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TEXTS PREPARING. GENERAL NOTICES.

The following Texts are preparing for the Original Series of the Early English Text Society:—

- Anglo-Saxon and Latin Rule of St. Benet, ed. Dr. H. Logeman.
 Anglo-Saxon Glosses to Latin Prayers and Hymns, edited by Dr. F. Holthausen.
 An Anglo-Saxon Martyrology, edited from the 4 MSS. by Dr. G. Herzfeld.
 Aelfric's Metrical Lives of Saints, MS. Cott. Jul. E 7, Part IV, ed. Prof. Skeat, Litt.D., LL.D.
 All the Anglo-Saxon Homilies not accessible in English editions, including those of the Vercelli MS., edited by Prof. Napier, M.A., Ph.D.
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 A Parallel-text of the 6 MSS. of the Ancren Riwe, ed. Prof. Dr. E. Kölbing.
 The Siege of Jerusalem, edited from the MSS. by Dr. F. Kopka.
 Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery-Books, edited from the MSS. by Mr. T. Austin. [At Press].
 Early English Verse Lives of Saints, Standard Collection, from the Harl. MS., ed. Dr. C. Horstmann, Supplementary Early English Lives of Saints, ed. Dr. C. Horstmann.
 The Early and Later Festivals, ab. 1400 and 1440 A.D., ed. Dr. C. Horstmann.
 Thomas Robinson's Life and Death of Mary Magdalene, ab. 1620 A.D. [At Press].
 Q. Elizabeth's Translations, from Boethius, &c., edited from the unique MS. by Walford D. Selby. [At Press].
 Early English Deeds and Documents, from unique MSS., ed. Dr. Lorenz Morsbach.
 Merlin, Part IV., containing Preface, Index, and Glossary. Edited by H. B. Wheatley.
 Beowulf, a critical Text, &c., ed. Prof. Zupitza, Ph.D.
 Pilgrimage of the Lyf of Manhode, in the Northern Dialect, ed. S. J. Herrtage, B.A.
 Early English Homilies, 13th century, ed. Rev. Dr. R. Morris.
 The Rule of St. Benet: 5 Texts, Anglo-Saxon, Early English, Caxton, &c., ed. Rev. Dr. R. Morris.
 A Chronicle of England to 1327 A.D., in Northern verse (42,000 lines), ab. 1350 A.D., edited from the unique Göttingen MS. by M. L. Perrin, B.A.

1 March, 1888. With this, go out four Texts: the two of the Original Series for 1887,—
 1. Dr. Horstmann's re-edition of Henry Bradshaw's *Life of St. Werburghe*, A.D. 1521; 2. Dr. Horstmann's edition of the earliest MS. and form of the set of *Saints' Lives*, &c., contained in the Laud MS.; 3. the third and last Text for the Extra Series, 1887, *The Torrent of Portyn-gale*, re-edited by Dr. E. Adam (with Prof. Kölbing's help); 4. the first Text of the Original Series for 1888: Part I, the text and translation of Dr. Holthausen's edition of an early treatise on the *Vices and Virtues* from the Stowe MS. 240, ab. 1200 A.D. The other Original-Series Texts for 1888 will be Mr. Rhodes's re-edition of the Anglo-Saxon Glosses and Latin text of Bede's *Liber Scintillarum*, and Mr. Harsley's edition of Eadwine's early 12th century *Canterbury Psalter*, as to which see below. Both these texts are nearly all in type.

For the Extra Series, 1888, Bullein's *Dialogue on the Fever Pestilence*, 1567, has been for a long while all in type and revised; and it will go out as soon as its Editors, Messrs. A. H. and Mark Bullen, allow. The second book for this year will be a new edition of the first English *Anatomic of the Body of Man*, by Thomas Vicary, Serjeant of the Surgeons, and Chief Surgeon to Henry VIII, Edward VI, Q. Mary, and Q. Elizabeth, five times Master of the Barber-Surgeons' Company, and Chief Surgeon to St. Bartholomew's Hospital after its re-foundation in 1546-7 by Henry VIII. and the City of London. No copy of the first edition of this little book in 1548 is now known; and therefore the unique copy of it, re-issued by the Surgeons of Bartholomew's in 1577, has been reprinted. Diligent efforts have been made to secure all accessible details of Vicary's life in its various aspects—1. 'a meane practiser at Maidstone'; 2. the head Court-Surgeon for over forty years; 3. a member (1527-62) and Master of the Barber-Surgeons' Company; 4. the re-organiser of the recreated Bartholomew's Hospital; and 5. a private citizen. But though fair success has attended the searches under sections 2 and 5, little has been attained under 1; while for 3 and 4, delay is still needful.

Mr. D'Arcy Power has, by the kind leave of Mr. South's widow, lent the Society Mr. South's full extracts from the earliest Minute-Book of the Barber-Surgeons' Company; but the Governors of the Company have refused to allow the printing of any of the extracts, inasmuch as Mr. Sidney Young, a member of the Company, has long been compiling its history from its records, and he does not wish any of these printed before his book is published, which will be some years hence. With regard to Bartholomew's Hospital, Part I of its Records is now printing by two Officers of the Hospital; and till their First Part is out, the Society's book cannot be completed. This will therefore be issued in two Parts, of which the first (all now in type) will contain all Vicary's work, with its many illustrative Documents from the Public Record Office, the Guildhall Records, the Museum MSS., &c., while in Part II will be the Notes, Indexes, and Forewords, with a Life of Vicary. Nearly all the Forewords, save the Bartholomew's section—the old Surgeon's life at the Hospital in 1548-62—are in type. The New Shakspere Society has sold the Early English Text Society the right to print copies of its plates of Edward VI's Coronation Procession through the City of London in 1547, and Norden's Plan of London in 1593; and other illustrations will be given. The Editors are the Director, and his son Mr. Percy Furnivall, a student of St. Bartholomew's Hospital. It is hoped that Part I of the book will be ready in May.

Mr. Alexander J. Ellis has already in type over two hundred pages of Part IV of his great work on *Early English Pronunciation*, dealing with our modern dialects. This will be issued by the Philological and Chaucer Societies jointly with the Early English Text Society; but the date of publication must depend on the progress of the very intricate and laborious work, and the funds of the several Societies. The Part will undoubtedly be finished this year.

— Dr. Aldis Wright many years ago undertook the editing of the MS. Anglo-Saxon Psalters for the Society. As a preliminary, he copied the 12th century (? ab. 1150 A.D.) Trinity MS. of Eadwine's Canterbury Psalter, which has transitional forms like the change of Anglo-Saxon *c* to *ch* (*wyrchende* for A.Sax. *wyrcende*), the weakening of full vowels in the endings, *senfullen* for A.Sax. *synfullan*, &c. Dr. Aldis Wright also made notes of all the other Anglo-Saxon Psalters from the ninth to the twelfth century, and tentatively classified them by the Roman and Gallican versions which they respectively gloss. Meantime Dr. Hy. Sweet edited the oldest MS., the Vespasian, in his *Oldest English Texts* for the Society. The next step should have been to collate six or eight Psalms from all the MSS., and see whether one or (at most) two texts, with collations, would not have sufficed for the whole body. But as Mr. Harsley, to whom Dr. Aldis Wright kindly handed his whole material, wanted one text printed forthwith for his Doctor's Dissertation, leave was given for the late Canterbury Psalter to go to press; and now the text of it is all printed. Dr. Logeman then raised the question of how the other MSS. should be treated; and he was authorised to prepare a Parallel-Text edition of the first ten Psalms from all the MSS., to test whether the best way of printing them would be in one group, or in two—in each case giving parts of all the MSS. on one page—under their respective Roman and Gallican Latin originals. If collation proves that all the MSS. cannot go together on successive pages, there will be two Parallel-Texts, one of the A.Sax. MSS. following the Roman version, and the other, of those glossing the Gallican; but every effort will be made to get the whole into one Parallel-Text. This Text will be an extravagance; but as the Society has not yet committed one in Anglo-Saxon, it will indulge in one now. And every student will rejoice at having the whole Psalter material before him in the most convenient form. Dr. Logeman and Mr. Harsley will be joint editors of the Parallel-Text. The Early English Psalters are all independent versions, and will follow separately in due course.

Through the good offices of Prof. Arber, the books for the Early-English Examinations of the University of London will be chosen from the Society's publications, the Committee having undertaken to supply such books to students at a large reduction in price. The profits from these sales will be applied to the Society's Reprints. The *Ayenbite of Inwyt* is now reprinting under the supervision of its Editor, Dr. Richard Morris. Members are reminded that fresh Subscribers are always wanted, and that the Committee can at any time, on short notice, send to press an additional Thousand Pounds' worth of work.

Our *Jubilee Reprint Fund*, for which Mr. M. T. Culley of Coupland Castle has sent a Letter of Appeal to every Member, has as yet receivd but little support, tho' Mr. Mortimer Harris started it with a cheque for two guineas. Further Donations will be welcome. They should be paid to the Honorary Secretary, Mr. W. A. Dalziel, 67 Victoria Road, Finsbury Park, London, N.

The Subscribers to the Original Series must be prepared for the issue of the whole of the Early English *Lives of Saints*, under the editorship of Dr. Carl Horstmann. The Society cannot leave out any of them, even though some are dull. In many will be found interesting incidental details of our forefathers' social state, and all are worthful for the history of our language. The Lives may be lookt on as the religious romances or story-books of their period.

The Standard Collection of Saints' Lives in the Corpus and Ashmole MSS., the Harleian MS. 2277, &c. will repeat the Laud set, our No. 87, with additions, and in right order. The differences between the foundation MS. (the Laud) and its followers are so great, that, to prevent quite unwieldy collations, Dr. Horstmann decided that the Laud MS. must be printed alone, as the first of the Series of Saints' Lives. The Supplementary Lives from the Vernon and other MSS. will form one or two separate volumes. The Glossary to the whole set, the discussion of the sources, and of the relation of the MSS. to one another, &c., will be put in a final volume.

When the Saints' Lives are complete, Trevisa's englishing of *Bartholomæus de Proprietatibus Rerum*, the mediæval Cyclopædia of Science, &c., will be the Society's next big undertaking. Dr. Holthausen has kindly said that he will probably edit it. Before it goes to press, Prof. Napier of Oxford has been good enough to promise that he will edit for the Society all the unprinted and other Anglo-Saxon Homilies which are not included in Thorpe's edition of Aelfric's prose,¹ Dr. Morris's of the Blickling Homilies, and Prof. Skeat's of Aelfric's Metrical Homilies. Prof. Kölbing has also undertaken for the Society a Parallel-Text of all the six MSS. of the *Ancren Rivwe*, one of the most important foundation-documents of Early English.

For 1889, Dr. Holthausen's Part II, the Introduction, Notes, and Glossary to the Stowe MS. *Vices and Virtues*, will probably be ready in January. What other books will follow, must depend on when any editor of one of the many works in preparation for the Society has a Part or the whole of it ready for issue. Lists of these Works are on the last page of the Cover and the first of this inside quarter-sheet.

In case more texts are ready at any time than can be paid for by the current year's income, they will be dated the next year, and issued in advance to such Members as will pay advance subscriptions. Last year's delay in getting out Texts must not occur again, if it can possibly be avoided.

¹ Of these, Mr. Harsley is preparing a new edition, with collations of all the MSS. Many copies of Thorpe's book, not issued by the Aelfric Society, are still in stock.

Of the Vercelli Homilies, the Society has bought the copy made by Prof. G. Lattanzi.

OTHER SOCIETIES.

Wyclif, founded by Dr. Furnivall in 1882, for the printing of all Wyclif's Latin MSS. *Hon. Sec.*, J. H. Standerwick, General Post Office, London, E.C. One Guinea a year.

Chaucer, founded by Dr. Furnivall in 1868, to print all the best Chaucer MSS., &c. *Editor in Chief*, F. J. Furnivall. *Hon. Sec.*, W. A. Dalziel, 67, Victoria Road, Finsbury Park, N. Subscription, Two Guineas a year.

New Shakspeare, founded by Dr. Furnivall in 1873, to promote the intelligent study of SHAKSPERE, and to print his Works in their original Spelling, with illustrative Treatises. *President*, ROBERT BROWNING. *Director*, F. J. FURNIVALL. *Hon. Sec.*, K. Grahame, 65, Chelsea Gardens, Chelsea Bridge Road, London, S.W. Subscription, One Guinea a year.

Ballad, founded by Dr. Furnivall in 1868, to print all Early English MS. Ballads, and reprint the Roxburghe, Bagford, and other collections of printed Ballads. *Editor in Chief*, The Rev. J. W. Ebsworth, M.A., F.S.A. *Hon. Sec.*, W. A. Dalziel, 67, Victoria Road, London, N. One Guinea a year.

Shelley, founded by Dr. Furnivall in Dec. 1885, to promote the study of Shelley's Works, reprint his original editions, and procure the acting of his *Cenci*. *Chairman of Committee*, W. M. Rossetti. *Hon. Sec.*, T. J. Wise, 127, Devonshire Road, Holloway, London, N. Subscription, One Guinea a year.

Browning, founded by Dr. Furnivall and Miss Hickey in 1881, for the study and discussion of Robert Browning's Works, print Papers on them, illustrations of them, and to procure the performance of the poet's plays. *President*, Dr. Furnivall. *Hon. Sec.*, W. B. Slater, 249, Camden Road, London, N. Subscription, One Guinea a year.

Philological, founded in 1842, to investigate the Structure, Affinities, and the History of Languages. *Hon. Sec.*, F. J. Furnivall, 3, St. George's Sq., Primrose Hill, London, N.W. One Guinea entrance, and one a year. Parts I., II., and III. of the Society's English Dictionary, for which material has been collecting for 30 years, have lately been issued, edited by Dr. J. A. H. Murray, and publish by the Clarendon Press, Oxford. Part IV (nearly ready) will complete vol. i. (A-B), and start vol. ii. (C-D). Mr. Henry Bradley is now joint Editor, and has begun vol. iii with E.

Wagner, to promote the study of his Musical and other works, and the performance of his Operas at Bayreuth. *Hon. Sec.* for England, B. L. Mosley, 55, Tavistock Square, London, W.C. Subscription, Ten Shillings a year.

Shakspeare Quarto Facsimiles, issued under the superintendence of Dr. Furnivall, 10s. 6d. each, or 6s. if the whole series of forty-three is taken, edited by F. J. Furnivall, Prof. Dowden, Mr. P. A. Daniel, Mr. H. A. Evans, Mr. Arthur Symons, Mr. T. Tyler, and other Shakspeare scholars. B. Quaritch, 15, Piccadilly, London, W. (Thirty-five Facsimiles have been published, and eight more will be ready soon. The Series will be completed in 1888.)

The Life of
Saint Werburge of Chester.

BERLIN: ASHER & CO., 5, UNTER DEN LINDEN.
NEW YORK: C. SCRIBNER & CO.; LEYPOLDT & HOLT.
PHILADELPHIA: J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.

The Life of
Saint Weneforde
of Chester,

By HENRY BRADSHAW.

ENGLISHT A.D. 1513, PRINTED BY PYNSON A.D. 1521
AND NOW RE-EDITED

BY

CARL HORSTMANN.



LONDON:
PUBLISHED FOR THE EARLY ENGLISH TEXT SOCIETY
BY N. TRÜBNER & CO., 57 & 59, LUDGATE HILL.

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R. CLAY AND SONS, CHAUCER PRESS, BUNGAY.

INTRODUCTION TO THE
LYFE OF ST. WERBURGE BY HENRY
BRADSHAW.

THE present legend is extant only in an edition by Pynson (London), 1521 (described in Dibdin's *Typogr. Antiq.* II. 491), of which five copies are known to exist¹: one (the copy described by Dibdin as Heber's) in the British Museum, two in the Bodleian, one in the Minster library at York, and one in Mr. Christie Miller's collection (cf. Hawkins). It was carefully reprinted (in the type and shape of Pynson's ed., with all its faults, and without punctuation) for the Chetham Society, 1848, by E. Hawkins, with an introduction. Extracts had been given by Dibdin, and, not always correctly, by Warton (*Hist. of Enjl. Poetry*, II. 371—380).

In Pynson's edition the poem is preceded by a prologue in the honour of St. Werburge by J. T. (whose name neither Herbert nor Hawkins were able to make out). This prologue in an acrostic of the two first stanzas, and in vv. 17, 23, 28, names Henry Bradsha, "sometyme monke in Chester," and servant of St. Werburge, as the author of the English legend. At the end of the book are appended three "balades" by different authors, the first of which, "A Balade to the auctour," written by an (official?) examiner to whom the book was sent for approbation (cf. p. 200, v. 8 ff), mentions that its author, "though vncertayne be

¹ It was mentioned by Maittaire (who in 1741 inserts it in a list of books not before noticed), and in Ames's *Typogr. Ant.* 1749, who must have had a copy before him. However, Heber, *Typog. Ant.*, I. 270, says, that a few years before he wrote, the very existence of the book was questioned; and Dr. Foote Gower, in his Sketch of materials for the history of Chester, 1771, also doubts its existence; cf. Hawkins.

his name,"¹ died in "the present yere of this translation MDXIII"—which implies that the legend was completed that same year (1513), shortly before the author's death; the second ballad, written, as it seems, by a friend of the author, perhaps an inmate of the same abbey, shortly after his death, calls him "Harry Braddeshaa, of Chestre abbay monke" (v. 24), and laments his premature death (v. 27). All these "balades" speak of the author and his work in terms of the highest praise, and testify to the admiration it must have inspired. So, then, Henry Bradsha(w) is the author of the English life of St. Werburge.

Of this poet nothing more is known than what is recorded by Anthonyà Wood, who says (in his *Athene Oxonienses*, 1691, ed. Bliss, 1813, I. col. 18)—"he was born in the auncient town of Westchester, commonly called the city of Chester; and being much addicted to religion and learning, when a youth, was received among the Benedictine monks of St. Werburge's monastery in the said city. Thence at riper years he was sent to Gloucester college in the suburb of Oxon, where, after he had passed his course in theology among the novices of his order, he returned to his cell at St. Werburge, and in his elder years wrote *De antiquitate et magnificentia urbis Chestrie chronicon*, &c., and translated from Latin into English a book which he thus entitled, *The lyffe of the glorious Virgin St. Werburge: Also many miracles that God had shewed for her*, London 1521, 4°. He died in 1513 (5 Henry VIII.), and was buried in his monastery, leaving then behind him other matters to posterity; but the subject of which they treat, I know not" (cf. Hawkins). The date of his death (1513) agrees with that stated in the

¹ There cannot be the least doubt that these words refer to the author of the English legend, not to that of its Latin source, as Hawkins maintains. It seems that the legend had been sent for approbation to the authorities without the author's name, or with his Christian name only, he being a monk. The mistake was caused by the word "author," v. 6, which Hawkins applies to the composer of the Latin source as Bradshaw modestly calls himself a translator only.

“Balade to the author.” He died just upon the completion of his legend (cf. p. 200, v. 20), which does not betray any traces of old age, nay, seems to have been written in his full vigour. This fact, and the expressions used in the second “balade” (p. 201, v. 27), that death had “abbrevged the lyfe of this good clerke,” seem to imply that he died not very old. His premature death would explain why a poet of his talents left no more works from his pen. Besides, he calls “preignaunt Barkley, nowe beyng religious” (who died in 1552), and “inuentiu Skelton, poet laureate” (laureated before 1490, died in 1529), his contemporaries (cf. p. 199, v. 2024). Assuming him to have reached 45—50 years, the date of his birth may be fixed about 1465. Of his Latin work quoted by Wood, *De antiquite et magnificentia urbis Chestrice Chronicon*, nothing is known; it was no doubt preparatory to his *Life of St. Werburge*, and the substance of it was embodied in the legend.¹ “Of the ‘other matters to posterity’ nothing more is positively known to us than to Wood; but Mr. Herbert was in possession of a poem, *The lyfe of St. Radegunde*, also printed by Pynson, of which he says, ‘although the name of the author or translator of this book does not decidedly appear on the face of it, yet on comparing it with the life of St. Werburge, it may readily be perceived that both were penned by the same person, Henry Bradshaw, but hitherto omitted in every list of his works’” —*Typogr. Antiq.* p. 294 (Hawkins). Of this *Lyfe of St. Radegunde*, ed. by Pynson, a unique copy is now in the

¹ Hawkins thinks it not improbable that some fragments dispersed in various MSS. descriptive of Chester may have been extracted from his chronicle. He further remarks: “Mr. Cowper, in his *Summary of the Life of St. Werburge*, quotes more than once the Latin life of this lady by Bradshaw, and these extracts he derives from Leland’s *Collectanea*; but where this collector discovered his original authority does not appear. Mr. Cowper is probably mistaken in ascribing the work to Bradshaw’s own pen; it is much more probable that the extracts are derived from the original chronicle or passionary which Bradshaw translated; for he himself states distinctly that his poem was a translation from a Latin history preserved in his monastery.”

possession of Mr. Miller, Britwell. I have in vain applied to the possessor to be allowed to take a copy of it for the present edition, of which the *Lyffe of St. Radegunde* was to form part, so making up the works of Bradshaw. As I have not seen that book, I cannot say more about it than what I have quoted from Hawkins.

The *Life of St. Werburge* is the work of Bradshaw's life, finished only shortly before his death. This saint was called the Patroness of Chester¹ (II. 1741); she was the patroness of Bradshaw's abbey, where her bones rested. Local saints at that time were the chief glory of their respective places, their "legend" a subject of the deepest local interest; to have their "legend" in Latin, or in the vernacular tongue, was the chief object of local ambition.² Most of the Latin *Vitæ* are due to this local interest. The original Life was often subsequently enlarged by the history of the translation, by additions and appendices containing more recent local miracles. English literature abounds not only in legends, but in local legends in prose and verse, written in the absence of a Latin life, or when that was deemed insufficient, as being intelligible to the clergy alone, or deficient and inadequate in style. Lydgate's *Edmund and Fremund*, and *Albon and Amphabell*, were the standard works of this kind in the preceding century. There were others which combined the legend of the saint with the history of the town or monastery where he rested.³ So Bradshaw undertook to write the life of *his* local saint, a task for which he was eminently qualified, both by inclination, parts, and studies.

¹ When the author calls her prioress and lady of Chester Abbey (I. 99), which she never was, he can only mean it in the sense that King Ethelred made her "lady ruler and president" over all the nunneries in his kingdom; or perhaps he only calls her so because she was enshrined there, and was considered its patroness.

² Bradshaw considers it as a sign of a good reign when "The lyues of sayntes were soth in eche place, And written in legendes for our comfort and grace," II. 1155.

³ So *St. Editha, sive Chronicon Vitodunense* (ed. by me, Heilbronn, 1883).

As his book shows him, he was a man of a childlike, sweet temper, simple, pious, without affectation, warm-hearted, modest, sincere, a friend of the people, to whom he dedicated his work (II. 2016). He had a natural sense of beauty, an innate grace, a deep moral feeling. He was of a religious, poetic, and antiquarian cast. His life was spent in the narrow walls of his monastery, in the stillness of his cell, of his study, far from the tumult of the great world. He was not ambitious, but unregardful of the applause of the great. His interest centred in his native place, in his abbey, in its saint. He knew Latin, and was well versed in Latin literature; he knew of course the Bible; he was well acquainted with the English literature of his time—with Chaucer, Lydgate, Barclay, Skelton;—but his chief delight was the chronicles and histories and legends of old. He had written in Latin a chronicle on the antiquities and magnificence of Chester, and was Chester's best antiquary. So it was that, not feeling so bold as "to descrybe hye hystories," and scorning to write "bawdy balades, to excyte lyght hertes to pleasure and vanyte" (I. 91), he, to avoid idleness and make himself useful, undertook "to wryte a legende good and true, and translate a lyfe into Englysshe, I meane Blessed saynt Werburge, Protectrice of Chester and of the abbay" (I. 92 ff.).

The *Life of St. Werburge* is a legendary epic after the fashion introduced by Lydgate; in two books, with the apparatus of prologues and epilogues (Lenvoye), with episodic ingredients—the lives of the immediate relations of his saint—with frequent descriptions, in the modern style full of "aureate terms," in the stanza used by Lydgate. But it is of a more comprehensive plan than the mere legendary epics of that poet, containing not only the life of his saint, and those of her relations, St. Audry, St. Sexburge, and St. Ermenilde, but connecting it with the history of the city of Chester and its abbey, and grounding the whole on the history of England and Mercia. It is the result of careful studies

of local history, and is of great antiquarian interest, the more valuable as it rests on authorities partly unknown to us. It is written for the people, not for the great, and in a more popular and simple, though less refined style than Lydgate's, in verses rich in alliteration, which remind us, in their rhythm, of the old alliterative long-line still used in the North; thus combining an artistic and popular element. It is not a mere translation, nor an imitation, but shows traces of an original genius, of a truly epic tone, with a native simplicity of feeling which sometimes reminds the reader of Homer.

I here give the contents of the poem.¹

BOOK I.—In a prologue the author treats of the divers dispositions of men² and of his own motive in writing, and mentions his authorities. He then begins with the Anglo-Saxon invasion and the Heptarchy, and gives a description of the kingdom of Mercia. St. Werburge was daughter of Wulfere, King of Mercia, and of St. Ermenilde, daughter of King Ercombert of Kent (whose mother was Emma of France), and of St. Sexburge, who was daughter of King Anna of East Anglia by St. Hereswith of Northumberland (and sister to St. Audry); so that St. Werburge descended from the four chief Saxon kings (besides that of France). (The poet gives a complete and valuable genealogy of all these royal houses, so fertile in saints.)³ Wulfere was second son to Penda, King of Mercia (626—656), and brother to Peada, St. Ethelred (afterwards king, father to King Coelred), St. Merwald (father to Sts. Mildred, Milburge, Milgide, and to Mereuin, by his wife Domneva of Kent), St. Marcell, St. Keneburge, and St. Keneswyde. He succeeded his elder brother Peada, who was slain, after a three years' reign, by his wife Elflède; and chiefly resided near Stone, in Staffordshire. He had, besides St. Werburge, three sons: Sts. Wulfade and Ruffin, who died martyrs, and Kenred, who was king afterwards, and died at Rome in the odour of sanctity. Wulfere was a valiant and politic king, but of a fierce temper. Peada had

¹ Cf. Alban Butler, *Lives of the Fathers, &c.*, London, 1833, 3 Febr., who relies on Braulshaw, but differs in the circumstances of the death of Wulfade and Ruffin. Another summary of the life of St. Werburge, with an historical account of the images carved on her shrine (now the episcopal throne) in the choir of the Cathedral of Chester, was given by W. Cooper, at Chester, 1749.

² The passage reminds of Horace, *Od.* 1. 1.

³ There are some mistakes in the printed text: v. 289, read Domneva instead of Ermenberge (cf. 448); v. 397, the name is Domneva in the Vita. The four holy daughters of King Ermenred: Ermenberge, Ermenburge, Adeldryde (r. Domneva), Ermengyde, are wanting in the *Female Saints*, but extant in the *Vita St. Werburgae*.

begun to plant the faith in Mercia; Wulfere had been baptized by the bishops Finanus and Jerumannus, and had on that occasion, and at his marriage, vowed to destroy all idolatry in his kingdom; he was a good Christian at first and assisted St. Cedda (Chad), whom he obtained from Archbishop Theodorus for the bishopric of Lichfield after Jerumannus, in building churches, but he afterwards became an apostate. Young Werburge was an example of every virtue, full of humility, meekness, and piety, sober and grave, "still and womanly," and no wonder, she being of so good a stock. For her beauty and singular qualities she was desired by many; the prince of the West Saxons wooed her, but she, "abashed sore," answered that she had chosen the Lord Jesus for her spouse. A mountain might sooner be moved "than she forto graunt to suche worldly pleasure." The wicked Werebode, chief steward at her father's court, whom he had perverted, made use of his powerful influence with the king to obtain his assent to marry her, which he granted on condition he could gain that of his daughter. But her mother Ermenilde, and her brothers, Wulfade and Ruffin, severely rebuke Werebode's temerity in making such a proposal, he being such a "carle." Therefore he meditated revenge. Wulfade, one day chasing a stag, happened to get to the oratory of St. Chad, who then lived in the wilderness. By him, Wulfade was instructed in the faith, and baptized; so was his brother Ruffin. These princes frequently resorting to St. Chad, were espied by Werebode; who slandered them to the king, their father, as having forsaken their faith and as plotting his murder. The king, to find out the truth, took Werebode to the oratory, but sent him there before him to warn the princes. Werebode, however, finding them there, and neglecting his errand, hastily returned to the king, and incensed him so against them, that he, in a rage, slew his own sons.¹ He had no sooner returned to his castle, than Werebode was seized by an evil spirit, and died miserably. Whereupon the king repented, and, by the advice of his queen, went to St. Chad—whose vestments he saw hanging on a sunbeam—and did penance, and became a good Christian again; he destroyed all the idols, converted their temples into churches, and founded the Abbey of Peterborough, and the Priory of Stone, where his sons were buried. Werburge, considering the wretchedness of this life, asked her father's consent to enter monastic life in the Abbey of Ely. At first he refused, and advised her to marry, saying, "ryght ioyfull wolde I be To kysse a chyld of thyne, hauynge thy lykenesse, And se the also coronate as a myghty pryncesse;"² but she persisted, saying she had made a vow of chastity; and pleaded her cause so

¹ There is an old English "local" legend in verse on the martyrdom of Wulfade and Ruffin in MS. Cott. Nero CXII (ed. in *Altengl. Legendn*, Neue Folge, 1881, p. 308-314), compiled about 1450 by one of the canons of Stone priory, who quotes as his authorities "the Cronakle" and a "Table" suspended in his church. It differs in many particulars from the account given by Bradshaw.

² These words are, to me, of Homeric simplicity.

pathetically and with so many tears, that at last her father granted her request. He conducted her in great state, with the peers of his realm in attendance, to Ely, and was met at the gate of the monastery by the abbess Audry, with all her convent in procession, singing holy hymns. Werburge on her knees begged for admittance, and was received as a novice, and *Te Deum* was sung. The poet here inserts a splendid description of the festivities given by Wulfere in honour of the spiritual marriage of his daughter, in presence of her uncles and aunts, of King Egbyret of Kent, and Aldulphe of Eastanglia; of the decorations of the hall, hung with painted tapestry representing Old Testament stories, the orders of Angels, Mary, the apostles, martyrs, confessors, virgins, and the stories of Hector, Arthur, &c.; of the feast and the songs sung during the banquet by minstrels. Having been professed after her noviciate, St. Werburge lived a holy life at Ely, in prayer, penance, and contemplation; "her body upon erthe, her soule in heuen lent." O ye fair ladies, richly clad and "proud as a peacock," take example by this holy virgin, who, being a king's daughter, has exchanged her coronet, silk and velvet, for a coarse habit and a life in penance!—The poet then inserts the lives of (1) St. Audry, who, having been married twice, yet remaining chaste, entered Canwod abbey, was made abbess of Ely—her dowry—and built a new monastery there in 673, where she died in 679, 23 June; (2) of her sister, St. Sexburge, mother to Egbyret, Lothary, Ermenylde, and Erkengode; who, after her husband's death, entered Sheppey monastery (in Kent), built at her cost, and thence went to Ely, where she became second abbess after St. Audry, and died 16 years later, 6 July; and (3) of St. Ermenilde, Sexburge's daughter, who, after the death of Wulfere, also entered the house of Ely under her mother, and became third abbess of it, and died there (13 Feb.). The poet adds two miracles done by St. Ermenilde after her translation: how a prisoner's fetters were broken, and how a schoolmaster was lamed for punishing his pupils on the Saint's day, but restored at the Saint's shrine. Wulfere, who died after a 17 years' reign, and was buried at Lichfield, was succeeded by his brother Ethelred, his son Kenred then being a minor. This Ethelred made Werburge, his niece, principal or superintendent of all nunneries in his kingdom, and she left Ely. By his liberality she founded the houses of Trentham (in Staffordshire), of Hanbury (near Tutbury, in Staffordshire), and of Wedon, one of the royal manors in (North)hamptonshire. The same king also built the collegiate church of St. John in the suburbs of Chester, and gave to St. Egwyn the ground for the great Abbey of Evesham upon Avon. Having reigned 29 years, he, by the advice of St. Werburge, changed his life, and took the monastic habit in Bardney monastery in Lincolnshire, resigning his crown to his nephew Kenred, Werburge's brother. Kenred was a pious king, anxious to root out vice and strife. He gave to Egwyn 84 tenements and lands in Worcestershire for the maintenance of Evesham; and going to Rome on pilgrimage, with Offa and Egwyn, ceded that monastery to the pope, and on his return had his donation confirmed by a "seyn" (synod) at Alve. After a reign of five

years he resigned the crown to Coelred, his uncle's son; and going to Rome in 708, entered the Benedictine Order. Werburge, consecrated abbess by Bishop Sexwulfus of Litchfield, governed the monasteries in her care by word and example, being "a mynyster rather than a maystres, a handmayd rather than a pryores," a perfect model of humility, piety, and abstinence; she would rise long before matins, and recite the psalter on her knees, and after matins remain in contemplation till daybreak; she never took more than one repast in the day. For a pastime, she caused the *Legendary* or *Vitas Patrum* to be read among her sisters, &c. She mostly resided at Wedon and Trentham. Her holiness was confirmed by many miracles. Thus, once, when wild geese (*gauntes*) wasted the lands of Wedon, she had them penned by a servant, and loosing them the next morning, restored to them a missing companion, which, as William of Malmesbury says, had already been roasted. When her bailiff cruelly chastised her servant Alnotus, his head was turned backward; but he was restored on asking forgiveness. Twice she was miraculously saved from being oppressed, the last time by an oak tree opening to conceal her. She cured many sick people who visited her. When her end drew near, she foretold her death, visited all places under her care, and gave her last orders; she desired her body to be buried at Hanbury. In her illness she thanked God for His visitation, and consoled her sisters, teaching them how death was birth to another life and freedom. On her last day she humbly received the sacrament in presence of her sisters, exhorted them to keep their order in charity and obedience, and recommended them to God. She died at Trentham on the 3rd of February, angels conveying her soul to heaven. Her body was brought to the church, and watched, amid the lamentations of the sisters. The folk of Trentham, wishing to retain it, watched it with strong hand, but fell asleep miraculously, and those of Hanbury came and brought it to their place, as she had desired. The "third passionary" at Chester Abbey speaks of many miracles done at Hanbury. Such was the life of St. Werburge, "a princess, a virgin, a nun, and a president." For her many miracles, her body was raised in 708, nine years after her death, in presence of Coelred, his council, and many bishops, and being found entire and sweet looking, was richly clothed and enshrined at Hanbury, 21 June, where her body remained incorrupt 200 years, till the Danish invasion.

BOOK II.—A prologue treats of the use of literature, and of the contents of the second book. The poet then narrates the Danish invasion, which, preceded by horrible tokens, was a scourge for the sins of men. In 875, when the Danish fury swept over Mercia, and these pirates had advanced as far as Repton (in Derbyshire), within five miles of Hanbury, and expelled King Burdredus, the people of Hanbury, for fear of the Danes, carried the shrine of St. Werburge to Chester. Here it was solemnly received by the clergy, lords, and citizens in procession, singing *Te Deum* and welcoming the saint, and was deposited in the mother-church of Peter and Paul. The poet here inserts a short history of his native place—called *Caerleon* by

the Britons, the City of Legions by the Romans, afterwards Chester "quasi castris, being built like a comely castle"—of its uncertain foundation, its early Christianity (since King Lucius), which had been kept intact ever since, the meeting of St. Augustine and the monks of Bangor, the expulsion of the Britons by King Offa. King Edward senior, Alfred's son and successor, marrying his sister Elflède to Ethelrede, created him first Duke of Mercia after the expulsion of its kings. This Elflède, holding St. Werburge in special veneration, built and endowed with secular canonicis a stately minster—afterwards the Cathedral—over the relics of St. Werburge, joining it to the old church, which was new dedicated to the Trinity and St. Oswald,¹ and translating the church of Peter and Paul to the centre of the city, where a parish-church was built in their honour. Elflède, in 908, rebuilt and enlarged the city of Chester, then nearly decayed, walled it in, and fortified it with a strong castle. After the death of her husband she rebuilt the churches and towns of Stafford, Warwick, Tamworth, and Shrewsbury, and founded the great Abbey of St. Peter's in Gloucester, whither she translated the relics of St. Oswald, and where she herself was buried in 919. The poet then relates part of the miracles done since St. Werburge's translation to Chester. She saved that place from the Welsh king Griffinus, and again from the Danes and Scots under kings Harold and Maucelyn; she thrice cured a lame woman, Eadgida; made a barren woman, Judith, conceive; helped another in labour; restored a woman struck blind for working on the Sabbath; healed six blind and lame persons; delivered a man hanged unlawfully from the gibbet; saved corn, hoarded up in her park at Upton during a raid, from being destroyed by the enemy's horses; cured one of her canons, Ulminus, who had broken his leg. Following the reigns of the next kings, Athestan, Edmund, &c., the poet dwells on the blessed reign of Edgar, "the floure of England," the reformer of the Church; who, at Chester, received the homage of eight kings, and rowed with them up the Dee to the church of St. John, and devoutly visited and enriched the church of St. Werburge. In the reign of Edward the Confessor, Leofric was Duke of Mercia and Earl of Chester, who with his pious wife Godith rebuilt many churches, founded the monastery of Leonence, near Hereford, and that of Coventry, and repaired that of Evesham. At Chester he rebuilt St. Werburge's minster, besides repairing

¹ The church of St. Oswald forms the south transept of the choir of Chester Cathedral. It was set apart for the uses of the inhabitants of the parish within which the monastery was placed. "The abbot and convent afterwards, wishing to reattach it to the Cathedral, built for the parishioners a small chapel, dedicated to St. Nicholas, on the spot where the theatre now stands; but they do not appear to have been contented with their new place of worship, for in 1488 a composition was made between the abbot and the parishioners of St. Oswald for their new church. They accordingly re-entered into the south transept (which had been rebuilt by Abbot Ripley), and have ever since used it as their parish church."—See *Chester Guide*.

the church of St. John. William the Conqueror gave to his kinsman, Hugh Lupus, the earldom of Chester with the sovereign dignity of a palatinate, on condition he should conquer it. Having been three times beaten, he at last took the city, and divided the conquered lands of the county among his followers. In 1093, under William Rufus, Hugh dismissed the canons regular of St. Werburge, and, in presence of St. Anselm, laid the foundation of a magnificent abbey in honour of St. Werburge, which he handed over to Benedictine monks, brought over from Bec in Normandy; he secured it by strong walls. Miracles continued: St. Werburge appeared to a monk of her abbey, Dan Simon, who was much abused by his fellows, exhorting him to bear wrong patiently. Earl Richard, son and heir to Hugh Lupus, on a pilgrimage to St. Winifred's, at Holywell, was miraculously saved from being intercepted by Welshmen, the Dee giving passage to a force sent to his succour, near Eilburgee; for which miracle Richard's constable, William, the son of Nigell, gave to St. Werburge the village of Newton, and founded the abbey of Norton on the Dee, near where his army forded the river—which place is still called "The constable sondes." The same Richard was afterwards perverted by his wife Matilda, niece to Henry I., so that he claimed abbeylands—the manor place of Salton—from the abbot, and intended to have transferred that abbey to another order; when, on his return from Normandy, he, with his wife and company, was shipwrecked and drowned near Barfleur; St. Werburge herself told her sacristan of their fate. In 1180 a great fire broke out at Chester, which destroyed the minster of St. Michael, and threatened to consume the whole city, but was suddenly extinguished when the shrine of St. Werburge was carried about in procession.¹

Conclusion (mostly in 8-lined stanzas).—(1) All these miracles, and many more, recorded in the third Passionary at Chester, but which it would be tedious to relate, magnify this holy virgin, who is justly called by the people Patroness of Chester, and honoured there next our lady, "as is rehersed at masse in her sequens." (2) O ye lords, citizens, and matrons of Chester, remember the privileges granted by your forefathers, the protection given by St. Werburge, the punishments inflicted on the violators of her abbey, and "to the monastery be never vn-

¹ What became of her shrine afterwards, is told by Butler: The relics being scattered in the reign of Henry VIII., her shrine was converted into the episcopal throne in the same church, and remains in that condition to this day. This monument is of stone, ten feet high, embellished with thirty curious antique images of kings of Mercia and other princes, ancestors or relations of this saint. See Cooper's remarks on each.—On the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII., Chester was erected into an independent bishopric, and St. Werburge's was converted into a cathedral church, which it has ever since remained (dedicated to Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary); a dean and six prebendaries were installed; the last abbot (Thomas Clarke) became the first dean.

kynde." (3) O blessed Werburge, pray for thy servant, thy monastery, "I beseech thee, swete patrones!" (4, L'envoye) Go forth, little book, which art written not for clerks, but for the merchant men and rude people; Jesus be thy speed!

For this Life, the poet has most conscientiously collected all the materials then accessible. He himself mentions his authorities in general (I. 127—133), and quotes them in special at their respective places. They are partly legends, partly chronicles. His chief source he calls "the legend," "the true legend," "the true Passionary, A boke wherin her holy lyfe wryten is, Whiche boke remayneth in Chester monastery" (I. 694-6), "the thrid Passionary" (I. 3246; II. 1691)—which, therefore, seems to have formed an additional volume to an older Passionary containing the lives of the saints of the year. This book being now lost, it becomes difficult to form an estimate of it. The life contained in it is no doubt identical with the primitive *Vita S. Werburgæ*, ascribed to Goscelinus¹ by the Bollandists (Feb. 3), *but augmented by later additions, as the history of the translation to Chester, and the miracles done at Chester.* The life by Goscelinus is rather scanty in facts, containing only St. Werburge's descent from four kings (including that of France, but not the Northumbrian line), her holy life at home, and at Ely, where she is joined by her mother Ermenilde, both contending in

¹ This is the same Goscelinus who, after Will. of Malm., *Reg. Angl.* 4, 1, innumeras Sanctorum Vitas stilo extulit vel informiter editas comptius emendavit, post Bedam secundus in laudibus Sanctorum Angliæ enarrandis. The Bollandists remark: Floruit is c. a. MC, a S. Anselmo Archiep. Cantuar. aliisque ob doctrinam ac pietatem singularem in Angliam evocatus e Belgio, ubi ante monachus S. Bertini apud Audomaropolim varias Sanctorum vitas illustrarat easque inter etiam stylo cultiori emendarat Vitam S. Amelbergæ Virginis . . . Eam autem Vitam dum hic Cap. 6 suo stylo recusam agnoscit, et huius se auctorem esse prodit. Utraque præterea vita eadem ratione suis est capitibus propriisque titulis distincta. . . Vixit Ramesiæ non procul a monasterio Eliensi. . . Perhaps he wrote the life of St. Werburge on the occasion of her translation to Chester, and instigated by St. Anselm. Hawkins, mistaking the "balade to the author" (p. 200) to have been written by Bradshaw to the author of the Latin life, doubts the authorship of Goscelinus, because it is said there that "uncertain was the author's name."

humility; her being appointed lady president of all nunneries; two miracles related diffusedly (wild geese penned, a bailiff punished for cruelty), her death, burial, and first translation.¹ How much richer in details is Bradshaw's life! More particulars² he found in the *Vita SS. Wolfhadi et Ruffini martyrum, auctore anonymo* (Act. SS. Bolland, 24 July, p. 570), from which he took the character of false Werebode, his marriage project, his intrigue, the death of the two princes by their own father. Next he used Lives of St. Sexburge³ (6 July), of St. Etheldrede or Audry of Ely⁴ (23 June), and that of St. Ermenilde (probably by the same Goscelinus), which is extant only in an abridged text in Capgrave's *Nova Legenda Angliæ* (ed. 1516), where the same two miracles recorded by our poet are found. Occasionally he quotes the legend of St. Egwyn, I. 2408. Into the narrative of the saint's life, so combined from different legends, he inserted such additional matter—descriptions of Mercia and Chester, notes on the Heptarchy, the Danish and Norman invasions, a chronicle of English kings, anecdotes, &c.—as he was pleased to extract from the various chronicles which he mentions, from Bede, William of Malmesbury, Girardus Cambrensis, Alfred of Beverley, Henry of Huntingdon (from whom he quotes several passages in Latin verse), and Ranulph Higden, his countryman and a monk of his own abbey (who died in St. Werburge's abbey ab. 1363).⁵ For the second book

¹ The contents of this life were, as usual, summarily repeated in the sequence sung at Mass, which B. alludes to in II., 1689 ff., most likely also in the hymns, &c. of the Officium.

² I cannot find from where he took the Prince of West Saxons, who wooed St. Werburge; or the miracles recorded in chap. 26: perhaps the latter were added in a marginal note to the Passionary. The miracles done at Hanbury (cf. I., 3245 ff.) were, it seems, not specified, but only generally mentioned in the Passionary.

³ The *Vita* is lost; the text in Capgrave *Nov. Leg. Angl.* contains only a short encomium.

⁴ Her Life in Act. SS. Boll. 23 June contains a detailed genealogy.

⁵ He quotes Bede, I. 136 (Anglos. invasion), 432 (Penda's victories), 507 (Wulfer made king), 1072 (St. Chad), 1844 (St. Sexburge born at Exning), 2472 (Kenred forsaking the world), II. 497 (St. Augustin

—Werburge's translation to Chester, and miracles done there, with a history of Chester and its abbey—his chief authority must be sought in the 3rd Passionary, or rather in the additions appended to the Life; which appendix seems also to have contained the changes affecting the Abbey of Chester, as the miracles are classified after the two periods of the abbey (miracles done in the time of canons regular, and in the time of Benedictine monks). The history of the translation may have been added soon after the fact; the miracles go as far as 1180 (when the great fire raged at Chester), and seem to have been added soon after that date (if not simultaneously with the facts) in chronological order. When the poet speaks of many more miracles recorded in the 3rd Passionary, which he thinks proper to omit, for they "wolde require a longe tyme and space, To the reders tedious, no meruayle sothly" (II. 1690), these miracles perhaps formed another set, added later or registered with the facts, and were merely ordinary cures, such as he had mentioned before. As to the history of Chester and its abbey, we must not forget that Bradshaw had written a Latin chronicle on the antiquities of Chester, which no doubt rested partly on local sources,¹ and also contained a history of Chester Abbey; so that he could rely on the results of former studies.² That he used local

and the monks of Bangor); William of Malmesbury: I. 2189 (first abbesses of Ely), 2379 (K. Ethelred made Abbot of Bardney), 2697 (the wanting goose roasted), II. 1209 (Leofric made Earl of Chester); Alfridus: II. 133 (beginning of the Danish invasion); Giraldus: I. 2318 (Ethelred builds the collegiate church of St. John at Chester); Ranulph Higden's Polycricon: I. 177 (the kingdom of Mercia), 3451 (date of the first translation of St. Werburge), II. 379 and 386 (foundation of Chester), 1213 (foundations by Leofric). The quotations from Henricus (Henry of Huntingdon), II. 364, 666, 1205, are not without some errors (cf. ed. Saville).

¹ There were several official books kept at Chester: 1. The Red Book, once in possession of the abbey of St. Werburge, containing the evidences of their endowments, copies of legal proceedings out of plea rolls: it is now carefully preserved in the archives of the Dean and Chapter; 2. A remarkable MS., *Annales Cestrienses*, Chester Annals, from Christ to 1255 (cf. *Chester Guide*).

² In II. 561 he gives the testimony of Archbishop Antoninus for the

sources is evident from II. 597, where he refers to a table preserved at St. John's in Chester, with the history of its foundation. Several of the facts given by our poet are found elsewhere: Ranulph Higden (*Polic.* 5, 18) shortly mentions the translation of St. Werburge to Chester, and the institution of canons secular; the presence at Chester of King Edgar with eight kings is recorded by Florence of Worcester, and others; for Leofric, our poet quotes William of Malmesbury (II. 1201); for his foundations, R. Higden—the same foundations are also mentioned in *Vita S. Edwardi Conf.* (5 January), Cap. 7, including that of St. Werburge's abbey; Hugh Lupus is mentioned by William of Malmesbury, *Pont. Angl.* 4 (and *Reg. Angl.* 2, 13), and Higden. But many of the particulars we can trace to Brakshaw only, who, in the absence of other sources, himself remains our chief authority.

I here give the text of the *Vita* by Goscelinus, to show how greatly its scanty materials are enriched in the English legend.

Vita Auctore Goscelino monacho ex Ms. Guilielmi Cambdeni.¹
(Act SS. Bolland. Febr. 3, p. 391.)

Cap. I. Genealogia S. Werburgae.

Cap. II. Conversatio in Elio monasterio.

Cap. III. Conversatio matris suae in eodem monasterio.

Cap. IV. Praeponitur monasteriis sanctimonialium Werburga a patruo suo Rege Æthelredo. Idem Rex huius sanctitatis exemplo fit perbeatissimus monachus.

Cap. V. Werburga ut mater pia, ita fit omnium ministra pro magistra.

Cap. VI. Volatilium agmina praecepto captivat et relaxat.

Cap. VII. Humilitas ejus. Carnificem retorta in tergum cervicis increpat, et supplicem reformat.

Cap. VIII. Transitus ipsius iii Nonas Februarii.

Cap. IX. Corpus ejus Triecengehamenses custodientes obdormiunt, et Hamburgenses divinitus reseratis foribus auferunt.

Cap. X. Post novem annos elevata, inventa est toto corpore et vestibus ut vivens vernantissima.

Filia Regum, et sponsa Christi decentissima, Virgo Werburga in Cestria civitate requiescit, meritorum signis gloriosa. Clara est in tota Anglia, et pura sanctitate, et regia dignitate, et virtutum attestazione, atque Anglicarum historiarum celebritate. A primis

first gifts to St. Werburge's; he refers here, it seems, to a deed preserved in the abbey.

¹ A somewhat abridged text of this life is that in Capgrave, *Nova Leg. Angliae*, 1516.

Anglorum Regibus sublimiter splendescit; a Rege vero Doro-
berniae, quod est Cantuariae, potentissimo Aethelbrichto, qui primus
Anglorum Regum per Protodoctorem suum Augustinum Christo
sacerari meruit, ino a quatuor regibus altum et sanctum genus tra-
hit: quod hie sequenti ordine exponi dulce videtur, quo Dei gemma
carius appetiefur, et quasi de praevis sideribus haec matutina
stella clarius spectetur. Aethelbrichtus igitur ex Berta Regina
filia Regis Francorum, Eadbaldum cum Aethelburga filia pro-
creavit, quem suae pietatis et regni optimum haerodem reliquit.
Aethelburga vero Regina post proprii Regis Nordanhumbro-
rum Aedvini interfectionem, reversa ad fratrem Eadbaldum in villa
Limminga monasterium aedificavit, in quo cum S. Aedburga
requiescit. Eadbaldus quoque ex alterius Regis Francorum filia
Emma Eormredum atque Ergombertum Principes sanctamque
Virginem Answytham, quae apud Folcanstam deposita vene-
ratur, propagavit. Eormredo autem ex inelyta conjugē Oslava
nati sunt Aethelredus, atque Aethelbrichtus, quos innocenter
jugulatos, splendida lucis columna de coelo prodidit Christi
martyres: quatuor quoque sibi filiae sanctae, Domneva, Aermen-
berga, Aermenburga, et Aermengida, velut paradisiaci fontis
quadrifida emicuerunt flumina. Fratri vero eius, Ergomberto
Regi, Annae Regis filia Saexburga, soror perpetuae Virginis
Aetheldrethae, regaliter conjuncta peperit Aegbrichtum ac Lo-
tharum Reges, caeloque dignas Eormhildam atque Eorken-
godam Reginas. Eormhilda Wlfero Regi Marciolorum, Pendae
Regis filio, tradita, splendidissimam Werburgam, cui haec par-
entalis purpura infloratur, generavit. Beatissima vero matertera
eius Virgo Eorkengoda amore sacrae religionis peregrinata trans
mare requiescit, ubi se a Domino susceptam tamquam advenam
suam multis virtutibus ostendit. At beata et regia Domneva regio
Wlferi germano Merwalaē conjugata, ad summae Trinitatis gra-
tiam triplicem Virginitatis protulit lauream, sanctissimas scilicet
sorores Mildburgam, Mildrydam, et Mildgydam, quae distinctis
monasteriorum suorum lapidibus irradiant patriam. Natus est
ei et Merevin filius, qui ad sanctos innocentes a baptisate raptus
est parvulus. Almifluae quoque Werburgae generositatem ac
sanctimoniam proxime exornant sanctissimae amitae suae Pendae
Regis filiae, Kyneburga et Kynewida, quae cum propinqua sua
beatissima Tibba Burgensem superni janitoris Petri illustrent
ecclesiam. Suus vero genitor praenominatus ac patrum Reges,
id est, Peada, Aedelredus ac praedictus Merwala praedictarum
sororum fratres, Christianae institutionis non solum cultores,
verum etiam primi atque intensissimi fuere propagatores: et
sicut Aedelbrichtus Doroberniae, ita Wlferus in Mercis Christi-
anitate primus dilatavit. Sic itaque, ut praemisimus, ex qua-
tuor regibus, et antiquis Regibus rosa Christi Werburga florescit:
a principe susceptae fidei Aedelbrichto Cantuariorum, a Berta
vel Emma Francorum, ab Anna Rege, et avia Saexburga Ori-
entalium Anglorum, a patre vero luculentissima facta Merciorum.
Haec vero ad gloriam praedicandae Virginis praetitulatur, ut
de radice sancta ramum sanctum deceat sanctitudo, ino de con-
tempta regni excellentia maior adscribatur claritudo. Restat
nunc ut explicemus sanctam ipsius conversationem, et probabi-
lem in Domino finem.

A tenero ergo aevi flore, cum formae pulchritudo insigniter responderet generositati suae, coepit speciosa facie cum speciosissima mente ad illum, qui speciosus est forma prae filiis hominum, contendere: cuius ut inaeestimabilem dulcedinem praegustare potuit, protinus in eius amorem anhelo pectore exarsit, et, ut cervus ad fontes aquarum, virginalis anima eius in ipso sitiit: adeo dulcis et suavis Spiritus Domini a Patre dilectionis procedens illam attraxit, caelestes concupiscentias in eius corde accendit, terrenas exstinxit. Illa amore perpetuae virginitatis ad sponsum aeternae integritatis convolavit, procos et amatores regificos angelica pudicitia repulit, imo Christus electam sibi inhabitans omnibus appetitoribus eripuit. Sanctissima parens non cessabat assiduis monitis irrigare hortum Domini, et plantare in ea inmarcescibilia germina paradisi, et accendere lampadem eius oleo et flamma caritatis inextinguibili. Ad illam enim vitam flagrantissimam prolem exercebat, quam ipsa adhuc sub jugo maritali gemitibus inenarrabilibus suspirabat. Verum altissima Dei providentia benigne dispensans omnia, matrem eam in regno statuit omnium inopum, omnium necessitudinum refugium, simul etiam ut piis visceribus pignus Deo gigneret acceptissimum et amplioem coronam dilatorum tandem reciperet desideriorum. Viluerant divitiae tam matri quam filiae; palatium habebat pro monasterio: aurum, gemmae, vestes auro textae, et quidquid fert pompatica mundi jactantia, onerosa sibi magis erant quam gloriosa; et si forte his uti ad tempus regia compelleret dignitas dolebant se potius vanitati subiectas tamquam captivas.

At vero virginalis B. Werburgae libertas, mox ut valuit, haec vincula exiit, et ad Eligense monasterium cum officio sublimium parentum hostia Dei commigravit: ubi primum beata et intemperata matertera sua Ætheldreda, ac deinde soror eiusdem Virginis, sua ut praedictum est, avia, principabatur Sexburga. Illico abjicitur cultus terreni nitoris, induitur habitus sacrae religionis, vestis pulla pro ornamento gloriae, velum capitis humile pro regni assumitur diademate. Ita praeclara Virgo certabat fastum mundi calcare; mente et conversatione, velut hic peregrina, ad supernam patriam tendere; tota animi submissione humillimam Christi exhibere ancillam, quam ipse exaltare dignaretur in sponsam. Omnes monasterii famulatus anticipabat: omnibus se inferiorem exhibebat: erga omnium necessitates vulneratae caritatis viscera impendebat.

Jam deo amabilis pater eius Wlferus, multarum ecclesiarum aedificator, christianae fidei summus amator ac dilatator, quippe qui etiam subjectos Reges, datis provinciis in mercedem, ad Christi cultum attraxit, septimo decimo imperii sui anno de temporali regno ad perenne transivit. Tunc beatissima Regina Eormenhilda post pios fletus triumphans se solutam a mundiali catena, diu desideratam conversationem arripuit, et cum beata filia in Eligensi monasterio jugum Domini suave subiit. Hic deinceps tanta virtutum flagrantia in omni sanctitate et religione vixit infatigabilis, ut et Virginibus exemplum esset castitatis ac totius virtutis. Contendebant alterutra pietate mater et filia, quae humilior, quae possit esse subiectior; mater sibi praeferebat eius quam genuerat, virginitatem, Virgo matris auctoritatem: utrimque et vincere

et vinci gaudebant. Nunc autem in eodem coenobio ad salutiferam ipsius benignissimae parentis tumbam conspicue elucescit, quibus clementiae visceribus se in cunctos diffuderit, dum corporaliter vixit; adeo ut experti ipsius beneficia audeant fideliter asserere, quod nullus credulus petitor frustretur eius ope.

Igitur patruus Werburgae Rex Æthelredus, qui fratri Wlfero successerat, cum sancta mente totius sanctitatis esset benignissimus, videns in beata nepte divinam prudentiam ac sanctimoniam altius resplendere, qui nimirum virtutem poterat ultra germanitatem diligere, tradidit ei monasteriorum Sanctimonialium, quae in suo regno pollebant, principatum. Pulchre sane superna id actum est providentia, ut sacrae institutionis, cuius perfecta erat discipula, in salutem multorum decentissima foret magistra.

Rex vero magis ac magis coepit imperii taedere, dum se reputaret inter secularia negotia quasi animal accline terrae, illam vero columbinis pennis meritorum ad caelum volitare, et quid plura? Non quievit aestus spiritus sui, donec vigesimo nono regni sui anno in Bardeniensi coenobio de Rege efficeretur monachus, qui idem jam favore superno probatur meritis venerandus.

Dilectissima autem Deo Werburga erga subjectos ita erat magistra, ut potius videretur ministra: aequabat, vel magis subiciebat se infimis: malens, si liceret, locum extremitatis quam praelationis. Portabat omnes quasi viscera sua, fovebat acsi uterina pignora, erudiebat exemplo attentius quam imperio. Totam possederat dilectio et benignitas, pax et hilaritas. Ad indigentes promptissima illi largitas: ad afflictos compatientissima erat pietas: adversa ridebat patientia, vincebat fiducia, calcabat caelesti laetitia: ad usum vero divinae sapientiae accipiebat prospera, abstinentiam pro deliciis, vigiliis pro somno, labores pro voluptate, lectiones et orationes sacras pro epulis habebat: corpore in terris, animo conversabatur in caelis.

Sed jam forsitan lectorem lassamus, dum miracula suspendimus. **S** Majora miraculis sunt merita, quibus ipsa fiunt miracula: quia possunt esse perfecta merita absque signis, signa vero nihil sunt absque meritis. At vero multis mirabilibus effulsisse probatur dignissima Virgo, et in Eligensi coenobio, et quocunque degebat loco. In Weduna autem regio patrimonio suo, quod est in Hamtuna provincia, jocundum et celeberrimum a generatione in generationem hoc eius miraculum asseritur ab ipsa plebe tota.

