

# The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle

## Part 2: A.D. 750 - 919

### Online Medieval and Classical Library Release #17



A.D. 750. This year Cuthred, king of the West-Saxons, fought

with the proud chief Ethelhun.

A.D. 752. This year, the twelfth of his reign, Cuthred, king of

the West-Saxons, fought at Burford (27) with Ethelbald, king of

the Mercians, and put him to flight.

A.D. 753. This year Cuthred, king of the West-Saxons, fought

against the Welsh.

A.D. 754. This year died Cuthred, king of the West-Saxons; and

Sebright, his relative, succeeded to the kingdom, which he held

one year; Cyneard succeeded Humferth in the see of Winchester;

and Canterbury was this year on fire.

A.D. 755. This year Cynewulf, with the consent of the West-Saxon

council, deprived Sebright, his relative, for unrighteous deeds,

of his kingdom, except Hampshire; which he retained, until he

slew the alderman who remained the longest with him. Then

Cynewulf drove him to the forest of Andred, where he remained,

until a swain stabbed him at Privett, and revenged the alderman,

Cumbra. The same Cynewulf fought many hard battles with the

Welsh; and, about one and thirty winters after he had the

kingdom, he was desirous of expelling a prince called Cyneard,

who was the brother of Sebright. But he having understood that

the king was gone, thinly attended, on a visit to a lady at

Merton, (28) rode after him, and beset him therein; surrounding

the town without, ere the attendants of the king were aware of

him. When the king found this, he went out of doors, and

defended himself with courage; till, having looked on the

etheling, he rushed out upon him, and wounded him severely. Then

were they all fighting against the king, until they had slain

him. As soon as the king's thanes in the lady's bower heard the

tumult, they ran to the spot, whoever was then ready. The

etheling immediately offered them life and rewards; which none of

them would accept, but continued fighting together against him,

till they all lay dead, except one British hostage, and he was

severely wounded. When the king's thanes that were behind heard

in the morning that the king was slain, they rode to the spot,

Osric his alderman, and Wiverth his thane, and the men that he

had left behind; and they met the etheling at the town, where the

king lay slain. The gates, however, were locked against them,

which they attempted to force; but he promised them their own

choice of money and land, if they would grant him the kingdom;

reminding them, that their relatives were already with him, who

would never desert him. To which they answered, that no relative

could be dearer to them than their lord, and that they would

never follow his murderer. Then they besought their relatives to

depart from him, safe and sound. They replied, that the same

request was made to their comrades that were formerly with the

king; "And we are as regardless of the result," they rejoined,

"as our comrades who with the king were slain." Then they

continued fighting at the gates, till they rushed in, and slew

the etheling and all the men that were with him; except one, who

was the godson of the alderman, and whose life he spared, though

he was often wounded. This same Cynewulf reigned one and thirty

winters. His body lies at Winchester, and that of the etheling

at Axminster. Their paternal pedigree goeth in a direct line to

Cerdic. The same year Ethelbald, king of the Mercians, was slain

at Seckington; and his body lies at Repton. He reigned one and

forty years; and Bernred then succeeded to the kingdom, which he

held but a little while, and unprosperously; for King Offa the

same year put him to flight, and assumed the government; which he

held nine and thirty winters. His son Everth held it a hundred

and forty days. Offa was the son of Thingferth, Thingferth of

Enwulf, Enwulf of Osmod, Osmod of Eawa, Eawa of Webba, Webba of

Creoda, Creoda of Cenwald, Cenwald of Cnebba, Cnebba of Icel,

Icel of Eomer, Eomer of Angelthew, Angelthew of Offa, Offa of

Wermund, Wermund of Witley, Witley of Woden.

((A.D. 755. This year Cynewulf deprived King Sigebert of his

kingdom; and Sigebert's brother, Cynehard by name, slew Cynewulf

at Merton; and he reigned thirty-one years. And in the same year

Ethelbald, king of the Mercians, was slain at Repton. And Offa

succeeded to the kingdom of the Mercians, Bernred being driven

out.))

A.D. 757. This year Eadbert, king of the Northumbrians, received

the tonsure, and his son Osulf the kingdom; which he held one

year. Him his own domestics slew on the ninth day before the

kalends of August.

A.D. 758. This year died Archbishop Cuthbert. He held the

archbishopric eighteen years.

A.D. 759. This year Bregowin was invested archbishop at

Michaelmas, and continued four years. Mull Ethelwold this year

succeeded to the Northumbrian kingdom, held it six winters, and

then resigned it.

A.D. 760. This year died Ethelbert, King of Kent, who was the

son of King Wihtred, and also of Ceolwulf.

A.D. 761. This year was the severe winter; and Mull, king of the

Northumbrians, slew Oswin at Edwin's-Cliff, on the eighth day

before the ides of August.

A.D. 762. This year died Archbishop Bregowin.

A.D. 763. This year Eanbert was invested archbishop, on the

fortieth day over mid-winter; and Frithwald, Bishop of Whitern,

died on the nones of May. He was consecrated at York, on the

eighteenth day before the calends of September, in the sixth year

of the reign of Ceolwulf, and was bishop nine and twenty winters.

Then was Petwin consecrated Bishop of Whitern at Adlingfleet, on

the sixteenth day before the calends of August.

A.D. 764. This year Archbishop Eanbert received the pall.

A.D. 765. This year Alred succeeded to the kingdom of the

Northumbrians, and reigned eight winters.

A.D. 766. This year died Archbishop Egbert at York, on the

thirteenth day before the calends of December, who was bishop

thirty-six winters; and Frithbert at Hexham, who was bishop there

thirty-four winters. Ethelbert was consecrated to York, and

Elmund to Hexham.

A.D. 768. This year died King Eadbert, the son of Eata, on the

fourteenth day before the calends of September.

A.D. 772. This year died Bishop Mildred.

A.D. 774. This year the Northumbrians banished their king,

Alred, from York at Easter-tide; and chose Ethelred, the son of

Mull, for their lord, who reigned four winters. This year also

appeared in the heavens a red crucifix, after sunset; the

Mercians and the men of Kent fought at Otford; and wonderful

serpents were seen in the land of the South-Saxons.

A.D. 775. This year Cynewulf and Offa fought near Bensington,

and Offa took possession of the town. In the days of this king,

Offa, there was an abbot at Medhamsted, called Beonna; who, with

the consent of all the monks of the minster, let to farm, to

Alderman Cuthbert, ten copyhold lands at Swineshead, with leasow

and with meadow, and with all the appurtenances; provided that

the said Cuthbert gave the said abbot fifty pounds therefore, and

each year entertainment for one night, or thirty shillings in

money; (29) provided also, that after his decease the said lands

should revert to the monastery. The king, Offa, and King Everth,

and Archbishop Hibbert, and Bishop Ceolwulf, and Bishop Inwona,

and Abbot Beonna, and many other bishops, and abbots, and rich

men, were witnesses to this. In the days of this same Offa was

an alderman, of the name of Brorda, who requested the king for

his sake to free his own monastery, called Woking, because he

would give it to Medhamsted and St. Peter, and the abbot that

then was, whose name was Pusa. Pusa succeeded Beonna; and the

king loved him much. And the king freed the monastery of Woking,

against king, against bishop, against earl, and against all men'

so that no man should have any claim there, except St. Peter and

the abbot. This was done at the king's town called

Free-Richburn.

A.D. 776. This year died Bishop Petwin, on the thirteenth day

before the calends of October, having been bishop fourteen

winters. The same year Ethelbert was consecrated Bishop of

Whitern, at York, on the seventeenth day before the calends of

July.

A.D. 778. This year Ethelbald and Herbert slew three high-

sheriffs -- Eldulf, the son of Bosa, at Coniscliff; Cynewulf and

Eggo at Helathyrn -- on the eleventh day before the calends of

April. Then Elwald, having banished Ethelred from his territory,

seized on his kingdom, and reigned ten winters.

A.D. 780. This year a battle was fought between the Old-Saxons

and the Franks; and the high-sheriffs of Northumbria committed to

the flames Alderman Bern at Silton, on the ninth day before the

calends of January. The same year Archbishop Ethelbert died at

York, and Eanbald was consecrated in his stead; Bishop Cynewulf

retired to Holy-island; Elmund, Bishop of Hexham, died on the

seventh day before the ides of September, and Tilbert was

consecrated in his stead, on the sixth day before the nones of

October; Hibbald was consecrated Bishop of Holy-island at

Sockbury; and King Elwald sent to Rome for a pall in behoof of

Archbishop Eanbald.

