Four Centuries of Holinshed's Chronicles (1577-1977)

Vernon F. Snow

Follow this and additional works at: https://surface.syr.edu/libassoc

Part of the European History Commons, and the Medieval History Commons

Recommended Citation

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Libraries at SURFACE. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Courier by an authorized administrator of SURFACE. For more information, please contact surface@syr.edu.
THE

Third volume of Chronicles, beginning at Duke William the Norman, commonly called the Conqueror; and defending by degrees of prerogatives to all the kings and queens of England in their orderly successions:

First compiled by Raphael Holinshed, and by him extended to the year 1575.

Now newly corrected, augmented, and continued to such occurrences and accidents of truth necessary to the year 1586.

Wherein are contained many matters of singular boldness and rare chivalrous nature, fit only to be seen in metapits, to take pleasure in the grounds of ancient syllabics.

With a third table (peculiarly serving this third volume) both of names and matters memorable.

Historia plenissima narrativa et peregrina.

TITLE PAGE TO VOLUME III
Holinshed, Chronicles, 1587 ed.
(about one-half actual size)

Sol Feinstone Collection, Syracuse University

THE COURIER

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY ASSOCIATES VOLUME XIII, NUMBER 3 & 4
# Table of Contents

**FALL 1976**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Four Centuries of Holinshed’s <em>Chronicles</em> (1577-1977)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by Vernon F. Snow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hobby-Horses, Horseplay, and Stephen Crane’s “Black Riders”</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by Donald Vanouse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News of the Library and Library Associates</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most of the research for this article is based upon the 1577 edition of Holinshed's Chronicles in the George Arents Research Library for Special Collections and the 1587 edition in the Sol Feinstone Collection, both at Syracuse University. The 1587 edition is in excellent condition, bound in morocco leather, and complete (except for the castrations mentioned in this article). The 1577 edition is, unfortunately, mutilated and incomplete (lacking are Volume II and sixty-odd pages of volume I). The author also utilized the Arents Library's copy of the 1807-8 edition, which is in good condition, copies of both the 1577 and 1587 editions in the microfilm collection, and numerous periodicals and monographs. He has in time past also used copies of the Chronicles held by the British Library, the Folger Shakespeare Library, the University of Nebraska, and the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery.

Early in the brief reign of Edward VI (1537-1553), Reginald Wolfe, an affluent London publisher who enjoyed royal patronage, conceived a grandiose plan for a universal geography and history. ¹ He would utilize the rich documentary sources uncovered from the monasteries during their dissolution by Henry VIII. He would put forth a Protestant point of view. He would print the cosmography in the English language rather than in Latin and incorporate woodcut illustrations and maps. To these ends Wolfe purchased collections of documents and, by prior arrangement, acquired many of the manuscripts of John Leland who had been an antiquary and library keeper to Henry VIII.² Wolfe constructed chronologies and drafted up-to-date maps.


² For Leland and the importance of both his research and his manuscripts, most of which concerned British antiquity and English topography, see T. D. Kendrick, British Antiquity (New York: Methuen, 1970) pp. 45-64 and McKisack, Medieval History, pp. 5-23. Most of his writings, though utilized by others, remained unpublished until the eighteenth century.
In due time, realizing the impossibility of completing the ambitious venture on his own, he employed Raphael Holinshed, an experienced Cambridge-educated translator, to assist him.³

Wolfe died without completing his publishing project. Shortly after, in 1573, a syndicate composed of three London stationers—George Bishop, John Harrison and his half-brother Luke Harrison—took over the enterprise and retained Holinshed to complete it.⁴ The new publishers scaled down the scope of the project, limiting it to England, Scotland and Ireland, and accelerated the progress by resorting to a division of labor. They secured the services of William Harrison,⁵ antiquarian and chaplain to the prominent statesman and writer Lord Brooke, to write the description of England and Scotland. Richard Stanyhurst,⁶ an English-educated scholar from Dublin, was to write the description of Ireland. Raphael Holinshed himself acted as the general editor and contributed the narrative histories. This arrangement proved satisfactory; within four years all the manuscripts (except a translation of Giraldus Cambrensis) were ready for publication.⁷ Both volumes of the composite work were printed by Henry Binneman in 1577 and then

³For biographical information on Holinshed see DNB, 9:1024-6. A native of Cheshire, his given name also appears as Ralph and his surname as Hollingshead or Holinshead in the documentary sources. After leaving Christ's College, Cambridge, he served in the church prior to joining Wolfe as a translator.

⁴Ibid., p. 1025. For biographical details on the individual members of the syndicate see Duff, English Book Trade, pp. 35, 67-8.

