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The *Durham Latin Prose “Brut”* to 1347
with a Continuation to 1348:
A Nationalistic Chronicle of England
and Its Manuscripts

TREVOR RUSSELL SMITH
University of Leeds

THE UNEDITED *DURHAM LATIN Prose “Brut,”* as I have named it, covers the history of England from Brutus to the English *annus mirabilis* of 1346–47.¹ In this year the English enjoyed great success against their long-term enemy of Scotland at Neville’s Cross and more recent enemy of France at Crécy and Calais. The text was written shortly

This research was supported by a Postdoctoral Fellowship in the Arts and Humanities Research Institute, University of Leeds, and images are reproduced with the support of Michael Livingston.

1 The only sustained investigation of the text is by Offler as an appendix: Hilary S. Offler, “A Note on the *Northern Franciscan Chronicle*,” *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 28 (1984): 45–59, appendix at 57–59. For the many writings discussed throughout this article, see the following reference works: Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England*, 2 vols. (London: Routledge, 1974–82); John Taylor, *English Historical Literature in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987); R. Graeme Dunphy, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle* (Leiden: Brill, 2010–), <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/encyclopedia-of-the-medieval-chronicle>; Trevor Russell Smith, “National Identity, Propaganda, and the Ethics of War in English Historical Literature, 1327–77” (Ph.D. thesis, University of Leeds, 2017), 205–65.

after these victories, around the middle of the fourteenth century, and the focus and marks of ownership in its earliest manuscript suggest it was written at or for Durham Cathedral, and perhaps by a Durham monk.² The *Durham "Brut"* is particularly important for sharing elements of its later narrative with three other major late medieval English chronicles and can help us to better understand the writing of history in northern England in the period. It survives in three manuscripts, one of which is identified and examined for the first time in this article. This previously unknown manuscript is key to establishing the relationships between these manuscripts and therefore the development of the text. Additionally, this new manuscript includes the continuation of the text to 1348, so far entirely overlooked and known only in a copy added to one of the other manuscripts in an early modern hand, and thus proves it to be a genuine medieval composition.

The chronicle takes the form of a *Brut* chronicle, in that it argues that the English inherit the right to rule all of Britain from its legendary founder Brutus, but it is not ultimately derived from the actual *Brut* chronicles. The first *Prose Brut*, properly speaking, is the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* (to 1272).³ It draws on a variety of sources and was finished at some point during the reign of Edward I. It was then independently adapted and continued in the late 1330s in the *Short* and *Long Anglo-Norman Prose Bruts* (each to 1333).⁴

2 The *terminus post quem* is August 1347 (the latest event mentioned is Edward III's capture of Calais, although the narrative ends with England's mid-May 1347 campaigns in Scotland), and the *terminus ante quem* is the end of the third quarter of the fourteenth century (the hand of the earliest text, in the Durham manuscript, is dated s. xiv^{3/4}). For the dating of the hand, see Gameson's manuscript catalogue entry at n. 68 below, and for it being written in Durham, see Offler, "Note on the *Northern Franciscan Chronicle*," 46.

3 The *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose "Brut" Chronicle*, ed. Julia Marvin (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006). On the *Brut* tradition, see also Friedrich W. D. Brie, *Geschichte und Quellen der mittellenglischen Prosachronik "The Brute of England" oder "The Chronicles of England"* (Marburg: Friedrich, 1905); Lister M. Matheson, *The Prose "Brut": The Development of a Middle English Chronicle* (Tempe: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1998); Marvin, *The Construction of Vernacular History in the Anglo-Norman Prose "Brut" Chronicle: The Manuscript Culture of Late Medieval England* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2017), esp. 1–15; Smith, "National Identity, Propaganda, and War," 211–20.

4 Not fully edited. A section of a peculiar *Short Brut* manuscript is edited by Childs and Taylor, a group of three peculiar *Short Brut* manuscripts is edited by Pagan, and a late peculiar

The *Short Brut* was translated into Latin in the mid-fourteenth century as the *Canterbury Latin Prose Brut* (to 1326 only),⁵ while the *Long Brut* was translated into Middle English in the late fourteenth century and received many continuations and variant versions through the fifteenth century.⁶ This type of history writing that focused on English dominance was particularly popular in the fourteenth century, during which England suffered numerous raids and invasions from the Scots. One of these, David II's 1346 invasion that ended with the English victory at Neville's Cross, is narrated in some detail right before the end of the *Durham "Brut."*

The *Durham "Brut"* fits into the tradition of the pseudo-*Brut* chronicles that take the general form of the *Brut* but do not draw their text from the *Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut* or any of its derivative versions.⁷ Much of the *Durham "Brut"* is derived, in one way or another, from known sources, most obviously Geoffrey of Monmouth's *De gestis Britonum* for its early years⁸ and John of Tynemouth's *Historia aurea* for 1328–38.⁹ The chronicler

version of the *Long Brut* is transcribed by Maxwell (but with errors here and there, such as mistaking Us for Ns and vice versa), but none of these compare their texts to the tradition as a whole: *The Anonimale Chronicle, 1307 to 1334, from Brotherton Collection MS 29*, ed. Wendy R. Childs and John Taylor, Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Record Series 147 (Leeds: Yorkshire Archaeological Society, 1991); *Prose Brut to 1332*, ed. Heather Pagan, Anglo-Norman Text Society, Annual Texts 69 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011); "The Anglo-Norman Prose *Brut*: An Edition of British Library, MS Cotton Cleopatra D III," ed. Marcia Lusk Maxwell (Ph.D. diss., Michigan State University, 1995).

5 Unedited. Only one witness of the *Short Brut* ends at 1326, but it is unclear if this is the source of the *Canterbury Latin Prose Brut*: Cambridge, University Library, MS Mm I 33 (2294), fols. 1r–62v (s. XIV²). See Brie, *Geschichte und Quellen der mittelhochdeutschen Brute*, 127–30; Canterbury Anonymous, *Chronicon: Chronicle, 1346–1365*, ed. Charity Scott-Stokes and Chris Given-Wilson, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2008), xii–xx.

