

## DURHAM AND SADBERGE.

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THE EARLY CHRONICLES.

Up to the death of Edwin, our principal authorities have been of the most scanty character, both in number and in detail. The difficulties of the student are increased by the absence of a proper edition of the work known as that of Nennius. Of this venerable production, the differing MSS. ought to be printed in parallel columns. On Mr. Hodgson Hinde's death, his representatives found among his papers a number of copies of "The Fountains of British History explored. London, published by J. B. and J. G. Nichols. MDCCCLII." This little book consists of a minute consideration of the work in question, "from a conviction that, if that authority is altogether discarded, the early Anglo-Saxon annals will present a blank very pleasant to theorists and system-mongers, but little conducive to the information of the ordinary enquirer." Possibly there may be some slip in the edition which led to its withdrawal from publicity, but whether this be so or no, it is a useful dissection and translation of the History of the Britons. The critical remarks are worthy of Mr. Hinde's acumen, and they should be read before the preceding chapter of Durham and Sadberge.

It has been suggested that it would be convenient to print in these pages a revised summary of the relative dates and qualities of the principal chronicles on which the annals of Durham, for the times before the existence of cotemporary records, depend. Some of these have to a certain extent already been referred to.

When written history adds its light to the broken proofs afforded by earthworks and stones, our Venerable Bede takes foremost rank. His celebrated Ecclesiastical History was revised by him in about 732. "The schools of Yorks (says Stubbs) were the result of the general learned movement originated by Bede, and the schools of York produced Alcuin, in his turn the light of the Western world." The handwriting of our earliest copy of the Saxon Chronicles, which may be regarded as more southern productions, ends more than a century and

a half later, in the time of King Alfred, its probable originator. For the period preceding Bede, as to general rather than ecclesiastical history, the most important adjuncts to his great work (which, after all, is our chief guide, even for civil affairs) are his own Six Ages; the Chronological Recapitulation attached to his history; the Short Northumbrian Chronology appended to the earliest known manuscript of the same, (which is brought down to 737, and the varying computations of the copyists or editors of which do not reach below 748); and the Genealogies attached to the History of the Britons which passes by the name of Nennius, or rather the northern version of the history itself as it appears in the earliest manuscripts. There is, it is true, evidence for an edition of the middle of the 7th century, but we cannot say to what it extended, and there is a sequence of statements in our early text which it is difficult to sever from the Genealogies. They, as distinguished from general additions to them in the 10th century, continue in their original condition as to Northumbria, ending, like the Short Chronology, in 737 or thereabouts. Of authority equal to them, probably, are some at least of the poems which pass by the name of the Celtic bards mentioned in them. These have lately been admirably edited by Skene. There are, too, for ecclesiastical history, a few tracts of authority equal to Bede's. There is the Life of St. Wilfrid by Eddi (709-720) of which we require a new edition. Bede's Life of St. Cuthbert in prose is preceded by that in verse, and by an anonymous life of the Saint in prose which gives many interesting topographical details wanting in Bede's adaptation. Again, the great historian's Lives of the Abbots of Jarrow and Wearmouth were founded upon an earlier production by one of the brethren. The celebrated Lindisfarnè text of the Gospels, a most valuable evidence for the history of art, was certainly written by Bishop Eadfrid, and it is concluded that his task was finished before his appointment to the see in 698.

To the writings we have already enumerated, it is again submitted, all subsequent statements, especially if contradictory, must give way.

After the time of Bede, the materials for north country history, as for that of the nation at large, are much dovetailed. Their value doubtless greatly depends, as in the previous period, upon the order of the years of their conclusion or known composition, though, as we shall see, some early performances were not used in all later writings, and for the traces of them we are indebted to later works still.

The first and most important of the chronicles after Bede is a Northumbrian one, embedded in that ascribed to Symeon, and certainly used by him in composing his History of the Church of Durham. From 732 to 766 it mostly coincides with the recapitulation of Bede's works,

which in some MSS. ends with 735, in others with 766. From 766 to 803 it is of the same character, a series of notes, written, apparently, while the events narrated were fresh in the memory. At present it terminates abruptly in 803, but Symeon himself, judging from internal evidence in his Durham History, seems to have had a continuation to 867 or a little after. This continuation was not forthcoming for Houeden between 1132 and 1161. Yet Wendover, a later writer, must have had something of the sort before him, for among other Northumbrian matters found nowhere else, he mentions the usurpation of Redulf in 844; and the truth of his unsupported testimony was amply vindicated by the existence of the usurper's coins in the Hexham find.

