

НЕИЗВЕСТНЫЙ АВТОР

**THE ANGLO-SAXON  
CHRONICLE**

Неизвестный автор

**The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle**

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## Содержание

|  |    |
|--|----|
| ORIGINAL INTRODUCTION TO INGRAM'S EDITION [1823] | 5  |
| THE ANGLO-SAXON CHRONICLE                        | 14 |
| Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.                | 40 |

# The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle

## ORIGINAL INTRODUCTION TO INGRAM'S EDITION [1823]

England may boast of two substantial monuments of its early history; to either of which it would not be easy to find a parallel in any nation, ancient or modern. These are, the Record of Doomsday <sup>1</sup> and the "Saxon Chronicle" <sup>2</sup>. The former, which is little more than a statistical survey, but contains the most authentic information relative to the descent of property and the comparative importance of the different parts of the kingdom at a very interesting period, the wisdom and liberality of the British Parliament long since deemed worthy of being printed <sup>3</sup> among the Public Records, by Commissioners appointed for that purpose. The other work, though not treated with absolute neglect, has not received that degree of attention which every person who feels an interest in the events and transactions of former times would naturally expect. In the first place, it has never been printed entire, from a collation of all the MSS. But of the extent of the two former editions, compared with the present, the reader may form some idea, when he is told that Professor Wheloc's "Chronologia Anglo-Saxonica", which was the first attempt <sup>4</sup> of the kind, published at Cambridge in 1644, is comprised in less than 62 folio pages, exclusive of the Latin appendix. The improved edition by Edmund Gibson, afterwards Bishop of London, printed at Oxford in 1692, exhibits nearly four times the quantity of the former; but is very far from being the entire <sup>5</sup> chronicle, as the editor considered it. The text of the present edition, it was found, could not be compressed within a shorter compass than 374 pages, though the editor has suppressed many notes and illustrations, which may be thought necessary to the general reader. Some variations in the MSS. may also still remain unnoticed; partly because they were considered of little importance, and partly from an apprehension, lest the commentary, as it sometimes happens, should seem an unwieldy burthen, rather than a necessary appendage, to the text. Indeed, till the editor had made some progress in the work, he could not have imagined that so many original and authentic materials of our history still remained unpublished.

To those who are unacquainted with this monument of our national antiquities, two questions appear requisite to be answered:— "What does it contain?" and, "By whom was it written?" The indulgence of the critical antiquary is solicited, whilst we endeavour to answer, in some degree, each of these questions.

To the first question we answer, that the "Saxon Chronicle" contains the original and authentic testimony of contemporary writers to the most important transactions of our forefathers, both by sea and land, from their first arrival in this country to the year 1154. Were we to descend to particulars,

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<sup>1</sup> Whatever was the origin of this title, by which it is now distinguished, in an appendix to the work itself it is called "Liber de Wintonia," or "The Winchester-Book," from its first place of custody.

<sup>2</sup> This title is retained, in compliance with custom, though it is a collection of chronicles, rather than one uniform work, as the received appellation seems to imply.

<sup>3</sup> In two volumes folio, with the following title: "Domesday-Book, seu Liber Censualis Willelmi Primi Regis Angliae, inter Archlyos Regni in Domo Capitulari Westmonasterii asservatus: jubente rege augustissimo Georgio Tertio praelo mandatus typis MDCCLXXXIII"

<sup>4</sup> Gerard Langbaine had projected such a work, and had made considerable progress in the collation of MSS., when he found himself anticipated by Wheloc.

<sup>5</sup> "Nunc primum integrum edidit" is Gibson's expression in the title-page. He considers Wheloc's MSS. as fragments, rather than entire chronicles: "quod integrum nacti jam discimus." These MSS., however, were of the first authority, and not less entire, as far as they went, than his own favourite "Laud". But the candid critic will make allowance for the zeal of a young Bachelor of Queen's, who, it must be remembered, had scarcely attained the age of twenty-three when this extraordinary work was produced.

it would require a volume to discuss the great variety of subjects which it embraces. Suffice it to say, that every reader will here find many interesting facts relative to our architecture, our agriculture, our coinage, our commerce, our naval and military glory, our laws, our liberty, and our religion. In this edition, also, will be found numerous specimens of Saxon poetry, never before printed, which might form the ground-work of an introductory volume to Warton's elaborate annals of English Poetry. Philosophically considered, this ancient record is the second great phenomenon in the history of mankind. For, if we except the sacred annals of the Jews, contained in the several books of the Old Testament, there is no other work extant, ancient or modern, which exhibits at one view a regular and chronological panorama of a PEOPLE, described in rapid succession by different writers, through so many ages, in their own vernacular LANGUAGE. Hence it may safely be considered, not only as the primaeval source from which all subsequent historians of English affairs have principally derived their materials, and consequently the criterion by which they are to be judged, but also as the faithful depository of our national idiom; affording, at the same time, to the scientific investigator of the human mind a very interesting and extraordinary example of the changes incident to a language, as well as to a nation, in its progress from rudeness to refinement.

But that the reader may more clearly see how much we are indebted to the "Saxon Chronicle", it will be necessary to examine what is contained in other sources of our history, prior to the accession of Henry II., the period wherein this invaluable record terminates.

The most ancient historian of our own island, whose work has been preserved, is Gildas, who flourished in the latter part of the sixth century. British antiquaries of the present day will doubtless forgive me, if I leave in their original obscurity the prophecies of Merlin, and the exploits of King Arthur, with all the Knights of the Round Table, as scarcely coming within the verge of history. Notwithstanding, also, the authority of Bale, and of the writers whom he follows, I cannot persuade myself to rank Joseph of Arimathea, Arviragus, and Bonduca, or even the Emperor Constantine himself, among the illustrious writers of Great Britain. I begin, therefore, with Gildas; because, though he did not compile a regular history of the island, he has left us, amidst a cumbrous mass of pompous rhapsody and querulous declamation some curious descriptions of the character and manners of the inhabitants; not only the Britons and Saxons, but the Picts and Scots<sup>6</sup>. There are also some parts of his work, almost literally transcribed by Bede, which confirm the brief statements of the "Saxon Chronicle"<sup>7</sup>. But there is, throughout, such a want of precision and simplicity, such a barrenness of facts amidst a multiplicity of words, such a scantiness of names of places and persons, of dates, and other circumstances, that we are obliged to have recourse to the Saxon Annals, or to Venerable Bede, to supply the absence of those two great lights of history—Chronology and Topography.

The next historian worth notice here is Nennius, who is supposed to have flourished in the seventh century: but the work ascribed to him is so full of interpolations and corruptions, introduced by his transcribers, and particularly by a simpleton who is called Samuel, or his master Beulanus, or both, who appear to have lived in the ninth century, that it is difficult to say how much of this motley production is original and authentic. Be that as it may, the writer of the copy printed by Gale bears ample testimony to the "Saxon Chronicle", and says expressly, that he compiled his history partly from the records of the Scots and Saxons<sup>8</sup>. At the end is a confused but very curious appendix, containing

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<sup>6</sup> The reader is forcibly reminded of the national dress of the Highlanders in the following singular passage: "furciferos magis vultus pilis, quam corporum pudenda, pudendisque proxima, vestibus tegentes."

<sup>7</sup> See particularly capp. xxiii. and xxvi. The work which follows, called the "Epistle of Gildas", is little more than a cento of quotations from the Old and New Testament.

<sup>8</sup> "De historiis Scotorum Saxonumque, licet inimicorum," etc. "Hist. Brit. ap." Gale, XV. Script. p. 93. See also p. 94 of the same work; where the writer notices the absence of all written memorials among the Britons, and attributes it to the frequent recurrence of war and pestilence. A new edition has been prepared from a Vatican MS. with a translation and notes by the Rev. W. Gunn, and published by J. and A. Arch.

that very genealogy, with some brief notices of Saxon affairs, which the fastidiousness of Beulanus, or of his amanuensis, the aforesaid Samuel, would not allow him to transcribe. This writer, although he professes to be the first historiographer <sup>9</sup> of the Britons, has sometimes repeated the very words of Gildas <sup>10</sup>; whose name is even prefixed to some copies of the work. It is a puerile composition, without judgment, selection, or method <sup>11</sup>; filled with legendary tales of Trojan antiquity, of magical delusion, and of the miraculous exploits of St. Germain and St. Patrick: not to mention those of the valiant Arthur, who is said to have felled to the ground in one day, single-handed, eight hundred and forty Saxons! It is remarkable, that this taste for the marvelous, which does not seem to be adapted to the sober sense of Englishmen, was afterwards revived in all its glory by Geoffrey of Monmouth in the Norman age of credulity and romance.

We come now to a more cheering prospect; and behold a steady light reflected on the "Saxon Chronicle" by the "Ecclesiastical History" of Bede; a writer who, without the intervention of any legendary tale, truly deserves the title of Venerable <sup>12</sup>. With a store of classical learning not very common in that age, and with a simplicity of language seldom found in monastic Latinity, he has moulded into something like a regular form the scattered fragments of Roman, British, Scottish, and Saxon history. His work, indeed, is professedly ecclesiastical; but, when we consider the prominent station which the Church had at this time assumed in England, we need not be surprised if we find therein the same intermixture of civil, military, and ecclesiastical affairs, which forms so remarkable a feature in the "Saxon Chronicle". Hence Gibson concludes, that many passages of the latter description were derived from the work of Bede <sup>13</sup>. He thinks the same of the description of Britain, the notices of the Roman emperors, and the detail of the first arrival of the Saxons. But, it may be observed, those passages to which he alludes are not to be found in the earlier MSS. The description of Britain, which forms the introduction, and refers us to a period antecedent to the invasion of Julius Caesar; appears only in three copies of the "Chronicle"; two of which are of so late a date as the Norman Conquest, and both derived from the same source. Whatever relates to the succession of the Roman emperors was so universally known, that it must be considered as common property: and so short was the interval between the departure of the Romans and the arrival of the Saxons, that the latter must have preserved amongst them sufficient memorials and traditions to connect their own history with that of their predecessors. Like all rude nations, they were particularly attentive to genealogies; and these, together with the succession of their kings, their battles, and their conquests, must be derived originally from the Saxons themselves, and not from Gildas, or Nennius, or Bede <sup>14</sup>. Gibson himself was so convinced of this, that he afterwards attributes to the "Saxon Chronicle" all the knowledge we have of those early times <sup>15</sup>. Moreover, we might ask, if our whole dependence had been centered in Bede, what would have become of us after his death? <sup>16</sup> Malmsbury indeed asserts, with some degree of vanity, that you will not easily find a Latin historian of English affairs between Bede and himself <sup>17</sup>; and in the fulness of self-complacency professes his determination, "to season with Roman salt the barbarisms of his native tongue!" He affects great contempt for Ethelwerd, whose

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<sup>9</sup> "Malo me historiographum quam neminem," etc.

<sup>10</sup> He considered his work, perhaps, as a lamentation of declamation, rather than a history. But Bede dignifies him with the title of "historicus," though he writes "fiebili sermone."

<sup>11</sup> But it is probable that the work is come down to us in a garbled and imperfect state.

<sup>12</sup> There is an absurd story of a monk, who in vain attempting to write his epitaph, fell asleep, leaving it thus: "Hac sunt in fossa Bedae. ossa:" but, when he awoke, to his great surprise and satisfaction he found the long-sought epithet supplied by an angelic hand, the whole line standing thus: "Hac sunt in fossa Bedae venerabilis ossa."

<sup>13</sup> See the preface to his edition of the "Saxon Chronicle".

<sup>14</sup> This will be proved more fully when we come to speak of the writers of the "Saxon Chronicle".

<sup>15</sup> Preface, "ubi supra".

<sup>16</sup> He died A.D. 734, according to our chronicle; but some place his death to the following year.

<sup>17</sup> This circumstance alone proves the value of the "Saxon Chronicle". In the "Edinburgh Chronicle" of St. Cross, printed by H. Wharton, there is a chasm from the death of Bede to the year 1065; a period of 330 years.

work will be considered hereafter; and he well knew how unacceptable any praise of the "Saxon Annals" would be to the Normans, with whom he was connected <sup>18</sup>. He thinks it necessary to give his reasons, on one occasion, for inserting from these very "Annals" what he did not find in Bede; though it is obvious, that the best part of his materials, almost to his own times, is derived from the same source.

The object of Bishop Asser, the biographer of Alfred, who comes next in order, was to deliver to posterity a complete memorial of that sovereign, and of the transactions of his reign. To him alone are we indebted for the detail of many interesting circumstances in the life and character of his royal patron <sup>19</sup>; but most of the public transactions will be found in the pages of the "Saxon Chronicle": some passages of which he appears to have translated so literally, that the modern version of Gibson does not more closely represent the original. In the editions of Parker, Camden, and Wise, the last notice of any public event refers to the year 887. The interpolated copy of Gale, called by some Pseudo-Asserius, and by others the Chronicle of St. Neot's, is extended to the year 914 <sup>20</sup>. Much difference of opinion exists respecting this work; into the discussion of which it is not our present purpose to enter. One thing is remarkable: it contains the vision of Drihtelm, copied from Bede, and that of Charles King of the Franks, which Malmsbury thought it worth while to repeat in his "History of the Kings of England". What Gale observes concerning the "fidelity" with which these annals of Asser are copied by Marianus, is easily explained. They both translated from the "Saxon Chronicle", as did also Florence of Worcester, who interpolated Marianus; of whom we shall speak hereafter.

But the most faithful and extraordinary follower of the "Saxon Annals" is Ethelwerd; who seems to have disregarded almost all other sources of information. One great error, however, he committed; for which Malmsbury does not spare him. Despairing of the reputation of classical learning, if he had followed the simplicity of the Saxon original, he fell into a sort of measured and inverted prose, peculiar to himself; which, being at first sufficiently obscure, is sometimes rendered almost unintelligible by the incorrect manner in which it has been printed. His authority, nevertheless, in an historical point of view, is very respectable. Being one of the few writers untainted by monastic prejudice <sup>21</sup>, he does not travel out of his way to indulge in legendary tales and romantic visions. Critically considered, his work is the best commentary on the "Saxon Chronicle" to the year 977; at which period one of the MSS. which he seems to have followed, terminates. Brevity and compression seem to have been his aim, because the compilation was intended to be sent abroad for the instruction of a female relative of high rank in Germany <sup>22</sup>, at her request. But there are, nevertheless, some circumstances recorded which are not to be found elsewhere; so that a reference to this epitome of Saxon history will be sometimes useful in illustrating the early part of the "Chronicle"; though Gibson, I know not on what account, has scarcely once quoted it.

During the sanguinary conflicts of the eleventh century, which ended first in the temporary triumph of the Danes, and afterwards in the total subjugation of the country by the Normans, literary pursuits, as might be expected, were so much neglected, that scarcely a Latin writer is to be found: but

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<sup>18</sup> The cold and reluctant manner in which he mentions the "Saxon Annals", to which he was so much indebted, can only be ascribed to this cause in him, as well as in the other Latin historians. See his prologue to the first book, "De Gestis Regum," etc.

<sup>19</sup> If there are additional anecdotes in the Chronicle of St. Neot's, which is supposed to have been so called by Leland because he found the MS. there, it must be remembered that this work is considered an interpolated Asser.

<sup>20</sup> The death of Asser himself is recorded in the year 909; but this is no more a proof that the whole work is spurious, than the character and burial of Moses, described in the latter part of the book of "Deuteronomy", would go to prove that the Pentateuch was not written by him. See Bishop Watson's "Apology for the Bible".

<sup>21</sup> Malmsbury calls him "noble and magnificent," with reference to his rank; for he was descended from King Alfred: but he forgets his peculiar praise—that of being the only Latin historian for two centuries; though, like Xenophon, Caesar, and Alfred, he wielded the sword as much as the pen.