Cum in ipsius Wedunae mansionem moraretur regia Virgo, agros eius solito infinita aucarum indomitaram, quas gantas vocant, depopulabatur multitudo. Nuntiat domesticus ruricola hoc damnum Dominae suae. Tunc illa magnanimi fide praecepit illi, ut omnes adduceret, et includeret, more scilicet animalium qui depascunt alienas segetes. Vade, inquit, et omnes hac volucres introduc huc. Itabat ille altius obstupescens, an garriret, an deliraret haec jussio. Quomodo enim suspectus advena tot volatilia ire gressibus in vincula cogeret, quibus per caelum evadere liceret? Quomodo, inquit, ad primum accessum meum in aethera fugientes huc convertam? Tunc virgo propositum urgens: Vade, ait, quantocyus, et ex nostro jussu

omnes adduc in custodiam nostram. Ille timens vel supervacuum dictum divae praeceptricis negligere, post omnes vadit, dicensque illis: Ite, ite ad Dominam nostram; omnes ante se, acsi captiva pecora, agit. Nulla avis de tanto coetu pennam levavit sed quasi implumes pulli vel alis excisae pedetentim se permovebant, pedestri incessu summissis collis velut pro confusione reatus sui adventabant: sic intra curiam iudicis suae trepidae et suppressae quasi damnatae se collegere, ibique retruduntur captivae, vel magis servantur indulgentiae.

Noctem illam filia lucis, uti consueverat, in hymnis caelestibus ac precibus perpetuat. Mane omnes advenae elatis vocibus concrepant ad Dominam, quasi veniam et emigrandi poscentes licentiam. At illa, ut erat erga omnem Dei creaturam benignissima, absolutas jubet dimitti, interminans ne ultra auderent in hunc locum regredi. Unam autem ex eis quidam ministrorum exiens furto abstulerat, et occuluerat: cumque omnes elatis pennis in aera se sustulissent, seseque circumspiciendo requisissent, damnum contubernii sui una absente percensent. Extemplo universus exercitus supra domum Virginis glomeratur, ingenti strepitu injuriam collegii sui conqueritur; caelum undique diffusis copiis obtegitur, ut quasi hac voce humana iudicium miseratricis suae implorare viderentur: Quare, domina, cum omnes nos relaxaverit tua clementia, una ex nobis tenetur captiva? Et potest haec iniquitas latere in domo sancta tua, et foeda rapacitatis valere sub tua innocentia? Egressa ergo divina Virgo ad murmur tantae plebis et querimoniam, intellexit caussam, acsi praefatis verbis auditam. Protinus percrutatam furtum reus ipse publicat receptamque volucrem suae genti pia conciliatrix associat, et abire simul praedicta conditione mandat. Quibus nimirum sic gestiebat, dicebat benigno animo: Benedicite volucres caeli domino. Nec mora; omnis illa concio ita avolavit, ut nulla huius generis avicula in ipsa terra almae Werburgae, ut famose memoratur, ultra reperta sit. Bene ergo illi pecualis creatura parebat, quae omnium Creatori tota devotione jugiter obtemperabat. Tale prorsus miraculum in Vita beatissimae Virginis Amelbergae, quam nostro stylo recudimus, legitur, quatenus in eodem opere eadem fides utriusque, licet diverso tempore et loco exstiterint, comprobetur.

Quantae autem humilitatis fuerit, quantae etiam apud Deum sublimitatis, in eodem loco Wedunensi aliis confirmatur indicibus. Erat illi armentarius, vir piae conversationis, et quantum licuit sub humana servitute sanctae vitae, qui et suis locis fama meritorum perpetuatur ac recolitur festive, Alnotus nomine. Hunc villicus Dominae cum forte lanicaret cruentissimo verbere, et ille omnia in Dei nomine toleraret mansuetissime, alma Virginis compassio non ferens dolorem, proruit ad pedes indignos lanistae, clamans cum prece et increpatione: Parce pro Dei amore, quare excarnificas hominem innocentem, apud altissimum Inspectorem omnibus nobis (ut credo) acceptiorem? Cumque ille vel prae furore vel prae superbia tardius flecteretur, continuo dura cervix et torva facies superna indignatione in terga illi reflectitur. Sic demum quod magis debuerat, ipse ad pedes Dominae provolvitur, et veniam, quam insonti negaverat, suo reatu cum lacrymis deprecatur: statimque interveniente

Virginis clementia, in pristinum statum reparatur. Vir autem Domini memoratus jacet ad Stowam una legia a Buccabrive, quem in silva anachoreticam vitam ducentem latrunculi martyrizaverunt, et divina signa Deo acceptabilem, uti celebratur, prodiderunt.

Praeterea haud dubium est, amantissimam Deo Werburgam quam multis aliis signis emicuisse, et caelesti beneficio diversos aegros ac debiles curasse. Potuit etiam divina inspiratione plura praescire ac praedicere, diemque ultimum, quem semper prae oculis habebat totaque vigilantia cum flammanti lampade eminus observaverat, jam proximum ignorare nequibat. Cum ergo omni familiae et monasteriis sibi creditis praenimia caritate jugiter optaret adesse; et econtra nulli tolerabile videretur sua dulci praesentia carere; elegit tamen divina praescientia et voluntate Heamburgae monasterio requiescere corpore, quae omnibus semper repraesentaretur mente. Quamobrem praecepit Heamburgensi familiae, ut ubicumque migraret ex hac luce, ipsi incunctanter venirent corpusque eius ad suum monasterium transportarent.

Venit ergo caelicolaë Virgini diu desideratus finis terrenorum laborum ac dolorum, et ingressus caelestium aeternorumque gaudiorum: nox mortalitatis recessit, et dies aeternitatis illuxit: tenebrae transierunt, et lumen verum luxit, ac sol laetitiae perennis ortus est illi. Gaudebat beata anima quasi ad epulas invitata, videlicet de exilio ad patriam, de carcere ad regnum, de morte ad vitam, de captivitate ad triumphum, de tyrannide seculi ad illum quem desiderabat sponsum sempiternae gloriae transitura. Deposita itaque in coenobio quod Tricengeham appellatur, per languorem et mortem corporis ad immortalia solennia ab angelicis choris assumitur, et in caelestem curiam supernis concentibus triumphatur; cuius depositio tertio Nonas Februarii celebratur.

Corpus sacrum in ecclesiam defertur, et in medio populi Tricengehamensium obseratis diligentissime januis custoditur, certantibus nequidquam omnibus, ut Heamburgenses excluderentur, et per suum obsequium vel defensionem praeceptum vaticinae Virginis vinceretur, sacerque thesaurus in eodem loco perpetim retineretur. At non est sapientia, non est consilium contra Deum. Dum enim nocte ipsa attentius vigilarent, subito sopor gravissimus omnes occupat. Supervenit illico copiosa plebs Heamburgensium cum Dei ministris, extemplo omnia ostia monasterii, cadentibus in terram seris et vectibus, reserantur illis. Irruunt ergo, omni custodum turba somno sepulta, rapiunt nullo se adversae partis movente glebam Virginis et auferunt, secumque cum ingenti laetitia et gratiarum actione laudisona ad Heamburgense monasterium confusis rebellibus deducunt.

Quis itaque pensare sufficiat, quanta solemnitate ipsius anima suscepta sit Deo, cuius corpus ad requiem praelectam transferri tanto dedit prodigio? In hoc ergo sacro loco Dei margarita cum debita reverentia et solemnibus júbilo tumultata, plurimis signorum indicibus se probat vivere in caelesti regia; sanitas aegrotis, lumen caecis, auditus surdis, sermo mutis restituitur: leprosi mundatione, et diversis languoribus oppressi una salute per-

cepta gratulantur. Tot itaque post mortem suam vitae reformat quae tam sancte vivebat.

Post haec etiam inenarrabilis Domini gratia in ipsa carne virginali diutius incorrupta evidenter ostendere est dignata, qualiter sibi placuerit intemerata ipsius pudicitia cum mente qua Deum videbat mundissima. Post novem siquidem annos eius sepulturae, suggerentibus Heamburgensibus, placuit Regi Ceolredo, qui tunc regnabat Mercii, quatenus sacrosancta ipsius gleba de tumulo elevaretur, clamantibus cunctis indignum esse ut tanta lux multorum sub modio terrae absconderetur. Ablato ergo operculo speluncae, cum putaretur ab omnibus more humanae conditionis tota caro defluxisse et tantum nuda ossa superesse; inventa est potius Virgo integerrima quasi in dulci stratu obdormire; vestes nitidissimae et sanae, sicut primitus induta erat, omnino apparuere; facies candida, et genae roseae, tamquam in primaevio flore, amoto reverenter velamine, sunt visae. Attollitur clamor gratiarum in caelum, tantaeque gratiae admiratio in laudes Domini accendit frequentem populam. Assumitur ergo a Sacerdotibus solemniter adornatis, cum supplicibus votis et canoris chorizantis Ecclesiae modulis. Explorantibus adhuc diligenti studio, nulla penitus in ea laesio, nulla reperta est corruptio. Ita demum reconditur in theca sibi competenter parata, ubi conspicue fideles populos illustrat praeclara lampade sua.

Duravit diutius sub Angelica custodia hic honor illaesi corporis, usque ad tempora scilicet Paganorum et diem malorum, quando justissima Dei dispensatione haec patria Anglorum tradita est gladiis Gentilium. Tunc demum vitalis gleba voluit cedere mortali legi, atque resolvi, ne impiis manibus eam contingerent hostes, miraculorum Dei increduli et beneficiorum ingrati. Potuit plane Dei omnipotentia et in die malorum dilectam suam protegere, sicut servavit plerosque Sanctos huius patriae ab iniqua contagione, qui adhuc usque jam post quadringentos amplius annos vernant integro et incorrupto corpore, et poterunt indubitaute usque in finem pro Divino arbitrio perdurare. Verumenimvero mirabilis et gloriosus Deus in Sanctis suis, mira et inaestimabili providentia alios in majorem gloriam resurrectionis ad tempus resolvit, alios perpetua incorruptione in exemplum promissionis suae custodit. Tot nobilissimi Martyres et summi Sacerdotes Domini a bestiis, vel avibus, vel ignibus sunt consumpti. Posuerunt, inquit Psalmographus, mortalia servorum tuorum, Domine, escas volatilibus caeli, carnes Sanctorum tuorum bestiis terrae. Quo maior fuit ignominia, eo maior erit gloria. Summus Martyrum primicerius Stephanus, dum legitur multa signa in vita fecisse, non ibi tamen legitur mortuos suscitasse. Post mortis vero triumphum omniumque membrorum resolutionem, plerosque mortuos describitur vitae reddidisse, ut a mortis injuria major nasceretur vitae potentia. Magnae itaque gratiae Dei respectus erat in B. Werburgae corpore solido, sed major spes aeternae renovationis restat in jam consumpto.—Celebremus ergo promptissima devotione sacratissimam ipsius festivitatem, quia omnis eius celebritas ad Christi Domini pertinet honorem, qui ita eam condignis meritis fecit celebrabilem quam nimirum nobis pro-

vidit ante se Interventricem, quatenus per dilectae suae venerationem, suam mereamur propitiationem, qui non habemus meritorum executionem. Tanto quippe benignius illam exaudiet orantem pro nobis, quanto accensiores fuerimus in ipsius Deo offerendis praeconiis. Annuat nobis semper memorandae Werburgae coronator, quatenus per eius sancta suffragia et hic profutura desideria consequamur, et in aeternum beatæ visionis ac resurrectionis suae consortia mereamur. Annuat, inquam, ipse Salvator, qui cum Patre et Spiritu sancto in omnia secula regnat et dominatur. Amen.

Comparing Bradshaw's poem with the Latin *Vita*, and the other sources used by him, we find how unjust it would be to call him—as he modestly calls himself—a mere translator. Indeed, nothing would be falsier. He had not only to gather his materials from the most distant sources, and to arrange all this mass of information, all these legendary, historic, anecdotic ingredients, but he added largely of his own, using freely his invention (save in facts) for poetic purposes. His own are not only the prologues, “breue rehearsalls,” and epilogues (II. Capp. 21—24), but the many descriptive parts, as the splendid description of the feast at St. Werburge's spiritual marriage (I. Cap. 16), that of the procession which brings her relics into Chester (II. 267—350), that of the great fire at Chester (II. 1598 ff.), the descriptions of war, battle and siege, with ordnance and “artillarie”; his own, the fine lyric ingredients which mostly remind us of popular songs, as the song at receiving holy communion (“Well-come my lorde, well-come my kynge,” &c., I. 2963—2990), the Lamentation of the Sisters at Werburge's death (I. 3137 ff.), the “Welcome” to St. Werburge at the bringing-in of her relics (II. 316 ff.); his own, nearly all the numerous and long speeches (woodings, dialogues, exhortations, prayers, farewells, &c.), the apostrophe to the ladies of his time (I. 1779—1806), the reflections; his own, all the illustration, the *examples* taken from sacred and profane history and from nature, the quotations from the Bible, the proverbs, the metaphors, &c.¹

¹ Examples taken from sacred and profane history are, for instance: In beaute anyable, she was equall to Rachell, Comparable to Sara in fyrm

In his descriptions he conforms to the taste of his time, which, since Chaucer, through the influence of Italian poetry,

fidelyte, In sadness and wysedom lyke to Abygaell, Replete as Delbora with grace of prophecy, Equyualent to Ruth she was in humylyte, In pulchrytude Rebecca, lyke Hester in lolynesse, Lyke Judyth in vertue and proued holynesse, I. 799—805; similar instances, I. 2171-5, 2178—2184; I. 1044 ff.: Lyke as Archythofell, chefe counselour to Absalon, Sundry tymes moeued hym vnto varyaunce, And with kynge Assuerus in fauour was Amon, Counseylynge hym euer vnto great myschaunce: In lyke cause Werbode, moeued to vengeance, was chefe counseler to Vulfer the kynge; and II. 1500—1513: It is red in scripture howe quene Jesabell, Ambicious of honour agaynst all ryghtousnes, Peruerted her lorde Achas, kyng of Israell, To sle Nabath for his vineyard doubtles; Also Athalia, the bible sheweth expresse, Commaunded to slee the kynges children all, That she myght regne sole princesse imperiall, &c.; I. 1093—1099: To Noe came comforte after the great deluge By a douue bryngynge a braunche of Olyue, To the prophet Hely a rauen dyd refuge, Brought hym his sustenaunce and saued hys lyue; Vnto saynt Eustach full memoratyue Our lorde appered in a hartes lykenes, To whome he obeyed gladly with mekenes—Of whiche *examples* prynce Vulfade gladde was; I. 788: The nobles . . . came for to seke her, lyke as to Solomon Quene Saba approached to here of his wysedome; II. 1468: Like as to Moises deuided the redde see And the water of Jordan obeyed to Josue, Ryght so the depe riuer of Dee made diuision; I. 1345 ff. From profane history: II. 1201, This Edgare was nominate in cronicles expresse The floure of Englande, regnyng as emperour, Lyke-wise as Romulus to Romains was of prowes, Cyrus to the Persis, to the Grekes their conquerour, Great Charles to Frenchemen, to Troians Hectour; II. 1626 ff.: Alas, great heuynes it was to beholde The cite of Troye all flamyng as fire, More pite of Rome cite was manyfolde, Feruently flagrant, empeiryng the empire: As to the quantite the cite of Chestire myght be assembled this tyme in like case To the sayd citees. From nature: I. 724-8, Dothe not a royall rose from a brere procede, Passynge the stocke with pleasaunt dylectacyon? The swete ryuer passeth by due probacyon His heed and fountayne: ryght so dothe she Transcende her parentes with great benygnyte; cf. 610; 2003: As the ryuer passeth oftetymes the heed-fountayne, The lytell graffe or ympe transcendeth the tree, Lykewyse theyr chyldren encreased certayne In mekenes, &c.; 2949 ff.: The swete byrde closed in a cage a longe season Gladly entendeth to fly at lyberte, The prysoner fetered and cast in depe dongeon Euer supposes to be rydde frome captuyte: The soule of mankynde, moost dygne of dutye, Naturally desyreth . . . to be delyuered from bodyly pryson; 1156: He watched on them . . . Lyke as a hounde folowynge . . . or a dogge dothe a dere by sent of the chas; 1233, he rored and yelled lyke a wyld bull; 1805, proued as a pecocke; 1579, stoness glyteryng as Phebus, and the beten golde lyke an erthly paradyse (the same simile 3125, 3377); 1790, shynyng lyke angels; 3390, more white than the lile Mixt with rose

and the then growing arts of painting and music, had turned to picturesqueness and melody. In his description of the feast, the hall is hung with painted tapestry, paintings which represent the whole celestial hierarchy in the order then used in altar-pieces. The attitudes in which he produces his saint, her way of address, her tone of feeling, sometimes remind us of the Sancta-conversazione-pictures of the old masters, and breathe the devotion which inspired a Fra Angelico da Fiesole.¹ His genuine and true English character appears more in the lyric and dialogic ingredients, in the sense of humour which sometimes pervades his narrative, as in the miracle of the geese (I. 2612 ff.), in the invective against the proud ladies of his time (I. 1779 ff.); but more in the all-pervading truth which makes him cling to facts rather than fictions, and renders his performance more historical than legendary; in the truth of his feeling, his warm heart, his earnestness, his piety and devotion.

Bradshaw's powers have been very differently rated: Warton speaks slightly of him, Dibdin values him highly,

colour; 1814, Werburge professed to her rule full ryght, A redolent floure . . . As Lucyfer shynynge, a clere lampe of lyght. He compares (like Lydgate) the virtues of his saint to the precious stones and flowers (II. 313 ff., 1906 ff.), she is a myrrour of mekeness, a flower of chastyte, a well of clenness (I. 2521, 3140). He uses Venus for love (I. 44, 1884), goddess Cupyde (890); more frequently Phebus for sun (I. 1191; bryghter than Phebus in his meridian spere II. 1389, shenyng more bryght than radiant phebus in the triumphant trone I. 3330). Quotations from the Bible: I. 855-60, 1149-52, 1352-6, 2851-7, 3009-11, 3196-9; 3485; II. 8 ff. Proverbs: Tho man prepose, god dysposeth all; Who clymbeth to hye, often hath a fall, I. 930-1; Tho mankynde prepose his mynde to fulfill, Yet god dysposeth all thyng at his wyll, 3201-2; A lad to wedde a lady is an inconuenyent, 1015; Good maners and conyng make a man, II. 7 (cf. Manners maken man, Quoth Wil'iam of Wykeham); I. 76, 2750. On the whole his illustrations are not very rich, but adapted to the purpose, and in the character of his time.

¹ It must also be remembered that the shrine of St. Werburge at Chester was decorated with thirty images of kings of Mercia and other princes, ancestors or relations of our saint (from which he took, perhaps, the Prince of West Saxons who wooed S. W.). Other instances of the influence of painting are frequent in the poetry of that time, as in Capgrave's *Life of St. Katharine*.

Hawkins takes a middle course.¹ In my estimation he ranks among the best of old English poets. Not only

¹ Warton, for instance, remarks: "Henry Bradshaw has rather larger pretensions to poetical fame than William of Nassington, although scarcely deserving the name of an original writer in any aspect. . . . B. is not so fond of relating visions and miracles as his argument seems to promise. Although concerned with three saints, he deals more in plain facts than in the fictions of religious romance, and on the whole his performance is rather historical than legendary; this is remarkable in an age when it was the fashion to turn history into legend. . . . But a greater degree of credulity would perhaps have afforded him a better claim to the character of a poet, and at least we should have conceived a more advantageous opinion of his imagination had he been less frugal of those traditionary fables in which ignorance and superstition had clothed every head of his argument. The most splendid passage of the poem is the description of the feast made by Wulfer in the Hall of the Abbey of Ely. . . . If there be any merit of imagination or invention to which the poet has a claim in this description, it altogether consists in the application; the circumstances themselves are faithfully copied by B. from what his own age actually presented. In this respect, I mean as a picture of ancient life, the passage is interesting, and for no other reason. The versification is infinitely inferior to Lydgate's worst manner. . . . Bale, a violent reformer, observes that our poet was a person remarkably pious for the times in which he flourished. This is an indirect satire on the monks and on the period which preceded the Reformation. I believe it will readily be granted that our author has more piety than poetry. His prologue contains humble professions of his inability to treat lofty subjects and to please light readers." Dibdin says: "It is presumed that his name will stand among the foremost in the list of the poets of the period wherein he wrote. His descriptions are oftentimes happy as well as minute, and there is a tone of moral purity and rational piety in his thoughts, enriched by the legendary lore of romance that renders many passages of his poem exceedingly interesting." Hawkins: "If it is not allowed to rank B., according to Dibdin's estimate, among the foremost in the list of poets of his period, it is unjust to place him in so low a rank among his contemporaries as the severity of Warton seems to demand. There is a tone of moral principle and devotional piety so unaffectedly pervading the whole volume, and so easily and naturally introduced, as to impress the reader with the conviction that they had an habitual influence upon his mind and heart, and exhibited themselves without an effort, and almost unconsciously in all his expressions. There is much strength and apparent sincerity in his numerous exhortations to piety and devotion. . . . His familiarity with the Latin language has been already noticed, and the reader can scarcely have failed to observe his intimate acquaintance with the sacred writings; numerous Scripture personages are adduced as models and examples of the various virtues which adorn the Christian character; and the language of Scripture is constantly

for his deep learning, his truth and sincerity, his warm feeling, his piety, and the purity of his moral; not only for the frequently happy and vigorous style of his narrative, his lyric parts, his graphic descriptions, &c.; but for the combination of all these powers; and because his poem is a most successful attempt at a genuine and popular epic, rude as its form may still be. There is an attempt at epic style, at epic copiousness, minuteness, and objectiveness, at epic humour, which shows that the poet not only studied in the school of Homer,¹ but had a natural talent for that kind of poetry. The poem is, to me, full of single charms, full of happy traits of character and description (cf. f. i. I. 1301); everything is to the point and interesting, nothing dry, tedious, and diffuse (as in Capgrave), or showy and ostentatious (as in Lydgate). Even in his descriptions he observes the law

apparent in his exhortations and descriptions. Moral maxims and proverbs, the concentrated wisdom of ages, seem to have been familiar to him, and may be detected in many of his pages. . . The remark of Warton is probably just, that had he had a greater degree of credulity, he would have had a greater chance of being poetical; credulity indeed does not seem to be his failing, for though he records many miracles, . . . it is quite clear that he omits many marvellous tales which might have been supplied by the original work, but which would be 'to the readers tedious, no mervayle, sothly,' and to which he was not himself quite prepared to give full credit. . . B. had evidently less faith in the miracles of his monastery than had been enjoyed by his predecessors; in truth, there appears to be occasionally a lurking humour in his description which betrays as much disbelief in his own narrative as the temper of the times and the still lingering credulity of his contemporaries would permit (?). If his own good sense and the growing enfranchisement of the period from the bondage of superstition and papal imposition checked in him any tendency to imaginative flights and poetic paroxysms, it will not be denied that he frequently exhibits considerable strength of expression in his language, and great powers in his vivid and graphic descriptions. A goodly specimen of railing may be found in the rebuke of Werbode for his presumption. Many of the miraculous cures are described with great force, and it will be difficult to find in any contemporary author so lively, picturesque, and humorous a narrative as that of the unhappy *Geese of Wedon*, 'who went mekely as yf they had reason naturall, unto her presence,' &c."

¹ I may be mistaken in assuming that he read Homer; but Homer's poems, certainly, were known at his time.

of epic progression, as when his persons move in procession one after another, according to their rank (as I. 1506 ff., II. 274 ff.). The simplicity of feeling and expression is (I think) sometimes truly Homeric (so I. 1415-23). His speeches breathe a sweetness and tenderness and delicacy characteristic of the genuine epic; even the formal way of address is truly epic. The poet is full of his subject, of his hero; all is steeped in that *admiration* and *devotion* which are the true sources of epic poetry. The details are executed with that *love* which springs from devotion. Sometimes, in his narrative, we even find the tone of *hilarity* peculiar to Homer (as in the miracle of the geese). These qualities cannot but excite our admiration, and impress the reader with agreeable feelings. There is even an attempt at epic composition; at least the inserted lives of St. Sexburge and St. Audry are, I think, intended as episodes. In giving at large the genealogy of his saint, he does exactly what Homer did before him. In other respects he is bound by the course of his narrative.

The poem is written in 7-lined stanzas (rhyme royal, introduced by Chaucer); sometimes a Latin verse is added as an 8th line: I. 2696, 3110, 3118, 3413; an English verse is added in II. 526. Once the two last verses of the 7-lined stanza are formed by Latin leonine verses: II. 1337-8. The concluding chapters (II. Cap. 21—23) are composed in 8-lined stanzas (the last verse forming the refrain), Cap. 21 with same rhymes throughout the chapter. The same change of stanzas occurs in Lydgate, the 8-lined stanza being considered more fit for magniloquent passages, prayers, admonitions, &c. The Lenvoye (Cap. 24) is again written in rhyme royal (as in Lydgate).—The verses seem at first sight rather rugged and imperfectly built. Hawkins remarks: "He had clearly not a musical ear, his versification is not smooth and harmonious, and his naturally defective appreciation of rhythmical intonation has been much exaggerated by the awkward and difficult arrangement of the stanza which he has adopted; with an easier metre his lines might have

flowed with more ease and grace." Indeed, the regular 10-syllable verses of Chaucer, with a regular change of toned and toneless syllables, are not frequently found. But he generally retains the old popular long-line (with four accents in two half-lines, and an arbitrary number of untuned syllables) used by the Anglo-Saxons, revived in the alliterative long-line of the 14th century, and still employed in the North at his time—verses which have a sort of anapæstic (or dactylic) rhythm.¹ This principle does not, however, seem to be strictly observed, and verses of the regular kind seem to be mixed up with the long-lines. In choosing the popular long-line he also retained the alliteration used with the long-line, and still popular in the North; not, as a rule, in each verse, but arbitrarily, and mostly attached to certain locutions and phrases (partly of old date, partly new formed).² Some-

¹ Hawkins remarks: "To produce anything of rhythmical composition, the accent must be laid strongly upon the very last syllable of the line, even in cases when, according to the modern mode of pronunciation, the last syllable is as little dwelt upon as possible; the following illustrations may be observed: gostly remedy, parte trinite, odour savour hour, body clergy verity," &c. This is true, and more so in French or Latin words, where the accent is mostly to be put on the last syllable, which is frequently the only rhyming one; but Hawkins does not understand the principle.

² Such phrases of old or recent date, are, for instance: brute best, wyld wood, sharpe swerd, bare bon, harde hert, wretched world, dere derlyng, doughter dere, louely lady, crowned kyng, chefe champyon, fa'se fend, poore peple, royall rose, royall reme, &c.; mayn and myght, churches and chapeles, wyldowes and wyues, rentes and ryches, ryches and royalte, realme and royalte, vnclcs and auntes, prelatis and pr.nces, hawkyng and huntynge, fayr and fre, meke and mylde, wanton and wyldc, sadde and sobre, secret and styl, well and wysely, to haue and holde, call and cry, sigh and sobbe, wayle and wepe, sing and say, mervayle and muse, gouerne and guye, conserue and saue, &c.; lyke a lady, feruent as fyre, flamyng as fyre, clerer than cristall, after cours of kynde, a lampe of lyght, lanterne of lyght, kyng of kynges, on payne of punyshment, in parte of payne, grace of god, for love of our lord, a well with water, deth with his darte, most of myght, knelyng on kne, dredfully daryng, syngyng swetely, regnyng in regaly, reigne with reuerence, found fals, kept in clos, soth to say, to try out the truthe, to take in a trayne, semyng as on slepe, sorowe came vnsought, vertu to auance, moeued his mynde, &c. Many of these combinations are certainly new, as prynce prepotent, principall protectour, trusty

times, however, and mostly in descriptive passages, it is so frequent that it occurs more than thrice in the same line, or extends over two lines, or that two different alliterations are found in one line. So the same popular element which appears in the lyric parts, in the proverbs quoted, &c., also figures in the metre of his verses, and in the alliterations.—The rhymes are frequently defective: there are several identical rhymes (tell tell, I. 1682; out out, II. 1161; playne playne, I. 2608; cost (cost) cost (coast), II. 1157), or where the rhyming syllable is identical (Englande lande, forsake sake, past-tyme tyme, Oswolde wolde, Kenrede we rede, well-come come, dyspleasure pleasure, olyue lyue, Eadfryde Osfryde, Oxenforde Herforde, Werburge Milburge; also rhymes like sadnesse gentylnesse, ydlenes busines mekenes, example people, resonable impossyble, dygnyte beaute, suerte prosperite, mighty twenty, newly ghostly, reason pryson, &c., rhymes which are very frequent). There are many bad

treasure, charitable chanons, tortuous tormentour, taynted traytour, redolent rose, power and policy, pleasant and profitable, floure of femynyte, diamond of dignite, saphire of sincerite, sufficient to suffyse, dygne of duty, submytting vnder subjeccyon, &c. Sometimes we find two alliterative words in a line: Stande vp Werbode, kyng Vulfer than sayd; It is well knowen thou arte comen of nought; Ledyng the Israelites to the lande of promysyon, &c.; sometimes more: The maker of mankynde most in maieste; Called specyall prymate and pryncypall presydent; With mynstrels melody and myrthes amonge; Our chyfe champion in all our chyualry; Thou cruell pagane presумыnge at thy pleasure; he lauded full lowly our lord; The people were prone and punysshed therfore; Manyfest wyth myracles by meryte of her mekenesse; On a rocke they ranne no remedy myght fynde, &c. The same alliteration in two lines: Her merytes were moche more commendable Than were her myracles manyfest and playne (I. 2606), The messenger merueyled and mused in his mynde Of this straunge message stode styll in a study (2633), Also she refused her fathers realme and royalte All ryches rentes pleasures possessions (1541). Heaped alliterations in two lines: This wycked Werebole the bedyll of Belyall, The minister of myschef & sergeaunt of sathanas (I. 1023-4). In French words the alliteration lies frequently in the first syllable before the tone, as in daily desiryng, perceuyng him penitent, she refused her realme, her pre-eminence caused no presumpcyon, our counsell therto consentynge; or in the second-toned syllable, as in vertue to auance, conserue and saue, aray and royalte (cf. fortune unfrendly).

rhymes, as pilgrimage barge, express rehers I. 2206, doubtles rehers (r. express?), princes rehers, porte harte, solemnysed syde;¹ especially where *n* rhymes with *m*, as tyme ruine, exempt obedient, Rome alone.² Another licence (frequent in the older popular Midland poetry) is, that he rhymes only the last and toneless syllables, so even in endings, as, for instance, gees felde, I. 2619; churches richesse, II. 360; brethur tresur, I. 2329; parte trinite, 3364; is byleuys, 1113; resolued shryned, II. 231; descended notyfyed, I. 589; possessed greued, 2844; rehersed dede, or in heuyn Ruffyn, 1225; heuen (r. heuyn) nyen, 2319; maydyn dyscyplyne, 764; lenton religyon, martyr (r. marter) father, father syster, syster doughter, bretherne (r. brether) aulter, 2226; maker daunger, foundere clere; or in cases like doubtles folysshenes, doubtles quyetnes, lady be, body satisfy, Ely heuy, cruelly dayly worldly, depely monastery, evidently merveillously, consequently oratory, euery robry, allmyghty glory, frosty sagitari, bull irefull, knowlage rage, &c.; and so in French words in on, nee, er, our, te, ure, ell, ous, y, all, &c. (as in power dyfferre, mariner prisoner, discrecion consolacion, greuans pagans, protectour benefactour, artylere vycторыe, dygnyte beaute she, solemnyte dirige, batell befell, delicyous plentuous beauteous, precious in pontificalibus, continuall Paule, &c.); even in example people;³ also in Anna Delbora, I. 2813; Adda Duyna, Peade thyrtty, Sledde fre, 368; Whitbye lady, Ely desydery, Deiram sam, Egnicius gracyous, &c.⁴ Full rhymes, like mother other, lolynesse holynesse, I. 805; Worcester Dorchester, are

¹ Complayne (subst.) certayne, I. 2626, is a sort of forced rhyme.

² There are many more instances of this kind: tyme doctrine, tyme Collatyne, tyme Jurwyne, tyme diuine, baptyne ruine, Salomon wysedom, region Rome, alone whom, sone kyngdome, one fredom, disposicion martyrdom, religion custom, reason wysedom, barowne rowme, rowne euerichone, renowne come, peticion come. Instances of the same kind frequently occur in Midland poetry.

³ The author probably wrote exampull pepull, or exampill pepill (cf. fire Chestire, yere Alexandere).

⁴ In all these cases the last rhyming syllable has of course the tone, or a sort of undertone.

very rare. So in these rhymes again the poet uses the liberties of popular poetry. But in a great many cases the impurity of the rhyme is not due to the poet, but to the edition, as in *realme* (r. *reme*) *Jerusalem*, I. 560; *paganes* (r. *pagans*) *penance*, *parentes* (r. *parens*) *conscyens*, *myscreauntes ordynaunce* (cf. *pagans Fraunce*, *Romans plesans*), *Ermenylde reconcyled begyled* (r. *reconcyld*), *heuen* (r. *heuy*) *nyen*, *hande* (r. *honde*) *sounde*, *lande* (r. *londe*) *founde* (r. *fonde*), *strang* (r. *strong*) *among*; in many cases it is made good by restoring the dialectic peculiarities which the original presented (especially northern forms), as in *eight right* (r. *reght*), *destroy* (r. *destry*) *edyfy*, I. 868; *bretherne* (r. *brether*) *aulter*, *matyns* (r. *matens*) *presens*, 2545; *martyre* (r. *martere*) *were*, *martyr father*, *eye* (r. *ye*) *kne* (cf. *ee*: *see Josue*, II. 1466), *herte* (r. *harte*) *parte*, *soule* (r. *saule*) *Paule* (cf. *Paule all specyall*), *slayne Finane*, *abbesse* (r. *abbas*) *place*; or by the pronunciation, as in *Lyncolne mansyon* I. 565, *Johan extoreyon*. It is clearly proved by the rhymes that *e* and *y* had a similar pronunciation¹ (in *Mary fre chastite*, *Synaye see*, *Caunterbury countre*, *Gregorye natiuite*, *Elye she amyte*, *Dee partye*, *Mersee memorye*, *thyrty Peade*, *thyrte fre Sledde*, *lady be pite*, *party humilite kne*, *glorye virginite*, *victory charite*, *hystorye auctorite*, *myghtye royalte*, *mysery me*, *euagely humilite*, *tyrannye tree*, &c.; cf. *truly tui*); wherefore we find frequently *e* written for *y* (as in *womanle chastyte*, *gladle possibilite*, *truele me chyualre*, *trule he vanyte*, *solemle humilite*, *honorable chastyte*, *misere me cite*, *priore liberte*, *police chyualre*, *lile see*, *thyrte fre*; besides *richely monastery*, *truly mysery*, *Ely heuy*, *I transitori*, &c.). In this way we must also explain rhymes like *vpone adowne* (r. *adone*), I. 1302; *crowne possessyon*, 2360; *towne alone*, *rowme euerichone*, *custome barowne rowme*, *renowne*

¹ Compare also the spelling in *eche* and *yche*, *quene* and *quiene*, *chefe* and *chyfe*, *succide*; *Bede*, however, is rhymed with *Ethelred*, *clere* with *were*. *ȝ* had not yet the present pronunciation, as is proved by rhymes like *nyen* (r. *nyne*) *heuen* (r. *heuy*), I. 2318, *shrine virgine*, *tyne ruyne*, *syde Osfryde*, &c.; *nyne* rhymes with *quene*.

religion many-one; before foure honoure, sore sauour, more rigoure (cf. hour auctour, floure coloure, hour restour succour), but also honour: pleasur tresour, I. 821 (cf. treasure endure, pleasure sure, Arthure endure sure); precious in pontificalibus. Besides, the dialect allowed the poet to use a variety of forms, as certayne playne, certan man Dunstan, certen men women; batell befell, batayle fayle, catall thrall; merciens consciens, mercians greuans; contre Canterbury, countray Journay; brether aulter, brethur tresour, I. 2329; hert and hart, almyghty and almyght, byfore and byforne, &c.

This leads us to consider whether Pynson printed the text exactly as written by the poet, or whether he altered it in some respects. His edition was made only a few years after the poem, and it is very readable, if we except some mistakes; so that we may trust that he did not materially alter the readings. There is, however, as little doubt that he modified the dialect of the original by introducing the forms used in the London press. There are still traces left which clearly prove that the dialect was marked more strongly in the original. Chester being situated on the confines of the Northern, Western, and Midland dialects, we may expect to find peculiarities of all these dialects. Indeed, there are traces of all these dialects, or at least may be gathered from the rhymes.¹ Bradshaw wrote lond hond sond (= sand) rhyming with fonde (= found) bonde sonde (= sound), as I. 23,518 (rhymes like hande sounde, I. 2275; lande founde, 246; Mercelande founde, londe founde, probably also Merslande hande, Englande vnderstande, must therefore be altered). He wrote Paule (rhyming with all, special), saule II. 588 (P soule), as in the North; abbas and abbesse; knowlage (I. 932); slayne and slane (: Finane, I. 866), certayne certan (northern) and certen (midland);

¹ It is chiefly owing to the influence of various dialects that the spelling is still very uncertain; we find Oswald and Oswald, trist and trust, perell and peril, batell and batayle, posturne and postrone, compassed and compassed, riall and royall, orison and orayson, &c.

he uses *ee* (or *ye* = eye), *he* I. 1004 (= high), *distrye* (as in the North); *toyne* (= tune). Forms like *wete* (: *fete*) I. 2212, *smetyyn*, *marter* (: father were), *matens* (: presens), *gebet*, *profet*, *perell*, *franches*, *viset* were frequent in the North Midland; as also *reght* (P right : eight); *mycle*, frequent in the latter half of the poem, is the northern form, as also *correcke*; *whome* (= home), II. 1464, is a spelling peculiar to some parts of the North Midland. In endings we find *u* in *brethur* *Worcestur* (: *tresur*), I. 2329, as in the West; *o* in *lenton* (: *deuocion*), *comon songon lynon yron Oxonford* (the same forms, used mostly in the West, are however frequent in Caxton and other printers); *y* in *byleuys* (: *is*) I. 1113, *heuyn* 1225, 2318, *maydyn* 764, *Chestire* (: *fire*) II. 1630, all of which are found in rhymes. The text has still frequent plurals in *is*, as *tearis*, *hartis*, *prestis*, *princis*, *actis*, *Persis*, &c., besides in *-es*, which is sometimes demanded by the rhyme (as in *churches* : *richesse*, *feldes gees* I. 2619), and *-s* in *citizens*, *Romans*, *pagans*, *Merciens*, &c. (all in rhymes). The rhyme *mynisters* : *sterres* seems to demand *mynisteres*; *Ierarchyses*, I. 1629, or *Ierarcheses*, has to be altered in *Ierarchyse* (northern spelling); *childer*, I. 3277, *brether* are northern forms. The second person of the present tense ends in *-s*, as in the West Midland (cf. *thou knowes*, *does*, *hase*); *thou shall*, *was*, *dyd*, *suffered*, *gaue*, *toke*, are without ending. The third person ends in *-eth* and *-es* (cf. *dothe* and *serues* in the same line, I. 952); the plural in *-en*, as in the Midland (cf. *ben*, *lyen*, *shewen*, *obseruen*). The infinitive still ends sometimes in *-en*, as *waken*; more frequently the participle, as *letten*, II. 1313, *bounden*, &c. *Lent* (from *lenden* to arrive, reside) I. 970, 1778, is a Northern form.¹ Bradshaw still uses some old and dialectic words, as *layth* (lightning), II. 12; *drowed*, II. 1856 (r. *haue drowen*, from *dreozen*, to suffer), *anentes*, *bown*, *shalmes* (I. 1689), *seyn* (= synod).

¹ Latin verbs in *ate*, *st*, have commonly no ending in the preterite and participle (as *creat*, *cruciat*, *preparat*, *coronate*, *congregate*, *arrest*, *electe*; but *extincted*).

If in these dialectic forms, as well as in his metre and in the use of alliterations, he shows himself to be a friend of the people and of the popular, he is more modern in other respects. He imitates Lydgate's way of construction, his asyndeta, his omission of the auxiliary 'to be', even with the participle, his frequent use of the participle, his absolute participles (as well known and founde, I. 543, proued 2543, 3200, manyfest and playne 2606), &c.; though he is more natural, and not so abstruse and difficult as Lydgate. He is still more modern in the use and formation of words. Since Chaucer and Lydgate it had been the fashion to introduce long and sonorous words from the French and Latin for the sake of melodiousness and picturesqueness; the ear delighted in the sound of words ending in aunce, oun, aunt, ous, all, able, ate, &c.; every poet tried to augment the stock of these 'aureate terms.' Our poet stands not behind in this respect. He uses words like alienat, ampliati, appropryat, confederate, congregate, consecrate, coronate, creat, cruciat, decorate, eleuate, endure, illumynate, maculate, metigate, nomynat, conomynat, prenomynat, pröbate, prostrate, roborate, regenerate, sacrat, tumylate, dylate, retrograt; vnyt, inhabyte, promyt, electe, extyncte; edyfy (= build), gloryfy, magnyfy, multyply, putryfy, specyfy, testyfy, veryfy; enterprise, psalmodise, solempnyse; dyscus, expulse; apperceyue, reuolue; sautyng, flouryng, pasturyng; corespondent, equypolent, equypotent, omnipotent, prepotent, redolent, resplendent, sufficient, remanent; constaunt, exuberaunt, rutilant, oppugnaunt, abundaunt, preignaunt, vernaunt, valeaunt; facundious, memorous, tymerous, dolorous, melodyous, tedyous, vycoryous; celestially, corporally, eternally (besides eterne), contynually, historyally, imperiall, lynyally, marcyally, memorally, memoriall, monasticall, pudicall, sensually, supernaturall, virginally, vitally, fragyll; commendable, comparable, incomparable, deceuable, fauourable, honorable, mercyable, odible; myssyue, memoratyue, primatyue; barbarike, polytike; alian, cotidian; dygne, condygne; caduce, transytory, interyore, interiously, senyore,

remedyless; sanctimoniall, moiniall, monyall (and moynes), coronall; essentyals (sensuals); tuycyon, fruycyon, intrusyon, extorceyon, mynystracion, nomynyon, notycyon, collusion, suspection, recidiuacion; dyuydent, inconuenient, encresement; preheminece, magnificence; audytour, enherytour, instructour; valeaunce, purucaunce; spousage, parentage; fortytude, pulchrytude; femynyte, audacyte, lascynyte, ambiguite, penalite, senyoryte, sensualite, amyte, volupte; desydery, lumynary, sagittari; pensyuenece; musture, verdure, pasture, moynes, spouses; homycyde, fysnamy, lygne, ayde, decour, vre, cubycle, subbarb, &c. Many of these words and formations have since disappeared or become obsolete, as recidiuacion, nomynyon, notycyon, suspection, volupte, encresement, desydery, spouses, moiniall, vre,¹ decour, cubycle, lygne, dygne, condygne, caduce, odible, vycoryall, hystoryall, memorall, memorous, facundyous, remanent, interyously, promyt, psalmodise, apperceyue, sautyng; as also formations like enuired, encronicled, depair (= impair), dyspent, reparel; or have taken a different meaning, as tumylate, edyfy, recourse, transcende (a ryuer), dyuydent. Some of them seem to have been introduced by Bradshaw, as perhaps caduce, volupte, nomynyon, more certainly cyrcumfused (I. 2038). Many French words have still the French spelling, as enherytrice, protectrice, mediatrice, lygne, lygnage, promesse and promes, baptyme, sautyng, covent, &c.² French adjectives used adverbially, frequently omit *-ly*, as playne, sure, certayn, expresse, contynual, specyall, consequent, &c.

The Glossarial Index to the text was added by Mr. W. M. Wood, for the convenience of readers, under instructions from the Director of the E. E. Text Society.

¹ *vre* seems first to occur in Lydgate.

² In French words also we frequently find double forms, as promyt (promyttnge) and promyse, descrybe and descryue, moynes and moiniall, memorall memoriall memorous, interyour interyously, suspicion and suspection, regalyte regaly (I. 407) realte, lynage and lygnage, discens and dyscent, &c.

CORRECTIONS.

- p. 16, v. 221, *put* ; *after* delectable.
p. 19, v. 303, *put* ¹ *after* Offryde.
p. 51, v. 1274, *put* . *after* syght.
p. 83, v. 2228, *read* matrone *inst.* of matronè.
p. 166, v. 1034, *read* Galway, Scot.
p. 184, headline, *read* Barfleur

¶ Here begynneth the holy lyfe and history of
saynt werburge / very frutefull for all christen
people to rede.

(Engraving of St. Werburg on title-page.)

¶ *The Prologe of .J. T. in the honour & laude of saint p. 2*
Werburge / and to the prayse of þ^e translatour of the
legende folowyng.

1

H onour / ioye / and glorie / the toynes organicall, 1
E ndeles myrthes w^t melodies ! / prayse ye all y^e princes,
N ourisshed in vertue / intact / as pure as cristall,
R elefe to all synners ! / o Werburge, lady maistres ;
I n grace thou passed / all other, and in goodnes, 5
Whan thou was present in this mundayne lyfe ;
None was the lyke / wydowe / mayde / ne wyfe. 7

2

B y diuyn grace / to vs a ryche present, 8
R eiocyte we may / in Werburge one and all,
A gemme of vertue / a virgin resplendent,
D irect of our lorde (in ioye and blis eternall
S urely she is set) to intercede and call, 12
H er mouth nat cessyng / for them to call and crye
A nd in her trust / of synne to haue mercy. 14

3

O good lady maistres / declyne thy syght a-fer 15
 And graciously beholde / thy seruauant chast and pure,
 Henry Bradsha / sometyme monke in Chester,
 Whiche only for thy loue / toke the payne and laboure
 Thy legende to translate— / he dyd his busy cure, 19
 Out of latine / in Englishshe rude and ¹ vyle, 1 p. ande and
 Whiche he hath amended / with many an ornate style. 21

4

Alas, of Chestre / ye monkes haue lost a treasure, 22
 Henry Bradsha / the styrpe of eloquence !
 Chestre, thou may wayle / the deth of this floure ;
 So may the citezens / alas ! for his absence,
 So may many other / for lacke of his sentence. 26
 O swete lady Werburge / an holy Abbasse glorious,
 Remembre Henry Bradsha / thy seruauant most gracious. 28

5

In hym remayned no vice ne presumpcion, 29
 Enuy and wrath / from hym were exyled,
 Slouth ne Venus in hym had no dominion,
 Auarice and glotony / he vtterly expelled ;
 No vice in hym regned / his felowes he excelled. 33
 As clene as cristall / he bare these vertues thre :
 Chastite / obidience / and wylfull pouerte. 35

6

O cruell deth / whiche art the perfite ende 36
 Of this noble clerke / and euery mortall thyng,
 Agaynst the / no man may hym defende ;
 Thou causest wo / languor / and anguissyng.
 And who on this / wolde haue remembryng 40
 Howe from erth / to erth he must agayne,
 He wolde dispise all thynges that be mundayne. Vale. 42

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- ¶ How at Wedon wilde gyse were pynned at her commandement / and also relesed & put at libertie Ca. xxiiii.
- ¶ How a tyrande without pite was punysshed, his face set backwarde / and by his mekenes was restaured to helth and prosperite agayne Cap. xxv.
- ¶ How deuers princes folowyng sensualite, entending to violate this virgine by power: by myracle were put to confusion Cap. xxvi.
- ¶ How saynt Werburge gaue knowlege to her systers of her departure / & howe she ordred in vertue her sayd monasteries after her departure Cap. xxvii.
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- ¶ A litel breue treatise of her hole lyfe / and how for her myracles shewed after her deth / the couent of Hamburi purposed to translat her body by helpe of kyng Coelrede, reignyng in mercelande Ca. xxxi.
- ¶ The solempne translacion of this glorious virgine saynt Werburge. and of the great myracles done at the same season by the might of god / and merite of this gracious lady Cap. xxxii.
- ¶ Howe the body of saynt Werburge continued hole / & substancial at Hambury after þ^r translacion by the space of .CC. yeres / tyll the danes were comon to this lande / or it fell & resolued was vnto powder Cap. xxxiii.

¶ Here foloweth the lyfe of the gloryous virgyn
saynt werburge / also many miracles that
god hath shewed for her. / & fyrst the pro-
loge of the auctour.

[Under this title the same engraving as on p. 1, and the same
engraving is also repeated at the back of the leaf.]

[BOOK I.]

¶ *The prologe of the translatour of this lytell werke, þ^e lyf of saynt Werburge.*

1

WHan Phebus had ronne his cours in sagittari 1
 And Capricorne entred, a sygne retrograt,
 Amyddes Decembre / þ^e ayre colde & frosty,
 And pale Lucyna / the erthe dyd illumynat,
 I rose vp shortly / fro my cubycle preparat, 5
 Aboute mydnyght / and cast in myne intent
 How I myght spende / the tyme conuenyent. 7

2

I called vnto mynde / the great vnstedfastnes 8
 Of this wretched worlde— / not by cours of nature—
 How there be brought / some men to busynes,
 Oppressed with pouerte / langour / and dyspleasure,
 Some other exalted / to felycyte and pleasure. 12
 The maker of mankynde / most in maieste,
 Ruleth all at his wyll / it may non other be. 14

3

Beholde dyscretly / and se the fyrmament, 15
 Consyder the sonne / and the mone also,
 With all the planettes / and sterres resplendent,
 How they kepe theyr cours / bothe to and fro,
 Euer obedyent / theyr creature vnto ; 19
 And byrdes besely / syngynge euery day,
 Praysynge theyr prymate all that they may ; 21

4

The .iiii. elementes / in lyke condycyon,	22
The fyre / the water / the ayre / and the londe,	
Obseruen theyr duty / after theyr creacyon	
And buxum ben / and euer so be fonde.	
Thus euery creature / as we vnderstonde,	26
Obeiyeth to his creature / with humylyte—	
Except dyssolute man / folowyng sensualyte ;	28

5

If man wyll remembre / how he was create	29
To the lykenes and figure / of god almyghty,	
And set in paradyse / a place moost delycate,	
To haue the fruycyon / of eternall glory /	
If not synne expulsed hym / to the vale of mysery,	33
But that he wolde encline / his naturall reason	
To serue his maker / truely at due season.	35

6

Dyuers people / haue dyuers condicions :	36
Comynly proued / it is euery day :	
Some set to vertu / and good disposycyons,	
In penaunce / prayer / all that they may,	
Some in contemplacyon / the sothe to say,	40
Some in abstynence / to chastyce the body	
And make it subget / to the soule perfytely ;	42

7

Some other reioyce / in synne and ydelnes,	43
Some seruantes to Venus / both day and nyght,	
Other to couetyse / and worldly besynes,	
Some to deceyue / by subtylte in syght,	
Some vnto marchandyse / & wynnynge full ryght,	47
Some ferefull and tymerous / without audacyte,	
Some sadde and sobre / and of great grauyte ;	49

8

Many haue pleasure to speke of rybaudry,	50
Some of fyghtyng / braulyng / and actes marcyall,	
Other to flater / and paynt the company,	

Some to syt bytwene the cuppe and the wall,
 Some to blaspheme / and dyssemble withall, 54
 To backbyte and sclauder / by malyce and enuy,
 Some to extorcyon / thefte and playne robry. 56

9

Thus after fraylte / and sundry compleccyons 57
 Dyuers men dyuers in lyuyng there be,
 Dysposed by a contrary dysposycyon,
 Some vnto vertue / some vnto vanyte ;
 Many maners of people / now we may se 61
 Wauerynge in the worlde / without quyettes,
 As a shyp by tempest / is dryuen, doubtles. 63

10

Whan I reuolued / with due circumstaunce 64
 The dyuers maners / and mutablyte
 Of worldly people / and the great varyaunce,
 And how this lyfe / is of no suerte,
 Now in great langour / now in prosperyte ; 68
 yet after our meryte / we shalbe sure
 To be rewarded / at our departure : 70

11

Than to vertuous labours / we shulde apply 71
 And spende not our tyme / all in ydlenes ;
 For, as a byrde is made / by nature to fly,
 Ryght so we shulde vse / some good busynes
 To our soule-helthe / with great mekenes ; 75
 For tyme euyl spende / in labours vayne
 Is harde to be well / recouered agayne. 77

12

But now, syth I am / a relygyous man, 78
 For losynge of tyme / can not me excuse,
 Therefore I purpose / to do as I can :
 All suche ydlenes / whylom to refuse,
 With the grace of god / the tyme for to vse 82
 Some small treatyse / to wryte breuely
 To the comyn vulgares / theyr mynde to satysfy. 84

13

To descrybe hÿe hystories / I dare not be so bolde, 85
 Syth it is a mater / for clerkes conuenient,
 As of the .vii. aeges / and of our parentes olde,
 Or of the .iiii. empyres / whylom moost excellent ;
 Knowynge my lernynge / therto insufficyent. 89
 As for bawdy balades / ye shall haue none of me,
 To excyte lyght hertes / to pleasure and vanyte. 91

14

But now in auoydnyng / suche great folysshenes 92
 I purpose to wryte / a legende good and true
 And translate a lyfe / into Englysshe doubtles ;
 I meane the spouse / of our lorde Ihesu,
 Blessed saynt Werburge / replete with vertue, 96
 A noble prynces borne / & vyrgyne pure and glorious,
 After an holy monyall / and an abbesse gracyous. 98

15

In the abbay of Chestre / she is shryned rychely, 99
 Pryores and lady / of that holy place,
 The chyef protectryce / of the sayd monastery
 Longe before the conquest / by deuyne grace ;
 Protectryce of the Cytee / she is and euer was, 103
 Called speycall prymate / and pryncypall presydent,
 There rulyng vnder / our lorde omnypotent. 105

16

And yf I vnworthy / begynne this lytell werke, 106
 I praye all the reders / mekely of pardon,
 To correcke and amende / syth I am no clerke,
 Excuse my ignoraunce / and take the entencyon.
 My mynde is to shewe / her lyfe and deuocyon, 110
 That euery man and woman / ensample maye take
 At this pure vyrgyn / synne to forsake. 112

17

And syth that she is / in blysse now gloryfyed, 113
 It were no reason / her name be had in scyence,
 But to the people / her name be magnifyed,

To her laude and prayse / honour and reuerence.
 Her parentes and bretherne / þ^o floures of experyence, 117
 Haue ben kepte in close / secrete many a day :
 Wherefore I purpose / somewhat of them to say. 119

18

Fyrst I entende / to make playne descripcyon 120
 Of her fathers kyngedome / the realme of Mercyens,
 How longe it endured / vnder his tuycyon,
 Vnder how many kynges / it had prehemynens ;
 Also of her petygre / the noble excellence— 124
 For so many sayntes / of one kynred, certayne,
 Is harde to be founde / in all the worlde agayne. 126

19

Vnto this rude werke / myne auctours these shalbe : 127
 Fyrst the true legende / and the venerable Bede,
 Mayster Alfrydus / and Wyllyam Maluysburye,
 Gyrarde / Polycronycon / and other mo in deed.
 Now glorious god / graunt me to procede ; 131
 Blessed vyrgyn Werburge / my holy patronesse,
 Helpe me to endyte / I praye the, swete maystresse. 133

¶ *A descripcyon of the realme of Mercyens / of bondes and
 commodytes of the same.*

20

¶ The yere of our sauoure / by full computacyon¹ 134
 Foure hundred / nyne & fourty frome his natiuite,<sup>1 P. compu-
 lacyon</sup>
 As venerable Bede / maketh declaracyon,
 Duke Hengyst came to this lande in great royalte
 With Saxons / Angles / Iutes / thre people myghtye ; 138
 Desyred by Vortyger / than kynge of Brytons,
 Came to defende[him] / fro greuous oppresyons. 140

21

Also the yeres of our blessed sauoure 141
 Syxe hundredreth foure score and nyne expresse
 The Brytons were expulsed / so sayth mync auctoure,

- From Englande to walles / with great wretchydnes.
 In Englande than ruled / seuen kynges, doubtles, 145
 whose names we purpose / to shewe with lycens,
 But pryncypally / of the kyngdome of Mercyens. 147
 22
- The fyrst realme of Saxons / began in Kent, 148
 The yere of grace / foure hundreth fyue and fyfty ;
 Where duke Engystus / in honour excellent,
 With septre and crowne / fyrst reigned royally.
 The seconde was Southsex / sayth the hystory, 152
 Wher Adla and Ella / reigned full ryght ;
 Whiche realme endured / but short tyme in myght. 154
 23
- The thyrde was Westsaxons / famous and myghty, 155
 Where fyrst reigned / kyng Cerdicus,
 The yere of our lorde / fyue hundreth one and twenty ;
 Whiche realme by processe / and power vycoryous
 Subdued all other / to hym, full memorous. 159
 The pryncypall Cytees / of his regalyte
 Were in olde season / Wynchester and Salesburye. 161
 24
- The fourth was Estsex / Where duke Erchenwyn 162
 Fyrst reigned kyng / hauynge domynacyon,
 By the kyng of Merselande / brought ofte to ruine ;
 The chyef Cytee was Colchester / of his domynyon.
 Also of eest-Englande / was the fyfth kyngdome, 166
 Where Vffa crowned / had fyrst the sufferaynte
 Of Northfolke and Southfolke / knowen in certaynte. 168
 25
- The syxthe was the kyngdome of Merslande, 169
 Where Cryda was crowned / fyrst by auctoryte,
 Hauynge nyne shyres / obedyent to his hande,
 As after shall appere / more euydent to be.
 The seuenth was Northumberlande / vnder Ida & Alle, 173
 Whylom dyuyded / in sondry kyngdomes twayne ; [175
 The chyfe Cytee was yorke / wher þ^e kyng dyd reygne.