The chronicle is known as *Historia de Gestis Regum Anglorum et Danorum*, or briefly as the History of the Kings. Its early character, independently of the period at which it concludes, appears by the writer describing the church of Hexham as existing in its pristine splendour. That church was defaced in 875.

The famous Book of Life, containing the names of the benefactors of the churches of Lindisfarne, Chester, and Durham, is supposed to have been commenced in its gold and silver letters in the 9th century. Many important documents, reaching over the following centuries, are found in it; and a new and careful edition, arranged in order of handwriting rather than that of folios, and with an index, would be a boon. If such an arrangement were preceded by a facsimile of the MS., it would still more command the gratitude of North Country folks, who yearn for some systematic publication of such chronicles, calendars, and records, as are of real value.

The collection of Rochester evidences by Bishop Ernulf of that city, called *Textus Roffensis*, contains genealogies of the Saxon kings, originally compiled, Mr. Haigh believes, not later than in the beginning of the 9th century, as Coenwulf of Mercia (796-818) is the last whose descent is traced, and Beornwulf, his second successor (821-823) the last who is named.

Our earliest codex of the Saxon chronicle, in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, 173, is in one hand until 891. But this original version is constantly interpolated by additions, apparently of the 12th century, which are chiefly on erasures of the original text. Both Asser's Life of Alfred and Ethelwerd's Chronicle, up to 893, resemble some codex very similar to this Cambridge one.

With the visit to Durham of King Edmund, who died in 948, ends the Cambridge MS. of the History touching St. Cuthbert, or rather relating to the possessions of his church (printed by Mr. Hinde). Symeon appears to allude to it as the ancient cartulary of the church, and freely

uses both it and a most valuable addition to the time of Canute, who died 1036, which appears in the Oxford MS. of this our highest authority for the rise of the possessions of the Church of Durham. In the introduction to the *Monumenta Historica* published by Government is the singular observation that the history under notice "is of little value, as the facts appear more fully *elsewhere*." Elsewhere must, we may presume, mean Symeon's *Durham History*, but that worthy was of quite a different mind, for he omits particulars which he says "it is unnecessary to detail, as they are written elsewhere." His "elsewhere" is the earlier history in question, and there the particulars are found. As the two MSS. are severed and under different heads in the useful Government Catalogue of Materials for British History, it is plain that they were not understood.

Our second codex of the Saxon Chronicle, Cottonian MS. Tiberius A, VI., extends to 977 in one hand, apparently of the latter part of the 10th century. The MS. appears to be Mercian.

The third codex of the chronicle has been published by Wheloc from the now injured Cottonian MS., Otho, B. ix. 2, which extends to 1031, in a hand apparently of the 11th century. In Thorpe's edition the MS. and Wheloc's print are made to supplement and collate with the other versions by the references G. and W.

Ethelwerd's chronicle, already mentioned, terminates in 975, and was composed before 1011. The author or the compiler was a member of the royal family of Wessex.

A fourth codex of the Saxon Chronicle is the Cottonian MS., Tiberius B. iv., in one hand to 1016. It has Mercian and Northumbrian additions. After the middle of the 10th century, it has, like the fifth codex, noticed below, peculiarities relating to Northumbria. During the 8th and 9th centuries, that fifth codex, together with the first in its present state, and also the second, are frequently a year before the fourth codex in the chronology. But the latter agrees with the first codex before it was altered, and also with the Northern Chronicles.

A most singular document about the body of St. Cuthbert and other documents interesting to us are to be found in the *Diplomatarium* published by Thorpe, which should always accompany Kemble's great collection of Saxon charters.

The fifth codex of the Saxon Chronicle, Cottonian MS., Tiberius, B. i., of the class of the second one, is apparently in the same hand to 1046. And a sixth one, Cottonian MS., Domitian, A. VIII. 2, runs in nearly one hand, apparently of the 12th century, until 1056, and has peculiar Kentish additions.

