

**COLLECTANEA ADAMANTÆA. X.  
THE CHRONICLES OF LONDON FROM  
44 HEN.III TO 17 EDW.III TRANSLATED  
FROM A MS. IN THE COTTONIAN  
LIBRARY. IN THREE VOLUMES, VOL. I**

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Translated from a Ms. In the Cottonian Library. In Three Volumes, Vol. I by Edmund  
Goldsmid

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**EDMUND GOLDSMID**

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FROM

44 HEN. III. TO 17 EDW. III.

*TRANSLATED FROM A MS. IN  
THE COTTONIAN LIBRARY,*

BY

EDMUND GOLDSMID, F.R.H.S.  
F.S.A. (Scot.)



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## Introduction.

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"THE Manuscript from which the following Chronicle of London has been transcribed forms the latter portion of a small parchment book in octavo, preserved among the Cottonian Manuscripts (Cleopatra, A. VI.), and commences at folio 54. It is written in the old Norman French, and from the handwriting appears to have been compiled about the middle of the fourteenth century, but unfortunately no clue exists by which the name of the writer can be ascertained. The period which it embraces is from the 44th of Henry III. to the 17th of Edward III., and at the commencement of each year are recorded the names of the mayors and sheriffs of London."<sup>2</sup>

With these words Mr. Aungier begins his introduction to the original text of the Chronicle

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<sup>2</sup> Mr. Aungier's Introduction to the Norman-French Text, published by him for the Camden Society.



of London. The present editor has always regretted that this edition should have been issued without a translation: the ancient Norman-French in which the MS. is written is almost incomprehensible to all but one who has made this dialect his special study, and the interest therefore of the Chronicle is much diminished. It is in the hope of being useful to many who, till now, have been unable to make use of this valuable MS., that the present translation has been undertaken.

A desire to render the following pages more attractive to the general reader, has induced the editor to insert most of the copious notes added by Mr. Aungier to his edition; and, in a few instances, he has subjoined illustrations or explanations of his own, where it appeared to him that the text was in need of such elucidation.

The following description of old London and her inhabitants, during the period embraced by the chronicle, an era in every respect as important as any in our annals, may not be thought uninteresting; it is quoted from Mr. Aungier's Introduction:—

“Proceeding eastward along the Strand,<sup>1</sup> the

<sup>1</sup> At a very early period, the *Strand*, it appears formed a part of the banks of the Thames, and remained *as a strand* after all other parts in the vicinity of the growing London had lost their native character and appearance. In 1315 it is stated that

visitor in the 14th century would approach the outer barrier of the city, which marked the extent of its liberties; and which, from the adjoining magnificent house of the Templars, was named Temple Bar. Passing this barrier, which from the name constantly used in old documents seems to have been merely a bar, he would enter Fleet Street, at this period not devoted to any particular trade, but abounding in shops, and surrounded by a populous neighbourhood; then, passing on the right hand the noble convent of the White Friars, he approached, not a broad street, but a river, tolerably broad, and with a very rapid current, from whence was derived its name, the Fleet,<sup>1</sup>

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the footway at the entrance of Temple Bar, and from thence to the Palace of Westminster, was so bad that the feet of horses, and rich and poor men, received constant damage, particularly in the rainy season; at the same time the footway was interrupted by *thickets and bushes*. The sites of two of the bridges in the line of the Strand at that period are marked out and preserved by the names given to the lanes through which their channels found way,—Ivy-bridge Lane and Strand-bridge Lane, opposite the end of Newcastle Street. (Knight's London.)

<sup>1</sup> The Fleet has its origin in the high grounds of that most beautiful of heaths, Hampstead; nor did its waters for some centuries belie the place of their birth. From Hampstead it passed by Kentish Town, Camden Town, and the old church of St. Pancras, towards Battle Bridge, in the neighbourhood of which place an anchor is said to have been found, from which it is

and which at this period was crowded with small vessels laden chiefly with lime and charcoal, and bound to the wharfs which extended as far as Battle Bridge, now called King's Cross. Crossing Fleet Bridge, he would now enter Ludgate Street; and, passing on the right hand the large convent of the Blackfriars, whose fine gardens extended down to the Thames, he crossed the draw-bridge that spanned the wide city ditch, and, passing beneath King Lud's gate, entered the city. There the wide street of Ludgate opened to his view the west front of London's chief ornament, St. Paul's church. Quitting this noble structure, and passing along the churchyard, which was open for passengers during the day, the spectator would enter the 'West-Cheape,' a wide and almost triangular area, formed by the street now called Cheapside; and a field named in old records the Crownstield, which seems to have extended along the southern side near the top, and also included part of what is now Paternoster Row. In the midst of this

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inferred, that vessels must have anciently passed from the Thames so far up the river. It next directed its course past Bagnigge Wells and the House of Correction, towards the valley at the back of Mount Pleasant, Warner Street and Saffron Hill, and so to the bottom of Holborn. Here it received the waters of the Old Bourne (whence the name Holborn) which rose near Middle Row, and the channel of which forms the sewer of Holborn Hill to this day.