26

The realme of Mercyens / by olde antyquyte,	176
As playnly declareth / Polycronycon,	
Thre hundreth yeres / endured in auctoryte,	
Vnder eyghtene kynges / worthy nomynyon,	
Greatest of gouernaunce of all this regyon ;	180
Where Vulfer reigned / a kyng vctoryous,	
Father to saynt Werburge / vyrgyn moost gloryous.	182

27

The boundes and lorshyppes / of the sayd Mercyens,	183
As shewen dyuers bokes hystoryall,	
Were large and myghty / and of great prehemynens,	
Where the sayd kyng reigned by power imperyall.	
This realme to dyscrybe / begyn we shall	187
At the Cytee of Chester / and the water of Dee,	
Bytwene Englande and wales / of the west partye ;	189

28

And so transcendynge / vp towarde Shrewysbury	190
By the water of Sabryne / vnto Brystowe ;	
The Eest-see mesureth / the Eest parte, truely ;	
The water of Thamys / the south parte doth shewe,	
Flowynge vnto London / who-so dothe it knowe ;	194
The water of Humbre / was on the north syde,	
With the water of Mersee / theyr landes to dyuyde.	196

29

Of the foresayd ryuer / and water of Mersee	197
The kyng of Mercyens / taketh his name,	
As moost sure dyuydent / to be had in memorye,	
Mesurynge and metynge / the bondes with great fame	
Of Mersee and Northumberlande / kynges of the same,	201
Bitwene chesshyr & lancashyr theyr kingdomes, certayne,	
As auneynt Cronycles describen it full playne.	203

30

The sayd myghty kyngdome / of Mercyens dyd holde	204
Many noble Cytees / with townes and burghes royall,	
Whiche Penda optayned / enlarged manyfolde ;	

As Chester / Stafford / Lytchefelde / Couentre memorall,
 Lyncolne and Huntyngdon / Northampton withall, 208
 Leycester and Derby / Cambrydge and Oxonforde,
 Worchester and Brystowe / with other mo, & Herforde. 210

31

Many royall ryuers / were conteyned in the same, 211
 With sundry kyndes of fysshes / swete and delycyous—
 It were tedyous to shewe / of them the dyuers name
 In ryuers and in pooles / swymmynge full plentuous ;
 Also forestes / parkes / chases large and beauteous, 215
 And all beestes of venery / pleasaunt for a kynge
 To cours at lyberte / be founde there pasturynge. 217

32

Also this royall realme / holdeth, as we fynde, 218
 Habundaunce of fruytes / plesaunt and profytable,
 Great plente of cornes / and graynes of euery kynde ;
 With hylles / valeys / pastures / comly and delectable
 The soyle and glebe / is set plentuous and commendable. 222
 In all pleasaunt propurtes / no part of all this lande
 May be compared / to this foresayd Merselande. 224

33

The people of Mercyens / the trouthe yf we dare saye, 225
 Lordes / barons / knyghtes / with all the comunete,
 In musture and in batayle / euer the pryce haue they
 The kynges grace to serue / moost valyaunt in artylere,
 In all actes Marcyall / euer hauynge the victorye, 229
 With herte / mynde and harneys / redy day and nyght
 Theyr enemyes to subdue / by power, mayne & myght. 231

34

If they be well ordred / vnder a sure capytayne 232
 And set to suche busynesse / theyr honour to auaunce,
 The tryumph they optayne— / knowen it is certayne
 In Englande and Scotlande / & in the realme of Fraunce ;
 Fewe of them haue countred / by manhode and valeaunce 236
 Great nombre of enemyes / with knyghthode & polycy,
 We meane them moost specyall / in the Weest-party. 238

35

Many other commoditytes / pleasures and propriytes	239
This sayd realme / holdeth of olde antyquyte,	
In royalties and lordshyppes / landes and lybertes,	
Honourably dylated / in worshyp and polyce,	
Flourynge in wysedome / honours /and chyualre :	243
Veryfyed by kynge Offa / moost myghty and excellent,	
Proued in his actes / by playne experyment.	245

36

This Offa subdued / in hystory as is founde,	246
The kynge[s] of Westsaxons / Northumberlande & Kent,	
Droue Brytons to wales / out of this lande,	
And made a depe dytche / for a sure dyuydent	
Bytwene Englande and Wales / & to this day presente	250
Is called dytche Offa / so that no Bryton	
On payne of punysshement / shulde entre this regyon.	252

37

Kynge Offa translated / as sayth Polycronycon,	253
By myghty power / the see of Canterbury	
Vnto Lychefelde chyrche / with famous oblacyon,	
For euer to contynu / confyrmed by auctoryte ;	
Also he founded / saynt Albans monasterye ;	257
Fyrst of deuocyon / to Rome gaue Peter pens.	
Thus royall somtyme / was the realme of Mercyens.	259

¶ *A descrypcyon of the Geanalogy of saynt Werburge, and how she descended of foure kynges of this lande | & of the royall blode of Fraunce.*

¶ *Regnum Merc'. ex parte patris.*

38

T His noble prynces / the daughter of Syon,	260
The floure of vertu / and vyrgyn gloryous,	
Blessed saynt Werburge / full of deuocyon,	
Descended by auncetry / and tytyle famous	

Of foure myghty kynges / noble and vycторыous, 264
 Reynyng in this lande / by true successyon,
 As her lyfe hystoryall / maketh declaracyon. 266

39

The yere of our lorde / frome the natyuyte 267
 Fyue hundreth .xiiii. and also .iiii. score,
 Whan Austyn was sende / frome saynt Gregorye
 To conuert this regyon / vnto our sauoure,
 The noble kynge Cryda / than reygned with honoure 271
 Vpon the mercyens / whiche kynge was father
 Vnto kynge Wybba / and Quadriburge, his syster. 273

40

This Wybba gate Penda / kynge of mercyens ; 274
 Whiche Penda subdued / fyue kynges of this regyon,
 Reygny[n]ge thyrty yere / in worshyp and reuerens,
 Was grauntfather to Werburge / by lynyall successyon.
 By his quene Kyneswith / had a noble generacyon, 278
 Fyue valeant prynces / Peada,¹ and kynge Wulfer / ^{1P.} Penda
 Kynge Ethelred / saint Marceyl / saint marwalde in-ferre ;

41

And two holy doughters / blessed and vertuous : 281
 Saynt Keneburge / and saynt Keneswyde the vyrgyn—
 Whiche ladyes were buryed / full memorous
 At peturborowe abbay / and now there lyen in shryne.
 The sayd kynge Ethelrede / by sufferaunce deuyne 285
 Had a prynce Cochede ¹ / whiche after reygned kynge,
 That translated Werburge / the .x. yere of her buryenge. 287

42

¹ r. Coelrede

Saynt Merwalde specyfyed / vnclde to saint Werburge, 288
 By his quene saint Ermenberge, a princes daughter of
 kent,

Gate .iiii. holy vyrgyns / saint myldred, & saint mylburge,
 Saynt Mylgyde the thyrde / of vertu equypolent ;
 With a sone Mereum ¹ / whiche frome the holy sacrament 292
 Of baptyng was taken / by myracle expresse ¹ r. Mereuin
 To the blys of heuen / to reygne there endelesse. 294

43

The seconde sone of Penda / we meane kyng Wulfere, 295
 A noble valyant prynce / by lynyall dyscent
 Reygnynge vpon the Mercyens with royalte & power,
 Maryed saynt Ermenylde / p^o kynges doughter of kent ;
 Where[by] throughe the grace of god omnytpotent 299
 He¹ had fayre yssue / saynt Werburge / saynt Kenrede,
 Saynt wulfade / saynt Ruffyn / in story as we rede. ¹P. They

¶ *Regnum Northumbrorum /*
ex parte matris.

44

The seconde realme of whom saynt Werburge dyd descende,
 Was of saynt Edwyn / kyng of Northumberlande ; [302
 Whiche maryed Quadryburge / his ryghtes to defende,
 Doughter of Cryda¹ / kyng of Merslande. ¹P. Gryda
 Bytwene them descended / as we vnderstande, 306
 'Two comly prynces / the fyrst we call Eadfryde,¹ ¹r. Osfryde
 The seconde sone, in batayle slayne, was named Offryde. 308

45

Kyng Eadfryde gate Hereryc, y^t was kyng of Deiram. 309
 This Hereryc by Beorswyde, his quene fayre & fre,
 Had saynt Hylde, the abbesse / saynt Bede sayth y^e same,
 Lady, also foundresse / of the abbay of Whytbye.
 This sayd kyng Hereryc / had another lady, 313
 The quene of eest-Englande / saynt Heryswith she hyght,
 Mother to saynt Sexburge / & thre other ladies bryght. 315

46

This holy Sexburge / full of grace and goodnes, 316
 Was maryed to Ercombert / a noble kyng of Kent.
 Bytwyx them descended / a precyous ryches :
 The blessyd Ermenylde / humble and pacyent ;
 Whiche for her vertue / was maryed full excellent 320
 To Wulfer, kyng of Merciens / with great solempnyte,
 And mother was to werburge / a swete floure of chastite. 322

¶ *Regnum Estanglorum /*
ex parte matris.

47

The thyrd noble kyngedome / of her parentage 323
Was the realme of eest-England / whylom in great degre.
Tytylus, kyng of the same / vycторыous and sage,
Gate Redwald his fyrst sone / a chrysten prynce was he.
This Redwalde had .ii. sones / flourynge in chyualrye : 327
The fyrst was Kenuherus / a noble man of fame,
The seconde Eorpwaldus / called by his name. 329

48

This foresayd kyng Tytylus / had a seconde sone, 330
Called Egnicius / accepted as a martyre.
Whiche sayd Egnicius / by lynyall progressyon
Had .iii. noble prynces / that worthy euer were :
The fyrst was called Ethelwod / þ^e seconde Adelhere, 334
The thyrd was saynt Anna / a kyng moost vertuous
In batayle slayne vnryghtfully / now a martyr gloryous. 336

49

This forsayd kyng Anna / maryed, as we rede, 337
The holy prynces Hereswith / for loue and amyte.
They had a noble yssue / to encrease theyr mede :
The blessed Sexburge / saynt Audry of Elye, [341
Saynt Ethelburge the thyrd— / in Bryges now lyeth she—
Saynt Withburge the .iiii., y^e martyr saynt Iurwyne, [343
And Aldulph, after kyng / whiche regned a longe tyme.

50

The lady saynt Sexburge / eldest of them all, 344
A gracyous matrone / endurynge all her lyfe,
Was maryed to Ercombert / þ^e kyng of Kent royall.
They brought fourth a progeny / noble to dyscryue :
The blessed Ermenylde / vertuous mayd and wyfe : 348
Whiche lady was mother / by grace of god almyght
Vnto blessed Werburge / our confort and our lyght. 350

¶ *Regnum Cancie et Francie / ex parte matris.*

51

The .iiii. myghti kyngdome / of whom this royal princes 351
 Saynt Werburge descended / was the realme of kent ;
 Where reygned fyrst Hengystus / by vycory & prowes,
 Whiche was the fourth man / by lygnage euydent
 Procedynge fro Woden / a prynce full prepotent, 355
 Of whom our progenytours / Angles / Iutes / & Saxons,
 Lynyally succeeded / kynges of dyuers nacyons. 357

52

This foresayd prynce Woden / as dyuers auctours sayne,
 Was the .xv. fro Noe / by naturall progressyon, [358
 Of his eldest sone Sem / descendynge playne,
 In saxons tongue Geaf / after ryte and custome,
 Not of the lygne of Iaphet / by theyr opynyon. 362
 Retourne we to Hengyst / and to his successoures
 And speke of theyr royalte / to please the audytoures. 364

53

Ermenrycus, kyng of kent / reygned with great power 365
 The yere of our sauoure / fyue hundreth fyue & thyrte,
 Vnto whome Engystus was great-graundfather.
 This sayd kyng Ermenryc / had yssue fayre and fre :
 A doughter called Rricula / which married was to sledde,
 Of Estsex and Mydylsex /gouernoure and kyng ; [369
 Of whom a myghty kynred / by proces was comynge. 371

54

This Ermenryc gate Ethelbryct full vertuous, 372
 Whiche kyng reygned in kent / the yere of our sauour
 Fyue hundreth fyue & fyfty / & baptyesed was gracyous
 By blessyd bysshop Austyn / of Englande called doctour ;
 He was fyrst crysten kyng / & pryneypall protectour 376
 Of the fayth within this lande / and founder was also
 Of dyuers holy places / and monasteryes both-tow. 378

55

This sayd kyng Ethelbryc / for the great habundaunce 379
 Of ryches and honour / was maryed solely

To the prynces Berta / the kynges daughter of Fraunce.
 And of them proceded a vertuous progeny : [383
 Eadburg & Ethelburg saintes— / whiche Ethelburg, truly,
 By Edwyne, kyng of North / had .iiii. princes honorable,
 And .iii. holy doughters / gracyous and commendable. 385

56

Also kyng Ethelbryct / had to his successoure 386
 Kyng Eadbalde / in Kent reygnynge a longe space ;
 He maryed lady Emma / of fraunce the chosen floure,
 And by her had yssue / saynt Enswyde full of grace,
 Also prynce Ermenred, his seconde sone / whiche wace 390
 Maryed to quene Oslaua : / of them dyd procede
 Two holy martyrs / Ethelbryct and Etheldrede. 392

57

This prynce Ermenred / had .iiii. ladyes bryght, 393
 Lyke the .iiii. floodes of Paradyse / shynynge in vertu :
 The eldest of the systers / saynt Ermenberge hyght,
 The seconde saynt Ermenburge / the spouses of Ihesu,
 The thyrde saynt Adeldryde / all vyces dyd subdu, 397
 The .iiii. saynt Ermengyde / sayth theyr lyues hystoryall ;
 Thre of them holy vyrgyns / the fourth matrone we call.

58

[399

This foresayd Eadbalde / a souerayne myghty kyng, 400
 By Emma of Fraunce / had to his enherytoure
 The noble kyng Ercumbert / full gracyous in lyuynge ;
 Whiche maryed Sexburge / with worshyp & honoure,
 The kynges daughter of eest-England specyfyed afore. 404
 This prynce loued vertue / prayer and deuocyon, [406
 Commaundyng all his realme / to kepe þ^e fast of Lenton.

59

Ercumbert .xxx. yere / regnyng in his regaly 407
 Had a noble progeny / in grace and all goodnes :
 His prynce hyght Egbryct / his seconde sone Lothary ;
 Whiche prynce reigned but ten yere / kyng expresse,
 Lothary succeeded hym / raynyng .xii. yeres doubtlesse. 411

Also he had two daughters / saynt Ermenylde þ^o quene,
The other hyght saynt Erkengode / a moynes serene. 413
60

This lady Ermenylde / was maryed royally 414
To the aforesayd Vulfer / kynge of Mercyens ;
Bytwene them descended / full graciously
A noble Margaryte / of hye magnyfycens,
A roose of Paradyse / full of prehemynens : 418
Moost blessed Werburge / the gemme of holynes,
Our synguler suffrage / and sterre of our clerenes. 420

¶ *A descripcyon of the actes & chyualry of kynge Penda,
graundfather to saynt Werburge / & of his noble and
vertuous yssue and progenye. Ca. .iiii.*

61

THe yere of grace .vi. C. syxe and twenty 421
The foresayd prynce Penda / began for to reygne,
The tenth man fro Woden / a prynce in Saxony ;
Sone and heyre to Wybbe / sayth myne auctour playne.
Fyfty yeres of aege / that tyme he was, certayne, 425
Whan he was fyrst crowned / kynge of Mercyens ;
Thyrty yeres he reigned / with great reuerens. 427

62

Fyue kynges in batayle / this Penda dyd subdue : 428
Saintes Edwyn & Oswald / kinges of Northumberlande,
With Sygebert / Egnycius / and Anna full of vertu,
Thre noble kynges / regnynge in eest-Englande,
With helpe of Brytones / by Bede we vnderstande ; 432
Dylated his regyon / with worshyp and honoures,
Moche more than dyd / any of his predecessoures. 434

63

He maryed Keneswith / a lady fayre and bryght, 435
And by her had yssue / a goodly generacyon :
Peada his prynce / Vulfer a noble knyght,

Saynt Ethelred / and Merwalde full of deuocyon,	
Also saynt Mersellyn / of holy conuersacyon,	439
Saynt Keneburge / also saynt Keneswyde,	
Auntes to saynt Werburge / vpon the fathers syde.	441
64	
Thre of his chyldren / as we vnderstande,	442
Prynce Peada / Kyneburge / and Ethelrede,	
He maryed with Oswy / Kyng of Northumberlande,	
To .iii. of his yssue / for loue and for mede.	
Vulfer and Merwalde / the story sayth in dede,	446
Were maryed vnto / the royall blode of Kent : 1 P. Domneue	
To Ermenylde and Domneue ¹ / two ladyes excellent.	448
65	
Soone after by grace / the myddyll parte of Mercyens	449
Vnder prynce Peada / were baptysed euery-chone ;	
Whiche Peada maryed / Elfede with reuerens,	
Doughter vnto Oswy / kyng of the North regyon.	
Penda therto graunted / without contraryccyon,	453
Vnder a fre lycence / his people were at lyberte	
Within all his regyon / baptysed for to be.	455
66	
Also prynce Alfryde / sone to kyng Oswy,	456
Maryed saynt Keneburge / syster to prynce Peada.	
Whiche sayd Peada / brought from the north party	
Foure holy preestes / Ced / Beccy / and Adda,	
To preche to his people / the fourth was Duyna ;	460
Whiche .iiii. selden seased / day / nyght nor tyme	
To conuert the people / vnto chrystes doctryne.	462
67	
Kyng Penda consented / as afore is sayd,	463
And permytted doctours / to preche in euery place	
Throughtout his realme / and neuer it denyed,	
To baptyse his subgetes / by fayth and ghostly grace ;	
He ayded them with socour / and helpe in that case	467
That wolde be conuerted / for theyr synguler mede,	
As sayth myne auctour / the venerable Bede.	469

68

But by the temptacyon / of our ghostly enemy 470
 This sayd kynge Penda / this vyctoryous knyght,
 Of valyaunt men in armure raysed a great company
 And to the North partyes went / purposyng to fyght
 And cruelly to slee / by power / mayne / and myght 474
 The foresayd kynge Oswy / as he afore had slayne [476
 Say[n]t Oswalde, his brother / kynge and martyr playne.

69

Shortly was forgotten / the fauour of his affynyte 477
 That fully was contracte / bytwene these kynges twayne
 Ioynd at the maryages / of theyr chyldren thre,
 Euer to haue endured / in loue by reason playne.
 yet Oswy offered Penda / many ryche gyftes, certayne, 481
 To auoyde his malyce / and for to kepe the peas ;
 Whiche Penda refused / replete with wyckednes. 483

70

Bytwene these .ii. kynges / was a stronge myghty batell, 484
 Not ferre frome yorke / ny the flood of Wynwed,
 In the regyon of Leedes / where by fortune cruell
 Kynge Penda perysshed / & carefully was leed,
 And .xxx. dukes with hym / were slayne and lefte deed. 488
 The kynge Oswy offered gladly / with good entent
 His yonge daughter Edelfled / to god omnyotent. 490

71

He set her for doctryne / to the abbesse saynt Hylde, 491
 Lady of Strenyshalt— / now called Whytby—
 And gaue .xii. possessyons / a monastery to buylde—
 Whiche place is from yorke / myles thyrty.
 He gaue great landes / to his sone-in-lawe, Peade. 495
 But the thyrde yere after / this sayd prynce was slayne
 By treason of his wyfe Elfede / for certayne. 497

¶ *How after dethe of Penda & his sone, prynce Peada, his seconde sone Vulfer / father to saynt Werburge, was electe to be kynge of all the Mercyens. Ca. v.*

72

After that this Penda / of Mercyens kynge, 498
 In batayle by kynge Oswy / cruelly was slayne,
 And his prynce Peada / after hym thre yeres reygnynge
 Was put vnto deth / by his quene, in certayne,
 These people of Mercyens / rebelled sore agayne 502
 The foresayd Oswy / kynge of Northumberlande,
 And hym refused / as ye shall vnderstande. 504

73

All the sayd Mercyens / by a generall counsell 505
 Fortyfyed themselfe / with power, myght and reason,
 And crowned prynce Vulfer / as Bede doth vs tell,
 with honour / worshyp / and great renowne,
 Whiche prynce to kynge Penda / was the seconde sone ; 509
 This prynce was preserued / afore-tyme secretly
 And saued by his subiectes / frome dethe and malady. 511

74

This valyaunt prynce / and redoubted knyght, 512
 Kynge Vulfer thus crowned / with great prosperyte
 Vpon the Mercyens reigned / by tyle and myght—
 Whiche realme was dyuyded / whylom in partes thre : [516
 Fyrst in the West-marches / & in the South parte, truely,
 The thyrde parte was nomynate / mydle-Englonde—
 Ouer them all thre / he reigned, as is fonde. 518

75

This sayd kynge Vulfer / in honour famous, 519
 Was deuoutely baptysed / with great solempnyte
 By two holy bysshops / the blessed Finanus
 And bysshop Ierumannus / saythe the hystorye ;
 The kynge made a vowe / of hye auctoryte 523
 All temples of ydols / within his regyon
 To destroy and chaunge / vnto chrysten relygyon. 525

76

This Vulfer was polytyke / replete with wysdom, 526
 Vycoryous in batayle / proued by his chyualry,
 His enemyes oppressed / by manhode and reason,
 Subdued his aduersaryes / and had the vycory ;
 From his realme expelled / all cruell tyranny, 520
 Conquered in batayle / at Ashdum ryght famous
 The kyng of West-Saxons / called Kenwalcus. 522

77

Also he subdued / vnto his Empyre 533
 The Ilande Vecta / called the yle of wyght :
 And after that he had / of it his desyre,
 He gaue the sayd yle / by tytle full ryght
 To the kyng of eest-Englande / to enlarge his myght, 537
 Vnder that condycyon / that he baptysed wolde be ;
 And was his godfather / of pure charyte. 539

78

In lykewyse as this prouynce / of Mercyens 540
 Whylom was greatest realme / within Englande,
 Many yeres contynuyng / in prehemynens,
 Ryght so the spyrytualte— / well knowen and founde
 How fyue bysshop-sees / within this sayd Merselande : 544
 As at Chester / at Lychefelde / also at Worcester,
 The fourth at Lyncolne / the fyfth at Dorchester. 546

79

Forthermore after dethe / of Ierumannus, 547
 Bysshop of Lychfelde / Vulfer the sayd kyng
 Desyred the archebysshop / and prymate Theodorus
 To graunt them a bysshop / of holy lyuyng,
 To gouerne the people / by spyrytuall techyng, 551
 To shewe to his subiectes / the ensample of vertu
 And to preche and teche / the fayth of Chryst Ihesu. 553

80

This holy archebyssop / and prymate Theodorus 554
 Desyred saynt Cedda / of the kyng Oswy
 For his perfecyon / and lyuyng vertuous,

To be remooued / to the prouy[n]ce of Mercy.
 Kynges Vulfer was gladde / of his comynge, truly : 558
 Ryght so were all / the people of his realme,
 Thankynge therefore / the kynges of Ierusalem. 560

81

Kynges Vulfer graunted / to saynt Cedda the confessoure,
 Than bysshop of Lychefelde / moche possessyon [561
 To edify chyrches / vnto chrystes honoure ;
 But namely he gaue a certayne mansyon
 In the prouynce of Lyndesy / ny vnto Lyncolne, 565
 Suffycient to suffyse / and well for to content
 Fyfty seruauantes / of god,¹ relygyous, obedyent. ¹P. good 567

82

This noble sayd prynce / and redoubted souerayne, 568
 Flourynge in manheed / wysedome and polycy,
 Excelled the peres / of this realme, certayne,
 In person / fortytude / and proued chyualry ;
 Lyberall to his seruauantes / gentyll in company, 572
 Gracyous to the poore / and a sure protectour,
 A founder of chyrches / and a good benefactour. 574

¶ *A lytell descripcyon of the noble maryage bytwene Kynges
 Vulfer & saynt Ermenylde, y^e kynges doughter of Kent
 / & of the solemnyte done at þ^e same season. Ca. vi.*

83

3^N meane whyle the kynges / mynded maryage, 575
 By the sufferaunce of our lorde god omnytpotent,
 Issue to encrease / acordynge to his lygnage,
 After hym to succede / kynges and presydent.
 He mynded moost / the kynges doughter of Kent, 579
 Prynces Ermenylde / nomynated she was ;
 A beautefull creature / replete with great grace. 581

84

Certaynly her father / was called Ercomberte, 582
 As afore is specyfied / the kynges of Kent,
 Her mother Sexburge / humble in her herte ;

Of whome Ermenylde / a lady excellent,
 Lynally descended / by tittle full auncent; 586
 Her graundfather Edbalde / kynge Ethelbryctes sone,
 The fyrst crysten prynce / of Saxons nacyon. 588

85

Of foure myghty kyngdomes / she is descended : 589
 From the royall blode of Fraunce / also of Kent
 Vpon her fathers party / as afore is notyfyed ;
 And on her mothers syde / by lyne auncent
 Frome the eest-Englande / famous and excellent, 593
 Also of Northumberlande / flouryng in honour,
 Conuerted and baptysed / vnto our sauour. 595

86

This sayd Ermenylde / this floure of vertue,¹ 596
 Was euer dysposed / from her natyuyte
 Vnto the dyscyplyne / of our lorde Ihesu ;
 Enspyred with his grace / and benygnyte,
 Refused this worlde / ryches and vanyte ; 600
 He¹ vsed the maners / of sadde dysposycyon, ^{1 r. She}
 Passyng fragyll youth / and naturall reason. 602

87

Suche synguler confort / of vertuous doctryne 603
 In her so dyd water / a pure perfyte plante,
 Whiche dayly encreased / by sufferaunce deuyne,
 Merueylously growyng / in her fresshe and varnaunt,
 With dyuers propyrtes / of grace exuberaunt, 607
 As sobrynes / dyscrecyon / and mekenesse vyrgynall,
 Obedyence / grauyte / and wysedome naturall. 609

88

Euery tree or plante / is proued euydent 610
 Whyther good or euyl / by experyence full sure,
 By the budde and fruyte / and pleasaunt descent ;
 A swete tree bryngeth forth / by cours of nature
 Swete fruyte and delycyous / in tast and verdure : 614
 Ryght so Ercombert / by his quene moost mylde
 Brought gracyously forth / the swete Ermenylde. 616

89

She folowed her father / in worshyp and honoure, 617
 At her mother Sexburge / she toke imytacyon
 To lyue in clennes ; / presentynge in behauour
 Her father in power / her mother in relygyon.
 Humble in herte / hauynge compassyon, 621
 Pyteous and lyberall / where was necessaryte,
 Ioyfull to obserue / the dedes of charyte. 623

90

Forther of her lyfe / to make declaracyon, 624
 As the true legende playnly dothe expresse,
 Consyder the hystory / with good inspeccyon
 Of blessed Sexburge / that noble pryncesse.
 The sayd conuersacyon / and ghostly swetenesse 628
 That is perceyued / in her holy mother,
 The same perfeccyon / was in the other. 630

91

Neuerthelesse Ermenylde / escape ne myght 631
 Worldely honours / and seculer dygnyte,
 As requyred so noble a state of ryght,
 Ryches / possessyon / namely her beaute.
 But vnto maryage / compelled was she 635
 Of her parentes / contrary to her entent ;
 To whome she was founde / euer obedyent. 637

92

This noble lady / by deuyne prouydens 638
 Elected to her / a spouse commendable,
 A valyaunt prynce / the kynges sone of Mercyens,
 Called kyng Vulfer / famous and honorable,
 Reyngynge in Mercelande / with ioy incomparable, 642
 Excellynge many other / prynces of this regyon
 In ryches / retynu / fortune / honour / and wysdome. 644

93

At this maryage / was moche solempnyte. 645
 Her father Ercomberte / and her frendes all,
 Tho prynces her vnclis / Egbryet and Lothary,

The kynge of eest-Englande / Aldulph in specyall,
 Dukes / erles / barons / and knyghtes in generall : 649
 Whiche sayd company / were redy that same day
 To worshyp the matrymony / in theyr beest aray. 651

94

This royall maryage / was solempnysed 652
 With synguler pleasures / ryches and royalte,
 Theyr frendes, cosyns / redy on euery syde
 To do theyr deuoyre / and shewe humanyte,
 Nothyng wantynge / euery thyng was plente, 656
 Of delycate metes / and myghty wynes stronge,
 With mynstrels / melody / and myrthes amonge. 658

95

Whan this fayre prynces / resplendent in vertue, 659
 Came vnto Mercelande / in the order of matrymony,
 Than grace with good gouernaunce / dyd vyce subdue,
 Vertue was maystres / chefe ruler and lady ;
 The faythe of holy chyrche / dyd growe and multiply, 663
 Relygyon encreased / honour and prosperyte,
 In euery place pacyence / true loue and charyte. 665

96

At the solempne spousage / of this lady bryght 666
 Kynge Vulfer promysed / on his fydeyte
 Errours to correcke / by his wysdome and myght,
 Clerely to expell / all sectes of ydolatrie
 Frome his realme / and fulfyll by his auctoryte 670
 The promyse truely made / at the fonte of baptyme :
 The chyrche to conserue / and saue it from ruyne. 672

97

The myghty realme of Mercyens / also of Kent 673
 That season were brought / bothe vnto vnyte,
 And as one kyngedome / ruled full excellent,
 Theyr subiectes and seruantes / in tranquyllyte.
 Kynge Vulfer by his quene / had a noble progenye : 677
 Vulfade and Ruffyn / with prynce Kenrede,
 And Werburge / of whome we purpose to procede. 679

¶ *A breue declaracyon of the holy lyfe and conuersacyon of saynt Werburge / vsed in her tender youthe / aboute the comyn cours of nature. Ca. vii.*

98

This blessed lady / and royall prynces, 680
 Descendynge of noble / and hye parentage,
 Was doughter to Vulfer / the legende dothe rehers,¹
 Kyng of Mercelande / and of famous lynage, ^{1 r. expres}
 Her mother Ermenylde / ioyned to hym in maryage; 684
 They dwelled somtyme / a lytell frome Stone
 At a place in Stafforde-shyre / amyddes his regyon. 686

99

They had bytwene them / other chyldren thre : 687
 Vulfade and Ruffyn / martyrs full gloryous,
 Synt Kenrede his prynce / of greate auctoryte,
 Tumylate at Rome / a confessour gracyous.
 The lyues of these thre / we wyll not now dyscus, 691
 But speke of the ghostly / and meke conuersacyon
 Of blessed Werburge / now at this season. 693

100

For as declareth / the true Passyonyary, 694
 A boke wherin / her holy lyfe wryten is—
 Whiche boke remayneth / in Chester monastery—
 I purpose by helpe / of Ihesu, kyng of blys,
 In any¹ wyse to reherse / any sentence amys, ^{1 r. nane?} 698
 But folowe the legende / and true hystory,
 After an humble style / and from it lytell vary. 700

101

This blessed Werburge / from her natyuyte 701
 Folowynge the counseyll / of her noble parentes,
 Dysposed her selfe / euer to humylyte,
 Obedyent to them / with all reuerens,
 Loth to dysplease / or make any offens 705
 Or dysquyet any reasonable creature—
 Thus was her maner / in youthe, be ye sure. 707

102

Sadde and demure / of her countenaunce,	708
Stable in gesture / proued in euery place,	
Sobre of her wordes / all vertu to auauunce,	
Humble / meke / and mylde / replete with grace.	
Many vertuous maners / in her founde there was,	712
And dyuers gyftes naturall / to her appropriyate,	
As was conuenient / for so noble a state.	714

103

And as she encreased / moore and more in age,	715
A newe plant of goodnes / in her dayly dyd sprynge,	
Great grace and vertue / were set in her ymage.	
Wherof her father / had moche merueylynge ;	
Her mother mused / of this ghostly thynges :	719
To beholde so yonge / and tender a may	
From vertu to vertu / to procede euery day.	721

104

No merueyll it is / who-so taketh hede	722
In naturall thynges / the dyuers operacyon.	
Dothe not a royall rose / from a breere procede,	
Passynge the stocke / with pleasaunt dylectacyon ?	
The swete ryuer passeth / by due probacyon	726
His heed and fountayne : / ryght so dothe she	
Transcende her parentes / with great benygynte.	728

105

And tho her bretherne / delyted for to here	729
For theyr soule-helthe / ghostly exortacyon,	
yet she them passed / manyfolde more clere	
In loue of our lorde / and meke conuersacyon.	
And lyke as Phebus / in his heuenly regyon	733
Passed ¹ other stretes / shynynge moost pure,	^{1 r. passeth}
So dothe this vyrgyn / aboute the cours of nature.	735

106

Lordes / dukes / barons / within the kynges hall	736
Merueyled on her maners / and constaunte sobrynes ;	
The plente of wysedome / and dyscrecyon withall	

In so tender age / they neuer knewe expresse ;
 Her mynde so perfyte / auoydyng all ylnes ; 740
 But they knewe well / it pretended by all reasone
 Synguler grace and goodnes / to her comynge soone, 742

107

Affyrmyng on this wyse / yf she wolde contynu 743
 With suche vertuous maner / in yeres of hie dyscrecyon,
 That she sholde do honour / by the grace of Ihesu
 Vnto all her kynrede / and synguler consolacyon,
 An ensample of vertu / and humylyacyon, 747
 Theyr conforte / theyr tresure / and sterre full bryght,
 And chefe lumynary / shynynge day and nyght. 749

108

Fyrst in the mornynge / to chyrche she wolde go, 750
 Folowynge her mother / the quene, euery day,
 With her boke and bedes / and departe not them fro,
 Here all deuyne seruyce / and her deuocyons say
 And to our blessed sauour / mekely on knees pray, 754
 Dayly hym desyryng / for his endeles grace and pyte
 To kepe her frome synne / and preserue her in chastyte. 756

109

Where youthe is dysposed / of naturall mocyon 757
 To dysportes and pleasures / full of vanyte,
 This mayde was euer / of sadde dysposycyon,
 Constaunt and discrete / styll and womanle,
 Gladde in her soule / to here speke of chastyte, 761
 Clennes and sobrenes / and ioyfull for to here
 Ghostly exortacyons / to her herte moost dere. 763

¶ *How this yonge vyrgyn saynt Werburge was desyred of
 dukes & erles in maryage / and of the answeere she gaue
 to them / in auoydyng worldly pleasures.* Ca. viii.

110

AS tender youthe passed / this blessed maydyn 764
 Dayly encreased / more and more in vertue,
 In ghostly scyence / and vertuous dyscopylyne,

Obserynge the doctryne / of our lorde Ihesu,
 Had his commaundmentes / in her herte full tru ; 768
 So that no creature / more perfyte myght be
 In vertuous gyftes (by grace) than she. 770

111

She was replete / with gyftes naturall : 771
 Her vysage moost pleasaunt / fayre and amyable,
 Her goodly eyes / clerer than the crystall,
 Her countenaunce comly / swete and commendable ;
 Her herte lyberall / her gesture fauourable. 775
 She, lytell consyderynge / these gyftes transytory,
 Set her felycyte / in chryst perpetually. 777

112

She hadde moche worshyp / welthe / and ryches, 778
 Vestures / honoures / reuerence and royalte ;
 The ryches she dysposed / with great mekenesse
 To the poore people / with great charyte.
 But her sadnes / constaunce / and humylyte, 782
 Vertue / gentylnes / so pacyent and colde,
 Transcended all these other / a thousande folde. 784

113

The vertuous maners / and excellent fame 785
 Of this holy vyrgyn / redoubted so ferre
 In all this regyon / in praysynge her name,
 That the nobles of this lande / wolde not dyfferre,
 But with ryche apparell / and myghty power 789
 Came for to seke her— / lyke as to Salomon
 Quene Saba approched / to here of his wysedome. 791

114

So lyke-wyse some came / to her of her vertue, 792
 Some of her sadnesse / and prudent dyscrecyon,
 Some for her constaunce / so stable and true,
 Some of her chastyte / and pregraunt reason,
 Some for her beaute / and famous wysedome ; 796
 And some, that were borne / of kynges lygnage,
 Desyred yf they myght / haue her in maryage. 798

115

In beaute amyable / she was equall to Rachell,	799
Comparable to Sara / in fyrme fidelyte,	
In sadnes and wysedom / lyke to Abygaell :	
Replete as Delbora / with grace of prophecy,	
Equyualent to Ruth / she was in humylyte,	803
In pulchrytude Rebecca / lyke Hester in lolynesse,	
Lyke Iudyth in vertue / and proued holynesse.	805

116

The prynce of Westsaxons / a pere of this lande,	806
Wylllynge to haue her by way of maryage,	
With humble reuerence / as we vnderstande,	
Sayd to her these wordes / wysely and sage :	
‘ O souerayne lady / borne of hye lynage,	810
O beautefull creature / and imperyall prynces,	
This is my full mynde / that I now rehers.	812

117

‘ From my fathers realme / hyder I am come	813
Vnto our ¹ presence / yf ye be so content,	¹ r. your
With worshyp and honour / and moche renowne,	
In all honest maner / aperyng euydent ;	
My mynde is on you set / with loue feruent,	817
To haue you in maryage / all other to forsake,	
If it be your pleasure / thus me for to take.	819

118

‘ ye shalbe asured / a quene for to be,	820
ye shall haue ryches / worshyp / and honour,	
Royall ryche appareyll / and eke the sufferaynte,	
Precyous stones in golde / worthy a kynges tresour,	
Landes / rentes / and lybertees / all at your pleasur,	824
Seruantes euery houre / your byddyng for to do,	
With ladyes in your chambre / to wayte on you also.’	826

119

With these kynde wordes / the vyrgyn abashed sore	827
And with mylde countenaunce / answered hym agayne	
The playnes of her mynde / to rest for euermore,	

Sayenge : 'o noble prynce / I thanke you now, certayne,
 For youre gentyll offer / shewed to me so playne, 831
 ye be well worthy / for your regalyte
 To haue a better maryage / an hundreth folde than me. 833

120

'But now I shewe you / playnly my true mynde : 834
 My purpose was neuer / maryed for to be ;
 A lorde I haue chosen / redemer of mankynde,
 Ihesu, the seconde persone in trynyte,
 To be my spouse / to Whome my vyrgynyte 838
 I haue depely vowed / endurynge all my lyfe,
 His seruauant to be / true spouses and wyfe. 840

121

'Therefore, noble prynce / hertfully I you pray, 841
 Tempte me no forther / after suche condycyon,
 Whiche am so stedfast / and wyll be nyght and day
 Neuer for to change / nor make alteracyon.
 Take ye this answere / for a sure conclusyon : 845
 The promyse I haue made / and vowe of chastyte
 Endurynge my lyfe / shall neuer broken be.' 847

122

Dyuers other astates / came her for to assayle, 848
 Made instaunt requestes / vnto this vyrgyn fre :
 For all theyr busynesse / they myght not preuayle,
 So constaunt, fyrme & stable / in herte & mynde was she :
 A mountayne or hyll / soner, leue ye me, 852
 Myght be remoeued / agaynst the course of nature
 Than she for to graunte / to suche worldly pleasure. 854

123

She well considered / the texte of holy scrypture : 855
 'Who byleueth her chast / for the loue of Ihesu,
 The temple of god / they be clypped sure
 And shalbe rewarded / for that noble vertu
 An hundreth folde (by grace), vyces to subdu, 859
 And heuen for to haue / at theyr departynge'—
 Whiche she remembred wysely / aboue all thyng. 861

¶ *How þe false Werbode desyred kynge Vulfer to have Werburge, his doughter, in maryage. And how y^e kynge graunted therto. Ca. ix.*

124

AS afore is sayd / whan Penda the kynge 862
 By saynt Oswy kynge / at Leedes was slayne
 And Vulfer his sone / the fourth yere folowyng
 Was baptysed and crowned / By bysshop Fynane,
 A solempne voue he made / faythfull and certayne, 866
 All temples of ydolles / in his realme to destroy
 And chaunge them to chyrches / and newe edyfy. 868

125

The same he promysed / as he was true knyght 869
 Whan that he maryed / blessed Ermenylde,
 Dredynge sore the iustyce / of god almyght
 For his fathers demerytes / vnreconsyld
 On hym to fall sodeynly / and so be begyled ; 873
 Promysynge a-mendes / at his conuersyon
 Vnto holy chyrche / with humble deuocyon. 875

126

Whiche kynge Vulfer / as was the more pyte, 876
 By the wycked counseyll / of a fals knyght
 Called Werbode / ranne soone in apostasy,
 For a lytell whyle / wantynge perfyte lyght ;
 The bryghtnes of the day / was tourned to nyght 880
 Whan he gaue credence / that creature vnto,
 Prolongynge the actes / he promysed to do. 882

127

Vnder kynge Vulfer / chefe stewarde of his hall 883
 Was this false Werbode / ruler of euery porte.
 Whome the lady Venus / brought vnto thrall,
 Persed and wounded / so greuously his harte
 Enflammed with loue / and with her fyry darte, 887
 Plonget with sorowe / syghynge day and nyght :
 The beaute of Werburge / moeued so his syght. 889

128

The blynde goddes Cupyde / vexed so sore his mynde 890
 With interyor loue / and sensuall desyre
 Of worldely affecccyon / that reste coude he none fynde ;
 His spyryte was troubled / he brenned as dothe the fyre.
 Vpon this holy vyrgyn / his loue was so entyre, 894
 To haue her in maryage / was all his intent,
 That euery houre was a moneth / after his iudgement. 896

129

Prouyded in his mynde / how that he well myght 897
 Enforce hym wysely / with boldynesse and polycye
 To shewe his full entent / in maner good and ryght,
 No dyspleasure taken / vpon his lordes partye :
 By this ymagynacyon / he fell vpon his knee 901
 Afore his lorde and kynge / desyrynge a petycyon :
 His mynde to declare / with fully grace of pardon. 903

130

‘Excellent prynce,’ he sayd / ‘and moost worthy kynge, 904
 That reygnes now within the realme of Englande,
 Flouryng in chyualry / in honour encreasyng,
 Transcendyng other prynces / of this forsayd lande !
 My full intencion / now ye shall vnderstande, 908
 Requyryng your grace / in this poore cyrcumstaunce
 At my petycyon / to take no greuaunce. 910

131

‘My synguler good lorde / hertfully I you pray 911
 With instaunte request / and humble supplycacyon :
 Graunte me your doughter Werburge / as ye maye,
 To haue her in maryage / auoydyng all treason.
 If your grace deny / this present petycyon, 915
 Dethe me behoues / full soone and hastely :
 My loue is so feruent / there is no remedy.’ 917

132

‘Stande vp, Werbode’ / kynge Vulfer than sayd, 918
 ‘Our chyfe champion / in all our chyualry !
 your humble desyre / shall not be denyd

Of Werburge, our daughter / now consent wyll we,
 If ye may optayne / her wyll and mynde, truele, 922
 Her mothers also / vnder that condycyon
 We graunt her to you / at your meke suggestyon.' 924

133

Of this gracyous answer / a gladd man he was ; 925
 Reioysynge in his herte / began to conspyre,
 Castynge in his mynde / craftely by compas
 How he myght optayne / to the hie empyre
 And reygne after Vulfer / at his owne desyre. 929
 But, ' tho man prepose / god dysposed all ' ;
 ' Who clymbeth to hie / often hath a fall.' 931

¶ *How the quene saynt Ermenylde wolde not consente therto /
 & how her bretherne saynt Wulfade and Ruffyn were
 agaynst the sayd maryage. Ca. x,*

134

Ⓞ F this busynesse / whan the quene had knowlege, 932
 Namely of Werebode / the greuouus presumpcyon,
 How he had moeued / throught his wycked rage
 The kyng in suche causes¹ / by synguler petycyon, ^{1 r. cause}
 And how the kyng consented / to his supplycacyon : 936
 She was sore greued / at this prowde crafty knyght,
 Called hym in presence / and sayd these wordes ryght : 938

135

'Thou wycked tyraunt / and vnkynde creature, 939
 Folowyng thyne appetyte / and sensualityte,
 Thou cruell pagane / presумыnge at thy pleasure,
 Blynded with ygnoraunce / and infydelyte,
 Who gaue the lycence / and suche auctoryte 943
 Our daughter Werburge / to desyre of the kyng,
 Without our counseyll / therto consentynge ? 945

136

' Consyder ryght well / thy kynred and pedegre : 946
 It is well knowen / thou arte comen of nought,
 Nother of duke / erle / lorde / by auncetre,

- But of vylayne people / yf it be well sought ;
 Agaynst our honour / now that thou hase wrought, 950
 Whiche consequently / shall be to thy payne—
 For all thy labour / is spende in vayne. 952
 137
- 'Thou knowes of a certayne / refused she hase 953
 Many a ryche maryage / within this londe,
 A thousande tymes better / than euer thou wase,
 Is now orels shalbe / by any maner fonde.
 Our doughter to the / shall neuer be bonde, 957
 Nor suche a caytyfe / shall haue no powere
 With kynges blode royall / to approche it nere. 959
 138
- 'Vnder my souerayne lorde / and me also 960
 An offycer thou arte / and of great royalte
 To be a true seruaunte. / now thou arte our foo,
 Tryed / proued / founde fals / in eche degre.
 Thou hase well deserued / to be hanged on a tre 964
 For thy mysdede / thou shall soone repent
 Thy hye presumpcyon / proude and dysobedyent. 966
 139
- 'As for our doughter / and dere derlynge, 967
 By the grace of god / and our aduysement
 Soone shalbe maryed / to the moost myghty kyng
 That euer was borne / and in this erth lent,
 We meane our sauour / lorde omnypotent ; 971
 Wherefore thy wretchydnes / wyll vpon the lyght.
 Thou taynted traytour / out of our syght !' 973
 140
- With that saynt Werburge / came into presence, 974
 Afore her mother / and all the company,
 Doynge her duty / with all due reuerenc[e] ;
 Folowyng her doctryne / full sapyntly,
 With lycence optayned / spake euydently, 978
 After suche maner / that all the audyence
 Reioysed to here / her lusty eloquence. 980

141

‘O souerayne lady / and kynges doughter dere, 981
 My dere mother / ouer all thynges transytory,
 O gracyous prynces / and quene to kyng Vulfere,
 To your ghostly counseyll / do me euer apply :
 As I haue promysed / ryght euydently 985
 To the kyng of kynges / and lorde celestyall,
 I wyll obserue / endurynge this lyfe mortall. 987

142

‘And thou false Werbode / folowynges sensualyte, 988
 I meruayle greatly / thy hye presumpcyon
 To moeue our father / with suche audacyte,
 Knowynges my mynde / set on relygyon.
 yet for thy soule-helthe / accepte this lesson : 992
 Aske mercy and grace / of my spouse eternall,
 Lest vengeaunce sodeynly / vpon the do fall.’ 994

143

Wherwith her bretherne / Vulfade and Ruffyn, 995
 Two noble prynces / manfull, sadde and wyse ;
 Sore vexed with payne / theyr hertes were within
 At this false stewarde / whiche can so deuyse
 Agayne theyr honour / to do suche preiudyse 999
 As to attempte theyr father the kyng
 In so great a mater / they not consentynge : 1001

144

They called Werebode / afore them all, 1002
 Sayenge : ‘ thou caytyfe / who gaue the lycence
 To moeue this cause / so he and specyall
 Touchynges a lady / of suche prehemynence,
 A kynges doughter / of moche magnyfysence, 1006
 None comparable to hym / in all this regyon
 In honour / royalte / power / and dyscrecyon ?’ 1008

145

‘And as our mother sayd / to the byforne, 1009
 Loke well thy progeny / and all thy lynage ;
 A vyllayne orels wers / sothly thou was borne,

Now our dere syster / wolde haue in maryage,
 As semynge for a prynce / of hye parentage; 1013
 Than for suche a carle / by a prouerbe auneynt
 'A lad to wedde a lady / is an inconuenyent.' 1015

146

'Therefore we charge the / vpon greuous peyne, 1016
 Moue no suche mater / nor speke of it no more!
 For yf suche mocyon / come to vs agayne
 Of hye presumpcyon / as is done afore,
 Thou shalt repent / the cause and dede full sore. 1020
 Now we commaunde the / no forther to contryue,
 But cease of suche busynesse / in peyne of thy lyue.' 1022

¶ *How the false Werbode complayned vpon Vulfade and
 Ruffyn¹ to kynge Vulfare by malyce and enuy / and was
 the cause of theyr dethe. Ca. xi.* P. Fussyn

147

THis wycked Werebode / the bedyll of Belyall, 1023
 The minister of myschef / & sergeaunt of sathanas,
 Consyderynge he was / despysed of them all
 And sore rebuked / for his outragious trespas,
 He brenned in enuy / as a man without grace, 1027
 Cast in his mynde / how he myght wroken be
 Vpon her bretherne / by some subtylte. 1029

148

Euer from that tyme / he lay in wayte, 1030
 Sekyng occasions / on them to complayne;
 Dayly ymagyned / with subtyll deceyte
 Them to subdue / and cause to be slayne,
 Attendyng oportunyte / to take them in a trayne, 1034
 By the false entysement / of his mayster Belyall
 Prompte to all myschefe / as dyscyple naturall. 1036

149

In fauour of his prynce / by crafte he hym brought 1037
 (As now is in custome)—with false flattery

Some please theyr mayster / and that is ryght nought ;
 So dyd this Werebode / by subtyll polycy :
 His vengeable mynde / was hymselfe to magnify 1041
 And vtterly to lose / these prynces twayne
 Or destroye hym-selfe / by mysfortune playne. 1043

150

Lyke as Archythofell / chefe counselour to absalon, 1044
 Sundry tymes moeued hym / vnto varyaunce,
 And with kyng Assuerus / in fauour was Amon
 Counseylynge hym euer / vnto great myschaunce :
 In lyke cause Werbode / moeued to vengeaunce 1048
 Was chefe counseler / to Vulfer the kyng ; [1050
 Whiche brought hym-selfe to shame / and euyll endynge.

151

The elder prynce, Vulfade / in his dysporte 1051
 Vsed haukyng, huntynge / for a past-tyme ;
 But vnto huntynge namely / was his resorte
 Euery day in the morowe / longe afore pryme.
 And as it fortun'd / vpon a tyme, 1055
 A myghty harte reysed was / coursed a longe space ;
 Whome Vulfade pursued / with pleasure and solace. 1057

152

This harte sore strayed / ranne for his socour, 1058
 As all deer done / of theyr propretye,
 To a well with water / after his great labour
 Hym to reconforte / and the more fressher be,
 Wherby saynt Cead / had his oratorye. 1062
 The wylde harte there lay / full secrete and styll
 And suffered this holy man / to do all his wyll. 1064

153

This blessed bysshop, moeued with pyte, 1065
 Couered this sayd harte / with bowes and leues also,
 Put a small corde / aboute his necke, trule,
 And after commaunded hym spedly to go
 To the wylde woodes / whens he came fro, 1069

- His pasture to seke. / for saynt Cead knewe truly
 It was a sygne folowyng / of some great mysery. 1071
 154
- (As Bede wytnneseth) this holy confessour 1072
 Was bysshop of Lychefelde / and Couentre ;
 Whiche for the loue of. our sauour
 In wyldernesse dwelled / all solytarye,
 Contented with fruytes / of the wylde tree, 1076
 With rootes / herbes / water / for his sustentacyon,
 Enduryng penaunce / with due contemplacyon. 1078
 155
- This venerable prynce / ensuyng this great harte 1079
 Approched to his cell / with great dylygence,
 Tenderly requyryng / where and in what parte
 This harte escaped / so ferre out of presence.
 This holy man answered / with all reuerence : 1083
 ‘ Beestes / byrdes / fowles / I kepe none at all,
 But I knowe the instructour / of thy helthe eternall. 1085
 156
- ‘ By this brute beest / thou shall perceyue well 1086
 The sacramentes of holy chyrche euerychone,
 To encrease thy byleue / by our ghostly counsell,
 And so to be baptyssed / and haue remyssyon :
 By dyuers brute beestes / for mannes saluacyon 1090
 Our lorde hath shewed / secretes mystycall
 To his electe persones / by grace supernall. 1092
 157
- ‘ To Noe came conforte / after the great deluge 1093
 By a doue / bryngyng a braunche of Olyue ;
 To the prophet Hely / a rauen dyd refuge,
 Brought hym his sustenaunce / and saued his lyue ;
 Vnto saynt Eustach / full memoratyue 1097
 Our lorde appered / in a hartes lykenes,
 To whome he obeyed / gladly with mekenes.’ 1099
 158
- Of whiche examples / prynce Vulfade gladde was, 1100

- Thankynge god and saynt Cead / that he thyder come,
 And sayd : 'holy father / fulfilled with grace,
 If ye can supply / my instaunte petycyon
 That the sayd harte / myght retourne hyder soone 1104
 Whiche is now in wyldernesse / vnto our presence,
 Than to your doctryne / I wyll gyue fully credence.' 1106
 159
- Saynt Cead vnto prayer / deuoutely went : 1107
 And the wyldre harte / frome the wood came hastely
 With the corde in his necke / apperynge euydent,
 And in theyr presence / stode full ryght soberly.
 'My sone,' than he sayd / 'byleue than stedfastly. 1111
 Vnderstande ye may / all thyng possyble is
 To a faythfull persone / that perfytely byleuys.' 1113
 160
- Wulfade, confortd / and in the fayth probate, 1114
 Fell downe to his fete / with humble deuocyon,
 Desyrynge baptym / to be regenerate
 Vnto our sauour / for his soules saluacyon.
 Saynt Cead blessed / the well that season 1118
 And baptysd this prynce / in name of the trynnye,
 Was preest and godfather / for want of companye. 1120
 161
- This chrysten prynce / taryed with hym all nyght 1121
 In fastynge / prayer / and medytacyon,
 And was refreshed / naturally in syght
 With bodyly and ghostly sustentacyon ;
 The next day receyued / the holy communyon, 1125
 With lycence departed / to his father agayne ;
 The harte to the forest / recourcd, certayne. 1127
 162
- The thyrde day after / his brother Ruffyn, 1128
 Folowynge the same harte / by deuyne prouydence,
 Was well instructed / in ghostly doctryne,
 Baptysd by saynt Cead / & communed with reuerence,
 And, as it fortun'd / by playne experyence, 1132

- Of all the proces done / to the elder brother
 All thynges dyd happe / ryght so to the other. 1134
 163
- Afore this season / chrystes fayth moost gracyous 1135
 Through this lande / was preched in eue[r]y place
 By bysshop Fynane / and Ierumannus—
 Whiche Ieruman of eest-Englande / fyrst byssop was,
 And with saynt Ermenylde / came hyder by grace ; 1139
 yet fully conuerted / was not Mersee regyon
 Clene frome ydolatry / vnto this season. 1141
 164
- These forsayd prynces / conuerted newly 1142
 By blessed Cead / to chrysten relygyon,
 Dayly to hym resorted / for counseyll ghostly,
 To encrease in vertue / and holy perfeccyon ;
 With lycence pretended / they wolde togyder come 1146
 Vnto his oratory / from the kynges hall,
 Vnder colour of Huntynge / as they dyd it call. 1148
 165
- And as it is wryten / in holy scripture 1149
 ‘ Who-so is a sure frende / loueth stedfastly,
 And who is enemy / putteth dylygent cure
 Myschefe to accomplysshe / moost studyously :’
 The false Werebode, suspectynge / euydently 1153
 The newe conuersyon / of these prynces twayne,
 Prepared hym craftely / to take them in a trayne. 1155
 166
- He watched on them / secretly euery day, 1156
 To knowe theyr resorte / and vnto what place,
 Lyke¹ as a hounde folowynge / these prynces to bytray,
 Or a dogge dothe a dere / by sent of the chas. ^{1 P. Kyke}
 Whan he had perceyued / how all thynges was, 1160
 He compased in mynde / by false inuencion
 To complayne to the kyng / for theyr destruceyon. 1162
 167
- ‘ My synguler goode lorde / and moost pryneypall,’ 1163

Sayd this Werebode / the fals traytour,
 ‘Pleaseth your goodnes / and grace specyall
 To my supplycacyon / to be a protectour.
 ye haue two prynces / myghty in honour, 1167
 Whiche are my lordes / and euer shalbe,
 If they wolde be true / to your soueraynte. 1169

168

‘They haue refused— / the more pyte is, 1170
 your auneynt lawes / and sectes euerychone,
 And with your lycence / haue done yet more amys :
 For now they be subiecte / to a newe relygyon,
 Vtterly refusyng / your decrees and olde custome, 1174
 Folowyng the counseyll / and mynde of a senyor,
 Called bysshop Cead / theyr specyall auctor. 1176

169

‘your strayte commaundymentes / they dayly despyce, 1177
 And purpose, I tell you / in secretenes,
 Vnto your persone / to do moche preiudyce,
 To murther or poyson you / shortly, doubtles,
 And so for to reygne / and gouerne your ryches, 1181
 Bytwene them twayne / to dyuyde your lande,
 By fals conspyracy / as ye shall vnderstande.’ 1183

170

With these false tales / and many other mo 1184
 The kynge was moeued / to malyce and yre,
 By his compleccyon / as he was wont to do,
 More cruell than a beest / as feruent as the fyre ;
 Depely affyrmyng / that dethe shulde be theyr hyre, 1188
 If he myght take them / in any place
 They shulde be slayne / and suffer withouten grace. 1190

171

In the morowe after / whan Phebus began to clere, 1191
 The kynge toke Werbode / with hym secretly,
 To try out the truthe / and how it wolde appere,
 Wheder his prynces / were gone to the oratory ;
 If it were so / he sende hym pryuely 1195

To gyue them knowlege / of his entent,
For to remoeue / from his hasty Iudgment. 1197

172

The father had pyte / vpon his chyl dren naturall, 1198

Wolde not haue slayne them / the sothe to say ;

Wherfore he sende / the seruaunt of Belyall

To conuay them fro thens / some other way.

The kynge knewe hym-selfe / not able that day 1202

To refrayne his yre / and cruell hastynesse,

Gyuen to hym of nature / in suche great dystresse. 1204

173

This wycked Werebode / came to the oratory 1205

And save these prynces / in great deuocyon ;

Counceyled his message / by malyce and enuy,

Retourned to the kynge / hastely and soone,

Newly complaynyng / by fals ymagynacyon 1209

A hundreth-folde worse / than at the fyrst tyme,

With new addycyons / to bryng them to ruyn. 1211

174

And whan the kynge / approched nygh the cell, 1212

Herynge the complayntes / of this fals knyght,

The chyl dren perceyued / a voyce ryght well,

Cessed of theyr prayers / and came forth full ryght.

On whome whan Vulfere / had ones a syght, 1216

He was sore moeued / as hote as the fyre

Agaynst his¹ chyl dren / that loued hym entyre. 1 P. her. 1218

175

But by the malyce / and wycked temptacyon 1219

Of the deuyll / mannes olde mortall enemy,

And what by the false crafty suggestyon

Of Wycked Werebode / fulfilled with enuy,

And by his owne hastynesse / and cruell fury, 1223

These prynces were slayne / Vulfade and Ruffyn—

Now gloryous martyrs / reygnyng in heuyn. 1225

176

After whan kynge Vulfer / approched his castell 1226

And vnneth was entred / into his hall,
 Incontinently a spyryte / the false fende of hell,
 Entred fals Werebode / afore¹ the people all, 1 P. after.
 Inwardly hym vexed / with peynes contynuall, 1230
 That his armes and handes / he dyd horrybly tere—
 Whiche sodayne vengeance / all the courte dyd fere. 1232

177

He rored and yelled / lyke a wylde bull, 1233
 Shewed all the myschefe / malyce and enuy
 Done agaynst the martyrs / with a mynde yrefull—
 So sore constrayned / with peynes greuously.
 The deuyll ceased not / his dolours to multiply 1237
 Tyll his fylthy soule / compelled sore was
 For to expyre / for his hydeous trespas. 1239

¶ *How kynge Vulfer was conuerted & toke great repentaunce
 for his offences. And by the counseyll of saynt Ceade
 was a deuoute man | and a good benefactour to holy
 chyirche | and a founder of dyuers holy places relygyous.*
 Ca. xii.

178

¶ **T**Han Vulfer, consyderynge / with due dyscrecyon 1240
 His cruell hastynes / and furyous mynde,
 How ferre he had / abused his reason,
 Agaynst his chyldren / by nature and kynde :
 He sore repented / in hystory as we fynde, 1244
 His greuous trespas / and homycyde vnnaturall,
 In conscyence greued / for his synnes mortall ; 1246

179

Namely lamentynge / in soule his apostasy 1247
 After his baptyme / and ghostly conuersyon,
 And for the departure / of his prynces truly
 Contrary to ryght / kynde and all reason,
 The losse of his fame / through this regyon, 1251
 A dethe to his quene / and his louers all,
 Greuous to his kynnesmen / and frendes naturall. 1253

180

- All these consydered / with due cyrcumstaunce, 1254
 He wayled and weped / sobbynge fullsore,
 Plonged in sorowe / heuynes / and greuauce,
 Lamentynge his offence / a thousande tymes therfore ;
 His intollerable peyne / encreased more and more, 1258
 Wofully he went / to his bed by and by,
 Supposynge some dethe / withouten any remedy. 1260

181

- Some of his louers / beyng there present 1261
 Gaue hym theyr counseyll / to hunte in the forest,
 Some to dysportes / and pleasures euydent,
 Some vnto melody / all thoughtes to degest.
 But Ermenylde, his quene / whiche loued hym best, 1265
 Counseyled hym truly / to take contrycyon
 And mendes make / by due satysfaccyon. 1267

182

- Of this ghostly counseyll / the kyng was very glad, 1268
 And in the morowe after / prepared besyly
 With mekenesse to seke / blessed saynt Cead.
 So whan the kyng came / to his oratory,
 The bysshop was at masse / and ryght consequently 1272
 Fro heuen¹ descended / so gloryous a lyght ^{1 P. henen.}
 That of the mystery / Vulfer had no syght, 1274

183

- Whan masse was ended / saynt Cead his vestures caste 1275
 Vpon the sonne-beame / by myracle there hangynge,
 Supposynge on a forme / and made moche haste
 To mete at the doore / mekely the sayd kyng,
 Whiche laye there prostrate / penaunce desyrynge ; 1279
 With reuerence hym eleuate / and gaue an exortacyon ;
 The kyng was agreable / for to do satysfaccyon. 1281

184

- The bysshop hym enioyned / in parte of penaunce 1282
 To destroye all ydolles / and sectes of ydolatry
 In all his realme / and the temples of paganes

- To translate to the honour / of god almyghty,
 With preestes and clerkes / to pray and synge deuoutly, 1286
 Also peas and iustyce / to be kepte contynuall,
 With the werkes of mercy / to be vsed in specyall. 1288
 185
- Forther he enioyned hym / of his charyte 1289
 Monasteryes to make / of great perfeccyon,
 Endowed with landes / possessed in lyberte,
 Therin for to set / men of relygyon,
 To pray to our lorde / for his saluacyon ; 1293
 Whiche Vulfer promysed / to fulfill gladle,
 As soone as he myght / by possybylyte. 1295
 186
- Than the foresayd kynge / and the holy confessour 1296
 Went to theyr prayers / in the oratory.
 And as the kynge loked vp / to our sauour,
 The sayd sacrat vestures / he sawe euydently
 Hangynge on the sonne-beame / full merueylously ; 1300
 His gloues / his gyrdell / the kynge had vpon,
 Whiche shortly to grounde / falled adowne. 1302
 187
- Wherby he perceyued / the great holynesse 1303
 Of blessed saynt Cead / and interyor deuocyon,
 Desyred his prayer / dayly with mekenesse
 To almyghty god / for his remyssyon ;
 Frome thens departed / with his benedyccyon, 1307
 Ioyfull in his soule / to-warde his place,
 Thankynge god mekely / of his great grace. 1309
 188
- As the kynge promysed / to our sauour, 1310
 Shortly he auoyded / all ydolatry,
 Brenned theyr ydolles / correcked theyr errour,
 Translated theyr temples / vnto god almyghty,
 Founded monasteryes / of relygyon many, 1314
 Of men and women / gaue them possessyons,
 Landes / rentes / ryches / to encrease deuocyons. 1316

189

Namely he founded / a ryche monastery 1317
 For dethe of the prynces / in satysfaccyon
 To the honour of god / and saynt Peter, truly,
 Called Peterborowe abbay / in all this regyon ;
 Endowed it with rentes / lybertes / possessyon— 1321
 A place where many / relygyous persones be,
 Seruyng day and nyght / our lorde with charyte. 1323

190

Also there was founded / at Stone a pryore 1324
 In the honour of god / and the martyrs twayne,
 Possessed with landes / rentes and lyberte,
 Where deuoute chanons / ben inhabyte, certayne.
 Myracles and synges / haue ben shewed there playne 1328
 To the laude and prayse / of god omnyotent
 And of these holy martyrs / patrones there present. 1330

¶ *Of the feruent desyre & great deuocyon y^e saynt Werburge
 hadde to be relygyous | & of y^e dayly supplicacyons she
 made to the kynge, her father, for the same.* Ca. xiii.