6 *The Brut, or the Chronicles of England*, ed. Friedrich W. D. Brie, Early English Text Society, Original Series, 131, 136, 2 vols. (London: Paul, 1906–8). Scholarship on the *Middle English Prose Brut* is extensive, one suspects because the text is in Middle English and readily available in an EETS edition, but see Matheson, *Prose "Brut."*

7 See also Heather Pagan, "When Is a *Brut* No Longer a *Brut*? The Example of Cambridge, University Library, Dd 10 32," in *L'Historia regum Britannie et les "Bruts" en Europe*, ed. Hélène Tétrel and Géraldine Veyseyre, 2 vols. (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2015–18), 1:179–92.

8 Geoffrey of Monmouth, *De gestis Britonum*, ed. Michael D. Reeve (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2007). See also Smith, "National Identity, Propaganda, and War," 70 n. 187.

9 Unedited. No witnesses end at 1338. The fullest witness is London, Lambeth Palace Library, MSS 10–12 (s. XIV), but see also an abridged version in Cambridge, Jesus College,

does not directly copy large sections from its sources, as is implied by Hilary S. Offler, but makes careful and deliberate changes to them that merit further study. He focuses mostly on England and its relations with its enemies, Scotland and France.

The final section of the text, for 1338–47, is particularly valuable because it shares sections of its narrative with several other chronicles and seems to point to a now-lost source chronicle that might be approached through a careful comparison of the related texts.¹⁰ Offler argues that this source, the so-called *Minorite Chronicle* (alternatively titled the *Northern Franciscan Chronicle*), was also used for sections of the *Anonimalle Chronicle* (for 1333–47),¹¹ *Lanercost Chronicle* (for 1333–47),¹² and John of Washington's *De primordio et progressu sedis episcopalis* (for 1346).¹³ Offler shows how the text is quite similar to *Lanercost's* here, although the latter includes much additional

MS Q B 7 (24), fols. 111r–124r (s. xiv), both of which end in 1347 and are traced to the Benedictine Cathedral Priory of St Cuthbert, Durham. See also Vivian H. Galbraith, "The *Historia aurea* of John, Vicar of Tynemouth, and the Sources of the *St Albans Chronicle* (1327–1377)," in *Essays in History Presented to Reginald Lane Poole*, ed. Henry W. C. Davis (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927), 379–98; Galbraith, "Extracts from the *Historia aurea* and a French 'Brut' (1317–47)," *English Historical Review* 43 (1928): 203–17; Neil R. Ker et al., ed., *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Bodleian Libraries, 2015–), <http://mlgb3.bodleian.ox.ac.uk>; Smith, "National Identity, Propaganda, and War," 261–64.

10 Offler, "Note on the *Northern Franciscan Chronicle*."

11 *The Anonimalle Chronicle, 1333 to 1381, from a MS Written at St. Mary's Abbey, York*, rev. ed., ed. Vivian H. Galbraith (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1970), at 1–28. See also Albert F. Pollard, "The Authorship and Value of the *Anonimalle Chronicle*," *English Historical Review* 53 (1938): 577–605.

12 *Chronicon de Lanercost, 1201–1346, e codice cottoniano*, ed. Joseph Stevenson (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Printing Company, 1839), at 274–352. See also Andrew G. Little, "The Authorship of the *Lanercost Chronicle*," *English Historical Review* 31–32 (1916–17): 269–79, 48–49; Annette Kehnel, "The Narrative Tradition of the Medieval Franciscan Friars on the British Isles: Introduction to the Sources," *Franciscan Studies* 63 (2005): 461–530 at 508–9.

13 Unedited. The only full copy is Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 748 (SC 1339), fols. 6r–67r (s. xv) at 66r–66v (from the battle of Crécy through Neville's Cross, but without the final details on captives, and continues independently with a brief mention of the Black Death and the battle of Poitiers, 1356). See also Herbert H. E. Craster, "The Red Book of Durham," *English Historical Review* 40 (1925): 504–32; Barrie Dobson, "Contrasting Chronicles: Historical Writing at York and Durham at the Close of the Middle Ages," in *Church and Chronicle in the Middle Ages: Essays Presented to John Taylor*, ed. Ian Wood and Graham A. Loud (London: Hambledon, 1981), 201–18 at 205–12.

anti-Scottish rhetoric and a few interpolated documents. *Anonimalle* is also similar but translated into Anglo-Norman French, often so literally that it has many obvious Latinisms, is much expanded here and there, and does not have the most severely “anti-Scottish” comments of *Lanercost*, especially during David II’s 1346 invasion of England.¹⁴ Offler argues that the similarities and differences between the four shared texts do not allow for anything like a linear progression from the most basic (*Durham “Brut”*) to most complicated (*Lanercost*). Indeed, both *Anonimalle* and *Lanercost* share many added elements that are not found in the *Durham “Brut,”* but also differ from each other, sometimes considerably. However, a more thorough study of all four texts and all their manuscripts needs to be undertaken to arrive at a secure understanding of the composition of these northern chronicles.¹⁵

Offler identified the first known manuscript of the chronicle, MS B II 35 in the Durham Cathedral Library, and offered the only sustained study of the *Durham “Brut.”* This Durham text was written in the third quarter of the fourteenth century, and its thirty-five leaves were added to the manuscript at some point between 1395 and the late fifteenth century.¹⁶ It includes above the beginning of the text a diagram of seven roundels, each filled with text that briefly describes one of the kingdoms of the Heptarchy, and together surround a slightly larger one that has text on Britain itself, with the whole diagram surrounded by a circular border (fig. 1). The diagram occupies nearly half of the folio and serves as a visual focus that structures the reading of the later narrative.¹⁷ The main text begins with “Britannia,

14 See also Trevor Russell Smith, “Ethics and Representation of War in the *Lanercost Chronicle*, 1327–46,” *Bulletin of International Medieval Research* 20 (forthcoming).

15 I am currently preparing such a study.

16 For the dating of the hand, see Gameson’s manuscript catalog entry at n. 68 below, and for the text’s place in the manuscript, see Roger A. B. Mynors, *Durham Cathedral Manuscripts to the End of the Twelfth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939), 41.

