

ANALYSIS OF SOURCES (SECTION 1)

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This exercise is intended to analyse the sources used for the following academic article:

AUTHORITY AND CONFLICT AT THE CISTERCIAN ABBEY OF STRATA FLORIDA

By: Professor Janet Burton

Overview.

The author noted that between c.1340 and c.1440, the Cistercian abbey of Strata Florida was attacked and invaded by fellow White Monks (Cistercians). She argues that these events arose due to the prestige and importance of Strata Florida and to the products of local rivalries.

It is relevant to note that following the so called 'conquest of Wales' by Edward I between 1277 and 1283, the Statute of Rhuddlan of 1284 established the constitution of the Principality of Wales under the auspices of the English Crown. The first English Prince of Wales was Edward I's eldest son, Edward. The article questions if this political change could have been responsible for the incidents at Strata Florida.

Although Strata Florida was an establishment of considerable size and importance, by 1535 it was valued at just over £118 per annum which made it by no means the wealthiest Cistercian monastic house in Wales.

In order to determine why these incidents of violence took place the author has relied on a considerable quantity of archives, primary sources, secondary sources and even some online resources.

Archives

Most of the archives referenced were extracted from The National Archives. A total of 20 different references are made to archive material. Most of these are prefixed 'SC' indicating 'Special Collection' and these are often petitions to the English crown complaining about the behaviour of invaders or their attempts to overthrow the abbot sometimes by violent actions which included imprisonment, theft or destruction of buildings and objects. A difficulty with these archives is the varied translations of Welsh names.

Three referenced archives have the prefix 'C' (Chancery). One is a writ informing the king of an excommunication (signification of excommunication), and the others are entries on the roll of Patents.

There is just one archive with an 'E' prefix (Exchequer). This is a reference to the Register of Edward Price of Wales (The Black Prince)

List of archives

Special Collection Archives

SC8/82/4057

Petition by the Abbot of Whitland requesting remedy to be 'quit of suit to the County of Cardigan' according to his charter.

Dated ?1320

SC8/4/165

Petition by the Abbot of Blaunchlaunde [Whitland] requesting a sergeant to speak for him in pleas and have a jury of 12 men as these are denied under Welsh law.

Dated 1320

SC8/34/1681

Petition by Abbot and convent of Whitland requesting that they and their people holding land from the king have the right to defend their rights in 'all manner of quarrels'.

SC8/336/15874

Petition by John Cobbe, abbot of Cymmer [sic] requesting lands, tenements and goods of his abbey to be seized into king's hand because his predecessor, Rys [sic] ousted him from the abbey and kept it by 'riotous malefactors'.

Dated 1442-3

SC8/87/4334

Petition by abbot of Strata Florida requesting confirmation of their charters. He offered payment of 20 marks.

Dated ?1320

SC8/87/4335

Petition by abbot of Strata Florida claiming that according to their charters he ought not to perform any 'suit' but the constable of Cardigan is distraining him.

Dated ?1320

SC8/47/4336

Petition by the Abbot of Strata Florida requesting confirmation of his charters confirmed by the king's father.

Endorsed 'fiat' [to be done]

Dated ?1320

SC8/87/4851

Petition [unnamed] requesting letters patent of Edward I granting commote [division of land] of Penardd to Geoffrey Clement.

Dated 1331

SC8/48/4852

Petition by Robert Clement stating that king's grandfather granted commote of Penardd to his father and he requests remedy against seizure by Roger Mortimer on behalf of the king.

Endorsement 'coram rege et magno consilio' [in the presence of the king and great council].

Dated ?1331

SC8/98/4853

Petition by Elene verch [daughter of] Mereduk (Meredith) regarding her rights to lands which are the inheritance of her mother.

Dated 1331 (related to previous item).

SC8/49/2410

Petition by Gwenthian (Gwenllian) daughter of Meredith requesting to be able to grant land to her daughters because 'she is so old and feeble'. She requests a writ of justice permitting her to enfeoff [grant] to whichever daughter she wishes.

Dated ?1330

SC8/73/3611

Petition by the abbot of Strata Florida requesting an inquisition against the 'many extortions and mischiefs' on the abbot's tenants.

Dated 1334

SC8/240/11951

Petition by the abbot and convent of Strata Florida requesting a writ to stop Robert Clement distraining them to answer in his court as he and his people were always judged by the king's court.

