

**THE PUBLICATION OF THE SURTEES
SOCIETY, ESTABLISHED IN THE
YEAR M.DCCC.XXXIV: RITUALE
ECCLESIAE DUNELMENSIS; NUNC
PRIMUM TYPIS MANDATUM**

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CATHOLIC CHURCH

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THE
PUBLICATIONS
OF THE
SURTEES SOCIETY

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ESTABLISHED IN THE YEAR

M.DCCC.XXXIV.



M.DCCC.XL.

RITUALE
ECCLESIAE
DUNELMENSIS.

NUNC PRIMUM TYPIS MANDATUM.

LONDON:
J. B. NICHOLS AND SON, PARLIAMENT STREET;
WILLIAM PICKERING, CHANCERY LANE.
EDINBURGH:
LAING AND FORBES,

At a meeting of the COUNCIL of the SURTEES SOCIETY,
on the seventh day of January 1839, it was

RESOLVED,—That the Anglo-Saxon Ritual belonging to the
Dean and Chapter of Durham be printed under the super-
intendence of Mr. Stevenson.

JAMES RAINE, *Secretary.*

P R E F A C E.

The Anglo-Saxon Ritual, its importance, § 1, 2; its defective condition, § 3; description of the Durham manuscript, § 4; called 'the Ritual of King Alfrid,' § 5; how far probable, § 6; its deficiencies, § 7; its errors, § 8; its interlinear Saxon Gloss, § 9.

§ 1. THE volume now presented to the public contains, as its title states, the Anglo-Saxon Ritual belonging to the Cathedral Church of Durham.

This work, from the institution of the Society through whose instrumentality it is now printed, was naturally regarded by its members as having many claims upon their peculiar attention. The religious services of the ancient kingdom of Northumbria, the most cultivated, because the most learned of the states into which Saxon England was divided, are to be understood from it alone; the philologist is assisted in his investigation into the nature of the language spoken by the natives of that district by examining its interlinear gloss; and through it some insight may be gained respecting superstitions which lingered, when it was written, amongst a people as yet scarcely converted from the adoration of Thor and of Woden.

§ 2. But the interest attached to the volume is by no means of an exclusively local nature. No inquiry into the character of the Ritual adopted by the Saxon church can be decided without examining the component parts and general tendency of the present work; and the state of the Christian world generally may be illustrated from

its pages. Exhibiting the language of Northumbria in an earlier and purer stage than it is to be found in by far the greater number of specimens which have come down to us, it throws considerable light upon the other Anglo-Saxon dialects, and contributes in no unimportant degree to elucidate the history and progress of the Teutonic languages generally.

§ 3. Possessing so many claims upon our attention, it is much to be regretted that the manuscript from which the work is here printed is not only imperfect but incorrect. Several portions have been lost since the Durham copy was transcribed, and others have become so defaced by time, by constant use, and by damp, as to be now illegible; while the text which does remain is so incorrectly written as in many passages to be unintelligible. Nor do the defects and errors here mentioned admit of an easy remedy, for, although many of the component parts are exactly similar to the corresponding passages in the Sacramentary of Pope Gregory the Great,¹ no other copy of the work, as a whole, is known to be in existence.

§ 4. The manuscript² from which the present work is printed is a small folio, measuring six and a half inches in height by four and a quarter in breadth, written upon eighty-eight leaves of parchment of the thick quality usually employed by the Anglo-Saxon scribes. The lines, of which there are twenty-three in a full page, are marked with a style; the initial letters are sometimes red, some-

¹ "Divi Gregorii Papæ, hujus nominis primi, cognomento Magni, liber Sacramentorum, nunc demum correctior et locupletior editus ex missali MS. Sancti Eligii Bibliothecæ Corbeiensis, notis et obser-

vationibus illustratus, opera et studio Fr. Hugonis Menard, monachi congregationis S. Benedicti, alias Cluniacensis, et S. Mauri."—*Paris*. 1642, 4to. ² Marked in the Collection, A. iv. 19.

times black, and sometimes, especially when more elaborately finished, a black outline filled up and heightened with a red pigment, into the composition of which lead seems to have entered largely. Many of these initial letters represent the heads of birds, snakes, and other animals, intertwined in the intricate manner which appears so frequently upon the sculpture as well as in the manuscripts of our Anglo-Saxon ancestors. The appearance of the writing, without being so beautiful as that of the Durham Gospels (Cott. MS. Nero, D iv.), or the Psalter of the same school of penmanship (Vespas. A 1.), is respectable; and the interlinear gloss bears a striking resemblance to those found in the two manuscripts which we have just now mentioned.

§ 5. It is not easy to decide when this manuscript was transcribed. Tradition calls it 'the Ritual of King Alfrid;' thereby alluding, we are told, to the individual of that name who succeeded his brother Egfrid in A.D. 685.¹ If by this it be meant that the present copy was transcribed from one which had belonged to that monarch, such may perhaps be the truth;² but if it be intended hereby to affirm that this identical volume had once belonged to King Alfrid, the story, like many others of

¹ Beda speaks of him in terms of high commendation. 'Successit autem Egfrido in regnum Alfrid, vir in Scripturis doctissimus, qui frater ejus et filius Osuii regis esse dicebatur; destructumque regni statum, quamvis intra fines angustiores, nobiliter recuperavit.'—H. E. iv. 26, § 341. Again, in the Life of St. Cuthbert, cap. xxiv. the same author writes, 'Intellexit ergo, quia de Aldfrido diceret, qui

ferebatur filius fuisse patris illius, et tunc in insulis Scottorum ob studium literarum exsulabat.' He died in 705, H. E. v. xviii.

² Since Aldfrid was educated by the monks of Iona, and embraced those views which distinguished that society from the emissaries of Gregory, it is probable that the Ritual which he would adopt would be that of Britain, not Rome.

the same kind, is rendered more than dubious by internal evidence, for the appearance of the character in which it is written prevents it from claiming a higher antiquity than the commencement of the ninth century.

¶ 6. The only internal evidence which it contains is not sufficiently definite to settle the question, either in favour of, or against, its Northumbrian origin. Upon a leaf from which the earlier writing has been erased, a later hand has entered four 'collectæ,' in which the writer prays to God through the merits and intercession of St. Cuthbert (p. 185). Appended to these is a contemporary, and apparently autograph memorandum, recording that 'Aldred the provost wrote these four collects before "undern," near South Woodgate, at Aclea in Wessex, upon the festival of St. Lawrence, upon a Wednesday, when the moon was five days old, for [the use of] Ælfsig, the bishop, in his tent.' There seems every reason to believe that Ælfsig, the last bishop of Chester-le-Street, who filled that see from A.D. 968 to 990, is the personage here mentioned, although there was a bishop of Winchester of the same name from 951 to 958. But we have no means of accounting, with any degree of certainty, for the journey of the bishop to Aclea in Wessex,¹ and must therefore be satisfied to leave the matter in the same degree of obscurity in which we find it.²

¹ Several ecclesiastical councils were held at Aclea, but at an earlier period. Could it be shown that a meeting of a similar nature was summoned during the pontificate of this bishop of Chester-le-Street, we should then have a satis-

factory explanation of his journey into Wessex.

² Since we can trace it in the custody of the fraternity which ultimately settled at Durham during the bishopricks of Ælfsig and Aldhun, (p. 143, an entry scrawl-