bodleian copy. The former MS. is quoted by Dodsworth, as being in his time in the Remembrancer's Office in the Exchequer, in vol. lxxi. of his MS. Collections, p. 124.

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978-1-108-05231-3 - Chronicon Abbatiae Ramesiensis a saec. X. usque ad an. circiter 1200

Edited by William Dunn Macray

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

it and refers to it in his *Glossarium Archaiologicum* in frequent instances, some of which will be found noted in the glossary to this volume. In the notes to pp. 200–5, I have printed his collations and remarks upon the charter granted by William I.; and alterations made in a few words in St. Oswald's farewell address (which are pointed out in notes on p. 99) give occasion for the following curious memorandum, inserted by Spelman at the end of the volume:—"Apr. 16 ¶ 1638. " Md. that one Adams and an other, beinge the bailiffe " of St. Need's, came to me this morning as from my " L. Privy Seale and Sir Thomas Cotton to see this my " booke of Ramsey, and the said Adams had the " perusing of it in the presence of his companion an " hower or twoe by themselues in the parlor here at a " bye table, and when they were gone, I found the blott, " rasure and new writinge thereuppon (as it appeareth " fol. 13, col. 1), the yncke beinge very fresh and scarsly " dry. H. Spel. Witsesse, Edward Drake and Edward " Swanton." The cause of the "rasure and new writinge" appears only to have been that the luckless readers spilt their ink, and, in anxious fear as to the consequences of their misadventure, erased the blotted words, and then filled up the spaces with ingenious fancy readings of their own. A hundred years after Spelman the MS. was in the possession of Walter Clavell, of the Inner Temple, F.R.S., and in the catalogue of his library, which was sold in London by auction in March and April 1738, it appears on p. 83 as no. 22 of the MSS. in folio; "Registrum monasterii de Ramsey, " *in pergam.*" It was then bought by Dr. Richard Rawlinson (as appears from his own interleaved copy of Clavell's catalogue, now in the Bodleian Library) for the sum of 1*l.* 14*s.*

The volume is a folio, written in double columns, and contains for the Ramsey chronicle portion 58 leaves, but

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-05231-3 - Chronicon Abbatiae Ramesiensis a saec. X. usque ad an. circiter 1200

Edited by William Dunn Macray

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PREFACE.

xi

altogether 66 leaves.¹ The initial letter U represents a ram and an ewe facing each other on opposite sides of a tree, in allusion to one of the suggested derivations of the place-name. Between folios 51 and 52 (p. 314 of the printed text) there is a gap which unfortunately comes at a very interesting point, viz., at the commencement of a charter of the second Geoffrey Mandeville, earl of Essex, which contained a grant to the abbey in expiation of the misdeeds of his father. It seems that the two middle leaves of one of the gatherings (which are irregular in number) are here lost, and as no other MS. amongst those described below contains this portion of the text, the loss cannot be supplied from any other as yet known source. The loss occurred before the MS. came to Spelman's hands, since the pagination and numbering of the sections, which apparently are his, go on consecutively. That the MS. is, so far as regards the first part at least, only a copy of one of earlier date, is shown by the curious error on p. 95 in reading *causa* for *tam*, and still more evidently by the strange omission, without any break in transcription, of a long passage at pp. 104–106. And that, again, the fourth part is work of a later date may very safely be inferred from the apocryphal addition in it of Ailwin's dying prophecy, found at p. 107. It is with the charter of William I. that this fourth part really commences; all that precedes, from p. 181, being only (with the exception of K. Edgar's charter) an abridgment of the most noticeable portion of the pre-Norman narrative; and that this abridgment was compiled to provide a series of lectures, to be read it may be presumed in the refectory, appears from three references to *hearers* and *readers*. In chapter 23 (xxi.) at the beginning of part ii., p. 47, instead of the "præsenti hujus operis distinctioni" of

¹ It is fully described at cols. | *R. Rawlinson*, by the editor of this
601–3, part i. of the *Catal. Codd.* | volume, printed at Oxford in 1862.