17 See also Olivier de Laborderie, “The First Manuals of English History: Two Late Thirteenth-Century Genealogical Rolls of the Kings of England in the Royal Collection,” *Electronic British Library Journal* 40 (2014): article 4, 1–25 at 10–11. For English historical literature this sort of feature is found most often in genealogical rolls, but see also, for example, London, British Library, Royal MS 13 A XVIII, fols. 150r–156v (s. xiv), a genealogy of the kings of England with diagram and French explanations for Heptarchy–Henry III, bound with other historical literature. See also Joan A. Holladay, “Charting the Past: Visual

insularum optima, inter Galiam et Hiberniam sita" ("Britain, the best of the islands, situated between France and Ireland") and ends with "et sic in Angliam cum honore et gloria redierunt" ("and thus they returned into England with honour and glory"). It is laid out in two columns, typical for medieval history writing, but without any of the guiding apparatus often found in other chronicles of the period.¹⁸ There are only occasional marginal notes, and the contemporary ones typically signal kings' reigns. Decorated capitals in blue and red ink are used frequently in the beginning of the manuscript to signal section divisions, but these become less frequent and cease to be used from folio 9v. There are four large decorated capitals (five to seven lines tall) to mark the opening description of Britain and sections on Brutus, Ebraucus, and the three high priests who helped convert the Britons to Christianity.¹⁹ There are also three large blank spaces on the right side of the column next to the sections on Octavius, Arthur, and Cadwallader that were possibly intended to feature portraits.²⁰ Some verse is interpolated into the text here and there and is signaled at each instance with a "u." for "uersus" ("verse" or "verses") in the margin.²¹ Where one might expect a clear statement of the chronicle's end, as common in many chronicles, there is instead below the final line "Deus θεος יהוה" (words for the Judeo-Christian deity in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew), with vowels added under the final Hebrew word to signal pronunciation, written in a later hand.²²

Configurations of Myth and History and the English Claim to Scotland," in *Representing History, 900–1300: Art, Music, History*, ed. Robert A. Maxwell (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010), 115–32, 232–35.

18 See, for example, James Freeman, "The Manuscript Dissemination and Readership of the *Polychronicon* of Ranulph Higden, c. 1330–c. 1500" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Cambridge, 2013), 154–60.

19 Durham MS, fols. 1r, 1r, 1r, 2r.

20 Durham MS, fols. 2r, 2v, 3r. For the use of portraits and other decorations to signal different sections of historical narratives, see Kathleen L. Scott, "The Illustrations of the Takamiya *Polychronicon*," in *The Medieval Book and a Modern Collector: Essays in Honour of Toshiyuki Takamiya*, ed. Takami Matsuda, Richard A. Linenthal, and John Scahill (Cambridge: Brewer, 2004), 161–78.

21 Durham MS, fols. 1r, 6r ("u." note is among other marginalia), 7v (two different sections of verse), 9v, 12r, 13v, 31r.

22 My thanks to Pelia Worth for assisting me with the Hebrew here.



FIGURE 1. The opening text with diagram of the Heptarchy in Durham, Cathedral Library, MS B II 35, fol. 1r. Image © Chapter of Durham Cathedral.

Edward Donald Kennedy recently identified another copy of the chronicle in a British Library manuscript (Cotton MS Vitellius A XX).²³ This London manuscript was written in the second half of the fifteenth century.²⁴ It has the same main text as the Durham manuscript and includes the diagram above the text's starting point (fig. 2). However, the copier here either miscounted the roundels or misjudged their size, and thus had to include another one off to the right side. In the Durham manuscript, some of the text extends from one of the roundels into the circular border surrounding the diagram. In the London manuscript, all of this text except the final word, "Leycestr." ("Leicester"), is fitted into the roundel by using slightly smaller letters than those in the other roundels. The main text begins and ends at the same point and follows the same layout as the Durham manuscript. It is in two columns and has spaces for decorated capitals (typically two lines tall), but these spaces are filled with rubricated capitals only, and only through folio 2r. The space for the first capital was never filled in, possibly because a particularly well-decorated capital was intended for it, as was customary. None of the three blank spaces on the sides of columns are included, nor is there any suggestion that they merited extra decoration. There are only occasional marginal notes, some of which are contemporary with the manuscript's writing.²⁵ All of the sections of verse are included, and each is signaled in the same manner as the Durham manuscript.²⁶

After the main text in the London manuscript there is also a continuation for 1347–48, including discussion of the Black Death, in a much later hand.²⁷ This continuation appears to be independent from all known English chronicles, beginning with "anno Domini .mcccxlviij. post natale Domini,

23 Edward Donald Kennedy, "Glastonbury," in *The Arthur of Medieval Latin Literature: The Development and Dissemination of the Arthurian Legend in Medieval Latin*, ed. Siân Echard (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011), 109–31 at 129 n. 84.

24 See the manuscript catalog entry at n. 70 below.

25 There may have been more notes in the outer margins that have since been cut away due to damage from the Ashburnham House fire.

26 London MS, fols. 1v (first letter of each line is highlighted in red ink), 10r, 12v (two different sections of verse), 16r, 20v, 23r, 50r.