⁵For Harrison see DNB, 9:46; Georges Edelen, “William Harrison (1535-1593), Studies in the Renaissance,” 9(1962):256-72; and Edelen’s “Introduction” to The Description of England (Ithaca: Published for the Folger Shakespeare Library by Cornell University Press, [1968]) especially pages xxviii-xxxiv. A native of London, Harrison attended Westminster School and took degrees at both Oxford and Cambridge, and eventually served as a rector in an Essex parish church. As chaplain in the household of Lord Cobham, he had access to a good library and some valuable manuscript collections. This position also served to bring him in contact with William Lamberde, the antiquary from Kent whose opinions were highly valued and quoted in Holinshed's Chronicles.

⁶On Stanyhurst see DNB. 18:975-9. His father, James Stanyhurst, was active in Irish politics, serving as Speaker of the Irish House of Commons from 1557 to 1568, and a friend of Edmund Campion and Sir Henry Sidney; Richard (1547-1618), a student at University College, Oxford, translated Virgil's Aeneid and wrote a life of St. Patrick in Latin. After the publication of the Chronicles, he openly espoused Roman Catholicism and went into exile on the Continent. For his reputation as a poet and translator see C.S. Lewis, English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Excluding Drama, The Completion of the Clark Lectures, Trinity College Cambridge, 1944 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), pp. 26, 28, 353, 365, 679.

⁷In the 1577 edition Holinshed comments upon the fact that Cambrensis’s Conquest of Ireland was not finished in time for inclusion in the first volume. He does not indicate who had been delegated to translate the work, but in all likelihood the person responsible was either Holinshed himself or Stanyhurst, or perhaps, even Hooker, the general editor of the second edition, whose translation was incorporated in that edition.
Of Saint Nicholas even at Pluckley.
On Saint Nicholas day, at Spalding,
at Ekesker, and Sinoche, at Arncede, and
at Northwich, in Chester, the 7. day at
Sandhurst. The eight day being the Con-
ception of our Lady, at Clitherele in Lanca-
shire, at Pals in Chester. The 29. day at
Canterbury, and at Salisbury.

How a man may journey
from any notable town in England,
to the City of London, or from
London to any notable
town in the
Realm.

The way from Walsingham
to London.

From Walsingham to Pick-
ery.
From Pickena to Brandon
ery.
From Brandon to Newmarket
ery.
From Newmarket to Babynam
ery.
From Babynam to Barkeway
ery.
From Barkeway to Puchzich
ery.
From Puchzich to Ware
ery.
From Ware to Waltham
ery.
From Waltham to London
ery.

The way from Barwike to Yorke, and
so to London.

From Barwike to Helsoze
ery.
From Helsoze to Antwike
ery.

SIXTEENTH CENTURY MILEAGE CHART
Holinshead, Chronicles, Part I, p. 124, 1577 ed.
forwarded to the governmental censors. Although granting general approval, the censors demanded the excision of several pages concerned with Ireland. The publishers complied, of course, whereupon the work was licensed in July 1578 and subsequently distributed to several London booksellers. The lavishly illustrated work bearing the title Ralph Hollinghed's *Chronycle* was well received by the reading public.

The composite nature of the *Chronicles* is manifest in the first volume. It contains Harrison's description of England followed by Holinshed's history of England prior to the Norman Conquest; then Harrison's description of Scotland; and then Stanyhurst's description of Ireland, Holinshed's history of Ireland down to 1509, and finally Stanyhurst's continuation from 1509 to 1547. The work includes dedicatory epistles addressed to Lord Brooke, the Earl of Leicester, and Sir Henry Sidney, penned by Harrison, Holinshed, and Stanyhurst, respectively. The second volume encompassing the history of England from 1066 to the reign of Elizabeth—a narrative history patterned after Ranulf Higden's *Polychronicon*—was written by Holinshed and dedicated to Lord Burghley. Though bearing little resemblance to Wolfe's original plan, the *Chronicles* proved to be the most elaborate and comprehensive British history published thus far.

---

8 In Elizabethan England the Privy Council censored historical and political works, that is a member of the Council or a non-member selected by the Council read a copy before any were licensed by the Stationers' Company and put out for sale. The censor could approve the entire work, recommend excision of selected pages or sections, or prohibit publication. It was a complicated and time-consuming process. It would appear that the censor did not read a manuscript or a printer's copy but a printed copy, presumably the first before any distribution or sales took place. Thus, while the first volume was completed in 1577 and the second volume at least started in 1577, the sheer bulk of both volumes proved very time-consuming to both printer and censor, this accounts for the time gap between the printing and the licensing, which took place on 1 July 1578. See *A Transcript of the Register of the Company of Stationers of London, 1554-1640*, 5 Vols., edited by Edward Arber (1874-94; reprint ed., New York: Peter Smith, 1950), 2:329.