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Edited by William Dunn Macray

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

the unabridged text, we have "præsenti lectioni;" in chap. 40 (xxxv.), p. 70, Edgar's charter is inserted with the prefatory words "quod privilegium non inutile duximus huic inserere lectioni;" and in chap. 80 (xc.), p. 146, for "Videris, lector," we have "Videris, o lector vel lectionis auditor hujus."¹

This MS., as well as that in the Exchequer, was used by the indefatigable collector, Dodsworth. In vol. lxviii. (f. 41) of his MSS. he extracts the genealogy of Ailwin from the MS. "penes H. Spelman;" and other notes, of the Bolebech charters, &c., made in Dec. 1633, are to be found in vols. cxiii., f. 68*b*, and cxli., f. 121*b*. The use made of it by Richard James is noticed further on.

A third MS. is a transcript of Spelman's copy, which was made for Sir Roger Twysden. It came to the hands of Richard Gough, and ought, it would seem, to have been sent to the Bodleian Library after his death with his topographical collections, in accordance with his will. It was, however, sold by auction with his miscellaneous books in 1810; it is numbered 4,196 in the catalogue, p. 193, 19th day, 27 Apr., and was bought by Richard Heber for 16*s.* 6*d.* In Heber's sale catalogue it appears in part xi., 1836, p. 50, as No. 489 of the MSS., and was then sold to Sir Thos. Phillipps for 19*l.* 19*s.*, and is still in the Phillipps' library at Thirlestane House, Cheltenham, numbered 8,130. It extends to the end of the episcopal license about the church of Warboys (p. 302), and has there this note, "Hucusque examinatus"

¹ On the last leaf in the volume is the following note, by a hand of the middle of the 16th century:—"Statutus redditus abbatiae de Ramesia alebat sexaginta monachos. Cœnobium recipiebat annuatim septem millia librarum, unde ablata tria millia per Thomam Wolseium, cardinalem, cum cruce de auro et argento inestimabili." The fol-

lowing is the return of gold and silver plate seized by the Commissioners at the Dissolution, as contained in the account-roll drawn up by Sir John Williams for Edw. VI., which is now in the Bodleian Library:—"Ramesay, viz., in golde plate xvi unc., in gilte plate M.M. 13, and in white plate cclxiii. oz."

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-05231-3 - Chronicon Abbatiae Ramesiensis a saec. X. usque ad an. circiter 1200

Edited by William Dunn Macray

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PREFACE.

xiii

“ cum membranaceo codice D. Henrici Spelman per me
“ Roger Twysden,” followed by a list of the abbots.

Another seventeenth century transcript (referred to in the notes of readings as MS. C.¹) is preserved in the library of Jesus College, Oxford, No. lxxviii., among the MSS. of Father Augustine Baker.² In the old *Catal. MSS. Anglice* of 1697 it is described as being vol. 8 of Lord Herbert of Cherbury's collections, transcribed from the original in the Cottonian collection. There is no evidence of the truth of either of these statements. Certainly no copy of our Chronicle appears ever to have existed in the Cotton Library; and the only reason for calling this MS. one of Lord Herbert's appears to be that Baker's books follow in the college numeration immediately upon some of his. The MS. at one time belonged to Antony à Wood, who has written his name as “*Bosco*” on both covers. How and when it came to Jesus College is not known. It was evidently transcribed from the Spelman MS., since the references given in the margin to the folios of the original coincide with it. For some unexplained reason, however, it omits chaps. 113–117, and 384–402, thus passing over, in the case of the latter omission, the place where the loss of the Mandeville charter occurs.³ From this copy some extracts were made by Wood, which are in a volume of his collections in the Bodleian Library numbered 18 D., at ff. 121–7, although they are there said to be from “*Liber cœnobii de Ramsey in bib. Cottoniana.*” The extracts reach to chap. 360, and comprehend also a large number of abstracts of charters in English. There is no doubt

¹ In the note on p. 304 “D.” is a mistake for “C.”