27 A marginal note in the same hand is found on fol. 46r.

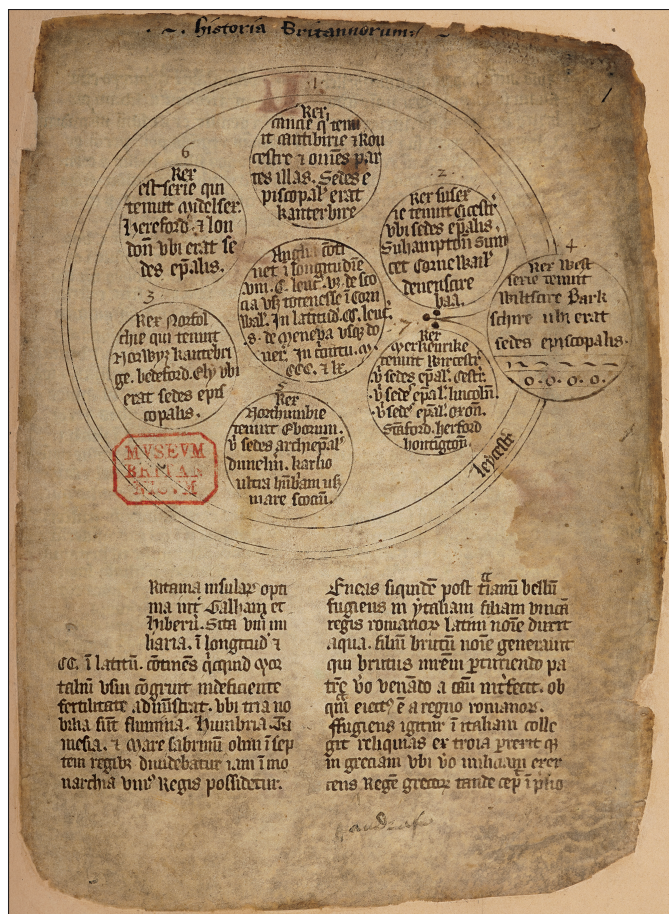


FIGURE 2. The opening text with diagram of the Heptarchy in London, British Library, Cotton MS Vitellius A XX, fol. 1r. Image © British Library Board.

tenuit rex Angliae parliamentum suum” (“in the year of [our] Lord 1347, after Christmas, the king of England held his parliament”) and ending with “ad ambitum horrorem istius pestilentie nullatenus deuenerunt” (“they certainly did not come to the enveloping horror of that pestilence”), but it has so far been unclear if it is an authentic composition or merely an early modern retrospective continuation. After the end of the continuation there is a note in the same hand stating that the continuation was copied from a manuscript owned by one John Catesby.



FIGURE 3. The opening text without diagram of the Heptarchy in Dublin, Trinity College, MS 485 (E I 27), p. 1. Image © the Board of Trinity College Dublin.

A previously unknown and unidentified copy of the *Durham "Brut"* in MS 485 (E I 27) of Trinity College Dublin is almost certainly the manuscript referenced at the end of the London manuscript. I identified it myself when examining the manuscript for the text, which is described only vaguely by the catalog as "*Cronica Anglie*, a Brut chronicle of British history to 1348."²⁸ The Dublin manuscript was written in the second half of the fifteenth century. It begins at the same point as the other two manuscripts but does not include the Heptarchy diagram (fig. 3). Its main text is not different enough from the Durham manuscript to suggest that it is an earlier version of the text that might be closer to the supposed *Minorite Chronicle*. Just like the other two manuscripts, it is laid out in two columns. The first, third, and fourth large decorated capitals in the Durham manuscript are here decorated with gold leaf, as are capitals at the second and third of the sections that have blank spaces on the sides of their columns in the Durham manuscript.²⁹ The Dublin manuscript consistently uses decorated capitals in blue and red ink (two to three lines tall) and follows the section divisions of the Durham manuscript. It includes all the lines of verse, but instead of signaling them in marginal notes, the first letter of each line of verse is written slightly larger and in alternating blue and red ink, with the exception of the second and fourth sections of verse, which are laid out as normal prose.³⁰

After the common main text to 1347, the Dublin manuscript begins a continuation at a new chapter with a decorated capital (see fig. 6). This continuation is the same as that found in the London manuscript (fig. 4). There is no explicit change of hand, different ink color, or marginal note here that might suggest the following text was a later addition or might have been viewed as a separate text.³¹ In the Dublin manuscript, less than a

28 See n. 70 below.

29 Dublin MS, pp. 1, 1, 3, 5, 7.

30 Dublin MS, pp. 1, 17, 21, 22, 28, 37, 42, 91.

31 See also how Ranulf Higden added many continuations to his *Polychronicon* to form the later Intermediate and Long Versions (to 1344 and 1352) without any obvious signals, while the further anonymous continuations to 1377 (or so) are typically signaled by a statement that Higden's text ends: Vivian H. Galbraith, "An Autograph MS of Ranulph Higden's *Polychronicon*," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 23 (1959): 1–18; John Taylor, *The Universal Chronicle of*

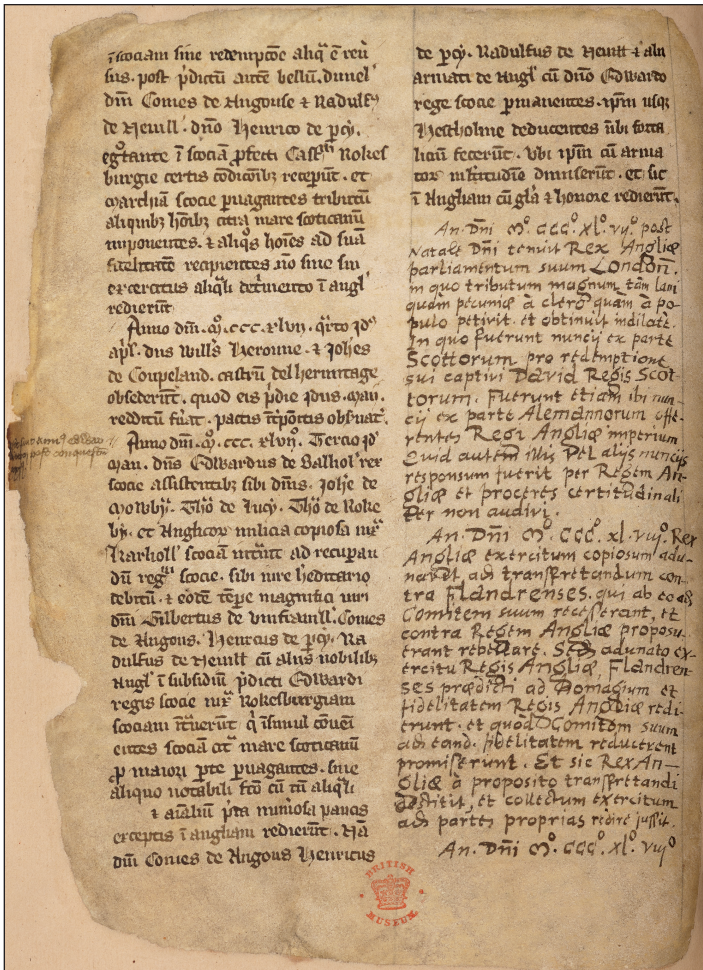


FIGURE 4. The beginning of the 1348 continuation in London, British Library, Cotton MS Vitellius AXX, fol. 55v. Image © British Library Board.