A.D. 782. This year died Werburga, Queen of Ceolred, and Bishop

Cynewulf, in Holy-island; and the same year there was a synod at

Acley.

A.D. 784. This year Cyneard slew King Cynewulf, and was slain

himself, and eighty-four men with him. Then Bertric undertook

the government of the West-Saxons, and reigned sixteen years.

His body is deposited at Wareham; and his pedigree goeth in a

direct line to Cerdic. At this time reigned Elmund king in Kent,

the father of Egbert; and Egbert was the father of Athulf.

A.D. 785. This year died Bothwin, Abbot of Ripon, and a

litigious synod was holden at Chalk-hythe; Archbishop Eanbert

resigned some part of his bishopric, Hibbert was appointed bishop

by King Offa, and Everth was consecrated king. In the meantime

legates were sent from Rome to England by Pope Adrian, to renew

the blessings of faith and peace which St. Gregory sent us by the

mission of Bishop Augustine, and they were received with every

mark of honour and respect.

A.D. 787. This year King Bertric took Edburga the daughter of

Offa to wife. And in his days came first three ships of the

Northmen from the land of robbers. The reve (30) then rode

thereto, and would drive them to the king's town; for he knew not

what they were; and there was he slain. These were the first

ships of the Danish men that sought the land of the English

nation.

A.D. 788. This year there was a synod assembled at Fingall in

Northumberland, on the fourth day before the nones of September;

and Abbot Albert departed this life.

A.D. 789. This year Elwald, king of the Northumbrians, was slain

by Siga, on the eleventh day before the calends of October; and a

heavenly light was often seen on the spot where he was slain. He

was buried in the church of Hexham; and Osred, the son of Alred,

who was his nephew, succeeded him in the government. This ),ear

there was a synod assembled at Acley.

A.D. 790. This year Archbishop Eanbert died, and Abbot Ethelherd

was chosen archbishop the same year. Osred, king of the

Northumbrians, was betrayed and banished from his kingdom, and

Ethelred, the son of Ethelwald, succeeded him.

A.D. 791. This year Baldulf was consecrated Bishop of Whitern,

on the sixteenth day before the calends of August, by Archbishop

Eanbald and Bishop Ethelbert.

A.D. 792. This year Offa, King of Mercia, commanded that King

Ethelbert should be beheaded; and Osred, who had been king of the

Northumbrians, returning home after his exile, was apprehended

and slain, on the eighteenth day before the calends of October.

His body is deposited at Tinemouth. Ethelred this year, on the

third day before the calends of October, took unto himself a new

wife, whose name was Elfleda.

A.D. 793. This year came dreadful fore-warnings over the land of

the Northumbrians, terrifying the people most woefully: these

were immense sheets of light rushing through the air, and

whirlwinds, and fiery, dragons flying across the firmament.

These tremendous tokens were soon followed by a great famine: and

not long after, on the sixth day before the ides of January in

the same year, the harrowing inroads of heathen men made

lamentable havoc in the church of God in Holy-island, by rapine

and slaughter. Siga died on the eighth day before the calends of

March.

A.D. 794. This year died Pope Adrian; and also Offa, King of

Mercia, on the fourth day before the ides of August, after he had

reigned forty winters. Ethelred, king of the Northumbrians, was

slain by his own people, on the thirteenth day before the calends

of May; in consequence of which, Bishops Ceolwulf and Eadbald

retired from the land. Everth took to the government of Mercia,

and died the same year. Eadbert, whose other name was Pryn,

obtained the kingdom of Kent; and Alderman Ethelherd died on the

calends of August. In the meantime, the heathen armies spread

devastation among the Northumbrians, and plundered the monastery

of King Everth at the mouth of the Wear. There, however, some of

their leaders were slain; and some of their ships also were

shattered to pieces by the violence of the weather; many of the

crew were drowned; and some, who escaped alive to the shore, were

soon dispatched at the mouth of the river.

A.D. 795. This year was the moon eclipsed, between cock-crowing

and dawn, (31) on the fifth day before the calends of April; and

Erdulf succeeded to the Northumbrian kingdom on the second before

the ides of May. He was afterwards consecrated and raised to his

throne, at York, on the seventh day before the calends of June,

by Archbishop Eanbald, and Bishops Ethelbert, Hibbald, and

Baldulf.

A.D. 796. This year died Archbishop Eanbald, on the fourth day

before the ides of August; and his body is deposited at York.

The same year also died Bishop Ceolwulf; and another Eanbald was

consecrated to the see of the former, on the nineteenth day

before the calends of September. About the same time Cynewulf,

King of Mercia, made inroads upon the inhabitants of Kent as far

as the marsh; and the Mercians seized Edbert Pryn, their king,

led him bound into Mercia, and suffered men to pick out his eyes,

and cut off his hands. (32) And Ethelard, Archbishop of

Canterbury, held a synod, wherein he ratified and confirmed, by

command of Pope Leo, all things concerning God's monasteries that

were fixed in Witgar's days, and in other king's days, saying

thus: "I Ethelard, the humble Archbishop of Canterbury, with the

unanimous concurrence of the whole synod, and of all the

congregations of all the minsters, to which in former days

freedom was given by faithful men, in God's name and by his

terrible judgment do decree, as I have command from Pope Leo,

that henceforth none dare to choose them lords from lewd men over

God's inheritance; but, as it is in the writ that the pope has

given, or holy men have settled, our fathers and our teachers,

concerning holy minsters, so they continue untainted without any

resistance. If there is any man that will not observe this

decree of God, of our pope, and of us, but overlooketh it, and

holdeth it for nought, let them know, that they shall give an

account before the judgment-seat of God. And I Ethelard,

archbishop, with twelve bishops, and with three and twenty

abbots, this same with the rood-token of Christ confirm and

fasten."

((A.D. 796. This year Offa, king of the Mercians, died on the

fourth before the kalends of August; he reigned forty years.))

A.D. 797. This year the Romans cut out the tongue of Pope Leo,

put out his eyes, and drove him from his see; but soon after, by

the assistance of God, he could see and speak, and became pope as

he was before. Eanbald also received the pall on the sixth day

before the ides of September, and Bishop Ethelherd died on the

third before the calends of November.

A.D. 798. This year a severe battle was fought in the

Northumbrian territory, during Lent, on the fourth day before the

nones of April, at Whalley; wherein Alric, the son of Herbert,

was slain, and many others with him.

A.D. 799. This year Archbishop Ethelbert, and Cynbert, Bishop of

Wessex, went to Rome. In the meantime Bishop Alfun died at

Sudbury, and was buried at Dunwich. After him Tidfrith was

elected to the see; and Siric, king of the East Saxons, went to

Rome. In this year the body of Witburga was found entire, and

free from decay, at Dercham, after a lapse of five and fifty

years from the period of her decease.

A.D. 800. This year was the moon eclipsed, at eight in the

evening, on the seventeenth day before the calends of February;

and soon after died King Bertric and Alderman Worr. Egbert

succeeded to the West-Saxon kingdom; and the same day Ethelmund,

alderman of the Wiccians, rode over the Thames at Kempsford;

where he was met by Alderman Woxtan, with the men of Wiltshire,

and a terrible conflict ensued, in which both the commanders were

slain, but the men of Wiltshire obtained the victory.

((A.D. 801. This year Beornmod was ordained Bishop of

Rochester.))

A.D. 802. This year was the moon eclipsed, at dawn, on the

thirteenth day before the calends of January; and Bernmod was

consecrated Bishop of Rochester.

A.D. 803. This year died Hibbald, Bishop of Holy-island, on the

twenty-fourth of June, and Egbert was consecrated in his stead,

on the thirteenth of June following. Archbishop Ethelherd also

died in Kent, and Wulfred was chosen archbishop in his stead.

Abbot Forthred, in the course of the same year, departed this

life.

A.D. 804. This year Archbishop Wulfred received his pall.

A.D. 805. This year died King Cuthred in Kent, and Abbess

Colburga, and Alderman Herbert.

A.D. 806. This year was the moon eclipsed, on the first o[

September; Erdwulf, king of the Northumbrians, was banished from

his dominions; and Eanbert, Bishop of Hexham, departed this life.