² The book is noted as having been in the possession “*monasterii S. Laurentii de Dei Custodia, congregationis Anglicanæ; e libris R. P. Aug. Baker.*” The house called *de Dei Custodia* (=

Dieu-le-gard, now Dieulouard), in the department of Meuse, formerly Lorraine, was given to the English Benedictines in 1606, and here Baker passed a portion of his life as prior.

³ The charter of Hen. VI. follows as in Spelman's MS.

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

that the original source is Spelman's MS. ; for after an extract of Alfilda's grant (chap. 35) these words follow, "After the said gift doth immediately follow this writing " in the said book, *Vir quidem dives Godricus,*" &c., which are the initial words of the next chapter in that MS., but not in the Exchequer copy. And at the end is the note of the abbey-revenue and of Wolsey's "appropriations" which occurs in Spelman's MS., as noted above.

A fifth MS. is amongst those (no. 862) which were purchased from the Ashburnham collection by the nation in 1883 for the British Museum. This was formerly in the Stowe library, being amongst the MSS. which were bought by the Marq. of Buckingham from the library of Thomas Astle, Keeper of the Records, after Astle's death in Dec. 1803, and which, on the Stowe sale, were bought by the late Earl of Ashburnham in 1849. It is most legibly written, within ruled red lines, in imitation of print, on 126 leaves of good vellum ; and probably belongs to the middle of the seventeenth century. In former notices it has been erroneously said to be of the fifteenth century. It extends to the end of the charter of Will. Conq. of 29 Dec. 1077, which is followed only by the long charter of Hen. VI., and the "Narratio Galterii." The numbering of the chapters agrees with that in B., and in various places in which I have tested it with reference to discrepant readings it is found often to agree with the text of B. Possibly therefore we may have here another transcript from Spelman's much used copy. At p. 55, however, for the words "pluris reputans pauciores," there is the new reading of "plures reputans pauciores." It is sometimes referred to in the notes as D. The volume contains also Gervase of Tilbury's "Dialogus de Scaccario," and the following short miscellanea :—

1. Notes, and a bull of Greg. V., about Peter-pence.
2. Title of a "taxatio" of ecclesiastical goods.
3. Notes about the Carmelite monastery at Aylesford, from 1240 to 1417

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-05231-3 - Chronicon Abbatiae Ramesiensis a saec. X. usque ad an. circiter 1200

Edited by William Dunn Macray

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PREFACE.

xv

Finally, there is in the Public Record Office a transcript of the Bodleian MS. made for Mr. Petrie, formerly Deputy Keeper of the Records, probably with a view to publication in his *Monumenta Historiæ Britannicæ*. It is in two parts, numbered 53, 1, 2, containing 129 leaves; a third part contains copies of charters from Cotton MS. Vespasian E. II. By the use of this, which was kindly allowed me, I have in one or two instances been enabled to gain correct readings of contracted names.

Harleian MSS. 311 (ff. 163–9 b.) and 312 (ff. 37–47 b.) contain extracts made by Sir Simonds D'Ewes in Oct. 1634 from Spelman's MS. In these he copies (strange to say) Mandeville's charter, no. 393, exactly as it appears in that MS. now, apparently detecting no imperfection or inconsistency in the conclusion!

Richard James, of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, who died in 1638, made large collections relative to ecclesiastical affairs in England from all the MS. chronicles which came in his way. These collections are now in the Bodleian Library. And in vol. xxviii. there are many extracts, extending from p. 166 to p. 190, from our Spelman MS. James's extracts were all made with the controversial view of exhibiting the abuses which prevailed before the Reformation, and to many of his quotations he appends marginal notes to point his moral. It is worth while to quote these.