<sup>22</sup> This was no less a personage than Matilda, the daughter of Otho the Great, Emperor of Germany, by his first Empress Eadgitha or Editha; who is mentioned in the "Saxon Chronicle", A.D. 925, though not by name, as given to Otho by her brother, King Athelstan. Ethelwerd adds, in his epistle to Matilda, that Athelstan sent two sisters, in order that the emperor might take his choice; and that he preferred the mother of Matilda.

the "Saxon Chronicle" has preserved a regular and minute detail of occurrences, as they passed along, of which subsequent historians were glad to avail themselves. For nearly a century after the Conquest, the Saxon annalists appear to have been chiefly eye-witnesses of the transactions which they relate<sup>23</sup>. The policy of the Conqueror led him by degrees to employ Saxons as well as Normans: and William II. found them the most faithful of his subjects: but such an influx of foreigners naturally corrupted the ancient language; till at length, after many foreign and domestic wars, tranquillity being restored on the accession of Henry II., literature revived; a taste for composition increased; and the compilation of Latin histories of English and foreign affairs, blended and diversified with the fabled romance and legendary tale, became the ordinary path to distinction. It is remarkable, that when the "Saxon Chronicle" ends, Geoffrey of Monmouth begins. Almost every great monastery about this time had its historian: but some still adhered to the ancient method. Florence of Worcester, an interpolator of Marianus, as we before observed, closely follows Bede, Asser, and the "Saxon Chronicle"<sup>24</sup>. The same may be observed of the annals of Gisburne, of Margan, of Meiros, of Waverley, etc.; some of which are anonymous compilations, whilst others have the name of an author, or rather transcriber; for very few aspired to the character of authors or original historians. Thomas Wikes, a canon of Oseney, who compiled a Latin chronicle of English affairs from the Conquest to the year 1304, tells us expressly, that he did this, not because he could add much to the histories of Bede, William of Newburgh, and Matthew Paris, but "propter minores, quibus non suppetit copia librorum."<sup>25</sup> Before the invention of printing, it was necessary that numerous copies of historical works should be transcribed, for the instruction of those who had not access to libraries. The transcribers frequently added something of their own, and abridged or omitted what they thought less interesting. Hence the endless variety of interpolators and deflorators of English history. William of Malmesbury, indeed, deserves to be selected from all his competitors for the superiority of his genius; but he is occasionally inaccurate, and negligent of dates and other minor circumstances; insomuch that his modern translator has corrected some mistakes, and supplied the deficiencies in his chronology, by a reference to the "Saxon Chronicle". Henry of Huntingdon, when he is not transcribing Bede, or translating the "Saxon Annals", may be placed on the same shelf with Geoffrey of Monmouth.

As I have now brought the reader to the period when our "Chronicle" terminates, I shall dismiss without much ceremony the succeeding writers, who have partly borrowed from this source; Simon of Durham, who transcribes Florence of Worcester, the two priors of Hexham, Gervase, Hoveden, Bromton, Stubbes, the two Matthews, of Paris and Westminster, and many others, considering that sufficient has been said to convince those who may not have leisure or opportunity to examine the matter themselves, that however numerous are the Latin historians of English affairs, almost everything original and authentic, and essentially conducive to a correct knowledge of our general history, to the period above mentioned, may be traced to the "Saxon Annals".

It is now time to examine, who were probably the writers of these "Annals". I say probably, because we have very little more than rational conjecture to guide us.

The period antecedent to the times of Bede, except where passages were afterwards inserted, was perhaps little else, originally, than a kind of chronological table of events, with a few genealogies, and notices of the death and succession of kings and other distinguished personages. But it is evident from the preface of Bede and from many passages in his work, that he received considerable assistance from Saxon bishops, abbots, and others; who not only communicated certain traditionary facts "viva voce", but also transmitted to him many written documents. These, therefore, must have been the early

<sup>23</sup> See particularly the character of William I. p. 294, written by one who was in his court. The compiler of the "Waverley Annals" we find literally translating it more than a century afterwards:—"nos dicemus, qui eum vidimus, et in curia ejus aliquando fuimus," etc.—Gale, ii. 134.

<sup>24</sup> His work, which is very faithfully and diligently compiled, ends in the year 1117; but it is continued by another hand to the imprisonment of King Stephen.

<sup>25</sup> "Chron. ap." Gale, ii. 21.

chronicles of Wessex, of Kent, and of the other provinces of the Heptarchy; which formed together the ground-work of his history. With greater honesty than most of his followers, he has given us the names of those learned persons who assisted him with this local information. The first is Alcuinus or Albinus, an abbot of Canterbury, at whose instigation he undertook the work; who sent by Nothelm, afterwards archbishop of that province, a full account of all ecclesiastical transactions in Kent, and in the contiguous districts, from the first conversion of the Saxons. From the same source he partly derived his information respecting the provinces of Essex, Wessex, East Anglia, and Northumbria. Bishop Daniel communicated to him by letter many particulars concerning Wessex, Sussex, and the Isle of Wight. He acknowledges assistance more than once "ex scriptis priorum"; and there is every reason to believe that some of these preceding records were the "Anglo-Saxon Annals"; for we have already seen that such records were in existence before the age of Nennius. In proof of this we may observe, that even the phraseology sometimes partakes more of the Saxon idiom than the Latin. If, therefore, it be admitted, as there is every reason to conclude from the foregoing remarks, that certain succinct and chronological arrangements of historical facts had taken place in several provinces of the Heptarchy before the time of Bede, let us inquire by whom they were likely to have been made.

In the province of Kent, the first person on record, who is celebrated for his learning, is Tobias, the ninth bishop of Rochester, who succeeded to that see in 693. He is noticed by Bede as not only furnished with an ample store of Greek and Latin literature, but skilled also in the Saxon language and erudition<sup>26</sup>. It is probable, therefore, that he left some proofs of this attention to his native language and as he died within a few years of Bede, the latter would naturally avail himself of his labours. It is worthy also of remark, that Bertwald, who succeeded to the illustrious Theodore of Tarsus in 690, was the first English or Saxon archbishop of Canterbury. From this period, consequently, we may date that cultivation of the vernacular tongue which would lead to the composition of brief chronicles<sup>27</sup>, and other vehicles of instruction, necessary for the improvement of a rude and illiterate people. The first chronicles were, perhaps, those of Kent or Wessex; which seem to have been regularly continued, at intervals, by the archbishops of Canterbury, or by their direction<sup>28</sup>, at least as far as the year 1001, or by even 1070; for the Benet MS., which some call the Plegmund MS., ends in the latter year; the rest being in Latin. From internal evidence indeed, of an indirect nature, there is great reason to presume, that Archbishop Plegmund transcribed or superintended this very copy of the "Saxon Annals" to the year 891<sup>29</sup>; the year in which he came to the see; inserting, both before and after this date, to the time of his death in 923, such additional materials as he was well qualified to furnish from his high station and learning, and the confidential intercourse which he enjoyed in the court of King Alfred. The total omission of his own name, except by another hand, affords indirect evidence of some importance in support of this conjecture. Whether King Alfred himself was the author of a distinct and separate chronicle of Wessex, cannot now be determined. That he furnished additional supplies of historical matter to the older chronicles is, I conceive, sufficiently obvious to every reader who will take the trouble of examining the subject. The argument of Dr. Beeke, the present Dean of Bristol, in an obliging letter to the editor on this subject, is not without its force;—that it is extremely improbable, when we consider the number and variety of King Alfred's works, that he should have neglected the history, of his own country. Besides a genealogy of the kings of Wessex from Cerdic to his own time, which seems never to have been incorporated with any MS. of the "Saxon Chronicle",

<sup>26</sup> "Virum Latina, Graec, et Saxonica lingua atque eruditione multipliciter instructum."—Bede, "Ecclesiastical History", v. 8. "Chron. S. Crucis Edinb. ap.", Wharton, i. 157.

<sup>27</sup> The materials, however, though not regularly arranged, must be traced to a much higher source.

<sup>28</sup> Josselyn collated two Kentish MSS. of the first authority; one of which he calls the History or Chronicle of St. Augustine's, the other that of Christ Church, Canterbury. The former was perhaps the one marked in our series "C.T." A VI.; the latter the Benet or Plegmund MS.

<sup>29</sup> Wanley observes, that the Benet MS. is written in one and the same hand to this year, and in hands equally ancient to the year 924; after which it is continued in different hands to the end. Vid. "Cat." p. 130.

though prefixed or annexed to several, he undoubtedly preserved many traditionary facts; with a full and circumstantial detail of his own operations, as well as those of his father, brother, and other members of his family; which scarcely any other person than himself could have supplied. To doubt this would be as incredulous a thing as to deny that Xenophon wrote his "Anabasis", or Caesar his "Commentaries". From the time of Alfred and Plegmund to a few years after the Norman Conquest, these chronicles seem to have been continued by different hands, under the auspices of such men as Archbishops Dunstan, Aelfric, and others, whose characters have been much misrepresented by ignorance and scepticism on the one hand; as well as by mistaken zeal and devotion on the other. The indirect evidence respecting Dunstan and Aelfric is as curious as that concerning Plegmund; but the discussion of it would lead us into a wide and barren field of investigation; nor is this the place to refute the errors of Hicke, Cave, and Wharton, already noticed by Wanley in his preface. The chronicles of Abingdon, of Worcester, of Peterborough, and others, are continued in the same manner by different hands; partly, though not exclusively, by monks of those monasteries, who very naturally inserted many particulars relating to their own local interests and concerns; which, so far from invalidating the general history, render it more interesting and valuable. It would be a vain and frivolous attempt ascribe these latter compilations to particular persons<sup>30</sup>, where there were evidently so many contributors; but that they were successively furnished by contemporary writers, many of whom were eye-witnesses of the events and transactions which they relate, there is abundance of internal evidence to convince us. Many instances of this the editor had taken some pains to collect, in order to lay them before the reader in the preface; but they are so numerous that the subject would necessarily become tedious; and therefore every reader must be left to find them for himself. They will amply repay him for his trouble, if he takes any interest in the early history of England, or in the general construction of authentic history of any kind. He will see plagiarisms without end in the Latin histories, and will be in no danger of falling into the errors of Gale and others; not to mention those of our historians who were not professed antiquaries, who mistook that for original and authentic testimony which was only translated. It is remarkable that the "Saxon Chronicle" gradually expires with the Saxon language, almost melted into modern English, in the year 1154. From this period almost to the Reformation, whatever knowledge we have of the affairs of England has been originally derived either from the semi-barbarous Latin of our own countrymen, or from the French chronicles of Froissart and others.

The revival of good taste and of good sense, and of the good old custom adopted by most nations of the civilised world—that of writing their own history in their own language—was happily exemplified at length in the laborious works of our English chroniclers and historians.

Many have since followed in the same track; and the importance of the whole body of English History has attracted and employed the imagination of Milton, the philosophy of Hume, the simplicity of Goldsmith, the industry of Henry, the research of Turner, and the patience of Lingard. The pages of these writers, however, accurate and luminous as they generally are, as well as those of Brady, Tyrrell, Carte, Rapin, and others, not to mention those in black letter, still require correction from the "Saxon Chronicle"; without which no person, however learned, can possess anything beyond a superficial acquaintance with the elements of English History, and of the British Constitution.

Some remarks may here be requisite on the CHRONOLOGY of the "Saxon Chronicle". In the early part of it<sup>31</sup> the reader will observe a reference to the grand epoch of the creation of the world. So also in Ethelwerd, who closely follows the "Saxon Annals". It is allowed by all, that considerable difficulty has occurred in fixing the true epoch of Christ's nativity<sup>32</sup>, because the Christian aera

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<sup>30</sup> Hicke supposed the Laud or Peterborough Chronicle to have been compiled by Hugo Candidus (Albus, or White), or some other monk of that house.

<sup>31</sup> See A.D. xxxiii., the aera of Christ's crucifixion, p. 23, and the notes below.

<sup>32</sup> See Playfair's "System of Chronology", p. 49.

was not used at all till about the year 532<sup>33</sup>, when it was introduced by Dionysius Exiguus; whose code of canon law, joined afterwards with the decretals of the popes, became as much the standard of authority in ecclesiastical matters as the pandects of Justinian among civilians. But it does not appear that in the Saxon mode of computation this system of chronology was implicitly followed. We mention this circumstance, however, not with a view of settling the point of difference, which would not be easy, but merely to account for those variations observable in different MSS.; which arose, not only from the common mistakes or inadvertencies of transcribers, but from the liberty which the original writers themselves sometimes assumed in this country, of computing the current year according to their own ephemeral or local custom. Some began with the Incarnation or Nativity of Christ; some with the Circumcision, which accords with the solar year of the Romans as now restored; whilst others commenced with the Annunciation; a custom which became very prevalent in honour of the Virgin Mary, and was not formally abolished here till the year 1752; when the Gregorian calendar, commonly called the New Style, was substituted by Act of Parliament for the Dionysian. This diversity of computation would alone occasion some confusion; but in addition to this, the INDICATION, or cycle of fifteen years, which is mentioned in the latter part of the "Saxon Chronicle", was carried back three years before the vulgar aera, and commenced in different places at four different periods of the year! But it is very remarkable that, whatever was the commencement of the year in the early part of the "Saxon Chronicle", in the latter part the year invariably opens with Midwinter-day or the Nativity. Gervase of Canterbury, whose Latin chronicle ends in 1199, the aera of "legal" memory, had formed a design, as he tells us, of regulating his chronology by the Annunciation; but from an honest fear of falsifying dates he abandoned his first intention, and acquiesced in the practice of his predecessors; who for the most part, he says, began the new year with the Nativity<sup>34</sup>.

Having said thus much in illustration of the work itself, we must necessarily be brief in our account of the present edition. It was contemplated many years since, amidst a constant succession of other occupations; but nothing was then projected beyond a reprint of Gibson, substituting an English translation for the Latin. The indulgence of the Saxon scholar is therefore requested, if we have in the early part of the chronicle too faithfully followed the received text. By some readers no apology of this kind will be deemed necessary; but something may be expected in extenuation of the delay which has retarded the publication. The causes of that delay must be chiefly sought in the nature of the work itself. New types were to be cast; compositors to be instructed in a department entirely new to them; manuscripts to be compared, collated, transcribed; the text to be revised throughout; various readings of great intricacy to be carefully presented, with considerable additions from unpublished sources; for, however unimportant some may at first sight appear, the most trivial may be of use. With such and other difficulties before him, the editor has, nevertheless, been blessed with health and leisure sufficient to overcome them; and he may now say with Gervase the monk at the end of his first chronicle,

"Finito libro reddatur gratia Christo."<sup>35</sup>

Of the translation it is enough to observe, that it is made as literal as possible, with a view of rendering the original easy to those who are at present unacquainted with the Saxon language. By this method also the connection between the ancient and modern language will be more obvious. The same method has been adopted in an unpublished translation of Gibson's "Chronicle" by the late Mr. Cough, now in the Bodleian Library. But the honour of having printed the first literal version of the

<sup>33</sup> Playfair says 527; but I follow Bede, Florence of Worcester, and others, who affirm that the great paschal cycle of Dionysius commenced from the year of our Lord's incarnation 532—the year in which the code of Justinian was promulgated. "Vid. Flor. an." 532, 1064, and 1073. See also M. West. "an." 532.

<sup>34</sup> "Vid. Prol. in Chron." Bervas. "ap. X." Script. p. 1338.

<sup>35</sup> Often did the editor, during the progress of the work, sympathise with the printer; who, in answer to his urgent importunities to hasten the work, replied once in the classical language of Manutius: "Precor, ut occupationibus meis ignoscas; premor enim oneribus, et typographiae cura, ut vix sustineam." Who could be angry after this?

"Saxon Annals" was reserved for a learned LADY, the Elstob of her age <sup>36</sup>; whose Work was finished in the year 1819. These translations, however, do not interfere with that in the present edition; because they contain nothing but what is found in the printed texts, and are neither accompanied with the original, nor with any collation of MSS.

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<sup>36</sup> Miss Gurney, of Keswick, Norfolk. The work, however, was not published.

## THE ANGLO-SAXON CHRONICLE

The island Britain <sup>37</sup> is 800 miles long, and 200 miles broad. And there are in the island five nations; English, Welsh (or British) <sup>38</sup>, Scottish, Pictish, and Latin. The first inhabitants were the Britons, who came from Armenia <sup>39</sup>, and first peopled Britain southward. Then happened it, that the Picts came south from Scythia, with long ships, not many; and, landing first in the northern part of Ireland, they told the Scots that they must dwell there. But they would not give them leave; for the Scots told them that they could not all dwell there together; "But," said the Scots, "we can nevertheless give you advice. We know another island here to the east. There you may dwell, if you will; and whosoever withstandeth you, we will assist you, that you may gain it." Then went the Picts and entered this land northward. Southward the Britons possessed it, as we before said. And the Picts obtained wives of the Scots, on condition that they chose their kings always on the female side <sup>40</sup>; which they have continued to do, so long since. And it happened, in the run of years, that some party of Scots went from Ireland into Britain, and acquired some portion of this land. Their leader was called Reoda <sup>41</sup>, from whom they are named Dalreodi (or Dalreathians).

