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978-1-108-05237-5 - The Metrical Chronicle of Robert of Gloucester: Volume 1

Edited by William Aldis Wright

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The Metrical Chronicle of Robert of Gloucester

This ballad chronicle, published in two volumes in 1887, is attributed to Robert of Gloucester (*fl.* c.1260–c.1300), both because it is written in Gloucestershire dialect, which makes it a valuable source for students of Middle English, and because the writer was probably an eyewitness to the contemporary events he mentions in the text, such as the siege of Gloucester Castle and the Battle of Evesham during the so-called Second Barons' War (1264–7). These are by far the most interesting portions of the poem, since much of the preceding historical narrative is derived second-hand from earlier Latin chroniclers. Volume 1, edited by the scholar William Aldis Wright (1831–1914), contains the first half of the chronicle. The poem is accompanied by exhaustive footnotes of variant readings and is prefaced by a lengthy introduction.

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The Metrical Chronicle of Robert of Gloucester

VOLUME 1

EDITED BY WILLIAM ALDIS WRIGHT



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Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Mexico City

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

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108052375

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This edition first published 1887
This digitally printed version 2012

ISBN 978-1-108-05237-5 Paperback

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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.

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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THE METRICAL CHRONICLE
OF
ROBERT OF GLOUCESTER.

EDITED BY
WILLIAM ALDIS WRIGHT, M.A., HON. D.C.L. AND LL.D.,
FELLOW AND SENIOR BURSAR OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

PART I.

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

LONDON:
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1887.

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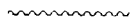
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P R E F A C E.



THE Metrical Chronicle, which is commonly attributed to Robert of Gloucester, appears to have been first noticed by John Stow in *A Summarie of Englyshe Chronicles* (1565), and is there ascribed, in “The names of Authours in this Booke alledged,” to “Robert, a chronicler, that wrate in the tyme of Henry the thirde.” The story of William Rufus and his chamberlain, which will be found in lines 8012—8021 of the present edition, is quoted by Stow in the *Summarie*, apparently from the Cotton MS. In the interval between 1565 and 1580, when he published *The Chronicles of England*, Stow must have discovered some reason for giving the writer a more precise description, for in the later volume he refers to him more than once as “Robert of Gloster” or “Robertus Glocestrensis.” In his *Remaines concerning Britain*, published in 1605, Camden follows Stow in adopting this designation, and gives the well known saying of Mabel FitzHamon to Henry I. on the authority of the Metrical Chronicle, “as Robert of Gloucester in the Librarie of the industrious Antiquary maister Iohn Stowe writeth.” Indeed the appellation seems to have been accepted without question by subsequent writers. Selden (*Jani Anglorum facies altera*, 1610) quotes him as “Robertus Glocestrensis,” or (*Titles of Honour*, ed. 1672, p. 498) “Robert of Gloucester, that wrote about Edward the first,” and his work (*ibid.* p. 535) as “that old English rythmical Story of Robert of Gloucester,” or (p. 115) “the old Rhimes

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“ of Robert of Glo. MS.” All Selden’s quotations are made from the Cotton MS., except one in the History of Tythes (1618), in which he mentions two manuscripts, one in the library of Sir Robert Cotton and the other in that of Thomas Allen of Oxford, and quotes from the latter, which in all probability is the same as MS. Digby 205 in the Bodleian Library. But it was from Selden’s notes to the first portion of Drayton’s Polyolbion, containing Books I.–XVIII., which appeared in 1613, that English readers learned to become familiar with Robert of Gloucester and his verses, and from this source William Browne in his *Britannia’s Pastorals* (Book II. song 4, ed. Hazlitt, Vol. II. p. 70) no doubt derived his knowledge of

“ The lay which aged Robert sung of yore
In praise of England and the deeds of Swaines
That whilome fed and rul’d vpon our plaines.”