This year also, on the next day before the nones of June, a cross

was seen in the moon, on a Wednesday, at the dawn; and

afterwards, during the same year, on the third day before the

calends of September, a wonderful circle was displayed about the

sun.

A.D. 807. This year was the sun eclipsed, precisely at eleven in

the morning, on the seventeenth day before the calends of August.

A.D. 812. This year died the Emperor Charlemagne, after a reign

of five and forty winters; and Archbishop Wulfred, accompanied by

Wigbert, Bishop of Wessex, undertook a journey to Rome.

A.D. 813. This year Archbishop Wulfred returned to his own see,

with the blessing of Pope Leo; and King Egbert spread devastation

in Cornwall from east to west.

A.D. 814. This year died Leo, the noble and holy pope; and

Stephen succeeded him in the papal government.

A.D. 816. This year died Pope Stephen; and Paschalis was

consecrated pope after him. This same year the school of the

English nation at Rome was destroyed by fire.

A.D. 819. This year died Cenwulf, King of Mercia; and Ceolwulf

(33) succeeded him. Alderman Eadbert also departed this life.

A.D. 821. This year Ceolwulf was deprived of his kingdom.

A.D. 822. This year two aldermen were slain, whose names were

Burhelm and Mucca; and a synod was holden at Cliff's-Hoo.

A.D. 823. This year a battle was fought between the Welsh in

Cornwall and the people of Devonshire, at Camelford; and in the

course of the same year Egbert, king of the West-Saxons, and

Bernwulf, King of Mercia, fought a battle at Wilton, in which

Egbert gained the victory, but there was great slaughter on both

sides. Then sent he his son Ethelwulf into Kent, with a large

detachment from the main body of the army, accompanied by his

bishop, Elstan, and his alderman, Wulfherd; who drove Baldred,

the king, northward over the Thames. Whereupon the men of Kent

immediately submitted to him; as did also the inhabitants of

Surrey, and Sussex, and Essex; who had been unlawfully kept from

their allegiance by his relatives. The same year also, the king

of the East-Angles, and his subjects besought King Egbert to give

them peace and protection against the terror of the Mercians;

whose king, Bernwulf, they slew in the course of the same year.

A.D. 825. This year Ludecan, King of Mercia, was slain, and his

five aldermen with him; after which Wiglaf succeeded to the

kingdom.

A.D. 827. This year was the moon eclipsed, on mid-winter's mass-

night; and King Egbert, in the course of the same year, conquered

the Mercian kingdom, and all that is south of the Humber, being

the eighth king who was sovereign of all the British dominions.

Ella, king of the South-Saxons, was the first who possessed so

large a territory; the second was Ceawlin, king of the West-

Saxons: the third was Ethelbert, King of Kent; the fourth was

Redwald, king of the East-Angles; the fifth was Edwin, king of

the Northumbrians; the sixth was Oswald, who succeeded him; the

seventh was Oswy, the brother of Oswald; the eighth was Egbert,

king of the West-Saxons. This same Egbert led an army against

the Northumbrians as far as Dore, where they met him, and offered

terms of obedience and subjection, on the acceptance of which

they returned home.

A.D. 828. This year Wiglaf recovered his Mercian kingdom, and

Bishop Ethelwald departed this life. The same year King Egbert

led an army against the people of North-Wales, and compelled them

all to peaceful submission.

A.D. 829. This year died Archbishop Wulfred; and Abbot Feologild

was after him chosen to the see, on the twenty-fifth of April,

and consecrated on a Sunday, the eleventh of June. On the

thirteenth of August he was dead!

A.D. 830. This year Ceolnoth was chosen and consecrated

archbishop on the death of Abbot Feologild.

A.D. 831. This year Archbishop Ceolnoth received the pall.

A.D. 832. This year heathen men overran the Isle of Shepey.

A.D. 833. This year fought King Egbert with thirty-five pirates

at Charmouth, where a great slaughter was made, and the Danes

remained masters of the field. Two bishops, Hereferth and Wigen,

and two aldermen, Dudda and Osmod, died the same year.

A.D. 835. This year came a great naval armament into West-Wales,

where they were joined by the people, who commenced war against

Egbert, the West-Saxon king. When he heard this, he proceeded

with his army against them and fought with them at Hengeston,

where he put to flight both the Welsh and the Danes.

A.D. 836. This year died King Egbert. Him Offa, King of Mercia,

and Bertric, the West-Saxon king, drove out of England into

France three years before he was king. Bertric assisted Offa

because he had married his daughter. Egbert having afterwards

returned, reigned thirty-seven winters and seven months. Then

Ethelwulf, the son of Egbert, succeeded to the West-Saxon

kingdom; and he gave his son Athelstan the kingdom of Kent, and

of Essex, and of Surrey, and of Sussex.

A.D. 837. This year Alderman Wulfherd fought at Hamton with

thirty-three pirates, and after great slaughter obtained the

victory, but he died the same year. Alderman Ethelhelm also,

with the men of Dorsetshire, fought with the Danish army in

Portland-isle, and for a good while put them to flight; but in

the end the Danes became masters of the field, and slew the

alderman.

A.D. 838. This year Alderman Herbert was slain by the heathens,

and many men with him, among the Marshlanders. The same year,

afterwards, in Lindsey, East-Anglia, and Kent, were many men

slain by the army.

A.D. 839. This year there was great slaughter in London,

Canterbury, and Rochester.

A.D. 840. This year King Ethelwulf fought at Charmouth with

thirty-five ship's-crews, and the Danes remained masters of the

place. The Emperor Louis died this year.

A.D. 845. This year Alderman Eanwulf, with the men of

Somersetshire, and Bishop Ealstan, and Alderman Osric, with the

men of Dorsetshire, fought at the mouth of the Parret with the

Danish army; and there, after making a great slaughter, obtained

the victory.

A.D. 851. This year Alderman Ceorl, with the men of Devonshire,

fought the heathen army at Wemburg, and after making great

slaughter obtained the victory. The same year King Athelstan and

Alderman Elchere fought in their ships, and slew a large army at

Sandwich in Kent, taking nine ships and dispersing the rest. The

heathens now for the first time remained over winter in the Isle

of Thanet. The same year came three hundred and fifty ships into

the mouth of the Thames; the crew of which went upon land, and

stormed Canterbury and London; putting to flight Bertulf, king of

the Mercians, with his army; and then marched southward over the

Thames into Surrey. Here Ethelwulf and his son Ethelbald, at the

head of the West-Saxon army, fought with them at Ockley, and made

the greatest slaughter of the heathen army that we have ever

heard reported to this present day. There also they obtained the

victory.

A.D. 852. About this time Abbot Ceolred of Medhamsted, with the

concurrence of the monks, let to hand the land of Sempringham to

Wulfred, with the provision, that after his demise the said land

should revert to the monastery; that Wulfred should give the land

of Sleaford to Meohamsted, and should send each year into the

monastery sixty loads of wood, twelve loads of coal, six loads of

peat, two tuns full of fine ale, two neats' carcases, six hundred

loaves, and ten kilderkins of Welsh ale; one horse also each

year, and thirty shillings, and one night's entertainment. This

agreement was made in the presence of King Burhred. Archbishop

Ceolnoth, Bishops Tunbert, Kenred, Aldhun, and Bertred; Abbots

Witred and Weftherd, Aldermen Ethelherd and Hunbert, and many

others.

A.D. 853. This year Burhred, King of Mercia, with his council,

besought King Ethelwulf to assist him to subdue North-Wales. He

did so; and with an army marched over Mercia into North-Wales,

and made all the inhabitants subject to him. The same year King

Ethelwulf sent his son Alfred to Rome; and Leo, who was then

pope, consecrated him king, and adopted him as his spiritual son.

The same year also Elchere with the men of Kent, and Huda with

the men of Surrey, fought in the Isle of Thanet with the heathen

army, and soon obtained the victory; but there were many men

slain and drowned on either hand, and both the aldermen killed.

Burhred, the Mercian king, about this time received in marriage

the daughter of Ethelwulf, king of the West-Saxons.