Sixty winters ere that Christ was born, Caius Julius, emperor of the Romans, with eighty ships sought Britain. There he was first beaten in a dreadful fight, and lost a great part of his army. Then he let his army abide with the Scots <sup>42</sup>, and went south into Gaul. There he gathered six hundred ships, with which he went back into Britain. When they first rushed together, Caesar's tribune, whose name was Labienus <sup>43</sup>, was slain. Then took the Welsh sharp piles, and drove them with great clubs into the water, at a certain ford of the river called Thames. When the Romans found that, they would not go over the ford. Then fled the Britons to the fastnesses of the woods; and Caesar, having after much fighting gained many of the chief towns, went back into Gaul <sup>44</sup>.

((B.C. 60. Before the incarnation of Christ sixty years, Gaius Julius the emperor, first of the Romans, sought the land of Britain; and he crushed the Britons in battle, and overcame them; and nevertheless he was unable to gain any empire there.))

A.D. 1. Octavianus reigned fifty-six winters; and in the forty-second year of his reign Christ was born. Then three astrologers from the east came to worship Christ; and the children in Bethlehem were slain by Herod in persecution of Christ.

A.D. 3. This year died Herod, stabbed by his own hand; and Archelaus his son succeeded him. The child Christ was also this year brought back again from Egypt.

A.D. 6. From the beginning of the world to this year were gone five thousand and two hundred winters.

A.D. 11. This year Herod the son of Antipater undertook the government in Judea.

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<sup>37</sup> This introductory part of the "Chronicle" to An. I. first printed by Gibson from the Laud MS. only, has been corrected by a collation of two additional MSS. in the British Museum, "Cotton Tiberius B" lv. and "Domitianus A" viii. Some defects are also here supplied. The materials of this part are to be found in Pliny, Solinus, Orosius, Gildas, and Bede. The admeasurement of the island, however inaccurate, is from the best authorities of those times, and followed by much later historians.

<sup>38</sup> Gibson, following the Laud MS. has made six nations of five, by introducing the British and Welsh as two distinct tribes.

<sup>39</sup> "De tractu Armorico."—Bede, "Ecclesiastical History" i. I. The word Armenia occurring a few lines above in Bede, it was perhaps inadvertently written by the Saxon compiler of the "Chronicle" instead of Armorica.

<sup>40</sup> In case of a disputed succession, "Ubi res veniret in dabium," etc.—Bede, "Ecclesiastical History" i. I.

<sup>41</sup> Reada, Aelfr.; Reuda, Bede, Hunt. etc. Perhaps it was originally Reutha or Reotha.

<sup>42</sup> This is an error, arising from the inaccurately written MSS. of Orosius and Bede; where "in Hybernia" and "in Hiberniam" occur for "in hiberna". The error is retained in Wheloc's Bede.

<sup>43</sup> Labienus = Laberius. Venerable Bede also, and Orosius, whom he follows verbatim, have "Labienus". It is probably a mistake of some very ancient scribe, who improperly supplied the abbreviation "Labijs" (for "Laberius") by "Labienus".

<sup>44</sup> Of these early transactions in Britain King Alfred supplies us with a brief but circumstantial account in his Saxon paraphrase of "Orosius".

A.D. 12. This year Philip and Herod divided Judea into four kingdoms.

((A.D. 12. This year Judea was divided into four tetrarchies.))

A.D. 16. This year Tiberius succeeded to the empire.

A.D. 26. This year Pilate began to reign over the Jews.

A.D. 30. This year was Christ baptized; and Peter and Andrew were converted, together with James, and John, and Philip, and all the twelve apostles.

A.D. 33. This year was Christ crucified; <sup>45</sup> about five thousand two hundred and twenty six winters from the beginning of the world. <sup>46</sup>

A.D. 34. This year was St. Paul converted, and St. Stephen stoned.

A.D. 35. This year the blessed Peter the apostle settled an episcopal see in the city of Antioch.

A.D. 37. This year <sup>47</sup> Pilate slew himself with his own hand.

A.D. 39. This year Caius undertook the empire.

A.D. 44. This year the blessed Peter the apostle settled an episcopal see at Rome; and James, the brother of John, was slain by Herod.

A.D. 45. This year died Herod, who slew James one year ere his own death.

A.D. 46. This year Claudius, the second of the Roman emperors who invaded Britain, took the greater part of the island into his power, and added the Orkneys to rite dominion of the Romans. This was in the fourth year of his reign. And in the same year <sup>48</sup> happened the great famine in Syria which Luke mentions in the book called "The Acts of the Apostles". After Claudius Nero succeeded to the empire, who almost lost the island Britain through his incapacity.

((A.D. 46. This year the Emperor Claudius came to Britain, and subdued a large part of the island; and he also added the island of Orkney to the dominion of the Romans.))

A.D. 47. This year Mark, the evangelist in Egypt beginneth to write the gospel.

((A.D. 47. This was in the fourth year of his reign, and in this same year was the great famine in Syria which Luke speaks of in the book called "Actus Apostolorum".))

((A.D. 47. This year Claudius, king of the Romans, went with an army into Britain, and subdued the island, and subjected all the Picts and Welsh to the rule of the Romans.))

A.D. 50. This year Paul was sent bound to Rome.

A.D. 62. This year James, the brother of Christ, suffered.

A.D. 63. This year Mark the evangelist departed this life.

A.D. 69. This year Peter and Paul suffered.

A.D. 70. This year Vespasian undertook the empire.

A.D. 71. This year Titus, son of Vespasian, slew in Jerusalem eleven hundred thousand Jews.

A.D. 81. This year Titus came to the empire, after Vespasian, who said that he considered the day lost in which he did no good.

A.D. 83. This year Domitian, the brother of Titus, assumed the government.

A.D. 84. This year John the evangelist in the island Patmos wrote the book called "The Apocalypse".

A.D. 90. This year Simon, the apostle, a relation of Christ, was crucified: and John the evangelist rested at Ephesus.

A.D. 92. This year died Pope Clement.

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<sup>45</sup> "8 die Aprilis", Flor. M. West.

<sup>46</sup> Gibbon regrets this chronology, i.e. from the creation of the world, which he thinks preferable to the vulgar mode from the Christian aera. But how vague and uncertain the scale which depends on a point so remote and undetermined as the precise time when the world was created. If we examine the chronometers of different writers we shall find a difference, between the maximum and the minimum, of 3368 years. The Saxon chronology seems to be founded on that of Eusebius, which approaches the medium between the two extremes.

<sup>47</sup> An. 42, Flor. This act is attributed by Orosius, and Bede who follows him, to the threatening conduct of Caligula, with a remark, that it was he (Pilate) who condemned our Lord to death.

<sup>48</sup> An. 48, Flor. See the account of this famine in King Alfred's "Orosius".

A.D. 110. This year Bishop Ignatius suffered.

A.D. 116. This year Hadrian the Caesar began to reign.

A.D. 145. This year Marcus Antoninus and Aurelius his brother succeeded to the empire.

((A.D. 167. This year Eleutherius succeeded to the popedom, and held it fifteen years; and in the same year Lucius, king of the Britons, sent and begged baptism of him. And he soon sent it him, and they continued in the true faith until the time of Diocletian.))

A.D. 189. This year Severus came to the empire; and went with his army into Britain, and subdued in battle a great part of the island. Then wrought he a mound of turf, with a broad wall thereupon, from sea to sea, for the defence of the Britons. He reigned seventeen years; and then ended his days at York. His son Bassianus succeeded him in the empire. His other son, who perished, was called Geta. This year Eleutherius undertook the bishopric of Rome, and held it honourably for fifteen winters. To him Lucius, king of the Britons, sent letters, and prayed that he might be made a Christian. He obtained his request; and they continued afterwards in the right belief until the reign of Diocletian.

A.D. 199. In this year was found the holy rood.<sup>49</sup>

A.D. 283. This year suffered Saint Alban the Martyr.

A.D. 343. This year died St. Nicolaus.

A.D. 379. This year Gratian succeeded to the empire.

A.D. 381. This year Maximus the Caesar came to the empire. He was born in the land of Britain, whence he passed over into Gaul. He there slew the Emperor Gratian; and drove his brother, whose name was Valentinian, from his country (Italy). The same Valentinian afterwards collected an army, and slew Maximus; whereby he gained the empire. About this time arose the error of Pelagius over the world.

A.D. 418. This year the Romans collected all the hoards of gold<sup>50</sup> that were in Britain; and some they hid in the earth, so that no man afterwards might find them, and some they carried away with them into Gaul.

A.D. 423. This year Theodosius the younger succeeded to the empire.

A.D. 429. This year Bishop Palladius was sent from Pope Celestinus to the Scots, that he might establish their faith.

A.D. 430. This year Patricius was sent from Pope Celestinus to preach baptism to the Scots.

((A.D. 430. This year Patrick was sent by Pope Celestine to preach baptism to the Scots.))

A.D. 435. This year the Goths sacked the city of Rome; and never since have the Romans reigned in Britain. This was about eleven hundred and ten winters after it was built. They reigned altogether in Britain four hundred and seventy winters since Gaius Julius first sought that land.

A.D. 443. This year sent the Britons over sea to Rome, and begged assistance against the Picts; but they had none, for the Romans were at war with Atila, king of the Huns. Then sent they to the Angles, and requested the same from the nobles of that nation.

A.D. 444. This year died St. Martin.

A.D. 448. This year John the Baptist showed his head to two monks, who came from the eastern country to Jerusalem for the sake of prayer, in the place that whilom was the palace of Herod.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Those writers who mention this discovery of the holy cross, by Helena the mother of Constantine, disagree so much in their chronology, that it is a vain attempt to reconcile them to truth or to each other. This and the other notices of ecclesiastical matters, whether Latin or Saxon, from the year 190 to the year 380 of the Laud MS. and 381 of the printed Chronicle, may be safely considered as interpolations, probably posterior to the Norman Conquest.

<sup>50</sup> This is not to be understood strictly; gold being used as a general term for money or coin of every description; great quantities of which, it is well known, have been found at different times, and in many different places, in this island: not only of gold, but of silver, brass, copper, etc.

<sup>51</sup> An interpolated legend, from the "Gesta Pontificum", repeated by Bede, Florence, Matth. West., Fordun, and others. The head was said to be carried to Edessa.

A.D. 449. This year Marcian and Valentinian assumed the empire, and reigned seven winters. In their days Hengest and Horsa, invited by Wurtgern, king of the Britons to his assistance, landed in Britain in a place that is called Ipwinesfleet; first of all to support the Britons, but they afterwards fought against them. The king directed them to fight against the Picts; and they did so; and obtained the victory wheresoever they came. They then sent to the Angles, and desired them to send more assistance. They described the worthlessness of the Britons, and the richness of the land. They then sent them greater support. Then came the men from three powers of Germany; the Old Saxons, the Angles, and the Jutes. From the Jutes are descended the men of Kent, the Wightwarrians (that is, the tribe that now dwelleth in the Isle of Wight), and that kindred in Wessex that men yet call the kindred of the Jutes. From the Old Saxons came the people of Essex and Sussex and Wessex. From Anglia, which has ever since remained waste between the Jutes and the Saxons, came the East Angles, the Middle Angles, the Mercians, and all of those north of the Humber. Their leaders were two brothers, Hengest and Horsa; who were the sons of Wihtgils; Wihtgils was the son of Witta, Witta of Wecta, Wecta of Woden. From this Woden arose all our royal kindred, and that of the Southumbrians also.

((A.D. 449. And in their days Vortigern invited the Angles thither, and they came to Britain in three ceols, at the place called Wippidsfleet.))

A.D. 455. This year Hengest and Horsa fought with Wurtgern the king on the spot that is called Aylesford. His brother Horsa being there slain, Hengest afterwards took to the kingdom with his son Esc.

A.D. 457. This year Hengest and Esc fought with the Britons on the spot that is called Crayford, and there slew four thousand men. The Britons then forsook the land of Kent, and in great consternation fled to London.

A.D. 465. This year Hengest and Esc fought with the Welsh, nigh Wippedfleet; and there slew twelve leaders, all Welsh. On their side a thane was there slain, whose name was Wipped.

A.D. 473. This year Hengest and Esc fought with the Welsh, and took immense Booty. And the Welsh fled from the English like fire.

A.D. 477. This year came Ella to Britain, with his three sons, Cymen, and Wlenking, and Cissa, in three ships; landing at a place that is called Cymenshore. There they slew many of the Welsh; and some in flight they drove into the wood that is called Andred'sley.

A.D. 482. This year the blessed Abbot Benedict shone in this world, by the splendour of those virtues which the blessed Gregory records in the book of Dialogues.

A.D. 485. This year Ella fought with the Welsh nigh Mecred's-Burnsted.

A.D. 488. This year Esc succeeded to the kingdom; and was king of the men of Kent twenty-four winters.

A.D. 490. This year Ella and Cissa besieged the city of Andred, and slew all that were therein; nor was one Briten left there afterwards.

A.D. 495. This year came two leaders into Britain, Cerdic and Cynric his son, with five ships, at a place that is called Cerdic's-ore. And they fought with the Welsh the same day. Then he died, and his son Cynric succeeded to the government, and held it six and twenty winters. Then he died; and Ceawlin, his son, succeeded, who reigned seventeen years. Then he died; and Ceol succeeded to the government, and reigned five years. When he died, Ceolwulf, his brother, succeeded, and reigned seventeen years. Their kin goeth to Cerdic. Then succeeded Cynebils, Ceolwulf's brother's son, to the kingdom; and reigned one and thirty winters. And he first of West-Saxon kings received baptism. Then succeeded Cenwall, who was the son of Cynegils, and reigned one and thirty winters. Then held Sexburga, his queen, the government one year after him. Then succeeded Escwine to the kingdom, whose kin goeth to Cerdic, and held it two years. Then succeeded Centwine, the son of Cynegils, to the kingdom of the West-Saxons, and reigned nine years. Then succeeded Ceadwall to the government, whose kin goeth to Cerdic, and held it three years. Then succeeded Ina to the kingdom of the West-Saxons, whose kin goeth to Cerdic, and reigned thirty-seven winters. Then succeeded

Ethelheard, whose kin goeth to Cerdic, and reigned sixteen years. Then succeeded Cuthred, whose kin goeth to Cerdic, and reigned sixteen winters. Then succeeded Sigebriht, whose kin goeth to Cerdic, and reigned one year. Then succeeded Cynwulf, whose kin goeth to Cerdic, and reigned one and thirty winters. Then succeeded Brihtric, whose kin goeth to Cerdic, and reigned sixteen years. Then succeeded Egbert to the kingdom, and held it seven and thirty winters, and seven months. Then succeeded Ethelwulf, his son, and reigned eighteen years and a half. Ethelwulf was the son of Egbert, Egbert of Ealmund, Ealmund of Eafa, Eafa of Eoppa, Eoppa of Ingild, Ingild of Cenred (Ina of Cenred, Cuthburga of Cenred, and Cwenburga of Cenred), Cenred of Ceolwald, Ceolwald of Cuthwulf, Cuthwulf of Cuthwine, Cuthwine of Celm, Celm of Cynric, Cynric of Creoda, Creoda of Cerdic. Then succeeded Ethelbald, the son of Ethelwulf, to the kingdom, and held it five years. Then succeeded Ethelbert, his brother, and reigned five years. Then succeeded Ethelred, his brother, to the kingdom, and held it five years. Then succeeded Alfred, their brother, to the government. And then had elapsed of his age three and twenty winters, and three hundred and ninety-six winters from the time when his kindred first gained the land of Wessex from the Welsh. And he held the kingdom a year and a half less than thirty winters. Then succeeded Edward, the son of Alfred, and reigned twenty-four winters. When he died, then succeeded Athelstan, his son, and reigned fourteen years and seven weeks and three days. Then succeeded Edmund, his brother, and reigned six years and a half, wanting two nights. Then succeeded Edred, his brother, and reigned nine years and six weeks. Then succeeded Edwy, the son of Edmund, and reigned three years and thirty-six weeks, wanting two days. When he died, then succeeded Edgar, his brother, and reigned sixteen years and eight weeks and two nights. When he died, then succeeded Edward, the son of Edgar, and reigned—

A.D. 501. This year Porta and his two sons, Beda and Mela, came into Britain, with two ships, at a place called Portsmouth. They soon landed, and slew on the spot a young Briton of very high rank.