It was very natural for Weever (*Ancient Funerall Monuments*, ed. 1631, p. 60) to add another touch to the description, and to speak of him as “ Robert the Monke of Gloucester, an old rimer, who writes the language of our fathers about foure hundred yeares since”; and hence Fuller, who only knows him from Weever and Selden, places him among the writers of Gloucestershire (*Worthies*, ed. 1662, p. 358) as “ Robert of Gloucester, so called, because a Monk thereof.” In the account of the riot at Oxford in 1263, which took place between the students of the University and the townsmen, Antony Wood (*Hist. et Antiq. Univ. Oxon.*, ed. 1674, vol. i. p. 112) quotes the verses of Robert of Gloucester (1186–11233) as “*poetæ cujusdam Oxoniensis, ibi tum præsentis carmina.*” The narrative has certainly every appearance of having been written by a contemporary if not an eyewitness of the events described, and Hearne (*Preface to Robert of Gloucester’s Chronicle*, p. lxxvi.), accepting Wood’s statement as not improbable, goes a step further and suggests that Robert,

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being a monk of Gloucester, was sent to Oxford “by some of the Directors of the great Abbey of Gloucester” to take charge of the youth that they had there under their care. And this appears to him so very probable that he adds, “I am apt to think, that, upon that score, he resided in an old House, where Monks used to study, on the West Part of Stockwell-street, in the same Place where Gloucester College (afterwards styl’d Gloucester Hall, and at length Worcester College, on the West Side of which the Monks of Gloucester had a Mill) was since founded in the year 1283, or, as others say, in 1281, by John Giffard Baron of Brimsfield, the same that was so famous for his Military Skill in the time of Hen. III. and is mentioned, for that reason, towards the End of this History.” All this, however, is merely ingenious speculation, and beyond the fact that the name of the writer of a portion of the Chronicle was Robert, and that from the dialect in which he wrote he was probably a Gloucestershire monk, there is nothing whatever known about him. But before going further into this question it is necessary to say something of the external form of the Chronicle itself.

It is evident that there were two recensions, which are represented, the one by the Cottonian and Harleian MSS. in the British Museum, and the other by the MSS. at Oxford and Cambridge which will be hereafter described. These two recensions are in substantial agreement to the end of the reign of Henry I., but in the former the events from the accession of Stephen to the end of Henry the Third’s reign are recorded at much greater length and occupy upwards of 2,900 lines, while in the latter they are compressed into less than 600. In addition to this, in the earlier portion of the Chronicle the MSS. of the later recension have upwards of 800 lines which do not occur in those of the earlier recension. All these inserted lines, together with the

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shorter continuation, will be found in the Appendix to the present edition. It is remarkable, however, that in both the longer and the shorter continuations the narratives of the events of Stephen's reign are almost exactly of the same length, and they appear to have been derived from the same original source. The most natural conclusion from this fact is that the original Chronicle ended with the reign of Henry I., the earliest form of it which has come down to us being that which we have in the Cottonian and Harleian MSS., and that it was supplemented by at least two different narrators, one of whom supplied the longer and the other the shorter continuation, while the latter may also have inserted the additional lines which are found in the earlier portion of the Chronicle as it appears in the later recension. If the shorter continuation had been a mere brief summary of the reigns of the successors of Henry I. it might very well have been supplied by the author of the longer continuation; but it is in the highest degree improbable that the same writer should have given two entirely different accounts of Stephen's reign, one in 440, the other in 438 lines.

It is a further question whether the longer continuation and the original portion of the Chronicle are by the same hand. If they are, we must suppose that the writer first carried his narrative to the end of Henry the First's reign, that various copies of this portion were circulated among the libraries of different monasteries, and that one of these was made the basis of what I have called the later recension, while the original was retained by the author and supplemented by himself. On the other hand, the first portion of the Chronicle may have been an independent work which was completed in two forms by two different continuators, neither of whom was the original author. It is impossible to say to which of these two suppositions the greater probability is to be attached, there

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being no positive evidence for one or the other, although I am rather inclined on *à priori* grounds to favour the latter. It is extremely difficult in a composite work like the present to argue safely from internal indications of date. In the earlier part there appear to be references to the times of Henry I. which would point to his reign as the period of its original composition. For instance, in speaking of the number of abbeys founded by King Edgar and St. Athelwold, the writer says (5739–5741):

Vor eyzte & fourty abbeys · hii rerde in this londe
echon.