CHAP.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 5. Of the descent of K. Edgar. | Note. "Clerus sibi erigit in Reges spurios potius quam legitimos hæredes." |
| 10. Of the accession of K. Edmund. | "Clerus proditorie substituit illegitimos hæredes in regnum." |
| 32. Of the gift of drinking cups by the Lady Ethelgiva. | "Monachorum bibesia in memorias benefactorum." |

b 2

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978-1-108-05231-3 - Chronicon Abbatiae Ramesiensis a saec. X. usque ad an. circiter 1200

Edited by William Dunn Macray

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xvi

PREFACE.

CHAP.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 46. Of a law-suit about land at Slepe. | <i>Note.</i> "Monachi quo jure, quaque injuria, terras sibi corradunt." |
| 54. Of the gifts of the Lady Alfwara. | "Monachi expilant undique." |
| 55. Of the gift by Goda the priest of his church of Holywell. | "Presbyter habet patronatum ecclesiae suae." ¹ |
| 58. On Oswald's approval of the site as secure from hostile attacks. | "Monachi ad tutamen in uliginosis locis collocati." |
| 75. Of Ætheric's bargain with a drunken Dane. | "Malæ artes quibus monachi prædia sibi compararunt." |
| 103. Of Abbot Alfwin's obtaining disputed lands by large payments to the King and Queen. | "Monachi ad se prædia rapiunt quo jure, quaque injuria." |
| 219. Of the King's grant of the hundred of Hurstingstone. | "Abbatem omnem sæcularem auctoritatem ad se contrahunt." |
| 243. Of a grant by Abbot Reginald on the condition that the grantee hold the abbey harmless against all claims on the part of the Crown. | "Monachi large conducunt defensores erga Regem." |

For some of the later deeds in the last part I have had the advantage, by the great courtesy of Edward Fellowes, Esq., the present owner of Ramsey Abbey, of collating the originals, which are still preserved in that gentleman's charter room.² To these my attention was

¹ James is certainly right in regarding this instance of a parish priest possessing the patronage of his own church as note-worthy. The case occurs in the tenth century. The conclusion would seem to be that Goda built and endowed the church himself.

² Not only parchment deeds but all the surviving remains of the

abbey-buildings are now well cared for. The half-ruined ivy-clad noble gateway still gives admittance to the old abbatial demesne; the modern mansion preserves in its basement many an arched roof and doorway; and the monumental figure of the founder Ailwin occupies a conspicuous and honourable place in the corridor.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-05231-3 - Chronicon Abbatiae Ramesiensis a saec. X. usque ad an. circiter 1200

Edited by William Dunn Macray

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PREFACE.

xvii

first called by meeting with the following interesting passage in vol. cxliii. of Thomas Hearne's MS. diary, in the Bodleian Library, at pp. 146-8, under date of 15 Dec. 1734 :—

“ On Thursday, Nov. 28 last, Mr. John Jones, Curat
 “ of Abbat's Ripton, attended Dr. Knight to Ramsey, to
 “ see what remains there were of the old writings and
 “ records formerly belonging to the abbey there. Upon
 “ their admission into the room where they are kept
 “ (an upper garret), they were both unexpectedly sur-
 “ prized at so great a sight as there was of them,
 “ far exceeding anything they imagined before their
 “ entrance. There may be, speaking within compass,
 “ as much as will fill a moderate cart, tho' not a cart-
 “ load. They consist mostly of grants and donations
 “ made to the abbey (most or all upon parchment) with
 “ several rent-rolls, some few terriers, &c., but a great
 “ many (to Mr. Jones at least) not very legible, others
 “ gnawed in great measure by rats and mice, which
 “ formerly haunted the place, tho' they are now pretty
 “ well secured. Most of the grants have large seals appen-
 “ dant to them, and pretty entire and legible, others broke
 “ and shatter'd. They lie all confused, and it would, in
 “ the opinion of Dr. Knight and Mr. Jones take up, at
 “ least, a month's time to view and inspect every one of
 “ them distinctly, tho' they imagine, after all, that there
 “ will not be a great deal very usefull to be pick'd out of
 “ them. Nor is the perusal of any one of them to be had
 “ out of the manor-house, where they are kept, without
 “ the special leave (if that is at all to be had) of the Gent.
 “ that owns the estate and them.¹ 'Twas his steward,
 “ or bayliff, who lives in the house, that favoured them

