

**LA FOLIE TRISTAN :
AN ANGLO-
NORMAN POEM**

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La folie Tristan : an Anglo-Norman poem by Albert Eugene Curdy

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ALBERT EUGENE CURDY

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NORMAN POEM**

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AN ANGLO-NORMAN POEM

EDITED BY
ALBERT EUGENE CURDY

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD OF UNIVERSITY STUDIES OF
THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY IN CONFORMITY
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OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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PREFACE.

The Douce version of *La Folie Tristan* was suggested to me as the subject for a dissertation by Professor F. M. Warren, of Yale University, during the course of his lectures on the Breton Cycle at The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland, in the spring of 1900. The complete dissertation was presented to the Board of University Studies of The Johns Hopkins University in May, 1902, and was accepted by them in fulfillment of the requirements of the university for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

The pages here offered represent only a portion of the work done, the scope of which is indicated in the table of contents attached to this extract from the complete dissertation.

I should have liked to present at this time the entire result of my study of the manuscript and poem, *La Folie Tristan*, but in the time at my disposal I have not been able to complete the work as should be done for an edition; hence, I have preferred to postpone the publication of the entire work to a later date, when I purpose to publish an edition of the poem which I hope may be complete in detail and accurate in treatment. My only excuse for presenting these few pages at this time is that the regulations of The Johns Hopkins University demand it. I have thought best to include here only the chapters on the Description of the Douce Manuscript, The Douce Manuscript in Literature, and Tonic Vowels. There are probably omissions in the second chapter mentioned which should be supplied.

The name of the hero of this poem occurs in various forms in the poems of different authors. In the poem treated in these pages, *Tristan* is the constant form. I have used that spelling always when mentioning the name in connection with this poem. When quoting, or when making use of the name in connection with other monuments, I have used the spellings found there.

In my treatment of the Phonology and Morphology I have observed the following plan. Under each heading, as, for in-

stance, Free \bar{E} (page 20), I have placed the developments in the order of the frequency of their occurrence, placing first under each development such forms as are supported in rime or are interesting on account of their rime. Unless otherwise indicated all examples of a development are given. The forms found in *La Folie Tristan* are stated first, then citations from other texts and authors are given.

All Latin or German words or letters under consideration are in capitals; all French words or letters are italicized.

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr. E. M. B. Nicholson, M. A., Librarian of the Bodleian Library, who, during my stay in Oxford in the summer of 1901, very generously assisted me in my work by many helpful suggestions, and also by personally interesting himself in the examination of the paleography of the manuscript of the poem here under consideration.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DOUCE MANUSCRIPT.

The poem, *La Folie Tristan*, is found in a single manuscript now in the Bodleian Library, at Oxford. It bears the number Douce d. 6. The manuscript is described as follows by Falconer Madan, M. A., Sub-Librarian of the Bodleian Library¹: "21983. In French, on parchment: written in the 13 and 14 cent.: 10 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ in., 46 leaves, chiefly in double columns. 1; (fol. 1) Two fragments of a French poetical version of the romance of Tristan, copied successively into the present volume in the 13 cent. The first *beg.* 'Cui pur Tristan es cuer se dolt,' after a leaf or more lost, *ends* at the middle of the first column of fol. 12', 'Sun esperit aitant rendit' (1811 lines): the second *beg.* on the next column 'Tristan surjurne en sun pais' *ends* 'Mult set ben ke il herbigez' (996 lines), and is succeeded immediately in the same column by the next piece. A long account and discussion of

¹ *A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford*. Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1895. Vol. iv, p. 622.

these pieces by Douce follow,¹ embodying the opinions of others. The first fragment seems to be the close of the romance, the second an episode poem from an earlier part. The author appears to be 'Thomas.' The greater parts of these fragments are unique, and differ in orthography and perhaps style: they are printed in full with a facsimile of the first 19 lines of the second fragment, by Francisque Michel (*Tristan*, 3 vols., Lond. 1835-9), who thinks the second piece may be complete in itself.

"2. (fol. 19). 'Hic incipit Certamen inter Humilitatem & Superbiam,' in French verse: *beg.* 'Vus ki creez en damne Deuz' *ends* 'Trestuz pusumalui venir. Amen.'

"3. (fol. 20^v). A short legendary account of the True Cross, in French prose: *beg.* 'Qui voudra oir e saver de la verraie Croiz': after which is a short Latin piece on the same subject, *beg.* 'Crux Xpristi conficiebatur.' These two pieces were added early in the 14th cent.

"Owned in the 15th cent. by 'John Fawne' (fol. 22^v). The absence of this MS. from the printed catalogue of 1840 is explained by Michel's remarks (*ut supra*, i. lvi) 'Ce manuscrit . . . par une disposition particulière de son ancien possesseur n'a point été légué à la Bibliothèque Bodlienne': presumably Douce's executors forwarded it later than the other MSS.

"Now MS. Douce d. 6."

To the description of Mr. Madan should be added the following: There are thirty-nine lines in each column ruled with a plummet. The paragraph initials are blue and red alternating. The initials of each verse are separated from the following letters by one space which is marked by perpendicular ruling. Some of the capitals are only larger forms of the miniscules. The colored initials are plain, and are without adorning tracery or ornamentation. The initials beginning the verses have a red line through them. The ink is dull brown with a slightly reddish tinge. The ink of the colored initials is still bright.

The poem which is treated in this dissertation occupies folios 12^v, column 3, to 19^v, column 1, line 20, after which immediately follows 'Hic incipit,' etc.

¹ After the last page of the manuscript.

Following page nineteen are several pages filled with notes in the handwriting of Mr. Douce. These are bound in with the manuscript. The pages of the manuscript have been numbered, and the numbering continues on the pages containing Mr. Douce's notes.

The notes are as follows :¹ "See Mr. Scott's *Tristan* XCIII, 203. This MS. may have possibly formed part of an album belonging to some monastery ; because it contains, besides the two poems on *Tristan de Leonnais*, a long metrical dialogue between pride and humility, and a prose disputation on the cross. Mons. de Trepan who had abridged this romance, asserts that no *metrical romance* exists on this subject. It is evident that he is not quite correct in this assertion, but Mr. Douce's MS. contains, perhaps, the only remnant of the labours of the minstrels on this popular history. It is very doubtful whether the MS. even when entire, contained the whole story of *Tristan*, because it is not likely that its proprietors should have thought it worth while to transcribe the adventure which occupies the second poem after having written so circumstantial an account of his hero's death, if the same story had been told in other words. It may therefore be conjectured that he had at first procured only the concluding part of the romance, and, that having afterwards recovered one of the former cantos, he proceeded to copy it on the same page which contained the termination of the story.

"There is some reason to believe that the two parts were composed by different hands, because the orthography is different, and so is, I think, the style ; that of the second being concise and lively, while that of the former is diffuse and languid, besides which, the residence of King Mark is placed in London in the first poem, and in the second at the castle of Tintagel.

"Having carefully compared the language of both with that of the *fabliaux* published by Barbazon, I cannot believe them to be much more modern than those compositions, because the grammatical construction is at least equally simple, and many of the words appear to be even nearer to the original Latin, the parent

¹ These notes are partial copies of remarks in Walter Scott's *Sir Tristrem*, but are not in the phraseology of the edition of 1804. See my copy of Scott's remarks in the chapter on the Douce Manuscript in *Literature*, page 10.