Ar vre king þat we abbeþ nou · adde yrerd so vale ·
To monye him wolde þenche · viftene bi tale ·

The king here referred to, “our king that we have now,” is apparently Henry I., who after Edgar was the greatest founder of monasteries. But as it is impossible that the Chronicle in its present form can have been written at so early a period, it is more than probable that the reference in this passage was taken from the original document which the versifier had before him. Other passages indicate that the writer, although not perhaps actually a contemporary of Henry I., wrote at a period when the events of his reign were fresh in the minds of men. He refers more than once to the union of the Norman stock with the older English royal family by the marriage of Henry and Matilda of Scotland, the daughter of Margaret, who was in the direct line of descent from Edmund Ironside. See ll. 6466–6469:

As ze mowe ihure her afterward · in king henries lif ·
How engeland com to kunde azen þoru þe gode
quene mold is wif ·

þat þes margarete dozter was · mold þe gode quene ·
Vor þis lond were ʒut out of kunde · ʒif heo nere
ich wene ·

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And again, ll. 7250–7257 :

Ac after þat willam þe rede king · issote was bi cas ·
 & þe gode henry is broþer · after him king was ·
 Seint edwardes nece · þat of is fader kunde com ·
 & of þe riȝte kunde of engelond · king henry to wiue
 nom ·

þat was mold þe gode quene · þat in gode time was
 ybore ·

þo smot uerst þis tre aȝen · to is kunde more ·
 & normandie þoru þe king · & þoru þe quene enge-
 lond ·

Tioyned were þo kundeliche · as in one monnes hond

But these, after all, although they appear to have been added by the versifier, may very well have been written at a much later period than the time to which they refer. Indeed, it is quite clear from another of the writer's insertions that it was made not earlier than the reign of Edward I., and probably after 1294, when the king exacted of the clergy half their revenues. Speaking of the twenty manors which were given to Winchester in the time of Edward the Confessor by the king, his mother, and the bishop, the writer adds, with a touch of sly humour which sometimes peeps through his monotonous dulness (6998–7001) :

And þat nas noȝt lute þere ·

Vor it wolde finde hom lec & morten · inowe bi þe
 zere ·

Vor gode þe nexte king Edward · þat after him
 supþe com ·

Ne ȝef hom noȝt folliche so mucche · wiþinne is
 kinedom ·

All that has been said hitherto refers to the earlier portion of the Chronicle, and it would seem that even this part in its present shape was written not long before the end of the thirteenth century.

We come now to the longer continuation as it appears in the text of this edition, and in the Cottonian MS.

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from which it is printed. In this the writer mentions his own name in the description of the great darkness at the time of the battle of Evesham, which was so dense that the monks could not see to read the service in the churches. It extended for thirty miles round, and is compared by the writer to the darkness at the crucifixion. Only a few drops of rain fell (11746-9) :

An vewe dropes of reine · þer velle grete inou ·
 þis tokinnge vel in þis lond · þo me þis men slou ·
 Vor þretti mile þanne · þis isei roberd ·
 þat verst þis boc made · & was wel sore aferd ·

“This saw Robert, that first this book made and was “right sore afraid.” The last two lines are omitted in the only other MS. of an early date which I have consulted, and at first I was inclined to think that they might refer merely to the transcriber of the Cottonian MS. But they occur also in the late MS. which is preserved in the Hunterian Museum, Glasgow, and the expression “þat verst þis boc made” points rather to the author than to the scribe. We know, therefore, that the writer of the longer continuation at least, if not of the whole work, was named Robert, that he lived at the time of the battle of Evesham in 1265, and that he was within thirty miles of the place. The continuation in its present form could not have been written earlier than 1297, because, as Sir Frederic Madden pointed out, it contains a reference to the canonization of St. Lewis, which took place in that year: for the writer, after recording the taking of Damietta in 1249, adds (10943),

pulke gode lowis · is now seint · & ileid in ssrine ·

On the whole it seems probable that if we place the date of the Chronicle about the year 1300 we shall approximate within a very few years to the time of its composition, and the Cottonian MS. must be nearly contemporary. The writer of the latter portion at least may have been as a young man an eyewitness

of the riots at Oxford in 1263, to which reference has already been made, and two years later may have been living, most probably in Gloucestershire, and perhaps in Gloucester itself, not very far from the scene of the battle of Evesham. This is confirmed by the language in which the Chronicle is written, which is the dialect of Gloucestershire, and, according to Dr. Morris, that of the southern part of the county, and by the local knowledge which the writer shows of Gloucester and the neighbourhood. For instance, in the account of queen Ethelfleda's death (lines 5480-1), he follows Henry of Huntingdon in saying

At tamewurþe heo deyde supþe . & ybured heo was
 ywis .

In saint petres porche at gloucestre .

but he adds on his own account "as þe abbey ȝut is." Again, in the description of the reconciliation of Sir Hubert de Burgh and the banished nobles with king Henry the Third at Gloucester, on St. Swithin's eve in 1234, there are details which have every appearance of being preserved by local tradition (lines 10822-10831):

Sir hubert de boru & oþere . þat in prison were
 ido .