9 The *Chronicles* was sold by the two surviving members of the original syndicate, that is George Bishop and John Harrison, in their respective shops in London. But it would appear that the syndicate also printed copies, presumably by some contract system, for other London booksellers, including one John Hunne; see *Notes and Queries*, 6th Series, 11(1885):351-2. The widow of Luke Harrison, the third member of the syndicate who had died before publication, secured permission to sell her copies to Thomas Woodcock, a London bookseller; see DNB, 9:1025 and R. B. McKerrow, *A Dictionary of Printers and Booksellers . . . 1557-1640* (London: Bibliographical Society, 1910), p. 300.


11 The particular copy I have used for this description was printed by John Bynneman for George Bishop, the senior member of the syndicate whose shop, The Bell, was located in St. Paul's Churchyard. See Duff, *English Book Trade*, p. 35.

12 For Holinshed's indebtedness to Higden see Levy, *Tudor Historical Thought*, p. 182 and Edelen, *Description*, xvii.
The contributors were industrious compilers. They ferreted out the primary sources and then linked them together into chronological narratives. They quoted from documents. They copied from some printed histories; they paraphrased others. They claimed little originality. Two authorities were better than one; three were superior to two. Rarely did they reject or select or exclude. For them the scissors and paste technique constituted good and acceptable methodology, not plagiarism. Yet, it must be noted that the work was well documented. The contributors incorporated prefatory bibliographies. More important, the work was profuse with marginal notations indicating the source(s) utilized and frequently the author was cited in the text. Thus the reader can readily ascertain that Harrison relied heavily upon Leland for much of his descriptive detail; that Holinshed used Bale and Geoffrey of Monmouth for his crude and fantastic chronology which linked the ancient Hebrews with Brutus and the latter, in turn, with the Anglo-Saxons; that Stanyhurst relied upon Cambrensis and Cope for his account of Ireland. The compilers, in short, used a variety of sources and documented them, but they rarely evaluated the evidence or exercised critical judgment. They preferred to include conflicting views and dubious interpretations, then allow the reader to reach his own conclusions. At the same time they selected and wrote from a Protestant perspective similar to that of John Foxe, the martyrologist.

---

13 For discussions of the methodology evident in the Chronicles see McKisack, Medieval History, pp. 117-8 and Levy, Tudor Historical Thought, pp. 183-6.

14 For Holinshed’s authorities see the introductory pages in volumes 1, 5, and 6 of the Chronicles (Ellis edition), respectively, for England, Scotland and Ireland. Most of the traditional sources, especially those in print appear on these lists, but one should note the entry “Records and rolles diverse” in the list covering English sources.

15 Holinshed was more inclined to indicate his sources in the margin, while Harrison frequently incorporated them in the text. All contributors utilized the margins to indicate the contents of the paragraph.


17 For discussion of this see Kendrick, British Antiquity, and McKisack, Medieval History, pp. 118-9. Also see Chronicles, 1:312-585 (Ellis edition).


19 This generalization holds true for Holinshed and Harrison, both of whom were clerics in the established church, although it probably would not apply to Stanyhurst, who became a recusant shortly after the publication of the Chronicles. On this matter of religious bias see McKisack, Medieval History, p. 119; Edelen, Description, p. xxix; and R. Mark Benbow, “The Providential Theory of Historical Causation in Holinshed’s Chronicles: 1577 and 1587,” Texas Studies in Literature and Language 1(1959-60):264-76.
THE SLAYING OF BRUTE, THE MYTHICAL FIRST KING OF BRITAIN
QUEEN BOADICIA AND HER ARMY
Holinshed, *Chronicles*, Part II, p. 61, 1577 ed.
Despite its shortcomings, several of which were acknowledged by the general editor and his associates, Holinshed's *Chronicles* was adjudged a success.20 Yet, Raphael Holinshed himself did not long enjoy the fruits of his labors. A few months after the work was licensed he retired to the rural countryside near Warwick; he died in 1580 and his will was proven on 24 April, 1582.21 Many of his manuscripts, notes, and books, though first passing to one Thomas Burdet of Bramcote, Warwickshire, were subsequently purchased by John Stow, the London historian.