Ranulf Higden (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), 89–109. The three main versions are edited in Ranulf Higden, *Polychronicon*, ed. Churchill Babington and Joseph Rawson Lumby, Rolls Series 41, 9 vols. (London: Longman, 1865–86), to 8:324 (Short Version, following MSS C and D), 8:338 (Intermediate Version, following MSS A and B), 8:346 (Long Version, following MS E, the base text); Smith, “National Identity, Propaganda, and War,” 250–51 (a final sentence of the Long Version edited here, which is not found in Babington and Lumby’s edition because their MS E is imperfect). I am currently preparing an article on the continuations of Higden’s *Polychronicon*.

quarter of the final page is used for text, which is immediately followed below with “expliciunt cronica / Anglie, quod Geff” (“here ends the chronicle of England, which [is written by?] Geoffrey”) in red ink in larger, slightly stylized letters. The explicit appears to have originally been continued to a third line, but it has been scraped and written over here with “liber Iohannis Catesby, unius iusticiariorum domini regis de communi banco” (“[this is] the book of John Catesby, one of lord king’s justices of the common bench”) in a later hand.³² To the right of this text, at the top of column b, is also drawn a heraldic coat of arms, above which is written “arma domini Humfridi Catesby, milite de parte patris ac matris” (“the arms of lord Humphrey Catesby, knight on the side of his father and mother”) in a sixteenth-century hand.³³ The London manuscript includes the explicit of the Dublin manuscript in the same hand and ink as its continuation, but omits the final two words, perhaps because the writer understood them to be only part of a then mostly scraped description, and notes below that “haec additamenta transcripta sunt per Ricardum Iamesium ex alio eiusdem anonimi exemplari quod olim erat liber Iohannis Catesby, unius iusticiariorum domini regis de communi banco” (“these additions were copied by Richard James from another anonymous exemplar of his that once was the book of John Catesby, one of the lord king’s justices of the common bench”). This is the same Richard James who, around 1625–38, was librarian of Robert Cotton’s extensive collections, to which the London manuscript belongs, as can easily be confirmed by comparing the handwriting here to James’s in some of the surviving Cotton manuscripts (fig. 5).³⁴ The final part of this note is

32 I was unable to examine the Dublin manuscript under ultraviolet light during my visit. See also Norman Doe, “Catesby, Sir John (d. 1487),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Henry C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, new ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004–), oxforddnb.com.

33 Quarterly, 1st and 4th argent, two lions passant sable, armed and langued gules, 2nd and 3rd, azure, a chevron argent between three harts or. My thanks to Alan V. Murray for assisting me with this blazon.

34 Tom Beaumont James, “James, Richard (bap. 1591, d. 1638),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. See, for example, James’s hand in tables of contents added to the London MS, fol. iir; London, British Library, Cotton MS Titus A XX, fol. 2v, which is reproduced here in figure 5; Cotton MS Titus A XIII, fol. 1r, which is reproduced in Colin G. C.

Elenchus contentorum in
hoc codice

- 1 Nicolli. Speculum Sultorum. 1
- 2 Versus de bello principis Edwar. in Hispania.
- 3 Versus Michaelis Cornubiensis contra Henr.
Abrynccensem. 49.
- 4 Colia Dialogus inter aquam et vinum. 63.
- 5 Eiusdem diffusio nubendi.
- 6 Rhythmus de guerra Scotia per Robertum Balston.
- 7 Rhythmus eiusd. contra Artistas. 66. 67.
- 8 Rhythmus eiusd. de Divite et Lazaro. 67.
- 9 Colia rhythmus de diluvio NOE. 67. 68.
- 10 Eiusdem rhythmus de contemptu mundi. 68.
- 11 Rhythmus de victoria Scotorum apud Striuelyn
et occisione Comitis Glovernia. 68.
- 12 Probae cento Virgilianus. 69.
- 13 Rhythmus contra Franciam. 70.
- 14 Rhythmus de bello Scotia ubi David Brus fuit
captus. 70. 71.
- 15 Rhythmus de bello de Cressy. et veuyle croise.
- 16 Versus de condicionibus monachorum. 71.
- 17 Rhythmus de proprietatibus animalium. 71.
- 18 Rhythmi de papa. Cesare. eloquio. parasito. riu-
litre nobili. alijsq. huiusmodi. 71.
- 19 Disputatio rhythmica inter Anglum et Francium.
- 20 Versus de bello Troiano. 71.
- 21 Miscellanea de amor. parant. &c. 71.
- 22 Versus Guadonis Britannici contra monachos. 71.
- 23 Versus de Ihuo modtrato. 71.
- 24 Versus de die Natalis Dni.
- 25 Versus ad quendam Milonem avarum.
- 26 Versus ad Romelm. Reptm. Rufum.
- 27 Historia Mahumeti versibus. 71.
- 28 Versus de simonia Romanorum.
- 29 Versus quidam Grammaticalis.
- 30 Exhortatio Rob. Balston ad Anglos. versibus.
- 31 Comedia Babionis versibus. 71.
- 32 Comedia 6 et 7 versibus.
- 33 Liber de b Amphilo versibus.
- 34 Expansio rosarum Virgilij.
- 35 Apocalypsis Colia.
- 36 Versus de Sus Anna.
- 37 Satyra Balstoni contra papam aliosq.

FIGURE 5. An example of Richard James's handwriting for a table of contents in London, British Library, Cotton MS Titus A XX, fol. 2v. Image © British Library Board.