A.D. 508. This year Cerdic and Cynric slew a British king, whose name was Natanleod, and five thousand men with him. After this was the land named Netley, from him, as far as Charford.

A.D. 509. This year St. Benedict, the abbot, father of all the monks,<sup>52</sup> ascended to heaven.

A.D. 514. This year came the West-Saxons into Britain, with three ships, at the place that is called Cerdic's-ore. And Stuff and Wihtgar fought with the Britons, and put them to flight.

A.D. 519. This year Cerdic and Cynric undertook the government of the West-Saxons; the same year they fought with the Britons at a place now called Charford. From that day have reigned the children of the West-Saxon kings.

A.D. 527. This year Cerdic and Cynric fought with the Britons in the place that is called Cerdic's-ley.

A.D. 530. This year Cerdic and Cynric took the isle of Wight, and slew many men in Carisbrook.

A.D. 534. This year died Cerdic, the first king of the West-Saxons. Cynric his son succeeded to the government, and reigned afterwards twenty-six winters. And they gave to their two nephews, Stuff and Wihtgar, the whole of the Isle of Wight.

A.D. 538. This year the sun was eclipsed, fourteen days before the calends of March, from before morning until nine.

A.D. 540. This year the sun was eclipsed on the twelfth day before the calends of July; and the stars showed themselves full nigh half an hour over nine.

A.D. 544. This year died Wihtgar; and men buried him at Carisbrook.

A.D. 547. This year Ida began his reign; from whom first arose the royal kindred of the Northumbrians. Ida was the son of Eoppa, Eoppa of Esa, Esa of Ingwy, Ingwy of Angenwit, Angenwit of Alloc, Alloc of Bennoc, Bennoc of Brand, Brand of Balday, Balday of Woden. Woden of Fritholaf,

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<sup>52</sup> Merely of those called from him "Benedictines". But the compiler of the Cotton MS., who was probably a monk of that order, seems not to acknowledge any other. Matthew of Westminster places his death in 536.

Fritholaf of Frithowulf, Frithowulf of Finn, Finn of Godolph, Godolph of Geata. Ida reigned twelve years. He built Bamburgh-Castle, which was first surrounded with a hedge, and afterwards with a wall.

A.D. 552. This year Cynric fought with the Britons on the spot that is called Sarum, and put them to flight. Cerdic was the father of Cynric, Cerdic was the son of Elesa, Elesa of Esla, Esla of Gewis, Gewis of Wye, Wye of Frewin, Frewin of Frithgar, Frithgar of Brand, Brand of Balday, Balday of Woden. In this year Ethelbert, the son of Ermenric, was born, who on the two and thirtieth year of his reign received the rite of baptism, the first of all the kings in Britain.

A.D. 556. This year Cynric and Ceawlin fought with the Britons at Beranbury.

A.D. 560. This year Ceawlin undertook the government of the West-Saxons; and Ella, on the death of Ida, that of the Northumbrians; each of whom reigned thirty winters. Ella was the son of Iff, Iff of Usfrey, Usfrey of Wilgis, Wilgis of Westerfalcon, Westerfalcon of Seafowl, Seafowl of Sebbald, Sebbald of Sigeat, Sigeat of Swaddy, Swaddy of Seagirt, Seagar of Waddy, Waddy of Woden, Woden of Frithowulf. This year Ethelbert came to the kingdom of the Cantuarrians, and held it fifty-three winters. In his days the holy Pope Gregory sent us baptism. That was in the two and thirtieth year of his reign. And Columba, the mass-priest, came to the Picts, and converted them to the belief of Christ. They are the dwellers by the northern moors. And their king gave him the island of Hii, consisting of five hides, as they say, where Columba built a monastery. There he was abbot two and thirty winters; and there he died, when he was seventy-seven years old. The place his successors yet have. The Southern Picts were long before baptized by Bishop Ninnia, who was taught at Rome. His church or monastery is at Hwiterne, hallowed in the name of St. Martin, where he resteth with many holy men. Now, therefore, shall there be ever in Hii an abbot, and no bishop; and to him shall be subject all the bishops of the Scots; because Columba was an abbot—no bishop.

((A.D. 565. This year Columba the presbyter came from the Scots among the Britons, to instruct the Picts, and he built a monastery in the island of Hii.))

A.D. 568. This year Ceawlin, and Cutha the brother of Ceawlin, fought with Ethelbert, and pursued him into Kent. And they slew two aldermen at Wimbledon, Oslake and Cnebba.

A.D. 571. This year Cuthulf fought with the Britons at Bedford, and took four towns, Lenbury, Aylesbury, Benson, and Ensham. And this same year he died.

A.D. 577. This year Cuthwin and Ceawlin fought with the Britons, and slew three kings, Commail, and Condida, and Farinmail, on the spot that is called Derham, and took from them three cities, Gloucester, Cirencester, and Bath.

A.D. 583. This year Mauricius succeeded to the empire of the Romans.

A.D. 584. This year Ceawlin and Cutha fought with the Britons on the spot that is called Fretherne. There Cutha was slain. And Ceawlin took many towns, as well as immense booty and wealth. He then retreated to his own people.

A.D. 588. This year died King Ella; and Ethelric reigned after him five years.

A.D. 591. This year there was a great slaughter of Britons at Wanborough; Ceawlin was driven from his kingdom, and Ceolric reigned six years.

A.D. 592. This year Gregory succeeded to the papacy at Rome.

A.D. 593. This year died Ceawlin, and Cwichelm, and Cryda; and Ethelfrith succeeded to the kingdom of the Northumbrians. He was the son of Ethelric; Ethelric of Ida.

A.D. 596. This year Pope Gregory sent Augustine to Britain with very many monks, to preach the word of God to the English people.

A.D. 597. This year began Ceolwulf to reign over the West-Saxons; and he constantly fought and conquered, either with the Angles, or the Welsh, or the Picts, or the Scots. He was the son of Cutha, Cutha of Cynric, Cynric of Cerdic, Cerdic of Elesa, Elesa of Gewis, Gewis of Wye, Wye of

Frewin, Frewin of Frithgar, Frithgar of Brand, Brand of Balday, and Balday of Woden. This year came Augustine and his companions to England.<sup>53</sup>

A.D. 601. This year Pope Gregory sent the pall to Archbishop Augustine in Britain, with very many learned doctors to assist him; and Bishop Paulinus converted Edwin, king of the Northumbrians, to baptism.

A.D. 603. This year Aeden, king of the Scots, fought with the Dalreathians, and with Ethelfrith, king of the Northumbrians, at Theakstone; where he lost almost all his army. Theobald also, brother of Ethelfrith, with his whole armament, was slain. None of the Scottish kings durst afterwards bring an army against this nation. Hering, the son of Husa, led the army thither.

((A.D. 603. This year Aethan, King of the Scots, fought against the Dalreods and against Ethelfrith, king of the North-humbrians, at Daegsanstane [Dawston?], and they slew almost all his army. There Theobald, Ethelfrith's brother, was slain with all his band. Since then no king of the Scots has dared to lead an army against this nation. Hering, the son of Husa, led the enemy thither.))

A.D. 604. This year Augustine consecrated two bishops, Mellitus and Justus. Mellitus he sent to preach baptism to the East-Saxons. Their king was called Seabert, the son of Ricola, Ethelbert's sister, whom Ethelbert placed there as king. Ethelbert also gave Mellitus the bishopric of London; and to Justus he gave the bishopric of Rochester, which is twenty-four miles from Canterbury.

((A.D. 604. This year Augustine consecrated two bishops, Mellitus and Justus. He sent Mellitus to preach baptism to the East-Saxons, whose king was called Sebert, son of Ricole, the sister of Ethelbert, and whom Ethelbert had there appointed king. And Ethelbert gave Mellitus a bishop's see in London, and to Justus he gave Rochester, which is twenty-four miles from Canterbury.))

A.D. 606. This year died Gregory; about ten years since he sent us baptism. His father was called Gordianus, and his mother Silvia.

A.D. 607. This year Ceolwulf fought with the South-Saxons. And Ethelfrith led his army to Chester; where he slew an innumerable host of the Welsh; and so was fulfilled the prophecy of Augustine, wherein he saith "If the Welsh will not have peace with us, they shall perish at the hands of the Saxons." There were also slain two hundred priests,<sup>54</sup> who came thither to pray for the army of the Welsh. Their leader was called Brocmail, who with some fifty men escaped thence.

A.D. 611. This year Cynegils succeeded to the government in Wessex, and held it one and thirty winters. Cynegils was the son of Ceol, Ceol of Cutha, Cutha of Cynric.

A.D. 614. This year Cynegils and Cwichelm fought at Bampton, and slew two thousand and forty-six of the Welsh.

A.D. 616. This year died Ethelbert, king of Kent, the first of English kings that received baptism: he was the son of Ermenric. He reigned fifty-six winters, and was succeeded by his son Eadbald. And in this same year had elapsed from the beginning of the world five thousand six hundred and eighteen winters. This Eadbald renounced his baptism, and lived in a heathen manner; so that he took to wife the relict of his father. Then Laurentius, who was archbishop in Kent, meant to depart southward over sea, and abandon everything. But there came to him in the night the apostle Peter, and severely chastised him,<sup>55</sup> because he would so desert the flock of God. And he charged him to go to the king, and teach him the right belief. And he did so; and the king returned to the right belief. In this king's days the same Laurentius, who was archbishop in Kent after Augustine, departed this

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<sup>53</sup> For an interesting and minute account of the arrival of Augustine and his companions in the Isle of Thanet, their entrance into Canterbury, and their general reception in England, vid. Bede, "Hist. Eccles." i. 25, and the following chapters, with the Saxon translation by King Alfred. The succeeding historians have in general repeated the very words of Bede.

<sup>54</sup> It was originally, perhaps, in the MSS. ICC. the abbreviation for 1,200; which is the number of the slain in Bede. The total number of the monks of Bangor is said to have been 2,100; most of whom appear to have been employed in prayer on this occasion, and only fifty escape by flight. Vide Bede, "Hist. Eccles." ii. 2, and the tribe of Latin historians who copy him.

<sup>55</sup> Literally, "swinged, or scourged him." Both Bede and Alfred begin by recording the matter as a vision, or a dream; whence the transition is easy to a matter of fact, as here stated by the Norman interpolators of the "Saxon Annals".

life on the second of February, and was buried near Augustine. The holy Augustine in his lifetime invested him bishop, to the end that the church of Christ, which yet was new in England, should at no time after his decease be without an archbishop. After him Mellitus, who was first Bishop of London, succeeded to the archbishopric. The people of London, where Mellitus was before, were then heathens: and within five winters of this time, during the reign of Eadbald, Mellitus died. To him succeeded Justus, who was Bishop of Rochester, whereto he consecrated Romanus bishop.

((A.D. 616. In that time Laurentius was archbishop, and for the sorrowfulness which he had on account of the king's unbelief he was minded to forsake this country entirely, and go over sea; but St. Peter the apostle scourged him sorely one night, because he wished thus to forsake the flock of God, and commanded him to teach boldly the true faith to the king; and he did so, and the king turned to the right (faith). In the days of this same king, Eadbald, this Laurentius died. The holy Augustine, while yet in sound health, ordained him bishop, in order that the community of Christ, which was yet new in England, should not after his decease be at any time without an archbishop. After him Mellitus, who had been previously Bishop of London, succeeded to the archbishopric. And within five years of the decease of Laurentius, while Eadbald still reigned, Mellitus departed to Christ.))

A.D. 617. This year was Ethelfrith, king of the Northumbrians, slain by Redwald, king of the East-Angles; and Edwin, the son of Ella, having succeeded to the kingdom, subdued all Britain, except the men of Kent alone, and drove out the Ethelings, the sons of Ethelfrith, namely, Enfrid, Oswald, Oswy, Oslac, Oswood, Oslaf, and Offa.

A.D. 624. This year died Archbishop Mellitus.

A.D. 625. This year Paulinus was invested bishop of the Northumbrians, by Archbishop Justus, on the twelfth day before the calends of August.

((A.D. 625. This year Archbishop Justus consecrated Paulinus bishop of the Northumbrians.))

A.D. 626. This year came Eamer from Cwichelm, king of the West-Saxons, with a design to assassinate King Edwin; but he killed Lilla his thane, and Forthere, and wounded the king. The same night a daughter was born to Edwin, whose name was Eanfleda. Then promised the king to Paulinus, that he would devote his daughter to God, if he would procure at the hand of God, that he might destroy his enemy, who had sent the assassin to him. He then advanced against the West-Saxons with an army, felled on the spot five kings, and slew many of their men. This year Eanfleda, the daughter of King Edwin, was baptized, on the holy eve of Pentecost. And the king within twelve months was baptized, at Easter, with all his people. Easter was then on the twelfth of April. This was done at York, where he had ordered a church to be built of timber, which was hallowed in the name of St. Peter. There the king gave the bishopric to Paulinus; and there he afterwards ordered a larger church to be built of stone. This year Penda began to reign; and reigned thirty winters. He had seen fifty winters when he began to reign. Penda was the son of Wybba, Wybba of Creoda, Creoda of Cynewald, Cynewald of Cnebba, Cnebba of Icel, Icel of Eomer, Eomer of Angelthew, Angelthew of Offa, Offa of Wearmund, Wearmund of Whitley, Whitley of Woden.

A.D. 627. This year was King Edwin baptized at Easter, with all his people, by Paulinus, who also preached baptism in Lindsey, where the first person who believed was a certain rich man, of the name of Bleek, with all his people. At this time Honorius succeeded Boniface in the papacy, and sent hither to Paulinus the pall; and Archbishop Justus having departed this life on the tenth of November, Honorius was consecrated at Lincoln Archbishop of Canterbury by Paulinus; and Pope Honorius sent him the pall. And he sent an injunction to the Scots, that they should return to the right celebration of Easter.

((A.D. 627. This year, at Easter, Paulinus baptized Edwin king of the North-humbrians, with his people; and earlier within the same year, at Pentecost, he had baptized Eanfled, daughter of the same king.))

A.D. 628. This year Cynegils and Cwichelm fought with Penda at Cirencester, and afterwards entered into a treaty there.

A.D. 632. This year was Orpwald baptized.

A.D. 633. This year King Edwin was slain by Cadwalla and Penda, on Hatfield moor, on the fourteenth of October. He reigned seventeen years. His son Osfrid was also slain with him. After this Cadwalla and Penda went and ravaged all the land of the Northumbrians; which when Paulinus saw, he took Ethelburga, the relict of Edwin, and went by ship to Kent. Eadbald and Honorius received him very honourably, and gave him the bishopric of Rochester, where he continued to his death.

A.D. 634. This year Osric, whom Paulinus baptized, succeeded to the government of Deira. He was the son of Elfric, the uncle of Edwin. And to Bernicia succeeded Eanfrith, son of Ethelfrith. This year also Bishop Birinus first preached baptism to the West-Saxons, under King Cynegils. The said Birinus went thither by the command of Pope Honorius; and he was bishop there to the end of his life. Oswald also this year succeeded to the government of the Northumbrians, and reigned nine winters. The ninth year was assigned to him on account of the heathenism in which those lived who reigned that one year betwixt him and Edwin.

A.D. 635. This year King Cynegils was baptized by Bishop Birinus at Dorchester; and Oswald, king of the Northumbrians, was his sponsor.

A.D. 636. This year King Cwichelm was baptized at Dorchester, and died the same year. Bishop Felix also preached to the East-Angles the belief of Christ.

A.D. 639. This year Birinus baptized King Cuthred at Dorchester, and received him as his son.

A.D. 640. This year died Eadbald, King of Kent, after a reign of twenty-five winters. He had two sons, Ermenred and Erkenbert; and Erkenbert reigned there after his father. He overturned all the idols in the kingdom, and first of English kings appointed a fast before Easter. His daughter was called Ercongota—holy damsel of an illustrious sire! whose mother was Sexburga, the daughter of Anna, king of the East-Angles. Ermenred also begat two sons, who were afterwards martyred by Thunnor.