Shortly thereafter, the two surviving members of the original syndicate, namely George Bishop and John Harrison, formed a new syndicate—which included Ralph Newberie, Thomas Woodcock and Henry Denham, all well-known London stationers—to publish a second edition of Holinshed’s *Chronicles*.22 The enlarged group selected John Hooker, an Exeter antiquarian and office-holder, as the general editor, and Abraham Fleming, John Stow, and Francis Thynne (alias Boteville) as associates in the project.23 The scope and overall nature would remain the same; but the second edition would be different, not simply a reprint. The description of England would be enlarged and rearranged. The histories of England, Scotland and Ireland would be brought up-to-date, that is carried down to 1586. New authorities would be consulted and some changes would be made in the text. The first edition was, in the words of Hooker, “Now newlie augmented and continued with manifold matters of singular note and worthie memorie to the yeare 1586 . . . .”24

---

20 See Harrison’s dedicatory epistle addressed to Lord Cobham and Holinshed’s dedication to Lord Burghley and his “Preface to the Reader,” all of which contain self-effacing apologies.

21 *DNB*, 9:1025.

22 See McKisack, *Medieval History*, P. 116. For Denham, Newberie, and Woodcock see McKerrow, *Printers and Booksellers*, pp. 88, 199, 300, respectively.

23 For biographical data relating to the continuators see the respective articles in *DNB*: Hooker, 9:1181-3; Fleming, 7:271-3; Stow, 19:3-6; and Thynne, 19:843-5. Most of the secondary authorities single out Hooker as the general editor and yet specific evidence in the nature of an appointment is lacking. The circumstantial evidence points to that conclusion, however, for he seems to have had a hand in each of the three volumes, at least, he inserted material in each volume. Moreover, his dedicatory epistle honoring Sir Walter Raleigh has the earmarks of a general dedication rather than a specific one relating to Ireland (6:101-110 of the Ellis edition). The title page in volume I also seems to substantiate this deduction, for it says the work was continued by “John Hooker alias Vowell, Gent. and Others.” However, for two contrary views which support Fleming see Sarah Dodson “Abraham Fleming, Writer and Editor,” *University of Texas Studies in English*, 34(1955):51-66 and William E. Miller, “Abraham Fleming: Editor of Shakespeare’s Holinshed,” *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 1(1959-60):89-100.

24 From the title page of the 1587 edition of the *Chronicles*, volume I.
The augmentations included some recently published tracts of Hooker and several unpublished antiquarian essays of Francis Thynne, a controversial writer who had been in prison for suspected treason several years earlier. Hooker's inclusions, though extraneous, received the censor's approval. But Thynne's long accounts of the archbishops of Canterbury, the Wardens of the Cinque Ports, and the Cobham title were excised, seemingly by Dr. John Hammond, who had been appointed by Privy Council.

The second edition of the *Chronicles* was finally approved and licensed in January 1587. It came out in three folio volumes with elaborate title and additional dedications but without any illustrations. The redactors altered the text here and there. They cited new authorities in the margins and corrected some mistakes which had crept into the first edition. In most cases, they indicated additions and corrections with their names in abbreviated form. The resultant work was larger and more comprehensive than the 1577 edition; but, because of injudicious accretions, it turned out to be a rather unbalanced agglomeration.

Hooker and his associates also restructured portions of the *Chronicles*. They retained the basic framework of Volume I but rearranged the chapter order of Harrison's description of England, shifting some of the chapters in the First Book to the Second Book and vice versa, and they enlarged some short chapters and added several new ones. For example, they incorporated...
KING ARTHUR'S CAMP IN A SCOTTISH CAMPAIGN
STRANGULATION OF THE SCOTTISH KING MALDWYN, 684 A.D.
new passages on parliament, the cathedral cities and gardening, but they eliminated several short chapters on English weights and measures. They split several lengthy chapters in two. In sum, they increased the total number of chapters in the First Book from 17 to 24 and in the Second Book from 18 to 25. The accretions in any case far exceeded the deletions so that the revised description was more comprehensive. While most of these accretions represented the labors of William Harrison, some may reflect the decisions of John Hooker, the general editor.

In contrast, the history of England prior to the Norman Conquest remained almost intact. The new editor of this section, Abraham Fleming, while retaining Holinshed's chronological sequence, divided the mass of material into eight books and then further subdivided the books into chapters. He also prefaced each chapter with a lengthy title summarizing the contents—a very practical device which rendered the history more usable to the reader. Instead of providing his readers with a chronological chart, he apologetically referred them to a chart which Harrison had incorporated in the First Book of his description. Fleming also added bits of information to the narrative and annotations in the margin. Yet his principal innovation involved the periodisation of English history before the Norman Conquest.

