

**REMAINS HISTORICAL &  
LITERARY CONNECTED WITH THE  
PALATINE COUNTIES OF  
LANCASTER AND CHESTER, VOL.  
XV**

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## INTRODUCTION.

A Society, established for the publication of historical and literary remains connected with the Palatine counties of Lancaster and Chester, could not fail to direct their early attention to the history of a person so illustrious by her birth, so reputed for the sanctity of her life, so memorable for her imputed miracles, and whose name is familiar to every inhabitant of these palatine counties as the patroness saint of the cathedral of the diocese. Amongst the earliest notices issued by the Society was an announcement of their intention to publish a reprint of Henry Bradshaw's *Life and History of St. Werburgh* from the very rare quarto of 1521, printed by Pynson. That intention is now fulfilled by the present volume, containing the poem of which "Harry Braddeshaa, of Chestre Abbay, monke," is partly author, partly translator.

In the "prologe of the translatur," as he calls himself, he says, p. 4.

I purpose to wryte a legende good and true  
And translate a lyfe into Englysshe doubles;

and at p. 26 gives an account of the work, which he purposes to translate.

For as declareth, the true Passyonary  
A boke wherin, her holy lyfe wryten is  
Whiche boke remayneth, in Chester monastery

I purpose by helpe of Jhesu kyng of blys  
 In any wyse to reherse, any sentence anys  
 But folowe the legende, and true hystory  
 After an humble style, and from it lytell vary.

These variations, be they "lytell" or much, seem to be founded upon histories and chronicles, which have been published, and are accessible to all who choose to trace the authorities for some of these legendary notices.

Unto this rude werke, myne auctours these shalbe  
 Fyrst the true legende, and the venerable Bede  
 Mayster Alfrydus, and Wyllyam Malysburye  
 Gyarde Polycronycon, and other mo in deed. p. 5.

The "true legende" is doubtless the "true Passyonary" mentioned above, which is afterwards called the "thrid Passyonary;"

And as the history, of her lyfe doth expresse  
 In a boke nominat, the thrid passyonary; p. 120.

which also seems to have contained an account of more miracles than the translator was perhaps quite prepared to believe, or at least did not deem it quite expedient to publish at this time.

To expresse all myracles, written in the place  
 In a boke nominate, the thrid passyonarye  
 It wolde require, a longe tyme and space  
 To the reders tedious, (nomervayle sothly)  
 Where we omytte, to writte of them specially  
 But touched in generall, unto your audience. p. 197.

The poem is preceded by a "Prologe in honour and laude

of Sainte Werburge and to the prayse of the translatur by J. T.," whose name and profession we have been as little able to ascertain as was Herbert, when he first noticed this work.

Of the main body of the poem then Bradshaw must be considered as a translator from a work,\* in the Latin language, then remaining in the library of Chester monastery, called the true or third Passionary, inserting such additional matter as he was pleased to extract from the various chronicles which he mentions. He was however not merely a translator, but an author, for the "Prologes" to the first and second books, pp. 1 and 134, "A litell orison or prayer to the blessed virgine Saynte Werburge," p. 205, and the "breve conclusion," p. 207, are certainly original compositions of Bradshaw himself, and it is not improbable that he was also author of chapters 21 and 22, in the second book, being "A breve rehersall of the myracles of Saynt Werburge after her translacion to Chestre," and "A charitable

\* The author of the original work here translated is not known, nor was Bradshaw himself acquainted with his name, for in "a Balade to the auctour," published with the translation the very year in which it was concluded, is mentioned (p. 210) that "uncertayne was his name."

Warton observes "a great translator of the lives of the Saxon Saints from the Saxon, in which language only they were then extant, into Latin, was Goscelinus, a monk of St. Austin at Canterbury, who passed from France into England about 1058. Among the rest were the lives of St. Werburgh, St. Ethelred and St. Sexburgh, most probably the legends which were Bradshaw's originals." This conjecture can scarcely be reconciled to the above assertion with regard to the original author, that "uncertayne was his name."



mocion and desyre to all the inhabytauntes within the Countie Palatine of Chestre for the monasterie."