A.D. 642. This year Oswald, king of the Northumbrians, was slain by Penda, king of the Southumbrians, at Mirfield, on the fifth day of August; and his body was buried at Bardney. His holiness and miracles were afterwards displayed on manifold occasions throughout this island; and his hands remain still uncorrupted at Barnburgh. The same year in which Oswald was slain, Oswy his brother succeeded to the government of the Northumbrians, and reigned two less than thirty years.

A.D. 643. This year Kenwal succeeded to the kingdom of the West-Saxons, and held it one and thirty winters. This Kenwal ordered the old <sup>56</sup> church at Winchester to be built in the name of St. Peter. He was the son of Cynegils.

A.D. 644. This year died at Rochester, on the tenth of October, Paulinus, who was first Archbishop at York, and afterwards at Rochester. He was bishop nineteen winters, two months, and one and twenty days. This year the son of Oswy's uncle (Oswin), the son of Osric, assumed the government of Deira, and reigned seven winters.

A.D. 645. This year King Kenwal was driven from his dominion by King Penda.

A.D. 646. This year King Kenwal was baptized.

A.D. 648. This year Kenwal gave his relation Cuthred three thousand hides of land by Ashdown. Cuthred was the son of Cwichelm, Cwichelm of Cynegils.

A.D. 650. This year Egelbert, from Gaul, after Birinus the Romish bishop, obtained the bishopric of the West-Saxons.

((A.D. 650. This year Birinus the bishop died, and Agilbert the Frenchman was ordained.))

A.D. 651. This year King Oswin was slain, on the twentieth day of August; and within twelve nights afterwards died Bishop Aidan, on the thirty-first of August.

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<sup>56</sup> This epithet appears to have been inserted in some copies of the "Saxon Chronicle" so early as the tenth century; to distinguish the "old" church or minster at Winchester from the "new", consecrated A.D. 903.

A.D. 652. This year Kenwal fought at Bradford by the Avon.

A.D. 653. This year, the Middle-Angles under alderman Peada received the right belief.

A.D. 654. This year King Anna was slain, and Botolph began to build that minster at Icanhoe. This year also died Archbishop Honorius, on the thirtieth of September.

A.D. 655. This year Penda was slain at Wingfield, and thirty royal personages with him, some of whom were kings. One of them was Ethelhere, brother of Anna, king of the East-Angles. The Mercians after this became Christians. From the beginning of the world had now elapsed five thousand eight hundred and fifty winters, when Peada, the son of Penda, assumed the government of the Mercians. In his time came together himself and Oswy, brother of King Oswald, and said, that they would rear a minster to the glory of Christ, and the honour of St. Peter. And they did so, and gave it the name of Medhamsted; because there is a well there, called Meadswell. And they began the groundwall, and wrought thereon; after which they committed the work to a monk, whose name was Saxulf. He was very much the friend of God, and him also loved all people. He was nobly born in the world, and rich: he is now much richer with Christ. But King Peada reigned no while; for he was betrayed by his own queen, in Easter-tide. This year Ithamar, Bishop of Rochester, consecrated Deus-dedit to Canterbury, on the twenty-sixth day of March.

A.D. 656. This year was Peada slain; and Wulfhere, son of Penda, succeeded to the kingdom of the Mercians. In his time waxed the abbey of Medhamsted very rich, which his brother had begun. The king loved it much, for the love of his brother Peada, and for the love of his wed-brother Oswy, and for the love of Saxulf the abbot. He said, therefore, that he would dignify and honour it by the counsel of his brothers, Ethelred and Merwal; and by the counsel of his sisters, Kyneburga and Kyneswitha; and by the counsel of the archbishop, who was called Deus-dedit; and by the counsel of all his peers, learned and lewd, that in his kingdom were. And he so did. Then sent the king after the abbot, that he should immediately come to him. And he so did. Then said the king to the abbot: "Beloved Saxulf, I have sent after thee for the good of my soul; and I will plainly tell thee for why. My brother Peada and my beloved friend Oswy began a minster, for the love of Christ and St. Peter: but my brother, as Christ willed, is departed from this life; I will therefore intreat thee, beloved friend, that they earnestly proceed on their work; and I will find thee thereto gold and silver, land and possessions, and all that thereto behoveth." Then went the abbot home, and began to work. So he sped, as Christ permitted him; so that in a few years was that minster ready. Then, when the king heard say that, he was very glad; and bade men send through all the nation, after all his thanes; after the archbishop, and after bishops: and after his earls; and after all those that loved God; that they should come to him. And he fixed the day when men should hallow the minster. And when they were hallowing the minster, there was the king, Wulfere, and his brother Ethelred, and his sisters, Kyneburga and Kyneswitha. And the minster was hallowed by Archbishop Deusdedit of Canterbury; and the Bishop of Rochester, Ithamar; and the Bishop of London, who was called Wina; and the Bishop of the Mercians, whose name was Jeruman; and Bishop Tuda. And there was Wilfrid, priest, that after was bishop; and there were all his thanes that were in his kingdom. When the minster was hallowed, in the name of St. Peter, and St. Paul, and St. Andrew, then stood up the king before all his thanes, and said with a loud voice: "Thanks be to the high almighty God for this worship that here is done; and I will this day glorify Christ and St. Peter, and I will that you all confirm my words.— I Wulfere give to-day to St. Peter, and the Abbot Saxulf, and the monks of the minster, these lands, and these waters, and meres, and fens, and weirs, and all the lands that thereabout lye, that are of my kingdom, freely, so that no man have there any ingress, but the abbot and the monks. This is the gift. From Medhamsted to Northborough; and so to the place that is called Foleys; and so all the fen, right to Ashdike; and from Ashdike to the place called Fethermouth; and so in a right line ten miles long to Ugdike; and so to Ragwell; and from Ragwell five miles to the main river that goeth to Elm and to Wisbeach; and so about three miles to Trokenholt; and from Trokenholt right through all the fen to Derworth; that is twenty miles long; and so to Great Cross; and from Great Cross through a

clear water called Bradney; and thence six miles to Paxlade; and so forth through all the meres and fens that lye toward Huntingdon-port; and the meres and lakes Shelfermere and Wittlesey mere, and all the others that thereabout lye; with land and with houses that are on the east side of Shelfermere; thence all the fens to Medhamsted; from Medhamsted all to Welmsford; from Welmsford to Clive; thence to Easton; from Easton to Stamford; from Stamford as the water runneth to the aforesaid Northborough."—These are the lands and the fens that the king gave unto St. Peter's minster.—Then quoth the king: "It is little—this gift— but I will that they hold it so royally and so freely, that there be taken there from neither gild nor gable, but for the monks alone. Thus I will free this minster; that it be not subject except to Rome alone; and hither I will that we seek St. Peter, all that to Rome cannot go." During these words the abbot desired that he would gant him his request. And the king granted it. "I have here (said he) some good monks that would lead their life in retirement, if they wist where. Now here is an island, that is called Ankerig; and I will request, that we may there build a minster to the honour of St. Mary; that they may dwell there who will lead their lives in peace and tranquillity." Then answered the king, and quoth thus: "Beloved Saxulf, not that only which thou desirest, but all things that I know thou desirest in our Lord's behalf, so I approve, and grant. And I bid thee, brother Ethelred, and my sisters, Kyneburga and Kyneswitha, for the release of your souls, that you be witnesses, and that you subscribe it with your fingers. And I pray all that come after me, be they my sons, be they my brethren, or kings that come after me, that our gift may stand; as they would be partakers of the life everlasting, and as they would avoid everlasting punishment. Whoso lesseneth our gift, or the gift of other good men, may the heavenly porter lessen him in the kingdom of heaven; and whoso advanceth it, may the heavenly porter advance him in the kingdom of heaven." These are the witnesses that were there, and that subscribed it with their fingers on the cross of Christ, and confirmed it with their tongues. That was, first the king, Wulfere, who confirmed it first with his word, and afterwards wrote with his finger on the cross of Christ, saying thus: "I Wulfere, king, in the presence of kings, and of earls, and of captains, and of thanes, the witnesses of my gift, before the Archbishop Deus-dedit, I confirm it with the cross of Christ." (+)—"And I Oswy, king of the Northumbrians, the friend of this minster, and o[oe] the Abbot Saxulf, commend it with the cross of Christ." (+)—"And I Sighere, king, ratify it with the cross of Christ." (+)—"And I Sibbi, king, subscribe it with the cross of Christ." (+)—"And I Ethelred, the king's brother, granted the same with the cross of Christ." (+)—"And we, the king's sisters, Kyneburga and Kyneswitha, approve it."—"And I Archbishop of Canterbury, Deus-dedit, ratify it."—Then confirmed it all the others that were there with the cross of Christ (+): namely, Ithamar, Bishop of Rochester; Wina, Bishop of London; Jeruman, Bishop of the Mercians; and Tuda, bishop; and Wilfrid, priest, who was afterwards bishop; and Eoppa, priest, whom the king, Wulfere, sent to preach christianity in the Isle of Wight; and Saxulf, abbot; and Immine, alderman, and Edbert, alderman, and Herefrith, alderman, and Wilbert, alderman, and Abo, alderman; Ethelbald, Brord, Wilbert, Elmund, Frethegis. These, and many others that were there, the king's most loyal subjects, confirmed it all. This charter was written after our Lord's Nativity 664—the seventh year of King Wulfere—the ninth year of Archbishop Deus-dedir. Then they laid God's curse, and the curse of all saints, and all christian folks, on whosoever undid anything that there was done. "So be it," saith all. "Amen."—When this thing was done, then sent the king to Rome to the Pope Vitalianus that then was, and desired, that he would ratify with his writ and with his blessing, all this aforesaid thing. And the pope then sent his writ, thus saying: "I Vitalianus, pope, grant thee, King Wulfere, and Deus-dedit, archbishop, and Abbot Saxulf, all the things that you desire. And I forbid, that any king, or any man, have any ingress, but the abbot alone; nor shall he be Subject to any man, except the Pope of Rome and the Archbishop of Canterbury. If any one breaketh anything of this, St. Peter with his sword destroy him. Whosoever holdeth it, St. Peter with heaven's key undo him the kingdom of heaven."—Thus was the minster of Medhamsted begun, that was afterwards called Peter-borough. Afterwards came another archbishop to Canterbury, who was called Theodorus; a very good man and wise; and held his synod with his

bishops and with his clerk. There was Wilfrid, bishop of the Mercians, deprived of his bishopric; and Saxulf, abbot, was there chosen bishop; and Cuthbald, monk of the same minster, was chosen abbot. This synod was holden after our Lord's Nativity six hundred and seventy-three winters.

A.D. 658. This year Kenwal fought with the Welsh at Pen, and pursued them to the Parret. This battle was fought after his return from East-Anglia, where he was three years in exile. Penda had driven him thither and deprived him of his kingdom, because he had discarded his sister.

A.D. 660. This year Bishop Egelbert departed from Kenwal; and Wina held the bishopric three years. And Egbert accepted the bishopric of Paris, in Gaul, by the Seine.

A.D. 661. This year, at Easter, Kenwal fought at Pontesbury; and Wulfere, the son of Penda, pursued him as far as Ashdown. Cuthred, the son of Cwichelm, and King Kenbert, died in one year. Into the Isle of Wight also Wulfere, the son of Penda, penetrated, and transferred the inhabitants to Ethelwald, king of the South-Saxons, because Wulfere adopted him in baptism. And Eoppa, a mass-priest, by command of Wilfrid and King Wulfere, was the first of men who brought baptism to the people of the Isle of Wight.

A.D. 664. This year the sun was eclipsed, on the eleventh of May; and Erkenbert, King of Kent, having died, Egbert his son succeeded to the kingdom. Colman with his companions this year returned to his own country. This same year there was a great plague in the island Britain, in which died Bishop Tuda, who was buried at Wayleigh—Chad and Wilferth were consecrated—And Archbishop Deus-dedit died.

A.D. 667. This year Oswy and Egbert sent Wighard, a priest, to Rome, that he might be consecrated there Archbishop of Canterbury; but he died as soon as he came thither.

((A.D. 667. This year Wighard went to Rome, even as King Oswy, and Egbert had sent him.))

A.D. 668. This year Theodore was consecrated archbishop, and sent into Britain.

A.D. 669. This year King Egbert gave to Bass, a mass-priest, Reculver—to build a minster upon.

A.D. 670. This year died Oswy, King of Northumberland, on the fifteenth day before the calends of March; and Egferth his son reigned after him. Lothere, the nephew of Bishop Egelbert, succeeded to the bishopric over the land of the West-Saxons, and held it seven years. He was consecrated by Archbishop Theodore. Oswy was the son of Ethelfrith, Ethelfrith of Ethelric, Ethelric of Ida, Ida of Eoppa.

A.D. 671. This year happened that great destruction among the fowls.

A.D. 672. This year died King Cenwal; and Sexburga his queen held the government one year after him.

A.D. 673. This year died Egbert, King of Kent; and the same year there was a synod at Hertford; and St. Etheldritha began that monastery at Ely.

A.D. 674. This year Escwin succeeded to the kingdom of Wessex. He was the son of Cenfus, Cenfus of Cenferth, Cenferth of Cuthgils, Cuthgils of Ceolwulf, Ceolwulf of Cynric, Cynric of Cerdic.

A.D. 675. This year Wulfere, the son of Penda, and Escwin, the son of Cenfus, fought at Bedwin. The same year died Wulfere, and Ethelred succeeded to the government. In his time sent he to Rome Bishop Wilfrid to the pope that then was, called Agatho, and told him by word and by letter, how his brothers Peada and Wulfere, and the Abbot Saxulf, had wrought a minster, called Medhamsted; and that they had freed it, against king and against bishop, from every service; and he besought him that he would confirm it with his writ and with his blessing. And the pope sent then his writ to England, thus saying: "I Agatho, Pope of Rome, greet well the worthy Ethelred, king of the Mercians, and the Archbishop Theodorus of Canterbury, and Saxulf, the bishop of the Mercians, who before was abbot, and all the abbots that are in England; God's greeting and my blessing. I have heard the petition of King Ethelred, and of the Archbishop Theodorus, and of the Bishop Saxulf, and of the Abbot Cuthbald; and I will it, that it in all wise be as you have spoken it. And I ordain, in

behalf of God, and of St. Peter, and of all saints, and of every hooded head, that neither king, nor bishop, nor earl, nor any man whatever, have any claim, or gable, or gild, or levy, or take any service of any kind, from the abbey of Medhamsted. I command also, that no shire-bishop be so bold as to hold an ordination or consecration within this abbacy, except the abbot intreat him, nor have there any claim to proxies, or synodals, or anything whatever of any kind. And I will, that the abbot be holden for legate of Rome over all that island; and whatever abbot is there chosen by the monks that he be consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury. I will and decree, that, whatever man may have made a vow to go to Rome, and cannot perform it, either from infirmity, or for his lord's need, or from poverty, or from any other necessity of any kind whatever, whereby he cannot come thither, be he of England, or of whatever other island he be, he may come to that minster of Medhamsted, and have the same forgiveness of Christ and St. Peter, and of the abbot, and of the monks, that he should have if he went to Rome. Now bid I thee, brother Theodorus, that thou let it be proclaimed through all England, that a synod be gathered, and this writ be read and observed. Also I tell thee, Bishop Saxulf, that, as thou desirest it, that the minster be free, so I forbid thee, and all the bishops that after thee come, from Christ and from all his saints, that ye have no demand from that minster, except so much as the abbot will. Now will I say in a word, that, whoso holdeth this writ and this decree, then be he ever dwelling with God Almighty in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso breaketh it, then be he excommunicated, and thrust down with Judas, and with all the devils in hell, except he come to repentance. Amen!" This writ sent the Pope Agatho, and a hundred and twenty-five bishops, by Wilfrid, Archbishop of York, to England. This was done after our Lord's Nativity 680, the sixth year of King Ethelred. Then the king commanded the Archbishop Theodorus, that he should appoint a general Wittenmoot at the place called Hatfield. When they were there collected, then he allowed the letter to be read that the pope sent thither; and all ratified and confirmed it. Then said the king: "All things that my brother Peada, and my brother Wulfere, and my sisters, Kyneburga and Kyneswitha, gave and granted to St. Peter and the abbot, these I will may stand; and I will in my day increase it, for their souls and for my soul. Now give I St. Peter to-day into his minster, Medhamsted, these lands, and all that thereto lyeth; that is, Bredon, Repings, Cadney, Swineshead, Hanbury, Lodeshall, Scuffanhall, Cosford, Stratford, Wattleburn, Lushgard, Ethelhun-island, Bardney. These lands I give St. Peter just as freely as I possessed them myself; and so, that none of my successors take anything therefrom. Whoso doeth it, have he the curse of the Pope of Rome, and the curse of all bishops, and of all those that are witnesses here. And this I confirm with the token of Christ." (+) "I Theodorus, Archbishop of Canterbury, am witness to this charter of Medhamsted; and I ratify it with my hand, and I excommunicate all that break anything thereof; and I bless all that hold it." (+) "I Wilfrid, Archbishop of York, am witness to this charter; and I ratify this same curse." (+) "I Saxulf, who was first abbot, and now am bishop, I give my curse, and that of all my successors, to those who break this."—"I Ostritha, Ethelred's queen, confirm it."—"I Adrian, legate, ratify it."—"I Putta, Bishop of Rochester, subscribe it."—"I Waldhere, Bishop of London, confirm it."—"I Cuthbald, abbot, ratify it; so that, whoso breaketh it, have he the cursing of all bishops and of all christian folk. Amen."