& hom þat iweiued were . is pes he ȝef al so .

& hii a sein swithines eue . of Iun¹ þe verste
 day .

To him come at gloucetre . as mani man isay .

Vn hosed & bareuot . & vngurt al so .

Hor armes to þe elbowe naked . hor heued bar
 þer to .

Hii velle to þe kinges fet . & merci him criede
 vaste .

þe king ne miȝte þo uorbere . þat he ne wep atte
 laste .

¹ An error for *Iul*.

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& bigan nei vor pite · isuowe vprizt toumbe ·
 Bote as þe erl of hereforde him huld · & sir geffrey
 of crancoumbe ·

As we come down to the events of the Chronicler's own time, it becomes more and more evident that he writes as a contemporary, if not as an eyewitness. The account of the violent proceedings of Sir Maci de Besile, the French knight who had been appointed by the king sheriff of Gloucester, how he went armed into the court where his rival Sir William de Tracy, whom the barons had made sheriff, was sitting, forced his way up to the dais, seized Tracy by the hair of his head, and dragged him through the mud of the streets to the castle, where he kept him a prisoner (11060–11081), all this is given with a vividness which shows that the narrator must have been in Gloucester at the time of the events which he describes. The subsequent attack on Gloucester Castle by Sir John Giffard, the capture of Sir Maci, the revenge taken upon the carpenter who shot one of Sir John Giffard's squires, the sacrilege committed by Sir Thomas de Turbeville in seizing the French bishop of Hereford at the altar and dragging him out of the cathedral, the audacious manner in which Sir John Giffard answered the constable's summons to appear at the hundred court held at Quedgley, the artifice by which he and Sir John de Balun captured the west gate of Gloucester and let in the barons' army, these and many other natural touches mark the narrative as that of an eyewitness. No one but a narrator on the very spot would have known that the name of one of the luckless porters at the west gate, who let in Sir John Giffard and his woolpacks, was "Hobekin of Lodelowe," or that after prince Edward's vain attempt to take the city by assault, it was in a ship of the Abbot of Tewkesbury's, which was lying in the river, that he made his way to the castle, or that in a subsequent attack Sir John Giffard broke in by the

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wall of the abbot's orchard, which was left undefended (11587). So that perhaps after all we may with safety infer that Robert, who saw with his own eyes the great darkness which spread over the land at the time of the battle of Evesham, was living in Gloucester, that he was probably a monk belonging to the Abbey, and that he wrote at any rate the longer continuation of the Chronicle which now bears his name.

It is now necessary to discuss a much more complicated question, the sources of those portions of the Chronicle which are not the narrative of a contemporary, and in doing this I may frankly acknowledge at the outset I have been unable to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. It has been stated more than once that the Chronicle is evidently a translation from the French. On philological grounds Mr. Kington Oliphant (*Old and Middle English*, p. 430) says, "We may safely call it a translation from the French, when we see such forms as *the March* (Mercia), *Picards* (Picts), *Daneis* (Danes), *þe Londreis* (Londoners), *Pountfreit* (Pontefract, Pomefret)." I venture to think that the writer of the Chronicle used these forms because they were already in the language of his time, and not because he was following the French original, for the existence of which there is no evidence whatever. But the statement is repeated by the writer of the article on Robert of Gloucester in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, without giving any reasons, and M. Taine (*Histoire de la Littérature Anglaise*, i. 107, ed. 1873) speaks lightly, as of a thing well known, of "un moine, Robert de Gloucester, et un chanoine, Robert de Brunne, tous deux aussi insipides et aussi clairs que leurs modèles français." So far from the Chronicle being a translation from a French original, it is extremely doubtful whether there is any support for the much more guarded and moderate opinion expressed in Goldbeck and Mätzner's *Altenglische Sprachproben* (1867),

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i. 155, that the writer appears not to have been unacquainted with Wace's *Brut* and his *Roman de Rou*, as well as with the old French poem *La Estoire de Seint Aedward le Rei*. This view is supposed to be confirmed by certain verbal coincidences, which are indeed very slight and are due rather to the common originals followed by the writer of the *Chronicle* and the authors of the poems in question. It is, however, apparently accepted without question by Professor Ten Brink, in his *Geschichte der Englischen Litteratur* (1877), i. 345, for he mentions *La Estoire Aedward le Rei* and Wace's *Roman de Rou* among the numerous authorities which must have been known to and consulted by Robert.