Tite, *The Early Records of Sir Robert Cotton's Library: Formation, Cataloguing, Use* (London: British Library, 2003), 19; as well as Cotton MS Nero A X, fol. 3r (the *Pearl-Gawain* manuscript).

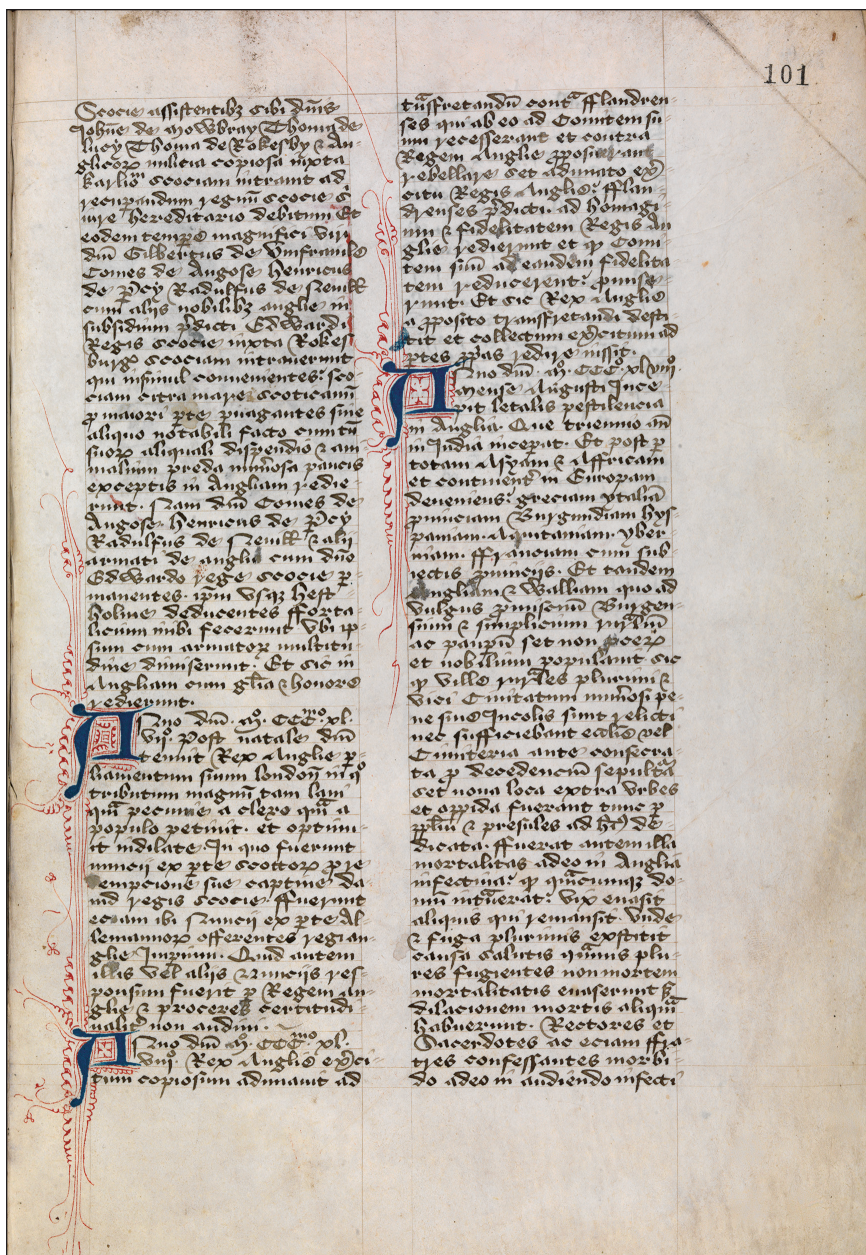


FIGURE 6. The beginning of the 1348 continuation in Dublin, Trinity College, MS 485 (E I 27), p. 101. Image © the Board of Trinity College Dublin.

word for word the same as the one on ownership at the end of the Dublin manuscript.

It is not possible here to perform a comprehensive analysis of the text of the three manuscripts or to lay out all the differences between them. However, a comparison of their narratives of Edward III's 1346 Normandy campaign (closely related to *Lanercost's*) provides enough evidence to arrive at a reasonable conclusion about how the three manuscripts relate to one another.³⁵

Eodem mense et anno, Edwardus rex Anglie inclitus et illustris expeditionem faciens contra regem Francie ad uendicandum hereditatem sibi auico et auunculi iuribus³⁶ debetam,³⁷ apud Portesmouth³⁸ cum mille quingentis³⁹ nauibus et copiosa multitudine bellatorum mare ingressus, duodecimo die mensis eiusdem apud Hoggys in Northmania⁴⁰ terram cepit, a quo usque Cadomuum profectus est, et uillam illam, interfecta et capta militum et armatorum multitudine copiosa, usque ad nudos parietes spolauit. ⁴¹ Cui ciuitas

35 Durham MS, fols. 33v–34r (base text); Dublin MS, pp. 98–99; London MS, fols. 54v–55r. I mostly follow *Lanercost's* punctuation here to better allow for comparison. This section of the text has never been edited, although the rest of the text after this is edited (from the Durham MS only) in Offler, "Note on the *Northern Franciscan Chronicle*," 57–59.