191

AS this myghty prynces / encreased in age, 1331
 So dayly encreased / her good condycyons,
 That greatly enioyed / her honorable lynage
 Consyderynge in her / suche vertuous dysposycyons ;
 In vygyls / prayers / and ghostly medytacyons 1335
 Set all her mynde / power / myght / and mayne,
 To serue our sauour / day and nyght, certayne. 1337

192

She well consydered / with due dyscrecyon 1338
 Of this present lyfe / the great wretchydnesse,
 How dredefull it is / full of varyacyon,
 Deceuable / peryllous / and of no sykernesse ;
 The tyme vncertayne / to be knowen, doubtlesse ; 1342
 For here is no cytee / nor sure dwellynge¹ place, <sup>1 P. dwel-
 yyng.</sup>
 All thyng is transytory / in short proces and space. 1344

193

Wherfore this vyrgyn / gladde and benyuolent, 1345
 Folowyng the counseyll / of blessed Mathewe,
 Was on of fyue vyrgyns / euer redy present,
 Had her lampe replete / with oyle full of vertue,
 Redy for to mete / her spouse, swete Ihesu, 1349
 With charytable werkes / in her soule contynuall—
 Therefore she was taken / to his blys eternall. 1351

194

She well consydered / the wordes of the gospell 1352
 ‘ Who refuses pleasures / and naturall generacyon
 For the loue of Ihesu / rewarded shalbe well
 With a hundreth-folde grace / here for theyr guerdon,
 And after this lyfe / haue eterne fruycyon ’ : 1356
 Whiche she remembred / and euer fro that day
 On her father wolde call / and mekely to hym say : 1358

195

‘ Reuerent myghty prynce / and lorde honorable, 1359
 Moost dere byloued father / my synguler helpe & socour,
 My trust / tresure / and solace / to me moost amyable,
 Instauntly I beseche you / for loue of our sauoure
 And of his mother mary / of vyrgyns the floure, 1363
 With all the company / that in heuen be,
 My humble petycyon / now graunt it vnto me. 1365

196

‘ Well-byloued father / this is my fully mynde, 1366
 My instaunte desyre / and humble supplycacyon :
 By the grace of god / maker of all mankynde,
 And by your lysence / helpe / and tucycon
 I purpose to enter / into holy relygyon 1370
 And vtterly refuse / all pleasures transytory,
 To be professed / at the house of Ely.’ 1372

197

‘ O my dere doughter ’ / sayd this noble kynge, 1373
 ‘ My pleasure / solace / and hope of my gladnesse,
 Moost dere byloued / and my synguler swete derlynge,

I well consyder / your vertue and sadnesse,
 your instaunt request / and humble gentylnesse, 1377
 And of your desyre / inwardly I am gladde;
 But yet your mocyon / makes my herte full sadde. 1379

198

' All my ioye and conforte / now resteth in the, 1380
 Syth thy dere bretherne / from vs ben agone;
 Thou arte the trusty treasure / to thy mother and me,
 Our synguler solace / and sure consolacyon.
 Wherefore, swete derlynge / as for my heyre alona 1384
 I wolde the mary / and a quene the make,
 If thou wyll consent / and my counseyll take. 1386

199

' Consyder and beholde / thugh all this lande, 1387
 Take the a maryage / at thyne owne pleasure,
 A prynce moost valyaunt / moost noble to be founde :
 And of helpe and ayde / I shall the assure,
 With ryches / royalte / welthe / and tresure, 1391
 Clothes of golde / and royall ryche apparell
 And all thynges necessary / as man can of tell. 1393

200

' Remembre also / how after course of kynde 1394
 Aege dothe sore greue / thy moder and me also.
 Therefore naturall loue (swete chylde) dothe me bynde
 To gyue the best counseyll / what thou shall do,
 To honour and worshyp / how thou may come to : 1398
 Whiche great renowne / and hye astate, certayne,
 To se the a quene / wyll make vs yonge agayne. 1400

201

' God ordeyned matrimony / fyrst in Paradyse 1401
 Bytwene man & woman / whan he the worlde dyd make,
 That mankynde myght encrease / multiply, and ryse,
 Eche persone at pleasure / a spouse for them to take ;
 Now ioyned by holy chyrche / all other to forsake, 1405
 The chylde of the father / to take his dyscyplyne,
 And after that to teche / his yssue theyr doctryne. 1407

202

‘Also man and beast / haue dysposycyon naturall 1408
 To brynge forth theyr lykenesse / by generacyon ;
 But man, hauynge reason / and fre wyll with-all,
 As lawe requyreth / hath his procreacyon
 Vnder true matrymony / by his owne eleccyon, 1412
 Orels to obserue / and lyue in pure vyrgynyte,
 For the greater meryte / and rewarde of glorye. 1414

203

‘And yf all maydens / shulde kepe theyr chastyte 1415
 As ye now do / how shulde the worlde encrease ?
 Swete louely creature / ryght ioyfull wolde I be
 To kysse a chylde of thyne / hauynge thy lykenesse,
 And se the also coronate / as a myghty pryncesse ! 1419
 Enclyne, dere derlynge/thy mynde to myne entent,
 And all these sayd honours / wyll folowe consequent.’ 1421

¶ *Of the meke answeere saynt Werburge gaue to her father whan
 she was moeued to maryage. Ca. xiiii.*

204

THe holi mayd / whan she knewe her fathers mynde, 1422
 Her soule was replete / with woo & pensyuenesse,
 And sore began to wepe / after cours of kynde—
 The salte teeres dystylled / for payne and heuynesse [1426
 By her ruddy chekes shynynge / full fayre, doubtlesse,
 Pyteous to beholde. / but whan the foresayd mayde
 Ceased of her sorowe / thus to hym she sayde : 1428

205

‘Moost beest byloued father / nexte to god almyght, 1429
 your kynde gentyll mocyon / wolde moeue inwardely
 The mynde of any creature / to folowe you ryght,
 Or any stony stomake / to relent and apply,
 And resolue eche harde herte / to waylynge dolefully, 1433
 Consyderynge on euery parte / with good dyscrecyon
 To accepte or refuse / this harde eleccyon. 1435

206

' Father, I haue ben to you / meke and obedyent 1436
 Euer syth I had / yeres of dyscrecyon,
 Gladde to obserue / your hye commaundyment
 With loue interyor / and humble intencyon—
 And so wyll contynue / with lowly submyssyon, 1440
 In this present lyfe / whyle I do endure ;
 Of my loue and prayer / euer ye shalbe sure. 1442

207

' But, moost louely father / I pray you hertfully 1443
 Take no dysplesure / pardon what I shall say.
 My soule / my herte / and mynde / is set stydfastly
 To serue my lorde god / nyght and also day,
 Neuer to be maryed / by no maner of way : 1447
 For sothly I haue vowed / my true vyrgynyte
 Vnto Ihesu / the seconde persone in trynyte. 1449

208

' That is my spouse / and blessed sauour, 1450
 For whose loue refused / in certaynte haue I
 All worldely pleasures / welth / ryches and honour,
 With all voyde busynesse / and cures transytory ;
 My loue on hym is sette / so sure and feruently, 1454
 That nothyng shall separate / my hert hym fro,
 Sekenes nor helthe / pleasure / peyne / ne wo. 1456

209

' Also my full entent / was neuer otherwyse 1457
 Than to be handmayde / to my lorde Ihesu
 And of my soule and body / to make hym sacryfyce,
 For my ghostly welthe / all vyces to subdue.
 He is my dere spouse / solace / helthe moost true, 1461
 On hym is all my herte / and hase ben set alway,
 And euer shalbe / vnto my endyng day. 1463

210

' In this wretched worlde / we can not longe endure 1464
 And of this present lyfe / we are in no suerte ;
 As we haue deserued / so we shalbe sure

After this pylgrymage / rewarded for to be.
 For mercy and grace / therfore mekely call we 1468
 Whyle we haue tyme and space— / for than it is to late
 Whan dethe with his darte / sayth to vs chekemate. 1470

211

'Wherfore, dere father / I shewe you now agayne 1471
 All my hole herte / desyre and entent,
 Whiche euer hath ben / and so shalbe, certayne,
 For to be relygyous / chast / and obedyent,
 Namely at Ely / for theyr vertue excellent. 1475
 Father, I requyre you / for chrystes loue and charyte,
 My meke supplycacyon / now graunte it vnto me.' 1477

212

The kynge well consydered / his daughters desyre, 1478
 Her constaunte true mynde / and pure deuocyon :
 Graunted her petycyon / with synguler loue entyre,
 'Trustyng by her prayer / and dayly supplycacyon
 Vnto heuen-blysse / the rather for to come. 1482
 Her mother Ermenylde / was gladde of this tydyng
 And lauded full lowly / our lorde and heuen kynge. 1484

¶ *How saynt Werburge was made a moynes after her desyre
 at the monastery of Ely vnder saynt Audry | lady and
 abbesse. Ca. xv.*

213

THan the kynge remembred / with due cyrcumstaunce
 The excellent vertue / sadnes / and granye [1485
 Of his dere daughter / and the perfyte constaunce,
 Her humble petycyon / and pure vrygnyte ;
 He thanked our lorde / with great humylyte 1489
 Of his infynyte grace / that so royall a floure
 Frome hym descended / to his prayse and honoure. 1491

214

He sende messages / in all goodly hast 1492
 With letters myssyue / thurgh his regyon,
 Commaundyng his subiectes / they shulde full fast

By a day assygned / be redy euerychone
 In theyr best maner / with hym for to gone 1496
 To brynge his doughter / to the hous of Ely,
 There to be relygyous / after her desydery. 1498

215

Whan the day was come / of theyr appoyntment, 1499
 The nobles of the realme / and lordes were redy
 To attende on theyr souerayne / at his commaundyment.

Kynge Vulfer prepared / all thyng pleasauntly
 And of his court / had chosen a noble company 1503
 In theyr best aray / royalte / and renowne,
 To offer saynt werburge / to god and relygyon. 1505

216

The kynge on his Journey / rode forthe royally, 1506
 The quene hym folowed / as is the custome ;
 Werburge succeded them consequently ;

The peeres and his counseyll / knewe well theyr rowme,
 Dukes / erles / lordes / and many a worthy barowne, 1510
 Knyghtes / squyers / gentyls / of her kynred also, [1512
 With ladyes and gentylwomen / & seruauentes both-two.

217

Whan the kynge approched / the sayd monastery, 1513
 Saynt Audry, than abbesse / toke her holy couent
 And mette the sayd kynge / and all his company
 With solempne processyon / and gretynge benyuolent,

Praysynge our lorde god omnypotent 1517
 Whiche of his goodnes / to that congregacyon ¹ 1 P.congregacyon
 Sende them a syster / of suche perfeccyon. 1519

218

Wereburge requyred / by the order of charyte 1520
 Mekely on her knees / to enter relygyon.
 Saynt Audry receyued / of her benygnyte

And graunted fre lycence / after her petycyon.
 Gladde were also / the hole congregacyon 1524
 And sange (Te deum), with moche reuerence,
 Magnyfyenge our lorde / of his prouydence. 1526

219

She was receuyed / with moche solempnyte 1527
 Into the holy order / after her entent,
 To proue her sadnes / and humylyte
 (As is the custome), and so be obedyent,
 To lyue euer after / humble / chast / and contynent. 1531
 Than dyd theyr Ioye / merueylously encreas,
 Consyderynge her pacyens / and perfyte holynes. 1533

220

Her royall dyademe / and shynynge coronall 1534
 Was fyrst refuted / for loue of our sauoure,
 The poore vayle accepted / and the symple pall,
 The royall ryche purpull / reiected that same houre,
 With other clothes of golde / sylkes of great honoure ; 1538
 She toke lowe appareyll / vestures that were blake—
 All her plesaunt garmentes / she clerely dyd forsake. 1540

221

Also she refused / her fathers realme and royalte, 1541
 All ryches / rentes / pleasures / possessyon,
 With all worldely honoures / full of vanyte ;
 Lowly submyttynge her / vnder subieccyon,
 Vertu to encrese / myndynge moost relygyon ; 1545
 She refused yet more her owne proper wyll,
 Put all to her abbesse / her order to fulfyll. 1547

¶ *Of the great solempnyte kynge Vulfer made at the ghostly
 maryage of saynt Werburge his doughter / to at his
 louers / cosyms / and frendes. Ca. xvi.*

222

¶ **K**ynge Vulfer, her father / at this ghostly spousage 1548
 Prepared great tryumphes / and solempnyte,
 Made a royall feest / as custome is of maryage,
 Sende for his frendes / after good humanyte,
 Kepte a noble housholde / shewed great lyberalyte 1552

Bothe to ryche and poore / that to this feest wolde come—
No man was denyed / euery man was well-come. 1554

223

Her vncles and aunes / were present there all : 1555

Ethelred and Merwalde / and Mercelly also—

Thre blessed kynges / whome sayntes we do call ;

Saint keneswyd / saint keneburg / theyr systers both-two,

And of her noble lygnage / many other mo 1559

Were redy that season / with reuerence and honour,

At this noble tryumphe / to do all theyr deuour. 1561

224

Tho kynges mette them / with theyr company : 1562

Egbryct, kyng of kent / brother to the quene,

The seconde was Aldulphe / kyng of the eest party,

Brother to saynt Audry / wyfe and mayde serene,

With dyuers of theyr progeny / and nobles, as I wene ; 1566

Dukes / erles / barons / and lordes ferre and nere

In theyr best aray / were present all in-fere. 1568

225

It were full tedyous / to make descrypeyon 1569

Of the great tryumphe / and solempne royalte

Belongynge to the feest / the honour and prouysyon

By playne declaracyon / vpon euery partye ;

But, the sothe to say / withouten ambyguyte, 1573

All herbes and floures / fragraunt, fayre and swete

Were strawed in halles / and layd vnder theyr fete. 1575

226

Clothes of golde and arras / were hanged in the hall, 1576

Depaynted with pyctures / and hystories manyfolde,

Well wrought and craftely / with precyous stones all

Glyteryng as Phebus / and the beten golde

Lyke an erthly paradise / pleasaunt to beholde. 1580

As for the sayd moynes / was not them amonge

But prayenge in her cell / as done all nouyce yonge. 1582

227

The story of Adam / there was goodly wrought 1583

And of his wyfe Eue / bytwene them the serpent,
 How they were deceyued / and to theyr peynes brought ;
 There was Cayn and Abell / offerynge theyr present,
 The sacryfyce of Abell / accepte full euydent ; 1587
 Tuball and Tubalcain / were purtrayed in that place,
 The inuentours of musyke / and craftes by great grace. 1589

228

Noe and his shyppes / was made there curiously, 1590
 Sendyng forthe a rauens / whiche neuer came agayne,
 And how the doue returned / with a braunche hastily,
 A token of conforte and peace / to man, certayne ;
 Abraham there was / standyng vpon the mount playne
 To offer in sacryfyce / Isaac, his dere sone, [1594
 And how the shepe for hym / was offered in oblacyon. 1596

229

The twelue sones of Iacob / there were in purtrayture, 1597
 And how into Egypt / yonge Ioseph was solde,
 There was inprysoned / by a false coniectour,
 After in all Egypte / was ruler (as is tolde) ;
 There was in pecture / Moyses wyse and bolde, 1601
 Our lorde apperynge / in busshe flammyng as fyre
 And nothyng therof brent / lefe / tree / nor spyre. 1603

230

The ten plagis of Egypte / were well embost, 1604
 The chyldren of Israell / passyng the reed see,
 Kyng Pharos drowned / with all his proude hoost ;
 And how the two tables / at the mounte of Synaye
 Were gyuen to Moyses / and how soone to ydolatry 1608
 The people were prone / and punysshed were therfore,
 How Datan and Abyron / for pryde were lost full youre. 1610

231

Duke Iosue was ioyned / after them in pecture, 1611
 Ledyng the Israhelytes / to the lande of promysyon,
 And how the sayd lande / was dyuyded by mesure
 To the people of god / by equall sundry porcyon ;
 The Iudges and bysshops / were there euerychone, 1615

Theyr noble actes / and tryumphes Marcyall
Fresshly were browdred / in these clothes royall. 1617

232

Nexte to hye borde-lorde / appered fayre and bryght 1618

Kynge Saull, and Dauyd / and prudent Salomon,

Roboas succedyng / whiche soone lost his myght,

The good kynge Esechyas / and his generacyon ;

And so to the Machabees / and dyuers other nacyon 1622

All these sayd storyes / so rychely done and wrought,

Belongyng to kyng Vulfer / agayn y^t tyme were brought. 1624

233

But ouer the hye desse / in the pryncypall place, 1625

Where the sayd thre kynges / sate crowned all,

The best hallynge hanged / as reason was :

Wherin were wrought / the .ix. ordres angelycall

Dyuyded in thre Ierarchyses / not cesyng to call 1629

'Sanctus / sanctus / sanctus/ blessed be the trynyte,

Dominus deus sabaoth/ thre persones in one deyte.' 1631

234

Nexte in ordre suyng / sette in goodly purtrayture, 1632

Was our blessed lady / floure of femynyte,

With the twelue apostles / echeone in his fygure,

And the foure euangelystes / wrought moost curyously,

Also the dyscyples / of chryst in theyr degre, 1636

Prechyng and techyng / vnto euery nacyon

The faythtes of holy chyrche / for theyr saluacyon. 1638

235

Martyrs than folowed / ryght manyfestly : 1639

The holy innocentes / whome Herode had slayne,

Blessed saynt Stephan / the prothomartyr truly,

Saynt Laurence / saynt Vyncent / sufferyng great payne,

With many other mo / than here ben now, certayne ; 1643

Of whiche sayd martyrs / exsample we may take

Pacyence to obserue / in herte for chrystes sake. 1645

236

Confessours approched / ryght conuenient, 1646

Fresshely embrodred / in ryche tysshewe and fyne :
 Saynt Nycholas, saynt Benedycte / and his couent,
 Saynt Ierom / Basylyus / and saynt Augustyne,
 Gregory the great doctour/Ambrose & saynt Martyne; 1650
 All these were sette / in goodly purtrayture—
 Them to beholde / was a heuenly pleasure. 1652

237

Vyrgyns them folowed / crowned with the lyly, 1653
 Amonge whome our lady/ chefe presydent was ;
 Some crowned with rooses / for theyr great vyctory :
 Saynt Katheryne / saynt Margarete / saynt Agathas,
 Saynt Cycyly / saynt Agnes / and saynt Charytas, 1657
 Saynt Lucye / saynt Wenefryde / and saynt Apolyn ;
 All these were brothered / the clothes of golde within.1659

238

Vpon the other syde / of the hall sette were 1660
 Noble auncyent storyes / & how the stronge Sampson
 Subdued his enemyes / by his myghty power ;
 Of Hector of Troy / slayne by fals treason,
 Of noble Arthur / kyng of this regyon ; 1664
 With many other mo / whiche it is to longe
 Playnly to expresse / this tyme you amonge. 1666

239

The tables were couered / with clothes of Dyaper, 1667
 Rychely enlarged / with syluer and with golde ;
 The cupborde with plate / shynynge fayre and clere.
 Marshallles theyr offyces / fulfilled manyfolde.
 Of myghty wyne plenty / bothe newe and olde, 1671
 All-maner kynde / of meetes delycate
 (Whan grace was sayd) to them was preparate. 1673

240

To this noble feest / there was suche ordynaunce, 1674
 That nothyng wanted / that goten myght be
 On see and on lande / but there was habundaunce
 Of all-maner pleasures / to be had for monye ;
 The bordes all charged / full of meet plente, 1678

- And dyuers subtyltes / prepared sothly were
 With cordyall spyces / theyr ghestes for to chere. 1680
 241
- The Ioyfull wordes / and swete communycacyon 1681
 Spoken at the table / it were harde to tell,
 Eche man at lyberte / without interrupcyon,
 Bothe sadnes and myrthes / also pryue counsell,
 Some adulacyon / some the truthe dyd tell ; 1685
 But the great astates / spake of theyr regyons,
 Knyghtes of theyr chyualry / of craftes the comons. 1687
 242
- Certayne, at eche cours / of seruyce in the hall
 Trumpettes blewe vp / shalmes and claryons,
 Shewyng the melody with / toynes musycall.
 Dyuers other mynstrelles / in crafty proporecyons
 Made swete concordance / and lusty dyuysyons— 1692
 An heuenly pleasure / suche armony to here,
 Reioysynge the hertes / of the audyence full clere. 1694
 243
- A synguler mynstrell / all other ferre passynge, 1695
 Toynd his instrument / in pleasaunte armony
 And sange most swetely / the company gladlyng,
 Of myghty conquerours / the famous vycory,
 Wherwith was rauysshed / theyr spyrytes and memory ; 1699
 Specyally he sange / of the great Alexandere,
 Of his tryumphes and honours / enduryng .xii. yere. 1701
 244
- Solemply he songe / the state of the Romans, 1702
 Ruled vnder kynge / by polycy and wysedome,
 Of theyr hye iustyce / and ryghtfull ordynauns
 Dayly encreasyng / in worshyp and renowne,
 Tyll Tarquyne þ^e proude kynge / with y^t great confusyon 1706
 Oppressed dame Lucrece / the wyfe of Colatyne ;
 Kynge neuer reygnd in Rome / syth that tyme. 1708
 245
- Also how the Romayns / vnder thre dyctatours 1709

Gouerned all regyons / of the worlde ryght wysely,
 Tyll Iulyus Cesar / excellynge all conquerours,
 Subdued Pompeius / and toke the hole monarchy
 And the rule of Rome / to hym-selfe manfully; 1713
 But Cassius Brutus / the fals conspyratour,
 Caused to be slayne / the sayd noble emperour. 1715

246

After the sayd Iulyus / succeeded his syster sone, 1716
 Called Octauyanus / in the imperyall see;
 And by his precepte / was made descrypcyon
 To euery regyon / lande / shyre / and cytee,
 A trybute to pay / vnto his dygnyte: 1720
 That tyme was / vnyuersall peas and honour:
 In whiche tyme was borne / our blessed sauoure. 1722

247

All these hystories / noble and auntyent 1723
 Reioysynge the audyence / he sange with pleasuer,
 And many other mo / of the newe testament,
 Pleasaunt and profytable / for theyr soules cure,
 Whiche be omytted / now not put in vre. 1727
 The mynysters were redy / theyr offyce to fulfyll
 To take vp the tables / at theyr lordes wyll. 1729

248

Whan this noble feest / and great solempnyte, 1730
 Dayly endurynge / a longe tyme and space,
 Was royally ended / with honour and royalte,
 Eche kynge at other / lysence taken hace,
 And so departed from thens / to theyr place; 1734
 Kynge Vulfer retourned / with worshyp and renowne
 Frome the house of Ely / to his owne mansyon. 1736

¶ *Of the holy professyon & ghostly conuersacyon saynt
Werburge vsed at Ely in relygyon / vnder saynt Audry
her abbesse and cosyn. Ca. xvii.*

249

SO whan this vyrgyn / the spouse of Ihesu, 1737
Had fully contynued / in holy relygyon
With mekenesse / pacyens / and all vertu
Fully the yere / of her probacyon,
Than she made instaunce / for her professyon 1741
Vnto saynt Audry / her lady and abbesse ;
Whiche soone was graunted / with great gladnesse. 1743

250

Ordynauce they made / and great royalte, 1744
Her frendes were called / agaynst that season ;
She was professed / with great humylyte,
The obseruauance done / with due deuocyon :
She made solempne vowe / of ghostly conuersacyon, 1748
Mekely to obserue / obedyence and chastyte
Endurynge her lyfe / and wylfull pouerte. 1750

251

By the exsample / of her perfeccyon 1751
Many dyuers persones / of her noble lynage
Refused this worlde / and entred relygyon,
Renounsynge vayne pleasures / ryches and maryage,
Enclyned to vertue / for theyr ghostly anauntage, 1755
As may be specyfyed / here after folowyng
Theyr names / theyr astate / and theyr good lyuyng. 1757

252

Now this glorious vyrgyn / after her desyre 1758
Is ghostly maryed / to our lorde Ihesu,
Accordynge to her entent / and true loue entyre,
She dayly encreased / frome vertu to vertu,
With more strayter lyfe / vyces to subdu ; 1762
The longer she endured / in relygyon
The better she prepared / her herte to deuocyon. 1764

253

And tho this vyrgyn / clerely dyd forsake 1765
 All ryches, honours / and pleasures worldly,
 With all possessyons / for her lordes sake,
 She thought than she reygned / moost lyke a lady,
 Cause that she lyued / in chrystes seruyce dayly ; 1769
 And certayne it is / holy scrypture recordynge,
 'Who serues well god / dothe reygne lyke a kyngo.' 1771

254

In prayer / penaunce / and / contemplacyon 1772
 Was all her busynesse / and study alway,
 Compasyng by what maner of medytacyon
 She myght best please / our lorde to his pay,
 Offerynge her persone / a true sacryfyce euery day ; 1776
 No labour her greued / loue was so feruent ;
 Her body vpon erthe / her soule in heuen lent. 1778

255

Swete / comly creatures / ladyes euerychone, 1779
 Sekynge for pleasures / ryches and arayment,
 Blynded by your beaute / and synguler affeccyon,
 Consyder this vyrgyn / humble and pacyent :
 A spectacle of vertue / euer obedyent ; 1783
 Beholde how she hase / clerely layde away
 Her royall ryche clothes / and is in meke aray. 1785

256

your garmentes now be gay and gloryous, 1786
 Euery yere made / after a newe inuencyon,
 Of sylke and veluet / costly and precyous,
 Brothered full rychely / after the beest facyon,
 Shynynge lyke angels / in your opynyon, 1790
 Where lesse wolde suffyse / and content as well
 As all that great cost / folowyng wyse counsell. 1792

257

A playne exsample / now ye may take 1793
 Of this myghty kynges doughter dere,
 Whiche for the loue of god / dyd forsake

- All suche vayne pleasures / and garmentes clere ;
 She gaue herselfe / to penaunce and prayere : 1797
 Wherefore, fayre ladyes / do waye suche vanyte,
 Prepare your-selfe / to vertue and humylyte ! 1799
 258
- Some of lowe byrthe / excellynge theyr degre 1800
 Done couet to haue / as royall ryche vesture,
 Worldly honours / also the sufferaynte,
 As they were ladyes / by lyne of nature :
 Of dredefull mysery / they bere the fygure, 1804
 Prowde as a Pecocke / whelynge full bryght ;
 All is but vanyte / contentynge the syght. 1806
 259
- Glorious vyrgyn / replete with synguler grace, 1807
 Endowed with souerayne gyftes celestyall,
 Refusynge voyde pleasures / whan thou had space,
 And honours transytory / whiche hath brought in thrall
 A thousande persones / in ruyne to fall ; 1811
 A myrrour thou arte / of vyrgynall clennes,
 Of true obedyence / and perfyte mekenes. 1813
 260
- So Werburge professed / to her rule full ryght, 1814
 A redolent floure / all vertue to augment,
 As Lucyfer shynynge / a clere lampe of lyght ;
 For whome her spouse / god sone omnypotent,
 Shewed many myracles / to euery pacyent, 1818
 A sygne her loue was / supernaturall,
 Closed in our lorde / by grace supernall. 1820
 261
- The excellent goodnes / of this moyñes, 1821
 And fame of vertue / with humylyte,
 Transcended all other / in perfyte holynes ;
 So that sundry persones / approached that party
 For ghostly conforte / counsell and remedy. 1825
 Suche as to her came / pensyue / woo / and sadde,
 Departed ioyfull / in soule mery and gladdes. 1827

262

She dayly prouyded / for ghostly treasure	1828
To buylde her a place / a sure mansyon,	
Euer to remayne / with ioye and endure	
In pleasure perpetuall / without corrupcyon :	
Whiche she optayned by her deuocyon	1832
After this departure / to reygne as a presydent	
In eterne blys / with god omnyotent.	1834

¶ *A lytell treatyse of the lyfe of saynt Audry, abbesse of Ely / and of her holy couersacyon and great deuocyon / vnder whome saynt Werburge was made nonne / and professed.*
Ca. xviii.

263

¶ He yere of our lorde .vi. C. ix. and thyrty	1835
Regned saynt Anna / kyng of eest-Englande ;	
Whiche maryed saynt Hereswith / of the North party.	
They had noble yssue / as we vnderstande :	
Prynce Aldulph and Iurwyne / in story as is founde,	1839
Saynt Sexburge the quene / and blessed Audry,	
Saynt Ethelberge / Withburge / —a holy progeny.	1841

264

This blessed Audry / called Etheldred,	1842
Of two great kyngedomes / lynyally descendynge,	
Was borne in Suffolke / as sayth saynt Bede,	
In a lytell vyllage / called Exmynge. ¹	¹ r. Exnynge.
This noble prynces / and dere derlynge,	1846
With many great vertues / of grace illumynate,	
Magnyfied her parage / and royall astate.	1848

265

This blessed Audry / from her yonge aege	1849
Was dysposed euer / vnto sadnes,	
Obedyent lowly / vnto her parentage,	
Encreasyng in vertue / and constaunt sobrynes ;	
Worldely pleasures / dysportes / and wantonnes,	1853

Lyghtnes of language / and all presumpcyon In this sayd vyrgyn / had no domynacyon.	1855
266	
Sad and demure / she was in countenaunce, Nothyng enclyned / vnto fraglyte ; Benynge and pacyent / without perturbaunce, Meke / curteys / gentyll / full of humylyte ; Pryde / statelenes / and sensualyte	1860
Were not in her founde / by any condycyon, Curteyse in byhauour / vnto euery persone.	1862
267	
No man was greued / nor toke dyspleasure At this sayd mayden / in her fathers hall, Euery honest persone / and reasonable creature Were pleased with her / bothe one and all, None dyscontent / pryuate nor generall ;	1867
She was so meke / and full of pacyence, That people desyred / to come to her presence.	1869
268	
She was beauteous / fayre and amyable, Pleasaunte to beholde / in gyftes of nature, Her countenaunce comly / swete / louely / and stable ; Nothynge dysposed / vnto worldely pleasure, More lyke an angell / by all coniecture	1874
Than a fragyll mayde / of sensuall appetyte— For in vayne pleasures / she had no delyte.	1876
269	
Whan that she came / to yeres of dyscrecyon, Dyuers her moeued / in way of maryage ; Some offered ryches / royalte / and renowne, Some other possessyons / landes and herytage, And some the sufferaynte / her mynde to asswage ;	1881
All these she refused / for the loue of Ihesu, To whome she auowed / her chastyte full tru.	1883
270	
After that Venus / had her longe assayled	1884

To peruerte her mynde / to worldly affeccyon,
 And of all nettes and engynes / therof had fayled,
 Than came to her presence / a prynce of renoune,
 Called duke Tombert / of the eest regyon ; 1888
 Whiche longe desyred / to haue her in spousage,
 At the laste optayned / the wyll of her parentage. 1890

271

Vnto whiche thyng / he wolde neuer encline, 1891
 For all the moeyon / of her hye parentes,
 Tyll she was assured / by heuenly doctryne
 To kepe her vyrgynyte / clere in conscyens ;
 Than she consented / without concupyscens, 1895
 And with the sayd duke / she lyued in chastyte,
 Bothe mayden and wyfe / almost yeres thre. 1897

272

After whose dethe / she remayned in Ely, 1898
 In fastynge / prayer / vygyls / and penaunce—
 Whiche place was gyuen / to her Ioynt and dowry
 By Tombert her husbände / with great pleasaunce.
 This yle of Ely / by deuyne purueaunce 1902
 With muddy waters / is compased aboute,
 Theyr enemyes to greue / and strongely to holde out. 1904

273

Thyder came Egbyrct¹ / kyng of the north parte, 1905
 To desyre saynt Audry / in matrymony. ^{1 r. Egfrid.}
 To whome she wolde neuer / consent in herte,
 For no maner counseyll / that myght be done, truly—
 Tho her syster Sexburge / moeued her tenderly— 1909
 Tyll the angell of god / assured her to be
 Quene / wyfe / and mayde / kepyng vyrgynyte. 1911

274

Than Audry graunted / maryed for to be 1912
 Vnto this foresayd / noble kyng Egfryde.
 And at the maryage / was great solempnyte,
 Tryumphes, honoures / on euery syde ;
 Great cost and royalte / they dyd prouyde. 1916

- Frome Ely departed / vnto his owne place,
 In the North parte dwellynge / with great solace. 1918
 275
- By the grace of our lorde god / moost of myght, 1919
 And helpe of his mother / blessed mayd mary,
 By prayer of Audry / and by myracle ryght
 Togyder they lyued / bothe in pure chastyte :
 The naturall mocyon / of his lascyuyte 1923
 Was shortly slaked / and feruent desyre,
 By myracle / as water quencheth the fyre. 1925
 276
- Whan he apperceyued / her asured constauce, 1926
 Her perfyte holynes / and chast contynence,
 His herte reiosed / of her contynuaunce.
 Of whome she desyred / with humble reuerence
 And synguler supplycacyon / to haue fre lysence 1930
 At Canwod abbay / to enter relygyon ;
 Whiche the kynge graunted / for her deuocyon. 1932
 277
- Saynt Ebba, syster / vnto saynt Oswolde, 1933
 Was abbesse and ruler / of that congregacyon.
 Where blessed Audry / ryght as she wolde,
 Was reuerently receyued / into relygyon ;
 And after the yere / of her probacyon 1937
 Professed there was / by bysshop Wylfryde ;
 Where all worldly honours / she set on syde. 1939
 278
- Frome thens she departed / to the yle of Ely, 1940
 More quyetyly to lyue / out of busynesse,
 For drede of the kynge / her husbunde, truly,
 Purposyng to take her / frome that holynesse.
 She toke two maydens / with her, doubtlesse ; 1944
 And in theyr Iournay / our lorde of his grace
 Shewed dyuers myracles / at eche restyng-place. 1946
 279
- The archebysshop of yorke / Wylfryde, her confessour, 1947

Was depryued frome his benefyce / by the kynge cruelly ;
 Obserued pacyence / laudyng our sauour
 And folowed saynt Audry / to the place of Ely—
 Whiche (as afore is sayd) was her Ioynt and dowry— 1951
 And electe her abbesse / on that congregacyon,
 Moost worthy to be / for her holy conuersacyon. 1953

280

Where Audry buylded / a chyrche of our lady, 1954
 With helpe of kynge Aldulph / her brother naturall,
 Dystaunt a myle / frome the olde monastery
 Founded by saynt Austyn / for meryte spyrytuall ;
 Whiche place all desolate / she edyfied full specyall 1958
 By her prouysyon / an other noble monastery,
 The yere of grace / syxe hundreth seenty and thre. 1960

281

Whan the werke was ended / as her wyll was, 1961
 She endowed the abbay / with fraunches and lyberte
 And gaue the hole yle of Ely / to that place,
 With all commoditytes / profettes / and yssues, fre
 Frome all exaccyons / exempte clerely to be 1965
 Of kynge and bysshop / conformed it at Rome, [1967
 With all prelates & prynces / consentynge of this regyon.

282

In short tyme and space / to Audry dyd resorte 1968
 Relygyous men and women / a great company,
 Professed in that place / for theyr ghostly conforte,
 Renounsynge vayne pleasures / & honours transsytory ;
 Amonge whome saynt Werburge / professed solely, 1972
 Promysed in audyence / to lyue a lyfe monestycall
 After saynt Benettes rule / for the lyfe eternall. 1974

283

[1975

Also the yere of grace / syxe hundreth seenty and nyne
 In the moneth of Iulii / in the nynth kalendas
 To heuen departed / saynt Audry the quene,
 Than reyngynge in Kent / kynge Lothary by grace,

Aldulph in eest-Englande / her brother whiche was, 179
 Kynges Offryde¹ her husbände / in Northumberlande,
 Also kynges Ethelrede / than reygnyng in Mercelande. 1981
¹ r. Egfyde.

¶ *A breue rehersal of þ^e lyfe of saynt Sexburge / graund-
 mother to saynt Werburge. And of her comynge to Ely
 to her syster Audry from Shepay monastery. Ca. xix.*

284

THe holy matrone / and quene saynt Sexburge, 1982
 A kynges doughter / & moder to kynges twayne,
 Syster to saynt Audry / & graundmother to Werburge,
 Of noble parentage / is comen, certayne,
 Of two realmes descendyng / lynally and playne : 1986
 By her father / from the realme of eest-Englande
 And by her mother / frome Northumberlande. 1988

285

Her father saynt Anna / as sayth myne auctour, 1989
 Was kynges of the eest parte / sone to Egnicius ;
 Whiche Anna was maryed / with moche honour
 To Hereswith / dcughter to kynges Herericus
 And syster to saynt Hylde / the vyrgyn gracyous ; 1993
 To whome saynt Edwyn / the glorious martyr,
 Kynges of Northumberlande / was great-graundfather. 1995

286

This sayd kynges Anna / lyued a longe space 1996
 In welthe / worshyp / honour / and prosperyte
 With his quene Hereswith / by synguler grace,
 Obseruyng Iustyce / pacyence / and equitye,
 Kepte the preceptes / of god almyghte, 2000
 Mercyfull and lyberall / to the poore in payne ;
 Whiche kynges by Penda / was murdered and slayne. 2002

287

As the ryuer passeth / oftetymes the heed-fountayne, 2003
 The lytell graffe or ympe / transcendeth the trec,
 Lykewyse theyr chyldren / encrested, certayne,

- In mekenes / pacyence / and perfyte charyte
 Aboute theyr parentes / in vertue and benygnyte ; 2007
 So that theyr name / lynage / and hye astate
 By them was magnyfyed / praysed and decorate. 2009
 288
- Kynge Anna and Hereswith / had a noble yssue : 2010
 Syxe goodly chyldren / pleasaunt to beholde—
 None fayrer in this lande / myndynge all vertue
 And to all good maners / dysposed manyfolde ;
 yet was theyr fayrenes / not equall to be tolde 2014
 To theyr deuocyon / and synguler goodnes ;
 Whose names expressed / ben afore, doubtles. 2016
 289
- Sexburge, the eldest / of the systers all, 2017
 Instructe by her parentes / in vertuous dysceplyne,
 Folowyng theyr counsell / in herte full specyall
 Prepared her soule / after theyr doctryne
 Fer¹ aboute the age / of so yonge a femynyne ; ¹ P. For. 2021
 So that euery day / by grace and wysdome
 In her dyd growe / some plant of deuocyon. 2023
 290
- In all this realme / dylated was her fame ; 2024
 That, whan she approched / vnto lawfull aege,
 Prynces / dukes / erles / herynge of her name
 Desyred to haue Sexburge / in maryage,
 And busily laboured / vnto her parentage. 2028
 This mayd was maryed / with honour full excellent
 Vnto Ercombert / the noble kynge of Kent. 2030
 291
- To whome kynge Ethelbryet / graundfather was, 2031
 The fyrst chrysten kynge / of Saxons and chefe floure,
 Baptysed by saynt Austyn / thrughe heuenly grace ;
 He was to holy chyrche / a specyall benefactour :
 Monasteryes and pryores / founded with great honoure. 2035
 Kynge Eadbalde his sone / exemple of hym toke,
 Whiche was father to Ercombert / as sayth my boke. 2037

292

- This lady Sexburge / cyrcumfulsed with grace, 2038
 After her desyre / and vertuous entent
 Had leuer the monastery / than the fayre palace,
 The chyrche to vvyte / than with maryage be lent ;
 But to her parentes / she was euer obedyent, 2042
 Folowyng theyr counseyll / and of her frendes dere
 In lawfull maryage / toke the sayd kyng her fere. 2044

293

- A noble generacyon / she hadde by the kyng : 2045
 Egbryet and Lothary / two prynces prepotent,
 And two holy daughters / in vertue shynynge,
 Ermenylde and Erkengode / by lynyall descent.
 'This Ermenylde, maryed / with honour equyualent 2049
 Vnto kyng Vulfer / had a royall yssue :
 The glorious Werburge / replete with vertue. 2051

294

- Her syster Erkengode / refused vtterly 2052
 Honours / worshyp / and worldly possessyon,
 Ryches / maryage / and pleasures transytory,
 Went vnto Fraunce / with humble deuocyon,
 At the Cytee of Burges / entred relygyon, 2056
 Where Ethelberge her aunt / was ruler and abbesse ;
 Togyder they lyued / in perfyte holynesse. 2058

295

- This honorable Sexburge / and blessed matrone, 2059
 Refusyng worldly honours / and solempnyte
 Preferred mekenesse / and perfyte deuocyon
 Aboue all ryches / power and dygnyte,
 Auoyded ambycyon / obserued humylyte, 2063
 Vpon poore people / euer had compassyon
 And them releued / with due mynystracyon. 2065

296

- She made her palace / manytymes an hospytall, 2066
 Her pryuate cubycle / a deuoute oratory ;
 As a kynde mother amyable / in courte and in hall

Mekely fulfilled / the seuen werkes of mercy ;
 Oftetymes in the chyrche / selde amonge company ; 2070
 yet euer whan she myght / haue tyme and space,
 Magnyfyed and praysed / our lorde in secrete place. 2072

297

She instructe her husbände / in ghostly vertu, 2073
 To great lolynesse / and synguler perfeccyon.
 So by her counseyll / with the grace of Ihesu
 Frome infydelyte / purged was that regyon ;
 Destroyed theyr ydolles / theyr sectes euerychone, 2077
 Restaured temples / vnto chrystes honour,
 Founded monasteryes / by her cost and labour. 2079

298

The kyng by her mocyon / commaunded straytly 2080
 All his people and subiectes / vpon sharpe correccyon
 To obserue prayer / and penaunce deuoutely
 And truly for to fast / the holy tyme of Lenton.
 The archbysshop Theodorus / and fathers of relygion, 2084
 Consyderynge her pacyence / and benygnyte
 Reioysed in her dedes / and praysed the trynyte. 2086

299

Whan the famous Ercombert / the sayd kyng of Kent, 2087
 Foure & twenty yere had reigned / in honour full royall
 With blessed Sexburge / his quene excellent,
 Than he departed / frome this lyfe mortall.
 The quene prepared / the obsequyes funerall, 2091
 With great lamentacyon / and great royalte,
 As was conuenyent / for his state and degre. 2093

300

After that Sexburge / refused worldely pleasure, 2094
 Entred relygion / professed chastyte,
 At Shepay monastery / in Kent full sure,
 Buylded at her cost / full honorable.
 After electe Abbesse / and ruler of that companye ; 2098
 To whome she was / a myrroure of mekenes
 And exemple of vertue / and proued holynes. 2100

301

As she was occupied / in medytacyon, 2101
 An heuenly messenger / to her was sent,
 Shewynge how for synne / and transgressyon
 Englande shulde suffer / great punysment
 And be subdued / with greuous torment. 2105
 Wherefore she lefte / in good rule that place
 And dyd electe to them / an other abbace. 2107

302

Sexburge toke lycence / of her systers all, 2108
 Commendynge them / vnto the trynpte,
 And so departed / fro her chyldren spyrytuall ;
 With labour attayned / to the hous of Elye,
 There to be subiecte / to Her syster Audrye 2112
 And to her doctryne / apply her entent,
 Vnto relygyon / euer founde obedyent. 2114

303

Saynt Audry was gladde / of her systers comynge ; 2115
 In lyke maner / were all the hole congregacyon,
 With myrthes and solace / in soule reioysynge
 To haue the presence / of so worthy a persone.
 There lyued togyder / in perfyte deuocyon, 2119
 Tyll blessed Audry / frome this lyfe mortall
 Departed was / to the lyfe eternall. 2121

304

After whose buryall / Sexburge was electe 2122
 To be abbesse and ruler / ouer that couent.
 Whiche to all vertue / her mynde dyd erecte ;
 And the .xvi. yere after / with labours dylygent
 She translate saynt Audry / that noble presydent, 2126
 Beynge hole incorrupte / also substancyall
 In body and in vesture / by grace supernall. 2128

¶ *How saynt Ermenylde after the dethe of kynge Vulfer, her
husbande, was made a nonne at Ely / vnder her mother
saynt Sexburge abbesse / and Werburge her deuoute
doughter. Ca. xx.*

305

Ⓜ *F* *Mercyens the kynge / whan the foresayd Vulfere
Had regned in honour / worshyp and royalte [2129
With saynt Ermenylde his quene / fully .xvii. yere,
Vnto euerlastyng blysse / departed than he
And buryed was / with moche solempnyte 2133
In Lychefelde chyrche. / after hym there dyd succede
In-to the kyngdome / his brother Ethelrede. 2135*

306

*The quene for her husbande / made great lamentacyon, 2136
Dolefully lamentyng / nyght and day his departure,
As nature enqyred / enduryng a longe season,
Remayned in wydohode / and mournyng vesture ;
yet after all heuynesse / penaunce / and dysconfyture 2140
She reioysed in soule / to be at lyberte,
Entendyng relygyon / by grace of the trynyte. 2142*

307

*Soone she departed / to the hous of Ely, 2143
Refusyng this worlde / pleasures, possessyon,
Instauntly requyred / with perfyte humylyte
To be a moynes / accepte in relygyon.
Gladde was the abbesse / of her conuersyon 2147
And thanked our lorde / of his specyall grace ;
So dyd all the systers / within the sayd place. 2149*

308

*Her naturall mother / blessed Sexburge, 2150
That tyme was lady / and chefe presydent ;
There was professed / her doughter Werburge,
An exemple of mekenes / to all the couent.
Ermenylde thanked god / and was obedynt 2154*

To her mother Sexburge / a myrrour of vertu, Also to her daughter / the spouses of Ihesu.	2156
309	
It passeth mannes reason / playnly to expresse Her vertuous lyfe / and ghostly conuersacyon, In prayer / penaunce / and proved mekenesse, In perfyte obedience / and synguler deuocyon, In vygyls / abstynence / and in hye perfeccyon,	2157 2161
The cotydyane labours / her body to chastyce, That her soule may be / to god true sacryfyce.	2163
310	
Bycause that Werburge / in order was senyoure, Her mother Ermenylde / gaue her the sufferaynte, Preferryng her daughter / with mekenes and honoure ; But yet her daughter / of a naturall amyte Preferred her mother / with humble senyoryte ; And so bytwene them / was a swete contencion Wheder shulde more subiecte be / to other in relygyon.	2164 2168 2170
311	
Afore, whan Ermenylde / was vnder maryage, Vnto holy matrones / she was comparable : Sara / Rebecca / Rachell / and Sybell sage, And saynt Elysabeth / with other mo honorable ; Now in relygyon / she is moost notable, Knownen by her vertues / and sadde dysposyeyon What vnder matrymony / was her intencion.	2171 2175 2177
312	
Ermenylde subdued / by synguler deuyne grace All fragyll mocyons / and sensualyte, Lyke maner as Iudyth / Olofernes slayne hace ; She mortyfyed all pleasures / lustes and volupete, Lykewyse as Iaell / dyd the prynce Sysare ; A duches of vertue / as whylom was Delbora ; Vsed the oratory / in prayer as dyd Anna.	2178 2182 2184
313	
After the departure / and wofull buryall	2185

- Of Sexburge, her mother / abbesse and lady,
 Her doughter Ermenylde / the blessed monyall,
 Was chosen abbesse / and ruler of Ely—
 As sheweth dan Wylllyam / of Maluysbury 2189
 How fyrst was Audry / than Sexburge, her syster,
 Afterwarde was abbesse / Ermenylde, her doughter. 2191
- 314
- The lyfe of Ermenylde / was euer vertuous, 2192
 Pleasaunt to god / and her systers euerychone ;
 In the syght of god / her dethe was precyous,
 Playnly notyfyed / by her conuersacyon.
 She vertuously gouerned / her congregacyon, 2196
 Frome this lyfe departed / to eternall glory,
 As sayth her legende / the Idus of February ; 2198
- 315
- And buried was / with moche lamentacyon 2199
 In the holy monastery / and house of Ely
 Amonge her parentage / and congregacyon ;
 Where she is shryned / with her aunt saynt Audry
 And with her mother / saynt Sexburge rychely ; 2203
 For whome our sauour / of his specyall grace
 Sheweth dayly myracles / in that sayd place. 2205
- 316
- One of the myracles / we shall now rehers 2206
 Our lorde for her shewed / at Ely abbay
 After her translacyon / the story dothe expres.
 It fortun'd in Whytson weke / vpon a thursday,
 An Englysshman was bounden / in wofull aray, 2210
 Fetered with yrons / bothe on handes and fete,
 Wrongfully accused / as ye may all wete. 2212
- 317
- By instaunt request / he gate hym lycence 2213
 To vysyte the tombe / of saynt Ermenylde.
 Whome he requyred / with humble reuerence
 And meke petycyon / frome the herte full mylde,
 To be delyuered / and fully reconсылde. 2217

Whose humble desyre / and synguler supplycacyon
Was fully graunted / to his consolacyon. 2219

318

At this tyme / whan this holy man was prayenge, 2220
Whan the Deken redde the holy gspell,
By meane of Ermenylde / to our lorde and kyng
Frome his handes and fete / the yrons done fell,
By grace aboue nature / merueylously to tell, 2224
That the sayd yrons / in syght of all the bretherne
Sprange vp sodenly / and lyght vpon the aulter. 2226

¶ *Aliud miraculum.*

319

AN other myracle / declare now may we, 2227
Done at the sayd Ely / by this holy matrone,
In presence of the pryor / and all the fraternyte,
Whiche pryor of this mater / had best notycyon.
A scole-mayster of Innocentes / after the custome 2231
Gauē lysence / vpon saynt Ermenylde's day
To all his chyldren / to sport them in play. 2233

320

Whan the feest / and solempnyte was done, 2234
The yonge tender chyldren / wanton and neclygent,
Dredynge theyr mayster / for fere of correccyon
To the holy shryne / they assembled full dylygent,
Trustynge therby of pardon / after theyr entent, 2238
Desyred theyr mayster / for saynt Ermenylde's sake
To pardon theyr trespas / and no dyspleasure take. 2240

321

The mayster, fulfilled / with hastynes and enuy,^{11 P. enuy.} 2241
Toke them frome the tombe / with great indygnacyon,
Without dyscrecyon / punysshed them greuously,
Gyunge no honour / to the saynt ne deuocyon
Rebuked them sore / sayenge with insultacyon:
'Trowe ye to be spared / from punyshment this day
For saynt Ermenylde's sake ? / nay, nay, do way!' 2247

322

After all this done / the nexte nyght folowyng, 2248
 Whan the sayd mayster / to his bedde was gone,
 His great vnkyndenes / saynt Ermenylde remembrynge
 Rewarded¹ hym Iustly / after his guerdon : ¹ P. Rewarned.
 His handes and his fete / prompte to persecucyon, 2252
 Were sodenly smytten / made lame / contracte also ;
 No power had to ryse / to moeue nor to go. 2254

323

This sodayne punysshement / langour / confusyon 2255
 Vexed hym greuously in all his body,
 Moost terryble of all / of helthe desperacyon
 Inwardly hym troubled / with peynes horryble.
 But yet by grace / he thought best remedy 2259
 Sende for his chyl dren / vpon the other day,
 Humble asked them pardon / in a wofull aray ; 2261

324

Desyrynge his seolers / for loue and charyte 2262
 To cary hym moost carefull / to her sepulture,
 To requyre for hym grace / helthe and prosperyte
 Of god and saynt Ermenylde / with all theyr cure.
 They toke hym tenderly / ye may me leue full sure, 2266
 Amonge them all / with mynde dylygent
 And brought to the shryne / this wretched impotent. 2268

325

They prayed for hym / to our blessed sauour 2269
 And to saynt Ermenylde / a longe tyme and space,
 Knelynge on theyr knees / wepyng full sore,
 In prayer and psalmody / for his helthe and solace :
 And so contynuyng / by our lordes great grace
 He that afore was lame / bothe on fote and hande,
 Restored to helthe / departed hole and sounde. 2275

¶ *How kynge Ethelrede, seynge the holy conuersacyon of Werburge, his nece / made her lady and abbesse at Wedon / Trentam / and Hambury.¹ And by her counseyll and exsample was made monke at Bardeneý abbay.* Ca. xxi. 1 P. Humbury.

326

THe famous prynce / and foresayd Ethelrede, 2276
 Brother to kyng Vulfer / as lawfull enherytour
 To the sayd kyngedome / dyd nexte hym succede,
 Electe of his peeres / with worshyp and honour,
 Permytted by his chyrche / to be theyr gouernour, 2280
 Bycause prynce Kenrede / his brother sone,
 Was yonge and not able / to rule his kyngdome. 2282

327

This sayd kynge Ethelrede / clerely consyderynge 2283
 With due cyrcumstaunce / the hye perfeccyon
 Of Werburge, his nece / and vertuous luyunge,
 Her great holynesse / and ghostly conuersacyon,
 Dayly encreseynge / with feruent deuocyon, 2287
 The excellent fame / and myracles full ryght
 Shewed by our sauyour / bothe day and nyght : 2289

328

These good exsamples / grounded in vertu, 2290
 Moeued kynge Ethelrede / in soule and in mynde :
 And clerely conuerted / throwe the grace of Ihesu
 To despyse this worlde / wretched and blynde,
 Pryncypally by grace / wryten as we fynde, 2294
 For her great goodnes / and vertues excellent
 He made her lady / ruler / and presydent 2296

329

Ouer all the nonnes / of euery monastery 2297
 Within his realme / to gouerne and to guyde,
 To instructe and informe / and to exemplyfy,
 To encrese deuocyon / vpon euery syde,
 Vertue to exalte / to subdue vyce and pryde ; 2301

That holy relygyon / pleasaunt to chryst Ihesu,
Myght dayly encrease / frome vertu to vertu. 2303

330

Also he gaue Werburge / great possessyon, 2304

Landes / and rentes / ryches withall,

To edify and repayre / places of relygyon

After her desyre / with fauour specyall.

Wherwith she buylded / famous memoryall 2308

Two fayre monasteryes / Trentam and Hambury,¹ ^{1 P. Hambury.}

Possessed with rentes / landes / and lyberte. 2310

331

Also by sufferaunce / of the sayd kynge, truly, 2311

She translate the kynges maner of Wedon,

Whiche was in Hamptonshyre / vnto a monastery

Of holy women / obseruyng relygyon,

Suffyciently endowed / with lybertes / possessyon. 2315

Of whiche sayd places / she had the gouernaunce,

As worthy maystres / all vertue to auance. 2317

332

The yere of grace / syxe hundreth foure score and nyen,

As sheweth myne auctour / a Bryton Giraldus, [2318

Kynge Ethelred / myndyng moost the blysse of heuen,

Edyfyed a collage-chyrche / notable and famous

In the subbarbes of Chester / pleasaunt and beauteous, 2322

In the honour of god / and the Baptyst saynt Iohan,

With helpe of bysshop Vulfryce / and good exortacyon. 2324

333

Also at the humble / and synguler supplycacyon 2325

Of blessed Egwyn / bysshop of worcestur,

This kynge gaue a place / for a fundacyon

To buylde a monastery / to relygyous brethur

At Eusam vpon Auen / for heuenly tresur, 2329

With a large precynct / to compas all the abbay,

More quyety to serue / our sauour nyght and day. 2331

334

After this tyme / Ethelrede the kynge 2332

By his counseyll maryed / a beautefull lady,
 Called quene Ostryde / a woman of good lyuyng,
 Borne in the North parte / daughter to kyng Oswy—
 To whome saynt Oswalde / was vncler, truly. 2336

The yssue bytwene them / after to succede
 Was a noble prynce / nomynate Colrede. 2338

335

Agaynst his enemyes / the kyng gate vycory,
 Fortunate in batayle / sore oppressed Kent. 2339

In all this regyon / famous was his chyualry;
 Namely he subdued / at the water of Trent
 Egfryde of Northumberlande / a kyng auncyent, 2343

His brother-in-lawe / whan Egfryde agaynst reason
 Entred his landes / by subtyll intrusyon. 2345

336

But after that Ostryde / his quene, was slayne 2346

By people of the North parte / moost cruelly,
 The kynge frome that tyme / by grace, certayne,
 Chaunged his maners / and lyuyng dayly
 Frome temporall cures / and busynesse worldly 2350

To ghostly werkes / and contemplacyon,
 Sekyng for heuen / with pure deuocyon. 2352

337

Specyally he folowed / saynt Werburge counsell, 2353

Vsyng hym after / her swete ghostly doctryne;
 The clere exsamples / as we afore dyd tell,
 Moeued his consyence / to ghostly dyscyplyne
 With suche contrycyon / by specyall grace deuyne, 2357

That all vayne pleasures / and honours transytyry
 Were clere expulsed / and put out of memory. 2359

338

This kyng refused / his septre and crowne, 2360

Clothes of Tyshew / and purpull full royall,
 With ryches / lybertes / pleasures / possessyon,
 For the loue of Ihesu / in herte pryncypall ¹ / ¹P. pryncypall.
 And for the meryte / of his soule-helthe withall. 2364

So whan he had reigned / nyne and twenty yere,
He chaunged his habyte / sayth the story clere; 2366

339

At a relygyous place / nomynate Bardenay, 2367
In Lyncolne-shyre / vnder his domynyon,
Synguler byloued / of hym alway,

Desyred the habyte / with meke supplycacyon
And was receyued / professynge relygyon, 2371

Euer after to obserue / the essencysals thre :
Obedyence / chastyte / and wylfull pouerte. 2373

340

He assygned his crowne / and temporall dygnyte 2374
Vnto prynce Kenrede / his brother sone,

As true enherytour / to haue regalyte.
For in pure obedyence / prayer and medytacyon
Ethelrede encrested / with feruent deuocyon; 2378

And as declareth / wyllyam of Maluysbury,
After was made abbot / of the sayd monastery. 2380

¶ *The holy conuersacyon of kynge Kenred, brother to saynt
Werburge / & how he refused his crowne / and was made
monke at Rome / & ther departed a holy confessor.*
Ca. xxii.