What these numerous authorities were, it is not easy to determine, nor can the writer's method in his compilation be exactly ascertained. He appears to have had access to many sources of information which he used as suited his purpose, weaving them together into a continuous narrative, and connecting them sometimes by observations, which, as they are not to be found elsewhere, must be supposed to be original, though this is by no means certain. I assume that the compiler of the materials and the versifier were the same, and that the processes of compiling and versifying went on simultaneously, because I have been unable to discover any compilation which the versifier could have had ready to his hand. Moreover, in saying that he used such and such sources of information, I only mean that the same narrative is to be found in the authors or works referred to, for it sometimes happens that it is only recorded in the pages of a later chronicle, and must therefore have been taken by our author from some authority earlier than both himself and the narrator who has also preserved it. With these preliminary remarks I proceed to analyse the work before us.

Roughly speaking, the first half of the *Chronicle* is taken from Geoffrey of Monmouth and Henry of Hunt-

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ingdon, for it is not till the time of Alfred that the writer appears to have used William of Malmesbury. In the geographical description with which the Chronicle opens (1–28) he follows Geoffrey; the account of the division of England into shires and bishoprics is substantially taken from Henry of Huntingdon, and here (91–110) occurs a quotation almost word for word from the Life of St. Kenelm as given in the metrical Lives of the Saints. But only three wonders of England are enumerated, instead of four as in Henry of Huntingdon, and the four great roads are described in a different order. The account of the climate of England however (180–189) is from Henry, while the seven ages of the world (190–205) differ from the number given in Bede and elsewhere in having the period from Abraham to David divided in two. The pedigree of Brutus (206–232) is given from Henry, who follows Nennius, or perhaps from Geoffrey of Monmouth, who is again the principal authority for the greater part of the early history (240–952), with the exception of certain chronological notes (478–483, 626–627, 646–649, 897–900, 949–952) which appear to be added by the compiler. The account of the Picts (953–996) and the description of Ireland (997–1014) are insertions from Henry of Huntingdon. Geoffrey is again the authority for the narrative down to the reign of Augustus (1015–1385), and after a brief account from some other source of the taxing of the world by Augustus and the reigns of Tiberius and Caligula (1386–1421), the same writer supplies the material for the history to the end of the reign of the emperor Claudius (1422–1529), the chronological note (1426–1429) as before being inserted by the compiler, who probably added lines 1530–1533, following Geoffrey again in 1534–1537. The story of Nero (1538–1585) is apparently taken from the same source as in Higden's Polychronicon, where it is referred to Martinus, and the gap in Geoffrey's history of the

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emperors (1586–1633) is supplied by the compiler, probably from Henry of Huntingdon. Geoffrey's narrative is continued to the end of the reign of the Emperor Constans (1634–1868), when a few lines (1869–1874) are again supplied from Henry of Huntingdon, who is also the authority in the main for the account of Constantine (1895–1934), the interval (1875–1894) being filled up from Geoffrey, whose narrative is again taken up and continued, with few exceptions, to the death of Arthur, and the complete conquest of the country by the Saxons (1935–4654). These exceptions are an original reflexion by the author (2089–2092), and an account of the seven planets (2435–2442), and of the discovery of Arthur's bones at Glastonbury, which may very well have come from the same source.

The division of the land among the Saxons and their six kings is apparently described in the compiler's own words, but in the account of the arrival of Cerdic and the conquest of Wessex and Northumbria he follows Henry of Huntingdon (4669–4692), whose narrative, after a short digression of his own on Woden and the division of the land between the Saxons and Angles (4693–4716), he again abridges in describing the reconversion of the country to Christianity by the mission of Augustine and his companions (4717–4776). William of Malmesbury appears to be the authority for the original introduction of Christianity in the time of king Lucius, and the foundation of Glastonbury (4777–4806), and from this point the compiler for a time takes the material of his narrative from Geoffrey of Monmouth (4807–4904) to the death of Ethelbert, king of Kent. Henry of Huntingdon again becomes his authority from line 4905 to line 56 of the passage inserted from the Harleian MS., the rest of this passage being taken from Geoffrey of Monmouth, as well as the lines which follow