36 uiribus *Dublin*

37 debitam *Dublin*

38 Portesmouth *Dublin*

39 quingentibus *Dublin*

40 Normannia *Dublin*

41 Here *Lanercost*, 342–43, interpolates Edward III's letter on his 1346 Normandy campaign up to the sack of Caen. The original copy appears to be Edward III, "Letter to the Chancellor, Treasurer and Other Members of his Council in London, 29 July 1346," in Kenneth Fowler, "News from the Front: Letters and Despatches of the Fourteenth Century," in *Guerre et société en France, en Angleterre et en Bourgogne, XIV^e–XV^e siècles*, ed. Philippe Contamine, Charles Giry-Deloison, and Maurice Keen (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Centre d'histoire de la région du nord et de l'Europe du nord-ouest, Université Charles de Gaulle-Lille III, 1991), 83–84. Several other versions of the letter also survive: a version similar to *Lanercost's*, but integrated without salutations into *Anonimale*, 19–20; to London and changed into third person in Edward III, "Lettre sur ses succès en Normandie (fin de juillet 1346), sequitur cedula," in Jean Froissart, *Oeuvres*, ed. Joseph Kervyn de Lettenhove, 25 vols. (Brussels: Devaux, 1867–77), 18:286–87;

Boiochensis⁴² se sponte reddidit, timens se⁴³ consimilia pateretur, et inde usque Rotomagum iter aggressus omnia adiacencia cede et incendio deuastauit. Villas grossas per quas transiuit optinuit, nemine resistente. Castra et municiones, paucissimis inuadentibus, licet essent fortissima in pulsu leui cepit.

Erat autem eo tempore suus aduersarius in Rothomago, cum graui multitudine armatorum, et licet in multitudine preualeret, pontem⁴⁴ Sechane⁴⁵ frangi fecit, ne rex Anglie ad ipsum accederet, et sic uersus Parisius, rex Anglie ex una parte sedes⁴⁶ et incendia faciendo, et rex Francie ex alia parte Sechane, pontes omnes Sechane uersus Parisius dirruens et muniens, ne ad ipsum⁴⁷ rex Anglie pertransiret,⁴⁸ nec uoluit nec audebat in defensionem populi sui et regni, cum potuisset aquam Sechane pertransire, sed usque Parisius fugebat. Rex autem Anglie usque Pusiachum⁴⁹ ueniens, et pontem fractum inueniens, mille equitibus et duobus milibus bales-teriis custoditum, ne posset ad transitum regis Anglie reparari. Sed rex Anglie,⁵⁰ interfectis et fugatis custodibus, ipsum pontem protinus reparauit, et cum exercitu pertransiuit. Deinde per Richardiam [sic]⁵¹ usque Ponthiuiam peruenit. Sequebatur autem eum⁵² suus aduersarius usque Cressy in Ponthiua, ubi septimo kalendas

reused and continued in Edward III, "Letter to Thomas de Lucy, 3 September 1346," in Chandos Herald, *The Black Prince: An Historical Poem, Written in French*, ed. Henry Octavius Coxe (London: Shakespeare Press, 1842), 351–55; which is also copied in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 302 (SC 2086), fol. 143v (s. xiv^{ex}), but is missing most of the text due to lost leaves.

42 Baioensis *London*

43 ne *Dublin*

44 add. tamen *Dublin*

45 Sechance *London*

46 cedes *Dublin and London*

47 add. transiret *London*

48 om. *London*

49 Pusiachum *Dublin*

50 om. reparari. Sed rex Anglie *London*

51 Pichardiam *Dublin*

52 om. *London*

Augusti conserto, graui prelio, suum aduersarium uicit, Domino concedente. Nam bellum inchoatum fuit die predicto, scilicet die Sabati post festum sancti Bartholomei, et usque ad horam nonam diei sequentis continuatum, et non humana sed diuina potencia consummatum. Ubi ex parte Gallicorum, rex Boemye, dux eciam Lotoryngie,⁵³ archiepiscopus Senonensis, et episcopus Noomensis,⁵⁴ prior altus Hospitalis Francie, abbas de Corbelle, comes eciam de Alason⁵⁵ qui fuit germanus regis Francie, comites insuper Flandrie, Sabaudie, d’Aumarle, de Harcourt,⁵⁶ de Ausoure,⁵⁷ de Monte Viliardy,⁵⁸ cum aliis multis comitibus et dominis ceciderunt.

Based on the Heptarchy diagrams alone, it is clear that the Durham and London manuscripts are closely related, with the latter copied from the former or vice versa. The Durham manuscript is the earliest witness of the chronicle, as it is in a much earlier hand than the other two manuscripts. Both the Dublin and London manuscripts appear to have been copied from this earliest manuscript due to their independent differences. The Dublin manuscript was not copied from the London manuscript because of the latter’s added text at note 47 and its bits of omitted text at notes 48, 50, and 52 that are in both the Dublin and Durham manuscripts. Although both the Dublin and London manuscripts have a shared difference from the Durham manuscript at note 46, this is probably just a correction that would be obvious to any scribe and is not evidence for a now-lost shared source after the Durham manuscript used by the Dublin and London manuscripts.⁵⁹ Equally, there seems little to suggest that either of them were copied from a text (or texts) before the Durham manuscript. The occasional textual

53 Lotoringie *Dublin*

54 Neonensis *Dublin*

55 Alasone *Dublin*

56 Harchorth *Durham*; Harchort *London*

57 Ausour *Dublin*

58 Biliardi *Dublin*

59 Indeed, *Lanercost* corrects this error as well: *Lanercost*, 343: “rex Angliae ex una parte caedes et incendia faciendo.”

errors in the Durham manuscript suggest there might have been an earlier exemplar that it was copied from, but nothing strongly points toward this. Indeed, there is nothing to preclude an “author” from making errors in his own autograph that would then be corrected by later scribes.⁶⁰

The *Durham “Brut,”* despite being earlier than the three other chronicles with related narratives, is not without errors in its narrative. The casualty list for the French side at Crécy is similar to, but with several differences from, that in *Anonimale* and *Lanercost*. It names, in order:

1. Jean l’Aveugle, king of Bohemia
2. Rodolphe, duke of Lorraine
3. Guillaume de Melun, archbishop of Sens
4. Bernard le Brun, bishop of Noyon
5. Grand prior of the Hospitallers of France (unidentified)
6. Abbot of Corbeil (unidentified)
7. Charles II, count of Alençon
8. Louis I, count of Flandres
9. Amadeus VI, count of Savoy (he was only twelve years old at the time, so this is probably Louis II de Vaud, his cousin and regent of the County of Savoy)
10. Jean V d’Harcourt, count of Aumale
11. Jean IV, count of Harcourt
12. Jean II de Châlon, count of Auxerre
13. Henri de Montfaucon, count of Montbéliard