A.D. 854. This year the heathen men (34) for the first time

remained over winter in the Isle of Shepey. The same year King

Ethelwulf registered a TENTH of his land over all his kingdom for

the honour of God and for his own everlasting salvation. The

same year also he went to Rome with great pomp, and was resident

there a twelvemonth. Then he returned homeward; and Charles,

king of the Franks, gave him his daughter, whose name was Judith,

to be his queen. After this he came to his people, and they were

fain to receive him; but about two years after his residence

among the Franks he died; and his body lies at Winchester. He

reigned eighteen years and a half. And Ethelwulf was the son of

Egbert, Egbert of Ealhmund, Ealhmund of Eafa, Eafa of Eoppa,

Eoppa of Ingild; Ingild was the brother of Ina, king of the

West-Saxons, who held that kingdom thirty-seven winters, and

afterwards went to St. Peter, where he died. And they were the

sons of Cenred, Cenred of Ceolwald, Ceolwald of Cutha, Cutha of

Cuthwin, Cuthwin of Ceawlin, Ceawlin of Cynric, Cynric of Creoda,

Creoda of Cerdic, Cerdic of Elesa, Elesa of Esla, Esla of Gewis,

Gewis of Wig, Wig of Freawine, Freawine of Frithugar, Frithugar

of Brond, Brond of Balday, Balday of Woden, Woden of Frithuwald,

Frithuwald of Freawine, Freawine of Frithuwualf, Frithuwulf of

Finn, Finn of Godwulf, Godwulf of Great, Great of Taetwa, Taetwa

of Beaw, Beaw of Sceldwa, Sceldwa of Heremod, Heremod of Itermon,

Itermon of Hathra, Hathra of Hwala, Hwala of Bedwig, Bedwig of

Sceaf; that is, the son of Noah, who was born in Noah's ark:

Laznech, Methusalem, Enoh, Jared, Malalahel, Cainion, Enos, Seth,

Adam the first man, and our Father, that is, Christ. Amen. Then

two sons of Ethelwulf succeeded to the kingdom; Ethelbald to

Wessex, and Ethelbert to Kent, Essex, Surrey, and Sussex.

Ethelbald reigned five years. Alfred, his third son, Ethelwulf

had sent to Rome; and when the pope heard say that he was dead,

he consecrated Alfred king, and held him under spiritual hands,

as his father Ethelwulf had desired, and for which purpose he had

sent him thither.

((A.D. 855. And on his return homewards he took to (wife) the

daughter of Charles, king of the French, whose name was Judith,

and he came home safe. And then in about two years he died, and

his body lies at Winchester: and he reigned eighteen years and a

half, and he was the son of Egbert. And then his two sons

succeeded to the kingdom; Ethelbald to the kingdom of the

West-Saxons, and Ethelbert to the kingdom of the Kentish-men, and

of the East-Saxons, and of Surrey, and of the South-Saxons. And

he reigned five years.))

A.D. 860. This year died King Ethelbald, and his body lies at

Sherborn. Ethelbert his brother then succeeded to the whole

kingdom, and held it in good order and great tranquillity. In

his days came a large naval force up into the country, and

stormed Winchester. But Alderman Osric, with the command of

Hampshire, and Alderman Ethelwulf, with the command of Berkshire,

fought against the enemy, and putting them to flight, made

themselves masters of the field of battle. The said Ethelbert

reigned five years, and his body lies at Sherborn.

A.D. 861. This year died St. Swithun, bishop.

A.D. 865. This year sat the heathen army in the isle of Thanet,

and made peace with the men of Kent, who promised money

therewith; but under the security of peace, and the promise of

money, the army in the night stole up the country, and overran

all Kent eastward.

A.D. 866. This year Ethered, (35) brother of Ethelbert, took to

the West-Saxon government; and the same year came a large heathen

army into England, and fixed their winter-quarters in East-

Anglia, where they were soon horsed; and the inhabitants made

peace with them.

A.D. 867. This year the army went from the East-Angles over the

mouth of the Humber to the Northumbrians, as far as York. And

there was much dissension in that nation among themselves; they

had deposed their king Osbert, and had admitted Aella, who had no

natural claim. Late in the year, however, they returned to their

allegiance, and they were now fighting against the common enemy;

having collected a vast force, with which they fought the army at

York; and breaking open the town, some of them entered in. Then

was there an immense slaughter of the Northumbrians, some within

and some without; and both the kings were slain on the spot. The

survivors made peace with the army. The same year died Bishop

Ealstan, who had the bishopric of Sherborn fifty winters, and his

body lies in the town.

A.D. 868. This year the same army went into Mercia to

Nottingham, and there fixed their winter-quarters; and Burhred,

king of the Mercians, with his council, besought Ethered, king of

the West-Saxons, and Alfred, his brother; that they would assist

them in fighting against the army. And they went with the West-

Saxon army into Mercia as far as Nottingham, and there meeting

the army on the works, they beset them within. But there was no

heavy fight; for the Mercians made peace with the army.

A.D. 869. This year the army went back to York, and sat there a

year.

A.D. 870. This year the army rode over Mercia into East-Anglia,

and there fixed their winter-quarters at Thetford. And in the

winter King Edmund fought with them; but the Danes gained the

victory, and slew the king; whereupon they overran all that land,

and destroyed all the monasteries to which they came. The names

of the leaders who slew the king were Hingwar and Hubba. At the

same time came they to Medhamsted, burning and breaking, and

slaying abbot and monks, and all that they there found. They

made such havoc there, that a monastery, which was before full

rich, was now reduced to nothing. The same year died Archbishop

Ceolnoth; and Ethered, Bishop of Witshire, was chosen Archbishop

of Canterbury.

A.D. 871. This year came the army to Reading in Wessex; and in

the course of three nights after rode two earls up, who were met

by Alderman Ethelwulf at Englefield; where he fought with them,

and obtained the victory. There one of them was slain, whose

name was Sidrac. About four nights after this, King Ethered and

Alfred his brother led their main army to Reading, where they

fought with the enemy; and there was much slaughter on either

hand, Alderman Ethelwulf being among the skain; but the Danes

kept possession of the field. And about four nights after this,

King Ethered and Alfred his brother fought with all the army on

Ashdown, and the Danes were overcome. They had two heathen

kings, Bagsac and Healfden, and many earls; and they were in two

divisions; in one of which were Bagsac and Healfden, the heathen

kings, and in the other were the earls. King Ethered therefore

fought with the troops of the kings, and there was King Bagsac

slain; and Alfred his brother fought with the troops of the

earls, and there were slain Earl Sidrac the elder, Earl Sidrac

the younger, Earl Osbern, Earl Frene, and Earl Harold. They

put both the troops to flight; there were many thousands of the

slain, and they continued fighting till night. Within a

fortnight of this, King Ethered and Alfred his brother fought

with the army at Basing; and there the Danes had the victory.

About two months after this, King Ethered and Alfred his brother

fought with the army at Marden. They were in two divisions; and

they put them both to flight, enjoying the victory for some time

during the day; and there was much slaughter on either hand; but

the Danes became masters of the field; and there was slain Bishop

Heahmund, with many other good men. After this fight came a vast

army in the summer to Reading. And after the Easter of this year

died King Ethered. He reigned five years, and his body lies at

Winburn-minster. Then Alfred, his brother, the son of Ethelwulf,

took to the kingdom of Wessex. And within a month of this, King

Alfred fought against all the Army with a small force at Wilton,

and long pursued them during the day; but the Danes got

possession of the field. This year were nine general battles

fought with the army in the kingdom south of the Thames; besides

those skirmishes, in which Alfred the king's brother, and every

single alderman, and the thanes of the king, oft rode against

them; which were accounted nothing. This year also were slain

nine earls, and one king; and the same year the West-Saxons made

peace with the army.

((A.D. 871. And the Danish-men were overcome; and they had two

heathen kings, Bagsac and Halfdene, and many earls; and there was

King Bagsac slain, and these earls; Sidrac the elder, and also

Sidrac the younger, Osbern, Frene, and Harold; and the army was

put to flight.))

A.D. 872. This year went the army to London from Reading, and

there chose their winter-quarters. Then the Mercians made peace

with the army.

A.D. 873. This year went the army against the Northumbrians, and

fixed their winter-quarters at Torksey in Lindsey. And the

Mercians again made peace with the army.