John Hooker also introduced a change of emphasis in his treatment of the non-English Celtic fringe. He devoted an entire volume—the Second Volume—to Ireland and Scotland and increased the coverage in each case. More significant, he changed the order and emphasis. In the first edition, Holinshed had treated Scotland first and Ireland next with the latter receiving only limited coverage. Hooker, reversing the order, dealt with Ireland first and then turned to Scotland; moreover, he incorporated his translation of Giraldus Cambrensis' "Conquest of Ireland," which had not been included in the first edition, and his narrative history encompassing the period from 1547 to 1586. These accretions, plus his personal experiences relating to the

---

30 The new chapter on parliament (1:291-3 of the Ellis edition), extracted from Sir Thomas Smith's *De Republica Anglorum* (1583), may well have been suggested by Hooker, a staunch advocate of parliamentary procedures who had sat in one Irish parliament and one English parliament before penning his *Order and Usage*, which was inserted in the volume covering Ireland. In fact, in 1586, while working on the *Chronicles*, he represented Exeter in the House of Commons. Hooker, native of Exeter and author of a history of the city and the cathedral, may well have suggested additional material on the cathedral cities. Also see Edelen, *Description*, xv-xxii.

31 In addition to the additions singled out above we know that Hooker also included some information about Hugh Oldham, Bishop of Exeter, and his role in the establishment of Corpus Christi, Oxford. See *Chronicles*, 2:830 (1587 edition).

32 See *Chronicles*, 1:31-33 (Ellis edition).

Irish parliament of 1568-70 and his previously published *Order and Usage*, reflect the pride and prejudice of the continuator, who had spent considerable time in Ireland between 1568 and 1575. It could be argued that in 1586 "the Irish Question" loomed large in Westminster; and therefore that Ireland deserved more attention; and that Hooker utilized his editorial authority to redress the balance and draw attention to Anglo-Irish affairs. But it could also be argued that "the Scottish Question," especially the fate of Mary Queen of Scots and the possible succession of James VI to the English throne, deserved priority in any historical treatment. It would appear that the editorial decisions relating to volume II represent the personal views of the general editor.

Those accretions relating to Scotland proved to be less extensive. The continuators retained the underlying structure and order, including Harrison's description, Holinshed's narrative and the dedicatory epistle to Leicester, although Francis Thynne added new passages to the text and extended the narrative from 1571 (where Holinshed stopped) to 1586. Whereas Holinshed had relied heavily upon John Major's history for his treatment of Scottish history prior to the Reformation—a history written in Latin from a Catholic point of view—Thynne used *Rerum Scoticarum Historica*, recently published in 1582 by George Buchanan, an avid Calvinist and critic of Queen Mary. A few pages in this volume were subsequently disapproved and excised.

The third volume, dealing exclusively with English history after the Norman Conquest, proved to be the most agglomerative. Though retaining Holinshed's structure and narrative, the revisors interjected additional information and new views at several points. Abraham Fleming, the principal redactor, incorporated additional sentences and paragraphs, invariably indicating the same with a marginal abreviation "Abr. Fl," and frequently included his source of information. To illustrate, he included from John

---

34 Ibid., 341-63. In 1572 Hooker wrote and distributed two versions of the *Order and Usage*, one dedicated to the Exeter representatives, the other to Sir William Fitzwilliam, then Lord Deputy of Ireland. He included in each edition of his tract a translation of the *Modus Tenendi Parliamentum*. Hooker incorporated the Exeter version in Holinshed's *Chronicles* and excluded the *Modus* and dedicatory epistles. However, the printer of the *Chronicles*, seemingly using a printed copy, took many liberties with spelling and punctuation. The present author has in preparation a critical edition of Hooker's *Order and Usage*, the first published description of parliament and the lawmaking procedures.

35 *Chronicles*, 5:655-745 (Ellis edition). He also appended to his narrative history an annotated bibliography of Scottish authors modeled, I suspect, after Richard Stanyhurst's list (6:57-66). A few of these pages bearing upon recent events were excised. See Maslen, "The Castrated Sheets in Holinshed," p. 123.

36 The entire volume, including his revision of Holinshed and his narrative, is replete with references to Buchanan. For Buchanan see DNB, 3:186-93.

