

**THE LEGENDS OF SS. NINIAN AND
MACHOR FROM THE UNIQUE
MS. IN THE SCOTTISH DIALECT OF
THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649086726

The Legends of SS. Ninian and Machor from the unique ms. in the Scottish dialect of the fourteenth century by W.M. Metcalfe

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W.M. METCALFE

**THE LEGENDS OF SS. NINIAN AND
MACHOR FROM THE UNIQUE
MS. IN THE SCOTTISH DIALECT OF
THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY**

The Legends
of
SS. Ninian and Machor

*From an Unique MS. in the Scottish
Dialect of the Fourteenth Century*

Edited, with Introduction, Notes, & Glossary

By

W. M. Metcalfe, D.D.

PAISLEY: ALEXANDER GARDNER

Publisher by Appointment to the late Queen Victoria

1904



JAN - 3 1936
8335

LONDON:
SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, HAMILTON, KENT & CO., LMD.

PRINTED BY ALEXANDER GARDNER FAISLEY.

PREFACE.

SOME years ago I edited for the Scottish Text Society the entire series of Legends to which the two here printed belong. I have chosen these for separate editing because, in the first place, I agree with Dr. Horstmann that they are the two best legends in the series, and, in the second, because they are the only two out of the fifty Legends that make up the series that deal with Scottish Saints.

Like other Legends of the Saints, they are valuable not only because of the language in which they are told, but also because of the insight they afford into the manners and customs of the past and of the hints they furnish respecting the moral and intellectual atmosphere prevailing among those for whom they were written and by whom they were listened to and read.

The Introduction was written and printed off some time ago. Had I to write it now, I might modify one or two of the phrases, but I do not think I should make any substantial alteration upon anything I have said.

Since the Introduction was written an accident has compelled me to go over the two Legends again and to examine again the arguments advanced by Dr. Neilson for the Barbour authorship of the Legends. Further study has only convinced me more thoroughly of the untenableness of that theory and of the correctness of

the suggestions I threw out, that Barbour had nothing to do with the authorship of the Legends, and that they were written by various unknown hands.

In the following pages I have dealt more freely with the text than I felt myself at liberty to deal with it when editing the whole of the Legendary. My object then was to depart as little as possible from the MS. Here my endeavour has been to give a readable text, but, owing to the corrupt state of the text in the MS., in one or two places I have failed.

With these exceptions, I have given in the Notes what I believe may be regarded as at least defensible explanations of all the difficult places.