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(4930–4939).¹ The story of the slaughter of Enfrid and his twelve companions by Eadwal (4940–4947) is from Henry of Huntingdon, but the writer by reading “cum xii millibus” instead of “cum xii militibus” has exaggerated the bloodshed. It is difficult to say what is the authority for the few lines (4948–4953) about Saint Oswald the king of Northumbria, but the mission of St. Birin, the conversion of the king of Wessex, and the death of Oswald in battle with Penda (4954–4979), are from Henry of Huntingdon. The writer shows his local knowledge, and perhaps also his partiality for his own county, in fixing the site of the battle at Marshfield in Gloucestershire. There is an obvious error in the date of Oswald’s death, owing to a corruption in line 4978, which we should perhaps read thus :

& vour & vourty vor seint oswald · niȝe ȝer king was

The death of his brother Enfrid is placed (line 4953) about the year 634, and the length of Oswald’s reign is given in Bede as nine years, so that the reading of some MSS. “score” for “hondred” is obviously only a conjectural emendation, which is also certainly wrong.

The narrative is now carried on (4980–5143) by the help of Geoffrey’s history to the point which it had reached at line 4654, the complete subjugation of the country by the Saxons, and the writer here takes leave of his former guide.

The account of the seven kingdoms of the heptarchy is taken from Henry of Huntingdon (5144–5155), but the history of this period is passed over very briefly, and the events of a century before the time of Egbert are unnoticed. From Egbert to the beginning of Alfred’s reign (5164–5323) the writer again follows Henry of

¹ The lines of the text are wrongly numbered from this point; 4932 should be 4923.

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Huntingdon, adding perhaps from William of Malmesbury the slight mention of St. Swithin and Bishop Alcstan (5264–5266). For the early history of Alfred (5324–5361) he is indebted to the latter source, except for lines (5334–5) which may have been inserted from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. The landing of the Danes in Devonshire and their defeat, with the baptism of Gudrun or Gurmund (5362–5385), are recorded by Henry of Huntingdon, but the name Gurmund is only found in William of Malmesbury, who also mentions that thirty of his chieftains were baptised with him, while he says nothing of the twelve days during which he was entertained by Alfred, as Henry of Huntingdon relates. William of Malmesbury may have been the authority for the rest of the reign of Alfred (5386–5411) and the beginning of that of Edward the Elder (5412–5439), but the writer differs from his predecessors in putting the age of Alfred when he first learned his letters at more than ten years, instead of twelve, as his biographer Asser and those who follow him relate. The rest of the reign of Edward and the beginning of the reign of Athelstan are taken from Henry of Huntingdon (5440–5491), but in the account of the rebellion of Ethelwold, although the writer follows Henry in calling him the king's brother instead of his uncle's son, he departs from all the authorities in giving his name Edwolf. Athelstone's love for the church (5492) is commemorated by the writer after William of Malmesbury, and the note of the birth of Dunstan in the first year of his reign (5493) may be from the A.S. Chronicle. From this point to the fifteenth year of Edgar (5494–5727) William of Malmesbury's narrative is followed, and several lines (5706–5719, 5722–3) are borrowed from the life of St. Athelwold in the metrical Lives of the Saints. But the scene of the battle against Anlaf is laid at Brymesbury (5550), which is clearly the Bruneshurh of Henry of Huntingdon, instead of at Bruneford, or Brunefeld, as in William of Malmesbury, and the names of the five boroughs out of which Edmund drove the Danes (5593–4)

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are given from Henry of Huntingdon. The translation of St. Swithin's relics by Edgar and Saint Athelwold (5728–31), which is here placed in the year 971, is recorded by Florence of Worcester under the date 970. The foundation of the abbeys by Edgar (5732–5741) is summarised perhaps from the A. S. Chronicle and Henry of Huntingdon, but the number of them, forty-eight, which is vaguely given as "more than forty" by Florence of Worcester and other authorities, agrees with the number in the metrical Life of Saint Athelwold, and in Eadmer's *Historia Novorum* (ed. Selden, p. 4). For the rest of the reign of Edgar the metrical Chronicle follows William of Malmesbury, except in lines 5762–5769 and 5808–5811, which the writer probably supplied himself. William of Malmesbury is again the authority for the history of Edward the Martyr (5812–5835) which agrees with the narrative in the metrical Lives of the Saints, except that the miraculous escape of Dunstan (5828–5835) is not told in the Lives, and the interpretation put upon it (5836–8539) is derived from Henry of Huntingdon. The story of the murder of Edward is (5840–5877), with the omission of a few lines, taken verbatim from the Lives of the Saints, and follows the narrative which is preserved by a later chronicler, John of Brompton, except 5866–7. Then follow two lines (5878–9) from Henry of Huntingdon, and William of Malmesbury again becomes the authority for the reign of Ethelred (5880–5925), with the exception of 5916–5921, the facts in which are also preserved in John of Brompton. Lines 5897–5905 are the same as in the metrical Life of St. Dunstan. For the narrative which follows (5926–5973) I have not been able to discover the original source of information, but from 5974 to 6399 the writer's authority is mainly Henry of Huntingdon, though he occasionally departs from his original. For instance, in 5985 the swarms of ants to which the Danes are compared are locusts in Henry. The date of the siege of Canterbury (6044–5) is from Florence of Worcester, and the details of the archbishop's