37 For example, see his additions to Holinshed's treatment of the parliament of 1404 (3:27-31 of the Ellis edition). For Fleming's role as "learned corrector" see Miller, "Abraham Fleming," pp. 89-94.
GRAIN HARVEST
THE THREE WITCHES IN MACBETH
Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* an account of Dr. Story, a Catholic “monster disguised in the likeness of a man,” who had been executed for treason in 1571.\(^3^8\) Similarly, he incorporated a brief account of Sir Walter Raleigh's voyage to the New World and his establishment of the colony of Virginia.\(^3^9\)

Three other contributors participated in the accretive process. John Hooker inserted his *Description of the Citie of Excester* in the middle of Edward VI's reign.\(^4^0\) Although the latter half of this insertion dealt with the Western Rebellion of 1549, the first half, concerned with ancient and medieval Exeter, must be deemed irrelevant (see the Ellis edition 3:926-61). Also extraneous was his history of Exeter cathedral (see the Ellis edition 3:961-3).\(^4^1\) The hitherto unpublished essays of Francis Thynne inserted toward the end of this volume, while quite useful to students of English history, were clearly out of place and inappropriate.\(^4^2\) Yet, the editors inserted his antiquarian treatment of several high offices, including a long essay on the archbishopric of Canterbury, and a self-serving account of the Leicester title in the midst of the narrative.\(^4^3\) The identity of the person ultimately responsible for including these extraneous essays is not clear—it could have been the general editor Hooker or, perhaps, Abraham Fleming.\(^4^4\)

\(^{3^8}\)See *Chronicles*, 4:259 (Ellis edition). Fleming quotes directly from Foxe and indicates such with an asterisk.


\(^{4^0}\)Hooker had written this pamphlet between 1565 and 1571 and published it in 1572 as an appendage to the Exeter edition of his *Order and Usage*. The best manuscript copy, actually the printer's copy, is located in the College of Arms (MS. 41).

\(^{4^1}\)This account came from Hooker's *Catalogue of the Bishops of Excester* (London: H. Denham, 1584); in fact, it served as the introduction to his catalogue. It is most interesting to note that it had been printed by Henry Denham, one of the members of the syndicate, who also used the alias Vowell.

\(^{4^2}\)See *Chronicles* 4:600-930 (Ellis edition).

\(^{4^3}\)While these could be construed as appendices, in as much as they appear toward the end of the last volume, in fact Thynne made belabored attempts to relate them to the events and contemporary personalities like the Earl of Leicester and Lord Cobham.

\(^{4^4}\)Francis Thynne put his name to most of these extraneous insertions, this much is clear, and he made no attempt to disclaim authorship. Although much of this material was excised, he suffered no loss of reputation or patronage, seemingly, for he became a member of the Society of Antiquaries and served as Lancaster Herald from 1602 until his death in 1608 (see *DNB*, 19:844). Abraham Fleming well could have been responsible, for the insertions are followed by a short concluding note by “A. F.” in which he more or less assumes credit for the last volume. On this see Miller “Abraham Fleming,” pp. 89-95. Neither Fleming nor Hooker appear to have sustained any loss of place or reputation from the censor's castrations. In fact, soon thereafter Fleming became the household chaplain of the Countess of Nottingham and received patronage from Archbishop Whitgift (*DNB*, 7:272), while Hooker received from Sir Walter Raleigh (to whom he had dedicated the new edition) the office of Steward of Brodnich (see *Historical Manuscripts Commission Reports, Exeter*, pp. 58-60).
The extended narrative was written by John Stow, the well-known London antiquarian and chronicler who had purchased the collections of Wolfe. Earlier he had authored several abridged accounts of England's history and with Archbishop Parker's backing he had published for the first time Matthew of Westminster's *Flores Historiarum* (1567), Matthew Paris's *Chronicle* (1571), and Thomas Walsingham's *Chronicle* (1574), all of which had been used and cited by Holinshed in the 1577 edition of the *Chronicles*. The selection of Stow to complete the history of England, that is, continue it from 1576 to 1586, was natural even though he had had some brushes with the law. Most of his narrative remained intact, including the coverage of many recent and controversial events, although some portions of it were castrated for reasons of state.

The second edition, despite its obvious weaknesses and shortcomings, proved to be an overwhelming success. In several respects it was superior to the first edition. The pagination was consistent instead of a mixture of medieval and modern foliation. Moreover, the elaborate indexes, made by Hooker and Fleming and appended to the third volume, greatly enhanced the utility of the work. The quality of the paper in the 1587 edition appears to be superior to that used in the 1577 edition—at least it has better withstood the ravages of fire, water and bookworms—and it would appear that more copies were printed and sold. Equally important, the 1587 edition proved to be a veritable goldmine of information about the British Isles. It was more than a mere compilation of sources and a narrative of historical events. For Englishmen it served as an almanac, travel guide, and encyclopedia. For the foreign traveller, ambassador, or merchant here was the past and present of England, Scotland, and Ireland all in one work and enhanced with good indexes. For the poet and playwright Holinshed’s *Chronicles* became a new national Bible, a rich storehouse of descriptive data, a sourcebook filled with legends, allusions and dramatic plots.