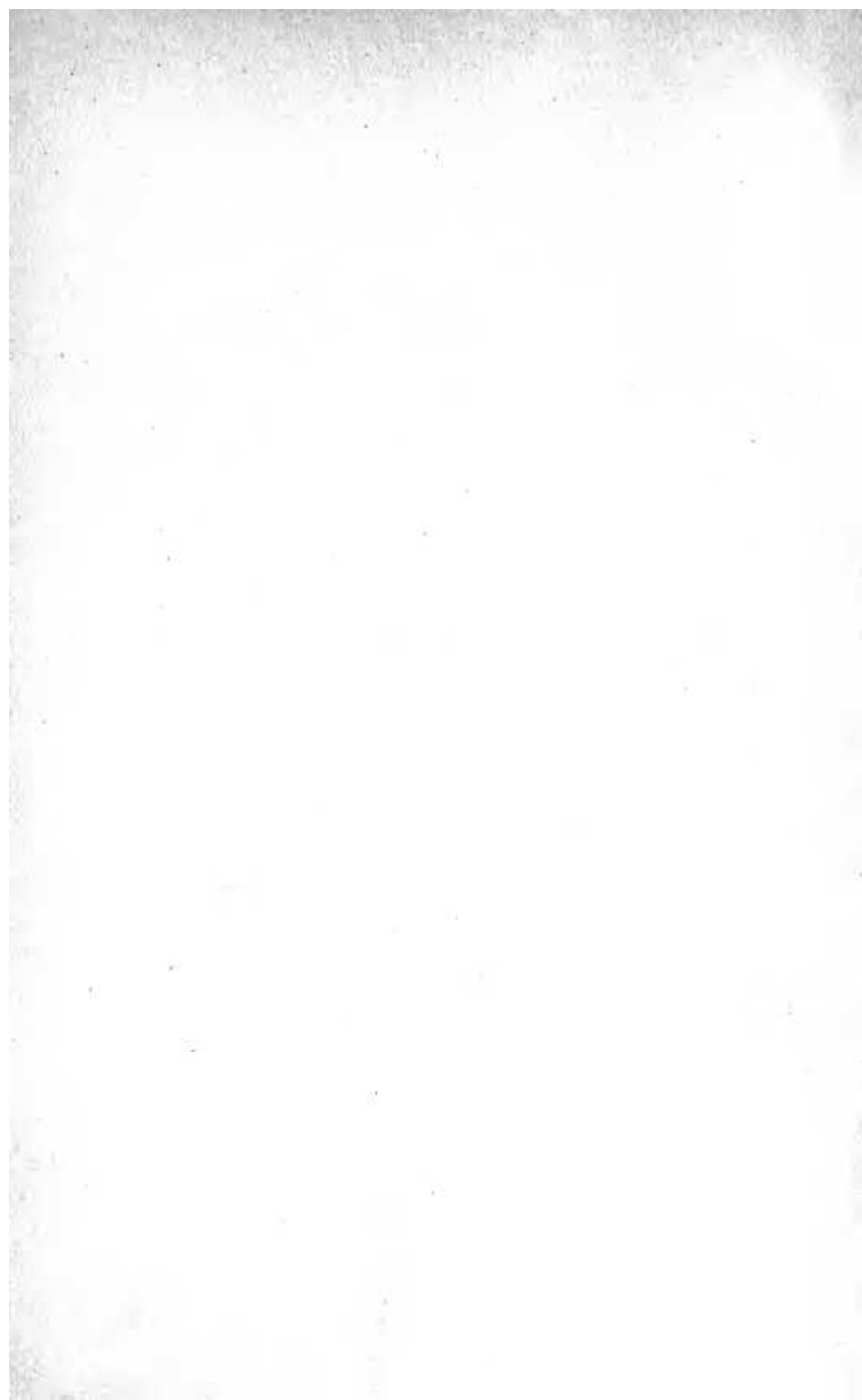
Owing to the accident referred to above, I have had to re-write the Glossary. It does not profess to be a complete index, but it is full enough, I hope, to be of use to lexicographers, as well as to the reader.

The issue of this volume will, I trust, contribute to the revival of the study of the old Scots literature, which scarcely deserves the neglect with which it is at present treated in our Schools and Universities.

W. M. M.

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INTRODUCTION.

I.—THE MANUSCRIPT.

THE two Scottish legends which are here printed are taken from a MS. in the University Library, Cambridge, where it bears the press-mark Gg II., 6. Apparently it is unique, no other manuscript copy of the legends it contains being known, with the exception of a transcript made some years ago and afterwards revised and corrected by Mr. Rogers of the University Library, Cambridge, for the use of the Scottish Text Society.

The history of the MS. down to the beginning of the eighteenth century is unknown. It was then, however, in the possession of Dr. John Moore, who died Bishop of Ely, July 31, 1714. Where he obtained it is not known; but when, in 1715, his library was purchased by George I. for 6000 guineas, the MS. along with his other MSS. and books, was presented by the King to the library of the University of Cambridge. There it remained unknown for many years, until it was discovered by Mr. Henry Bradshaw, late librarian to the University, who was in the habit of showing it to his friends, and first made public mention of it in the year 1866,* the year in which he discovered the Troy Book, which along with the

* Cambridge Antiquarian Society, Rep. 1866, pp. 111, *et seq.*