A.D. 874. This year went the army from Lindsey to Repton, and

there took up their winter-quarters, drove the king, Burhred,

over sea, when he had reigned about two and twenty winters, and

subdued all that land. He then went to Rome, and there remained

to the end of his life. And his body lies in the church of

Sancta Maria, in the school of the English nation. And the same

year they gave Ceolwulf, an unwise king's thane, the Mercian

kingdom to hold; and he swore oaths to them, and gave hostages,

that it should be ready for them on whatever day they would have

it; and he would be ready with himself, and with all those that

would remain with him, at the service of the army.

A.D. 875. This year went the army from Repton; and Healfden

advanced with some of the army against the Northumbrians, and

fixed his winter-quarters by the river Tine. The army then

subdued that land, and oft invaded the Picts and the

Strathclydwallians. Meanwhile the three kings, Guthrum, Oskytel,

and Anwind, went from Repton to Cambridge with a vast army, and

sat there one year. This summer King Alfred went out to sea with

an armed fleet, and fought with seven ship-rovers, one of whom he

took, and dispersed the others.

A.D. 876. This year Rolla penetrated Normandy with his army; and

he reigned fifty winters. And this year the army stole into

Wareham, a fort of the West-Saxons. The king afterwards made

peace with them; and they gave him as hostages those who were

worthiest in the army; and swore with oaths on the holy bracelet,

which they would not before to any nation, that they would

readily go out of his kingdom. Then, under colour of this, their

cavalry stole by night into Exeter. The same year Healfden

divided the land of the Northumbrians; so that they became

afterwards their harrowers and plowers.

((A.D. 876. And in this same year the army of the Danes in

England swore oaths to King Alfred upon the holy ring, which

before they would not do to any nation; and they delivered to the

king hostages from among the most distinguished men of the army,

that they would speedily depart from his kingdom; and that by

night they broke.))

A.D. 877. This year came the Danish army into Exeter from

Wareham; whilst the navy sailed west about, until they met with a

great mist at sea, and there perished one hundred and twenty

ships at Swanwich. (36) Meanwhile King Alfred with his army rode

after the cavalry as far as Exeter; but he could not overtake

them before their arrival in the fortress, where they could not

be come at. There they gave him as many hostages as he required,

swearing with solemn oaths to observe the strictest amity. In

the harvest the army entered Mercia; some of which they divided

among them, and some they gave to Ceolwulf.

A.D. 878. This year about mid-winter, after twelfth-night, the

Danish army stole out to Chippenham, and rode over the land of

the West-Saxons; where they settled, and drove many of the people

over sea; and of the rest the greatest part they rode down, and

subdued to their will; -- ALL BUT ALFRED THE KING. He, with a

little band, uneasily sought the woods and fastnesses of the

moors. And in the winter of this same year the brother of

Ingwar and Healfden landed in Wessex, in Devonshire, with three

and twenty ships, and there was he slain, and eight hundred men

with him, and forty of his army. There also was taken the war-

flag, which they called the RAVEN. In the Easter of this year

King Alfred with his little force raised a work at Athelney; from

which he assailed the army, assisted by that part of

Somersetshire which was nighest to it. Then, in the seventh week

after Easter, he rode to Brixton by the eastern side of Selwood;

and there came out to meet him all the people of

Somersersetshire, and Wiltshire, and that part of Hampshire which

is on this side of the sea; and they rejoiced to see him. Then

within one night he went from this retreat to Hey; and within one

night after he proceeded to Heddington; and there fought with all

the army, and put them to flight, riding after them as far as the

fortress, where he remained a fortnight. Then the army gave him

hostages with many oaths, that they would go out of his kingdom.

They told him also, that their king would receive baptism. And

they acted accordingly; for in the course of three weeks after,

King Guthrum, attended by some thirty of the worthiest men that

were in the army, came to him at Aller, which is near Athelney,

and there the king became his sponsor in baptism; and his

crisom-leasing was at Wedmor. He was there twelve nights with

the king, who honoured him and his attendants with many presents.

A.D. 879. This year went the army from Chippenham to

Cirencester, and sat there a year. The same year assembled a

band of pirates, and sat at Fulham by the Thames. The same year

also the sun was eclipsed one hour of the day.

A.D. 880. This year went the army from Cirencester into East-

Anglia, where they settled, and divided the land. The same year

went the army over sea, that before sat at Fulham, to Ghent in

Frankland, and sat there a year.

A.D. 881. This year went the army higher up into Frankland, and

the Franks fought with them; and there was the army horsed after

the battle.

A.D. 882. This year went the army up along the Maese far into

Frankland, and there sat a year; and the same year went King

Alfred out to sea with a fleet; and fought with four ship-rovers

of the Danes, and took two of their ships; wherein all the men

were slain; and the other two surrendered; but the men were

severely cut and wounded ere they surrendered.

A.D. 883. This year went the army up the Scheldt to Conde, and

there sat a year. And Pope Marinus sent King Alfred the "lignum

Domini". The same year led Sighelm and Athelstan to Rome the

alms which King Alfred ordered thither, and also in India to St.

Thomas and to St. Bartholomew. Then they sat against the army at

London; and there, with the favour of God, they were very

successful after the performance of their vows.

A.D. 884. This year went the army up the Somne to Amiens, and

there remained a year. This year died the benevolent Bishop

Athelwold.

A.D. 885. This year separated the before-mentioned army in two;

one part east, another to Rochester. This city they surrounded,

and wrought another fortress around themselves. The people,

however, defended the city, until King Alfred came out with his

army. Then went the enemy to their ships, and forsook their

work. There were they provided with horses; and soon after, in

the same summer, they went over sea again. The same year sent

King Alfred a fleet from Kent into East-Anglia. As soon as they

came to Stourmouth, there met them sixteen ships of the pirates.

And they fought with them, took all the ships, and slew the men.

As they returned homeward with their booty, they met a large

fleet of the pirates, and fought with them the same day; but the

Danes had the victory. The same year, ere midwinter, died

Charles, king of the Franks. He was slain by a boar; and one

year before his brother died, who had also the Western kingdom.

They were both the sons of Louis, who also had the Western

kingdom, and died the same year that the sun was eclipsed. He

was the son of that Charles whose daughter Ethelwulf, king of the

West-Saxons, had to wife. And the same year collected a great

fleet against Old-Saxony; and there was a great fight twice in

the year, and the Saxons had the victory. There were the

Frieslanders with them. And the same year succeeded Charles to

the Western kingdom, and to all the territory this side of the

Mediterranean and beyond, as his great-grandfather held it,

except the Lidwiccians. The said Charles was the son of Louis,

who was the brother of that Charles who was the father of Judith,

whom Ethelwulf, king of the West-Saxons, married. They were the

sons of Louis, who was the son of the elder Charles, who was the

son of Pepin. The same year died the good Pope Martin, who freed

the English school at the request of Alfred, king of the

West-Saxons. And he sent him great gifts in relics, and a part

of the rood on which Christ suffered. And the same year the army

in East-Anglia brake the truce with King Alfred.

A.D. 886. This year went the army back again to the west, that

before were bent eastward; and proceeding upwards along the

Seine, fixed their winter-quarters in the city of Paris. (37)

The same year also King Alfred fortified the city of London; and

the whole English nation turned to him, except that part of it

which was held captive by the Danes. He then committed the city

to the care of Alderman Ethered, to hold it under him.

A.D. 887. This year the army advanced beyond the bridge at

Paris; (38) and then upwards, along the Seine, to the Marne.

Then upwards on the Marne as far as Chezy; and in their two

stations, there and on the Yonne, they abode two winters. This

same year died Charles, king of the Franks. Arnulf, his

brother's son, had six weeks before his death bereft him of his

kingdom; which was now divided into five portions, and five kings

were consecrated thereto. This, however, was done with the

consent of Arnulf; and they agreed that they should hold in

subjection to him; because none of them had by birth any claim on

the father's side, except him alone. Arnulf, therefore, dwelt in

the country eastward of the Rhine; Rodulf took to the middle

district; Oda to the western; whilst Berenger and Witha became

masters of Lombardy and the Cisalpine territory. But they held

their dominion in great discord; fought two general battles, and

frequently overran the country in partial encounters, displacing

each other several times. The same year also, in which the

Danish army advanced beyond the bridge at Paris, Alderman

Ethelhelm led the alms of the West-Saxons and of King Alfred to

Rome.