---

45 The division of labor for this continued narrative is not clear. The transitional phrase reads: “from the year of our Lord 1576, where Raphael Holinshed left; supplied and continued to the present yeare 1586: by John Stow, and others” (see the Ellis edition, 4:341). It is clear that Stow wrote some of the narrative, for his initials appear in the margin. Yet, Abraham Fleming provided the introductory pages and the conclusion (4:341-2 and 951-2); moreover, Fleming also inserted paragraphs here and there (4:344, 346, 375, 460). It would appear that John Stow contributed the annalistic narrative and the documentary base; Fleming then edited it, added his own interpolations, and permitted Thynne and Hooker to insert their antiquarian essays.

46 A few pages of the excised section, namely the transitions linking Thynne’s essays on the Cobham and Leicester titles to the general narrative, were probably written by Stow.

47 In his concluding statement, Fleming, while admitting “Defaults,” requests the forbearance of the readers (see the Ellis edition 4:951). Also see Wright, *Middle Class Culture*, pp. 314-5.

48 The following comparison is based upon the editions in the George Arents Research Library, the Sol Feinstone Collection, and those microfilmed copies available through University Microfilms.

CORONATION OF MACBETH
Holinshied, *Chronicles*, Part III, p. 244, 1577 ed.
THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS, 1066
That Shakespeare used the second edition of Holinshed's *Chronicles* rather than the first has been demonstrated and well documented. Late in the nineteenth century Boswell-Stone, after comparing the texts of several plays with both the first and second editions of Holinshed's *Chronicles* concluded that Shakespeare must have used the 1587 edition. Certain key words and phrases employed in *Richard II*, *Henry IV*, *Henry V*, *Henry VI* and *Richard III* not evident in the 1577 edition appeared in the 1587 edition. From this comparative data Boswell-Stone deduced that several other plays, including *Lear*, *Cymbeline*, *John* and *Henry VIII*, were also based upon the second edition. His conclusions, besides being confirmed by other scholars, form the basis of several editions of Shakespeare's Holinshed; actually these functional editions contain only those excerpts from the *Chronicle* which Shakespeare utilized in his plays.

Even though Shakespeare made extensive use of the *Chronicles*, by the time of his death in 1616 they had been superseded by other general histories. In 1602 John Clapham published his *Historie of England*, an uncluttered narrative which detailed the early history of Britain. In 1611 John Speed came out with his *History of Great Britain*, which carried the narrative down to Tudor times. Both authors, rejecting Geoffrey of Monmouth as a reliable source, excluded most of the fabulous stories which Holinshed and Harrison had incorporated in the *Chronicles*. Moreover, both historians reflect the gradual emergence of a more critical methodology so evident in the later writings of John Stow, the archaeological researches of William Camden, and the papers delivered at the meetings of the Society of Antiquaries. By 1616, if not before, Holinshed’s *Chronicles* was regarded as a dated and inaccurate historical work.

Nevertheless, interest in the *Chronicles* persisted through the eighteenth century. Many seventeenth century authors continued to use Holinshed as a source. More important, in February 1723 a syndicate of London booksellers proposed to bring out an edition of the castrated pages of Holinshed’s *Chronicles* at five pounds, five shillings per set. This subscribed edition, composed of 250 copies, came out in July of that year. This was followed by two other editions published by rival printers between 1724 and 1728. Taken together they reflect a rather broad-based demand and exceptional interest for such a high-priced item. A few years later antiquarian Francis Peck acquired the manuscript collections of Abraham Fleming and discussed them briefly in his *Desiderata Curiosa*. Ultimately, the revival of interest in Shakespeare during the latter years of the eighteenth century, and the subsequent rise of critical scholarship, served to raise questions and arouse curiosity in the playwright’s sources. Small wonder that Sir Henry Ellis, shortly after being appointed Keeper of Printed Books in the British Museum, decided to bring out a new edition of Holinshed’s *Chronicles*, really a reissue of the 1587 edition.

Sir Henry was well suited for the task. Besides being a bibliophile and an experienced librarian he was interested in literary history and antiquarian studies. Moreover, he had direct access to the best collection of printed works in the world. The British Museum possessed several copies of the second edition of Holinshed’s *Chronicles*, but they were, seemingly, those that had been excised. It would appear from the “Advertisement” that Ellis utilized an expurgated copy and then added those castrations which had been published between 1723 and 1728.