However, persons 3, 4, 9, 10, 12, and 13 were not killed in the battle.⁶¹ *Anonimale* does not include persons 4, 12, or 13, while *Lanercost* does not include persons 11 and 12, claims that person 4 is the archbishop of Noyon (an office

60 See Daniel Wakelin, *Scribal Correction and Literary Craft: English Manuscripts, 1375–1510* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

61 We do not have further information on persons 5 or 6, unfortunately. My thanks to Michael Livingston for discussing the Crécy casualty lists with me.

which did not, and does not, exist), and presents its list in a different order.⁶² *Anonimalle* and *Lanercost* also include several additional named casualties. Neither of these lists is perfect, nor are any of the other many lists, and all include many inaccuracies.⁶³ These are not necessarily simply the result of errors in transmission, however, as even the earliest English casualty list has many errors, despite being written by the victor of Crécy himself, Edward III, shortly after the battle.⁶⁴

The evidence above suggests that the Durham manuscript is the earliest text of the *Durham "Brut"* and the source of both the Dublin and London manuscripts to 1347. The scribe who wrote the Dublin manuscript either copied from a later copy of the Durham manuscript that had already omitted the diagram and added the continuation, or copied from the Durham manuscript itself, omitted the diagram, and added the continuation as an integral part of the chronicle. The former seems more sensible, given the polished presentation of the Dublin manuscript and that it would be peculiar to add only a brief continuation to a chronicle of events that took place more than one hundred years before the scribe was writing. The copier of the London manuscript had only the Durham manuscript at hand, or one very close to it. Richard James, who had easy access to the London manuscript in Cotton's library, came across the Dublin manuscript itself somewhere at some point in 1625–38 and copied its continuation into the end of his manuscript.⁶⁵ Provenance records for the Dublin manuscript for this period, which would allow for a full understanding of how James got hold of it, unfortunately do not survive. It is of course possible that further manuscripts of the *Durham "Brut"* survive but have been misidentified as

62 *Anonimalle*, 19–23; *Lanercost*, 341–44.

63 Michael Livingston, "Counting the Dead at Crécy," in *The Battle of Crécy: A Casebook*, ed. Michael Livingston and Kelly DeVries (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2015), 485–89 (esp. 485–86).

64 Edward III, "Letter to Lucy, 3 September 1346."

65 None of the surviving records suggest that the Dublin manuscript was once owned by Cotton: Tite, *Early Records of Cotton's Library*, 31–90 (esp. MSS nos 2.73, 2.84, 2.119, 3.9, 9.3, 10.14, 25.2, 25.10, 29.23, 30.2, 82.4, 82.8, 82.10, 106.1, 113.35, 130.11, 163.11, 214.2, 229), 244–47.

“mere” *Brut* chronicles of England because of their lack of medieval titles or absence of declared authors that one might identify them by, as has been the case with the Dublin manuscript up until now.⁶⁶

It is hoped that this article will draw attention to this sadly neglected chronicle, written in a period when English writers were greatly interested in King Edward III’s wars with Scotland and France, and also sought to legitimize them by connecting them to their own legendary origins.⁶⁷ They did this in writings that drew on established authorities and narrative arcs, but made significant changes to make them their own compositions. The previously unknown Dublin manuscript allows us a better understanding of the development of the *Durham “Brut”* and will be crucial for further study of the text and its relation to *Anonimalle*, *Lanercost*, and Washington’s *De primordio et progressu sedis episcopalis*. It also confirms that the previously unknown 1347–48 continuation was not composed in the early seventeenth century by James or one of his contemporaries, but instead in a lost exemplar contemporaneous with the narrated events that had been copied in the Dublin manuscript, or possibly by the writer of the Dublin manuscript himself in the second half of the fifteenth century. This continuation deserves further examination, especially given how little contemporary English history writing survives from 1348 through 1377.

List of Manuscripts

EARLIEST TEXT

1. Durham, Cathedral Library, MS B II 35, fols. 1r–34v (to 1347, s. XIV^{3/4}, Durham Cathedral)⁶⁸

66 However, none of the other manuscripts that Mynors identifies as being derived from the Durham manuscript contain the *Durham “Brut”*: Mynors, *Durham Cathedral Manuscripts*, 41 n. 1.

67 See Smith, “National Identity, Propaganda, and War”; John Spence, *Reimagining History in Anglo-Norman Prose Chronicles* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2013).

68 Bound in composite manuscript (after 1395 and before 1500) with ecclesiastical and historical writings, notably works by Bede. Thomas Rud and James Raine, *Codicum manuscrip-*

LATER TEXTS

2. Dublin, Trinity College, MS 485 (E I 27), pp. 1–101 (1347–48 continuation on pp. 101–2, s. xv², John Catesby, d. 1487)⁶⁹
3. London, British Library, Cotton MS Vitellius A XX, fols. 1r–55v (from MS 1, 1347–48 continuation from MS 2 on fols. 55v–56r, main text s. xv² and continuation s. xvii¹, Tynemouth Priory)⁷⁰

torum ecclesiae cathedralis Dunelmensis catalogus classicus (Durham: Andrews, 1825), 141–44; Ker et al., ed., *Medieval Libraries*; Richard Gameson, *The Medieval Manuscripts of Durham Cathedral: A Descriptive Catalogue* (forthcoming). My thanks to Richard for sharing with me his draft description of this manuscript in which he dates the hand of the *Durham "Brut"* in the manuscript.

69 Bound with *De vita et moribus philosophorum et poetarum* on pp. 103–62. Marvin L. Colker, *Trinity College Library Dublin: Descriptive Catalogue of the Mediaeval and Renaissance Latin Manuscripts*, 2 vols. (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1991), 894–96.

70 Bound with historical writings different from those in the Durham manuscript. British Museum, *A Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Cottonian Library Deposited in the British Museum* (London: Hansard, 1802), 381–82; British Library, *Explore Archives and Manuscripts* (London: British Library), <http://searcharchives.bl.uk>; Ker et al., ed., *Medieval Libraries*; Tite, *Early Records of Cotton's Library*, 160.