The poem is written in stanzas of seven lines each, of which the first and third, the second, fourth and fifth, and the sixth and seventh, rhyme with each other. To this arrangement there are a few exceptions; at p. 153 is a stanza of eight lines, of which the first and third, the second, fourth, fifth and seventh, the sixth and eighth, rhyme with each other. At pp. 115, 116, 126, are three stanzas similarly arranged, in which three cases however the last line is Latin. Chapters 21, 22 and 23, and two balades at pp. 211 and 212 are all written in similar stanzas of eight lines.

Throughout the poem, in order to produce, in reading, anything of rythmical intonation, the accent must be laid strongly upon the very last syllable of the line, even in cases where, according to the modern mode of pronunciation, the last syllable is as little dwelt upon as possible. Every stanza affords instances of this intonation, and it is scarcely necessary to refer to any particular passages, but in p. 125, the following illustrations may be observed,—gostly and remedy, parte and trinite, odour, savour, hour; body, clergy, verily, &c. &c.

The Latin language was probably very familiar to our author, for the reader can scarcely fail to be struck with the frequent introduction of quaint Latinisms. At p. 150 we find "With grace circumfulced and lyghtned was England." In the same page he talks of faith enduring "without recidivation," and in p. 152, of faith being "remanent;" we find "promyttynge," p. 163, 166; "facundious," p. 209,

210 ; "desydery," 56, and several others may be discovered by consulting the glossary. The greater number of these words it will be perceived were derived directly from the Latin, but not unfrequently, as is most usual in writers of that age, the Latinisms appear to have been introduced under the influence of the French language upon our own, rather than directly from the Latin. At p. 153, he speaks of St. Alban's monastery being edified, from *edifyer* ; p. 115, of this life being *caduce* ; p. 137, of the abbey of Chester envired with walles ; baptism is written *baptym*, *baptime* ; convent, *covent* ; sautynges, from *assaut* ; and dygne of dutye, from *digne*. The termination of the past tense, derived from the Latin participle, is of almost universal occurrence, as *maculate*, *preparate*, *coronate*, *nominat*, *tumulate*, &c. &c.

At pp. 147, 158 and 179 are quotations from Henry of Huntingdon, which contain some errors ; it is as well therefore to reprint them here from Savile's edition of that author.

p. 147.

Nobilitas innata tibi probitatis honorem \*  
 Armipotens Alfrede dedit, probitasque laborem,  
 Perpetuamque labor nomen, cui mixta dolori  
 Gaudia semper erant ; spes semper mixta timori.  
 Si modo victor eras, ad crastina bella pavebas.  
 Si modo victus eras, ad crastina bella parabas.

Jam post transactos vite regnique dolores  
 Christus ei sit vera quies, sceptrumque perenne.

*Henrici Huntingdoniensis, Hist. lib. v.*

p. 158.

O Effleda potens, O terror virgo virorum  
 Victrix nature, nomine digna viri.  
 Tu quo splendidior fieres, natura puellam,  
 Te probitas fecit nomen habere viri  
 Te mutare decet sed solam, nomina sexus,  
 Tu regina potens, rexque trophæa parans.  
 Jam nec Cæsarei tantum meruere triumphi  
 Cæsare splendidior virgo virago vale. *Ibid.*

p. 179.

Auctor opum, vindex scelerum, largitor honorum,  
 Sceptryger Edgarus regna superna petit.  
 Hic alter Salomon, legum pater, orbita pacis;  
 Quod caruit bellis claruit inde magis.  
 Tempia Deo, templis monachos, monachis dedit agros  
 Nequitix lapsum, justitiæque locum. *Ibid.*

In the quotation from William of Malmsbury, p. 176, in the last line, for "a" read "de."

The first book of this poem contains an account of the descent of St. Werburge from four royal families, her character, the history of her life and those of some of her more immediate relations; it also relates the principal circumstances of her death and subsequent removal and condition of her body. The second book is chiefly devoted to the circumstances which connected her with the city of Chester, of which she was considered the patron saint. The author at p. 4 calls her prioress and lady of the Abbey of Chester: but she was never so, except under the general appointment of Ethelred, who made her (p. 85)