A.D. 888. This year Alderman Beeke conducted the alms of the

West-Saxons and of King Alfred to Rome; but Queen Ethelswith, who

was the sister of King Alfred, died on the way to Rome; and her

body lies at Pavia. The same year also Ethered, Archbishop of

Canterbury and Alderman Ethelwold, died in one month.

A.D. 889. This year there was no journey to Rome; except that

King Alfred sent two messengers with letters.

A.D. 890. This year Abbot Bernhelm conducted the alms of the

West-Saxons and of King Alfred to Rome; and Guthrum, king of the

Northern men, departed this life, whose baptismal name was

Athelstan. He was the godson of King Alfred; and he abode among

the East-Angles, where he first established a settlement. The

same year also went the army from the Seine to Saint Lo, which is

between the Bretons and the Franks; where the Bretons fought with

them, obtained the victory, and drove them out into a river, in

which many of them were drowned. This year also was Plegmund

chosen by God and all his saints to the archbishopric in

Canterbury.

A.D. 891. This year went the army eastward; and King Arnulf

fought with the land-force, ere the ships arrived, in conjunction

with the eastern Franks, and Saxons, and Bavarians, and put them

to flight. And three Scots came to King Alfred in a boat without

any oars from Ireland; whence they stole away, because they would

live in a state of pilgrimage, for the love of God, they recked

not where. The boat in which they came was made of two hides and

a half; and they took with them provisions for seven nights; and

within seven nights they came to land in Cornwall, and soon after

went to King Alfred. They were thus named: Dubslane, and

Macbeth, and Maelinmun. And Swinney, the best teacher that was

among the Scots, departed this life. And the same year after

Easter, about the gang-days or before, appeared the star that men

in book-Latin call "cometa": some men say that in English it may

be termed "hairy star"; for that there standeth off from it a

long gleam of light, whilom on one side, whilom on each.

A.D. 893. This year went the large army, that we before spoke

about, back from the eastern district westward to Bologne; and

there were shipped; so that they transported themselves over at

one time with their horses withal. And they came up with two

hundred and fifty ships into the mouth of the Limne, which is in

East-Kent, at the east end of the vast wood that we call Andred.

This wood is in length, east and west, one hundred and twenty

miles, or longer, and thirty miles broad. The river that we

before spoke about lieth out of the weald. On this river they

towed up their ships as far as the weald, four miles from the

mouth outwards; and there destroyed a fort within the fen,

whereon sat a few churls, and which was hastily wrought. Soon

after this came Hasten up with eighty ships into the mouth of the

Thames, and wrought him there a work at Milton, and the other

army at Appledore.

A.D. 894. This year, that was about twelve months after they had

wrought a work in the eastern district, the Northumbrians and

East-Angles had given oaths to King Alfred, and the East-Angles

six hostages; nevertheless, contrary to the truce, as oft as the

other plunderers went out with all their army, then went they

also, either with them, or in a separate division. Upon this

King Alfred gathered his army, and advanced, so that he encamped

between the two armies at the highest point he could find

defended by wood and by water, that he might reach either, if

they would seek any field. Then went they forth in quest of the

wealds, in troops and companies, wheresoever the country was

defenceless. But they were also sought after most days by other

companies, either by day or by night, both from the army and also

from the towns. The king had divided his army into two parts; so

that they were always half at home, half out; besides the men

that should maintain the towns. The army came not all out of

their stations more than twice; once, when they first came to

land, ere the forces were collected, and again, when they wished

to depart from their stations. They had now seized much booty,

and would ferry it northward over Thames into Essex, to meet

their ships. But the army rode before them, fought with them at

Farnham, routed their forces, and there arrested the booty. And

they flew over Thames without any ford, then up by the Colne on

an island. Then the king's forces beset them without as long as

they had food; but they had their time set, and their meat noted.

And the king was advancing thitherwards on his march with the

division that accompanied him. But while he was advancing

thitherwards, the other force was returning homewards. The

Danes, however, still remained behind; for their king was wounded

in the fight, so that they could not carry him. Then collected

together those that dwell in Northumbria and East-Anglia about a

hundred ships, and went south about; and with some forty more

went north about, and besieged a fort in Devonshire by the north

sea; and those who went south about beset Exeter. When the king

heard that, then went he west towards Exeter with all his force,

except a very considerable part of the eastern army, who advanced

till they came to London; and there being joined by the citizens

and the reinforcements that came from the west, they went east to

Barnfleet. Hasten was there with his gang, who before were

stationed at Milton, and also the main army had come thither,

that sat before in the mouth of the Limne at Appledore. Hasten

had formerly constructed that work at Barnfleet, and was then

gone out on plunder, the main army being at home. Then came the

king's troops, and routed the enemy, broke down the work, took

all that was therein money, women, and children and brought all

to London. And all the ships they either broke to pieces, or

burned, or brought to London or to Rochester. And Hasten's wife

and her two sons they brought to the king, who returned them to

him, because one of them was his godson, and the other Alderman

Ethered's. They had adopted them ere Hasten came to Bamfleet;

when he had given them hostages and oaths, and the king had also

given him many presents; as he did also then, when he returned

the child and the wife. And as soon as they came to Bamfleet,

and the work was built, then plundered he in the same quarter of

his kingdom that Ethered his compeer should have held; and at

another time he was plundering in the same district when his work

was destroyed. The king then went westward with the army toward

Exeter, as I before said, and the army had beset the city; but

whilst he was gone they went to their ships. Whilst he was thus

busied there with the army, in the west, the marauding parties

were both gathered together at Shobury in Essex, and there built

a fortress. Then they both went together up by the Thames, and a

great concourse joined them, both from the East-Angles and from

the Northumbrians. They then advanced upward by the Thames, till

they arrived near the Severn. Then they proceeded upward by the

Severn. Meanwhile assembled Alderman Ethered, Alderman Ethelm,

Alderman Ethelnoth, and the king's thanes, who were employed at

home at the works, from every town east of the Parret, as well as

west of Selwood, and from the parts east and also north of the

Thames and west of the Severn, and also some part of North-Wales.

When they were all collected together, they overtook the rear of

the enemy at Buttington on the banks of the Severn, and there

beset them without on each side in a fortress. When they had sat

there many weeks on both sides of the water, and the king

meanwhile was in Devonshire westward with the naval force, then

were the enemy weighed down with famine. They had devoured the

greater part of their horses; and the rest had perished with

hunger. Then went they out to the men that sat on the eastern

side of the river, and fought with them; but the Christians had

the victory. And there Ordhelm, the king's thane, was slain; and

also many other king's thanes; and of the Danes there were many

slain, and that part of them that came away escaped only by

flight. As soon as they came into Essex to their fortress, and

to their ships, then gathered the remnant again in East-Anglia

and from the Northumbrians a great force before winter, and

having committed their wives and their ships and their booty to

the East-Angles, they marched on the stretch by day and night,

till they arrived at a western city in Wirheal that is called

Chester. There the army could not overtake them ere they arrived

within the work: they beset the work though, without, some two

days, took all the cattle that was thereabout, slew the men whom

they could overtake without the work, and all the corn they

either burned or consumed with their horses every evening. That

was about a twelvemonth since they first came hither over sea.

A.D. 895. Soon after that, in this year, went the army from

Wirheal into North-Wales; for they could not remain there,

because they were stripped both of the cattle and the corn that

they had acquired by plunder. When they went again out of North-

Wales with the booty they had acquired there, they marched over

Northumberland and East-Anglia, so that the king's army could not

reach them till they came into Essex eastward, on an island that

is out at sea, called Mersey. And as the army returned homeward

that had beset Exeter, they went up plundering in Sussex nigh

Chichester; but the townsmen put them to flight, and slew many

hundreds of them, and took some of their ships. Then, in the

same year, before winter, the Danes, who abode in Mersey, towed

their ships up on the Thames, and thence up the Lea. That was

about two years after that they came hither over sea.

A.D. 896. This same year wrought the aforesaid army a work by

the Lea, twenty miles above the city of London. Then. in the

summer of this year, went a large party of the citizens. and also

of other folk, and made an attack on the work of the Danes; but

they were there routed, and some four of the king's thanes were

slain. In the harvest afterward the king encamped close to the

city, whilst they reaped their corn, that the Danes might not

deprive them of the crop. Then, some day, rode the king up by

the river; and observed a place where the river might be

obstructed, so that they could not bring out their ships. And

they did so. They wrought two works on the two sides of the

river. And when they had begun the work, and encamped before it,

then understood the army that they could not bring out their

ships. Whereupon they left them, and went over land, till they

came to Quatbridge by Severn; and there wrought a work. Then

rode the king's army westward after the enemy. And the men of

London fetched the ships; and all that they could not lead away

they broke up; but all that were worthy of capture they brought

into the port of London. And the Danes procured an asylum for

their wives among the East-Angles, ere they went out of the fort.