---

55 The *Chronicles* were used by historians Speed and Howe, even though they rejected Holinshed’s fabulous account of early Britain, and by Milton, Raleigh and the Levellers, to mention but a few. See J. H. Stibbs, “Raleigh and Holinshed,” *Modern Language Review*, 44(1949):543-6. As late as the 1790’s Robert Southey used the *Chronicles*, at least he jotted down passages in his commonplace book, but he gave no indication as to the edition.

56 Maslen “The Castrated Sheets of Holinshed’s *Chronicles*,” pp. 121-3. Although *DNB* (9:1026) singles out two editions, Maslen has located three editions.

57 *DNB*, 7:272.

58 It should be pointed out that in 1805 the Scottish portions of the 1587 edition of Holinshed were extracted and published separately in Arbroath; see Nicoll, *Holinshed Chronicle*, p. ix.

59 For Ellis see *DNB*, 6:698-700.

60 This statement is based upon the “Advertisement” quoted in this paragraph. We know from other sources that unexpurgated copies existed in private collections (see *DNB*, 9:1026).

61 See *Chronicles*, 1, (Ellis edition).
Finished in Januarie 1587, and the 29 of the Queenes Maiesties reigne, with the full continuation of the former yeares, at the expenses of John Harrison, George Bishop, Rafe Newberie, Henrie Denham, and Thomas Woodcocke.

AT LONDON,
Printed in Aldersgate street at the signe of the Starre.
Cum privilegio.

COLOPHON AND PRINTER'S MARK
The original Edition of the Chronicles of Holinshed, it is well known, was published by their Author in a mutilated State. A Number of Pages, which had previously been printed with the rest of the Work, were found to be omitted, except in a few Copies obtained by some favored Persons. In the present Edition, these Castrations are faithfully restored . . .

Here was reason enough to reissue the Chronicles. Using high standards set by Ellis to guide him, Richard Lane, a London printer in Shoe Lane, published the third edition in 1807-8.\textsuperscript{62}

The Ellis edition followed the text of the 1587 edition. The title pages and dedications were included; the excised pages were restored to their respective places in the text. The original orthography and punctuation were retained. Yet, Ellis and his publishers made several changes. They used a larger type, as one might expect, and opted for single columns and quarto sized pages rather than double columns on folio sized pages. The number of volumes was increased to six, as a consequence, and this in turn necessitated different pagination and new indexes.

More significant, Ellis also reversed the order of treatment so that all matters pertaining to England came first and all matters pertaining to Celtic Britain appeared last. Following Holinshed rather than Hooker, he placed the description and history of Scotland before those of Ireland. Fortunately he also included the 1587 title pages so that the perceptive reader can spot this reversal. The following table should clarify the whole matter and also serve as a general guide to the contents of the respective volumes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contents</th>
<th>Respective Volume Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Description of England</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Early History of Britain to 1066</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Description and History of Scotland</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Description and History of Ireland</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The History of England after 1066-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No reason is given for these editorial changes. They may well have been dictated by the demands of space and balance, but in all likelihood they reflect the pragmatic decisions of a market-conscious editor.

Since 1808 Holinshed's *Chronicles* has not been re-edited. However, it should be noted that excerpts from the work have been edited and published by literary and social historians. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Frederick J. Furnivall edited for the New Shakespeare Society that portion of the *Chronicles* written by William Harrison and Boswell-Stone

\textsuperscript{62} Ibid.
brought out the first edition of *Shakespeare’s Holinshed*. Since then there have been several editions of *Shakespeare’s Holinshed* and another republication of Harrison’s descriptive portion. All of these abridgements have been based on the Ellis edition.

A few years ago, thanks to our modern technology, the Ellis edition of 1807-8 was reprinted and distributed by an American publishing house. But, as a result of continuous demand and interest in Holinshed, that republication is now out of print. It should come as no surprise to learn, therefore, that four hundred years after the printing of the first edition of Holinshed’s *Chronicles* the same publisher has issued a second reprinting of the Ellis edition with an introduction similar in substance to this article.

Illustrations are from the *Chronicles* which are part of the George Arents Research Library (1577 edition) and the Sol Feinstone Collection (1587 edition) at Syracuse University.

---

63 The Furnivall edition, published between 1877 and 1908 in London, reprinted Harrison’s *Description of England* and excerpts from the *Description of Britain*. Boswell-Stone brought out his first edition in 1897.

64 See above, footnote 52. Unfortunately, the popular and widely read Everyman edition contains a few errors. The editors wrongly attributed the Irish history section of the 1577 edition to Richard Hooker and misdated the Arbroath edition of 1805 (see pp. vi and xi of the 1927 edition).

65 AMS Press, a New York publisher.