

**CHRONICON
ANGLIAE
PETRIBURGENSE**

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Chronicon Angliae Petriburgense by J. A. Giles

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J. A. GILES

**CHRONICON
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PETRIBURGENSE**

CHRONICON ANGLIÆ

PETRIBURGENSE.

ITERUM POST SPARKIUM CUM COD. MS⁷⁰ CONTULIT

J. A. Giles
J. A. GILES, LL.D.,

ECCLESIE ANGLICANÆ PRESBYTER,

ET COLL. COR. CHRISTI OXON. NUPER SOCIUS.

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DEDICATIO.

VIRO reverendo Georgio Butler, S.T.P., Decano Petriburgensis Ecclesiæ, et ceteris fratribus suis capituli ejusdem Ecclesiæ, Chronicon hoc Angliæ a monacho quodam Petriburgensi quingentis abhinc annis conscriptum, cum salute et devoto ad omnia obsequio, dedicat editor et humilis eorum consecrator Johannes Allen Giles, Anno Dominicæ Incarnationis MDCCCXLIV. Indictione II.

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P R E F A C E.

THE study of History seems almost innate in the human mind: it is the most extensive branch of human knowledge, and no other is equally important to the true interests of our species. Whilst other men are busied within the narrow limits which bound their daily existence, the historian and the antiquary alone break through the trammels both of space and of time. Our great moral writer, Dr. Johnson, avowed that he little envied the man who could find himself standing at Marathon or Iona, without deriving an impulse to his feelings from the patriots who fought at the one, or the learning which flourished at the other.

The history of one's own country will always be of the greatest interest to every liberal mind; and of all nations none is more abundantly supplied with records of the past than England. The great Cathedral, Conventual and Collegiate establishments, with which our island was studded, were so many conservatories in which every kind of learning was cultivated. Every monastery had its historiographer, whose duty it was to record both the public events of the day, and the private mat-

ters connected with the monastery. Such an historiographer was William of Malmesbury, also Matthew Paris, Matthew of Westminster, Wendover, Rishanger, and others without number, who either by their own hands or by their secretaries, rendered to their contemporaries the same services which are now discharged by the most eminent of our book-printers, and this in addition to the higher duties of author or editor. It is to the monasteries that we owe the preservation of all learning; for learning was in those days inseparable from the Church; and as regards the history of our own country, those who have never seen the interior of our public libraries, would look with astonishment at the immense masses of manuscripts which are there contained. Almost every monastery, out of the hundreds which once covered the land, has left at least one chronicle or register of public events; and though in many cases the authors of these seem to have had before them certain common authorities to guide them in compiling their own more condensed narratives, yet the different views which would present themselves to writers acting under circumstances of time, place, and party feelings entirely different, would no doubt give a character to each of these narratives which would render it worthy to be studied and preserved. Another use moreover is derived from the number of chro-

nicles which have come down to us, in the greater accuracy with which the chronology of our early history may be ascertained. On this point it is not too much to say that all our histories are extremely defective, and it will be impossible to compose a work having for its object the settlement of many errors in British chronology, until a much larger number of our chronicles and early records have been printed. The tediousness of consulting documents which exist only in manuscript is so great as to amount almost to a prohibition.

Among the manuscripts forming the Cotton collection in the British Museum is a book written on vellum of a size between 8vo. and 4to. [Claud A.V.] containing about two hundred leaves, of which the first part, containing about forty leaves, was not written before the year 1368: for it contains a work entitled *Chronicon Angliæ*, which beginning with the year of our Lord 654, records events that happened so late as the year above mentioned. The rest of the manuscript is of the early part of the thirteenth century. The contents of the whole volume are as follows:

1. *Chronicon Petroburgense a fundatione ejusdem monasterii ab anno Christi 604 ad annum 1368. Continet seriem Abbatum monasterii ejusdem et Priorum Spaldingensis ecclesie in comitatu Lincolnensi per Johannem Abbatem Burgi Sancti Petri.*