¹ The owner in 1734 was one Smith, who had been man-servant to a daughter of Colonel Silas Titus, (who had bought the estate from the Cromwell family), and to whom she had bequeathed it in 1732. Smith sold it in 1736 or 7 to Mr. Coulson Fellowes, great-grandfather of the present possessor.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-05231-3 - Chronicon Abbatiae Ramesiensis a saec. X. usque ad an. circiter 1200

Edited by William Dunn Macray

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

“ with the sight of them. Dr. Knight talks of going
 “ thither again, in the spring and warmer days of the
 “ year, in order to view the things more distinctly, and
 “ to see if there is anything that can be of service to
 “ Mr. Fr. Peck of Leicestershire who wrote to him about
 “ them, Mr. Peck having, it seems, a design of publish-
 “ ing the *Monasticon* with additions and corrections,
 “ &c. He also intends to publish (in his *Desiderata*
 “ *Curiosa*) those memorials of the life of Mr. N. Ferrar,
 “ which Mr. Jones formerly mentioned to me, and com-
 “ municated an extract out of. Mr. Jones hath them
 “ now (so he writes in his letter of November 30 last)
 “ by him, from the owner, to convey to him, Dr. Knight
 “ having acquainted him with the purport of them.”¹

Upon inquiry as to the present state of these records, I was most kindly invited to visit the abbey, and personally examine such as fell within the period of the Chronicle. Before my visit I had received through the courtesy of the Rev. W. M. Noble, B.A., curate of the parish, collations of seven charters, which are noted in the printed text.² My visit was paid after nearly the whole text of the chronicle was printed off, and I then found seven more originals, of two of which (Nos. 394, 395) the collation is given in the text, and of the others the readings are given in a table subjoined to this preface, together with some additions to those formerly supplied, which my personal examination enabled me to

¹ Mr. Jones is mentioned amongst those to whom thanks for help are given in the preface to the second vol. (published in 1735) of the *Desiderata Curiosa*; and at the end of that vol. a fourth vol. of the *Monasticon* is announced as being nearly ready for the press. Samuel Knight, D.D., archd. of Berks and prebendary of Ely, who was the author of the *Life of Colet*, died 9 Dec. 1746.

² Of these charters, as well as of various others, mention is made in a small history of “ Ramsey Abbey, “ its rise and fall,” by Rev. John Wise, M.A., the vicar of Ramsey, and by Mr. Noble (published in 1881), in which much use is made of the remaining records, and for knowledge of which I am indebted to Mr. Fellowes.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-05231-3 - Chronicon Abbatiae Ramesiensis a saec. X. usque ad an. circiter 1200

Edited by William Dunn Macray

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PREFACE.

xix

make. These fourteen charters range in date from a charter of Henry I. about 1112, to one of Henry II., between 1155-62.¹ The mere statement of this is of itself enough to show how rich the charter-chests at Ramsey are. And it may well be possible that a thorough search among the boxes of abbey-accounts of cellarers and bailiffs, rent-rolls, court-rolls, and the