During the winter they abode at Quatbridge. That was about three

years since they came hither over sea into the mouth of the

Limne.

A.D. 897. In the summer of this year went the army, some into

East-Anglia, and some into Northumbria; and those that were

penniless got themselves ships, and went south over sea to the

Seine. The enemy had not, thank God. entirely destroyed the

English nation; but they were much more weakened in these three

years by the disease of cattle, and most of all of men; so that

many of the mightiest of the king's thanes. that were in the

land, died within the three years. Of these. one was Swithulf

Bishop of Rochester, Ceolmund alderman in Kent, Bertulf alderman

in Essex, Wulfred alderman in Hampshire, Elhard Bishop of

Dorchester, Eadulf a king's thane in Sussex, Bernuff governor of

Winchester, and Egulf the king's horse-thane; and many also with

them; though I have named only the men of the highest rank. This

same year the plunderers in East-Anglia and Northumbria greatly

harassed the land of the West-Saxons by piracies on the southern

coast, but most of all by the esks which they built many years

before. Then King Alfred gave orders for building long ships

against the esks, which were full-nigh twice as long as the

others. Some had sixty oars, some more; and they were both

swifter and steadier, and also higher than the others. They were

not shaped either after the Frisian or the Danish model, but so

as he himself thought that they might be most serviceable. Then,

at a certain turn of this same year, came six of their ships to

the Isle of Wight; and going into Devonshire, they did much

mischief both there and everywhere on the seacoast. Then

commanded the king his men to go out against them with nine of

the new ships, and prevent their escape by the mouth of the river

to the outer sea. Then came they out against them with three

ships, and three others were standing upwards above the mouth on

dry land: for the men were gone off upon shore. Of the first

three ships they took two at the mouth outwards, and slew the

men; the third veered off, but all the men were slain except

five; and they too were severely wounded. Then came onward those

who manned the other ships, which were also very uneasily

situated. Three were stationed on that side of the deep where

the Danish ships were aground, whilst the others were all on the

opposite side; so that none of them could join the rest; for the

water had ebbed many furlongs from them. Then went the Danes

from their three ships to those other three that were on their

side, be-ebbed; and there they then fought. There were slain

Lucomon, the king's reve, and Wulfheard, a Frieslander; Ebb, a

Frieslander, and Ethelere, a Frieslander; and Ethelferth, the

king's neat-herd; and of all the men, Frieslanders and English,

sixty-two; of the Danes a hundred and twenty. The tide, however,

reached the Danish ships ere the Christians could shove theirs

out; whereupon they rowed them out; but they were so crippled,

that they could not row them beyond the coast of Sussex: there

two of them the sea drove ashore; and the crew were led to

Winchester to the king, who ordered them to be hanged. The men

who escaped in the single ship came to East-Anglia, severely

wounded. This same year were lost no less than twenty ships, and

the men withal, on the southern coast. Wulfric, the king's

horse-thane, who was also viceroy of Wales, died the same year.

A.D. 898. This year died Ethelm, alderman of Wiltshire, nine

nights before midsummer; and Heahstan, who was Bishop of London.

A.D. 901. This year died ALFRED, the son of Ethelwulf, six

nights before the mass of All Saints. He was king over all the

English nation, except that part that was under the power of the

Danes. He held the government one year and a half less than

thirty winters; and then Edward his son took to the government.

Then Prince Ethelwald, the son of his paternal uncle, rode

against the towns of Winburn and of Twineham, without leave of

the king and his council. Then rode the king with his army; so

that he encamped the same night at Badbury near Winburn; and

Ethelwald remained within the town with the men that were under

him, and had all the gates shut upon him, saying, that he would

either there live or there die. But in the meantime he stole

away in the night, and sought the army in Northumberland. The

king gave orders to ride after him; but they were not able to

overtake him. The Danes, however, received him as their king.

They then rode after the wife that Ethelwald had taken without

the king's leave, and against the command of the bishops; for she

was formerly consecrated a nun. In this year also died Ethered,

who was alderman of Devonshire, four weeks before King Alfred.

A.D. 902. This year was the great fight at the Holme (39)

between the men of Kent and the Danes.

((A.D. 902. This year Elswitha died.))

A.D. 903. This year died Alderman Ethelwulf, the brother of

Elhswitha, mother of King Edward; and Virgilius abbot of the

Scots; and Grimbald the mass-priest; on the eighth day of July.

This same year was consecrated the new minster at Winchester, on

St. Judoc's advent.

A.D. 904. This year came Ethelwald hither over sea with all the

fleet that he could get, and he was submitted to in Essex. This

year the moon was eclipsed.

A.D. 905. This year Ethelwald enticed the army in East-Anglia to

rebellion; so that they overran all the land of Mercia, until

they came to Cricklade, where they forded the Thames; and having

seized, either in Bradon or thereabout, all that they could lay

their hands upon, they went homeward again. King Edward went

after, as soon as he could gather his army, and overran all their

land between the foss and the Ouse quite to the fens northward.

Then being desirous of returning thence, he issued an order

through the whole army, that they should all go out at once. But

the Kentish men remained behind, contrary to his order, though he

had sent seven messengers to them. Whereupon the army surrounded

them, and there they fought. There fell Aldermen Siwulf and

Sigelm; Eadwold, the king's thane; Abbot Kenwulf; Sigebriht, the

son of Siwulf; Eadwald, the son of Acca; and many also with them;

though I have named the most considerable. On the Danish side

were slain Eohric their king, and Prince Ethelwald, who had

enticed them to the war. Byrtsige, the son of Prince Brihtnoth;

Governor Ysop; Governor Oskytel; and very many also with them

that we now cannot name. And there was on either hand much

slaughter made; but of the Danes there were more slain, though

they remained masters of the field. Ealswitha died this same

year; and a comet appeared on the thirteenth day before the

calends of November.

((A.D. 906. This year King Edward, from necessity, concluded a

peace both with the army of East-Anglia and of North-humbria.))

A.D. 907. This year died Alfred, who was governor of Bath. The

same year was concluded the peace at Hitchingford, as King Edward

decreed, both with the Danes of East-Anglia, and those of

Northumberland; and Chester was rebuilt.

A.D. 909. This year died Denulf, who was Bishop of Winchester;

and the body of St. Oswald was translated from Bardney into

Mercia.

A.D. 910. This year Frithestan took to the bishopric of

Winchester; and Asser died soon after, who was Bishop o[

Sherborne. The same year King Edward sent an army both from

Wessex and Mercia, which very much harassed the northern army by

their attacks on men and property of every kind. They slew many

of the Danes, and remained in the country five weeks. This year

the Angles and the Danes fought at Tootenhall; and the Angles had

the victory. The same year Ethelfleda built the fortress at

Bramsbury.

((A.D. 910. This year the army of the Angles and of the Danes

fought at Tootenhall. And Ethelred, ealdor of the Mercians,

died; and King Edward took possession of London, and of Oxford,

and of all the lands which owed obedience thereto. And a great

fleet came hither from the south, from the Lidwiccas (Brittany),

and greatly ravaged by the Severn; but they were, afterwards,

almost all perished.))

A.D. 911. This year the army in Northumberland broke the truce,

and despised every right that Edward and his son demanded of

them; and plundered the land of the Mercians. The king had

gathered together about a hundred ships, and was then in Kent

while the ships were sailing along sea by the south-east to meet

him. The army therefore supposed that the greatest part of his

force was in the ships, and that they might go, without being

attacked, where that ever they would. When the king learned on

enquiry that they were gone out on plunder, he sent his army both

from Wessex and Mercia; and they came up with the rear of the

enemy as he was on his way homeward, and there fought with him

and put him to flight, and slew many thousands of his men. There

fell King Eowils, and King Healfden; Earls Ohter and Scurf;

Governors Agmund, Othulf, and Benesing; Anlaf the Swarthy, and

Governor Thunferth; Osferth the collector, and Governor

Guthferth.