341

SO whan kynge Etheldrede / by heuenly grace 2381
At Bardenay abbay / professed relygyon,

Than prynce Kenrede / his successour was
And toke the Empyre / the sepre and the crowne
With moche worshyp / royalte / and renowne, 2385

As nexte of inherytaunce / by law naturall
To be kynge of Mercyens / by dyscent lynyall. 2387

342

This noble kynge Kenrede / replete with vertu, 2388
Brother to Werburge / obserued truly

The commaundmentes of god / & his lawes moost tru,

Obedyent to our sauyour / and lorde almyghty,	
Loued holy chyrche / moost tenderly,	2392
Mynystred Iustyce / to his subiectes all,	
Mercyfull to the poore / pyteous and lyberall.	2394
343	
In all his realme / was no dyuersyte,	2395
Malyce was subdued / rancour and debate,	
Vertue encreased / true loue and charyte,	
Enuy was exyled / and all pryuy hate ;	
Thefte / murthur / robry / were founde at no gate,	2399
True men myght lyue / without vexacyon ;	
Pollers / promoters had no domynacyon.	2401
344	
He gaue to our sauyour / and bysshop Egwyn	2402
For ghostly meryte / with moche honoure	
Of tenementes and landes / playnely to determyne,	
Within worcetur-shyre .iiii. score and foure,	
To maynteyne the monastery / spoken of before,	2406
Euesham vpon Auen / byfore lawfull wytnes,	
As the legende of Egwyn / truly dothe expres.	2408
345	
To the courte of Rome / kynge Kenred went;	2409
So dyd Offa kynge / of the eest-Saxons,	
Also bysshop Egwyn / by one assent,	
Deuoutly to vysyte / all the hole stacyons	
Of the cytee of Rome / with humble supplycacyons,	2413
Thankynge our lorde / of his mercy	
Hath them preserued / and all theyr company.	2415
346	
This holy bysshop / and kynge Kenrede	2416
Offered to our holy father / pope boneface	
With mekenes, deuocyon / for ghostly mede	
Afore his collage / wytnes in that case,	
The foresayd monastery / and relygyous place,	2420
Frome that day euer after / to be clerely exempte,	
To the popes holynes / immedyatly obedyent.	2422

347

Whan they had optayned / perfyte expedyceyon	2423
Of all theyr bulles / after theyr entent,	
They toke lycence / and had the popes beneson,	
And towarde Englande / retourned and went,	
Praysynge our lorde / with herte and loue feruent	2427
For theyr good spede / and prosperous Iournay,	
Preserued in good helthe / all to theyr countray.	2429

348

After all this done / Kenrede the sayd kynge	2430
Commaunded to be had / a counseyll generall,	
By letters myssyue / his peeres and lordes cytynge	
Shortly to be present / with hym, one and all,	
As well the spyrytualte / as the temporall.	2434
The Seyn was kepte / at a place called Alue,	
And thyder assembled / his prelates of degre.	2436

349

Berthtunaldus / the archebyssshop of Canturbury,	2437
The archbyssshop of yorke / called Wylfryde,	
With bysshops / suffreganes / archdekens many,	
Dukes / erles / barons / vpon euery syde,	
Knyghtes / esquyers / and comunes that tyde	2441
Were redy to knowe / the kynges mynde and pleasure,	
Well ordred in place / and scyence kepte sure.	2443

350

This gloryous Kenrede / crowned with golde,	2444
Clothed in purpull / rose vp fro his place,	
After due salutacyon / the cause mekely he tolde	
Why he for them sende / and wherfore it was :	
That they shulde testyfy / with hym in this case	2448
What landes he gaued / towarde the fundacyon	
Of the sayd monastery / with grete deuocyon,	2450

351

And how for that abbay / he went to Rome	2451
And made the place subiecte / immedyatly	
To our father boniface / and gate an exempcyon	

- For euer to remayne / to the sayd monastery,
 With pardons and pryuyleges / there redde openly, 2455
 And many other benefytes / of great commodyte,
 Wryten in theyr grauntes / who lyst them to se; 2457
 352
- Requyrynge the lordes / spyrytuall and temporall 2458
 To graunte to the same / with good entent
 And it to confyrme / and roborate specyall
 With charters and dedes / and seales patent.
 To whose petycyon / they dyd all consent, 2462
 Made confyrmacyons and grauntes them amonge,
 With a terryble sentence / who dothe the place wronge. 2464
 353
- Kynge Kenrede, consyderynge / the great holynes 2465
 Of his noble parentes / his vncles euerychone,
 Theyr royall progeny / the sufferaunt¹ goodnes, ^{1 r. sufferane.}
 From this lyfe transytory / to heuen agone;
 Namely the vertue / and feruent deuocyon 2469
 Of his syster Werburge / and his auntes all
 Moeued his mynde / to seke for lyfe eternall: 2471
 354
- And, as saynt Bede sayth / whan this noble kynge 2472
 Had reigned fyue yere / in great prosperyte,
 He forsoke this worlde / and chaunged his lyuynge,
 Refusyng his crowne / sepre / and dygnyte,
 All vayne honours / ryches and regalyte, 2476
 And made his vncles sone / prynce Coelrede,
 To take his empyre / after hym to succede. 2478
 355
- So with all gentylnes / and humylyte 2479
 The kynge of his subiectes / toke leue specyall,
 Commendynge his people / to the trynyte
 Them to conserue / spyrytuall and temporall.
 Of his departure / dolorous were they all. 2483
 Thus for the loue / of our sauoure
 He refused this worlde / pleasures and honoure. 2485

356

And went to Rome agayne / the yere of grace	2486
Seuen hundreth and eyght / by full computacyon,	
Vsytynge the stacyons / frome place to place ;	
There was professed / to saynt Benettes relygyon,	
Vsed vygyls / fastynges / prayer / medytacyon ;	2490
Where this holy monke / frome this lyfe transytory	
With vertu departed / to eternall glory.	2492

¶ *Of þ^e feruent & ghostly deuocyon of saynt Werburge / & vertuous gouernaunce of her places / & of þ^e great humilitie she vsed to her sisters / & al other creatures.*
Ca. xxiii.

357

T His venerable Werburge / & moynes gracyous,	2493
For her great vertue / and perfyte holynesse	
Electe to be gouernour / ouer the nonnes relygeous	
By her vnclē kynge Ethelrede / of his goodnesse	
Ouer dyuers monasteryes (as is sayd) expresse,	2497
Was consecrate abbesse / and lady gracyous	
By the bysshop of Lychefelde / nomynat Sexwulfus.	2499

358

And thus she departed / fro the hous of Ely,	2500
Wherin she vsed / heuenly medytacyon,	
With lycence optayned / in mynde sad and heuy ;	
So were the systers / and all the congregacyon	
Of her departure / knowynge her conuersacyon ;	2504
But, as wolde charyte / they had great gladnes,	
Knowynge by her vertue / relygyon to eneres.	2506

359

The spouses of Ihesu / and floure of benygnyte	2507
Consyderynge her-selfe / a lady and presydent,	
Ordered her monasteryes : ryght well and wysele,	
Receyued in systers / chast / humble / obedyent,	
Over them made rulers / vertuous / and pacyent,	2511

Her subiectes to instructe / and counseyll day and nyght, Vertue to exalte / and vyce depryue aryght.	2513
360	
This noble abbesse / remembrynge her duty, What charge it is / to rule a congregacyon, Humble requyred / the grace of god almyghty And dylygently prepared / to supple her rowme ; Pryncypally she gaue / to them euerychone Perfyte exsample / of vertue in her dede, With vertuous doctryne / the same to procede.	2514 2518 2520
361	
A myrroure of mekenesse / she was to them all, A floure of chastyte / and well of clenness, The fruyte of obedyence / in her was specyall ; Refusyng vayne pleasures / honours and ryches Content with lytell / an exsample of lowlynes As dothe belonge / vnto wyfull pouerte ; Pryde had no resydence / but all humylyte.	2521 2525 2527
362	
She was a mynyster / rather than a maystres, Her great preemynence / caused no presumpcyon ; She was a handmayd / rather than a pryores, Seruyng her systers / with humble subieccyon ; Subduyng her body / to penaunce and afflyccyon, Subiecte to the soule / as reason wolde shulde be, A true sacryfyce / offered to the trynyte.	2528 2532 2534
363	
It was no merueyll / tho all her couent Vnder suche a ruler / encreased in vertu, Seynge her exsample / afore them dayly present, Euer augmentyng / throwe the helpe of Ihesu ; Worldy desyres / she clerely dyd subdue ; She neuer ware lynon / by day or by nyght, All ryche vayne vestures / she set by them but lyght.	2535 2539 2541
364	
In prayer, medytacyon / the tyme she dyspent,	2542

Proued : for euery nyght / longe afore matyns
 She¹ wolde vpryse / at an houre conuenient ¹ P. The.
 And deuoutely say / afore our lordes presens
 Dauyd spalter holly knelynge / with great reuerence, 2546
 Or that her systers / came to the oratory
 To say dyuyne seruyce / fyndyng her all redy. 2548

365

At after matyns / she vsed contemplacyon, 2549
 Continually abydyng / vnto the day-lyght
 Prostrate on the grounde / or knelyng in deuocyon,
 Wepynge full tenderly / with teeres downe ryght ;
 Many holy oraysons / she sayd day and nyght ; 2553
 Pyteous / mercyable / and full¹ of charyte ¹ P. fulll.
 To the poore people / in theyr necessyte. 2555

366

This lady obserued / suche sharpe abstynence 2556
 That one dayly repast / wolde her well suffyse ;
 Delycate dysshe meetes / were put out of her presence ;
 So nature were content / in moost humble wyse,
 The Worde of god / was moost delycate seruyse ; 2560
 Myndyng moche more / the soule to satysfy
 Than please and content / her enemy, the body. 2562

367

These sayd exemples / with many other mo 2563
 Pleasaunte vnto Ihesu / she taught her couent,
 Them to preserue / frome theyr mortall fo,
 By synguler vertue / grace to augment.
 Her precepte and lyuyng / were euer corespondent, 2567
 She neuer commaunded syster / do any thyng
 But it was fulfilled / in her owne doynge. 2569

368

She exorted her chyl dren / euer to deuocyon, 2570
 With manyfolde doctrynes / ydlenes to exchewe ;
 Lyke a tender mother / had pyte and compassyon,
 She dayly fedde them / and nourysshed in all vertue,
 And dylygently prayed / our sauour Ihesu 2574

Them to preserue / of his infynyte grace	
Frome peryll of peryshynge / in blysse to se his face.	2576
	369
Also the .xii. degrees / of humylyte,	2577
Pacyence / quyettes / and great perfeccyon	
Were well obserued / with true loue and charyte,	
Amonge her systers / the hole congregacyon ;	
And the thre essencyals / of relygyon :	2581
Wylfull pouerte / chastyte / and obedience,	
were truly fulfilled / proued by the consequence.	2583
	370
As for a pastyme / amonge her systers all	2584
She caused to be redde / auoydyng ydlenesse,	
The swete legendary / for a memoryall,	
And Vitas patrum / shewynge great swetenesse,	
With other narracyons / of grace and goodnesse.	2588
Ofttymes to her couent / she had a comyn sayenge :	
'Please god and loue hym / and doubte ye nothyng.'	2590
	371
All reders excuse me / tho I can not expresse	2591
For lacke of lernynge / the vertues morall,	
The hye perfeccyon / and proued holynesse	
Of this pure vyrgyn / and sanctymonyall,	
Wherwith was decorate / her lyfe monestycall,	2595
Manyfest with myracles / by meryte of her mekenesse,	
As the true hystory / playnly dothe expresse.	2597
	372
The worthy myracles / of this vyrgyn pure	2598
Dylated were / through all this regyon,	
By deuyne sufferance / aboue nature,	
Profytable / to euery chrysten synguler persone ;	
In sekenesse / trouble / peyne or vexacyon	2602
Of her they haue refuge / helpe / and socoure	
By her merytes / and prayer / that euery honoure (!).	2604
	373
Her merytes were / moche more commendable	2605

Than were her myracles— / mānyfest and playne :
 For why by her merytes / famous and notable
 Sygnes and myracles / w~~ore~~ shewed full playne,
 In the house of Ely / by grace of our sufferayne 2609
 And in euery place / where she kepte residencyence.
 Of whome parte folowen / in this rude sentence. 2611

¶ *How at Wedon wylde gees were pynned by her commaundyment / & also releshed & put at lyberte. Ca. xxiii.*

374

THis holy vyrgyn / whan she dwelled at Wedon, 2612
 In Northamptonshyrn / with a deuoute couent—
 Whiche place somtyme / was the kynges mansyon,
 Translated to an abbay / by her commaundyment—
 A myracle was done / by this noble presydent, 2616
 As the true legende / playnly dothe vs say
 And all the inhabytauntes / vnto this present day. 2618

375

A great multytude / somtyme of wylde gees— 2619
 Comunely called Gauntes— / made great destruccyon ¹
 Vpon her landes / pastures / waters / and feldes, ¹P. descreypon.
 Deourynge the cornes / and fruytes of Wedon,
 Greuous to her subiectes / within that possessyon ; 2623
 The people coude fynde / no suffycyent remedy,
 But shewed theyr complaynte / to Werburge theyr lady. 2625

376

Whan Werburge had herde / this greuous complayne 2626
 How the cornes were wasted / þ^o tenauntes hurte therby,
 Her herte was moeued / with charyte than, certayne,
 To saue her fruytes / and helpe her company ;
 Wherefore she commaunded a seruaunt go hastely 2630
 To dryue those wylde gees / & brynge home to her place,
 There to be pynned / and punysshed for theyr trespace. 2632

377

The messanger merueyled / and mused in his mynde 2633

Of this straunge message / stode styll in a study,
 Knowynge it well / it passed course of kynde
 Wylde gees for to pynne / by any mannes polycy,
 Syth nature hath ordeyned / suche byrdes to fly; 2637
 Supposynge his lady / had ben vnreasonable
 Commaundyng to do / a thyng vnpossyble. 2639

378

With wordes of conforte / she sayd to hym agayne: 2640
 ‘Go in my name / do my commaundment.’
 The seruaunt went forth / thynkyng all but vayne,
 Vnto the foldes / where the byrdes were lent,
 And sayd his message / with mynde and good entent: 2644
 ‘My lady commaundes you / byrdes euerychone,
 Afore me to go / vnto her proper mansyone.’ 2646

379

A merueylous thyng / transcendyng nature: 2647
 Vnto his wordes / the gees were obedyent,
 Not one departed / fro thens, ye may be sure,
 Of all the nombre / that there were present;
 Towarde her place / afore hym they went, 2651
 Mekely / as yf they had reason naturall;
 Vnto her presence / he brought the gauntes all. 2653

380

Dredefully daryng / comen now they be, 2654
 Theyr wynges traylynge / entred into the hall,
 For great confusyon / after theyr kynde and propyte,
 Mournynge in theyr maner / abydyng one and all
 Her wyll and Iudgment / with mercy specyall; 2658
 Lamentynge all nyght / there in captyuyte
 Tyll the morowe after / withouten lyberte. 2660

381

All that same nyght / Werburge dyd contynue 2661
 In deuoute prayers / and ympnes celestyall,
 After her olde custome / vsed in all vertue.
 In the mornynge after / the byrdes that were thrall
 With hye voyces (as yf it were) on her dyd call 2665

For grace and pardon / of theyr offence,
And of departure / to haue fre lycence. 2667

382

Than she, full pyteous / to euery creature, 2668
Vpon these byrdes hauynge compassyon
Delyuered them / frome all daunger and cure,
Frely to departe / vnder this condycyon
That none of them / vpon the lordshyp of Wedon 2672
Shulde make destruceyon / nor lyght by any way
On cornes or fruytes / neuer after that day. 2674

383

Neuertheles a seruaunt / one of the gees dyd take 2675
And pryuely hydde it / agaynst iustyce and ryght,
Vnknowynge to Werburge / suche brybry to make.
The byrdes departed / moost glad to take theyr flyght,
From theyr tender Iudge. / but whan they sawe in syght
One of theyr felawes / taken frome theyr company, [2679
The sayd great nombre / of gees retourned hastely. 2681

384

They flewe ouer / this blessed vyrgyns hall 2682
Mournyng and waylyng / after theyr entent,
And wolde not departe / but fast on her dyd call—
yet they durst not lyght / for drede of her commaundment—
But in theyr maner & kynde they sayd / ' o swete presydent,
Why suffer ye suche wyckednes / done for to be [2686
Anendes our felawe / agaynst all ryght and charyte?' 2688

385

Werburge went fyrst / to knowe wherfore and why 2689
These byrdes retourned / so hastely, certayne.
By grace she perceyued / the cause of it, truly,
And tryed out the truthe / of all the mater playne.
She restaured the byrde / to his felyshyp agayne, 2693
And gaue them a lesson / or they went her fro,
How they shulde prayse / theyr maker and sufferayne, 2695
Sayenge (benedicite volucres celi domino).

386

But, as Wyllyam Maluysbury / sheweth expresse, 2697
 The goos that was taken / and stollen afore away,
 Was rosted and eten / the same nyght, doubtlesse ;
 So whan it was asked / for vpon the other day, ^{1 P. after}
 The bare bones were brough[t] / afor¹ this lady, veray : 2701
 And there by the vertue / of her benedyccyon
 The byrde was restaured / and flewe away full soone. 2703

387

Certainly, frome that tyme / vnto this present day, 2704
 As all the people knowe / dwellynge aboute Wedon,
 The foresayd wylde gees / attempten by no way
 To hurte theyr fruytes / ne lyght in that possessyon.
 No merueyll it is / remembrynge the deuocyon 2708
 And true loue she had / to god omnyotent :
 For vnto vertue / all thyng is obedyent. 2710

¶ *How a tyraunt without pyte punyshynge an Innocent was
 punyshed / & after made hole. Ca. xxv.*

388

FOrther to declare / the pacyence and humylyte 2711
 And the synguler grace / grounded in this abbas,
 As in the true legende / playnly ye may se
 We shall parte rehers / to augment your solas.
 Werburge had a seruaunte / whiche named was 2715
 Alnotus, a man / of meke conuersacyon,
 Knownen by his merytes / after due probacyon. 2717

389

Also a baylyfe she had / a cruell tyraunt ; 2718
 Whiche pyteously punysshed / without reason
 And wounded greuously / Alnot, her seruaunt,
 Without any greuauce / at the place of Wedon.
 Werburge for pyte / and great compassyon 2722
 Afore this caytyfe / kneled on her knee,
 Prayenge hym to cease / for loue of the trynyte ; 2724

390

Sayenge : ' why does thou punyssh / this innocent, 2725
 Causeles, without mercy / whiche I byleue playne
 Is more acceptable / to our lorde omnyotent
 Than many other be / for his mekenesse, certayne ?'
 The baylyfe at her prayer / wolde not refrayne, 2729
 But punysshed hym styll / in his fury and pryde ;
 Tyll the vengeaunce of god / fell on hym that tyde. 2731

391

Incontynente his heed / his necke / and his face 2732
 Were tourned backwarde / lyke a persone monstrous,
 Contrary to nature / for his great trespace,
 Crucyate with sorowe / and peynes hyduous,
 Contynually encreasyng / to beholde pyteous. 2736
 At the last remembred / of the best remedy :
 Fell prostrate to the fete / of Werburge, his lady, 2738

392

And cryed vpon her / with wofull chere, 2739
 Wepyng / lamentyng / his great inyquyte :
 ' My louely lady / and maystres moost dere,
 Helpe me, swete abbesse / in this necessity !
 I haue offended god / now pray for me, 2743
 And I wyll neuer / enduryng all my lyfe
 Dysplease no more / man / mayde / ne wyfe.' 2745

393

Whan Werburge consydered / his great contrycyon, 2746
 His woofull herte / and lamentable crye,
 Vpon hym she had / tender compassyon ;
 Beholdyng his greuaunce / and tender¹ agony, ^{1 r. terrible ?}
 ' Good brother,' she sayd / ' who-so wyll haue mercy 2750
 Must be mercyable / as in prouerbe wryten is ;
 Who is without mercy / of mercy shall mys. 2752

394

' Call vnto mynde / thy owne wycked dede 2753
 In punyshyng this poore man / without offence ;
 To se his punyshment / my herte sore dyd blede,

I kneled afore thy fete / desyrynge indulgence ;
 Thou toke no regarde / to my prayer ne presence, 2757
 Wherfore the Iustyce / of god almyghty
 Vpon the is fallen / for thy synne soday[n]ly.' 2759

395

Whan she had ended / her ghostly exortacyon, 2760
 Perceyunge hym penytent / with great humylyte,
 Gladde to amende / vyce and transgressyon,
 Anone vnto prayer / she went with charyte,
 Opteyned forgyuenesse / of the blessed trynyte : 2764
 His fysnamy / restaured to his kynde agayne,
 Bothe bodyly and ghostly / cured was, certayne. 2766

396

This forsayd Alnotus / by synguler grace 2767
 Refused this worlde / pleasures and vanyte,
 Went vnto wyldernesse / and anchoryte¹ was. 1 P. machoryte.
 Whome theues martyred / to heuen blysse went he,
 At Stow besyde Bukbrydge / buryed was, trule ; 2771
 For whome our lorde / of his infynyte goodnes
 Shewed many myracles / affyrmynge his holynes. 2773

¶ *How dyuers prynces folowyng sensualyte, intendyng to
 violate this vyrgyn bi power / bi myracle were put to
 confusyon. Ca. xxvi.*

397

ANother sygne was shewed / by the kynge of blys 2774
 Of a wanton prynce / folowyng sensualyte
 And his fragyll appetyte / in doynge amys ;
 Entendyng by vyolence / power / and auctoryte
 To depryue Werburge / of her vyrgynyte, 2778
 Espyed a season / to fulfill his entent,
 Whan she was solytary / and no man there present. 2780

398

By force than he began / this mayd to assaile. 2781
 But she trustyng in god / to be her protectour,
 Escapyng his presence / cast her sacrat vayle

- For lyghtnesse and ease / to fle from the traytour :
 The sonne-beame receyued it/whiche hanged that houre. 2785
 Whiche myracle sene / the prynce fledde away ;
 That vyrgyn was preserued / by grace that day. 2787
 399
- ¶ An other myracle / was done in Kent 2788
 In the vyllage of Hoo / yet full memorous.
 A sensuall prynce / of wycked consent
 Purposed to maculate / this vyrgyn gloryous,
 Consyderynge her persone / so fayre and beauteous ; 2792
 Taryed the season / to fynde her solytary,
 By power to oppresse / this gracyous lady. 2794
 400
- Whan the tyme was comen / he thought conuenient, 2795
 After her furyously / he ranne a fast pace.
 She, knowynge his mynde / and¹ vnchast entent, 1 P. add
 Seynge no remedy / by man in that place
 Called to our sauyoure / for his helpe and grace, 2799
 Sayenge : 'blessed lorde / for thy endeles pyte
 Defende me this daye / and saue my chastyte !' 2801
 401
- And as she fledde / frome this cruell persone, 2802
 She ranne for socour / to a great oke-tree.
 By grace the sayd tree / opened that same season,
 Sufferynge this mayd / to haue sure and fre entree ;
 Wherby she escaped his / wycked tyrannye. 2806
 Whiche tree to this day / endurynge all the yere
 By myracle is vernaunte / fresshe / grene / and clere. 2808
 402
- Of the sayd oke-tree / is a famous opynyon : 2809
 That no man may entre / the sayd concauhte
 In deedly synne bounden / without contryeyon ;
 But in clene perfyte lyfe / who-soeuer he be,
 May entre the sayd oke / with fre lyberte. 2813
 And nygh to that place / a chyrche is now dedycate
 In the honour of god / and werburge immaculate. 2815

403

¶ Many other myrales / our blessed sauour 2816
 Shewed for this vyrgyn / of his goodnes,
 Conforte to the people / in sekenes and langour
 That to her wyll seke / in theyr dystresse.
 Her excellent vertue / and great holynesse 2820
 By sygnes and myrales / were dayly manyfest
 To many a creature / with peynes opprest. 2822

404

The fame wherof sprange / so fast aboute, 2823
 Notyfyed playne / in all this regyon :
 The people approched / withouten doubt
 To knowe her blessed / and holy conuersacyon
 And of these myrales / to haue probacyon, 2827
 By the syght wherof / they myght all gloryfy
 With ioy and gladnesse / our lorde god almyghty. 2829

405

There was no sekeneesse / nor infyrmyte 2830
 That mankynde had / nor vexacyon,
 But by her prayer / and humylyte
 Makynge for them / to our lorde intercessyon
 They were restaured / to helthe and saluacyon 2834
 All, by the meryte / of this vyrgyn pure,
 A synguler refuge / vnto euery creature. 2836

406

To the dombe was gyuen / speche and language, 2837
 To blynde theyr syght / to defe theyr herynge,
 To halte and lame people / helthe, in euery aege,
 By deuyne grace / and her ghostly lyuynge.
 The people approchyng / nygh to her in dwellyng, 2841
 By cally[n]ge to her / in the name of Ihesu
 Had theyr petycyon / by her synguler vertu. 2843

407

Some other that were / fully possessed 2844
 With wycked spyrytes / vexynge the mynde,
 Or with sekenes incurable / miserably greued,

By her dayly prayer / aboue course of kynde
 Of theyr dyseases / they shulde remedy fynde, 2848
 And from her departe / in soule with gladnesse
 Whiche to her came / sory in peyne and wretchednes. 2850

¶ *How saynt Werburge gaue knowlege to her systers of her departure, & how she ordered in vertue her sayd monasteryes afore her dethe. Ca. xxvii.*

408

THIS blessed abbesse / and vertuous floure, 2851
 The well of clennes / and humylyte,
 Called to mynde / the wordes of our sauour
 Rehersed by Mathewe / in his euangely :
 'The vyctoryall crowne / of eterne glory 2855
 Is gyuen to them / that be redy eche houre,
 Wysely attendynge / whan they be sende fore.' 2857

409

This texte was euer / in her memoryall, 2858
 Prompte alway redy / as a true spouses
 To wayte on her spouse / whan he wyll call,
 Her lampe replete / with oyle of mekenes.
 Synguler gyftes / she had of chrystes goodnes : 2862
 Inspyred with the spyryte / of prophecy,
 Secrete thynges to come / knowynge therby. 2864

410

She knewe the season / was hastely comynge 2865
 Of her departure / fro this lyfe mortall.
 Wherefore she ordred / sadly euery thyng
 Within her monasteryes / and charges spyrytuall,
 Vysytynge her couent / with her presence personall 2869
 Gaue knowlege to them / that soone and hastely
 She shulde departe / frome this lyfe transytory. 2871

411

Afore her were called / the systers of yche place, 2872
 And were apoynted / who shulde succede

After to be gouernour / ruler / and abbesse
 To the pleasure of god / and theyr ghostly mede ;
 Specyally commendynge / vertue, as we rede, 2876
 What meryte they shall haue / of god almyghty
 In spyrytuall cures / that done well theyr duty. 2878

412

All other offycers / within eche monastery 2879
 Were assygned by Werburge / theyr presydent,
 And vnder obedyence / charged full depely
 Theyr offyce to execute / vertue to augment,
 For the synguler profyte / of all the couent. 2883
 She gaue to yche place / landes and possessyon
 Sufficyently to serue / all the congregacyon. 2885

413

Whan she had ordeyned / eche place in charyte, 2886
 Dyschargynge her conscyence / chargynge them all
 To obserue relygyon / with perfyte humylyte
 After her exemple / and doctryne pryncypall,
 She had perfyte knowlege / by grace supérnaturall 2890
 Her body shulde rest / in the place of Hamburgens
 After her departure / by deuyne prouydens. 2892

414

Wherfore she commaunded / the couent of Hambury 2893
 Wysely to attende / with all theyr dylygence
 Vpon the ende / of her lyfe transytory,
 Wheresoeuer it be / to come with benyuolence
 And incontynent take / her body with reuerence 2897
 And brynge it shortly / vnto theyr monastery,
 There to be tumylate / after her desydery. 2899

415

As it pleaseth our lorde / and celestyall sufferayne 2900
 To sende to his seruaunte / his vysytacyon—
 The day was apoynted / the houre incertayne
 Of her departure / frome worldly vexacyon :
 The messenger of dethe / the ende of trybulacyon, 2904

- Oppressed this lady / moost worthy fame
 Ryght at her monastery / nomynat Trentame. 2906
 416
- She thanked her maker / sayenge day and nyght 2907
 ‘ Well-come be the vysytacyon / of god almyghty.’
 She called her systers / present afore her syght,
 Her entente rehersynge / to them tenderly,
 Desyrynge all them / to folowe dylygently 2911
 The lawes of god / with honour and reuerence
 And to her counseyll / to gyue fully credence ; 2913
 417
- Sayenge : ‘ dere byloued systers / in our sauour, 2914
 O spyrytuall chyldren / my derlynges moost dere,
 Whiche haue refused / all worldly honour
 To serue our lorde / with herte and mynde clere,
 Suffer no synne / in your soule to apere, 2918
 But wasshe it away / by bytter contrycyon,
 With prayer, penaunce / and true confessyon. 2920
 418
- ‘ And trust ye well, your true obedyence, 2921
 your chast lyuyng / and wylfull pouerte,
 your dayly prayers / vygyls / and abstynence
 That ye haue obserued / her vnder me,
 Shalbe recompensed / a thousande-folde, trule, 2925
 Whan ye shalbe taken / fro this lyfe transytoy ;
 your rewarde shalbe / with immortall glory. 2927
 419
- ‘ As for my dethe / whiche approaches nere, 2928
 I drede nothyng / tho nature ferefull be :
 I knowe for certayne / who departeth well here
 Is newe-borne agayne / to Loye and felycyte.
 Iche chrysten man hath / a threfolde natyuyte : 2932
 Fyrst of his parentes / by cours of nature
 Borne to many troubles / and sorowes, sure ; 2934
 420
- ‘ By the seconde byrthe / whiche is more excellent, 2935

At fonte of baptye / we haue regeneracyon,
 By fayth professed / to god omnypotent
 And made the chyldren / of ghostly saluacyon,
 To auoyde by grace / all wycked temptacyon, 2939
 To be inherytours / of Ioy perpetuall,
 Folowyng the counseyll / of holy chyrche withall; 2941

421

'The thyerde byrthe / moost ferefull and to be dredde, 2942
 Is whan the soule / departeth fro the body
 To payne or blysse / and leues the corps dedde
 To tourne agayne to erthe / to wast and putryfy.
 In this thyerde byrthe / by callynge aferre¹ for mercy 2946
 Our soule shall lyue in blysse / euerlastyng, ^{1 r. afore?}
 Crowned with vycory / for our chaste lyuyng. 2948

422

'The swete byrde, closed / in a cage a longe season, 2949
 Gladly entendeth / to fly at lyberte;
 The prysoner fettered / and cast in depe dongeon
 Euer supposes / to be rydde frome captuyte:
 The soule of mankynde / moost dygne of dutye, 2953
 Naturally desyreth / proued by reason,
 To be delyuered / frome bodyly pryson.' 2955

¶ *Of þ^e ghostli exortacyon saynt Werburge made to her
 systers in her sekenesse / and how deuoutely she receyued
 þ^e sacramentes of holy chyrche byfore her deth.
 Ca. xxviii.*

423

THe day knowen / to her by reuelacyon 2956
 Of her departure / by sygnes euydent,
 She sende for all / the hole congregacyon,
 And in presence / of all her holy couent
 She called for the blessed sacrament; 2960
 To whome she sayd / with wordes expresse
 With wepyng teeres / and great mekenesse: 2962

424

- ‘Well-come my lorde / well-come my kynge, 2963
 Well-come my sufferayne / and sauour,
 Well-come my conforte / and ioy euerlastynge,
 My trust / my treasure / my helpe and socour,
 Well-come my maker / and my redemptour, 2967
 The sone of god / moost in maieste,
 Withouten begynnyng / and endeles shalbe. 2969

425

- ‘I byleue that thou / for all mankynde 2970
 Frome heuen descended / of thy charyte
 And was incarnate / scrypture dothe mynde,
 In the vyrgynall wombe / of blessed marye,
 And suffered dethe / to make vs all fre, 2974
 Descended to hell / roose the thyrd day,
 Ascended to heuen / and our raunson dyd pay; 2976

426

- ‘And I knowlege to the / with pure entent : 2977
 On Shorpthursday / after thy passyon
 Thy moost blessed body / in sacrament
 Thou gaue to vs / for our communyon,
 To be our defence / and ghostly tuycyon, 2981
 Now present here / in forme of breed,
 To Iudge mankynde / bothe quycke and deed. 2983

427

- ‘O sufferayne sauour / replete with grace, 2984
 I the beseche / haue pyte vpon me
 And in my soule / make a dwellynge-place,
 Expulce all vyce / synne and mysery ;
 Defende my soule / frome our aduersary, 2988
 Saue and protecte me / from peynes infernall
 And brynge through thy mercy / to ioye perpetuall.’ 2990

428

- Thus with reuerence / and great humylyte 2991
 She receyued / the blessed sacrament,
 The seconde persone / in trynYTE,

- In perfyte fayth / hope / and loue feruent,
 With great contrycyon / as it was apparent, 2995
 Her herte lyfte vp / to-warde heuen on hye
 Abydyng the wyll / of god almyghty. 2997
 429
- She exorted / her systers euerychone 2998
 That were there present / in companye,
 Desyrynge them all / with supplycacyon
 To remembre her / sayenge with humylyte :
 ‘ My systers in god / now knowe may ye 3002
 My dayes ben ferre past / comynge is the houre.
 Wherfore I betake you / fyrst to our sauour ; 3004
 430
- ‘ Prayenge you tenderly / for the loue of me 3005
 In deuyne seruyce / loke ye contynu ;
 Obseruyng pacyence / mekenes / and chastyte,
 Encresynge in relygyon / by the grace of Ihesu—
 “ Who-so perceuers / in herte and mynde true 3009
 Vnder obedyence / to the extreme day,
 Is sure to be saued ” / scrypture so doth say. 3011
 431
- ‘ Also remembre / that all worldly royalte, 3012
 Honour / ryches / pleasure / possessyon,
 If ye consyder / are but a vanyte,
 Nothyng assured / to trust therupon ;
 Wherfore dyspose you / to vertue alon 3016
 Whyle ye endure / in this lyfe mortall,
 Tyll that ye come / to Ioy perpetuall. 3018
 432
- ‘ Secondly ’ she sayd / ‘ systers, I you pray 3019
 Kepe¹ well the order / of perfyte charyte, 1 P. kept
 Neuer declynyng / fro it by no way,
 As ye haue taken / exemple of me ;
 Iche loue other / and worshyp in theyr degre, 3023
 So that no murmure / nor dyssymulacyon
 Be founde amonge / this holy congregacyon. 3025

433

Be euer lowly / humble / and obedyent 3026
 With due reuerence / worship and honoure,
 Folowe the mynde / of your presydent,
 Vnto your ¹ heed / and ghostly gouernoure. 1 r. you
 Kepe well chastyte / that precyous floure, 3030
 So that no thought / of sensualyte
 Corrupte your mynde / to breke vyrgynyte. 3032

434

Se that ye vse / dyscrete temperaunce, 3033
 Abstenyng frome vayne superfluyte ;
 Se that amonge you / be founde no varyaunce,
 Kepe well the degrees / of humylyte.'
 These and many other / exemples of charyte 3037
 She taught her couent / of synguler deuocyon,
 How they shulde optayne / to hye perfeccyon. 3039

435

Thyrldy she prayed / sayenge with mynde dylygent : 3040
 ' O blessed sauyour / I desyre the
 Saue and defende / my hole couent
 And theyr monasteryes / of thy great pyte
 Frome peryll of peryshynge / and frome enmyte, 3044
 That all the subiectes / of our congregacyon
 May well obserue / theyr holy professyon. 3046

436

' And graunt me, swete lorde / throwe thy goodnes : 3047
 Who-so in thy name / vpon me dothe call
 In langour / mysery / in peyne / or sekenes,
 Also women with chylde / in peynes thrall,
 May haue remedy / and helpe specyall ; 3051
 And people in pryson / halte / blynde / and lame
 By me may magnify / thy glorious name.' 3053

437

Than she requyred / with humylyte 3054
 The spyrytuall sufferage / of holy vnccyon,
 Her soule to conforte / frome all aduersyte ;

She toke her leue / and kyssed them ycheon.
 Alas, what herte / myght shewe the lamentacyon, 3058
 The wepynge / waylynge / and wofull heuynes
 At the departure / of theyr swete maystres ? 3060

¶ *Of the departure of saynt Werburge vnto heuen at the abbay
 of Trentam | fro this miserable lyfe | & what lamenta-
 cyon her systers made for her dethe. Ca. xxix.*

438

3N all her infyrmyte / peyne and busynesse 3061
 She vsed prayer / and medytacyon,

Callynge for mercy / by interyor mekenesse
 With wepynge eyes / and great lamentacyon ;
 Remembrynge in herte / our lordes passyon ; 3065
 Commendynge her couent / vnto our sauour
 To be theyr defence / ayde / and protectour. 3067

439

The peynes encreased / of her infyrmyte, 3068
 The panges doubled / her peyne to augment,
 Nature decayed / vnto suche debylyte
 That the sygnes of dethe / appered euydent.
 The houre approched / after all Iudgment : 3072
 Wherefore all thynges / were redy preparate,
 As was conuenient / for so noble a state. 3074

440

Her spouse Ihesus / hauynge pyte and cure 3075
 Vpon his spouses / in extreme dystresse,
 Wolde not suffer her peyne / longer endure,
 But sende his angels / with great lyghtnesse
 To conforte his seruauant / in peyne and sekenesse, 3079
 To dyssolue her wo / and great penalte
 And brynge vp her soule / to eterne felycyte. 3081

441

There derknes was tourned / all vnto lyght, 3082
 Langour and trouble / vnto prosperyte,

The day was governour / ouer the nyght
 Whan that she passed / this lyfe transytory,
 Bondage and thraldome / were brought to lyberte. 3086
 The tyme of¹ Ioye / and euerlastyng pleasure 1 p. ef
 Was approchyng to Werburge / euer to endure. 3088

442

A multytude of angelles / shynyng moost clere 3089
 Were redy to gyde / with humble reuerence
 The soule of werburge / as truly dyd apere,
 And brought it to blys / vnto the hye presence
 Of almyghty god / moost of magnyfycence, 3093
 Clerely releashed / frome peynes of purgatory
 To be rewarded / with euerlastyng glory. 3095

443

This blessed vyrgyn / gloryous and pure, 3096
 In stedfast fayth / hope / loue / and charyte
 The thyrde day of February / ye may be sure,
 Expyred frome this lyfe / caduce and transytory
 To eterne blysse / coronate with vycory, 3100
 Chaungyng her lyfe / myserable and thrall
 For infynyte ioye / and glory eternall. 3102

444

With moche honour / these spyrytuall mynysters 3103
 Conueyed the soule / aboute the fyrmament,
 Passyng the seuen planettes / and all the sterres,
 Vnto the presence / of god omnypotent,
 Syngyng full swetely / theyr songes equyualent 3107
 Of pleasaunt armony / of conforte and blys,
 Salutyng her mekely / with wordes reuerent 3109
 Veni dilecta : veni coronabis.

445

The thre Ierarcheses / were redy present 3111
 With heuenly melody / to receyue this monyall,
 The quere of vyrgyns / mette her incontynent
 With great solempnyte / and processyon royall,
 Presentyng her soule / with myrthes angelycall 3115

To Ihesu, her spouse / to whome he sayd, truly,
 'Well-come, dere doughter / to blysse celestyall, 3117
 Intra in gaudium : domui tui.'

446

In meane tyme and space / this venerable body 3119
 (The soule departed) lay whyte / streyght / and colde,
 Semynge as on slepe / she had ben, verely,
 With swete odours fragrant / passyng manyfolde
 All spyces and herbes / in erth may be tolde; 3123
 The place was so pleasaunt / full of delyce
 Lyke as it had ben / an erthly paradyce. 3125

447

This forsayd venerable congregacyon 3126
 With wepyng teeres / and syghes lamentable
 Washed the swete body / after the olde custome,
 And dressed the corps / with clothes honorable,
 Prepared all necessaryes / pleasaunt and commendable; 3130
 To churche she was brought / solely in syght,
 With feruent deuocyon / to be watched all nyght. 3132

448

And as they watched / with due mynystracyon 3133
 Ouer the sayd corps / deuoutly prayenge,
 They made great mournynge / and lamentacyon
 Euerychone to other / for her departynge ;
 'Alas,' they all sayd / with wofull waylynge, 3137
 'Our solace / our helthe / is clere gone away !
 Alas for sorowe / what shall we now say ? 3139

449

'The sterre of our conforte / is extyncte clere, 3140
 The lanturne of our lyght / is taken vs fro,
 The floure of chastyte / is layd vpon a bere,
 The myrrour of mekenes / now lyeth full loo,
 The treasure of relygyon / from vs now is ago. 3144
 Our sorowe encresed / wretchednes / and mysery,
 Syth thou arte departed. / alas, what remedy ? 3146

450

'Our hertes ben plunged / in great wo and peyne, 3147
 Our myndes are medled / with heuy langour ;
 How shulde we now rest / frome mornynge, certayne,
 Beholdynge now deed / whylom our protectour ?
 Swete lady, thou art gone / frome vs for euermore ; 3151
 Our deedly sorowe / replete with bytternes,
 For waylynge and wepynge / can neuer ceas. 3153

451

'With herte, mynde and voyce / to the we do call : 3154
 O blessed Werburge / our moost dere maystres,
 O sufferayne lady / and ruler of vs all,
 Why hase thou vs lefte / in suche heuynesse ?
 If thy wyll had ben / it is knowen expresse, 3158
 Thou myght haue taryed / with vs by petycyon.
 Alas, remedylesse / is our lamentacyon ! 3160

452

'Frome vs thou arte taken / and gone is our solace, 3161
 The myrroure of vertue / is deed now with the,
 The tryed stock of truth / and the grounde of grace
 Is pyteously decayed / our hope and sufferaynte.
 O blessed sauyour /vpon vs haue pyte, 3165
 Sende vs our conforte / by thy great myght agayne
 As thou hase reysed many / from dethe to lyfe, certayne. 3167

453

'O dredefull dethe / cruell enemy to nature, 3168
 With dolefull heuynes / on the we may complayne,
 Takyng our heed frome vs / to our great dysconfyture,
 Hath brought vs to thraldome / wofulnes and peyne ;
 Nother kyng ne emperour / thy fauour may optayne, 3172
 But he must departe / arested with thy launce.
 Thanke we god of all / for it is his pleasaunce.' 3174

¶ *How the hamburgenses toke the blessed body of Werburge
 frome Trentam by myracle & brought it to Hambury | &
 of þ^e buryall of werburge | & of manyfolde myracles
 shewed for her merytes .ix. yere after her translacyon.
 Ca. xxx.*

454

¶ His glorious vyrgyn / and moost blessed abbace 3175
 Departed from this lyfe / caduce and transytory
 (As afore is sayd) the yere and tyme of grace
 Almost seuen hundreth / the thyrde day of February,
 To celestyall blysse / and infynyte glory ; 3179
 Her subiectes oppressed / with wylfull pensyuenesse,
 With great trybulacyon / care and heuynesse. 3181

455

But where werburge gaue / in commaundymnt 3182
 To bury her corps / at place of Hambury,
 As was the wyll / of our lorde omnypotent ;
 Her subiectes of Trentam / whiche had her body,
 Purposed her wyll / and entent to deny, 3186
 Prepared to kepe / the corps by stronge hande,
 With them to remayne / as ye shall vnderstande. 3188

456

The sayd people of Trentam / watched full dylygent 3189
 Her corps, fulfyllynge / the obsequyes funerall,
 Entendynge to auoyde / and frustrate her testament
 Gate a great company / by power Marcyall,
 Closed fast theyr doores / and gates one and all, 3193
 Made sure yche place / by theyr prouydens
 For to kepe the corps / excludynge Thamburgens. 3195

457

But, as Salomon sayth / sentencyously, 3196
 ‘There may be no counseyll / power ne prudence,
 Wysedome of man / nor naturall polycy,
 To derogate or chaunge / deuyne sentence ;’
 Proued euer[y] day / by true experyence : 3200

- 'Tho mankynde prepose / his mynde to fulfyll,
 yet god dysposeth / all thyng at his wyll.' 3202
 458
- And as they watched / the same sayd nyght 3203
 Moost busyly / to execute they[r] wyll and entent,
 By deuyne prouydence / passynge mannes myght
 Sodeynly on slepe / was all that couent,
 Theyr company and mynysters / that were there lent, 3207
 Hauynge no power / for to waken, doubtles ;
 God so prouyded / for theyr great maystres. 3209
 459
- Than shortly resembled / vnto that sayd place 3210
 The people of Hamburgens / a great company,
 With the mynysters of god / people full of grace :
 And anone by the wyll / of our lorde almyghty
 The lockes and the barres / of that sayd monastery 3214
 Fell downe to the grounde / by power supernall,
 Without mannes hande / that enter they myght all. 3216
 460
- Whiche myracle proued / the people of Hambury 3217
 Entred Trentam abbay / with mynde reuerent,
 And founde there on slepe / all the other company,
 Man / woman / and chylde / all that were present.
 They kneled all downe / and worshypped the sacrament, 3221
 Praysynge our maker / of theyr good spede,
 Theyr specyall socour / euer at theyr nede. 3223
 461
- Her blessed body / from Trentam they dyd take, 3224
 Gladly departynge / out of the monastery—
 Nother man nor woman / had power to wake,
 Tyll they were passed / all greuous leopardy ;
 Magnyfyenge our lorde / of his grace deuoutly, 3228
 Solemply syngyng their songes celestiall
 With infinite gladnes / and comfort spirituall. 3230
 462
- After all this done / this holy congregacion 3231

With reuerence / honour / and solempnite,
 With wepynge tearis / for pure affection,
 With lamentable songes / masse and dirige
 Buried the corps / of this blessed ladie 3235
 Right in the chauncell / of the sayd abbay,
 There bodily to rest / as her wyll was alway. 3237

463

All obsequies ended / therto belongynge 3238
 As was agreable for suche a president,
 The systers departed / with clamour and mournynge,
 Plonged in heynes / and to their celles went,
 To wepe and wayle secretly / their hartis to content, 3242
 Cryng: 'alas, alas / nowe buried haue we
 The exemple of vertu / mekenes / and chastite !' 3244

464

And as the history of her lyfe / doth expresse 3245
 In a boke nominat / the thrid Passionary,
 After the buriall of this patronesse
 The place was decorat / with myracles many,
 Manifest to the people / of euery progeny 3249
 Howe god almyghty of his speciall grace
 Hath done for his seruant / in short tyme and space. 3251

465

For many people greued with infirmite, 3252
 Dolorous of hert / and interiour tribulacion,
 Heynes of mynde / or other penalite,
 To her graue resortyng / with feruent deuocion,
 Sekynge for remedy / with great contricion, 3256
 Anon by her prayer / vnto our sauour
 They were released from peyne and langour. 3258

466

Also by her merite, suffrage and petition 3259
 Euery humble creature had helpe and succour ;
 To distract persons / was yelded reason,
 wikked spirites expulsed were that same hour,
 Impotent and feble to helth she dyd restour, 3263

Halt and lame had passage / the blynde had perfect syght,
The dombe had speche / the deffe herynge ryght. 3265

467

Women with childe / beynge in great ieopardy, 3266
Namely in trauelyng / greued with wo and payne,
Whan they myght nat come / sendyng to her oratorye,
Makyng true oblacion / restaured were, certayne,
To helth and prosperite / from wo delyuered playne; 3270
And if they obteyned a relique from the place,
The mother and childe / by it founde speciall grace. 3272

468

The deuout pilgrym / the perfitt maryner, 3273
The true laborer / the marchant with richesse,
The carefull pore man / the peynfull prisoner
Were sondry tymes delyuered from wo and distresse;
Men / women / childer / sekyng with mekenes 3277
This glorious virgyn / with humble supplicacion,
Founde soone remedie / helpe and consolacion. 3279

¶ *A litle breue rehersall of her lyfe | and howe for her
myracles shewed þ^e couent of Hambury purposed to
translate her body | by the helpe of Mercyens. Ca. xxxi.*

469

THIS glorious lady / and gemme of holynesse 3280
Of fyue myghty kynges / descended lynally,
A prynces / an enherytryce / replete with mekenes
Refused all pleasures / pompe / and vayne glory,
Entred relygyon / professed at Ely, 3284
A spectacle of vertue / dwellynge in that place
And a floure of chastyte / electe by synguler grace. 3286

470

Her honorable vncler / kyng Ethelrede, 3287
Consyderynge her vertue / and hys deuocyon
Made her gouernour / for ghostly helthe and mede
Ouer all the monasteryes / within his regyon,

For the sure encrease / of perfyte relygyon ; 3291
 Foure of these monasteryes / we haue in memory :
 As Wedon / Trentam / Repton / and Hambury. 3293

471

Whan she was ruler / and chefe presydent 3294
 Of these sayd places / vnder god almyghty,
 Than vertue and goodnes / dayly dyd augment
 By heuently grace / to the soule-helthe of many,
 And by her exemple / and doctryne ghostly 3298
 Kynges / lordes / barons / refusynge theyr royalte
 Entred relygyon / with great humylyte. 3300

472

Her lyfe and doctryne / agreed bothe in one, 3301
 Proued in effecte / by specyall gyftes of grace :
 Many she conuerted / vnto contemplacyon,
 To prayer and penaunce / whyle they had here space.
 Her couent and subiectes / within euery place 3305
 By her excellent vertue / and hye dyscrecyon
 Were graciously gouerned / for theyr saluacion. 3307

473

Her dwellynge was most at the place of Wedon, 3308
 Where many myracles were shewed openly ;
 And at Trentam abbay / of her foundacion,
 From peyne she departed to eternall glory ;
 After her entent was buried at Hambury ; 3312
 Of whom it may be sayd / ' here lyeth nowe present
 A princesse / a virgin / a nonne / and a president.' 3314

474

The deuout couent of her congregacion, 3315
 Whiche hath long wayled / with sorowfull payne,
 Nowe haue great cause to make consolacion
 And gyue due honour to our lorde and sufferayne,
 Knowynge that Werburge / in blysse is nowe, certayne,
 For them all dayly a true mediatrice [3320
 In the heuynly trone / afore the hie Iustice. 3321

475

Our sauieur Iesus / graunter of all goodnes, 3322
 Consyderyng the mekenes / and pure virginite
 Of Werburge his spouse / and proued holynes,
 By speciall grace / preserued her body
 To his laude and honour / his name to magnifye, 3326
 Both hole and sounde / from naturall resolucion,
 As her soule was clere from vice and corruption. 3328

476

This immaculat mayde / shenyng more bryght 3329
 Than radiant phebus in the triumphant trone,
 With the quere of virgins / prayseth day and nyght
 The blessed trinite with due adoracion,
 Of perpetuall pleasure hauyng the fruycion, 3333
 A singular intercessour for her seruauntes all
 That here in erth mekely to her wyll call. 3335

477

And though her body do rest nowe in graue, 3336
 yet notable signes contynually be done:
 Some warned in their slepe comfort to haue
 By visityng her place / callynge her vpon,
 With contrite hert makyng true oblacion. 3340
 Whiche thyng contynued by space of .ix. yere
 With meruailous myracles euydent and clere. 3342

478

The couent, consyderyng suche great company 3343
 From diuers partes / resortynge to theyr place
 In pylgrimage to Werburge / for helpe and remedy,
 Entended to translate this glorious abbasse,
 To exalte her body replet with great grace 3347
 To her great honour / comfort to eche creature—
 Pite that suche a relique shulde lye in sepulture. 3349

479

To the prayes and honour of god omnipotent 3350
 And of saint Werburge laude and reuerence
 The couent and the people by one assent

Desired Coelrede, than kyng of merciens,
 For aide in this case / helpe and diligence. 3354
 (Whiche thyng graunted) the day appointed was ;
 The clergy and the comons reioised with solace. 3356

¶ *Of the solempne translacion of this glorious virgyn saynt
 Werburge / and of the great myracles done at the sayd
 season by the myght of god and merite of this gracious
 lady. Cap. xxxii.*

480

At the day appoynted of her translacion 3357
 Kyng Coelred and his counsell were redy-present,
 With bysshops, and the clergy, men of deuocion,
 Her systers and subiettes, a religious couent ;
 The comon people from eche place thider went 3361
 With great gladnes / the hole for pleasure gostly,
 The seke and impotent for helth and remedy. 3363

481

The bysshops and clergy stode vpon one parte 3364
 Of her holy graue / and her systers echone,
 Syngyng and praysyng the blessed trinite ;
 The kyng and his counsell with great deuocion
 Stode on the other parte in contemplacion. 3368
 The graue was opened, eleuat was the chest
 Wherin her holy corps .ix. yere fully dyd rest. 3370

482

Whan this sayd monument discouered was, 3371
 Suche a sauuite and fragrant odoure
 Ascended from the corps by singular grace,
 Passyng all wordly swetnes and sauour,
 That all there present that day and hour 3375
 Supposed they had ben / in the felicite
 Of erthely paradise / without ambiguite. 3377

483

And as eche man thought¹ by naturall reason¹ P. thought 3378
 Nothyng shulde remayn of that blessed body

- But the bare boones / all els to resolucion :
 The couerture remoued by the sayd clergy,
 The corps hole and sounde was funde, verely, 3382
 Apperyng to them / on slepe as she had ben,
 Nothyng depaired / that ther coude be seen. 3384
 484
- Her vesture appered hole, clere and white, 3385
 No parte consumed / for all the longe space,
 Fragrant in odoure / repleit with delite,
 As at the fyrst season whan she buried was ;
 But whan discouered was her swete face, 3389
 Beautye appered more white than the lile,
 Mixt with rose colour / moost faire for to se. 3391
 485
- Her louely countenaunce / so comly to beholde, 3392
 And her swete fisnomy / with fairenes decorat
 As fresshly apparant / moost pleasant to be tolde,
 As at the fyrst day / whan she was tumulat.
 No doubt therof / for she, with synne nat maculat, 3396
 Vsyng all her lyfe in clenness and virginite,
 From bodily corruption / by grace must saued be. 3398
 486
- The clergy, yet serchyng more diligently 3399
 Her precious body / and interiour vesture,
 Eleuat the corps full reuerently
 With moche worship, honour and cure,
 Founde nothyng perished in shap nor figure 3403
 For all the long space, tyme and contynuaunce
 She lay in sepulture by diuine ordynaunce. 3405
 487
- Whiche famous myracle / notified so clere, 3406
 The clergy with her systers in ioy and honour,
 The kyng and his counsell all therat present were,
 With voice melodious made a great clamour,
 Praysyng and magnifyng our blessed sauour 3410
 With celestiaall songes / and hymnes full of blys,

Deuoutly rehersyng / with all their deuour	3412
Mirabilis deus in sanctis suis.	3413
488	
With that the comon rude people euerychone	3414
In the sayd churche-yarde standyng without,	
Heryng the clergy syng with suche deuocion,	
Towarde heuen they cried / and busely dyd shout,	
The space of .iii. houres / or nere there-about,	3418
Worshippyng our lorde / with voice shrill and loude	
In hert, wyll and mynde / as well as they coude.	3420
489	
After all this done / her blessed body	3421
Was wasshed and reclothed with vesture precious	
By the sayd couent of the place of Hambury.	
The bysshops were reuesshed in pontificalibus,	
And all the clergy syngyng with voice melodious	3425
Kneled all downe and gaue due reuerence,	
Honour and worship to her corporall presence.	3427
490	
Thus they reseceyued with perfit humilite	3428
This sacrat relique, hole and substanciall,	
And layd it in a shryne with great solempnite,	
Enowrned with riches sumptuous and roiall,	
Prepared by the kyng / and ordeyned inspeciall,	3432
Entendyng that this relique and gostly treasure	
Perpetually with them shulde remayne and endure.	3434
491	
People oppressed with greuous infirmite,	3435
Distract persons / halt, blynde and lame,	
Resortynge to her shryne with humilite	
Shortly were cured by callynge of her name ;	
Impotent creatures (the legende sayth the same)	3439
Touchyng her tumbere / were cured from payne ;	
Whiche tumbere remayneth at Hambury, certayne.	3441
492	
After she was translate / knowen it is well,	3442

The clergy to¹ procession / went after to mas, 1 r. in
 Honoryng and praysyng / the kyng of Israell
 And blessed Werburge / with moche solace.
 Whan diuine seruice duely ended was, 3446
 The bisshops gaue theyr holy benedictions ;
 The people departed glad to their mansions. 3448

493

This holy sayd fest of her translacion 3449
 Was ordeyned and celebrate with solemnite,
 As sayeth Ranulphus in his policonicon,
 About the yere of grace .vii. hundreth and .viii., sothle,
 The .xi. Kalendas of the moneth Iulii ; 3453
 Regnyng in mercelande the said Kyng Coelrede,
 Than bysshop of Lichefelde was Hedda / as we rede. 3455

¶ *Howe the body of saynt Werburge contynued hole / and
 substanciall at Hambury after the translacion by the
 space of two hundreth yeres / tyll the danes were comon
 to this lande / or it felle and was resolued vnto powder.
 The .xxxiii. Chapitre.*

494

This rutilant gemme and specious floure 3456
 Hole and substanciall remayned at Hambury
 Two hundreth yeres in beaute and colour,
 By singular grace / and angelicall custodye,
 Tyll the danes were comon of malice and misery, 3460
 Of ire and myschief / as we vnderstande ;
 We meane the comyng of pagans to this lande. 3462

495

Whiche danes by sufferaunce and dispensacion 3463
 Of almyghty god / for synne and inquite
 Punysshed vnpiteously all this region
 with a wofull plage of great crudelite,
 The sharpe swerde of deth / hauynge no pite, 3467
 Spared no creature / prest nor religious,
 Long tyme duryng in their malice odious. 3469

496

- Than this vitall glebe by diuine ordinaunce 3470
 Voluntary permytted naturall resolution,
 Lest the cruell gentils / and wiked myscreauntes
 With pollute handes full of corrupcion
 Shulde touche her body / by indignation ; 3474
 Whiche pagans were enemyes to our lorde Iesu,
 Rebels to holy church, vnfeithfull and vntrue. 3476

497

- Howe-be-it the power of our swete sauour 3477
 Myght haue continued the body of his syruant
 All that longe season in worshyp and honour,
 As he preserued of his grace abundaunt
 Many sayntes of this realme hole, fresshe and vernant 3481
 viii. hundreth yeres agon / to this present day,
 And like so to endure / hole and clere alway. 3483

498

- Sothely to considre / our lorde omnipotent, 3484
 Glorious in his sayntes / scripture doth specifie,
 Of his diuine prouidence / pleasure and intent
 Some haue resolued / for the greater glorie
 Of their resurrection for the tyme, truly, 3488
 Some other to continue without corruption,
 To the true example of his promission. 3490

499

- Many holy martyrs / for Christ haue byn slayne, 3491
 The hie prestis of god murdred cruelly,
 Some with wylde bestes deuoured, in certayne,
 Some cast in fiers, on cooles to broyle and fry,
 Vpon many other byrdes fedyng openly— 3495
 Of whom the prophet clerely doth reherce :
 ‘The more peyne here and wo / the more glory, doubtles.’ 3497

500

- The glorious martyr Stephan (as is red) 3498
 In this present lyfe dyd myracles many,
 Neuertherles / he raised no people that were deed ;

But after the resoluyng of his blessed body
 He raised deed men to lyfe agayne, truely, 3502
 That the great power of lyfe myght sprynge
 From iniurie of deth / by our heuen kynge. 3504

501

Great was the respect of diuyn grace 3505
 In the body of Werburge / without resolucion,
 Shewed by her myracles / for mannes helth and solace ;
 But greater was the hope of the eterne renouacion¹ [3509
 In her body resolved to naturall consumption, ¹ P. renouacion
 Whiche for her merites to this present day
 Helpeth all her seruantes that to her wyll praye. 3511

502

Therefore worshyp we with singular deuocion 3512
 The holy lyuyng of this virgin gracious ;
 For why / all the halowyng of her conuersacion
 Belongeth to the honour of our lorde Iesus,
 Whiche of his grace hath made her so glorious 3516
 And graunteth his mercy / and of synne remysson
 To all them / for whom / she maketh intercession. 3518

503

Blessed pure virgin / moines and abbasse, 3519
 O venerable werburge / mekely we the pray,
 Make thou supplicacyon / to the graunter of grace,
 After this lyfe present / that all we may
 Come to heuen-blysse / whiche lasteth for ay, 3523
 There to beholde / the gloryous trynyte, [3525
 To whom be laude / worshyp / honour / & endeles glorye.