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murder at Greenwich are borrowed from the metrical Life of St. Alphe. The death of Ethelred (6123-4) is put on St. Gregory's day as in William of Malmesbury, not on St. George's day as in the A. S. Chronicle, and the date of the battle of Sherston, St. John's day (6150-1), is from the same historian, as are lines 6161-3, and 6200-6205. The character of Edmund Ironside (6136-6147) is from Ailred of Rievaulx, and the rest of his reign (6216-6399) is to be found in Henry of Huntingdon, expanded by Ailred of Rievaulx as far as 6328. The story of the murder of Edmund at Oxford, and of the punishment of his murderer (6329-6399), agrees also with the narrative in Roger of Wendover, with the addition of a few lines marked by the writer's peculiar humour (6390-6395) and apparently his own. It is difficult to say what authority he followed for the reign of Canute. The account of the first parliament and the banishment of Edmund's children (6400-6471) is substantially the same as that given by Florence of Worcester, who however says nothing of the marriage of Edmund the son of Edmund Ironside to the king of Hungary's daughter, as told in John of Brompton. The name of Edmund Ironside's grandson, afterwards known as the Atheling, is here given as Edward (6462), instead of Edgar as in Florence of Worcester. The marriage of Canute with Emma the mother of Edward the Confessor (6472-6487), which is said to have been suggested by her brother Richard duke of Normandy, with the consent of her sons Alfred and Edward, is related without these circumstances by other historians. The parliament at Oxford in 1018 is mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, and the name of Canute's first wife, Ailive or Ælfgifa, may be found in Henry of Huntingdon, but no notice is here taken of the suspicious stories which are told of the birth of her children by Florence of Worcester and others. The goodness of Canute to the church in restoring abbeys and churches, and the trans-

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lation of the body of St. Alfe or Alphege (6502–6521) are narrated by William of Malmesbury. The chronicler then (6522–6609) follows Henry of Huntingdon, who is apparently the only authority for the well known story of Canute and his courtiers. The journey to Rome (6610–6621) is described in Florence of Worcester, and Canute's benefactions to Glastonbury (6622–6635) are commemorated by William of Malmesbury, while the account of his death after a reign of twenty years (6636–6639) agrees with Henry of Huntingdon. Our chronicler, however, reckoning roughly from the death of Edmund Ironside in 1016, places the death of Canute in 1036 instead of 1035 as in the A. S. Chronicle.

The short reigns of Harold and Hardecanute (6640–6672) are taken probably from Henry of Huntingdon, the chronological notes (6658–9 and 6669–6672) being added from William of Malmesbury. The return of queen Emma from Flanders is related also by John of Brompton (6666–6670). The few lines which follow (6673–6682) are apparently the chronicler's own remarks, but in the account of the murder of Aldred or Alfred, the Confessor's brother, by Godwin, he follows Henry of Huntingdon (6683–6717). For a great part of the reign of Edward the Confessor the chief authority is Ailred of Rievaulx (6720–6843). His coming with a small retinue of foreigners is from Henry of Huntingdon (6756–6759). The story of the ordeal of queen Emma is also told in the Winchester Annals (6844–7033), but the details of the death of Godwin vary in some respects from the account there given. The scene is laid at Windsor (7012) as in Henry of Huntingdon, instead of at Hodiham or Odiham, as in the Winchester Annals, and Godwin is dragged out from under the table by his son Harold (7031), as is told by John of Brompton. In relating how the king sent for Edward the son of Edmund Ironside (7034–7062), the chronicler follows the same authority as John of Brompton, and differs