((A.D. 911. Then the next year after this died Ethelred, lord of

the Mercians.))

A.D. 912. This year died Ethered, alderman of Mercia; and King

Edward took to London, and to Oxford, and to all the lands that

thereunto belonged. This year also came Ethelfleda, lady of the

Mercians, on the holy eve called the invention of the holy cross,

to Shergate, and built the fortress there, and the same year that

at Bridgenorth.

A.D. 913. This year, about Martinmas, King Edward had the

northern fortress built at Hertford, betwixt the Memer, and the

Benwic, and the Lea. After this, in the summer, betwixt gang-

days and midsummer, went King Edward with some of his force into

Essex, to Maldon; and encamped there the while that men built and

fortified the town of Witham. And many of the people submitted

to him, who were before under the power of the Danes. And some

of his force, meanwhile, built the fortress at Hertford on the

south side of the Lea. This year by the permission of God went

Ethelfleda, lady of Mercia, with all the Mercians to Tamworth;

and built the fort there in the fore-part of the summer; and

before Lammas that at Stafford: in the next year that at

Eddesbury, in the beginning of the summer; and the same year,

late in the autumn, that at Warwick. Then in the following year

was built, after mid-winter, that at Chirbury and that at

Warburton; and the same year before mid-winter that at Runkorn.

((A.D. 915. This year was Warwick built.))

A.D. 916. This year was the innocent Abbot Egbert slain, before

midsummer, on the sixteenth day before the calends of July. The

same day was the feast of St. Ciricius the martyr, with his

companions. And within three nights sent Ethelfleda an army into

Wales, and stormed Brecknock; and there took the king's wife,

with some four and thirty others.

A.D. 917. This year rode the army, after Easter, out of

Northampton and Leicester; and having broken the truce they slew

many men at Hookerton and thereabout. Then, very soon after

this, as the others came home, they found other troops that were

riding out against Leighton. But the inhabitants were aware of

it; and having fought with them they put them into full flight;

and arrested all that they had taken, and also of their horses

and of their weapons a good deal.

A.D. 918. This year came a great naval armament over hither

south from the Lidwiccians; (40) and two earls with it, Ohter and

Rhoald. They went then west about, till they entered the mouth

of the Severn; and plundered in North-Wales everywhere by the

sea, where it then suited them; and took Camlac the bishop in

Archenfield, and led him with them to their ships; whom King

Edward afterwards released for forty pounds. After this went the

army all up; and would proceed yet on plunder against

Archenfield; but the men of Hertford met them, and of Glocester,

and of the nighest towns; and fought with them, and put them to

flight; and they slew the Earl Rhoald, and the brother of Ohter

the other earl, and many of the army. And they drove them into a

park; and beset them there without, until they gave them

hostages, that they would depart from the realm of King Edward.

And the king had contrived that a guard should be set against

them on the south side of Severnmouth; west from Wales, eastward

to the mouth of the Avon; so that they durst nowhere seek that

land on that side. Nevertheless, they eluded them at night, by

stealing up twice; at one time to the east of Watchet, and at

another time at Porlock. There was a great slaughter each time;

so that few of them came away, except those only who swam out to

the ships. Then sat they outward on an island, called the Flat-

holms; till they were very short of meat, and many men died of

hunger, because they could not reach any meat. Thence went they

to Dimmet, and then out to Ireland. This was in harvest. After

this, in the same year, before Martinmas, went King Edward to

Buckingham with his army, and sat there four weeks, during which

he built the two forts on either side of the water, ere he

departed thence. And Earl Thurkytel sought him for his lord; and

all the captains, and almost all the first men that belonged to

Bedford; and also many of those that belonged to Northampton.

This year Ethelfleda, lady of the Mercians, with the help of God,

before Laminas, conquered the town called Derby, with all that

thereto belonged; and there were also slain four of her thanes,

that were most dear to her, within the gates.

((A.D. 918. But very shortly after they had become so, she died

at Tamworth, twelve days before midsummer, the eighth year of her

having rule and right lordship over the Mercians; and her body

lies at Gloucester, within the east porch of St. Peter's

church.))

A.D. 919. This year King Edward went with his army to Bedford,

before Martinmas, and conquered the town; and almost all the

burgesses, who obeyed him before, returned to him; and he sat

there four weeks, and ordered the town to be repaired on the

south side of the water, ere he departed thence.

((A.D. 919. This year also the daughter of Ethelred, lord of the

Mercians, was deprived of all dominion over the Mercians, and

carried into Wessex, three weeks before mid-winter; she was

called Elfwina.))

**ENDNOTES:**

(27) Beorgforda, Ethelw.; Beorhtforda, Flor.; Hereford and

 Bereford, H. Hunt; Beorford, M. West. This battle of

 Burford has been considerably amplified by Henry of

 Huntingdon, and after him by Matthew of Westminster. The

 former, among other absurdities, talks of "Amazonian"

 battle-axes. They both mention the banner of the "golden

 dragon" etc.

(28) The minuteness of this narrative, combined with the

 simplicity of it, proves that it was written at no great

 distance of time from the event. It is the first that

 occurs of any length in the older MSS. of the "Saxon

 Chronicle".

(29) Penga in the original, i.e. "of pence", or "in pence";

 because the silver penny, derived from the Roman "denarius",

 was the standard coin in this country for more than a

 thousand years. It was also used as a weight, being the

 twentieth part of an ounce.

(30) Since called "sheriff"; i.e. the reve, or steward, of the

 shire. "Exactor regis". -- Ethelw.

(31) This is the Grecian method of computation; between the hours

 of three and six in the morning. It must be recollected,

 that before the distribution of time into hours, minutes,

 and seconds, the day and night were divided into eight equal

 portions, containing three hours each; and this method was

 continued long afterwards by historians.

(32) This wanton act of barbarity seems to have existed only in

 the depraved imagination of the Norman interpolator of the

 "Saxon Annals", who eagerly and impatiently dispatches the

 story thus, in order to introduce the subsequent account of

 the synod at Bapchild, so important in his eyes. Hoveden

 and Wallingford and others have repeated the idle tale; but

 I have not hitherto found it in any historian of authority.

(33) St. Kenelm is said to have succeeded Cenwulf:

 "In the foure and twentithe yere of his kyngdom

 Kenulf wente out of this worlde, and to the joye of

 hevene com;

 It was after that oure Lord in his moder alygte

 Eigte hondred yet and neygentene, by a countes rigte,

 Seint Kenelm his yonge sone in his sevende yere

 Kyng was ymad after him, theg he yong were."

 -- "Vita S. Kenelmi, MS. Coll. Trin Oxon."

 No. 57.Arch.

(34) i.e. the Danes; or, as they are sometimes called, Northmen,

 which is a general term including all those numerous tribes

 that issued at different times from the north of Europe,

 whether Danes, Norwegians, Sweons, Jutes, or Goths, etc.;

 who were all in a state of paganism at this time.

(35) Aetheredus, -- Asser, Ethelwerd, etc. We have therefore

 adopted this orthography.

(36) It is now generally written, as pronounced, "Swanage".

(37) For a more circumstantial account of the Danish or Norman

 operations against Paris at this time, the reader may

 consult Felibien, "Histoire de la Ville de Paris", liv. iii.

 and the authorities cited by him in the margin. This is

 that celebrated siege of Paris minutely described by Abbo,

 Abbot of Fleury, in two books of Latin hexameters; which,

 however barbarous, contain some curious and authentic matter

 relating to the history of that period.

(38) This bridge was built, or rebuilt on a larger plan than

 before, by Charles the Bald, in the year 861, "to prevent

 the Danes or Normans (says Felibien) from making themselves

 masters of Paris so easily as they had already done so many

 times," etc. -- "pour empescher que les Normans ne se

 rendissent maistres de Paris aussi facilement qu'ils

 l'avoient deja fait tant de lois," etc. -- Vol. i. p. 91,

 folio. It is supposed to be the famous bridge afterwards

 called "grand pont" or "pont au change", -- the most ancient

 bridge at Paris, and the only one which existed at this

 time.

(39) Or, in Holmsdale, Surry: hence the proverb --

 "This is Holmsdale,

 Never conquer'd, never shall."

(40) The pirates of Armorica, now Bretagne; so called, because

 they abode day and night in their ships; from lid, a ship,

 and wiccian, to watch or abide day and night.



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