¹ There are three charters of Rich. I.; one (releasing the abbey from all tolls) dated at Westm. 6 Oct., probably in his first year, as he was at Westminster then on that day; another dated at Tours ("Turron.") on 24 June, *an.* 1 (1190); and a third dated at Andely ("Rupem Andel.") 13 Nov. *an.* 10 (1198). The first and third have fragments of black and red seals respectively. Of the grant by King Stephen of the manor of Ripton, mentioned in archbp. Theobald's charter at p. 307, a copy by John Guillim, the herald, is contained in a volume of his heraldic collections in the Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS. B., cii. f. 98. Guillim does not note where the original was preserved. His copy runs as follows:—"S., Rex Angliæ, archiepiscopus, episcopis, abbatibus, comitibus, justiciariis, baronibus, vice-comitibus, ministris, et omnibus fidelibus suis Francis et Anglis totius Angliæ, salutem. Sciatis me dedisse et concessisse in perpetuam eleemosinam Deo et ecclesiæ sancti Benedicti de Rameseia et monachis ibidem Deo servientibus, pro anima Regis Henrici, et pro salute mea et uxoris meæ et infantum meorum, et pro incolumitate totius regni mei, manerium meum dominicum de Rippetona, cum om-

nibus suis pertinentiis. Quare volo et firmiter præcipio quod bene et in pace et quiete et libere et honorifice teneant, in bosco et in plano, [in] pratis et pascuis, in via et semitis, infra burgum et extra, in aquis et stagnis, et in omnibus locis et rebus omnibus, cum socio (*sic*) et saca, et toll.' et levis [levandis?], et infangenetheof, et cum omnibus libertatibus et quietanciis et consuetudinibus cum quibus illud manerium melius tenui dum in manu mea esset. Testibus, M. Regina, et R[ogero] Sarum episcopo, et A[lexandro] episcopo Linc., et R[oberto] episcopo Exon., et H. episcopo Ely[en]."

The H. in this last name must be a mistake for N. For Hervey, bishop of Ely died in 1181, and was succeeded in 1183 by Nigel; Roger, bishop of Salisbury, died Dec. 4, 1189; and Robert Chichester was appointed bishop of Exeter in April 1188; the date, therefore, of the grant must be 1188-9, and consequently 1189 is probably also the date of archbishop Theobald's confirmation in our text. An *inspeximus* of Edgar's foundation charter, by Hen. IV., V., or VI., is copied by Sir Rich. St. George, Norroy, without any attestations or date to show to what reign it belongs, in Bodl. MS. Rawlinson B. ciii. f. 113 b.

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978-1-108-05231-3 - Chronicon Abbatiae Ramesiensis a saec. X. usque ad an. circiter 1200

Edited by William Dunn Macray

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xx

PREFACE.

like, might bring to light a few more deeds falling within the compass of this volume; although some years ago the collection was examined and to a considerable extent sorted by Mr. Harrod, a well-known antiquary of Norfolk.

In following the Exchequer MS. for the text of the first three parts of the chronicle, all variations in readings which are there found are noted, including evident mistakes and mis-spellings, but mistakes found in B. have not been noticed, except that sometimes peculiarities in spelling have been pointed out, in order to show more particularly the agreement between that MS. and the text printed by Mabillon. But in part iv., for which B. is the authority, all variations in that MS. are noted, and the spelling of proper names follows the various inconsistent forms which are in some instances met with.

II. There has not been hitherto any complete edition of the text of this Chronicle. The first three parts, extending from p. 7 to p. 180 of the present volume, were printed by Thomas Gale at pp. 385–462 of the first volume of his valuable collection of “*Historiæ Brit., Saxon., Anglo-Danicæ, Scriptorum XV.*” fol. Oxon, 1691. He derived his text from the Exchequer MS., but, singularly enough, omitted the preface. The fourth part he says was “*multum mihi quæsita et multum desiderata.*” He knew from Spelman’s use of it in his Glossary that it was in existence, but could not trace the “*codicem fugitivum.*” There are many misprints and misreadings in his edition, some of which seriously affect the sense.¹

¹ The following are the most noticeable:—

p. 23, end of chap. x., “volens”	represented as willingly spreading his own reputation for sanctity.
for “nolens”; whereby Oswald is	p. 86, “Divino timore” for “nimio timore”.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-05231-3 - Chronicon Abbatiae Ramesiensis a saec. X. usque ad an. circiter 1200