A.D. 676. This year, in which Hedda succeeded to his bishopric, Escwin died; and Centwin obtained the government of the West-Saxons. Centwin was the son of Cynegils, Cynegils of Ceolwulf. Ethelred, king of the Mercians, in the meantime, overran the land of Kent.

A.D. 678. This year appeared the comet-star in August, and shone every morning, during three months, like a sunbeam. Bishop Wilfrid being driven from his bishopric by King Everth, two bishops were consecrated in his stead, Bosa over the Deirians, and Eata over the Bernicians. About the same time also Eadhed was consecrated bishop over the people of Lindsey, being the first in that division.

A.D. 679. This year Elwin was slain, by the river Trent, on the spot where Everth and Ethelred fought. This year also died St. Etheldritha; and the monastery of Coldingham was destroyed by fire from heaven.

A.D. 680. This year Archbishop Theodore appointed a synod at Hatfield; because he was desirous of rectifying the belief of Christ; and the same year died Hilda, Abbess of Whitby.

A.D. 681. This year Trumbert was consecrated Bishop of Hexham, and Trumwin bishop of the Picts; for they were at that time subject to this country. This year also Centwin pursued the Britons to the sea.

A.D. 684. This year Everth sent an army against the Scots, under the command of his alderman, Bright, who lamentably plundered and burned the churches of God.

A.D. 685. This year King Everth commanded Cuthbert to be consecrated a bishop; and Archbishop Theodore, on the first day of Easter, consecrated him at York Bishop of Hexham; for Trumbert had been deprived of that see. The same year Everth was slain by the north sea, and a large army with him, on the thirteenth day before the calends of June. He continued king fifteen winters; and his brother Elfrith succeeded him in the government. Everth was the son of Oswy. Oswy of Ethelferth, Ethelferth of Ethelric, Ethelric of Ida, Ida of Eoppa. About this time Ceadwall began to struggle for a kingdom. Ceadwall was the son of Kenbert, Kenbert of Chad, Chad of Cutha, Cutha of Ceawlin, Ceawlin of Cynric, Cynric of Cerdic. Mull, who was afterwards consigned to the flames in Kent, was the brother of Ceadwall. The same year died Lothhere, King of Kent; and John was consecrated Bishop of Hexham, where he remained till Wilferth was restored, when John was translated to York on the death of Bishop Bosa. Wilferth his priest was afterwards consecrated Bishop of York, and John retired to his monastery<sup>57</sup> in the woods of Delta. This year there was in Britain a bloody rain, and milk and butter were turned to blood.

((A.D. 685. And in this same year Cuthbert was consecrated Bishop of Hexham by Archbishop Theodore at York, because Bishop Tumbert had been driven from the bishopric.))

A.D. 686. This year Ceadwall and his brother Mull spread devastation in Kent and the Isle of Wight. This same Ceadwall gave to St. Peter's minster, at Medhamsted, Hook; which is situated in an island called Egborough. Egbald at this time was abbot, who was the third after Saxulf; and Theodore was archbishop in Kent.

A.D. 687. This year was Mull consigned to the flames in Kent, and twelve other men with him; after which, in the same year, Ceadwall overran the kingdom of Kent.

A.D. 688. This year Ceadwall went to Rome, and received baptism at the hands of Sergius the pope, who gave him the name of Peter; but in the course of seven nights afterwards, on the twelfth day before the calends of May, he died in his crism-cloths, and was buried in the church of St. Peter. To him succeeded Ina in the kingdom of Wessex, and reigned thirty-seven winters. He founded the monastery of Glastonbury; after which he went to Rome, and continued there to the end of his life. Ina was the son of Cenred, Cenred of Ceolwald; Ceolwald was the brother of Cynegils; and both were the sons of Cuthwin, who was the son of Ceawlin; Ceawlin was the son of Cynric, and Cynric of Cerdic.

((A.D. 688. This year King Caedwalla went to Rome, and received baptism of Pope Sergius, and he gave him the name of Peter, and in about seven days afterwards, on the twelfth before the kalends of May, while he was yet in his baptismal garments, he died: and he was buried in St. Peter's church. And Ina succeeded to the kingdom of the West-Saxons after him, and he reigned twenty-seven years.))

A.D. 690. This year Archbishop Theodore, who had been bishop twenty-two winters, departed this life,<sup>58</sup> and was buried within the city of Canterbury. Bertwald, who before this was abbot of Reculver, on the calends of July succeeded him in the see; which was ere this filled by Romish bishops, but henceforth with English. Then were there two kings in Kent, Wihtrud and Webherd.

A.D. 693. This year was Bertwald consecrated archbishop by Godwin, bishop of the Gauls, on the fifth day before the nones of July; about which time died Gifmund, who was Bishop of Rochester;

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<sup>57</sup> Beverley-minster, in Yorkshire.

<sup>58</sup> He was a native of Tarsus in Cilicia, the birth-place of St. Paul.

and Archbishop Bertwald consecrated Tobias in his stead. This year also Dryhtelm <sup>59</sup> retired from the world.

A.D. 694. This year the people of Kent covenanted with Ina, and gave him 30,000 pounds in friendship, because they had burned his brother Mull. Wihtréd, who succeeded to the kingdom of Kent, and held it thirty-three winters, was the son of Egbert, Egbert of Erkenbert, Erkenbert of Eadbald, Eadbald of Ethelbert. And as soon as he was king, he ordained a great council to meet in the place that is called Bapchild; in which presided Wihtréd, King of Kent, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Brihtwald, and Bishop Tobias of Rochester; and with him were collected abbots and abbesses, and many wise men, all to consult about the advantage of God's churches that are in Kent. Now began the king to speak, and said, "I will that all the minsters and the churches, that were given and bequeathed to the worship of God in the days of believing kings, my predecessors, and in the days of my relations of King Ethelbert and of those that followed him—shall so remain to the worship of God, and stand fast for evermore. For I Wihtréd, earthly king, urged on by the heavenly king, and with the spirit of righteousness annealed, have of our progenitors learned this, that no layman should have any right to possess himself of any church or of any of the things that belong to the church. And, therefore, strongly and truly, we set and decree, and in the name of Almighty God, and of all saints, we forbid all our succeeding kings, and aldermen, and all lawmen, ever, any lordship over churches, and over all their appurtenances, which I or my elders in old days have given for a perpetual inheritance to the glory of Christ and our Lady St. Mary, and the holy apostles. And look! when it happeneth, that bishop, or abbot, or abbess, depart from this life, be it told the archbishop, and with his counsel and injunction be chosen such as be worthy. And the life of him, that shall be chosen to so holy a thing, let the archbishop examine, and his cleanness; and in no wise be chosen any one, or to so holy a thing consecrated, without the archbishop's counsel. Kings shall appoint earls, and aldermen, sheriffs, and judges; but the archbishop shall consult and provide for God's flock: bishops, and abbots, and abbesses, and priests, and deacons, he shall choose and appoint; and also sanctify and confirm with good precepts and example, lest that any of God's flock go astray and perish—"

A.D. 697. This year the Southumbrians slew Ostritha, the queen of Ethelred, the sister of Everth.

A.D. 699. This year the Picts slew Alderman Burt.

A.D. 702. This year Kenred assumed the government of the Southumbrians.

A.D. 703. This year died Bishop Hedda, having held the see of Winchester twenty-seven winters.

A.D. 704. This year Ethelred, the son of Penda, King of Mercia, entered into a monastic life, having reigned twenty-nine winters; and Cenred succeeded to the government.

A.D. 705. This year died Ealdferth, king of the Northumbrians, on the nineteenth day before the calends of January, at Driffild; and was succeeded by his son Osred. Bishop Saxulf also died the same year.

A.D. 709. This year died Aldhelm, who was bishop by Westwood. The land of the West-Saxons was divided into two bishoprics in the first days of Bishop Daniel; who held one whilst Aldhelm held the other. Before this it was only one. Forthere succeeded to Aldhelm; and Ceolred succeeded to the kingdom of Mercia. And Cenred went to Rome; and Offa with him. And Cenred was there to the end of his life. The same year died Bishop Wilferth, at Oundle, but his body was carried to Ripon. He was the bishop whom King Everth compelled to go to Rome.

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<sup>59</sup> This brief notice of Dryhtelm, for so I find the name written in "Cotton Tiberius B iv." is totally unintelligible without a reference to Bede's "Ecclesiastical History", v. 12; where a curious account of him may be found, which is copied by Matthew of Westminster, anno. 699.

A.D. 710. This year Acca, priest of Wilferth, succeeded to the bishopric that Wilferth ere held; and Alderman Bertfrith fought with the Picts between Heugh and Carau. Ina also, and Nun his relative, fought with Grant, king of the Welsh; and the same year Hibbald was slain.

A.D. 714. This year died Guthlac the holy, and King Pepin.

A.D. 715. This year Ina and Ceolred fought at Wanborough; and King Dagobert departed this life.

A.D. 716. This year Osred, king of the Northumbrians, was slain near the southern borders. He reigned eleven winters after Ealdferth. Cenred then succeeded to the government, and held it two years; then Osric, who held it eleven years. This same year died Ceolred, king of the Mercians. His body lies at Lichfield; but that of Ethelred, the son of Penda, at Bardney. Ethelbald then succeeded to the kingdom of Mercia, and held it one and forty winters. Ethelbald was the son of Alwy, Alwy of Eawa, Eawa of Webba, whose genealogy is already written. The venerable Egbert about this time converted the monks of Iona to the right faith, in the regulation of Easter, and the ecclesiastical tonsure.

A.D. 718. This year died Ingild, the brother of Ina. Cwenburga and Cuthburga were their sisters. Cuthburga reared the monastery of Wimburn; and, though given in marriage to Ealdferth, King of Northumberland, they parted during their lives.

A.D. 721. This year Bishop Daniel went to Rome; and the same year Ina slew Cynewulf, the etheling. This year also died the holy Bishop John; who was bishop thirty-three years, and eight months, and thirteen days. His body now resteth at Beverley.

A.D. 722. This year Queen Ethelburga destroyed Taunton, which Ina had formerly built; Ealdbert wandered a wretched exile in Surrey and Sussex; and Ina fought with the South-Saxons.

A.D. 725. This year died Wihtrud, King of Kent, on the ninth day before the calends of May, after a reign of thirty-two winters. His pedigree is above; and he was succeeded by Eadbert. Ina this year also fought with the South-Saxons, and slew Ealdbert, the etheling, whom he had before driven into exile.

A.D. 727. This year died Tobias, Bishop of Rochester: and Archbishop Bertwald consecrated Aldulf bishop in his stead.

A.D. 728. This year <sup>60</sup> Ina went to Rome, and there gave up the ghost. He was succeeded in the kingdom of Wessex by Ethelhard his relative, who held it fourteen years; but he fought this same year with Oswald the etheling. Oswald was the son of Ethelbald, Ethelbald of Cynebald, Cynebald of Cuthwin, Cuthwin of Ceawlin.

A.D. 729. This year appeared the comet-star, and St. Egbert died in Iona. This year also died the etheling Oswald; and Osric was slain, who was eleven winters king of Northumberland; to which kingdom Ceolwulf succeeded, and held it eight years. The said Ceolwulf was the son of Cutha, Cutha of Cuthwin, Cuthwin of Leodwald, Leodwald of Egwald, Egwald of Ealdhelm, Ealdhelm of Occa, Occa of Ida, Ida of Eoppa. Archbishop Bertwald died this year on the ides of January. He was bishop thirty-seven winters, and six months, and fourteen days. The same year Tatwine, who was before a priest at Bredon in Mercia, was consecrated archbishop by Daniel Bishop of Winchester, Ingwald Bishop of London, Aldwin Bishop of Lichfield, and Aldulf Bishop of Rochester, on the tenth day of June. He enjoyed the archbishopric about three years.

((A.D. 729. And the same year Osric died; he was king eleven years; then Ceolwulf succeeded to the kingdom, and held it eight years.))

A.D. 733. This year Ethelbald took Somerton; the sun was eclipsed; and Acca was driven from his bishopric.

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<sup>60</sup> Wothnesbeorhge, Ethelw.; Wonsdike, Malmbs.; Wonebirih, H. Hunt; Wodnesbeorh, Flor.; Wodnesbirch, M. West. There is no reason, therefore, to transfer the scene of action to Woodbridge, as some have supposed from an erroneous reading.

A.D. 734. This year was the moon as if covered with blood; and Archbishop Tatwine and Bede departed this life; and Egbert was consecrated bishop.

A.D. 735. This year Bishop Egbert received the pall at Rome.

A.D. 736. This year Archbishop Nothelm received the pall from the bishop of the Romans.

A.D. 737. This year Bishop Forthere and Queen Frithogitha went to Rome; and King Ceolwulf received the clerical tonsure, giving his kingdom to Edbert, his uncle's son: who reigned one and twenty winters. Bishop Ethelwold and Acca died this year, and Cynewulf was consecrated bishop. The same year also Ethelbald ravaged the land of the Northumbrians.

A.D. 738. This year Eadbery, the son of Eata the son of Leodwald, succeeded to the Northumbrian kingdom, and held it one and twenty winters. Archbishop Egbert, the son of Eata, was his brother. They both rest under one porch in the city of York.

A.D. 740. This year died King Ethelhard; and Cuthred, his relative, succeeded to the West-Saxon kingdom, which he held fourteen winters, during which time he fought many hard battles with Ethelbald, king of the Mercians. On the death of Archbishop Nothelm, Cuthbert was consecrated archbishop, and Dunn, Bishop of Rochester. This year York was on fire.

A.D. 742. This year there was a large synod assembled at Cliff's-Hoo; and there was Ethelbald, king of Mercia, with Archbishop Cuthbert, and many other wise men.

A.D. 743. This year Ethelbald, king of Mercia, and Cuthred, king of the West-Saxons, fought with the Welsh.

A.D. 744. This year Daniel resigned the see of Winchester; to which Hunferth was promoted. The stars went swiftly shooting; and Wilferth the younger, who had been thirty winters Bishop of York, died on the third day before the calends of May.

A.D. 745. This year died Daniel. Forty-three winters had then elapsed since he received the episcopal function.

A.D. 746. This year was King Selred slain.

A.D. 748. This year was slain Cynric, etheling of the West-Saxons; Edbert, King of Kent, died; and Ethelbert, son of King Wihtred, succeeded to the kingdom.

A.D. 750. This year Cuthred, king of the West-Saxons, fought with the proud chief Ethelhun.

A.D. 752. This year, the twelfth of his reign, Cuthred, king of the West-Saxons, fought at Burford<sup>61</sup> with Ethelbald, king of the Mercians, and put him to flight.

A.D. 753. This year Cuthred, king of the West-Saxons, fought against the Welsh.

A.D. 754. This year died Cuthred, king of the West-Saxons; and Sebright, his relative, succeeded to the kingdom, which he held one year; Cyneard succeeded Humferth in the see of Winchester; and Canterbury was this year on fire.