In the reign of Edward the Confessor, who is mentioned, the chronicle

ascribed to Symeon, which we left at 803, was advanced a stage by an addition, which ended in 957. This part is chiefly derived from Asser, the Saxon Chronicle, and the History of St. Cuthbert. Like the first portion of the History of the Kings, it seems to have been known to and used by Symeon. A valuable narrative of a siege of Durham in the time of Bishop Aldhune, who first settled there, and of the descent of various manors of the see which he settled upon his daughter, was also prior to Symeon, but he has not made as much use of it as one might have expected. Possibly the erroneous date given to the siege (969, supposed by Hinde to be 999 and by Robertson and Freeman to be 1006,) perplexed him, or he may have been shocked at the doings of the Bishop and his daughter and at the facilities for divorce in their time.

William of Poitou (1036)-1067), "more studious of his patron's glory than of truth," must be read with caution.

We now reach Symeon himself. He stands on the roll of Durham monks as No. 38. The number of monks who emigrated from Jarrow to Durham in 1083 was 23, "to which it is likely enough that the 37 enrolled previous to Symeon had been reduced by deaths and removals during an interval of nine or ten years." "Symeon appears to have been resident in Durham, perhaps as a member of the choir, before the removal of the monastery from Jarrow, as he speaks from his own recollection of the performance of the choral service in the Cathedral by the secular clergy during the episcopate of Bishop Walcher; and it is probable from his position on the monastic roll that he joined the fraternity shortly after their transference to that city." He was present at the exhumation of St. Cuthbert in 1104, and his account of the Archbishops of York is dedicated to Dean Hugh, who was holding office in 1130 and 1133. His great work, however, on the Church of Durham ends in 1096. The alterations in it will be exemplified under the proper dates.

After the work of Symeon on the Durham Church some interpolations were made in the old History of the Kings about the saints of Hexham for the express purpose, as it appears, of contradicting the Durham writer. Hinde considers that the History of the Translations of St. Cuthbert was in Symeon's hands when he wrote the History of the Church, but that the chapters of the Lawson and other MSS. touching St. Cuthbert which are not incorporated by Symeon in his History of the Church of Durham were after his time.

There was formerly in the chancery of Durham a book professing to contain charters of kings and privileges granted to the Bishops of Durham, called the *Red Book*. During the civil troubles, on production of a letter from Bishop Morton, then in London, it was, with other muniments, delivered by his auditor to one Harrison, and is now only known

by certain extracts picked up somewhere by Bishop Cosin, and printed by the Surtees Society. According to them, it ended in the time of Bishop William I. (de St. Carilepho) before 1096. Charters of that bishop, of William the Conqueror, and of Archbishop Thomas of York, touching the foundation of Durham monastery were in it. What now exist as such are spurious documents, more than once altered. Without seeing the *Red Book* itself we cannot be certain, but the probabilities are, that, though it might end with Bp. William I., it was not of his time. It modifies and amplifies the old history touching St. Cuthbert to suit later ideas, and there are agreements with the portion of the chronicle next to be noticed in certain doubtful incidents wherein it differs from Symeon. A similar sort of book, continued to the reign of Henry IV., lay on the high altar at Durham, and is now only known to us by Prior Wessington's extracts from it in Henry VI.'s reign (also printed by the Surtees Society), and an abstract of its contents by Leland. Something of the character of both may doubtless be seen in the narrative printed in Dugdale's *Monasticon* under the head of Durham.

A peculiar portion of the chronicle which passes under the name of Symeon, and probably affected, rather than was derived from, the Durham MSS. just mentioned, commences with a recapitulation of the former part of the chronicle from 848 to 957, and thence it is continued to 1117. It is principally a mere copy of the chronicles, or rather interpolation of Marian's works, by Florence of Worcester, who ended them in that year, and died 1118. Where not so copied, it consists itself of interpolations by an unknown writer, which are sometimes at direct variance with Symeon's *History of the Church of Durham*, which is nevertheless used in this continuation. Stubbs considers that there are traces of independent study of the earlier authorities whom Florence had used.

The seventh codex of the *Saxon Chronicle*, in the Bodleian Library, Land. 636, is in the same hand to 1122. From 653 it contains several notices of Peterborough Monastery, to which it seems to have belonged.

William of Malmesbury's noble work ends in 1125. "In many instances it is difficult to name his authorities, as several of them appear to be now lost."

A further continuation of the chronicles ascribed to Symeon from 1117 to 1129 is of considerable value, and this portion, and this portion only, may possibly be by Symeon himself. It does not seem to have been known to an epitomist of 1132 who closes his abbreviation with 1119. Nor was it known to the Durham compilers of the *History of the Angles or Saxons* up to 1148. The MS. of the collection of

chronicles is fixed to a date between 1161 and 1175. John of Hexham had the continuation of 1129, as he commences his own chronicle in 1130.