[BOOK II.]

¶ The table of the seconde boke of þ^e gloryous vyrgyn saynt Werburge.

Ⓜ F the comynge to this lande of paganes / and of the trouble of this lande / and how y^e kynge of Mercyens for drede departed out of this lande / and how longe saynt Werburge contynued incorrupte and hole at the abbay of Hambury Ca. i.

¶ How the people of Hambury brought the shryne to Chester / and of the solempne receyuyng of it / by all the inhabytauntes of the countre Ca. ii.

¶ A lytell descrypcyon of the fundacyon of Chester / and of þ^e abbay-churche within the sayd cytee / where the holy shryne remaineth Ca. iii.

¶ A breue rehersall / of the fyrst fundacyon of the mynster of Chester / & of the instytucyon of seculer chanons / in the tyme of kynge Edwarde senyor. Ca. iiiii.

¶ Of the notable myracle[s] of saynt Werburge in y^e tyme of chanons / and fyrst how she saued Chester from the destruccyon of Walshe men Ca. v.

¶ Howe saynte Werburge cured and healed a woman thre tymes, whiche was halt and lame, to helthe and prosperite agayne Cap. vi.

¶ Howe saynt Werburge saued and defended Chester from innumerable barbarik nacions purposynge to destroye and spoyle the same cite vtterly Cap. vii.

- ¶ Howe saynt Werburge by her merite sent fruyte to a barayne Woman by synguler prayer made vnto her Cap. viii.
- ¶ Howe a woman with childe by peyne brought out of her mynde & reason by saynt Werburge was restaured to prosperite and helthe agayne Cap. ix.
- ¶ Of a nother woman, vnlauffuly wurkyng was made blynde and sore punysshed / and by saint Werburge was restored to syght agayne Cap. x.
- ¶ Howe saint Werburge restored to helth & prosperite .vi. lame & halt persons by singular grace Ca. xi.
- ¶ Of a yonge man vnryghtfully hanged, was thries deluyered from deth by saynt Werburge to helth and prosperite Cap. xii.
- ¶ Howe at the maner of Vpton saynt Werburge refrayned wilde horses from distruction of her cornes ca. xiii.
- ¶ Of a chanon of Chester hauyng his leg broken, was restored to helth by saint Werburge his patrones Ca. xiiii.
- ¶ A brene rehearsall or cronicle of certayne kyngis / and howe kyng Edgar came to Chester / also howe erle Leofrice repared diuers churches Ca. xv.
- ¶ Of the comyng of Willyam conquerour to this lande / & howe Lupe was fonder of Chester monastery ca. xvi.
- ¶ Howe saint Werburge taught her monke to kepe pacience for the greater merite and glori to come ca. xvii.
- ¶ Howe sandes rose vp within the salt see ayenst Hilburghde¹ by saint Werburge at the petition of ^{r.} Hilburghde William constable of Chestre Ca. xviii.
- ¶ Howe Matilde countesse of Chestre, counsellynge her husband agaynst the monasterie, was drowned at Bartflowe with many other mo Cap. xix.
- ¶ Howe a great fire, like to destroye all Chestre, by myracle ceassed whan the holy shryne was borne about the towne by the monkes Ca. xx.

- ¶ A breue rehearsall of the myracles of saynt Wer-
burge after her translacion to Chestre Ca. xxi.
- ¶ A charitable mocion / counsel / & desire to al thinha
bitantes wthin the countie palatin of Chester for
p^o monasteri ca. xxii.
- ¶ A litle orison or prayer to þ^e blessed virgin saint
Werburge by the translatour of this warke . . . Ca. xxiii.
- ¶ A short conclusion of this litle werke to the reders
by the translatour Ca. xxiiii.

[BOOK II.]

¶ *The prologe of the translatur of this lytell treatyse in the
seconde boke.*

1

Now whan we consyder / with mynde dylygent 1
The merueylous maners / & synguler condycion
Of the comyn people / symple and neclygent,
Whiche without lytterature / and good informacyon
Ben lyke to Brute beestes / as in comparyson, 5
Rude / wylde / and boystous / by a prouerbe, certan,
' Good maners and conynges / maken a man.' 7

2

Saynt Paule sayth / shewyng to the Romans 8
How all thynges wryten / in holy scription
Is wryten for our doctryne / and ghostly ordynans,
For our great conforte / and endeles pleasure.
All thynges is knowen playnly / by lytterature, 12
Morall vertues / be noted by it full playne
Frome vyce and neclygence / to abstayne, certayne. 14

3

What were mankynde / without lytterature? 15
Full lytell worthy / blynded by ignoraunce.
The way to heuen / it declareth ryght sure
Through perfyte luynges / and good perseueraunce ;

By it we may be taught / for to do penaunce 19
 Whan we transgresse / our lordes commaundymnt ;
 It is a swete cordyall / for mannes entent. 21

4

How shulde the seuen / scyences lyberall 22
 Haue ben preserued / vnto this day,
 The wysdome / of the phylosophers all,
 But alone by lernynge / it is no nay.
 The notable actes / of our fathers, I say, 26
 (yf litterature were nat) myght nat nowe be tolde,
 Nor auncient histories and cronycles olde. 28

5

The lawe of ciuile / and of holy canon 29
 By study be preferred with moche honour
 To execute iustice / and for due reformacion ;
 The most blessed doctrine of our sauour,
 The actis of the apostoles / with the doctours four, 33
 Be preserued by wrytyng / and put in memorie,
 With the lyues of saintes many a noble storie. 35

6

Of whiche histories we purpose speciall 36
 To speke of saint Werburge / vnder your protection,
 Declaryng the ende of her lyfe historiall
 As we haue begon / and made playne mencion
 In the fyrst volume by breue compilacion, 40
 There playnly descriuyng her linall discens
 Of .iiii. myghty kyngdomes by true experience ; 42

7

Also we haue shewed in the sayd littell boke 43
 Her goodly maners / and vertuous disposicion
 Of her yonge age / who-so lyst theron to loke ;
 And howe her bretherne suffred martyrdome ;
 Of her fathers realme a litell discricion ; 47
 Howe she was professed in the place of Ely ;
 Of her conuersacion within the sayd monastery ; 49

8

After for her vertue / howe she was made abbasse 50
 Of diuers monasteries, flouryng in vertue ;
 And of the great miracles whiche there done was
 For her great charite / by the grace of Iesu ;
 Howe diuers of her kynrede dyd clerely exchewe 54
 All wordly pleasures and honours transetory,
 Professyng obedience at the place of Ely ; 56

9

Also we haue shewed vnder your licence 57
 Of her departure from this lyfe mortall,
 And of her sepulture at the place of Hamburgence ;
 The manyfolde myracles shewed by grace supernall,
 The wofull lamentacion of her systers all ; 61
 And howe after .ix. yere of her translacion
 By diuine ordinaunce miracles were done. 63

10

We humble require you of your charite 64
 To this seconde abstract to graunt pardon,
 Consyderynge we omytte whilom the historie
 And speke of cronicles / makyng a digression ;
 It is of no ignoraunce / nor presumption, 68
 But to enlarge the mater and sentence,
 To gladde the auditours / and moue their diligence. 70

11

In oure seconde boke expresse nowe wyll we, 71
 Vnder your licence and speciall tuicion,
 Of this blessed virgin / flouryng in chastite,
 Why and wherefore she came to Chestre towne,
 Principally by miracle / and diuine prouision, 75
 And howe for synne / vice / and wykednes
 Danes oppressed this lande with wretchednes, 77

12

And howe she was receyued at Chestre citie ; 78
 Of the fyrst foundation of towne and the place ;
 Of the great myracles there shewed openlie

To chanons and monkes / by singular grace,	
Vnto euery creature in extreme case,	82
Howe Werburge delyuered the towne from enmite,	
From dredfull fire / and plages of miserye.	84
13	
Also encronicled foloweth here expresse	85
A brefe compilacion of kyng Edwarde seniour,	
Of kyng Ethelstam / the great worthynes,	
Of humble kyng Edgare ¹ regnyng as emperour,	1 P. Ergare
Of his comyng to Chestre / of his great honour ;	89
And howe Erle Leofrice repared of his charite	
The mynstre of Werburge, gyuyng therto liberte ;	91
14	
Of the seconde foundation of the sayd monastery	92
From secular chanons to monkes religious	
Soone after the conquest, sayth the historye,	
By the erle of Chestre nominat Hug. Lupus,	
With counsell and helpe of blessed Anselmus ;	96
And of the great compas of the sayd abbay,	
Enuired with walles myghty to assay ;	98
15	
Howe Richard ¹ erle of Chestre by myracle ryght	1 P. Ric' 99
Was preserued from daunger of Walshemen,	
And howe he was drowned about mydnyght	
Purposyng to distroye the monastery, certen.	
Celestiall signes were shewed to men and women,	103
To children and innocentes by singular grace	
Of blessed Werburge, patronesse of the place :	105
16	
These miracles specified / and many other mo	106
This virgin shewed within Chestre cite,	
Whiche at this tyme we let ouer go,	
Lest to the reders tedious it shulde be.	
Almyghty god, both one two and thre,	110
Sende vs of theyr grace to make a good ende :	
Helpe, lady Werburge, this warke to amende.	112

¶ *Of the comynge of cruell pagans to this lande / and howe
saint Werburge longe lyenge hole and incorrupt at
Hambury, than was resolved to powder. And howe the
kyng of merciens was chased from his lande. Ca. i.*

17

Fore the comyng of danes to this lande 113
Merueilous signes were shewed in syght,
To conuert the people (as we vnde[r]stande) :
Sterres in the heuen shynyng full bryght,
Dyuersly mouynge apperyng day and nyght, 117
Rennyng in the ayre dredfull to beholde,
By longe continuaunce, sayth the story olde ; 119

18

Flamyng fire / dragons in the ayre fleyng, 120
Thondryng / and layth / erth-quake moost terrible,
With many other signes / as cometis blasyng,
Were seen in the ayre / to nature horrible ;
Vpon clothyng of people bloody dropes odible 124
Euydently appered : the yere of grace
vii. hundreth .lxxxvi. in many a place. 126

19

By whiche sayd signes wonderfull to se 127
Two plages of pestilence folowed incontinent :
The first was great derthes, hungre and pouerte,
The seconde was the greuous and sore punysshement
Of the cruell danes, cursed and fraudulent ; 131
Whiche trouble began the .iiii. yere of Bricicus,
Kyng of westsaxon[s] / saith maister Alfridus. 133

20

The thyrde yere folowyng these signes, in certen,
Danes and Norwaies enterprised this lande,
In the north partie, an hoost of armed men,
Whiche cruelly spoiled and distroied holy Ilande,
With Tynmouth abbay / and all that myght be fonde, 138

Drowned and slewe the people euerychone,
 Brenned churches / townes / spared no religion. 140

21

In short tyme after the prenominate pagans 141

At tamysmouth reentred this realme agayne,
 Destroyed many cites by their myghty ordynaunce,
 Oppressed London / Canturbury by power, certayne ;
 The kyng of Merciens to escape was fayne ; 145

Kyng Adoulfus made the danes a batell,
 To whiche kyng by grace the victorye befell. 147

22

yf ye wyll consydre the cause wherfore and why 148

Our lorde suffred pagans to punyssh this region,
 The treuth was this : for synne specially.

For in the primatiue church / with great perfection
 Kynges / quienes / dukes entred religion, 152

Professed obedient, chaste, without propurte,
 Vertue to encrease / true loue and charite : 154

23

That tyme was iustice ministred with mercy, 155

True loue and amite founde in euery place ;
 Dissimulacion / pride and fals enuye

Durst nat appere in halle nor in palace,
 Extorcion, pollynge opteyned no grace ; 159

The commaundementes of god were obserued a-ryght,
 Charite was feruent / encreaseynge day and nyght. 161

24

By proces of tyme / as sayth myn auctour, 162

Through great possession / power / and liberte
 Vertue decreased in holy church day and houre,

Holy religion decayed pitiousle,
 Charite was colde / iustice and equite, 166

Extorcion, disceyte were vsed euery day,
 Couetise / pride / lechery were ryued¹ alway : 1 r. ryue 168

25

Therefore our lorde of his great ryghtwisnes 169

Suffred cruell people to entre this region, A scourge, to correct synne and wykednes ; Like a swarme of bees from dyuers nacion, Whiche had no pite, mercy nor compassion :	173
Danes, Gotes, Norwayes, and scottes also, Pictes and the wandeles, with many other mo.	175
26	
These foresayd fearfull and cruell nacions, Moost cruell pagans, dyd great persecucion, From the begynnyng of Adelwlfe, kyng of westsaxons, Tyll the comynge of normans vnto this region, The space enduryng by full computacion	176
Two hundreth yeres complet .xxx. also, With the swerde of vengeaunce, fire and moche wo.	180
27	
The yere of our lorde .D.CCC. fyfty and one At Tamysmouth arriued a great hoost of pagans With .iii. hundreth ships, and .l. men of armes echone ; Whiche destroyed Douer / and put the lande to greuans ; A gayne Bernulphus, the kyng of Mercians, The paynyms preuayled / and caused his hoost to fle ; Whiche fortune enforced them more bolder to be.	182
28	
But the yere of grace .D.CCC. sixe and sixtie The greattest noubre of the pagans all, viii. kynges, entred this realme by victorie, Norwaies / gootes / Wandels / danes in especiall, With many other nacions within in generall ; Kyng Hingware and Hubba than came to this lande, Whiche slewe saint Edmunde, kyng of Estenglande.	183
29	
The cruell paynyms and tyrauntes moost furious, Repleit with malice / pride / and enuye, Seruauntes to satan and ministres malicious, Purposed to desolate holy churche wyckedly : Brenned monasteries and spoiled vtterly	190
	201

Many churches, chapels, of a mortall hate, Slewe religious men, and nonnes dyd violate.	203
30	
The people were punysshed in euery place ; To olde, sicke and impotent they shewed no mercy, yonge soukyng children coude fynde no grace, Wyddowes and wyues were put to vilany, Maydens were corrupt / and slayne chamfully.	204 208
So all this realme endured confusion, Put to greuous peyne / deth / and affliction.	210
31	
After these infidels had ben at London And there accomplished theyr cruell entent, They soone proceded towarde Lincoln region, From thens directly with hasty iugement To the realme of Merciens, noble and auncient,	211 215
Right vnto Repton, where the kyng lay ; Robbyng and spoilyng all in theyr way.	217
32	
This kyng of Mercelande, called Burdredus, Regnyng .xxii. yere vpon the merciens, Was clerely expelled by the pagans furious, And went vnto rome with pure conscience ; Where he is buried by diuine prouidence—	218 222
Whiche kyng was cosyn by discent liniall To blessed Werburge so glorious and pudicall.	224
33	
This gracious virgin and preelect abbasse, Buried at Hambury (as is sayd before) Continued incorrupt and hole in that place In vesture and body .ii. hundreth yere and more ; But whan the danes came with suche rigour To Repton abbay / than she was resolued, And of deuocion full richely shryned.	225 229 231

¶ *Howe the people of Hambury brought the shryne to
Chestre | and of the solemne receyuyng of it by all the
inhabitauntes of Chesshyre. Cap. ii.*

34

3^N meane tyme the danes pitously destroyed 232
The monasteries of Werburge / Trentam & Wedon,
As they many other places had euyll oppressed
In the north and eest part of this region ;
The kyngdome of Kent suffred lyke punicion, 236
The Ile of Wyght endured moche turment :
So dyd the Westmarches / for punysshement. 238

35

The people of Hambury, wysely consydering 239
The comynge of danes vnto Repton,
And of the departure of Burdred, theyr kyng,
Howe all Englande was in great affliction,
And howe they were next to endure punicion— 243
Whiche forsayd Repton was distaunt from Hambury
The space of .v. mile, sayth the history— 245

36

The Hamburgenses with all the comons and clergy, 246
Dredynge full sore the pagans flagellacions,
Of their lyues desperate / but for the shryne specially,
To our blessed sauour made dayly inuocacions
With vigils, prayers and feruent meditacions, 250
To preserue the countrey / the relique / the shryne
From daunger of enmite and miserable ruyne. 252

37

As they continued in cotidian prayer, 253
The best remedie sekynge for to fynde
To auoide vexacion and all greuouse daunger
Of theyr great ennemies cursed and vnkynde,
The holy goost inspired theyr mynde 257
To take the shryne with great humilite
And brynge it to Chestre from perill and enmyte. 259

38

They toke this riall relique of reuerence 260
 With great mekenes, deuocion and feruour,
 Through the grace of god, theyr helpe and defence,
 Came to-warde Chester with diligence and honour—
 A place preordinat by our sauour 264
 Where her body shulde rest and worshipped be,
 Magnified with miracles next our ladie. 266

39

¶ Whan the clergie of Chestre and the citezens 267
 Herde tell of the comynge of this noble abbasse,
 They made preparacion and great diligence,
 In theyr best-maner worship and solace
 To mete this relique of singular grace ; 271
 The great estates / and rulers of the countray
 Were redy to honour saint Werburge that day. 273

40

First was ordeyned a solemne procession, 274
 With crosses / and baners / and surges clere lyght,
 The belles were tolled for ioye and deuocion ;
 The ministres of god in coopes redy dight,
 With censours of siluer / to encense her body right ; 278
 All prestis and clerkes redy to say and syng
 Proceeded in ordre / this holy virgin praysyng. 280

41

Next to the clergie approched in degree 281
 The lordes of the shyre, knyghtes, barons, all ;
 With feruent deuocion / praysyng the trinite
 Whiche sent to them suche comfourt spirituall.
 The citezens ensued with gladnes cordiall, 285
 With bokes and beades / magnifieng our maker
 For this great treasure to kepe them from daunger. 287

42

Venerable virgins next sette in ordre clere, 288
 With lilies in theyr handes / coronate with chastite,
 Good widowes and wyues appoynted well were,

‘ WELCOME TO CHESTER, SWETE LADY.’	141
Gyuyngē true thankes vnto this virgin frē.	
Nex[t] them assemble all the commonte	292
In all goodly maner, dyuisēd by discrecion,	
Praysyngē saynt Werburge with humiliacion.	294
43	
Whan they approched to her hie presence	295
And comon were afore this relique most riall,	
They kneled all downe with mycle reuerence,	
Salutyngē the shryne with honour victoriall,	
Magnifyng with melodye and tunys musicall	299
This glorious virgin / nothyng done amis,	
Syngyngē Te deum to the kyng of blysse.	301
44	
The lordes / the citezins / and all the commons	302
Mokely submytted them-selfe to the shryne,	
With manyfolde prayses and humble supplicacions,	
With interiour loue / and morall discipline,	
Trustyng all in her to saue them from ruyne,	306
From greuous daunger / and cruell enmite	
By her entercession vnto the trinite.	308
45	
They gaue due thankes vnto this abbasse,	309
Deuoutly sayenge knelyng vpon kne :	
‘ Welcome, swete lady, replet with grace,	
The floure of mekenes / and of chastite,	
The cristall of clenens and virginite ;	313
Welcome thou art to vs euerychone,	
A speciall comfort for vs to trust vpon I	315
46	
‘ Welcome, swete princesse / kynges doughter dere,	316
Welcome, faire creature / and rose of merciens,	
The diamonde of dignite / and gemme shenyng clere,	
Virgin and moiniall of mycle excellence ;	
Welcome, holy abbasse of hie preeminence,	320
The rutilant saphire of syncerite,	
Welcome, swete patronesse, to Chestre cite !	322

47

'Thou art our refuge / and singular succour, 323
 Oure sure tuicion, next to the trinite,
 Oure speciall defence at euery houre
 To releue thy seruauntes in all necessite ;
 Thou art our solace and helpe in eche degre, 327
 Oure ioye / trust / and comfort / and goostly treasure :
 Welcome to this towne, for euer to endure !' 329

48

¶ Agaynst her comynge into Chestre cite 330
 The stretes were strawed with flours fragrant,
 The mancions and halles edified rialle
 Were hanged with arras precious and pleasaunt,
 Torches were caried on eche syde fragrant ; 334
 Also ouer the shryne was prepared a canaby
 Of cloth of golde and tissewe riche and costly. 336

49

Thus with great worship, decoure and dignite 337
 Of all the clergie, lordis and citezens
 She was receyued with great humilite
 Into the cite with humble reuerence,
 The clergie syngyng with mycle diligence, 341
 The comons prayeng with loue feruent,
 Folowyng this relique after their entent. 343

50

In procession they passed all in to the towne, 344
 With ioye and great gladnes, ye may be sure,
 In ordre togyther, in charite and deuocion,
 Praysyng our sauour and this virgin pure ;
 They brought full solemple with gostly p[l]easure 348
 This riall relique to the moost noble place
 Within all the cite, as our lordes wyll was. 350

51

This seconde translacion of this virgin bright 351
 From Hambury abbay vnto Chestre cite
 Was celebrate, with ioye and gladnes full right,

The yere of our saueour in his humanite
 viii. hundreth complet .v. and seuentie ; 355
 Alured regned than kyng of this region,
 Victorious and liberall / coronate at London. 357

52

This kyng deuyded in .iiii. partes his richesse : 358
 One parte to the poore, the seconde to religion,
 The thyrde part to scholers / the fourth to bild churches ;
 And of a day naturall / he made trium diuision :
 viii. houres to rede and praye with feruent deuocion, 362
 viii. houres occupied with businesse naturall,
 And other .viii. houres to rule his realme riall. 364

henric'. li°. v.

Nobilitas innata tibi probita[ti]s honorem,
 Armipotens Alurede, dedit / probitasq3 laborem,
 Perpetuumq3 labor nomen : cui mixta dolori
 Gaudia semper erant : spes semper mixta timori.
 Si modo victus erat / ad crastina bella parabat,
 Si modo victor erat / ad crastina bella pauebat ;
 Iam post transactos regni viteq3 labores /
 Christe ¹ ei sit vera quies / sceptrumq3 perenne. 1 r. Christus

¶ *A litel descripcion of the foundacion of Chestre / and of
 the abbay-churche within the sayd cite / where y^e holy
 shryne by grace remayneth. Cap. iii.*

53

Two cites of legions in cronicles we fynde : 365
 One in south-Wales / in the tyme of Claudius
 Called Caeruska / by britons had in mynde,
 Orels Caerleon / buylded by kyng Belinus ;
 Where somtyme was a legion of knyghtes chiualous. 369
 This cite of legions was whilom the bysshops se
 Vnto all south-wales / nominat Wenedocie. 371

54

Another cite of legions we may fynde also 372

In the west part of Englande / by the water of Dee,
 Called Caerlleon of britons longe ago,
 After named Chestre, by great auctorite;
 Iulius the emperour sende to this sayd cite 376
 A legion of knyghtes / for to subdue Irelande;
 Like-wyse dyd Claudius (as we vnderstande). 378

55

The founder of Chestre / as sayth Policronicon, 379
 Was Lleon Gauer / a myghty stronge gyaunt,
 Whiche buylded caues and dongions many one,
 No goodly buyldyng / propre ne pleasaunt;
 But the Kynge Leil, a briton sure and valiaunt, 383
 Was founder of Chestre by pleasaunt buyldyng,
 And of Caerleil also / named by the kynge. 385

56

Ranulphus in his cronicle yet doth expresse 386
 The cite of Chestre edified for to be
 By the noble romans prudence and richesse
 Whan a legion of knyghtes was sende to the cite,
 Rather than by the wysdome of Britons or policie; 390
 Obiectyng clere agaynst the britons fundacion,
 Whiche auctour resteth in his owne opinion. 392

A° gratie. lxxv.

57

Kyng Marius, a bryton, regnyng in prosperite 393
 In the West partie of this noble region,
 Ampliat and walled strongly Chestre cite
 And myghtyly fortified the sayd fundacion.
 Thus eche auctour holdeth a singular opinion. 397
 This Marius slewe Reodric, kyng of pictis lande,
 Callyng the place of his name Westmarilande. 399

58

This 'cite of legions,' so called by the Romans, 400
 Nowe is nominat in latine of his proprete
 Cestria quasi castria / of honour and pleasance:
 Proued by the buyldyng of olde antiquite

In cellers and lowe voutes / and halles of realte 404
 Lyke a comly castell / myghty, stronge and sure,
 Eche house like a toure, somtyme of great pleasure. 406

59

Vnto the sayd Chestre all northwales subiect were 407
 For reformacion, Iustice and iugement ;
 Theyr bysshops see also it was many a yere
 Enduryng the gouernaunce of brutes auncient ;
 To saxons and britons a place indifferent ; 411
 The inhabitauntes of it manfull and liberal,
 Constant, sad and vertuous / and gentyll continuall. 413

60

Of frutes and cornes there is great habundaunce, 414
 Woddes / parkes / forestes / and beestis of venare,
 Pastures / feeldes / comons / the cite to auauce,
 Waters / pooles / pondes / of fysshe great plente ;
 Most swete holsome ayre by the water of dee ; 418
 There is great marchandise / shyps / and wynes strang,
 With all thyng of pleasure the citezens amonge. 420

61

The yere of our lorde a hundreth sixe and fyfty 421
 Reigned vpon this lande a briton kyng Lucius,
 Whiche with great desire required instantly
 His realme to be baptized of pope Eleutherius.¹ 1 P. Eleutherius
 Whose charitable mocion was harde full gratius : 425
 The pope enioyed / graunted his peticion
 And sende .ii. doctours to conuerte this region. 427

62

The doctours by prechyng and singular grace 428
 In short tyme conuerted the greater Britayne ;
 The people confessed their synne and trespase,
 Baptized all were / forgyuenes dyd attayne ;
 Idolatrie cessed through-out this lande, certayne ; 432
 With grace circumfulced and lyghtned was Englande,
 By faith to god professed was all Wales and scotlande. 434

63

Kynge Lucius ordeyned / by the doctours mocion	435
xxviii. bisshops in this realme for to be,	
And .iii. archebisshops, for gostly-exhortacion,	
To reduce the people to vertue and humilite.	
At London was set the chiefe archebisshops se,	439
The seconde in south-Wales at cite of legions,	
The thyrde was at yorke, all subiect to the britons.	441

64

Churches were edified in many a place	442
Here in the more Britayne with diligent labour,	
Christis faith encreased by speciall grace,	
Faithfull religion delated euery hour ;	
Diuine seruice was songon & sayd with great honour,	446
True faith and deuocion were dayly increasyng,	
Namely in Chestre by grace continuall abidyng.	448

65

Certaynly, sith baptyng came to Chestre cite,	449
Soone after Lucius / and afore kynge Arthure,	
By the grace of god and their humilite,	
The faith of holy churche dyd euer there endure	
Without recidiuacion and infection / sure ;	453
Wherefore it is worthy a singular commendacion,	
Aboue all the citees and townes of this region.	455

66

The perfect begynnyng and fyrst foundation	456
Of the monasterie within the sayd cite	
Was at the same tyme by famus opinion	
That baptyng began within this countre ;	
The great lordes of Chestre of landes and auncetre	460
First edified the churche for comfort spirituall	
In honour of the apostels Peter and Paule.	462

67

Whiche churche was principall to all the cite,	463
And the mouter-churche called withouten doubt ;	
It was their buriall by great auctorite,	

To all this sayd cite / and .vii. myle without ;
 The cemeterie was large to compase it about. 467
 But what by sufferance and processe of tyme
 Many olde customes ben brought now to ruyne. 469

68

In whiche mother-churche of Peter and Paule 470
 All holy sacramentes ministred dayly were,
 With great encrease of vertues all,
 Continuall enduryng more than .CCC. yere,
 In the britons tyme / of blodde noble and clerc, 474
 Afore the comyng of saxons to this lande,
 Whiche with apostasie enfected all Englande. 476

69

So after that the Angles / Iutes / and saxons 477
 By fortune of batell / power and policie
 Had clerely subdued all the olde britons
 And them expulsed to wales and wylde countre,
 The faith of holy churche remayned at chestre cite 481
 In the sayd churche, truely, by singular grace alone,
 Like as the faith of Peter neuer fayled at Rome. 483

70

What tyme saint Austin, the doctour of Englande, 484
 Had baptized Ethelbrut,¹ kynge of Kent, 1 r. Ethelbriht
 And by relacion dyd fully vnderstande
 That the faith of Christ most digne and excellent
 In the citie of legions was truely remanent, 488
 In the churche of the apostoles Peter and Paule,
 He magnified our lorde with thanke speciall. 490

71

That season there was a noble monasterie 491
 xii. myles from Chestre, nominate Bangour,
 Where religious monkes lyued vertuouslye,
 Almost .iii. thousande / obedient euery houre,
 Without possessions / lyuyng by theyr labour : 495
 Vnto whiche place he sende for helpe at nede,
 To conuert the saxons (sayth venerable Bede). 497

72

Saynt Austin approached the cite of legions,	498
Where the sayd couent afore hym were present :	
Whom he required to preche to the saxons	
The faith of holy churche and bapty m diligent.	
To whose humble prayer / they were disobedient,	502
Obseruyng no charite. / yet for theyr great pride	
Many of them were slayne by kyng Ethelfride.	504

73

That season the britons remayned vnder licence	505
Of Angles and saxons within the sayd cite,	
Tyll the dayes of Offa, kyng of merciens,	
Regnyng in the west marche with great victorie ;	
Whiche kyng expelled by power and chiuallrie	509
All brutes and walshemen clere out of his londe,	
In peyne of punysshement none there to be fonde.	511

74

Whan the said churche, hauynge great liberte,	512
Dayly augmented in vertue and holynes,	
Prestis and clerkes prayed the holy trinite	
And the sayd apostoles with great mekenes,	
The cite encreased in worshyp and ryches ;	516
Churches were edified with feruent deuocion	
In sondrie places within the sayd towne.	518

75

This noble kyng Offa agaynst the pagans	519
Of .xvii. batels had euer the victorye ;	
Confederate was with great Charles, kyng of Fraunce,	
And edified saint Albans monasterye ;	
Of Englande first toke the hole monarchie ;	
Gaue Peter pens vnto the court of Rome ;	524
Translate to Lichefeld the se of Canturbury ;	
xxxix. yere regned fully in this region.	526

¶ *A brefe rehersall of the first foundacion of the mynstre of
Chestre | and of the institucion of secular chanons in
the tyme of kyng Edwarde senior. Cap. iiii.*

76

The yere of grace .D.CCC. seuynte and fyue, 527
 Kyng Alured regned ¹ vpon ² this region, ¹ r. regning.
² P. vpon.
 The relique, the shryne full memoratyue
 Was brought to Chestre for our consolacion,
 Reuerently receyued, set with deuocion 531
 In the mouter-churche of saint Peter and Paule,
 (As afore is sayd), a place moost principall. 533

77

In whiche holy place vnto this present day 534
 She bodilye resteth by diuine prouidence,
 And so by his grace shall continue alway,
 In honour, worshyp / and mycle reuerence ;
 A deuout oratorie of vertue and excellence, 538
 Prepared by our lorde / where speciall remedy
 Is agayne all greuans in soule and in body. 540

78

The primatyue gyftes gyuen to the place 541
 Immediatly were after her comynge
 Of deuout people replet with grace
 In the dayes of the forsayd Alured kyng :
 Of landes and libertes they made moche offerynge 545
 To god and saint Werburge / after theyr possession,
 Tristryng to her prayer and sure protection. 547

79

The people with deuocion and mynde feruent 548
 Gaue diuers enormentes vnto this place :
 Some gaue a coope / and some a vestement,
 Some other a chalice / and some a corporace,
 Many albes and other clothes offred ther was, 552
 Some crosses of golde / some bokes / some belles ;
 The pore folke gaue surges / torches / and towelles. 554

80

The citezens offered to the sayd virgine 555
 For the great miracles amonge them wrought
 Many riall gyftes of Iewels to the shrine,
 Thankynge our lorde, that hath vs all bought,
 And blessed Werburge in worde, dede, and thought— 559
 Women and children she mynded full gracious,
 As testifieth the archebishop Antoninus. 561

81

Diuine seruice was obserued deuoutly 562
 Euery day, encreasyng with feruent adoracion
 As the feest required / and the solemnite,
 To the honour of our lorde and hie glorificacion ;
 Preistis and clerkes with pure meditacion 566
 Obseruyng their dutie gaue vertuous example
 Of great perfection to the comon people. 568

82

After kyng Alured / regned his son 569
 Edwarde senior, by liniall discence,
 Crowned the yere of grace .ix. hundreth and one,
 with wordly glorie and great preeminence ;
 Buylded castels, townes of myghty defence, 573
 Subdued the danes .vii. tymes in batell ;
 Encreased his realme manfully and well. 575

83

That tyme the realme of merciens was translate 576
 By the kynge / and gyuen to duke Ethelrede,
 A noble man of auncetre / politicke and fortunate,
 Whiche married his syster, lady Elflede,
 Doughter to the forsaid valiant kynge Alurede ; 580
 The sayd gentilman was wyse and vertuous,
 Sad and discrete, pacient and famous. 582

84

This lady Elflede, duchesse of merciens, 583
 Had speciall loue and singular affection
 To blessed Werburge, and true confidence :

Wherfore she mynded with great dilectacion
 To edifie a mynstre, a place of deuocion, 587
 To this holy virgin, for profite of her soule,
 Enlargynge the church of Peter and of Paule. 589

85

She moued her husbände with great mekenes 590
 To supplie the same dede of his charite,
 And diuers other nobles of theyr goodnes
 For aide in that cause after their degree.
 Ioyfull was the duke of the mocion gostle, 594
 Glad were the nobles within all the shire
 To founde a mynstre after her desire. 596

86

Afore the holy roode in a table writen is 597
 At saint Iohans church without the sayd cite,
 Howe that prince Edmund, the thyrde son e-wis
 Of Edwarde senior, true foundour shulde be—
 To whom lady Elflede was aunt by auncetre. 601
 So betwix twayne was founded in short space
 An holy mynstre, of vertue full and grace. 603

87

They sende for masons vpon euery syde, 604
 Counnyng in geometrie / the foundation to take
 For a large mynstre, longe, hie, and wyde,
 Substancially wrought / the best that they can make,
 To the honour of god / for saynt Werburge sake ; 608
 At the est ende taken theyr sure foundation
 Of the apostoles church / ioynynge both as one. 610

88

Whan it was edified / and curiously wrought 611
 And all thyng ended / in goodly proporcion,
 Than riche enormentes were offred and brought
 Of the said nobles with great deuocion ;
 Temporall landes / rentes / possession 615
 Were gyuen, for euer to mayntayne the place
 Of blessed Werburge by singular grace. 617

89

Spiritual ministres were elect also :	618
Secular chanons, of great humilite,	
To synge and psalmodise oure sauour vnto,	
Within the sayd mynstre hauynge a perpetuite ;	
Prebendes were assigned to that fraternite,	622
With townes / borowes / and fredomes manifest,	
Continually encreasyng vnto the conquest.	624

90

And the olde church of Peter and of Paule	625
By a generall counsell of the spirituale	
With helpe of the duke moost principall	
Was translate to the myddes of the sayd cite ;	
Where a paireshe-churche was edified, truele,	629
In honour of the aforesayd apostoles twayne,	
Whiche shall for euer by grace diuine remayne.	631

91

Also we may note, holdyng none opinion,	632
This lady Elfede of her charite	
Of the sayd mother-churche translate the patron,	
Caused the sayd oratorie reconciled to be	
In the honour of the most blessed trinite	636
And of saynt Oswalde, martyr and kyng,	
For the loue she had to hym continuyng.	638

92

The yere of our lorde .ix. hundreth and .viii.	639
This noble duchesse with mycle royalte	
Reedified Chestre / and fortified it full ryght,	
Churche / house / and wall, decayed piteousle.	
Thus brought vnto ruyne was Chestre cite	643
First, by Ethelfride, kyng of Northumberlande,	
And by danes / norwaies, vexyng all Englande.	645

93

Also she enlarged this sayd olde cite	646
With newe myghty walles stronge all-about,	
Almost by proporcion double in quantite	

To the forther byldyng brought without dout ;
 She compassed in the castell enemies to hold out 650
 Within the sayd Walles, to defende the towne
 Agaynst danes and walshemen, to dryue them all downe. 652

94

After the deth of her husband Ethelrede 653
 She ruled the realme of mercelande manfully,
 Buylded churches / and townes repaired in dede,
 As Staforde / Warwike / Thomwort / and Shirisbury ;
 Of newe she edified Runcorn and Edisbury. 657
 The body of saynt Oswalde also she translate
 From Bardeney to Gloucetur, there to be tumulate : 659

95

Where she edified a noble monastery, 660
 With licence of her brother afore nominate,
 In honour of saint Peter / ouer the blessed body
 Of the sayd saint Oswalde / kyng and martyr coronate.
 In wiche monastery this lady was tumulate, 664
 The yere of our lorde .ix. hundreth and nyntene ;
 Whom myn auctour prayseth in this wordes serene : 666
 henric' li.° v.

O Elfreda potens / o terror virgo virorum :

Victrix nature, nomine digna viri.

Te quoq; splendidior fecit¹ natura puellam, ¹ r. Tu quo sp. fieres

Te probitas fecit nomen habere viri.

Te mutare docet¹ sed solum² nomina sexus, ¹ r. decet, ² solam

Tu regina potens / rexq; trophea parans.

Iam nec cesarei tantum meruere triumpho,

Caesare splendidior virgo virago. Vale.

¶ *Of the notable myracles of saynt Werburge shewed in the
 tyme of chanons | and fyrst howe she saued Chester from
 distruction of walshemen. Cap. v.*

96

THis glorious Werburge and virgin pure 667
 By singular grace of god omnipotent
 Shewed many myracles to euery creature,

To blynde / dombe / halt / lame / and impotent,
 In the cite of Chestre / whan her shryne was present, 671
 Like-wyse as in her lyfe at Wedon / at Hambury—
 Witnesseth the same her true legende and history. 673

97

Wher[for]e¹ to the honour / prayse / and laudacion 674
 Of Iesu / the seconde persone in trinite, ^{1 P. Where}
 And of this virgin a¹ speciall commendacion, ^{1 r. to?}
 We purpose to reherse nowe with charite,
 Vnder the protection of you that shall the reders be, 678
 Parte of the myracles / with mynde diligent
 In this humble stile / and sentence consequent. 680

98

The first myracle / that our blessed sauour 681
 Shewed for his spouses / after her translacion
 To Chestre : was nye the tyme of Edwarde seniour,
 Son to kyng Alured, famous of renowne.
 The Name of britons was chaunged that season, 685
 Were named walshemen, in the montaynes segregate,
 Euer to the saxons hauynge inwarde hate. 687

99

The Walshemen that tyme had ouer them a kyng 688
 Called Griffinus / to be theyr gouernour,
 Electe by the comons their appetite folowyng,
 Endurate with malice / couetise and rancour,
 Ennemies to englisshemen / as is said before. 692
 This kyng entended by mortall enuy
 The cite of Chestre to spoyle and distrye. 694

100

A myghty host discended from the mountans, 695
 Well armed and strongly approchyng the cite,
 Prepared for batell, with them great ordinaunce.
 The sayd Griffinus and all his company
 With his power passed ouer the water of Dee— 699
 Whiche ryuer adioynneth to the sayd towne,
 Betwene Englande and Wales a sure diuision. 701

101

- This kyng layd siege vnto Chestre cite 702
 With all his great host / there honour to wyn—
 By policie of warre / encreasyng myghtyle.
 For whiche the citezens remaynyng within
 were sore disconsolate, like for to twyn : 706
 With wofull heuy hartes they dyd call and crye
 Vpon blessed Werburge for helpe and remedye. 708

102

- The charitable chanons with great deuocion 709
 Toke the holy shryne of theyr patrones,
 Set it on the towne-walles for helpe and tuicion,
 Trustyng on her to be saued from distres.
 But one of the ennemyes with great wyckednes 713
 Smot the sayd shryne in castyng of a stone,
 And it empaired / piteous to loke vpon. 715

103

- Anone great punysshement vpon them all lyght : 716
 The kyng and his host were smytten with blyndnes,
 That of the cite / they had no maner of syght ;
 And he that smote the holy shryne, doubtles,
 Was greuously vexed with a sprite of darkenes, 720
 And with hidous payne expired miserably—
 The kyng was sore a-dred / and all his company. 722

104

- Shortly the kyng remoued his great host, 723
 Departed from the cite without any praye,
 And gaue in commaundement in euery coost
 Saynt Werburge landes to meyntheyne alway,
 Assigned her possessions euer after that day 727
 With the signe of the crosse, a token euident,
 In pleasyng this virgin / for drede of punysshement. 729

¶ *Howe saynt Werburge cured and healed a woman thre tymes (whiche was halte and lame) to helth and prosperite agayne. Cap. vi.*

105

IN the cite of Chestre (the legende doth expresse) 730
 An honest matrone dwelled / Eadgida nominat,
 Whiche by continuaunce / and payne of sickenes
 Was made halt and lame / of helth all desperate ;
 yet to saynt Werburge her hart was eleuate, 734
 Instantly required with humble supplicacion
 This holy virgin for helth / and preseruacion. 736

106

Anone by the merite of this lady clere 737
 The pacient restored to helth and prosperite,
 Gaue honour and thankes to Werburge and prayer,
 Entendyng euer after her true seruauant to be
 And truely continue luyng in pure chastite. 741
 But shortly she brake her promesse made in syght,
 Folowyng her appetite and carnall lustes full ryght. 743

107

She had great riches, welth and prosperite 744
 And married with pleasure after her entencion ;
 Wher[for] she thries she endured her olde infirmite,
 And thries was cured, by meke intercession,
 To helth of body from peynfull contraction. 748
 Thus by the merite of this virgin pure
 She was deliuered from peyne thries to pleasure. 750

108

This forsayd Eadgide, prudently ponderyng 751
 These notable miracles with her gostly eye,
 Gaue great commendacion and speciall thankyng
 To almyghty god / with feruent humilite
 And to saynt Werburge, knelynge on kne, 755
 Came to her oratorie and gaue an oblacion
 To the holy shryne with singular deuocion. 757

¶ *Howe saynt Werburge saued Chestre from innumerable barbarike nacions / purposynge to distroye and spoyle the sayd cite vtterly. Cap. vii.*

109

AN other tyme innumerable barbarike nacions 758
Came to spoyle Chestre, to robbe it and distry,

(Sayth the historye) from diuers regions :

Harolde kyng of danes / the kyng of gotes & galwedey,
Maucolyn of Scotlande, and all theyr company, 762

With baners displayed, well armed to fyght ;
Theyr tentes rially in hoole heth were pyght. 764

110

They set theyr ordinaunce agaynst the towne 765

Vpon euery side / timorous for to se,

Namely at the northgate they were redy-bowne

By myght, police to haue entred the cite.

The citezens dredying to be in captiuite, 769

Made intercession vnto this holy abbasse

For theyr deliuerance in suche extreme case. 771

111

The deuout chanons sette the holy shryne 772

Agaynst theyr enemies at the sayd northgate,

Trustyng to Werburge to saue them from ruyne

And shewe some myracle to them disconsolate.

For the citezens were of their lyues desperate, 776

Passynge mannes mynde to escape theyr daunger

But all-only by merite of this virgin clere. 778

112

As the kynges were sautyng this forsaid cite, 779

Trustyng for a praye to haue it euery hour,

One of the sayd ennemies, replet with iniquite,

Nat worshyppynge y^e virgin / nor dredying our sauour,

Smote this riall relique with a stone in his rancour, 783

Brake therof a corner, curiously wrought,

Cast all to the grounde : than sorowe came vnsought. 785

113

The sayd malefactour nat passynge the place	786
Vexed with the deull for his greuous offence,	
Roryng and yellyng his outragious trespase,	
Tore his tonge a-sonder in wodely violence,	
Miserable expired afore them in presence ;	790
Satan ceased nat to shewe great punysshement	
Vpon his soule and body / by signes eident.	792

114

These kynges considerynge this soden vengeaunce	793
Amonge them all lyght so soone and hastily,	
Shortly remoued theyr great ordinaunce,	
Departed from the cite with theyr company ;	
Callyng on this virgin fast for grace and mercy,	797
Promyttynge neuer after to retourne agayne	
To disquiete her seruauntes and cite, in certayne.	799

¶ *Howe saynt Werburge by her merite sent frute to a
barrayne woman by syngular prayer made vnto her.*
The .viii. chapitre.

115

A Noble gentilman / a consul in office,	800
Descendyng of the hie and riall blodde of costy,	
Elected a spouses at his owne deuice,	
A swete faire gentilwoman, curtes and comly,	
Nominat Iudith / ioynned to hym in matrimony ;	804
With whom this lady lyued a longe season	
Barrayn and fruteles of generacion.	806

116

She daily lamented her great wretchednes,	807
As woman infortunate full of miserye,	
Prayed to saynt Werburge with interiour mekenes	
For remedy and helpe agaynst that wofull infamye,	
Desired to haue issue and frute of her bodye,	811
If it pleased god / and this virgin also,	
Most greatestest comfort to brynge her hert from wo.	813

117

Saynt Werburge appered to her in vision, 814
 In white bright vesture / clere as the cristall,
 Expressynge wordes of great consolacion,
 Most ioyfull to Iudith to make rehersall :
 Commaundyng her by the effect speciall 818
 To go to her churche with singular deuocion
 And praye our sauour with humble supplicacion, 820

118

Also for to compasse her holy aulter 821
 With a linen cloth / knelyng on her kne,
 And after for to take the same cloth in-ferre
 And compas her wombe about reuerentle.
 This Iudith was ioyfull / and rose vp yerle 825
 And truely fulfilled this gostly vision ;
 From thens departed to her propre mancion. 827

119

Soone after this wyfe afore-rehersed 828
 Conceyued a childe and had succession,
 Praysyng this virgin in hart, worde and dede ;
 And after the tyme of her purificacion
 Of the same faire cloth she made oblacion, ' 832
 Richely set in syluer / well wrought in compas
 With many riche enormentes she sende to this place. 834

120

After came her-selfe vnto the monastery 835
 With many of her neyghbours / there nye dwellyng,
 Praysyng and laudyng this glorious lady,
 With cordiall thankynges makyng theyr offeryng,
 Of this great myraclis ¹ true witnes bearyng ; ^{1 r.} myracle 839
 Departed from the place with ioy and deuocion
 All the sayd company / eche to theyr mancion. 841

¶ *Of a woman great with childe with peyne brought out of her wytte / by saynt Werburge was restoured to reason agayne. Cap. ix.*

121

IN the prouince of Chestre / knowen it is of olde, 842
 A certayne man dwelled / of great honeste,
 Whiche had a doughter disposed manyfolde
 To sondrye vertues / clennes / and humilite.
 This humble mayde ioyned was in matrimonye 846
 To an honest yong man / of whom she conceyued
 And was great with childe / openly perceyued. 848

122

Whan the tyme approched of her deliuerance, 849
 Vexed she was with mycle wo and payne,
 Continually enduryng / with suche hidous greuance
 That out of her mynde she went, incertayne ;
 All phisike and medicyns were founde to her in vayne : 853
 No comfort in erth, helpe nor remedye
 For her myght be founde in suche extremite. 855

123

Her father and mother / and her frendes all 856
 Brought theyr dere doughter with great deuocion
 To saynt Werburge churche / requiryng speciall
 This blessed virgin / with humble intercession
 To helpe the pacient from all vexacion, 860
 Promyttynge an oblacion to this lady bryght
 Whan she vnto reason were comen a-ryght. 862

124

And as she slepped at the aulter ende, 863
 Wofully cruciat with peynes hiduous,
 Passyng mannes cure it for to amende :
 Anone by the merite of this virgin glorious
 She was released from all payne greuous 867
 And fully restored to her reason agayne,
 Had good deliuerance / and spedde well, in certayne. 869

125

Whiche myracle knowen / her frendes euerychone 870
 And all the good matrons of the sayd cite
 Came holly togyther with theyr oblacion
 To the holy shryne, thankyng with hart fre
 This blessed virgin of her benignite, 874
 Whiche is so redy a mediatrice alway
 To helpe her true seruauntes both nyght and day. 876

¶ *Howe an other woman vnlauffully wurkyng was made
 blynde / and by saynt Werburge restored was to her
 syght agayne. Cap. x.*

126

Within the same cite afore the abbay-gate 877
 Dwelled a woman / which brake the commaundement
 Of god and holy churche / hye sabbot-day dyd violate
 Vnlauffully wurkyng : wherfore great punysshement
 Fell vpon this woman with peynes equiualent, 881
 Sodaynly smytten / wurkyng full busely
 With greuous blyndnes / and mycle miserye. 883

127

This woman, consyderyng her syght was gone, 884
 The pleasure of this worlde, her helpe and succour,
 Hauyng to lyue by / small riches or none,
 Cried maynly 'out out, alas' euery hour,
 'Wo is me wretche, fulfilled with dolour! 888
 Alas, I was borne to abyde this wofull day
 My maker to displease! / alas, what shall I say?' 890

128

She called to memorie with hye discrecion 891
 The myracles that Werburge shewed to mankynde :
 By grace she repented / with suche contricion
 That water distilled from her eyes blynde,
 Dolefully lamentyng / that she was so vnkynde ; 895
 Ruthfully was brought to Werburge oratory,
 Trustyng in this virgin to haue remedy. 897

129

As she continued in her supplicacion,	898
Wofully wepynge / abidyng the great grace .	
Of blessed Werburge / with singular inuocacion,	
Anone she was cured to helth and solace,	
Restored to her eye-sight / she passed the place,	902
Praysed our lorde and this virgin pure,	
Was a holy woman after, ye may be sure.	904

¶ *How saint Werburge restored to helth and prosperite vi.
lame and halt persons by singular grace. Cap. xi.*

130

T He excellent fame of this glorious lady	905
Dilated was through all this region,	
Manifest by myracles full honorably :	
Therefore from diuers partes came many a person	
For helth of body and gostly conuersacion,	909
Some to be cured from payne intollerable	
And some of olde sores that were incurable.	911

131

Amonge whom there came vnto her place	912
Sixe wofull persones / cured for to be,	
Halt, blynde and lame, besekyng her of grace	
With humble supplicacion vpon them haue pite,	^{1 P. treares.}
With wepynge teares ¹ sayenge / 'o souerayn ladie,	916
O imperiall princesse / and kynges doughter dere,	
Heele our disease by thy instant prayer !	918

132

'O blessed virgin and holy moiniiall,	919
O glorious abbasse / and worthy gouernour,	
O pereles parens and ministre spirituall,	
O celestiall gemme resplendent with honour,	
Praye for vs wretches vnto our sauour,	923
That we may opteyne here mercy and grace,	
Cured of our sekenes / after to se thy face.	925

133

‘ Thy name transcendeth this realme, swete lady, 926
 Thy myracles magnifien thy great goodnes,
 Thy worshypp encreaseth with honour and glorie
 Daily euermore through thy great holynes :
 Shewe nowe thy power / cure vs from sekenes, 930
 That by the we may prayse the kyng of blis,
 As thou hast cured many one or this.’ 932

134

By these meke prayers / in hert full penitent, 933
 And many other orisons sayd priuatly
 Callyng on this virgin with deuocion feruent,
 For certayne / or they passed the monastery
 They were all cured from peyne and malady. 937
 In wytnes wherof / and triall as it was
 Theyr staues remayned longe after in the place. 939

¶ *Howe a yonge man thries hanged vnlawfully, was thries
 deliuered by saynt Werburge from dethe to lyfe and
 lyberte. Cap. xii.*

135

Almyghty god gaue in commaundement 940
 By moises lawe / to his people echone,
 No innocent to slee by wrongfull iudgement
 Nor causeles to punyssh by greuous oppression,
 Also to beware of lyght susppection. 944
 Wherof a myracle we shall nowe expresse,
 Done in Chestre cite by Werburge theyr patronesse. 946

136

A certayne yonge man dwelled in the cite, 947
 Honest in maners / and of good conuersacion,
 Disposed to vertue and humilite :
 Was arrest and taken of a lyght suspicion
 By the officers and rule[r]s of the sayd towne, 951
 Gyltles accused most innocently,
 Condemned and iudged to deth shamfully. 953

137

After sentence gyuen / ministres were all redy 954
 Vpon the iudgement to do execucion :
 He was fetted and brought to the gebbet by and by
 And as a stronge thefe hanged ther-vpon.
 His frendes and cosyns for hym made great mone— 958
 Alas, what tonge myght expresse the wo
 They made that tyme departynge hym fro ? 960

138

And as this innocent hang in his payne, 961
 He called to mynd the manyfolde goodnes,
 The myracles of Werburge, shewed her, certayne,
 Howe she had saued many in great distres :
 So, whan he myght no wordes expresse, 965
 In mynde he required her / and humblie dyd pray
 From shamfull deth to saue hym that day. 967

139

Whan all the officers departed were thens 968
 Supposynge the soule seperate from the body,
 A white doue¹ descended afore them in presence 1 P. done.
 And lyght vpon the gebbet immediatly ;
 The byrde with his byll brake the rope, truely, 972
 The prisoner escaped that tyme from deth,
 Shortly reuiuynge toke naturall breth. 974

140

Whiche thyng notified, so meruailous in syght, 975
 The ministers returned / theyr labour in vayne :
 Toke this innocent by power and myght,
 Vpon the sayd gebbet hanged hym agayne.¹ ^{1 One stanza missing here?}
 Thus¹ he was delyuered by myracle from payne : 1 r. Thries ?
 The tortuous turmentours cessed their tyranny,
 Permytted the prisoner to go at liberte. 981

141

Whiche myracle knowen / his frendes and cosyns all 982
 Returned agayne with glad mynde and chere.
 The prisoner mette them, louyng god in spec'iall

And blessed Werburge in his best manere,
 The deuout citezens approched them nere, 986
 Went all to the shryne the virgin thankyng;
 The belles were tolled for ioy of this thyng. 988

¶ *Howe at the maner-place of Vpton saint Werburge restrayned
 wylde horses from distruction of cornes put in by theyr
 ennemyes. Cap. xiii.*

142

Also the thyrde season approached to Chestre cite 989
 Many cruell ennemyes in the part of Wirall,
 Purposyng to spoyle / and distroy all the countre,
 The people and theyr frutes / theyr corne and cattall.
 The citezens, dredyng to be captiue and thrall, 993
 Fortified the cite with men of armes bright,
 Hauynge sure artillarie for to defende and fight. 995

143

The husbandes of the countrey about there dwellyng, 996
 Agaynst the sayd ennemyes makyng sore prouysion
 Brought their corne & cattell / their husolde remaynynge,
 In assurance to be / to the parke of Vpton,
 Saynt Werburge landes, from all distruction— 1000
 Whiche parke from Vpton was distaunt a myle space,
 A prebende to a chanon of her mynstre and place. 1002

144

These wycked enemies fulfilled with malice, 1003
 Agaynst all conscience and ordre of charite,
 In no-manner wise dredyng the hie iustice
 Entred the sayd parke with mycle cruelte,
 Pulled downe the paale at pleasure and liberte, 1007
 Put in theyr horses, made great distruction
 Of cornes and catell, of a hie presumpcion. 1009

145

Werburge, remembryng theyr great wyckednes, 1010
 Theyr malice and myschief agaynst her possession,
 By myracle shewed her power and goodnes,

Preseruyng her seruauntes from all vexacion
 And punysshing her ennemies with great affliction, 1014
 As she hath done many seasons or this
 By mean to her spouse, our lorde kyng of blis. 1016

146

Whan the corne-sheuys laye broken afore them playne, 1017
 The horses had no power any part to take :
 For why? by myracle / theyr heedes all, in certayne,
 Were vp holderz in the ayre / theyr bodyes sore dyd quake,
 They touched no frutes / wast they dyd none make. 1021
 Of the principall doers / some raged out of mynde,
 Some smetyn with palsy / some lepre, halt and blynde. 1023

147

Whiche punysshement knowen vnto all the host, 1024
 The rulers and captens without any delaye
 Knyt agayne the sheuys / that none shulde be lost,
 With trembynge hartes humbly began to praye
 This holy virgin to saue them that daye ; 1028
 Vpon a condicion / escapyng from payne :
 Enduryng theyr lyfe neuer to turne agayne. 1030

148

From that tyme furth ther dare no nacion, 1031
 Consydering the power of this virgin pure,
 Approchyng Chestre cite to make derogacion ;
 Denmarke, Goet, nor Galway-scot, ye may be sure,
 Cruell danes nor walshemen dare nat procure. 1035
 Wherefore the citezens haue cause to loue the place
 And thanke this virgin for her helpe and grace. 1037

¶ *Howe a chanon of Chestre hauyng his leg and thie broken,
 was restaured to helth by saynt Werburge, hys
 patronesse. Cap. xiiii.*

149

Within Chestre-mynstre, that holy place, 1038
 Dwelled a chanon nominate Vlminus,
 Sad of disposicion by syngular grace,

Humble and pacient / discrete and vertuous,
 Liberall and honest / gentyll and piteous ; 1042
 And for a pastyme this was his pleasure,
 To hunt and to hauke to confort nature. 1044

150

And as this chanon rode for his solace 1045
 On huntynge with other honest company,
 By fortune vnfrendly— / the more pite was,
 Both horse and man fell to grounde sodendly,
 In perill of theyr lyues standynge in ieopardye : 1049
 The horse downe lyenge oppressed the chanon,
 Brake his leg a-sondre / with blod great effusion. 1051

151

Whan by his company the chanon was vp take, 1052
 He fell in a swowne for anguisshe, wo and payne,
 All wordly riches redy to forsake
 For one hour of quietnes to be had agayne ;
 Vnto his mancion they brought hym, certayne, 1056
 Where he continued in mycle wo and langour,
 Abydyng allonly the mercy of our sauour. 1058

152

Counnyng surgeans were sought vpon euery syde, 1059
 To cure this gentylman from penalite ;
 But none of them / by wysdome coude prouyde
 Clerely to heele hym / and do hym remedye.
 Thus he remediles / in extreme ieopardye 1063
 Prayed to saynt Werburge, his patronesse,
 For helth and remedye / of her great goodnesse. 1065

153

Whose humble prayer with inward loue feruent 1066
 Was graciously harde of her charite :
 For right soone after appered eident
 A byrde like a doue, most clere for to see,
 Into the chanons chambre the byrde flow, trule, 1070
 Among the company / and anone, doubtles,
 The place was repleit with odour and swetnes. 1072

154

Soone after the company euerichone 1073
 Were sadly on slepe, a thyng meruaylous,
 And afore the pacient by playne vision
 Saynt Werburge appered in his syght full glorious,
 Sayeng : 'my chaplayne and seruauent vertuous, 1077
 Why be ye absent from diuine seruice,
 Nat doynge your dutie accordyng to iustice ?' 1079

155

'Ma dame,' he sayd / 'and swete president, 1080
 It is well knowen to all the cite
 Of my mysfortune and harmes euydent,
 Howe my horse almost had oppressed me.
 Wherfore an impotent I endure mysere ; 1084
 It is no feyned cause / that I do expresse.
 I beseke you of helpe nowe, swete maistres.' 1086

156

Saynt Werburge, euer piteous and merciable 1087
 Vpon her seruantes in great distresse,
 Conforted her chaplayne with wordes delectable,
 Proued in effect by her excellent goodnes
 To his syght and felynge, as he dyd expresse : 1091
 She touched the foote / that sore and broken was,
 Cured it holly from payne by singular grace. 1093

157

Whan she had cured thus this impotent, 1094
 Anone she departed out of his syght.
 The chanon gaue honour to god omnipotent
 And to this virgin and lady bryght
 Of this gostly vision, comfort and lyght ; 1098
 All peyne was past, sekene, vexacion,
 Helth was come, by playne probacion. 1100

158

The chanon rose vp the same mydnyght 1101
 And went to mattens, as custome was.
 His bretherne were glad with all theyr myght,

Praysed our lorde of his singular grace
 And Werburge, patrones of the sayd place ; 1105
 Also with honour, reuerence and humilite
 The bretherne sange te deum solemlle. 1107

¶ *A brefe rehersall of certayne kynges / and how kyng
 Edgare came to Chestre. Also howe Leofrice, Erle of
 Chestre, repaired diuers churches. Cap xv.*

159

¶ After the decesse of kyng Edwarde seniour 1108
 Ethelstan his sonne was coronate at London
 Kyng of this lande / regnyng in honour
 With power, regalite by true succession ;
 Valeant in chivalry and actes euerychone, 1112
 Subdued danes / scottes / norwayes / britons all,
 Opteyned triumphe / and dignite imperiall. 1114

160

The fourth yere of his reigne / and the yere of grace 1115
 viii. hundreth .ii. and seenty by full computacion
 Guy erle of Warwike by fortune slayne hase
 Colbrond the gyaunt / floure of danes nacion.
 The sayd kyng Ethelstan by power and renowne 1119
 Thries subdued danes / and slewe the kyng of Irelande,
 Nominat prince Anlaff / as we vnderstande. 1121

161

This noble Ethelstan was good and gracious 1122
 To all-holy churche / namely to religion,
 Ryghtfull in iudgement / liberall and piteous
 To his true subiectes through his dominion ;
 To mynstres and holy places had great affection, 1126
 Confirmed theyr foundacions with libertes clere,
 Whose noble actes be touched a lytell here : 1128

Regia progenies produxit nobile stemma,
 Cum tenebris nostris illuxit splendida genma,
 Magnus Ethelstanus, patrie decus / orbita recti,
 Illustris probitas a vero nescia flecti.

