

**HISTORY OF THE HOLY ROOD-TREE: A
TWELFTH CENTURY VERSION OF THE
CROSS LEGEND,
WITH NOTES ON THE ORTHOGRAPHY OF
THE ORMULUM AND A MIDDLE ENGLISH
COMPASSIO MARIAE**

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History of the Holy Rood-Tree: A Twelfth Century Version of the Cross Legend, with Notes on the Orthography of the Ormulum and a Middle English Compassio Mariae by Arthur S. Napier

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ARTHUR S. NAPIER

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ERRATA

- Page xlvi, line 30. For *beed* read *been*
- „ lvii, line 32. After *tengles insert* and *Saxon Chronicle* (*Laud MS.*)
- „ 38, line 42. For *133* read *135*
- „ 79, line 2. For *pat þe were* read *þah þe were*
- „ 79, bottom line but one. For *siche* read *sich*

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History of the Holy Rood-tree,

A TWELFTH CENTURY VERSION OF
THE CROSS-LEGEND,

WITH

Notes on the Orthography of the *Ormulum*
(with a Facsimile)

AND

A Middle English *Compassio Mariae*.

BY

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PREFACE.

THE following very curious version of the Cross-legend is taken from the twelfth-century MS. Bodley 343. As the volume containing the hitherto unprinted homilies from this manuscript—they will be included in my edition of Old English Homilies in preparation for the Early English Text Society—may not appear for some little time, Dr. Furnivall has kindly allowed me to publish this legend separately, as being the only one in the MS. possessing any special interest for the student of medieval literature.

The two Latin versions and the one in Old French prose which will be found in the Appendix, are included on account of their close relationship to the English *Rood-tree History*.

I was also fortunate enough to find the Old French poem, still unpublished, which is the direct source of those portions of the *Cursor Mundi* which deal with the history of the Cross-wood and the Cross from the time of Moses, and I have printed extracts from it on p. 63 ff. A careful comparison of it with the *Cursor Mundi* will, no doubt, help to throw light on the text of the latter.

In the Introduction I have endeavoured to determine the relationship between the *Rood-tree History* and the versions allied to it, and also the relationship of this group to the important group of Cross-legends represented by Meyer's Latin *Legend*.

The *Ormulum* notes and the Middle English *Compassio Marice*, the latter an early specimen of the Cheshire

dialect, have been included at Dr. Furnivall's suggestion. The former appeared, in a somewhat shorter form, in the *Academy* in 1890, and the latter is a translation, slightly added to, of an article published in Germany a year and a half ago.

As, in accordance with Dr. Furnivall's wish, I have accompanied my edition of the *Rood-tree History* with a translation, a glossary was unnecessary. It may, however, be well to call attention here to the following words, as being earlier instances than had hitherto been recorded: *to die* (cf. note to p. 14, l. 25), *hoop* (cf. note to p. 22, l. 9), *root*, p. 4, l. 26, *to egg on* (cf. note on page 71). Compare also the note on the etymology of *gin* on page 72.

In conclusion I wish to acknowledge my obligation to Messrs. Madan and Macray of the Bodleian Library for their help in determining the age of the MS., and to Mr. Bickley of the British Museum, to whose kindness I owe a transcript of the Harleian Latin Prose version. My best thanks are also due to Professor Paul Meyer of Paris, through whose mediation I was enabled to have a copy made of the Old French poem, a portion of which he was good enough to collate himself with the MS.

I wish also to thank my friend, Professor Zupitza, who kindly looked through a part of the proof sheets, and Professor Adolf Tobler, of Berlin, who readily gave me most valuable assistance in preparing the Old French portions for the press.

Many thanks are also due to Professor Suchier, of Halle, who having himself announced his intention of publishing a number of Latin versions of the Cross-legend, including the Harleian and Cambridge versions, and the Judas story, at once very kindly waived his prior claim in my favour.

A. S. NAPIER.

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