

**DOMESDAY  
COMMEMORATION  
, 1886**

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Domesday Commemoration, 1886 by Various

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**VARIOUS**

**DOMESDAY  
COMMÉMORATION  
, 1886**





*11* Domesday Commemoration  
1886 *11*

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NOTES ON THE MANUSCRIPTS &c.  
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ISSUED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE  
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## Domesday Book.

THIS remarkable record, the oldest and most valuable survey among the national archives, was formerly kept by the side of the Tally Court, in the Receipt of the Exchequer, under three locks and keys, in charge of the Auditor, the Chamberlains, and Deputy-Chamberlains of the Exchequer, till, in 1696, it was deposited with the other records in the Chapter House at Westminster. In 1859 it was transferred to the Public Record Office.

Domesday Book consists of two volumes, of different sizes and appearance. The first, in folio, contains the counties of Bedford, Berks, Bucks, Cambridge, Chester and Lancaster, Cornwall, Derby, Devon, Dorset, Gloucester, Hants, Hereford, Herts, Huntingdon, Kent, Leicester and Rutland, Lincoln, Middlesex, Northampton, Nottingham, Oxford, Salop, Somerset, Stafford, Surrey, Sussex, Warwick, Wilts, Worcester, and York. The second volume, in quarto, contains the counties of Essex, Norfolk, and Suffolk.

The larger volume contains 382 leaves of parchment, with five old fly-leaves at the beginning and four at the end. The leaves measure 14½ in. by 9¾ in., and are mostly in quaternions of eight leaves, though this is not invariable. The rubbed and worn look of the first and last leaves of the portion for each county appears to indicate that these portions were kept separate for some time before being bound together

in one volume. All the counties, however, do not begin a separate sheet, Cheshire being an instance to the contrary. There are three pages smaller than the rest (ff. 42, 76, 81). These are pieces of parchment added to complete a portion which could not be got into the space allotted for it. One is a scrap cut off a page already ruled, and used with the lines vertical. Another (f. 81) has been inserted in the wrong place, and should be between ff. 82 and 83. Lines are ruled on the pages with a dry point, and on the margin may be seen the small holes made by the 'runner' used as a guide for the ruler. The number of lines varies from 50 to 59, but the writing does not always keep to them, so that the lines of writing sometimes exceed in number the lines ruled, no doubt to rectify a miscalculation of the space allotted for the entries. *See* ff. 72 *b*, 154.

The page is divided into two columns, and perpendicular lines are ruled to mark the margins and central space, which are not always accurately observed. Blank pages, such as folio 126, distinctly show the method of ruling.

The writing is very clear, the letters being all distinctly and separately formed; and any difficulty which is experienced in reading the book, arises only from the abbreviations, the same mark of contraction being often used to represent widely different syllables.

There is no ornament, but the name of the county is written at the head of each page, in red, and a dash of the same colour is used to heighten capital letters.

The names of places are also emphasized by a red line running through the middle of the letters.

In several places there are omissions and additions in the side and bottom margins, the passages to which they refer being indicated by marks (ff. 45 *b*, 60, 61, 61 *b*, 98 *b*, 102, 103, 106 *b*, 165 *b*, 166 *b*, 238 *b*, 282 *b*, 289, etc.) and there are some erasures and alterations (ff. 63 *b*, 67, 91).



Some of the marginal notes—as at ff. 48, 48 *b*, 72 col. 2, 74, 102—appear to be subsequent additions.

The same scribe was not employed throughout, Derbyshire and Yorkshire and the 'Feodum Rotberti de Bruis' (f. 332 *b*), being noticeably in a different handwriting. At the County of Lincoln, however, the original hand recurs.

The fly-leaves contain memoranda of various kinds and dates, made by officers of the Exchequer, and an extent of lands and an inquisition, both original documents of the thirteenth century, have been inlaid in one leaf.

Vol. II. is of a smaller size, the leaves being 10½ in. by 6½ in. The parchment is mostly of a coarser character, and the writing, which is by several hands and more cursive, is generally larger than that of Vol. I. The lines are marked in the same way, but are farther apart, the number in a page varying from 20 to 28, except in the case of two leaves (229 and 230) inserted in the middle of 'Norfolk,' which have 40 lines. The point used for ruling has sometimes cut through the parchment. There is no division into columns. The varying quality of the parchment, and the frequent changes of handwriting, suggest that the volume is composed by binding together a quantity of separately prepared returns, rather than by transcribing them. The red colour employed is of a different kind to that in Vol. I., and is much more sparingly used. There are one or two clumsy attempts at ornamented capitals, but of no artistic value.

The survey was probably commenced late in 1085, and completed in 1086, according to the colophon in the second volume :

'Anno millesimo octogesimo sexto ab incarnatione Domini vicesimo vero regni Willelmi facta est ista descriptio non solum per hos tres comitatus sed etiam per alios.'

'On any hypothesis,' says Eyton, 'as to the time taken by the different processes which resulted in Domesday Book,

the whole, that is the survey, the transcription, and the codification, were completed in less than eight months, and three of the eight were winter months. No such miracle of clerkly and executive capacity has been worked in England since.' The Commissioners appointed to make the survey were to inquire the name of each place; who held it in the time of King Edward the Confessor; the present possessor; how many hides were in the manor; how many ploughs were in the demesne; how many homagers; how many villeins; how many cottars; how many serving men; how many free tenants; how many tenants in soccage; how much wood, meadow, and pasture; the number of mills and fish-ponds; what had been added to or taken away from the place, and how much each free man or soc-man had. All this was to be triply estimated: First, as the estate was held in the time of the Confessor; then, as it was bestowed by King William; thirdly, as its value stood at the formation of the survey; and it was to be stated whether any increase could be made in the value.

The inquiries having been taken, were sent to Winchester, and were there methodized and enrolled in the form we now see them.

For some reason left unexplained, many parts were not surveyed. Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmoreland, and Durham are not described in the survey; nor does Lancashire appear under its proper name; but Furness, and the northern part of Lancashire, as well as the south of Westmoreland, with a part of Cumberland, are included within the West Riding of Yorkshire. That part of Lancashire which lies between the Ribble and Mersey, and which at the time of the survey comprehended six hundreds and one hundred and eighty-eight manors, is joined to Cheshire. Part of Rutland is described in the counties of Northampton and Lincoln.

The printed edition of 'Domesday' was commenced in 1773, and was completed early in 1783. (See THE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF DOMESDAY BOOK, in course of preparation by the Committee.)

### The old + Domesday + Covers.

These are the covers in which 'Domesday' was bound when it was deposited at the Chapter House, Westminster. The foundation is of wood, apparently of considerable antiquity; but the metal work does not appear to be earlier than the seventeenth century. In that depository russia leather covers were substituted for these old ones. After their transfer to the Public Record Office the two volumes had to be taken to pieces for the purposes of the facsimile reproduction of the text by photo-zincography; and, on their return from Southampton, they were placed in the present bindings. The work was carried out by Rivière in 1869.

In Devon's 'Issues of the Exchequer,' under date Michaelmas, 14 Edward III. (A.D. 1320), appears the following entry relating to the binding of the smaller book: 'To William, the bookbinder, of London, for binding and newly repairing the Book of Domesday, in which is contained the counties of Essex, Norfolk, and Suffolk, and for his stipend, costs, and labour; received the money the 5th day of December, by his own hands—3*s.* 4*d.*' Possibly this entry refers to the wooden cover of the smaller volume, which was, as already stated, removed at the Chapter House.