162

After Ethelstan regned Edmunde, his brothur,	1129
Fyue yeres in honour / hauyng great victory.	
Princis Elred and Edwyn succided eytherothur,	
In great busines with scottes and danes, truly.	
Next whom meke Edgare / sayth the history,	1133
xvi. yere of age / coronate at Kyngston,	
With peace and quietnes first ruled this region.	1135

163

In whose natiuite the blessed Dunstan	1136
Herde angels singe with mycle melody :	
'Peace is nowe come to Englande, certan,	
Quietnes / and rest / honour / and victory.'	
Of cornes and frutes that tyme was plentie ;	1140
Danes / norwaies / scottes / britons in euery place	
Submytted them-selfe to the kynges grace.	1142

164

Science encreased, true loue and amite,	1143
Vertue was exalted in all this region ;	
Monasteries were edified of his benignite,	
Endowed with riches / and riall possession :	
xl. religious places by famous opinion	1147
Were newly buylded by the sayd noble kyng,	
In sondry places of this realme standyng.	1149

165

Secular prestes expulsed sothely were	1150
From diuers monasteries with great discrecion,	
Religious persones, repleit with vertue clere,	
Entred their places cause of deuocion ;	
Charite was feruent and holy religion ;	1154
The lyues of sayntes were soth in eche place,	
And written in legendes for our comfort and grace.	1156

166

Many shypes were made vpon the kynges cost	1157
To serche by the se all his lande about,	
That no alian entre in no-maner cost,	

EDGAR, AT CHESTER, RECEIVES THE HOMAGE OF 8 KINGS. 171

By policie and manhod to holde all his ennemies out.	
Danes / norwaies / scottes durst nat ones loke out—	1161
Suche drede all nacions had ensuyng the tyme	
That kyng Edgare regned by prouidence diuine.	1163
167	
In progresse he passed ones in the yere	1164
Eche quarter of the realme with his company,	
To se that his subiectes well ordred were	
And the lawe obserued / iustice with mercy.	
Than was none oppression, wronges nor iniury,	1168
Debate, malice, rancour myght nat be founde ;	
True loue and charite was in all the londe.	1170
168	
Kynge Edgare approached the cite of legions,	1171
Nowe called Chestre / specified afore ;	
Where .viii. kynges mette of diuers nacions,	
Redy to gyue Edgare reuerence and honour,	
Legiance and fidelite depely sworne full sore	1175
At the same cite : after to be obedient,	
Promyt at his callyng to come to his parliament.	1177
169	
From the Castell he went to the water of Dee	1178
By a priue posturne through walles of the towne ;	
The kyng toke his barge with mycle rialte,	
Rowyng vpwarde to the churche of saynt Iohā ;	
The forsayd .viii. kynges with hym went alone :	1182
Kynge Edgare kept the storne / as most principall,	
Eche prince had an ore to labour with-all.	1184
170	
Whan the kynge had done his pylgrimage	1185
And to the holy roode made oblacion,	
They entred agayne into the sayd barge,	
Passyng to his place with great renoune.	
Than Edgare spake in praysyng of the crowne :	1189
‘ All my successours may glad and ioyfull be	
To haue suche homage, honour and dignite.’	1191

171

Also it is to be had in memory 1192
 That this sayd Edgare and his princis all
 Came with great reuerence vnto the monastery,
 To worshyp saynt Werburge with mynde liberall;
 Where he gaue fredoms and priuileges speciall, 1196
 With singular possessions of his charite,
 Confirmynge the olde grauntes by hye auctorite. 1198

172

This Edgare was nominate in cronicles expresse 1199
 'The floure of Englande' / regnyng as emperour,
 Lyke-wise as Romulus to romains was of prowes,
 Cyrus to the persis / to the grekes their conquerour,
 Great Charles to frenchemen / to troians Hectour; 1203
 Famous in victorie, preignant in wysdome,
 Vertuous and pacient / feruent in deuocion. 1205

henric'. li°. v.

Auctor opum, vindix scelerum / largitor honorum,
 Sceptriger Edgarus regna superna petit.
 Hic alter Solomon / legum pater / orbita pacis,
 Quod claruit bellis / claruit inde magis.
 Templi deo / templis monachos / monachis dedit agros :
 Nequitie lapsum / iusticieq3 locum.

173

Also from the byrthe of our blessed sauour 1206
 A thousande fyfty yere / and seyn expresse,
 In the tyme of saynt Edwarde kyng and confessour,
 As William Maluesbury beareth wytnes,
 Than Leofricus, a man of great mekenes, 1210
 Was erle of Chestre and duke of merciens,
 Son to duke Leoffwin by liniall discence. 1212

174

This noble Leofric, sayth policronicon, 1213
 Of his deuocion and beningne grace,
 Namely by the counsell and vertues mocion

Of his lady Godith, countes whiche was,
 Reedified churches decayed in many a place, 1217
 Also he founded the monastery of Leonence,
 By the towne of Herforde / and the place of Wenlence. 1219

175

This erle repared a noble olde monastery, 1220
 Euesham vpon Auen / gaue them great riches ;
 Also founder was of the abbay in couentre,
 Made the cite free, for loue of his countesse :
 At the cite of Chestre of his great goodnes 1224
 He repared the College-churche of saynt Iohū,
 Endowed it with riches and enormentes many on. 1226

176

This erle of Chestre, the sayd Leofricus, 1227
 Of his charite / and feruent deuocion
 To the honour of god / reedified full gracious
 The mynstre of Werburge within the sayd towne,
 Gaue vnto it riches and singular possession, 1231
 Endowed the sayd place with fredoms and liberte
 And speciall priuileges, confirmed by auctorite. 1233

177

So the sayd place encreased in honour, 1234
 In great possessions / fredoms / and richesse ;
 With singular deuocion vnto our sauour
 And prayse to saynt Werburge, theyr patronesse,
 The chanons obserued vertue and clennes, 1238
 Daily augmentyng by diuine sufferaunce
 Vnto the comyng to this lande of normans. 1240

¶ *Of the comyng of Willyam conquerour to this lande, and
 howe Hug. Lupe, his syster sonne, was founder of Chestre
 monasterye. Cap. xvi.*

178

¶ The yere of grace .M. sixe and thre-scour, 1241
 The .xiii. day of the moneth of october
 The duke of Normandy / William conquerour,

Fight a stronge batell / displayed his baner,
 Of normans and frenchemen hauynge great power, 1245
 Subdued kyng Harolde / opteyned all the londe,
 Was coronate at London / made saxons all bonde. 1247

179

For diuerse great causes he came to this countre : 1248
 First for deth of Alured, his nere kynsman ;
 The proscricion of Robert archebisshop of Canterbury ;
 The periury of Harolde agaynst conscience playne ;
 The promys of saynt Edward made to hym, certayne, 1252
 That the sayd Wylliam shulde enioye the crowne,
 If the kyng departed without succession. 1254

180

A generall counsell was celebrate at London, 1255
 That all bysshops sees by helpe of the conquerour
 From borowes shulde be translate to a famous towne
 Within their diocese / to the greater honour.
 Ryght so they all were / sayth myn auctour ; 1259
 Also the see of Lichefelde was translate to Chester,
 By helpe and sufferaunce of the bysshop Peter. 1261

181

With Wylliam conquerour came to this region 1262
 A noble worthy prynce nominate Hug. Lupus,
 The dukes son of Britayne / and his syster son ;
 Flourynge in chiuallry, bolde and victorious,
 Manfull in batell / liberall and vertuous : 1266
 To whom the kyng gaued for his enheritaunce
 The cōunte of Chesshire, with the appurtaunce, 1268

182

By victorie to wyne the forsaid Erledom, 1269
 Frely to gouerne it as by conquest right ;
 Made a sure chartre to hym and his succession,
 By the swerde of dignite to holde it with myght,
 And to calle a parlement to his wyll and syght, 1273
 To ordre his subiectes after true iustice
 As a prepotent prince / and statutes to deuise. 1275

183

This valeant knyght with a myghty host	1276
Descended from London to wyne the sayd counte.	
But the lordes of Cheshire rose from euyery cost,	
Agaynst hym made batell and had the victorie ;	
Thries they preuayled agaynst the erle, trulie.	1280
After he optayned to his fame and honour	
The erledome of Chestre, entred as a conquerour.	1282

184

He gaue to his knyghtes after theyr desire	1283
Lordshyps and franchises / and great possession,	
With riche mariages, within all Cheshire,	
Exalted his seruantes to hye promocion ;	
Vnto holy churche had special deuocion,	1287
Maynte[in]yng iustice / commendying vertue,	
Deposyng vice by the helpe of Iesu.	1289

185

After the departure of his vncler, the conquerour,	1290
Whan William Ruff. toke the regalite,	
Than blessed Anselme, the famous doctour,	
Dyd viset this lande oft-tymes of his charite,	
Glad to refourme / and bryng vnto vnite	1294
Where was debate / and mycle diuision,	
By diligent labour / and good exhortacion.	1296

186

This forsayd erle of his benigrite,	1297
Interiously louyng holy religion,	
Repleit with vertue and feruent charite,	
Sende for saynt Anselme vnto London,	
To come to Chestre at his peticion	1301
And there for to founde a religious place	
In honour of Werburge by diuine grace.	1303

187

Blessed Anselme at the erles supplicacion	1304
Came vnto Chestre with gladde chere shortly :	
Where he founded an abbaye of holy religion,	

A pleasaunt place and a noble monasterye, In worshyp of god / and saynt Werburge, sothely,	1308
The yere of grace by full computacion A thousande .iiii. score .xiii. yere alon.	1310
188	
All secular prestes / and chanons also, Within the sayd place afore-tyme dwellyng Were clerely dismyssed / and letten go ; Religious monkes, perfect in luyng, Receyued were gladly their rule professyng.	1311 1315
Saynt Anselme ordeyned <i>Richard</i> of <i>Beccense</i> To be their abbot with great preeminence.	1317
189	
Landes / rentes / libertes / and great possession, Franches / fredoms / and priuileges riall Were gyuen mekely to that foundation, Maners / borowes / townes / with the people thrall, And many faire churches / chapels withall, Wardes and mariages were gyuen that season To god and saynt Werburge, cause of deuocion ;	1318 1322 1324
190	
Kyng Wyllyam Ruff, son to the conquerour, Confirmed the foundation / with great auctorite, Endowed the monastery with mycle honour Of fredoms / franchises / also liberte. The place that tyme was made as fre As the sayd erle was in his castell, Or as hert myght thynke / or tonge myght tell.	1325 1329 1331
191	
Saynt Anselme departed thence vnto London And was made archebisshop of Canturbury. To the place he gaue a sure confirmacion, With singular priuileges to be had in memory ; Of whom it is written here folowyng, truly :	1332 1336
Hic vir dum vixit, extirpantes maledixit Werburge iura presentia siue ¹ futura.	1338

192

This noble prince gaue of his charite	1339
Riall riche enormentes vnto the sayd place,	
Coopes / crosses / Iewels of great rialte,	
Chales / censures / vestures / and landes dyd purchase ;	
A librarie of bokes to rede and synge there was—	1343
Of whiche riall iewels and bokes some remayne	
Within the sayd monastery to this day, certayne.	1345

193

The founder also buylded within the monasterie	1346
Many myghty places / conuenient for religion,	
Composed with stronge walles on the west partie	
And on the other syde with Walles of the towne,	
Closed at euery ende with a sure postron,	1350
In south part the cimiterie inuironed rounde about,	
For a sure defence ennemies to holde out.	1352

194

The .ix. yere aftre this riall foundation,	1353
This noble founder the .xxvii. day of Iuly	
Departed to-warde the heuenly mancion.	
Next whom his son Richarde succeded, truly,	
Than regnyng in honour the first kyng Henry.	1357
Also the place had their fraunches and fredom	
Afore the sayd cite a hundreth yere and one.	1359

¶ *Howe saynt Werburge taught her monke and chaplayne to kepe paciens for his greater merite and glorye to come.*
Cap. xvii.

195

E fter the translacion of Chestre monasterye	1360
From secular chanons to monkes religious	
By helpe of Anselme archebisshop of Canturburye,	
Supportyng therto the founder Hug. Lupus,	
As afore is specified full memorous,	1364
A monke there dwelled of vertuous disposicion	
Vnder obedience / nominate dan Symon.	1366

196

This brother Simon, his tyme well vsyng,	1367
Nowe in vertuous study / nowe in contemplacion,	
Nowe in deuout prayer / nowe busely wryttynge,	
Somtyme in solace / and honest recreacion,	
Observed deuoutly his holy religion,	1371
Obedience / pacience / and wylfull pouerte,	
Mekenes / meditacion / with pure chastite.	1373

197

For whiche examples and signes of vertue	1374
Diuers of his bretherne repleit with enuy	
Were fully confederate, entending to subdue	
This honest prest by malice and policy :	
They layd to his charge open wronges and iniury,	1378
They punysshed & oppressed hym with great affliction,	
Dayly augmentyng by subtyll collusion.	1380

198

Dan Symon, offending no brother at all,	1381
Observed pacience / euer callynge for grace,	
Wepying, lamentyng with syghes cordiall	
His fortune vnfrendly, remediles / in that case ;	
Entended to depart to some other place,	1385
Of a scrupulous conscience / seying no redresse,	
Was redy to procede plinged in heuynes.	1387

199

Werburge appered to this monke in vision,	1388
Bryghter than Phebus in his meridian spere :	
‘ My seruaunt,’ she sayd, callyng hym vpon,	
‘ Why be ye so sad / and heuy of chere ?	
Wheder entende ye ? shewe the mater clere !’	1392
‘ Alas,’ he sayd, ‘ ma dame and patronesse,	
For sorowe I can nat my peynes expresse.	1394

200

‘ Diuers of my bretherne ben greued at me,	1395
Vexyng me dayly with great tribulacion,	
Causeles on my part deserued, trule,	

In worde or en dede gyuyng none occasion.
 I can nat be quiet amonge that congregacion ; 1399
 Wherefore, swete lady, vnder your licence
 I purpose to departe in sauynge my conscience.' 1401

201

Saynt Werburge pacified his mynde and entent 1402
 With wordes of comfort and holy scripture,
 Made hym be humble in hert and pacient,
 'Thy sufferaunce shalbe great ioye and pleasure,
 And for thy pacience thou maist be sure 1406
 To haue rewarde in blis perpetuall
 At thy departure from this lyfe mortall.' 1408

202

Wherwith saynt Werburge departed sodeinl[y] 1409
 To the blys of heuyn euer-enduryng.
 The monke was meke in hert and mery,
 Obserued her doctrine this lyfe continuynge,
 Gaue good example of perfect lyuyng 1413
 Vnto his bretherne / and at his departure
 For his pacience passed to eternall pleasure. 1415

¶ *Howe sondes rose vp within the salt see agaynst Hilburghee
 by saynt Werburge at the peticion of the constable of
 Chestre. Ca. xviii.*

203

THe seconde erle of Chestre after the conquest 1416
 Was erle Richard / son to Hug. Lupus :
 Whiche Richarde entended all thyng to the best ;
 To visite saynt Winifride in hert desirous,
 Vpon his iourney went / myn auctour sayth thus, 1420
 Deuoutly to holy-well in pylgrimage,
 For his great merite and gostly aduantage. 1422

204

Whan the wicked walshemen herd of his comyng 1423
 After a meke maner vnto that party,
 They made insurrection, inwardly gladdying,

Descended from the mountaynés most furiously,
 Agaynst the erle raised a cruell company ; 1427
 Bytwxt hym and Chestre lettyng the kyngis way,
 Purposynge to s̄lee or take hym for a praye. 1429

205

The erle son perceyued theyr malicious entent : 1430
 In all hast possible sende to Chestre secretly,
 To warne his constable by loue and commaundem[en]t,
 Wyllyam the son of Nigell / to rayse a great army,
 To mete hym at Basyngwerke right sone and spedely 1434
 For his deliuerance from deth and captiuite
 Of the wyld walshemen / without humanite. 1436

206

The constable congregate in all goodly hast 1437
 A myghty stronge host / in theyr best arraye,
 To-warde Hilburghee on iourney ridyng fast,
 Trustyng vpon shippes all them to conuaye—
 Whiche was a riall rode that tyme, nyght and daye. 1441
 And whan they theder came, shyppeyng none there was
 To carie all them ouer in conuenient space. 1443

207

Alas, what hert may thynke / or tonge well expresse 1444
 The dolorous greuaunce / and great lamentacion
 That the host made / for loue and tendernes,
 Knowynge their great maister in suche persecucion ?
 Some wept and wayled without consolacion, 1448
 Some sighed and sobbed / some were in extasy,
 Without perfect reason. / alas, what remedy ? 1450

208

Wyllyam the constable, most carefull man on lyue 1451
 Of his mysfortune, in suche extreme necessite
 Called to hym a monke there dwellyng contemplatyue,
 Required hym for counsayle and prayer for his charite.
 The monke exhorted hym to knele vpon his kne, 1455
 Humblie to beseke Werburge, his patronesse,
 For helpe and remedy in suche great distresse. 1457

209

The constable content anone began to praye : 1458
 'O blessed Werburge and virgin pure,
 I beseke the mekely, helpe me this day,
 That we may transcende this ryuer safe and sure,
 To saue and defende my lorde from discomfiture ; 1462
 And here I promytte to god and the alone
 To offre to the a gyfte at my comyng-whome.' 1464

210

Whiche prayer ended, with wepyng and langour, 1465
 Beholde and consydre well with your gostly ee
 The infinite goodnes of our sauour :
 For like as to Moises deuided the redde see,
 And the water of Iordan obeyed to Iosue, 1469
 Ryght so the depe riuer of Dee made diuision,
 The sondes drye appered in syght of them echone. 1471

211

The constable consyderynge / and all the company 1472
 This great myracle transcending nature,
 Praysed and magnified our lorde god almyghty
 And blessed Werburge, the virgin pure.
 They went into wales vpon the sondes sure, 1476
 Deliuered their lorde from drede and enmite,
 Brought hym in safe-garde agayne to Chestre cite. 1478

212

The said Wylyyam constable came to the monasterye, 1479
 Thanked saynt Werburge with meke supplicacion,
 Fulfilled his promes made in extremite :
 Offred to the place the village of Neuton ;
 Afterwarde he founded the abbay of Norton. 1483
 And where the host passed / ouer betwix bondes,
 To this day ben called 'the constable sondes.' 1485

¶ *Howe Matilde countesse of Chestre, counsellyng her husbände agaynst the monastery of Chestre, was drowned at Barflewe, with many other mo. Cap. xix.*

213

After the decesse of Hug. Lupe prenominate 1486
 Richarde, his son, .vii. yeres of age,
 Was elect Erle by the kyng, and creat ;
 With counsaile gouerned his landes and heritage.
 At yeres of discrecion he toke in mariage 1490
 The lady Matild / nece to the first kyng Henry,
 Doughter to erle Stephan, (sayth the history). 1492

214

At his begynnyng he was a benefactour, 1493
 A founder to the place by landes and possession,
 By franchises and libertes / ayde / helpe / and succour,
 Gyuen to the abbay / augmentyng the foundacion :
 Proued by his actes of singular deuocion 1497
 Enduryng long tyme / tyll that his lady
 By wycked counsaile moued hym the contrarye. 1499

215

It is red in scripture howe quene Iesabell, 1500
 Ambicious of honour agaynst all ryghtousnes,
 Peruerted her lorde Achas / kyng of Israell,
 To sle Nabath for his vineyard, doubtles ;
 Also Athalia / the bible sheweth expresse, 1504
 Commaunded to slee the kynges children all,
 That she myght regne sole princesse imperiall : 1506

216

Ryght so this Matilde, clerely refusyng 1507
 The stepes of Sara / Rebecca / and Rachell
 And other good matrons : but imitacion ¹ takyng ^{1 P. mutacion}
 Of these wycked women Athali and Iesabell,
 Peruerted her husbände by her subtyll counsell 1511
 To aske of the abbot the maner-place of Salton
 With the appurtinaunce / by famous opinion. 1513

217

- Thabbot, by counsell of his bretherne all, 1514
 Denied to graunt their propre possession,
 The patrimony of Christ, and their landes seuerall
 To the sayd erle Richarde and his succession,
 Gyuen by his father at the first foundacion. 1518
 For whiche thyng the erle and Matilde, his lady,
 Hated thabbot / the bretherne / and the monastery. 1520

218

- The erle and his countesse went to Normandy, 1521
 To viset their frendes and cosyns naturall ;
 So dyd the princis / their father kyng Henry,
 With many estates of the blodde riall.
 These princis fauored no saxon at all ; 1525
 The erle conominat in malice and hate
 Agaynst the monasterie / as a man endurete. 1527

219

- Satan sende forth his seruauntes in hast 1528
 To enfect the erles hert with venomous poison.
 The bedyls of Belial attempted full fast
 The erle and his countesse / to kepe theyr opinion ;
 Detractours, flaterers, cause of promociion, 1532
 Trustyng therby to opteyne fauour and grace
 Excited their myndes agaynst the sayd place. 1534

220

- The erle sore attempted by his gostly ennemy, 1535
 By wycked people callyng hym vpon,
 Namely by the counsell of Matilde, his lady,
 Entended to alter and chaunge the foundacion
 Of the sayd abbay to a nother religion, 1539
 Confirmed the same, sweryng most depely,
 At his whom-comyng to Englande / from Normandy. 1541

221

- Thabbot and couent, knowyng this great perell 1542
 By special louers and frendes secretly,
 Were pensyue and sorowfull (it was no meruell),

Their hertes plonged in wo and misery, By naturall reason hauyng no remedy,	1546
Consyderyng his malice encreased more and more Agaynst the monastery / with wordes of rigour.	1548
222	
They had their hope, trust and confidence In blessed Werburge, their patronesse :	1549
With wepyng eies, clere in conscience They called her vpon in all their distresse :	
‘O glorious virgin, lady and swete maistres, Metigate the malice by thy benignite	1553
Of Richarde our lorde / mekely we praye the.	1555
223	
‘Suffre hym neuer to distroye thy place By wycked consell, malice and enuy, Founded and dedicate by heuenly grace In honour of god / and the specially ; Protect / defende / and saue thy monastery, Thy landes / thy libertes / and thy seruauntes all, As thou afore-tyme hast done continuall.’	1556 1560 1562
224	
In meane tyme the erle entended spedely From thens to depart / and retourne agayne, To fulfyll his entent agaynst the monasterye, By the subtyll mocion of his countesse, playne. A ship was prepared / all thyng redy, certayne ; The prince of England / the erle and his lady Toke shippingg at Barflewe, and all their comp[any].	1563 1567 1569
225	
Certaynly, they sayled but a lytell space Whan agaynst them roose a contrarie wynde. The mariners to gyde the ship had no grace, The stormes so great, hiduous agaynst kynde ; On a rocke they ranne / no remedy myght fynde ; Incontinently the ship barst all in-sondre ; The erle and his feliship were turned all vndre.	1574 1576

226

No man ne childe scaped from deth that tyme, 1577
 But one pore seruaunt, whiche swamme to the londe.
 Suche was theyr fortune by sufferaunce diuyne.
 Many of theyr bodis ¹ were neuer fonde. ¹ P. bedis.
 Thus was their power made thrall and bonde, 1581
 Theyr lyues were lost within a s[h]ort space
 Whiche were cruell ennemyes vnto her place. 1583

227

On saynt Katharins day at after mydnyght, 1584
 Whan matens were ended / and bretherne gon,
 Some mourning, waylyng for drede full ryght,
 Some busie in prayer and contemplacion :
 Werburge appered to the secristan alone, 1588
 Sayenge : 'ye may be ioyfull in god and mery :
 Erle Richarde is drowned, your mortall ennemy.'

228

The same glad tidying shewed an honest woman 1591
 Tollyng at the churche-dore the sayd day and hour,
 As she was commaunded by Werburge, in certan,
 To thabbot and couent ploned in great langour.
 (Whiche myracle herde) they pray[s]ed our sauour 1595
 And blessed Werburge / with hert deuoutly,
 Syngyng Te deum full solemply. 1597

¶ *Howe a great fire, like to distroye all Chestre, by myracle
 ceased / whan the holy shryne was borne about the towne
 by the monkes. Cap. xx.*

229

From the incarnacion of our sauour 1598
 A thousand / a hundreth yere, .lxxx. also,
 On sonday in mydleton / the .viii. houre,
 Whan euery paresshen theyr churche went to
 As all christen people of dutie shulde do, 1602
 A fyre by infortune rose vp sodeinly,
 All flamying feruent or the people dyd espy. 1604

230

This fearefull fire encreased more and more, 1605
 Piteously wastynge hous / chambre / and hall ;
 The citezens were redy their cite to succour,
 Shewed all their diligence / and labour continuall,
 Some cried for water / and some for hookes dyd call, 1609
 Some vsed other engins by crafte and policy,
 Some pulled downe howses afore the fire, truly. 1611

231

Other, that were impotent / mekely gan praye 1612
 Our blessed lorde / on them to haue pite ;
 Women and children cried 'out and waile-a-way,'
 Beholdyng the daunger and perill of the cite ;
 Prestes made hast diuine seruice to supple, 1616
 Redy for to succour their neyghbours in distres
 (As charite required) and helpe their heuynes. 1618

232

The fire contynued without any cestyng, 1619
 Feruently flamyng euer contynuall,
 From place to place meruaylously rennyng,
 As it were tynder consuming toure and wall.
 The citezens sadly laboured in vayne all ; 1623
 By the policie of man was founde no remedy
 To cesse the fire so feruent and myghty. 1625

233

Alas, great heuynes it was to beholde 1626
 The cite of Troye all flamyng as fire ;
 More pite of Rome cite was manyfolde,
 Feruently flagrant / empeiryng the empire :
 As to the quantite, the cite of Chestire 1630
 Myght be assembled this tyme in like case
 To the sayd citees, remedeles, alas ! 1632

234

Many riall places fell adowne that day, 1633
 Riche marchauntes houses brought to distruction,
 Churches and chapels went to great decay ;

- That tyme was brent the more part of the towne ;
 And to this present day is a famous opinion 1637
 Howe a myghty churche, a mynstre of saynt Michaelle,
 That season was brent and to ruyne fell. 1639
 235
- Whan the people sawe their power insufficient, 1640
 By diligent labour / wysdome and policye
 To subdue the fire / but styll dyd augment :
 To almyghty god they dyd call and crye
 And to saynt Werburge, the gracious lady, 1644
 For helpe and succour in suche wretchednes,
 Wepying and waylyng for woo and heuynes. 1646
 236
- Thabbot and couent of the sayd monasterie, 1647
 Religiously lyuyng in holy conuersacion,
 Repleit with mekenes and feruent charite,
 Toke the holy shryne in prayer and deuocion,
 Syngyng the letanie bare it in procession, 1651
 Compasyng the fyre in euery strete and place,
 Trustyng in Werburge for helpe, aide and grace. 1653
 237
- Whan they had ended the holy letanye 1654
 From place to place procedyng in stacion,
 Anone a stremyng sterre appered sodaynlye,
 A white doue descended afore the congregacion
 Approchyng as to helpe them / a signe of consolacion. 1658
 The people reioysed of that gostly syght
 And praysed saynt Werburge with power and myght. 1660
 238
- So by the merite of this blessed virgin 1661
 The fire began to cesse— / a myracle clere—
 Nat passyng the place / where the holy shryne
 Was borne by the bretherne / as playnly dyd appere.
 The citezens dyd helpe in their best manere ; 1665
 The feruent great fire extincted was in-dede
 By grace aboue nature / in story we may rede. 1667

239

The clergie, the burges / and the comons all, 1668
 Consydering the goodnes of this virgin bright,
 With tendernes of hert and loue in speciall
 Magnified and praysed our lorde god almyght
 And blessed Werburge by day, also nyght, 1672
 Whiche hath preserued of her great charite
 Chestre from distruction in extreme necessite. 1674

240

Vnto her shryne the people all went, 1675
 The clergie before, in maner of procession,
 Thankyng this virgin with loue feruent
 For her mercy and grace shewed them vpon ;
 Deuoutly knelyng there made oblacion, 1679
 Sayeng full sadly / 'we shall neuer able be
 The place to récompence for this dede of charite.' 1681

¶ *A breue rehersall of the myracles of saynt Werburge after
 her translacion to Chestre. Cap. xxi.*

241

THese fore-sayd myracles and signes celestiall, 1682
 By diuine sufferaunce shewed manifestly,
 Magnifien this virgin and blessed moiniall
 With mycle worshyp, honour and victory,
 Playnly declaryng vnto your memory
 What singular grace / worshyp / and excellence 1687
 Our sauour shewed for his spouse openly,
 As is rehersed at masse in her sequens. 1689

242

To expresse all myracles written in the place 1690
 In a boke nominate the thrid passionarye,
 It wolde require a longe tyme and space,
 To the reders tedious (no meruayle sothly).
 Wher[for]e we mytte to writte of them specially,
 But touched in generall vnto your audience, 1695

To reioyse and comfort your hertes inwardly, As ye may conside in her sequens.	1697
243	
Certaynly, it is knowen by bokes expresse : Sith that saynt Werburge came to Chestre cite, By the power of god and myracle, doutles, She hath defended the towne from ennemite, From barbarike nacions full of crudelite, Of whom we haue shewed with diligence,	1698 1703
Preseruyng her seruauntes / and the monastery, As is declared in her true sequence.	1705
244	
Also of her goodnes preserued she hase The sayd towne from fire in extreme necessite ; Many diuers tymes to their ioye and solace Releuyng the citezens in wo and penalite. For it is well knowen, by olde antiquite Sith the holy shryne came to their presence,	1706 1711
It hath ben their comfort and gladnes, truly, As playnly appereth in her sequens.	1713
245	
Also to blynde men she hath gyuen syght, To dombe men speche right perfectly, To deffe men their heryng pleasaunt and right, And helth to sicke men repleit with debilite, Delyuered prisoners from captiuite, Passage to lame men / to mad men intelligence ; Suche myracles shewed this blessed lady, As ye may vnderstande in her sequens.	1714 1719 1721
246	
Women with childe by her had good delyueraunce, Virgins defended from shame and vilany ; Her seruauntes were cured from wofull greuaunce, Marchantes and mariners delyuered from ieopardye ; Other were saued from hangyng shamfully ; A speciall comfort, succour and defence	1722 1727

- To all carefull creatures sekyng for remedy,
By singular grace / as sayth the sequens. 1729
247
- No wofull person in payne and wretchednes, 1730
Man, woman, childe / who-so-euer they be,
Comyng to the abbay with perfit mekenes,
Makyng supplicacion to this lady free,
But they departed ioyfull and merie
To theyr dwellyng-place by her beniuolence, 1735
And for their lyuyng had all thyng necessarie,
As written is playnly in her sequens. 1737
248
- For whiche great myracles and signes continuall 1738
This blessed Werburge, floure of humilite,
Of the people is called for grace supernall
'Patrones of Chestre' / protectrice of the countre.
Where next our sauour and his mother Marie
She hath great honour, prayse and preeminence, 1743
As most condigne to beare the principalite,
In witnes wherof recordeth her sequens. 1745
249
- This holy abbasse and lady imperiall 1746
Hath ben president in Chestre monasterie,
Theyr trust / theyr treasure / and defence speciall
In mycle reuerence .vii. hundreth yere, trulie ;
And so shall continue, by grace of god almyghty,
To the worldes ende in hie magnificence. 1751
To whom be honour, worship and glorie
Euer to endure / as sayth her sequens. 1753
- ¶ *A charitable mocion and a desyre to all the inhabytauntes
within the countie palatine of Chestre for the monasterie.
Cap. xxii.* 250
- Ⓞ ye worthy nobles of the west partye, 1754
Considre in your mynde with hye discrecion
The perfite goodnes of this swete ladye,

- We mean saynt Werburge, nowe at this season,
 Whiche hath ben your helpe and singular tuicion,
 And so euer wylbe— / haue this in your mynde 1759
 Whan ye to her call with humble supplicacion :
 Wherfore to the monasterye be neuer vnkynde. 1761
 251
- Remembre / at the foundation of the sayd place 1762
 your predecessours and fore-fathers redy were
 To gyue for their soule-helth by singular grace
 Parcell of their landes and possessions mere
 To our sauour and to saynt Werburge clere,
 Redy to offre them with humble hert and mynde 1767
 In perfit oblacion, with Hug. Lupe their foundere :
 Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer vnkynde. 1769
 252
- Many helde their landes of the sayd monasterie 1770
 By tenure grand-seriante / and some by homage,
 By tenure franke-almoigne / other by fealtie
 With seruice de chivalere / and some by escuage,
 Some by petit-seriant / and by tenure burgage,
 As in their euidentes and grauntes they may fynde : 1775
 Tres maners de rentes / with tenure villenage :
 Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer vnkynde. 1777
 253
- The place hath speciall franchises and liberte, 1778
 Hauynge certayne wardes of landes and mariage
 Of diuers gentilmen within the sayd counte ;
 All theyr tenauntes and seruauntes haue fre passage
 Within all cheshshire without tolle and pillage—
 Suche auncient fredoms in their dedes they fynde, 1783
 Gyuen by theyr founders for gostly auauntage :
 Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer vnkynde. 1785
 254
- The erle gaue the place many great fredoms 1786
 Within Chestre cite / whiche ben knowen of olde,
 With singular priuileges and auncient customs,

Saynt Werburge faire / with profites manyfolde,
 That no marchandise shulde be bought ne solde
 Enduryng the faire-dayes (in writyng as we fynde) 1791
 But afore thabbay-gate / to haue and to holde :
 Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer vnkynde. 1793

255

Therefore, lordes, barons / ye rulers of the countre, 1794
 We you nowe exhorte in our sauour,
 Discretly considre with your gostlie eie
 The myght of this mayden and chaste floure,
 Shewed by myracles euery day and hour—
 Whan she was required with true hert and mynde, 1799
 In all busines she hath ben their protectour :
 Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer vnkynde. 1801

256

Whan your forefathers haue ben in great perell, 1802
 In ieoperdie of lyfe on see and on londe,
 Or like to be slayne by ennemies in batell,
 Or taken by warre in prison fast bonde :
 Vnto this virgin / as we vnderstonde,
 Whan they called and cryed with contrite mynde, 1807
 They escaped all daunger / cam whom safe and sonde :
 Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer vnkynde. 1809

257

Marchauntes passyng with marchaundise, 1810
 From lande to lande truly entenyng,
 If they were taken with cruell enemyse
 Orels were put in perill of perisshyng :
 If they to this virgin deuoutly praying
 Made supplicacion with humble hert and mynde, 1815
 Anone they opteyned theyr humble askyng :
 Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer vnkynde. 1817

258

If any of you [was]¹ vexed with infirmite, ¹ on. 1818
 With sekenes incurable / or other vexacion,
 As ¹ wronges, iniuries, and other maladie. ¹ P. Ar.

Vnto saynt Werburge makyng intercession
 And to her place promysyng an oblacion
 With contrite hert and penitent mynde, 1823
 They were soone cured from all affliction :
 Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer vnkynde. 1825

259

And you, honest matrons, remembre you all 1826
 The goodnes of this virgin full of grace :
 Whan ye in trauelyng vpon her do call
 Or haue any relique sende from the place,
 ye fortune and spede well in short tyme and space ;
 And diuers maydens louyng a chaste mynde 1831
 From vilany ben saued by her purchase :
 Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer vnkynde. 1833

260

But eche contray / shire / and congregacion, 1834
 Some be disposed to vertues generall,
 And some to the contrarie, proued by reason :
 Folowyng their mynde and appetite sensuall
 Haue shewed¹ vnkyndnes to the place spirituall, ^{1 P. sheweb}
 And haue ben sore punysshed / take this in mynde, 1839
 To all other folowyng and¹ example speciall : ^{1 r. an}
 Wherfore to the monastery be neuer vnkynde. 1841

261

There was neuer man of high nor lowe degree, 1842
 Lorde / baron / knyght / marchaunt / and burges,
 Attemptyng to infringe their rightes and liberte,
 Remaynyng in the same malice and wyckednes,
 But if they repent shortly theyr busynes
 Askyng absolucion to theyr conscience blynde, 1847
 Vengeance on them doth lyght, doutles :
 Wherfore to the monastery be neuer vnkynd. 1849

262

Diuers malefactours agayne good conscience 1850
 Attemptyng¹ to take there seuerall possession ^{1 r. attemptyd}
 By subtell policy and wrong-feyned euidens,

By proued periury and fals collusion,
 Whiche in theyr iniury and wronge mesprision
 Without repentauns in theyr consciens blynde 1855
 Sodenly haue ben drowed a sharpe punction :
 Wherefore to the monastery be neuer vnkynde. 1857

263

Other haue be glad to alienat the patronage 1858
 Of certayne churches by malice and enuy,
 By a fals enquest for theyr owne auantage,
 Defraudyng the right of the holy monastery :
 Suche euill doers remaynyng in theyr tyranny,
 Without satisfaccion, in their consciens blynde, 1863
 Lyke wretches expired moste myserably :
 Wherefore to the monastery be neuer vnkynde. 1865

264

Other haue ben besy serching day and nyght 1866
 To infringe theyr fraunchis and fridome auncient
 By fals recordes, oppugnant to ryght,
 As hath ben proued by persones indifferent ;
 yet they haue procured and sought wronge iugement
 Agaynst their libertes, in conscience blynde : 1871
 Sodayne and euyll deth folowed them consequent :
 Wherefore to the monasterye be neuer vnkynde. 1873

265

Some other haue be, paraenture on late, 1874
 Studios to disquiet the place, the company,
 And diuers libertes haue alienate,
 Also tolled their franchis fraudulently,
 From the sayd place well knowen in memory ;
 Suche mysdoers we moue in conscience blynde 1879
 To mende ¹ their wronges, lest payne come sodeynly : ^{1 P. maende}
 Wherefore to the monasterie be neuer vnkynde. 1881

266

Suche malefactours conside nat discretly 1882
 Howe all suche landes, libertes and fredoms
 Were gyuen to Christ and ben his patrimonye,

And nat allonly to religious persons ;
 For all suche fraunches, priuileges, possessions
 Of charite were gyuen, of pure conscience and mynde 1887
 To god and saynt Werburge with great deuotions :
 Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer vnkynde. 1889

267

Nowe for to make a finall ¹ conclusion, ¹ P. small 1890
 We well perceyue in auncient bokes olde,
 All suche transgressours / holdingyng their opinion,
 Obstinate in malice, indurate and bolde,
 Some haue ben slayne / some drowned in water colde,
 Some shamfully hanged rebukyng their kynde, 1895
 Some wretchedly departed / some cruciat manyfolde :
 Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer vnkynde. 1897

¶ *A litell orison or prayer to the blessed virgine saynte
 Werburge by the translatur of this werke. Ca. xxiii.*

268

Ⓞ Blessed Werburge and virgin glorious, 1898
 Descended by auncetrie of blod victoriall,
 Doughter to kynge Vulfere / and Ormenilde vertuous,
 O sufferayne lady and famous moiniall :
 With hert and true mynde on the I call,
 Thou art my succour / my helpe in all distres : 1903
 Defende and saue me from peynes infernall
 By thy meke prayer, swete patrones. 1905

269

O rutilant gemme clerer than the cristall, 1906
 O redolent rose repleit with suaute,
 Whiche for the loue of thy spouse eternall
 Refused hast all vayne pleasures transetore,
 Honours / riches / and secular dignite ;
 Nowe regnyng in heuyn as a quene, doutles, 1911
 Praye for thy seruauant to the lorde of mercy,
 Mekely I beseke the, swete patronesse. 1913

270

O sufferayne lady full of singular vertue,	1914
Myndyng most religion from thy infancy	
Elect to the a spouse our sauour Iesu,	
Professed obedience at the house of Ely,	
Where thou obserued the sensualls ¹ thre	¹ r. essentials
By grace aboue nature, playn to expresse :	1919
Opteyne me power to haue victory	
Ageynst myn ennemyes, swete patrones.	1921

271

O floure of virgins and comly creature,	1922
Syngyng with angels in the heuenly toure,	
Transcendyng the saphir and diamounde pure	
In worship, praisyng, beaute and decur ;	
What tong can reherse thy ioy and honour,	
Whiche is ineffable for man to expresse?	1927
Beseke thy spouse, our blessyd sauour,	
To graunte me mercy, swete patrones.	1929

272

For thy great vertu and hie discrecion	1930
Chosen thou was a pyler here to be	
Of diuers monasteryes, to encrease religion	
By thy gostly doctryne and humilite ;	
Exsample thou gaue of perfit charite	
Vnto thi subgettis as a kynde maistres :	1935
Helpe me thy seruauant of thy benignite	
To please my maker, swete patrones.	1937

273

No maruell it was thought thy subgettis all	1938
Were vertuous and perfect in contemplacion,	
Vnder suche a ruler, a hed and principall,	
Whose gostly example and exortation	
Were corespondent, accordyng in one—	
Thy precept and deed were vnit with mekenes :	1943
In this vale [of] misery be my protection,	
I humble the require, swete patrones.	1945

274

Glorious abbasse and floure of chastite, 1946
 Carboncle shenyng bothe day and nyght,
 All this region by thy noble progenie
 And by the is decorat vnder god almyght ;
 The presens of thy blessyd body right
 Reioisith thy seruauntis in all distres, 1951
 Thou art our refuge and lanterne of light :
 Succour thy seruauntes, swete patrones. 1953

275

O pereles princes, lady imperiall, 1954
 O gemme of holynes and noble president,
 Comfort to all creatures in paynes thrall,
 Releuyng all secke, feble and impotent ;
 A myrrour of mekenes to euery pacient,
 Whose myracles magnifien thy great goodnes : 1959
 Defende thy seruaunt[es] from greuou turment
 By thy supplicacion, swete patronesse. 1961

276

O noble sufferayne and singular protectrice 1962
 Of thy true subiectes by speciall grace,
 In all necessite a sure mediatrice,
 From greuou oppression preseruyng thy place,
 A lanterne of lyght in eche wofull case
 To illumine thy people plunged in heuynes 1967
 With great consolacion and gostly solace :
 Nowe lyghten our conscience, swete patronesse. 1969

277

Swete louely lady, mekely I the praye, 1970
 For thy great mekenes and perfect charite,
 Make thou intercession both nyght and day
 For thy true seruauntes vnto the trinite,
 That we may opteyne here grace and mercy
 And of our synne to haue forgyuenes, 1975
 Afterwarde to come to eternall glorie ;
 Helpe nowe and euer, swete patronesse. 1977

¶ *A breue conclusion of this litell werke vnto the reders, by the
translatour. Cap. xxiii.*

278

With tremblyng penne / and hand full of drede 1978
In termes rude translate nowe haue we
The noble historye of saynt Werburge in-dede,
Besekyng all them for their good humanite
Whiche this litell proces shall beholde and se, 1982
For to adde and minisshe and cause reformation
Where nede requireth after your discrecion. 1984

279

At her lyfe historiall example may take 1985
Every great estate / quene / duches / and lady,
To encrease in vertue / and synne to forsake,
To obserue mekenes and prayer deuoutly,
With pacience of hert / and almesdede, truly. 1989
If thou be widowe / her lyfe well folowyng
Thou mayst be sure in blis to haue a wonnyng. 1991

280

If thou be religious / wearyng blacke vesture, 1992
Take good example at this holy abbasse ;
Her lyfe wyll teche the how thou shult¹ endure 1 r. shalt
In holy religion / opteynyng mycle grace
With mekenes / meditacion / mesure in eche place, 1996
And howe thou shalt kepe thy sensualls thre
Consideryng in heuen thy rewarde to be. 1998

281

If thou be a virgin, of hie or low degre, 1999
Takyng imitation of this virgin bright
Thou mayst well obserue the floure of chastite
And thy spouse shalbe the lorde most of myght ;
On whom if thou attende redy day and nyght, 2003
Thou shalt haue merite, as recordeth scripture,
With .v. wise virgins after thy departure. 2005

282

The cause mouyng vs this werke to begyn,	2006
It was to auoyde slouth and idelnes,	
And most for the loue of this holy virgin,	
Whiche is our sufferayn lady and patrones.	
As for baudy balades full of wretchednes,	2010
And wanton wylde gestis / we purpose none to make,	
For drede of losyng tyme / clothed in vesture blake.	2012

283

Go forth, litell boke / Iesu be thy spede	2013
And saue the alway from mysreportyng,	
Whiche art compiled, for no clerke in-dede,	
But for marchaunt men / hauyng litell lernyng,	
And that rude people therby may haue knowyng	2017
Of this holy virgin / and redolent rose,	
Whiche hath ben kept full longe tyme in close.	2019

284

To all auncient poetes, litell boke, submytte the,	2020
Whilom flouryng in eloquence facundious,	
And to all other / whiche present nowe be,	
Fyrst to maister Chaucer / and Ludgate sentencious,	
Also to preignaunt Barkley / nowe beyng religious,	2024
To inuentiue Skelton and poet laureate ;	
Praye them all of pardon both erly and late.	2026

285

If there be any thyng within this litell boke	2027
Pleasaunt to the audience / contentyng the mynde,	
We praye all reders / whan they theron do loke,	
To gyue thanks to god maker of mankynde,	
Nat to the translatur ignoraunt and blynde ;	2031
For euery good dede / done in any cost	
It cometh allonly of the holy gost.	2033

286

Almyghty god, both one two and thre,	2034
We desire the with humble supplicacion,	
Saue holy church of thy benignite,	

And all ministres in holy religion ;
 Preserue the kyngis grace, the Peeris, the region, 2038
 Defende our monasterie and thy seruau[n]tes all,
 And graunt vs by grace to come to blis eternall ! 2040

FINIS.

A balade to the auctour.

287

O thou disciple of Tully most famous
 Nowe flourisshyng in the floures of glorious eloquence,
 Like as appereth by your stile facundius,
 Full worthe laude, prayse and preeminence, 4
 Put forth your werkes full sure of sentence—
 Whose auctour / what though vncertayne be his name
 Of all the reders exalted shalbe in fame.

288

Alas, why shulde this delicious werke, 8
 Thus surely sette by pured science,
 To be examined by my rudenes all derke,
 Whiche knowe full well myn insufficiency,
 Sith I haue lerned by longe experience 12
 That dulle age in werkes of poetry
 Must nedes gyue to poetes place and victory.

289

Glorious god and kyng eternall,
 We magnifie thy name as is but ryght, 16
 Sith thou gaue to vs a floure most riall,
 Redolent in cronicles with historicall syght ;
 Whiche nowe is departed from this temporall lyght
 The present yere of this translacion 20
 M.D. xiii. of Christis incarnation.

Cuius anime propicietur deus.

An other balade.

290

O frutefull histore / o digne memoriall,
 Enbawmed with doctrine of virtues infinite,

With termes exquised / and sence retoriall,
 To spirituall hertes a singular delite, 4
 Fragrant and facunde / of englishe exquisite,
 Holsome in doctrine / for those that it desire :
 Auauunce you to rede it / for it is exquisite,
 Folowyng theeffect to kepe you from hell-fire. 8

291

Reioyse Chestre / reioyse ye religious
 And thanke your maker of his beniuolence
 That hath you gyuen suche treasure precieuse,
 Aduocatrice / in your most indigence ! 12
 O virgin werburge / of double excellence,
 Conserue thy seruauantes dayly familier,
 Preseruyng them from inconuenience,
 The for tensue / that art theyr lode-sterre. 16

292

Amonges the whiche to thyn honour
 One of thy clientes / with morall retorique
 Hath chaunged newly / o mayde most swete flour,
 Thy legende latine / to our language publique : 20
 Preserue his soule / and make hym domestique
 Within the heuyns / in whiche that thou art sonke—
 With deth preuent / he myght nothyng replique :
 Harry Braddeshaa, of Chestre abbay monke. 24

293

O cruell deth / o theffe vindicatyfe,
 To persons vertuous ennemy mortall,
 Of this good clerke thou hast abbreged the lyfe,
 Preuentyng hym with thy dede stronge fatall. 28
 yet in dispite of thy most venomus gall
 He hath translate this legende profitable
 And left it for holsome memoriall
 To all his sequaces— / a gyft most couenable, 32

294

With polysshed termes / and good sence litterall,
 No place there voyde / but vertue abundeth.

Theffect is manifest : for science ouer all
 Rethorically thy sentence groundeth, 36
 All vices surely it confoundeth.
 Shewyng the legende of this mayde pure,
 Her shenyng lyfe eche-where redoundeth.
 Suche steppes folowyng / we hope in them tendure. 40

An other balade to saynt werburge.

295

With hert contrite accepte my supplicacion,
 Aydyng my fraylete and lyfe vacillaunt,
 Renegate and contumace in all obstinacion,
 Bewrapt with all synne / detestable and recreaunt ; 4
 Vouchsafe to supplie Iesu and geat graunt
 Remyssion to haue of my synnes generall,
 Greuous and thrall / that I may the auant :
 A, gentill Werburge / to thy doctrine me call. 8

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Wherfore thy father / thy mother Ermenilde
 Enclined both to dedes catholique,
 Ruffine and Kenrede / thy bretherne were fulfild
 Both with great grace / through martyrdome both like, 12
 With diuers of thy kynne magnifique
 Redact in the catholique papall :
 Geat me suche grace to voyde all synnes inique
 And gentill Werburge, to thy doctrine me call. 16

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With faithfull clennes / thy soule was sure preserued,
 Euer contynuyng in doctrine celicall,
 Refusyng vanite / from vertue neuer swarued
 But in all grace remaynyng principall ; 20
 Vnto thy deth exhortyng great and small
 Ruled to be / to the preceptes diuine—
 Gouerned by grace / were thy disciples all :
 A, gentill Werburge, call me to suche doctrine. 24

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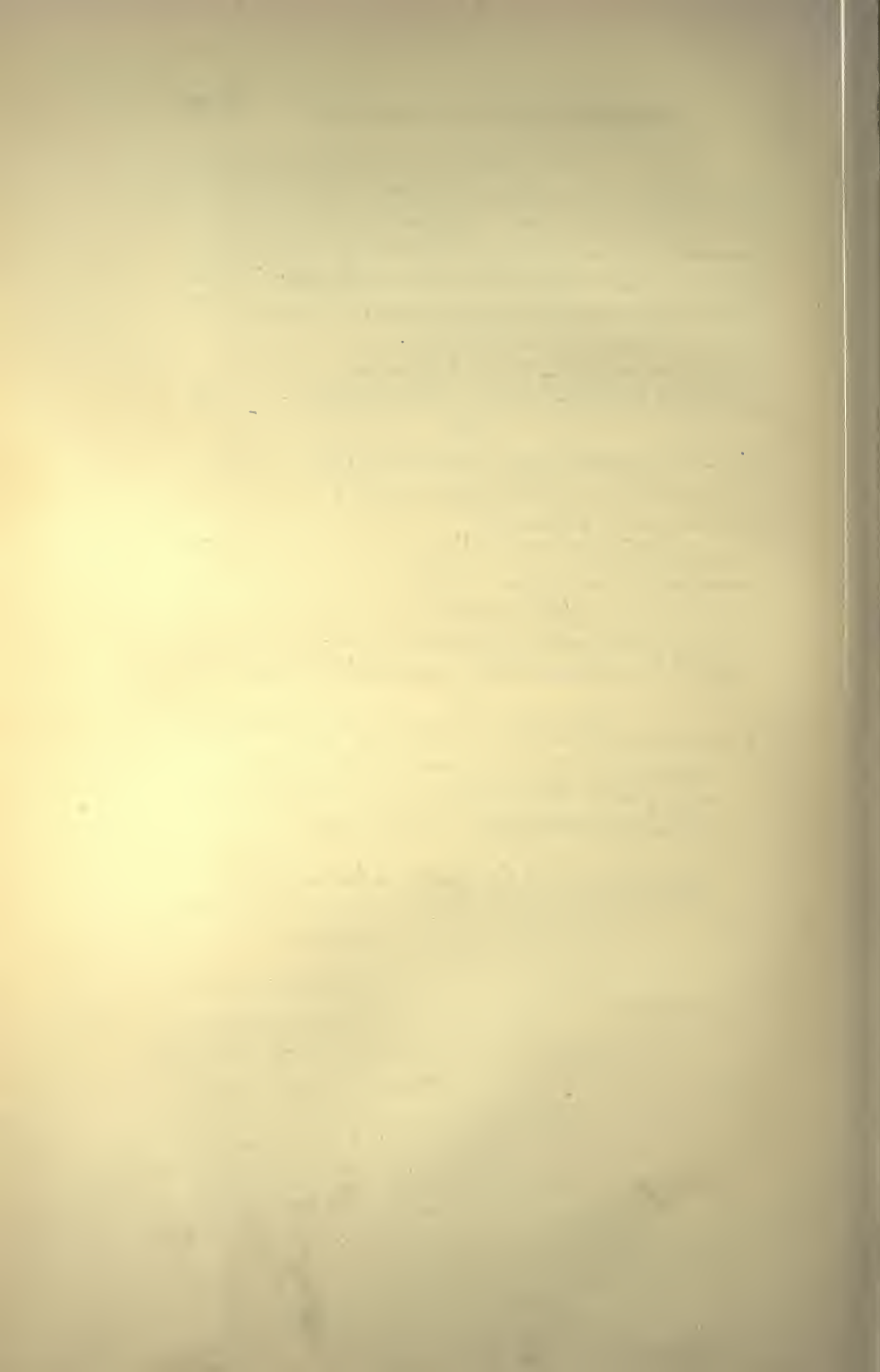
Wordly felicite abiect from my courage ;
 Enuy and pride / with lustes voluptuous,
 Rancorous cupidite myn hert sore do aswage,
 Bryng oyntmentes sanatiue for my sores dolorous ; 28
 Vnclose thy succours / and be beniuolous,
 Redy to be preseruyng me from pyne :
 Gouverne my lyfe from all actes daungerous,
 And gentill Werburge, call me to thy doctrine. 32

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Be nowe beniuolent / whan I shall on the call,
 Vnto thy slaue / as my trust hath ben sure ;
 Leue vnto me for a memoriall
 Knowlege effectuall of thy lyfe pure, 36
 Lyuyng ther-after / and so tendure,
 Euer in purite my lyfe to contynue,
 yeldyng thanks for thy most holsome lure—
 Christ ouer vs holde his hande / al vices teschue. Amen. 40

¶ *And thus endeth the lyfe and historye of saynt Werburge.*
Imprinted by Richarde Pynson / printer to the kynges
noble grace / With priuilege to hym graunted by our
souerayne lorde the kyng. A° M.D. xxi.

(Engraving on the last page, with the printer's monogram.)



GLOSSARIAL AND GENERAL INDEX.

By W. M. WOOD.

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 abbregeed, 201/27, abridged.
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 abundeth, 201/34, aboundeth.
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 Adelhere, a son of Egnicius, 20/334.
 Adda, a holy priest, 24/459.
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 Adla, a South Saxon king, 14/153.
 adowne, 52/1302, down.
 afore, 39/902, before.
 afore nominate, 153/661, before named.
 affynyte, 25/477, affinity.
 agayne, 137/187, against.
 ago, 113/3144, gone.
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 Alfryde, son of king Oswy, 24/456.
 Alfrydus, Mayster, 13/129.
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 Alle, a Mercian king, 14/173.
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- Alured, king, laudation of, 143
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 apere, 106/2918, appear.
 aperynge, 36/816, appearing.
 apoynted, 104/2873, appointed.
 apostoles, 132/33, apostles.
 approchyng, 166/1033, approach, appear against.
 arayment, 68/1780, display.
 archdekens, 90/2439, archdeacons.
 Archythofell, 44/1044, Achitophel.
 arested, 114/3173, arrested, stopped.
 armony, 65/1693, harmony.
 armure, 25/472, armour.
 arrest, 163/950, arrested.
 artillarie, 165/995, artylere, 16/228, artillery.
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 a-sondre, 167/1051, asunder.
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 astate, 55/1399, estate.

- asured, 36/820, assured, satisfied.
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 attempten, *pl.*, 99/2706, attempt.
 attempted, 183/1535, tempted, goaded.
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 auoyde, *v.*, 115/3191, make void.
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 ayre, 10/23, air.
 Bangour = Bangor monastery, 147/492.
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 barowne, 59/1510, baron.
 barrayn, 158/806, barren.
 barst, 184/1575, burst.
 batell, 147/478, 174/1266;
 batayle, 16/227, battle.
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 Beccy, a holy priest, 24/459.
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 bedes, 34/752, beads.
 bedyll, 43/1023, 183/1530, beadle, sergeant, servant.
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 beestiz, 145/415, beasts.
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 ben, *pl.*, 10/25, 109/3003, be.
 benedyccyon, 52/1307, benediction.
 beneson, 90/2425, benison.
 Benettes (St.) rule, 74/1974.
 beniuolence, 190/1735, benevolence.
 beniuolons, 203/29, benevolent.
 benynge, 71/1858, benign.
 benyuolent, 54/1345, benevolent.
 Beorswyde, the queen of king Hereryc, 19/310.
 bere, 113/3142, beer.
 Berta, the wife of king Ethelbryct, 22/381.
 besyly, 51/1269, busily.
 besynes, 10/45, business.
 beseke, 181/1460, beseech.
 besekyng, 198/1981, beseeching.
 besely, 9/20, busily.
 beten, 61/1579, beaten.
 bewrapt, 202/4, clothed.
 Bishoprics established in England, 27/544.
 bitwene, 15/202, between.
 blake, 60/1539, black.
 blasynge, 135/122, blazing.
 blod, 195/1899, blood.
 bloody, 135/124, bloody.
 blynde, 103/2838, blind.
 bokes hystoryall, 15/184, books of history, historical books.
 bonde, *v.*, 41/957, bound.
 bondes, boundes, 15/183, boundaries.
 borde-lorde, 63/1618, lords of the feast, seated at the high table.
 bordes, 64/1678, tables.
 borowes, 152/623, boroughs.
 both-tow, 21/378, both too = also.
 bowes, 44/1066, boughs.
 boystous, 131/6, boisterous, ignorant.
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 braulyng, 10/51, brawling.
 brenned, 39/893, burned.