A.D. 755. This year Cynewulf, with the consent of the West-Saxon council, deprived Sebright, his relative, for unrighteous deeds, of his kingdom, except Hampshire; which he retained, until he slew the alderman who remained the longest with him. Then Cynewulf drove him to the forest of Andred, where he remained, until a swain stabbed him at Privett, and revenged the alderman, Cumbra. The same Cynewulf fought many hard battles with the Welsh; and, about one and thirty winters after he had the kingdom, he was desirous of expelling a prince called Cyneard, who was the brother of Sebright. But he having understood that the king was gone, thinly attended, on a visit to a lady at Merton,<sup>62</sup> rode after him, and beset him therein; surrounding the town without, ere the attendants of the king were aware of him. When the king found this, he went out of doors, and defended himself with courage; till, having looked on the etheling, he rushed out upon him, and wounded him severely.

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<sup>61</sup> Beorgforda, Ethelw.; Beorhtforda, Flor.; Hereford and Bereford, H. Hunt; Beorford, M. West. This battle of Burford has been considerably amplified by Henry of Huntingdon, and after him by Matthew of Westminster. The former, among other absurdities, talks of "Amazonian" battle-axes. They both mention the banner of the "golden dragon" etc.

<sup>62</sup> The minuteness of this narrative, combined with the simplicity of it, proves that it was written at no great distance of time from the event. It is the first that occurs of any length in the older MSS. of the "Saxon Chronicle".

Then were they all fighting against the king, until they had slain him. As soon as the king's thanes in the lady's bower heard the tumult, they ran to the spot, whoever was then ready. The etheling immediately offered them life and rewards; which none of them would accept, but continued fighting together against him, till they all lay dead, except one British hostage, and he was severely wounded. When the king's thanes that were behind heard in the morning that the king was slain, they rode to the spot, Osric his alderman, and Wiverth his thane, and the men that he had left behind; and they met the etheling at the town, where the king lay slain. The gates, however, were locked against them, which they attempted to force; but he promised them their own choice of money and land, if they would grant him the kingdom; reminding them, that their relatives were already with him, who would never desert him. To which they answered, that no relative could be dearer to them than their lord, and that they would never follow his murderer. Then they besought their relatives to depart from him, safe and sound. They replied, that the same request was made to their comrades that were formerly with the king; "And we are as regardless of the result," they rejoined, "as our comrades who with the king were slain." Then they continued fighting at the gates, till they rushed in, and slew the etheling and all the men that were with him; except one, who was the godson of the alderman, and whose life he spared, though he was often wounded. This same Cynewulf reigned one and thirty winters. His body lies at Winchester, and that of the etheling at Axminster. Their paternal pedigree goeth in a direct line to Cerdic. The same year Ethelbald, king of the Mercians, was slain at Seckington; and his body lies at Repton. He reigned one and forty years; and Bernred then succeeded to the kingdom, which he held but a little while, and unprosperously; for King Offa the same year put him to flight, and assumed the government; which he held nine and thirty winters. His son Everth held it a hundred and forty days. Offa was the son of Thingferth, Thingferth of Enwulf, Enwulf of Osmod, Osmod of Eawa, Eawa of Webba, Webba of Creoda, Creoda of Cenwald, Cenwald of Cnebba, Cnebba of Icel, Icel of Eomer, Eomer of Angelthew, Angelthew of Offa, Offa of Wermund, Wermund of Witley, Witley of Woden.

((A.D. 755. This year Cynewulf deprived King Sigebert of his kingdom; and Sigebert's brother, Cynehard by name, slew Cynewulf at Merton; and he reigned thirty-one years. And in the same year Ethelbald, king of the Mercians, was slain at Repton. And Offa succeeded to the kingdom of the Mercians, Bernred being driven out.))

A.D. 757. This year Eadburt, king of the Northumbrians, received the tonsure, and his son Osulf the kingdom; which he held one year. Him his own domestics slew on the ninth day before the kalends of August.

A.D. 758. This year died Archbishop Cuthbert. He held the archbishopric eighteen years.

A.D. 759. This year Bregowin was invested archbishop at Michaelmas, and continued four years. Mull Ethelwold this year succeeded to the Northumbrian kingdom, held it six winters, and then resigned it.

A.D. 760. This year died Ethelbert, King of Kent, who was the son of King Wihtred, and also of Ceolwulf.

A.D. 761. This year was the severe winter; and Mull, king of the Northumbrians, slew Oswin at Edwin's-Cliff, on the eighth day before the ides of August.

A.D. 762. This year died Archbishop Bregowin.

A.D. 763. This year Eanbert was invested archbishop, on the fortieth day over mid-winter; and Frithwald, Bishop of Whithern, died on the nones of May. He was consecrated at York, on the eighteenth day before the kalends of September, in the sixth year of the reign of Ceolwulf, and was bishop nine and twenty winters. Then was Petwin consecrated Bishop of Whithern at Adlingfleet, on the sixteenth day before the kalends of August.

A.D. 764. This year Archbishop Eanbert received the pall.

A.D. 765. This year Alred succeeded to the kingdom of the Northumbrians, and reigned eight winters.

A.D. 766. This year died Archbishop Egbert at York, on the thirteenth day before the calends of December, who was bishop thirty-six winters; and Frithbert at Hexham, who was bishop there thirty-four winters. Ethelbert was consecrated to York, and Elmund to Hexham.

A.D. 768. This year died King Eadbert, the son of Eata, on the fourteenth day before the calends of September.

A.D. 772. This year died Bishop Mildred.

A.D. 774. This year the Northumbrians banished their king, Alred, from York at Easter-tide; and chose Ethelred, the son of Mull, for their lord, who reigned four winters. This year also appeared in the heavens a red crucifix, after sunset; the Mercians and the men of Kent fought at Otford; and wonderful serpents were seen in the land of the South-Saxons.

A.D. 775. This year Cynewulf and Offa fought near Bensington, and Offa took possession of the town. In the days of this king, Offa, there was an abbot at Medhamsted, called Beonna; who, with the consent of all the monks of the minster, let to farm, to Alderman Cuthbert, ten copyhold lands at Swineshead, with leasow and with meadow, and with all the appurtenances; provided that the said Cuthbert gave the said abbot fifty pounds therefore, and each year entertainment for one night, or thirty shillings in money; <sup>63</sup> provided also, that after his decease the said lands should revert to the monastery. The king, Offa, and King Everth, and Archbishop Hibbert, and Bishop Ceolwulf, and Bishop Inwona, and Abbot Beonna, and many other bishops, and abbots, and rich men, were witnesses to this. In the days of this same Offa was an alderman, of the name of Brorda, who requested the king for his sake to free his own monastery, called Woking, because he would give it to Medhamsted and St. Peter, and the abbot that then was, whose name was Pusa. Pusa succeeded Beonna; and the king loved him much. And the king freed the monastery of Woking, against king, against bishop, against earl, and against all men' so that no man should have any claim there, except St. Peter and the abbot. This was done at the king's town called Free-Richburn.

A.D. 776. This year died Bishop Petwin, on the thirteenth day before the calends of October, having been bishop fourteen winters. The same year Ethelbert was consecrated Bishop of Whitern, at York, on the seventeenth day before the calends of July.

A.D. 778. This year Ethelbald and Herbert slew three high-sheriffs—Eldulf, the son of Bosa, at Coniscliff; Cynewulf and Eggo at Helathyrn—on the eleventh day before the calends of April. Then Elwald, having banished Ethelred from his territory, seized on his kingdom, and reigned ten winters.

A.D. 780. This year a battle was fought between the Old-Saxons and the Franks; and the high-sheriffs of Northumbria committed to the flames Alderman Bern at Silton, on the ninth day before the calends of January. The same year Archbishop Ethelbert died at York, and Eanbald was consecrated in his stead; Bishop Cynewulf retired to Holy-island; Elmund, Bishop of Hexham, died on the seventh day before the ides of September, and Tilbert was consecrated in his stead, on the sixth day before the nones of October; Hibbald was consecrated Bishop of Holy-island at Sockbury; and King Elwald sent to Rome for a pall in behoof of Archbishop Eanbald.

A.D. 782. This year died Werburga, Queen of Ceolred, and Bishop Cynewulf, in Holy-island; and the same year there was a synod at Acley.

A.D. 784. This year Cyneard slew King Cynewulf, and was slain himself, and eighty-four men with him. Then Bertric undertook the government of the West-Saxons, and reigned sixteen years. His body is deposited at Wareham; and his pedigree goeth in a direct line to Cerdic. At this time reigned Elmund king in Kent, the father of Egbert; and Egbert was the father of Athulf.

A.D. 785. This year died Bothwin, Abbot of Ripon, and a litigious synod was holden at Chalkhythe; Archbishop Eanbert resigned some part of his bishopric, Hibbert was appointed bishop by King Offa, and Everth was consecrated king. In the meantime legates were sent from Rome to England by

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<sup>63</sup> Penga in the original, i.e. "of pence", or "in pence"; because the silver penny, derived from the Roman "denarius", was the standard coin in this country for more than a thousand years. It was also used as a weight, being the twentieth part of an ounce.

Pope Adrian, to renew the blessings of faith and peace which St. Gregory sent us by the mission of Bishop Augustine, and they were received with every mark of honour and respect.

A.D. 787. This year King Bertric took Edburga the daughter of Offa to wife. And in his days came first three ships of the Northmen from the land of robbers. The reve<sup>64</sup> then rode thereto, and would drive them to the king's town; for he knew not what they were; and there was he slain. These were the first ships of the Danish men that sought the land of the English nation.

A.D. 788. This year there was a synod assembled at Fingall in Northumberland, on the fourth day before the nones of September; and Abbot Albert departed this life.

A.D. 789. This year Elwald, king of the Northumbrians, was slain by Siga, on the eleventh day before the calends of October; and a heavenly light was often seen on the spot where he was slain. He was buried in the church of Hexham; and Osred, the son of Alred, who was his nephew, succeeded him in the government. This year there was a synod assembled at Acley.

A.D. 790. This year Archbishop Eanbert died, and Abbot Ethelherd was chosen archbishop the same year. Osred, king of the Northumbrians, was betrayed and banished from his kingdom, and Ethelred, the son of Ethelwald, succeeded him.

A.D. 791. This year Baldulf was consecrated Bishop of Whithorn, on the sixteenth day before the calends of August, by Archbishop Eanbald and Bishop Ethelbert.

A.D. 792. This year Offa, King of Mercia, commanded that King Ethelbert should be beheaded; and Osred, who had been king of the Northumbrians, returning home after his exile, was apprehended and slain, on the eighteenth day before the calends of October. His body is deposited at Tinemouth. Ethelred this year, on the third day before the calends of October, took unto himself a new wife, whose name was Elfleda.

A.D. 793. This year came dreadful fore-warnings over the land of the Northumbrians, terrifying the people most woefully: these were immense sheets of light rushing through the air, and whirlwinds, and fiery dragons flying across the firmament. These tremendous tokens were soon followed by a great famine: and not long after, on the sixth day before the ides of January in the same year, the harrowing inroads of heathen men made lamentable havoc in the church of God in Holy-island, by rapine and slaughter. Siga died on the eighth day before the calends of March.

A.D. 794. This year died Pope Adrian; and also Offa, King of Mercia, on the fourth day before the ides of August, after he had reigned forty winters. Ethelred, king of the Northumbrians, was slain by his own people, on the thirteenth day before the calends of May; in consequence of which, Bishops Ceolwulf and Eadbald retired from the land. Everth took to the government of Mercia, and died the same year. Eadbert, whose other name was Pryn, obtained the kingdom of Kent; and Alderman Ethelherd died on the calends of August. In the meantime, the heathen armies spread devastation among the Northumbrians, and plundered the monastery of King Everth at the mouth of the Wear. There, however, some of their leaders were slain; and some of their ships also were shattered to pieces by the violence of the weather; many of the crew were drowned; and some, who escaped alive to the shore, were soon dispatched at the mouth of the river.

A.D. 795. This year was the moon eclipsed, between cock-crowing and dawn,<sup>65</sup> on the fifth day before the calends of April; and Erdulf succeeded to the Northumbrian kingdom on the second before the ides of May. He was afterwards consecrated and raised to his throne, at York, on the seventh day before the calends of June, by Archbishop Eanbald, and Bishops Ethelbert, Hibbald, and Baldulf.

A.D. 796. This year died Archbishop Eanbald, on the fourth day before the ides of August; and his body is deposited at York. The same year also died Bishop Ceolwulf; and another Eanbald was consecrated to the see of the former, on the nineteenth day before the calends of September. About

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<sup>64</sup> Since called "sheriff"; i.e. the reve, or steward, of the shire. "Exactor regis".—Ethelw.

<sup>65</sup> This is the Grecian method of computation; between the hours of three and six in the morning. It must be recollected, that before the distribution of time into hours, minutes, and seconds, the day and night were divided into eight equal portions, containing three hours each; and this method was continued long afterwards by historians.

the same time Cynewulf, King of Mercia, made inroads upon the inhabitants of Kent as far as the marsh; and the Mercians seized Edbert Pryn, their king, led him bound into Mercia, and suffered men to pick out his eyes, and cut off his hands.<sup>66</sup> And Ethelard, Archbishop of Canterbury, held a synod, wherein he ratified and confirmed, by command of Pope Leo, all things concerning God's monasteries that were fixed in Witgar's days, and in other king's days, saying thus: "I Ethelard, the humble Archbishop of Canterbury, with the unanimous concurrence of the whole synod, and of all the congregations of all the minsters, to which in former days freedom was given by faithful men, in God's name and by his terrible judgment do decree, as I have command from Pope Leo, that henceforth none dare to choose them lords from lewd men over God's inheritance; but, as it is in the writ that the pope has given, or holy men have settled, our fathers and our teachers, concerning holy minsters, so they continue untainted without any resistance. If there is any man that will not observe this decree of God, of our pope, and of us, but overlooketh it, and holdeth it for nought, let them know, that they shall give an account before the judgment-seat of God. And I Ethelard, archbishop, with twelve bishops, and with three and twenty abbots, this same with the rood-token of Christ confirm and fasten."

((A.D. 796. This year Offa, king of the Mercians, died on the fourth before the kalends of August; he reigned forty years.))

A.D. 797. This year the Romans cut out the tongue of Pope Leo, put out his eyes, and drove him from his see; but soon after, by the assistance of God, he could see and speak, and became pope as he was before. Eanbald also received the pall on the sixth day before the ides of September, and Bishop Ethelherd died on the third before the calends of November.

A.D. 798. This year a severe battle was fought in the Northumbrian territory, during Lent, on the fourth day before the nones of April, at Whalley; wherein Alric, the son of Herbert, was slain, and many others with him.

A.D. 799. This year Archbishop Ethelbert, and Cynbert, Bishop of Wessex, went to Rome. In the meantime Bishop Alfun died at Sudbury, and was buried at Dunwich. After him Tidfrith was elected to the see; and Siric, king of the East Saxons, went to Rome. In this year the body of Witburga was found entire, and free from decay, at Dercham, after a lapse of five and fifty years from the period of her decease.

A.D. 800. This year was the moon eclipsed, at eight in the evening, on the seventeenth day before the calends of February; and soon after died King Bertric and Alderman Worr. Egbert succeeded to the West-Saxon kingdom; and the same day Ethelmund, alderman of the Wiccians, rode over the Thames at Kempford; where he was met by Alderman Woxtan, with the men of Wiltshire, and a terrible conflict ensued, in which both the commanders were slain, but the men of Wiltshire obtained the victory.

((A.D. 801. This year Beornmod was ordained Bishop of Rochester.))

A.D. 802. This year was the moon eclipsed, at dawn, on the thirteenth day before the calends of January; and Bernmod was consecrated Bishop of Rochester.

A.D. 803. This year died Hibbald, Bishop of Holy-island, on the twenty-fourth of June, and Egbert was consecrated in his stead, on the thirteenth of June following. Archbishop Ethelherd also died in Kent, and Wulfred was chosen archbishop in his stead. Abbot Forthred, in the course of the same year, departed this life.

A.D. 804. This year Archbishop Wulfred received his pall.

A.D. 805. This year died King Cuthred in Kent, and Abbess Colburga, and Alderman Herbert.