Edited by William Dunn Macray

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PREFACE.

xxi

Chapters viii.–lxii., from p. 21 to p. 107, have also been printed by Mabillon, as containing a life of St. Oswald, at pp. 735–760 of “Acta Sanctorum ord. S. Benedicti; saec. V.,” fol. Par. 1685. He describes his text as being taken “e MS. Chronico Ramesiensi, a “confratribus nostris Anglicanis Patribus Benedictinis “nobis communicato.” Very probably the copy was made from Augustine Baker’s transcript, for the peculiar readings generally agree with those found in MS. B. which Baker copied, and this may be taken as the rule where no divergence is specified in the notes in this volume. The varieties (of which most are found between pp. 91–107) can generally be accounted for as misreadings of the MS. or conjectural emendations; and there is only one which appears to be a positively distinct reading from another source. It occurs at p. 94, where for “utile videtur” Mabillon reads “condecens est.” His forms for the spelling of English proper names have not been noticed, because he has frequently dealt with those names in the ordinary foreign way of disregarding our insular ideas of orthography, and has transliterated them out of their familiar shapes.

In the 29th report of the Deputy Keeper of the Records printed in 1868, English abstracts may be found (at pp. 18, 19, 27–8, 37–8, and 44–5) of the charters of Edgar, Edw. Conf., Will. I., and Will. II.

III. The writer of the Chronicle has throughout preserved his anonymity, as one who wrote for the honour and welfare of the house to which he belonged, not for his own praise, nor even to preserve his own memory in the place which he loved. But, apart from the actual

p. 91, “assensu semel” for
“accessu senilis”.

p. 92, “Haud ergo” for “Hanc
“ergo”.

p. 114, “sanctum Ivonem” for
“faustum omen”.

p. 155, “potu” for “pastu”.

p. 176, “Ramesiam” for “Ro-
“mam.”

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-05231-3 - Chronicon Abbatiae Ramesiensiſ a ſaec. X. uſque ad an. circiter 1200

Edited by William Dunn Macray

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

ſtory of the original foundation of the abbey, and the life of St. Oswald as connected therewith, the book is, after all, little more than in its earlier part an abstract, and in its later a register, of grants and legal documents. Nor does it really profeſs to be more ; its own title is but this, “*Liber benefactorum eccleſiæ Rameſienſis.*” The motive and occaſion for the work were furniſhed by the waſting and pillage which had in the robber-days of Stephen afflicted Ramſey alike with the whole country. For when theſe days were paſt it was a natural thought to gather (as the Preface ſays) into one volume all that tradition could tell of the early hiſtory and all that could be collected of the ancient records, and ſo to ſecure the charters and grants which had then ſo narrowly eſcaped deſtruction from future loſs by any like calamity. It was probably about the middle of the reign of Henry II. that the compilation was made ; the lateſt event noticed is the death of the ſecond Geoffrey Mandeville, earl of Eſſex, which occurred in 1167, and we may therefore ſafely place the date of our Chronicle about 1170. That its commencement was not until ſome time after the death of abbot Walter in 1160 is ſhown by the application to him in the Preface of the words “*piæ recordationis.*” It therefore ſtands amongſt the earlieſt of monaſtic hiſtories. Ely, Durham, Rocheſter, and Glaſtonbury are the chief (if not the only) houſes that had found an earlier “*vates ſacer*” on any full ſcale, although by the end of that century or the beginning of the next the hiſtoriographer was found in every monaſtic “*ſcriptorium,*” and his work neceſſarily found its place in ſome meaſure in every chartulary and leiger-book. The authorities on which our writer baſes his early narrative are deſcribed as threefold. Firſtly, as he tells us, there are documents of extreme antiquity preſerved in the abbey-archives, which contained grants of lands by Saxon kings to various perſons, and by others to the abbey (pp. 4, 13, 49, 199, &c.); ſecondly, for the ſuc-