Of the same reign (Hen. I.) is the *Libellus* touching the Saxons (printed for the first time by Hinde in the volume of Symeon's Collectanea edited by him for the Surtees Society), in which some of the statements which we previously had not earlier than in the chronicles of Wendover and Wallingford are first seen. It is observable that Roger de Houeden in his chronicles in which we "have the full harvest of the labours of the Northumbrian historians," stands by the earlier writers in omitting these statements.

Ordericus Vitalis dates in 1140; the continuation of Malmsbury, "altogether original," called *Historia Novella*, in 1142. The first edition of Henry of Huntingdon's history (which eventually ended in 1154) ended in 1148. The copy of the Saxon chronicle used by him was (says Hardy) probably of the scantier class, in some respects resembling the Cottonian MS. Tib. A. vi. or Tib. B. i., but continued to a later period than either of those copies.

After the above works, a compilation was made before 1161, combining (with a few additions principally relating to Durham), the chronicles ascribed to Symeon, and the first edition of Henry of Huntingdon's work. It is entitled the History of the Angles or Saxons since Venerable Bede's death. In the treatment by its writer of the works nominally Symeon's, the extracts from Malmsbury are omitted, and, what is of more importance, the continuation of the chronicles is not used. This looks as if the continuator were not the compiler of the work under notice. To this work public attention has especially been drawn by Stubbs in his valuable edition of Houeden's chronicles.

The History since Bede, with a few additions (including notices of William the Conqueror's confirmation of Durham privileges and his gift of Hemmingburgh, and a copy of the charter ascribed to Archbishop Thomas,) constitute the chronicles of Roger de Houeden to 1148. From 1148 to 1169, Houeden uses to some extent another chronicle of the Durham school, written up to the latter year, and now composing part of the Chronicle of Melrose. The notices in 1148-69 not taken directly by Houeden from the Chronicle of Melrose, nor connected closely with the Becket contest, are very few. Stubbs thinks they are of questionable authority. "The death of Eustace of Boulogne is antedated five years." "Of the striking of money by Henry in 1149 called *the Duke's money*, and of the appointment of Henry as justiciar to Stephen in 1153, it is impossible to say that they are false, but equally impossible to say that that they are in the least degree probable." Nevertheless the

striking of coins by Duke Henry would well explain a most remarkable class of silver pennies, usually given to Henry I., but differing most materially from his other pieces and from all others of the English series. From 1170 to 1192 Houeden receives and annotates the work known as the chronicle of Benedict of Peterborough. From 1192 to 1201 we have his own pen and experience as a cotemporary of the events he relates. "The other chroniclers of the period are as ignorant of Houeden as he is of them."

Such, with the addition of the three short works usually printed at the end of Symeon's History of the Church of Durham, are the chief chronicles which must be consulted for the story of the land between the waters of Tyne and Tees to the time of the "jolly bishop" Pusat, when we arrive at the writings of Reginald, Boldon Buke, the Three Historians of Durham, and divers cotemporary proofs. The principal muniments of the episcopate of Durham are, however, lost, having been made way with before the time of Edward III. for reasons which will be discussed in due time.

W. HYLTON DYER L.

### S. MARY THE VIRGIN'S HOSPITAL, NEWCASTLE.

Among the depositions in the York Ecclesiastical Court I have found the following North Country case:—

1567. Office against John Reymes, master<sup>1</sup> of the Westspittle hospital, Newcastle-on-Tyne. He is not a priest, is non-resident, and allows the buildings to go into decay; he is supposed to be absent because he does not approve of the religion. The house is let to Lady Anne Hilton for 4*l.* per annum.

A formal document is put in by Raymes, proceeding from the Superior of the University of Louvaine, saying that Raymes is there, and he makes John Swinburn of Chopwell, esq., Robert Rames of Shortflat, esq. his brother, and John Swinburne of Wylam, gen., his attornies to act and answer for him.

J. RAINE.

<sup>1</sup> The reader interested in the Swinburnes and Raymes's, and the intimate connection between the families, and between them and the hospital, must consult Brand, i. 79 et seq., and Hodgson's Nd., ii. i. 368.