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<sup>66</sup> This wanton act of barbarity seems to have existed only in the depraved imagination of the Norman interpolator of the "Saxon Annals", who eagerly and impatiently dispatches the story thus, in order to introduce the subsequent account of the synod at Bapchild, so important in his eyes. Hoveden and Wallingford and others have repeated the idle tale; but I have not hitherto found it in any historian of authority.

A.D. 806. This year was the moon eclipsed, on the first of September; Erdwulf, king of the Northumbrians, was banished from his dominions; and Eanbert, Bishop of Hexham, departed this life. This year also, on the next day before the nones of June, a cross was seen in the moon, on a Wednesday, at the dawn; and afterwards, during the same year, on the third day before the calends of September, a wonderful circle was displayed about the sun.

A.D. 807. This year was the sun eclipsed, precisely at eleven in the morning, on the seventeenth day before the calends of August.

A.D. 812. This year died the Emperor Charlemagne, after a reign of five and forty winters; and Archbishop Wulfred, accompanied by Wigbert, Bishop of Wessex, undertook a journey to Rome.

A.D. 813. This year Archbishop Wulfred returned to his own see, with the blessing of Pope Leo; and King Egbert spread devastation in Cornwall from east to west.

A.D. 814. This year died Leo, the noble and holy pope; and Stephen succeeded him in the papal government.

A.D. 816. This year died Pope Stephen; and Paschalis was consecrated pope after him. This same year the school of the English nation at Rome was destroyed by fire.

A.D. 819. This year died Cenwulf, King of Mercia; and Ceolwulf<sup>67</sup> succeeded him. Alderman Eadbert also departed this life.

A.D. 821. This year Ceolwulf was deprived of his kingdom.

A.D. 822. This year two aldermen were slain, whose names were Burhelm and Mucca; and a synod was holden at Cliff's-Hoo.

A.D. 823. This year a battle was fought between the Welsh in Cornwall and the people of Devonshire, at Camelford; and in the course of the same year Egbert, king of the West-Saxons, and Bernwulf, King of Mercia, fought a battle at Wilton, in which Egbert gained the victory, but there was great slaughter on both sides. Then sent he his son Ethelwulf into Kent, with a large detachment from the main body of the army, accompanied by his bishop, Elstan, and his alderman, Wulfherd; who drove Baldred, the king, northward over the Thames. Whereupon the men of Kent immediately submitted to him; as did also the inhabitants of Surrey, and Sussex, and Essex; who had been unlawfully kept from their allegiance by his relatives. The same year also, the king of the East-Angles, and his subjects besought King Egbert to give them peace and protection against the terror of the Mercians; whose king, Bernwulf, they slew in the course of the same year.

A.D. 825. This year Ludecan, King of Mercia, was slain, and his five aldermen with him; after which Wiglaf succeeded to the kingdom.

A.D. 827. This year was the moon eclipsed, on mid-winter's mass-night; and King Egbert, in the course of the same year, conquered the Mercian kingdom, and all that is south of the Humber, being the eighth king who was sovereign of all the British dominions. Ella, king of the South-Saxons, was the first who possessed so large a territory; the second was Ceawlin, king of the West-Saxons; the third was Ethelbert, King of Kent; the fourth was Redwald, king of the East-Angles; the fifth was Edwin, king of the Northumbrians; the sixth was Oswald, who succeeded him; the seventh was Oswy, the brother of Oswald; the eighth was Egbert, king of the West-Saxons. This same Egbert led an army against the Northumbrians as far as Dore, where they met him, and offered terms of obedience and subjection, on the acceptance of which they returned home.

A.D. 828. This year Wiglaf recovered his Mercian kingdom, and Bishop Ethelwald departed this life. The same year King Egbert led an army against the people of North-Wales, and compelled them all to peaceful submission.

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<sup>67</sup> St. Kenelm is said to have succeeded Cenwulf: "In the foure and twentithe yere of his kyngdom Kenulf wente out of this worlde, and to the joye of hevene com; It was after that oure Lord in his moder alygte Eigte hondred yet and neygentene, by a countes rigte, Seint Kenelm his yonge sone in his sevende yere Kyng was ymad after him, theg he yong were." — "Vita S. Kenelmi, MS. Coll. Trin Oxon." No. 57. Arch.

A.D. 829. This year died Archbishop Wulfred; and Abbot Feologild was after him chosen to the see, on the twenty-fifth of April, and consecrated on a Sunday, the eleventh of June. On the thirteenth of August he was dead!

A.D. 830. This year Ceolnoth was chosen and consecrated archbishop on the death of Abbot Feologild.

A.D. 831. This year Archbishop Ceolnoth received the pall.

A.D. 832. This year heathen men overran the Isle of Shepey.

A.D. 833. This year fought King Egbert with thirty-five pirates at Charmouth, where a great slaughter was made, and the Danes remained masters of the field. Two bishops, Hereferth and Wigen, and two aldermen, Dudda and Osmod, died the same year.

A.D. 835. This year came a great naval armament into West-Wales, where they were joined by the people, who commenced war against Egbert, the West-Saxon king. When he heard this, he proceeded with his army against them and fought with them at Hengeston, where he put to flight both the Welsh and the Danes.

A.D. 836. This year died King Egbert. Him Offa, King of Mercia, and Bertric, the West-Saxon king, drove out of England into France three years before he was king. Bertric assisted Offa because he had married his daughter. Egbert having afterwards returned, reigned thirty-seven winters and seven months. Then Ethelwulf, the son of Egbert, succeeded to the West-Saxon kingdom; and he gave his son Athelstan the kingdom of Kent, and of Essex, and of Surrey, and of Sussex.

A.D. 837. This year Alderman Wulfherd fought at Hamton with thirty-three pirates, and after great slaughter obtained the victory, but he died the same year. Alderman Ethelhelm also, with the men of Dorsetshire, fought with the Danish army in Portland-isle, and for a good while put them to flight; but in the end the Danes became masters of the field, and slew the alderman.

A.D. 838. This year Alderman Herbert was slain by the heathens, and many men with him, among the Marshlanders. The same year, afterwards, in Lindsey, East-Anglia, and Kent, were many men slain by the army.

A.D. 839. This year there was great slaughter in London, Canterbury, and Rochester.

A.D. 840. This year King Ethelwulf fought at Charmouth with thirty-five ship's-crews, and the Danes remained masters of the place. The Emperor Louis died this year.

A.D. 845. This year Alderman Eanwulf, with the men of Somersetshire, and Bishop Ealstan, and Alderman Osric, with the men of Dorsetshire, fought at the mouth of the Parret with the Danish army; and there, after making a great slaughter, obtained the victory.

A.D. 851. This year Alderman Ceorl, with the men of Devonshire, fought the heathen army at Wemburg, and after making great slaughter obtained the victory. The same year King Athelstan and Alderman Elchere fought in their ships, and slew a large army at Sandwich in Kent, taking nine ships and dispersing the rest. The heathens now for the first time remained over winter in the Isle of Thanet. The same year came three hundred and fifty ships into the mouth of the Thames; the crew of which went upon land, and stormed Canterbury and London; putting to flight Bertulf, king of the Mercians, with his army; and then marched southward over the Thames into Surrey. Here Ethelwulf and his son Ethelbald, at the head of the West-Saxon army, fought with them at Ockley, and made the greatest slaughter of the heathen army that we have ever heard reported to this present day. There also they obtained the victory.

A.D. 852. About this time Abbot Ceolred of Medhamsted, with the concurrence of the monks, let to hand the land of Sempringham to Wulfred, with the provision, that after his demise the said land should revert to the monastery; that Wulfred should give the land of Sleaford to Meohamsted, and should send each year into the monastery sixty loads of wood, twelve loads of coal, six loads of peat, two tuns full of fine ale, two neats' carcasses, six hundred loaves, and ten kilderkins of Welsh ale; one horse also each year, and thirty shillings, and one night's entertainment. This agreement was

made in the presence of King Burhred. Archbishop Ceolnoth, Bishops Tunbert, Kenred, Aldhun, and Bertred; Abbots Witred and Weftherd, Aldermen Ethelherd and Hunbert, and many others.

A.D. 853. This year Burhred, King of Mercia, with his council, besought King Ethelwulf to assist him to subdue North-Wales. He did so; and with an army marched over Mercia into North-Wales, and made all the inhabitants subject to him. The same year King Ethelwulf sent his son Alfred to Rome; and Leo, who was then pope, consecrated him king, and adopted him as his spiritual son. The same year also Elchere with the men of Kent, and Huda with the men of Surrey, fought in the Isle of Thanet with the heathen army, and soon obtained the victory; but there were many men slain and drowned on either hand, and both the aldermen killed. Burhred, the Mercian king, about this time received in marriage the daughter of Ethelwulf, king of the West-Saxons.

A.D. 854. This year the heathen men <sup>68</sup> for the first time remained over winter in the Isle of Shepey. The same year King Ethelwulf registered a TENTH of his land over all his kingdom for the honour of God and for his own everlasting salvation. The same year also he went to Rome with great pomp, and was resident there a twelvemonth. Then he returned homeward; and Charles, king of the Franks, gave him his daughter, whose name was Judith, to be his queen. After this he came to his people, and they were fain to receive him; but about two years after his residence among the Franks he died; and his body lies at Winchester. He reigned eighteen years and a half. And Ethelwulf was the son of Egbert, Egbert of Ealhmund, Ealhmund of Eafa, Eafa of Eoppa, Eoppa of Ingild; Ingild was the brother of Ina, king of the West-Saxons, who held that kingdom thirty-seven winters, and afterwards went to St. Peter, where he died. And they were the sons of Cenred, Cenred of Ceolwald, Ceolwald of Cutha, Cutha of Cuthwin, Cuthwin of Ceawlin, Ceawlin of Cynric, Cynric of Creoda, Creoda of Cerdic, Cerdic of Elesa, Elesa of Esla, Esla of Gewis, Gewis of Wig, Wig of Freawine, Freawine of Frithugar, Frithugar of Brond, Brond of Balday, Balday of Woden, Woden of Frithuwald, Frithuwald of Freawine, Freawine of Frithuwulf, Frithuwulf of Finn, Finn of Godwulf, Godwulf of Great, Great of Taetwa, Taetwa of Beaw, Beaw of Sceldwa, Sceldwa of Heremod, Heremod of Itermon, Itermon of Hathra, Hathra of Hwala, Hwala of Bedwig, Bedwig of Sceaf; that is, the son of Noah, who was born in Noah's ark: Laznech, Methusalem, Enoch, Jared, Malalahel, Cainion, Enos, Seth, Adam the first man, and our Father, that is, Christ. Amen. Then two sons of Ethelwulf succeeded to the kingdom; Ethelbald to Wessex, and Ethelbert to Kent, Essex, Surrey, and Sussex. Ethelbald reigned five years. Alfred, his third son, Ethelwulf had sent to Rome; and when the pope heard say that he was dead, he consecrated Alfred king, and held him under spiritual hands, as his father Ethelwulf had desired, and for which purpose he had sent him thither.

((A.D. 855. And on his return homewards he took to (wife) the daughter of Charles, king of the French, whose name was Judith, and he came home safe. And then in about two years he died, and his body lies at Winchester: and he reigned eighteen years and a half, and he was the son of Egbert. And then his two sons succeeded to the kingdom; Ethelbald to the kingdom of the West-Saxons, and Ethelbert to the kingdom of the Kentish-men, and of the East-Saxons, and of Surrey, and of the South-Saxons. And he reigned five years.))

A.D. 860. This year died King Ethelbald, and his body lies at Sherborn. Ethelbert his brother then succeeded to the whole kingdom, and held it in good order and great tranquillity. In his days came a large naval force up into the country, and stormed Winchester. But Alderman Osric, with the command of Hampshire, and Alderman Ethelwulf, with the command of Berkshire, fought against the enemy, and putting them to flight, made themselves masters of the field of battle. The said Ethelbert reigned five years, and his body lies at Sherborn.

A.D. 861. This year died St. Swithun, bishop.

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<sup>68</sup> i.e. the Danes; or, as they are sometimes called, Northmen, which is a general term including all those numerous tribes that issued at different times from the north of Europe, whether Danes, Norwegians, Sweons, Jutes, or Goths, etc.; who were all in a state of paganism at this time.

A.D. 865. This year sat the heathen army in the isle of Thanet, and made peace with the men of Kent, who promised money therewith; but under the security of peace, and the promise of money, the army in the night stole up the country, and overran all Kent eastward.

A.D. 866. This year Ethered,<sup>69</sup> brother of Ethelbert, took to the West-Saxon government; and the same year came a large heathen army into England, and fixed their winter-quarters in East-Anglia, where they were soon horsed; and the inhabitants made peace with them.

A.D. 867. This year the army went from the East-Angles over the mouth of the Humber to the Northumbrians, as far as York. And there was much dissension in that nation among themselves; they had deposed their king Osbert, and had admitted Aella, who had no natural claim. Late in the year, however, they returned to their allegiance, and they were now fighting against the common enemy; having collected a vast force, with which they fought the army at York; and breaking open the town, some of them entered in. Then was there an immense slaughter of the Northumbrians, some within and some without; and both the kings were slain on the spot. The survivors made peace with the army. The same year died Bishop Ealstan, who had the bishopric of Sherborn fifty winters, and his body lies in the town.

A.D. 868. This year the same army went into Mercia to Nottingham, and there fixed their winter-quarters; and Burhred, king of the Mercians, with his council, besought Ethered, king of the West-Saxons, and Alfred, his brother; that they would assist them in fighting against the army. And they went with the West-Saxon army into Mercia as far as Nottingham, and there meeting the army on the works, they beset them within. But there was no heavy fight; for the Mercians made peace with the army.

A.D. 869. This year the army went back to York, and sat there a year.

A.D. 870. This year the army rode over Mercia into East-Anglia, and there fixed their winter-quarters at Thetford. And in the winter King Edmund fought with them; but the Danes gained the victory, and slew the king; whereupon they overran all that land, and destroyed all the monasteries to which they came. The names of the leaders who slew the king were Hingwar and Hubba. At the same time came they to Medhamsted, burning and breaking, and slaying abbot and monks, and all that they there found. They made such havoc there, that a monastery, which was before full rich, was now reduced to nothing. The same year died Archbishop Ceolnoth; and Ethered, Bishop of Witshire, was chosen Archbishop of Canterbury.

A.D. 871. This year came the army to Reading in Wessex; and in the course of three nights after rode two earls up, who were met by Alderman Ethelwulf at Englefield; where he fought with them, and obtained the victory. There one of them was slain, whose name was Sidrac. About four nights after this, King Ethered and Alfred his brother led their main army to Reading, where they fought with the enemy; and there was much slaughter on either hand, Alderman Ethelwulf being among the skain; but the Danes kept possession of the field. And about four nights after this, King Ethered and Alfred his brother fought with all the army on Ashdown, and the Danes were overcome. They had two heathen kings, Bagsac and Healfden, and many earls; and they were in two divisions; in one of which were Bagsac and Healfden, the heathen kings, and in the other were the earls. King Ethered therefore fought with the troops of the kings, and there was King Bagsac slain; and Alfred his brother fought with the troops of the earls, and there were slain Earl Sidrac the elder, Earl Sidrac the younger, Earl Osbern, Earl Frene, and Earl Harold. They put both the troops to flight; there were many thousands of the slain, and they continued fighting till night. Within a fortnight of this, King Ethered and Alfred his brother fought with the army at Basing; and there the Danes had the victory. About two months after this, King Ethered and Alfred his brother fought with the army at Marden. They were in two divisions; and they put them both to flight, enjoying the victory for some time during the day; and there was much slaughter on either hand; but the Danes became masters of the

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<sup>69</sup> Aetheredus,—Asser, Ethelwerd, etc. We have therefore adopted this orthography.

field; and there was slain Bishop Heahmund, with many other good men. After this fight came a vast army in the summer to Reading. And after the Easter of this year died King Ethered. He reigned five years, and his body lies at Winburn-minster. Then Alfred, his brother, the son of Ethelwulf, took to the kingdom of Wessex. And within a month of this, King Alfred fought against all the Army with a small force at Wilton, and long pursued them during the day; but the Danes got possession of the field. This year were nine general battles fought with the army in the kingdom south of the Thames; besides those skirmishes, in which Alfred the king's brother, and every single alderman, and the thanes of the king, oft rode against them; which were accounted nothing. This year also were slain nine earls, and one king; and the same year the West-Saxons made peace with the army.

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