- brent, 187/1636, burnt.
 brere, 33/724, briar.
 brethur, 86/2328, brethren.
 breue, 132/40, brief.
 breuely, 11/83, shortly.
 brothered, 64/1659, embroid-
 ered.
 browdred, 63/1617, embroid-
 ered.
 brutes, 148/510, Britons.
 Brystowe, 15/191, Bristol.
 Brytons, 13/139, Britons.
 brybry, 98/2677, bribery.
 bulles, 90/2424, bulls, Papal
 ordinances.
 Burdredus, king of Mercia,
 cousin of St. Wurburgh, e-
 expelled from Britain,
 138/218.
 burges, 188/1668, burgesses.
 burghes royall, 15/205, royal
 boroughs.
 buryenge, 18/287, burial.
 buxum, 10/25, buxom.
 byforne, 42/1009, before.
 byleue, 45/1088, belief.
 byleuys, *v.*, 46/1113, believes.
 byloued, 54/1360, beloved.
 byn, 125/3491, been.
 bysshop-sees, 27/544, bishop-
 rics.
 byssop, 47/1138, bishop.
 bytter, 106/2919, bitter.
 bytwyx, 19/318, betwixt, be-
 tween.

 caduce, 112/3099, 115/3176,
 caducous, falling early or by
 chance.
 Caerleil, 144/385, Carlisle, the
 city of, founded by king Leil.
 Caerlleon, the ancient name of
 Chester, 144/374.
 canaby, 142/335, canopy.
 captens, 166/1025, captains,
 officers.
 carbonele, 197/1947, carbuncle.
 catall, 165/992, cattle.
 cause, 170/1153, because.
 caytyfe, 41/958, caitiff.
 Cead (Ced, 24/459, Cedda,
 27/555), St. = St. Chad, in-
 structs Vulfade and Ruffyn
 in the Christian faith, 44 *et*
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et seq.
 celicall, 202/18, heavenly, ce-
 lestial.
 cemeterie, 147/467, cemetery.
 censours, 140/278, censures,
 177/1342, censers.
 Cerdicus, first king of the West
 Saxons, 14/156.
 cesse, 186/1625, cease.
 cessed, 49/1215, ceased, stopped.
 chales, 177/1342, chalices.
 chamfully, 138/208, shame-
 fully.
 chanons, 53/1327, canons.
 Charles = Charlemagne of
 France, 148/521.
 chartre, 174/1271, charter,
 agreement.
 chastyce, *v.*, 10/41, chastise.
 chekemate, 58/1470, check-
 mate.
 chere, 178/1391, countenance.
 Chesshyr, 15/202, Cheshire.
 chest, 121/3369, coffin.
 Chester, the reception of the
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 141 *et seq.*; the foundation
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 154; also from innumerable
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 chyrcches, 28/563, churches.
 cimiterie, 177/1351, cemetery.
 citezens, 2/25, citizens.
 "City of legions," two places
 so named, 143/365.
 ciuile, 132/29, civil (law).
 clene, 47/1141, clean.
 clenness, 69/1812, 104/2852,
 cleanness.
 clerke, 12/108, scholar.
 clerely, 93/2539, clearly.
 clothes, 63/1617, tapestry.
 clypped, 37/857, called, elected.
 Cochede [? Coelrede], a son of
 king Ethelrede, 18/286.

- Colbrond the giant, 169/1118.
 collage-chyrche, 86/2321, collegiate church, cathedral.
 comen, 40/947, come.
 comly, 145/405, comely.
 commonte, 141/292, commons, commonalty.
 communed, 46/1131, received the holy communion.
 comon, v., 141/296, come.
 compasyng, 68/1774, endeavouring.
 complayne, 96/2626, complaint.
 complecyon, 48/1186, complexion.
 complecyons, 11/57, appearances.
 comunes, 90/2441, commons (the people).
 comunete, 16/226, community, commonalty.
 comynly, 10/37, commonly.
 concauyte, 102/2810, hollow of a tree.
 concordance, 65/1692, concord, harmony, melody.
 confort, 20/350, comfort.
 coniectour, 62/1599, conjecture.
 consecrate, 92/2498, consecrated.
 conserue, 91/2482, preserve.
 constauce, 35/794, constancy.
 contracte, 25/478, 84/2253, contracted.
 contumace, 202/3, contumaciousness.
 contynu, 17/256, continue.
 conuenient, 78/2093, proper.
 conyng, 131/7, knowledge.
 cooles, 125/3494, coals, fires.
 coopes, 140/277, copes, clerical raiment.
 correspondent, 196/1942, corresponding.
 cornes, 96/2627, grain.
 coronall, 60/1534, coronet, crown.
 coronate, 56/1419, crowned.
 corporace, 149/551, linen cloth to cover consecrated bread.
 correcke, 12/108, correct.
 correcked, 52/1312, corrected.
 corrupt, 138/208, corrupted.
 cost, 175/1278, coast, side.
 cosyn, 138/223, cousin.
 cosyns, 164/958, relatives.
 cotidian, 139/253, cotydyane, 81/2162, quotidian, daily.
 couenable, 201/32, convenient.
 couent, 59/1514, convent.
 couerture, 122/3381, cover, the clothing of a corpse.
 counceyled, 49/1207, concealed, contrived, misconstrued.
 counnyng, 151/605, cunning, learned.
 countray, 140/272, country.
 countred, 16/236, encountered.
 cours, v., 16/217, hunt.
 course of kynde, 97/2635, the custom of nature.
 create, 10/29, creat, 182/1488, created.
 cruciat, 160/864, tormented.
 cruceyate, 100/2735, excruciating.
 crudelite, 124/3466, 189/1702, cruelty.
 Cryda, the first king of Mercia, 14/170.
 Crysten, 21/376, Christian.
 cubycle, 9/5, place for lying down in, bedroom.
 cupborde, 64/1669, sideboard holding the plate. [Not the modern cupboard.]
 cure, 2/19, labour, work; 66/1726, health.
 cures, 57/1453, charges.
 curteys, 71/1859, courteous.
 cyrcumfulsed, 77/2038, circumfulgent, shining.
 cytee, 53/1343, city.
 debate, 175/1295, disputation.
 debylyte, 111/3070, debility.
 decease, 169/1108, decease, death.
 deceuable, 53/1341, deceitful.
 declyne, 2/15, incline, cast down.
 decorate, 76/2009, decorated.
 decoure, 142/337, decorum.
 dedes, 191/1783, title deeds relating to lands.
 dedycate, 102/2814, dedicated.

- Dee, the river, 15/188 ; miracle of its drying up, 181.
 defe, 103/2838 ; deffe, 189/1716, deaf.
 degest, 51/1264, disperse.
 Deiram, Hererye, the king of, 19/309.
 deken, 83/2221, deacon.
 delated, 146/445, increased.
 Delbora, 36/802, Deborah.
 delyce, 113/3124, delight.
 delyted, 33/729, delighted.
 demerytes, 38/872, faults, sins.
 denayed, 24/465, denied.
 depaired, 122/3384, impaired.
 depaynted, 61/1577, pictured.
 depely, 105/2881, deeply, carefully.
 derke, 200/10, dark.
 derlynge, 41/967, darling, loved one.
 derogate, *v.*, 115/3119, make void, overturn.
 derogacion, 166/1033, disparagement.
 descriuyng, 132/41, describing.
 descryben, *v. pl.*, 15/203, describe.
 despyce, 48/1177, despise.
 desse, 63/1625, dais.
 destrucyon, 96/2620, destruction.
 desydery, 59/1498, desideration ; 105/2899, desire, request.
 dethe, 39/916, death.
 deuyne, 72/1902, divine.
 dight, 140/277, dressed.
 digne, 200, last line but one, worthy.
 dilated, 162/906, spread abroad.
 dilect, 1/11, loved.
 dirige, 117/3234, mournful dirge.
 discens, 132/41, discence, 150/570, descent.
 disceyte, 136/167, deceit.
 distract, 117/3261, distracted.
 distrye, 154/694, destroy.
 doctours, 132/33, doctors, but here the four Evangelists are meant.
 does, 100/2725, dost.
 dolours, 50/1237, troubles, pains, misery.
 dombe, 103/2837, dumb.
 Domneue [? Domueue], wife of Merwald, 24/448.
 done, *pl.*, 44/1059, 69/1801, do.
 dongions, 144/381, dungeons.
 doutles, 193/1848, doubtless.
 douue, 45/1094, dove, pigeon.
 dredde, 107/2942, dreaded.
 dropes, 135/124, drops.
 drowed, 194/1856, read drowned.
 due, 50/1240, diligent, circumspect.
 Dunstan, St., 170/1136.
 Duyna, a holy priest, 24/460.
 dyaper, 64/1667, diaper.
 dyfferre, 35/788, defer.
 dygne, 107/2953, worthy.
 dylated, 17/242, 23/433, spread out.
 dyscrecyon, 83/2243, discretion.
 dyscryue, 20/347, describe.
 dyscus, 32/691, discuss.
 dyspent, 93/2542, spent.
 dysshe, 94/2558, dish.
 dystylled, 56/1425, ran down.
 dytche Offa, 17/251, Offa's ditch between England and Wales.
 dyuised, 141/293, devised.
 dyuydent, 15/199, a divider (said of the Mersey as separating the kingdoms of Mercia and Northumberland) ; see also 17/249.
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 echeone, 63/1634, echone, 181/1471, each one.
 eche-where, 202/39, everywhere.
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- Edwyn, king of Northumberland, 19/303.
- edyfy, *v.*, 28/563, build.
- ee, 181/1466, eye.
- Eest-Englande, the fifth Saxon realm, 14/166.
- Efleda, the duchess, one of the founders of Chester minster, 150/583.
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- Egbryct, son of king Ercombert, 22/409.
- Egwyn, bishop, 89/2402.
- eies, 184/1551, eyes.
- electe, 154/690, elected.
- elected to, 30/639, chose for.
- Eleutherius, the Pope, 145/424.
- eleuat, 121/3369, eleuate, 51/1280, elevated, raised up.
- Elfleda, wife of Peada, 25/497.
- Ella, a South Saxon king, 14/153.
- embost, 62/1604, embossed, depicted.
- Emma, wife of king Eadbalde, 22/388.
- empaired, 155/715, damaged.
- empeiryng, 186/1629, impairing.
- enbawmed, 200, last line, embalmed.
- enbrodred, 64/1647, embroidered.
- encense, 140/278, incense.
- encresed, 88/2378, increased.
- endurate, 154/691, endowed, filled with; 183/1527, enraged.
- Engystus, Duke, rules in Kent, 14/150.
- enherytour, 88/2376, inheritor.
- enherytryce, 118/3282, inheritrix.
- enjoyed, 53/1333, found favour with; 145/426, filled with joy.
- enormentes, 149/549, 151/613, ornaments.
- enowned, 123/3431, ? put in an urn, *or* environed, surrounded, *or* adorned.
- enquest, 194/1860, inquiry.
- enquyred, 80/2138, required.
- ensample, 12/111, example.
- enspyred, 29/599, inspired.
- ensued, 140/285, followed.
- Enswyde, St., son of king Eadbalde.
- enterprised, 135/135, entered, overran, endeavoured to make prize of.
- entree, 102/2805, entry, entrance.
- entysement, 43/1035, enticement.
- enuired, 134/98, environed, surrounded.
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- equypolent, 18/291, having power.
- equyualent, 36/803, equivalent.
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- Erkengode, daughter of king Ercombert, 23/413.
- erle, 40/948, earl.
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- Ermenberge, St., daughter of prince Ermenred, 22/395.
- Ermenburge, St., daughter of prince Ermenred, 22/396.
- Ermengyde, St., daughter of prince Ermenred, 22/398.
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- escuage, 191/1773, scutage, holding by knight service.
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- est, 151/609, east.
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- eterne, 54/1356, eternal.
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- Etheistan, king of England, 169/1109.
- euangely, 104/2854, gospel.
- euery-chone, 24/450, every one.
- euidens, 193/1852, evidence.
- euidentes, 191/1775, indentures.
- Eustach, St., 45/1097.
- exaccyons, 74/1965, exactions, taxes, imposts.
- exchewe, 133/54, eschew.
- exemples, 94/2563, examples.
- exortacyon, 33/730, 51/1280, exhortation.
- expedycyon, 90/2423, despatched.
- expresse, 13/142, 22/410, exactly.
- expulce, 108/2987, expel.
- expulsed, 10/33, expelled, banished.
- exquised, 201/3, exquisite.
- extincted, 187/1666, made extinct, put out, extinguished.
- e-wis = wwis, Iwis, 151/599, I know.
- eytherothur, 170/1131, one the other.
- facundious, 199/2021, full of words.
- falled, *v.*, 52/1302, fell, did fall.
- foyrenes, 76/2014, fairness.
- foythtes, 63/1638, facts.
- fealtie, 191/1772, the oath of loyalty.
- felawes, 98/2680, fellows, companions.
- feldes, 96/2621, fields.
- feliship, 184/1576, fellowship.
- femynyne, 76/2021, woman.
- femynyte, 63/1633, women, womanhood.
- fere, *v.*, 50/1232, fear.
- ferefull, 10/48, afraid.
- ferre, 45/1082, far.
- feruent, 185/1604, fiercely.
- fettred, 164/956, fettered.
- fire, 135/120, fiery.
- fiers, 125/3494, fires.
- Finanus, bishop, 26/521.
- fisnomy, 122/3393, face.
- flammynge, 62/1602, flaming.
- fleynge, 135/120, flying.
- floure, 104/2851, flower.
- floure, 54/1363, chief, most eminent.
- flouryng, 17/243, 20/327, flourishing.
- foo, 42/962, foe, enemy.
- foldes, 97/2643, folds for sheep, etc.
- folowen, *pl.*, 96/2611, follow.
- folysshenes, 12/92, foolishness.
- fonde, 10/25, found.
- forsayd, 175/1297, aforesaid.
- forthermore, 27/547, furthermore.
- fortuned, 44/1055, happened.
- fragyll, 71/1875, frail.
- fragylte, 71/1857, frailness.
- franches, 175/1284, franchises.
- franke almoigne, 191/1772, holding land by praying for the souls of the dead.
- fraunches, 74/1962, franchises.
- fraylete, 202/2, frailty.
- fredoms, 191/1783, liberties, rights, free from taxes.
- fridome, 194/1867, freedom.
- fro, 9/5, from.

- fruycion, 120/3334, fruycyon, 10/32, fruition.
 fruteles, 158/806, fruitless, barren.
 fully, 39/903, complete, full.
 fullsore, 51/1255, full sore, sorrowfully.
 fundacyon, 86/2327, foundation.
 funde, 122/3383, found.
 furth, 166/1031, forth.
 fysnamy, 101/2765, face.
 fyry, 38/887, fiery, fierce.
 fysshe, 145/417, fish.
- galwedy, 157/761, Galway-scot, 166/1034, the people of Ireland.
 garde, 181/1478, guard.
 gate, 18/290, begot.
 Gauer, 144/380, Gower.
 gauntes, 96/2620, gannets (wild ducks).
 Geaf, 21/361, Saxon for *Shem*.
 geanalogy, 17/, line 1 of chapter heading, genealogy.
 geat, 202/5, 202/15, get.
 gebbet, 164/956, gibbet.
 gentyls, 59/1511, gentlefolk.
 gestis, 199/2011, jests, merry tales.
 ghestes, 65/1680, guests.
 ghostly, 32/692, 45/1088, 46/1124, holy, spiritual.
 ghostly scyence, 34/766, holy knowledge.
 gladde, 133/70, gladden, make glad.
 gladle, 52/1294, gladly.
 gladynge, 65/1697, making glad.
 glotony, 2/32, gluttony.
 goddes, 39/890, goddess.
 Goet, 166/1034, Goth.
 gostle, 151/594, spiritual, holy.
 Gotes, 137/174, Goths.
 grand-seriant, 191/1771, holding land by great service.
 gratius, 145/425, gracious.
 grauntes, 191/1775, grants, leases.
 grauntfather, 18/277, grand-father.
- grauyte, 29/609, gravity.
 Gregorye, St., 18/269.
 gretynge, 59/1516, greeting.
 greuance, 39/910, greuans, 137/186, offence.
 greued, 68/1777, grieved.
 greuous, 13/140, grievous.
 Griffinus, king of the Welshmen, his attempt on the city of Chester frustrated by St. Werburge, 154.
 Guy, Earl of Warwick, 169/1117.
 gyaunt, 169/1118, giant.
 gyde, 112/3090, 184/1572, guide.
 gyltles, 163/952, guiltless, innocent.
 Gyarde, 13/130, the chronicler.
 gyrdell, 52/1301, girdle.
- habundaunce, 64/1676, abundance.
 hace, 81/2180, has.
 hallynge, 63/1627, tapestry.
 halowyng, 126/3514, sacredness.
 Hambury = Hanbury, the monastery where St. Werburge ordered her body to be buried, 105/2893.
 harde, 145/425, heard.
 harneys, 16/230, war equipments.
 Harolde, king, the perjury of, 174/1251.
 harte, 44/1056, stag.
 hast, 58/1492, haste.
 hastely, 104/2865, quickly.
 hauke, v., 167/1044, hawk, hunt.
 heed, 33/727, 100/2732, head.
 heedes, 166/1019, heads.
 heele, v., 167/1062, heal.
 helthe eternal, 45/1085, spiritual health.
 Hely, 45/1095, Elisha.
 Hengyst, Duke, comes into Mercia, 13/137.
 her, 35/792, v., hear.
 herde, 140/268, heard.
 Hereryc, son of king Eadfride, 19/309.

- Hereswith, wife of St. Anna, 20/338.
- Herforde, 16/210, Hereford.
- hertfully, 39/411, heartily.
- herynge, 49/1213, hearing, 76/2026.
- Heryswith, St., wife of king Hereryc, 19/314.
- heuen, 51/1273, heaven.
- heuen-blysse, 58/1482, the bliss of heaven.
- heuynes, 51/1256, heaviness.
- heyre, 55/1384, heir.
- hidous, 155/721, hideous, horrible.
- hie, 125/3492, high.
- historiall, 132/38, history, historical.
- hole, 58/1472, whole.
- holly, 161/872, 168/1093, wholly.
- holsome, 145/418, wholesome.
- Holy llaude, 135/137, Holy Island, near the coast of Northumberland, destroyed by the Danes.
- homage, 191/1771.
- homocyde, 50/1245, homicide.
- Hoo, in Kent, the miraculous oak-tree at, 102/2789.
- Hoole heth, 157/764, a place near Chester.
- hoost, 135/136, host, number, multitude.
- Humbre, 15/195, the river Humber.
- husbandes, 165/996, husbandmen, farmers.
- husolde, 165/998, household.
- hyduous, 100/2735, hideous.
- hye, 12/85, 40/931, high, mighty.
- Hylde, St., daughter of king Hereryc, 19/311, 25/491.
- hystoryall, 18/266, historical.
- hyght, 19/314, called.
- Iaphet, 21/362, Japhet.
- iche, 109/3023, each.
- Ida, a Mercian king, 14/173.
- ierarchyses, 63/1629, ierarchesses, 112/3111, hierarchies, the threefold order of priesthood.
- Ierumann, Bishop, 26/522.
- llande Vecta, 27/534, the Isle of Wight.
- illumynate, 70/1847, illuminated.
- imytacyon, 30/618, imitation.
- incertayne, 105/2902, in certain, certainly.
- incontynente, 100/2732, forthwith.
- indurate, 195/1893, hardened, obdurate.
- infortune, 185/1603, mischance, misfortune.
- inhabyte, 53/1327, in residence.
- inique, 202/15, iniquitous.
- innocentes, 83/2231, children; 134/1004, infants.
- inprysoned, 62/1599, imprisoned.
- inspeciall, 123/3432, in special, specially.
- instaunt, 82/2213, pertinacious.
- instructe, 78/2073, instructed.
- insultacyon, 83/2245, insult.
- interiously, 175/1298, internally, earnestly.
- interyor, 39/891, internal.
- ioynned, 158/804, joined.
- ioynt, 72/1900, jointure, marriage portion.
- Isrehelytes, 62/1612, Israelites.
- Iudith, a barren woman, relieved by St. Werburge, 158.
- Iurwyne, St., daughter of St. Anna, 20/342.
- Keneburge, St., daughter of king Penda, 18/282, 24/457.
- Kenred, king, brother of St. Werburge, life of, 88 *et seq.*
- Kenrede, St., 19/300.
- Keneswyde, St., a daughter of king Penda, 18/282.
- Kenuherus, a son of Redwalde, 20/328.
- Kenwalcus, the Westsaxon king conquered by Vulfer, 27/532.
- Kent, the first realm of Saxons in, 14/148.

- knownen, 16/234, known.
 knowes, 41/953, knowest.
 knowlege, 108/2977, acknowledge.
 Kyneswith, the queen of king Penda, 18/278.
 kynred, 13/125, kindred.
- lad, 43/1015, lout, ungainly fellow.
 Lancashyr, 15/202, Lancashire.
 lanturne, 113/3141, lantern.
 lande of promysyon, 62/1612, Land of Promise.
 lascyuyte, 73/1923, lasciviousness.
 layth, 135/121, lightning.
 leed, 25/487, laid (*i.e.* buried).
 lefe, 62/1603, leaf.
 legiance, 171/1175, allegiance.
 Leil, a British king, the founder of Chester and Carlisle, 144/383.
 lent, 41/970. It means that "the most mighty king that ever was born" (*i.e.* the Saviour) was only *lent* to the world.
 Lenton, 78/2083, Lent.
 Leofric, Earl of Chester, 172/1213, re-edifies the minster of Chester, 173/1230.
 lepre, 166/1023, leperous.
 lernyng, 199/2016, learning.
 letanie, 187/1651, litany.
 letten, *pl.*, 176/1313, let.
 lettynge, 180/1428, stopping, hindering.
 leue, *v.*, 37/852, 84/2266, believe.
 leues, *v.*, 107/2944, leaves.
 leues, *n.*, 44/1066, leaves (of trees).
 lile, 122/3390, lily.
 liniall, 132/41, lineal.
 Leon, 144/380, Llewellyn.
 lolynesse, 36/804, 78/2074, lowliness, humility.
 lorshyppes, 15/183, lordships.
 Lothary, son of king Ercombert, 22/409.
 louers, 50/1252, friends, kinsmen.
- Lucius, a British king, causes the realm to be baptized, 145/422.
 Lupus, Earl of Chester, 174-175.
 lycence, 79/2108, leave.
 lycens, 14/146, licence.
 lyen, *v. pl.*, 18/284, lie.
 lygnage, 21/354, lineage.
 lygne, 21/362, line, lineage.
 lyght, 93/2541, little.
 lyght, *v.*, 83/2226, lighted.
 lyghtned, 145/433, enlightened.
 lynon, 93/2540, linen.
 lynyall, 18/277, lineal.
 lysence, 54/1369, licence, leave.
 lytell, 12/106, 70/1845, little, small.
 lytterature, 131/4, literature, letters.
 lyue, 43/1022, life.
- ma dame, 168/1080, madam, my lady.
 maculate, *v.*, 102/2791, stain, defile; 122/3396, stained, defiled.
 maende, *v.*, 194/1880, mend.
 magnifien, 188/1684, magnify.
 magnifique, 202/13, magnificent.
 maners, 176/1321, manors.
 manfull, 42/996, 145/412, manly.
 manheed, 28/569, manhood.
 mansyone, 97/2646, mansion.
 Marceyl, St., a son of king Penda, 18/280.
 margaryte, 23/417, pearl.
 Marius, a British king, amplifies the city of Chester, 144/393.
 marriage feast of St. Werburge, description of the solemnities at the, 60-66.
 Marwalde, St., a son of king Penda, 18/280.
 maryed, 67/1759, married.
 Matilda, Countess of Chester, 182-185.
 Maucolyn = Malcolm of Scotland, attempts to capture Chester, 157.

- may, 33/720, maid.
 maydyn, 34/764, maiden.
 maynteynge, 175/1288, main-
 taining.
 maystres, 86/2317, maystresse,
 13/133, mistress.
 mede, 20/339, happiness ;
 89/2418, merit.
 mediatrice, 119/3320, media-
 tress.
 medicyns, 160/853, medicines.
 medled, 114/3148, oppressed.
 meetes, 64/1672, meats.
 melody, 51/1264, music, mirth.
 memoratyue, 45/1097, memor-
 able.
 memorous, 14/159, memor-
 able
 memoryall, 104/2858, memory,
 mind.
 mendes, 51/1267, amends.
 Mercia takes its name from the
 river Mersey, 15/197.
 mercyable, 94/2554, merciful.
 Mercyens = Mercians, descrip-
 tion of the realm of the,
 13-17.
 Mereum [? Mereuin], a son of
 St. Merwalde, 18/292.
 Mersee, 15/196, the river
 Mersey.
 Merslande = Mercia, the sixth
 Saxon realm, 14/169.
 meruailous, 164/975, marvel-
 lous.
 meruayle, 42/989, merueyll,
 33/722, marvel.
 mesprison, 194/1854, mispri-
 son.
 metigate, 184/1554, mitigate.
 minishe, 198/1983, take from.
 Miracles of St. Werburge,
 153-169.
 moeyon, 55/1379, intention ;
 56/1430, proposition.
 moder, 75/1983, mother.
 moened, 38/889, moved.
 moines, 126/3519 ; moynes,
 23/413, 61/1581 ; moimiall,
 141/319 ; monyall, 12/98,
 82/2187, nun.
 mone, 9/16, moon.
 monestycall, 74/1973, monastic.
 montaynes, 154/686, moun-
 tains.
 monye, 64/1677, money.
 moost, 108/2968, most.
 more Britayne, 146/443, greater
 Britain.
 most, 9/13, greatest.
 mouter-churche, 146/464, mo-
 ther-church.
 mundayne, 1/6, worldly.
 musture, 16/227, mustering to-
 gether for warlike purposes.
 musyke, 62/1589, music.
 mutabylyte, 11/65, changeable-
 ness.
 mutacion, 182/1509, imitation.
 mycle, 141/297, much.
 myddyll, 24/449, middle.
 mydleton, 185/1600, the middle
 of Lent.
 myghty, 64/1671, strong.
 Mylburge, St., a daughter of
 St. Merwalde, 18/290.
 Myldred, St., a daughter of St.
 Merwalde, 18/290.
 Mylgyde, St., a daughter of
 St. Merwalde, 18/291.
 mynded, 28/575, made up his
 mind to.
 mynstre, 134/91, minster
 (church).
 mynystred, 89/2393, adminis-
 tered.
 myrthes angelycall, 112/3115.
 angelical mirth.
 myschefe, 50/1234, treachery,
 wickedness.
 mysere, 168/1084, misery.
 myssyue, 58/1493, missive, fit
 for sending.
 nat, 1/13, not.
 natyuyte, 106/2932, nativity.
 ne, 1/7, nor.
 nece, 182/1491, niece.
 neclygent, 83/2235, 131/3,
 negligent.
 Noe, 21/359, 45/1093, Noah.
 nomynate, 26/517, named.
 nomynyon, 15/179, remem-
 brance.
 nonnes, 138/203, nuns.

- Northumberlande, the seventh Saxon realm, 14/173.
- Norwaies, 135/135, Norwegians.
- nother, 116/3226, neither.
- notycyon, 80/2230, notice.
- nouyce, 61/1582, novice.
- ny, 28/565, nigh.
- nyen, 86/2318, nine.
- oak-tree, miracle of the, 102/2802.
- obsequyes funerall, 78/2091, funeral obsequies.
- obseruen, 10/24, observe.
- obstinacion, 202/3, obstinacy.
- odible, 135/124, odious, horrible.
- Offa, king of Mercia, 17/244.
- Offa, the first Saxon king of all England, 148.
- oke, 102/2803, oak.
- omytte, 133/66, omit.
- ones, 49/1216, once.
- oppugnant, 194/1868, repugnant, opposed.
- optayned, 15/206, obtained.
- or, 163/936, before.
- oraysons, 94/2553, orisons.
- ordinaunce, 157/765, war material.
- ordynans, 131/10, ordinance, guidance.
- ore, 171/1184, oar.
- orels, 41/956, 42/1011, 143/368, 192/1813, or else.
- organicall, 1/1, melodious.
- Ormenil = Ermenhilde, 195/1900.
- Osfryste, a son of king Edwyn, 19/308.
- Oslana, wife of prince Ermenred, 22/391.
- pacyens, 60/1533, patience.
- parage, 70/1848, quality, high parentage, blue blood.
- paraenture, 194/1874, peradventure.
- parentage, 72/1890, parents.
- paresshe, 152/629, parish.
- paresshen, 185/1601, parishioners.
- partye, 39/900, part.
- Passyonary, the, a book in Chester monastery, 32/694.
- paynt, 10/52, gloze over, flatter.
- paynyns, 137/188, pagans.
- Peada [? Penda], a son of king Penda, 18/279.
- Penda, King of Mercia, son of Wybba, 18/274; grandfather of St. Werburge, 18/277; a description of his acts and chivalry, 23-25.
- pensyuenesse, 56/1423, pensiveness, sadness.
- perceuers, 109/3009, perseveres.
- peres, 28/570, peers.
- perfitte, 2/36, perfect.
- persed, 38/886, pierced.
- peryllous, 53/1341, perilous, dangerous.
- Peter's pence first sent to Rome by king Offa, 17/258.
- Peterborowe = Peterborough Abbey, 18/284; the foundation of, 53.
- petit-seriant, 191/1774, holding land by petty service.
- petygre, 13/124, pedigree.
- peyne, 62/1585, 95/2602, 160/864, pain, trouble.
- peynes infernall, 195/1904, the pains of hell.
- Pharoo, 62/1606, Pharaoh.
- phisike, 160/853, physic.
- pight, 174/1244, pitched, fought.
- pillage, 191/1782, taxation.
- pitiousle, 136/165, piteously.
- pitously, 139/232, piteously, grievously.
- plage, 62/1604, 124/3466, plague.
- playnes, 36/829, plainness.
- plonget, 38/888, plunged.
- pollers, 89/2401, tax-gatherers.
- pollute, 125/3473, polluted.
- pollynge, 136/159, excessive, unjust, taxation.
- polyce, 17/242, policy.
- Polycronycon, 13/130, the Polychronicon.
- pontificalibus, 123/3424, pontifical, clerical robes.
- poreyon, 62/1614, portion.

- porte, 38/884, part.
 postron, 177/1350, posturne,
 171/1179, gate.
 power imperyall, 15/186, im-
 perial power.
 praye, 155/724, prey.
 prayes, 120/3350, praise.
 prehemynens, 13/123, pre-
 eminence.
 preiudyse, 42/999, prejudice.
 prenominate, 136/141, before-
 named.
 preordinat, 140/264, pre-
 ordained.
 preparat, 9/5, preparete,
 64/1673, 111/3073, prepared.
 prepotent, 21/355, 76/2046,
 very potent, most potent.
 presens, 197/1950, presence.
 prestis, 125/3492, priests.
 preuayled, 137/188, prevailed,
 got the better of.
 primatyue, 149/541, earliest.
 princes put to flight by St.
 Werburge's miracles, 101,
 102.
 priue, 171/1179, privy, secret.
 probate, 46/1114, on proba-
 tion.
 professed, 54/1372, make public
 profession.
 profettes, 74/1964, profits.
 prolongynge, 38/882, delaying,
 putting off.
 promoters, 89/2401, informers.
 promysyon, *n.*, 62/1612, pro-
 mise.
 promyt, 171/1177, promised.
 promyttynge, 158/798, pro-
 mising.
 prone, 62/1609, inclined.
 propre, 159/827, proper, own.
 propurtes, 16/223, propriytes,
 17/239, properties.
 protectryce, 12/101, protectress.
 prymate, 9/21, head, maker,
 God.
 pryme, 44/1054, early morning
 time.
 prynces, *pl.*, 53/1318, princes
 (*i.e.* the martyrs Wulfade and
 Ruffyn).
 prynces, 12/97, princess.
 pryores, 76/2035, priories.
 pryue, 65/1684, private, privy.
 psalmodise, 152/620, sing
 psalms.
 pudicall, 138/224, bashful,
 modest.
 punicion, 139/236, punishment.
 punysment, 79/2104, punish-
 ment.
 puredy, 200/9, made pure.
 purpull, 90/2445, purple.
 purtrayed, 62/1588, portrayed.
 purtrayture, 62/1597, portrai-
 ture.
 putryfy, 107/2945, putrefy.
 purueaunce, 72/1902, provi-
 dence.
 pyctures, 61/1577, pictures.
 pyght, 157/764, pitched.
 pyler, 196/1931, pillar.
 pyne, 203/30, pain, trouble.
 pynned, 96/2632, impounded.
 Quadriburge, daughter of king
 Cryda, 18/273.
 Quadryburge, wife of king
 Edwyn, 19/304.
 quere, 112/3113, choir, quire.
 Ranulphus, a gibe at, for giving
 a Roman origin instead of a
 British, to the city of Chester,
 144/386.
 raunson, 108/2976, ransom.
 raynynge, 22/411, reigning.
 realte, 145/404, royalty.
 recidiuacion, 146/453, back-
 sliding.
 reconforte, 44/1061, recomfort,
 refresh.
 reconsylde, 82/2217, reconciled.
 redact, 202/14, set up, en-
 shrined.
 rede, 177/1343, read.
 redde, *v.*, 83/2221, read.
 redemptour, 108/2967, re-
 deemer.
 reders, 95/2591, readers.
 redolent, 69/1815, 199/2018,
 sweet-smelling.
 reduce, 146/438, subject, con-
 vert.
 redy, 104/2859, ready.

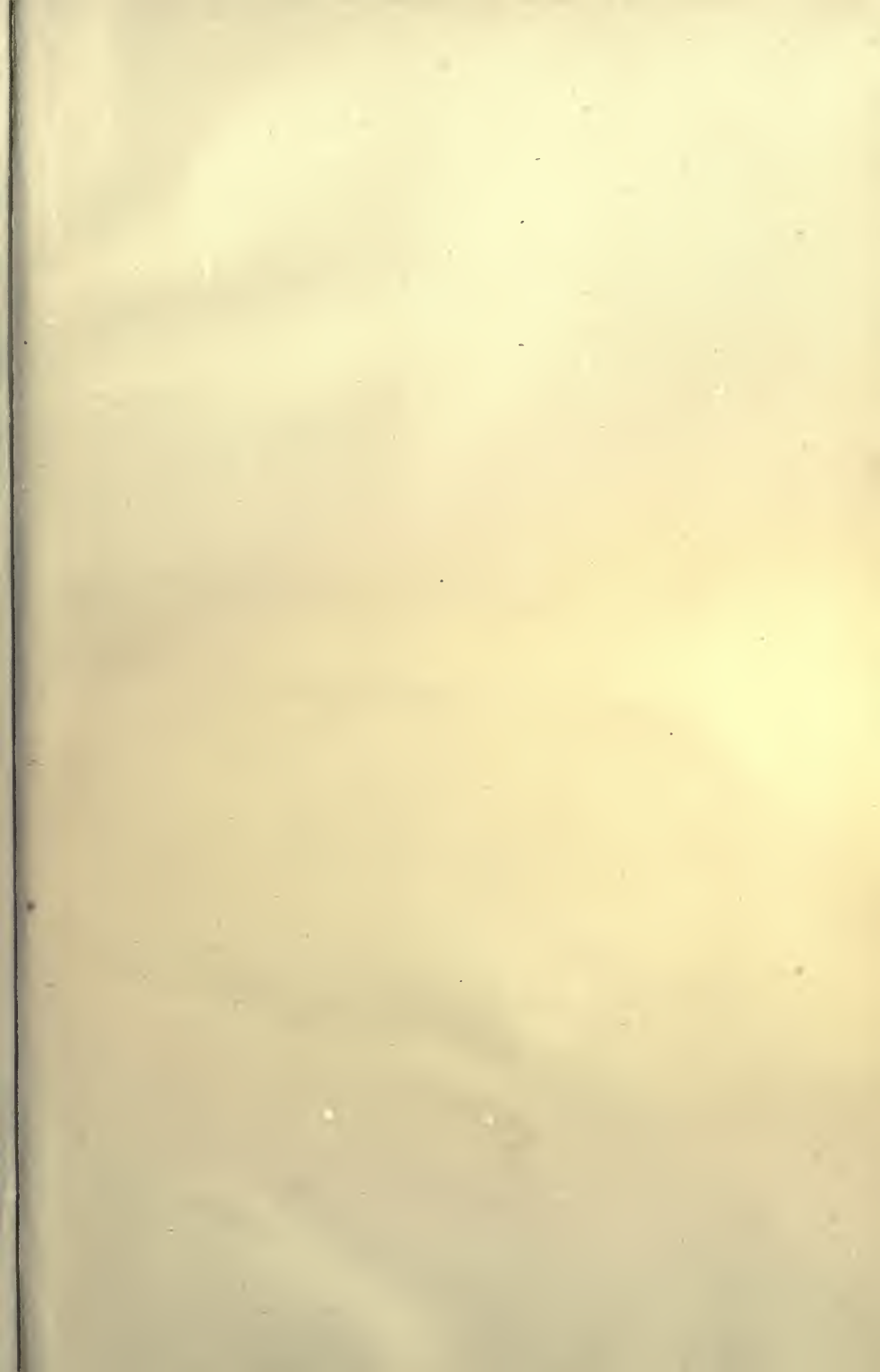
- redy-bowne, 157/767, set in readiness.
 Redwald, son of king Tytylus, 20/326.
 reed see, 62/1605, Red Sea.
 reforme, 175/1294, reform, amend.
 refused, 67/1753, renounced.
 refuted, 60/1535, refused, put off, rejected.
 regaly, 22/407, regalyte, 37/832, 88/2376, royalty.
 rehers, 32/682, rehearse.
 reioised, 121/3356, rejoiced.
 releashed, 112/3094, released.
 relique, 118/3271, relic.
 relygeous, 92/2495, religious.
 remanent, 147/488, remaining.
 remedylesse, 114/3160, without remedy.
 remooued, 37/853, removed.
 renegade, 202/3, renegade.
 repareled, 173/1220, repaired, renovated.
 repared, 134/90, repaired, amended.
 replete, 25/483, 54/1548, repleit, 122/3387, filled, full.
 replique, 201/23, reply.
 required, 192/1799, requested, sought after.
 resceyued, 123/3428, received.
 resolucion, 122/3380, turning to dust.
 resolved, 125/3487, turned into dust.
 resolyunge, 125/3501, turning into dust.
 restaured, 78/2078, restored.
 retoriall, 201/3, rhetorical.
 retrograt, 9/2, retrograding.
 retynu, 30/644, retinue.
 reuessed, 123/3424, re-vestured.
 reuiuynge, 164/974, reviving, coming to life again.
 reyngunge, 18/265, reigning.
 reysed, 44/1056, 114/3167, raised, roused.
 riall, 140/260, royal, regal.
 riale, 142/332, royally.
 Ricula, daughter of king Eremenric, 21/369.
 roborate, 91/2460, corroborate.
 robry, 11/56, robbery.
 rode, 180/1441, road.
 ronne, 9/1, run.
 rosee, v., 138/2975, 184/1571, rose.
 rored, v., 50/1233, roared.
 rowme, 59/1509, room, place, position.
 Ruffyn, St., 19/300.
 ruthfully, 161/896, sorrowfully.
 rutilant, 124/3456, 141/321, brilliant, shining.
 rybaudry, 10/50, ribaldry.
 ryches, 19/318, progeny.
 ryghtwisnes, 136/169, righteousness.
 ryued = ryue, 136/168, rife.
 Saba, the queen, 35/791.
 sabbot, 161/879, Sabbath.
 Sabryne, 15/191, the river Severn.
 sacrat, 52/1299, sacred, holy, blessed.
 sacrat vayle, 101/2783, veil that had been blessed.
 sad, 166/1040, staid, sober, quiet.
 sadde, 29/601, solemn.
 sagittari, 9/1, Sagittarius.
 Salomon, 35/790, Solomon.
 sanatiue, 203/28, curative.
 saueour, 143/354, Saviour.
 sautyng, 157/779, assaulting.
 sauyoure, 13/134, Saviour.
 Saxons in Kent, 14/148.
 scole-mayster, 83/2231, school-master.
 scolers, 84/2262, scholars.
 scylence, 12/114, 90/2443, silence.
 seased, 24/461, ceased.
 season, 102/2793, opportunity.
 secke, 197/1957, sick.
 secristan, 185/1588, sacristan.
 segregate, 154/686, separated.
 sekene, 57/1456, sekennesse, 95/2602, sickness, illness.
 selde, 78/2070, seldom, 24/461, seldom.
 Sem, 21/360, Shem.
 sence, 201/3, sense.

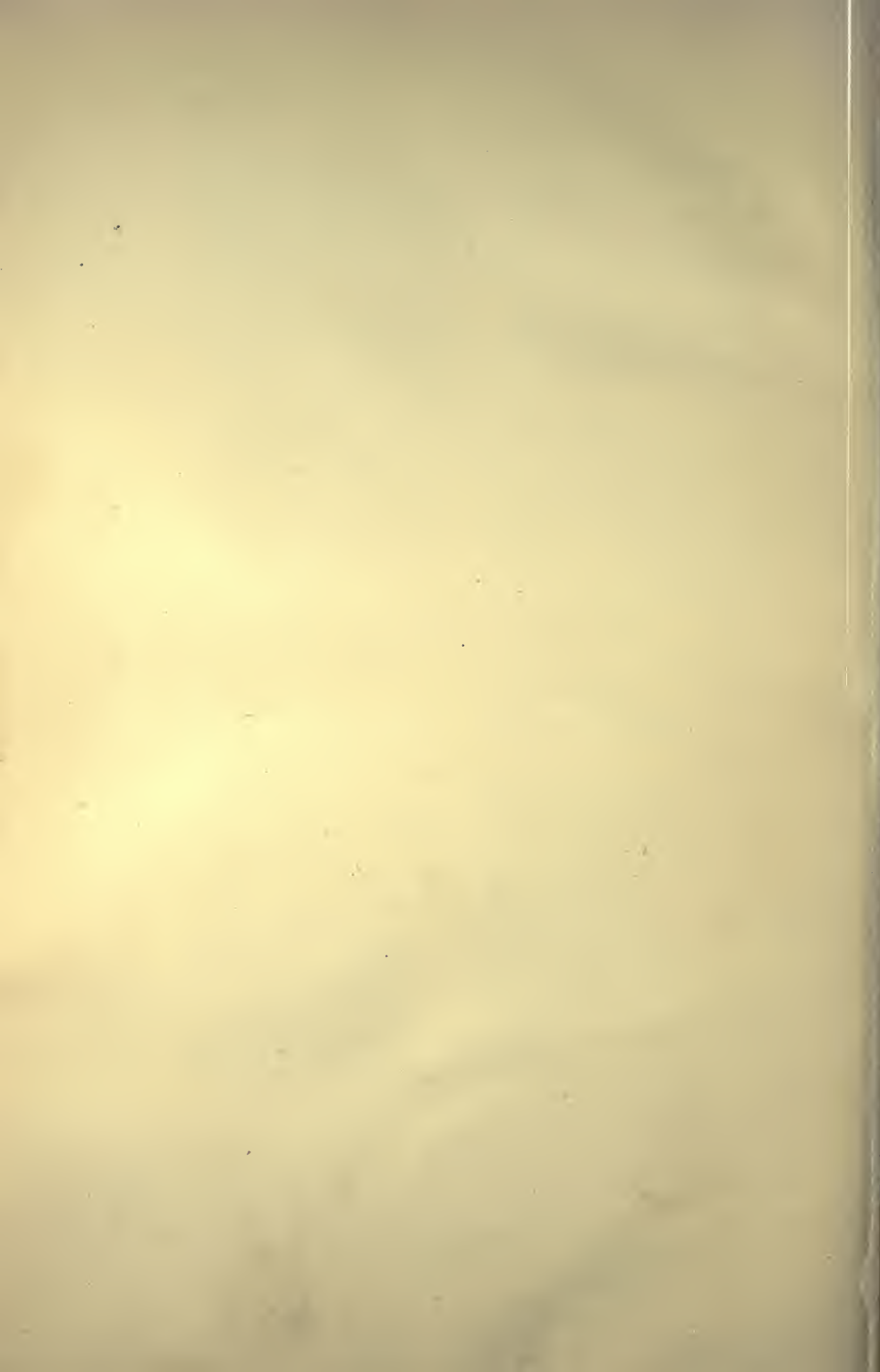
- sende, 49/1200, 104/2857, sent.
 sene, 102/2786, seen.
 sensuals thre, 196/1918, essen-
 tials, the three essential rules
 of Christian life.
 sent, 47/1159, scent.
 senyor, 48/1175, senior, old
 man.
 senyoure, 81/2164, elder.
 septre, 14/151, sceptre.
 sepulture, 84/2263, sepulchre.
 sequaces, 201/32, followers.
 sequens, 189/1697, sequence.
 seruce de chiualere, 191/1773,
 tenure by knight's service.
 Sexburge, St., life of, 75 *et seq.*
 Sexburge, daughter of St. Anna,
 20/340.
 Sexburge, St., daughter of king
 Hereryc, 19/315; and wife
 of king Ercombent, 19/317.
 Sexwulfus, bishop of Lichfield,
 92/2499.
 seyng, 93/2537, 102/2798, see-
 ing.
 shalbe, 36/820, shall be.
 shalmes, 65/1689, musical in-
 struments.
 shap, 122/3403, shape.
 shenyng, 120/3329, shining.
 sheuens, 166/1017, sheaves.
 shewen, 15/184, shown.
 Shorphthursday, 108 / 2978,
 Shrovethursday, Holy Thurs-
 day.
 shulde, 11/71, should.
 Simon, a monk, comforted by
 St. Werburge, 178-179.
 Sledde, king of Essex, 21/369.
 slee, 25/474, 180/1429, slay.
 slepped, 160/863, slept.
 smetyn, 166/1023, smitten.
 smot, 155/714, smote.
 sobrynes, 29/608, sobriety.
 socour, 24/467, succour, aid.
 sodayne, 50/1232, sudden.
 sodeynly, 42/994, sodendly,
 167/1048, suddenly.
 solas, 99/2714, solace.
 solemply, 21/380, 65/1702,
 solemple, 142/348, solemnly.
 solempne, 38/866, solemn.
 solempnyte, 60/1527, solemnity.
 sondes, 181/1471, sands.
 songe, *v.*, 65/1702, sang.
 songon, 146/446, sung.
 sonne, 9/16, sun.
 sonne-beame, 51/1276, beam of
 the sun.
 sonke, 201/22, sunk.
 sothe, 10/40, truth.
 sothely, 170/1150, truly.
 soukyng, 138/206, sucking.
 soule-helthe, 43/992, health of
 the soul.
 Southsex = Sussex, the second
 realm of Saxons in, 14/152.
 spalter, 94/2546, psalter.
 spedly, 44/1068, speedily.
 spende, 11/76, spent.
 spere, 178/1389, sphere.
 spousage, 31/666, 60/1548, be-
 trothal.
 spouses, 104/2859, spouse is.
 sprite, 155/720, spirit.
 sprytes, 103/2845, spirits.
 St. Alban's monastery founded
 by king Offa, 17/257.
 stacyons, 89/2412, stations.
 statelenes, 71/1859, stateliness,
 self-exaltation.
 sterre, 34/748, 112/3105, star.
 stock, 114/3163, foundation.
 stomake, 56/1432, stomach.
 Stone Priory, the foundation of,
 53/1324.
 Stone, in Staffordshire, 32/685.
 storne, 171/1183, stern (of a
 vessel).
 strang, 145/419, strong.
 strawed, 61/1575, 142/331,
 strewed.
 strayned, 44/1058, worn out
 with fatigue.
 strayer, 67/1762, strictly.
 stremyng, 187/1656, streaming,
 shining.
 Strenyshalt, the Abbey of,
 25/492.
 stydfastly, 57/1445, steadfastly.
 styrpe, 2/23, stock.
 suauitie, 121/3372, 195/1907,
 sweetness, fragrant odour.
 subbarbes, 86/2322, suburbs.
 subget, 10/42, subject.
 subieccyon, 60/1544, subjection.

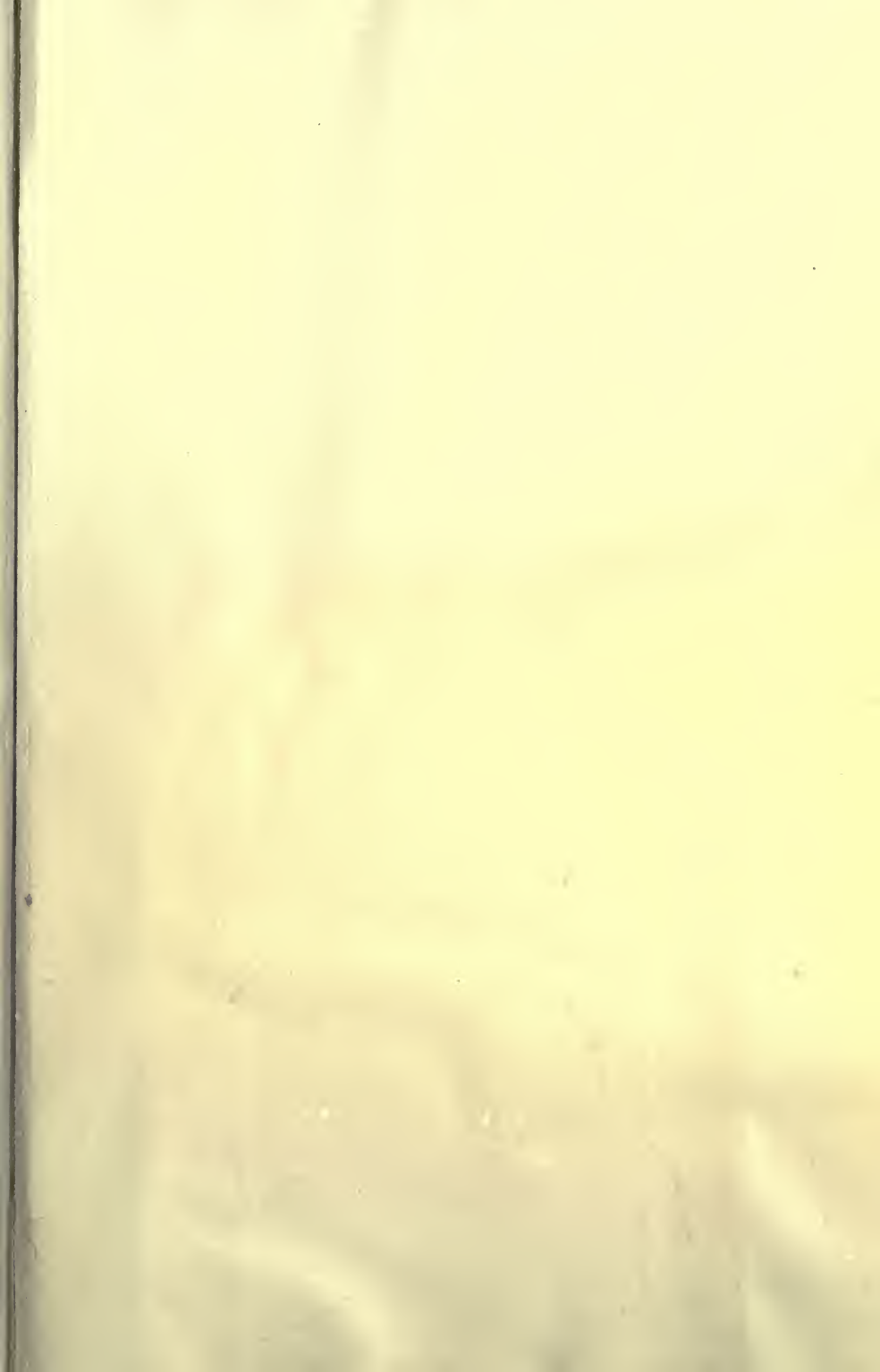
- subiettes, 121/3360, subjects.
 sufferaynte, 14/167, 36/822,
 69/1802, sovereignty.
 suffreganes, 90/2439, suffragans.
 suffyse, 68/1791, suffice.
 sunbeam, miracles of the,
 51/1275, 102/2785.
 supple, 186/1616, supply.
 surges, 140/275, wax candles.
 surgeans, 167/1059, surgeons.
 suspicion, 163/944, suspicion.
 suyng, 62/1632, ensuing, fol-
 lowing.
 swarued, 202/19, swerved.
 swerde, 137/182, sword.
 sweryng, 183/1540, swearing.
 swowne, 167/1053, swoon.
 sykernesse, 53/1341, surety,
 safety, steadfastness.
 Syon, 17/260, Heaven.
 Synaye, 62/1607, Sinai.
 syruant, 125/3478, servant.
 syth, 57/1437, since.
- tamysmouth, 136/142, the mouth
 of the Thames.
 taryed, 102/2793, waited.
 tendure, 202/40, 203/37, to
 endure.
 tensue, 201/16, to ensue.
 tenure burgage, 191/1774, hold-
 ing land by the tenure of a
 burgess.
 tenure villenage, 191/1776, hold-
 ing land by a base tenure.
 tere, *v.*, 50/1231, tear.
 thabbot, 183/1514, the abbot.
 Thamys, 15/193, the river
 Thames.
 than, 63/1639, then.
 the, 40/943, thee.
 theder, 180/1442, thither.
 theffect, 201/8, the effect.
 themselfe, 26/506, themselves.
 Theodorus, the archbishop,
 27/549.
 there, 193/1851, their.
 tho, 68/1765, though.
 thondryng, 135/121, thunder-
 ing.
 thrall, 97/2664, 69/1810, captive,
 thraldom.
 thrid, 117/3246, third.
- thries, 169/1120, thrice.
 throwe, 85/2292, 110/3047,
 through.
 thrught, 40/934, through.
 thyder, 46/1101, thither.
 timorous, 157/766, fearful.
 tissewe, 142/336, golden tissue.
 to, 10/30, in.
 toke, 164/977, took.
 Tombert, duke, first husband
 of St. Audry, 72/1888.
 toure, 145/406, tower.
 tortuous, 164/980, perverse.
 toyned, 65/1696, tuned.
 toynes, 1/1, tones, musical
 notes.
 transcende, 181/1461, cross
 over.
 transcendynge, 15/190, progress-
 ing.
 translate, 52/1285, transform.
 trauelyng, 118/3267, travail.
 traylyng, 97/2655, trailing,
 dragging.
 Trentame = Trentham Mon-
 astery, where St. Werburge
 died, 106/2906.
 tresour, 36/823, treasure.
 trespace, 100/2734, trespass.
 tresur, 86/2329, treasure.
 treuth, 136/150, truth.
 tristyng, 149/547, trusting.
 trium, 143/361, threefold.
 trone, 119/3321, throne.
 trowe, 83/2246, think.
 tryumphes marcyall, 63/1616,
 martial triumphs.
 tucyon, 13/122, rule, authority.
 tumbre, 123/3440, tomb.
 tumulat, 122/3395, put in the
 tomb.
 tumylate, 32/690, 105/2899,
 entombed, enshrined.
 tunys, 141/299, tunes, melody.
 turmentours, 164/980, tormen-
 tors.
 twayne, 14/174, twain, two.
 twyn, *v.*, 155/706, burst.
 tymerous, 10/48, timorous.
 tynder, 186/1622, tinder.
 tyrant bailiff, miracle of a,
 99.
 tysshewe, 64/1647, tissue.

- Tytylus, king of East England, 20/325.
- vacillaunt, 202/2, vacillating.
- valeaunce, 16/236, valour.
- varnaunt, 29/606, verdant.
- varyacyon, 53/1340, variation, changeableness.
- vayle, 60/1536, veil.
- venare, 145/415, venery, the chase.
- venery, 16/216, the chase.
- vengeable, 44/1041, revengeful.
- vernaunte, 102/2808, verdant, flourishing.
- vertues, 172/1215, vertuous.
- vestures, 51/1275, clerical garments, sacred apparel.
- vexed, 50/1230, tormented.
- Vffa, the first Saxon king of East England, 14/167.
- vilany, 193/1832, villainy
- vindicatyfe, 201/25, vindictive.
- viset, 175/1293, visit.
- Vlminus, Canon, restored to health by St. Werburge, 166/1039.
- vnceyon, 110/3055, unction.
- vnneth, 50/1227, uneasy.
- vnit, 196/1943, united.
- vnpiteously, 124/3465, without pity.
- vnpossyble, 97/2639, impossible.
- vnryghtfully, 20/336, wrongfully, treacherously.
- vnto, 47/1141, until.
- vnYTE, 31/674, unity.
- volupte, 81/2181, voluptuousness.
- Vortyger, king of the Britons, 13/139.
- voue, 38/866, vow.
- voultes, 145/404, vaults.
- voyde, 57/1453, empty.
- vre, 66/1727, use, very common.
- Vulfade and Ruffyn, the brothers of St. Werburge, rebuke Werbode, 42-3.
- Vulfer, the greatest of the Mercian kings, and father of St. Werburge, 15/181; chosen king of Mercia, 26-28; description of his marriage with St. Ermenylde, 28-31; causes his sons Vulfade and Ruffyn to be martyred, 49; he becomes a holy man, 50 *et seq.*
- vulgares, 11/84, common, unlettered, folk.
- vygyls, 53/1335, vigils, watchings.
- vylayne, 41/949, low order, villein.
- wace, 22/390, was.
- Waile-a-way, 186/1614, Well-away! (a cry of distress).
- Walles, 14/144, the country of Wales.
- Walshemen, 148/510, Welshmen.
- Wandeles, 137/175, Vandals.
- ware, *v.*, 93/2540, wore.
- warke, 134/112, work.
- wast, *v.*, 107/2945, waste.
- way, 69/1798, away.
- Wedon, the miracle at, 96.
- well-come, 61/1554, welcome.
- Wenedocie, a "city of legions" in South Wales, 143/371.
- Werbode, a false knight, the tale of his villainy, 38 *et seq.*
- Werburge, St., the prologue in honour of, 1;—genealogy of, 17-23;—daughter of king Wulfere and St. Ermenylde, 19/300;—a brief declaration of her holy life and conversation, 32-34;—how she is sought in marriage, and her answer thereto, 34-37;—she is sought in marriage by the false Werbode, 38-40; she rebukes Werbode, 42;—she desires to become a professed religious, 53 *et seq.*;—she becomes a nun at Ely monastery, 58 *et seq.*;—description of her life and conversation, 67 *et seq.*;—her fervent and holy devotion, 92-96; miracles worked by her, 96-104;—she obtains knowledge of

- her approaching departure, and gives her parting injunctions to her followers, 104-111;—her death and the lamentation of her followers, 111-113; her body is taken from Trentham and brought to Hanbury by a miracle, 115-118; short sketch of her life, 118-121; her body is enshrined at Hanbury, 121-124, and continues "hole and substantial" for two hundred years, 124-126;—the shrine containing her relics is taken to Chester, 139/259;—account of the miracles performed by her, 159 *et seq.*;—an orison or prayer to, 195;—a ballad on, 194.
- werke, 74/1961, work, building.
- wers, 42/1011, worse.
- Westmarilande = Westmorland, 144/399, named after a British king Marius.
- West saxons, the third realm of Saxons, 14/155.
- whan, 18/269, when.
- wheder, 48/1194, 178/1392, whither.
- whelynge, 69/1805, wheeling, parading.
- whilom, 199/2021, sometime.
- whom, 192/1808, whome, 181/1464, home.
- whom-comyng, 183/1541, home coming.
- whylom, 20/324, whilom, in time past.
- Whytbye, 19/312, Whitby.
- wiche, 153/664, which.
- wiked, 125/3472, wicked.
- Wild geese, the miracle of the, at Wedon, 96.
- William the Conqueror comes to England, 173/1241.
- Withburge, St., daughter of St. Anna, 40/342.
- withouten, *pl.*, 48/1190, without.
- woddes, 145/415, woods.
- Woden, the progenitor of the Angles, Jutes, and Saxons, 21/356; his ancestry traced back to Sem [Shem], 21/360.
- wodely, 158/789, madly.
- wonnyng, 198/1991, dwelling-place.
- wordly, 93/2539, wordly, 150/572, worldly.
- wroken, 43/1028, wreaked.
- wrong-feyned, 193/1852, false.
- wryten, 91/2457, written.
- Wulfade, St., 19/300.
- Wulfer, a son of king Penda, 18/279.
- wurkyng, 161/880, working.
- Wybba, king of Mercia, son of Cryda, 18/273.
- wydhode, 82/2139, widowhood.
- Wylfryde, the Archbishop of York, 73/1938.
- wynes, 145/419, wines.
- wysele, 92/2509, wisely.
- yche, 104/2972, each.
- ycheon, 111/3057, each one.
- ydolles, 38/867, idols.
- yeldyng, 203/39, yielding.
- yerle, 159/825, early.
- yle, 72/1902, isle.
- ylnes, 34/740, evil.
- ympe, 75/2004, scion.
- ympnes, 97/2662, hymns.
- yonge, 55/1400, young.
- youre, 62/1610, in time past, long ago.
- yrefull, 50/1235, full of ire, raging.
- yrons, 82/2211, irons.







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