Dated 1331-2

SC8/139/6928

Petition by the abbot and convent of Strata Florida complaining of violence and oppressions suffered by the abbot at the hands of the abbot of Conway.

1385? [however, more accurately dated to 1383 by the article's author]

SC8/336/15974

This archive is referred to in footnote 75 in the article but cannot be found by this reference. I suspect it may be a misprint for SC8/336/15874 which is described above.

Chancery Archives

C85/167

Request by bishop of St David's for royal aid in the excommunication of the abbot of Strata Florida named Maredudd Bool, for non payment of tithes.

Dated 1338.

C66/453

Patent roll, 20 Hen VI [20th year], Part 3

Dated 1441-1442

C88/455

Patent Roll, 21 Hen VI, Part 1

Dated 1442-43

Exchequer Archives

E36/144

Register of letters, indentures and memoranda of Edward Prince of Wales [The Black Prince]

Dated 20-21, Ed III [approximately 1347]

Primary Sources

Calendar of Charter Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office (London 1903-27), 1327-41 and 1377-81

Littere Wallie Preserved in Liber A in the Public Record Office edited by J Goronwy Edwards.

Calendar of the Close Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office (London 1902-) 1279-88

Calendar of the Patent Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office (London, 1891-) 1345-45.

Calendar of Ancient Petitions Relating to Wales (Cardiff, 1975)

Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem V (1908)

Statuta Capitulum Generalium Ordinis Cisterciensis ab Anno 1116 as Annum 1786 (Louvain 1933-41)

Registrum Johannis de Trillek, Episcopi herefordensis, AD 1344 to 1361

Brut y Tywysogyon, or, the Chronicle of the Princes: Red Book of Hergest version. Cardiff 1955. Edited and translated by Thomas Jones.

The Great Roll of the Pipe for the fourteenth Year of the reign of King John

Same for the sixteenth year

Online Sources

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C9209112>

This is a reference to the archive numbered SC8/139/1628 (see above) with particular reference to the dating exercise for this archive. The article's author argues that the petition, dated by William Rees (Calendar of Ancient Petitions) to 1442 actually should be dated to 1385. This is partially supported by the National Archive on this website.

www.gutorglyn.net/gutorglyn/poem/?poem-selection=005-009

www.gutorglyn.net/gutorglyn/poem/?poem-selection=008

These refer to poetry written by Gutor'r Glyn in praise of Abbot Rhys. Unfortunately, I was unable to access these webpages (possibly due to server security).

ANALYSIS OF SOURCES (SECTION 2)

Chris Dixon [student number 2114844]

This exercise is intended to analyse the sources used for the following academic article:

Repairing the loss of the past: the use of written, oral and physical evidence in the *Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis (c1113-42)*

By: Dr. Charles C. Rozier
Durham University

Overview

The author comments that Orderic Vitalis was an experienced student of writing history and that during his time as a Benedictine monk and later priest at the Monastery of St Évrault in Normandy he wrote a large quantity of text on subjects such as 'theology, biblical exegesis, poetry, music and most of all history'. He is most well known for his magnum opus, the *Ecclesiastical History*, written in Latin, which is contained in a vast amount of text over 13 books. A definitive version of this work is that edited and translated by the late Marjorie Chibnall who died in 1912 at the age of 96 after a 6 decade academic career specialising in Anglo-Norman studies.

The purpose of the article is the examination of the use of sources by Orderic Vitalis in the *Ecclesiastical History* in particular written oral and archaeological sources and his own attitudes to the reliability of each source type.

The early books of the *Ecclesiastical History* are relatively contemporary chronicles but Book 6 dealt with the history of St Evroult and the monastery from its original foundation in the 7th century up to the present day (that is, Orderic Vitalis's present day – 1130s). It is the writings from this section of the work which were the focus of the analysis in this article.

The author of this article identified from analysis of the text that Orderic clearly preferred written sources, despaired sometimes for lack of them, was cautious of using oral sources – preferring the evidence of older people, and would actively seek to confirm such sources with archaeological evidence or the examination of physical objects.

This quote from Book 1 of the *Ecclesiastical History* neatly summarises Orderic's attitude to the written source:

It is fitting that, since new events take place every day in this world, these should be systematically committed to writing for the glory of God, so that – just as past deeds have been handed down by our forebears – present

happenings should be recorded now and passed on by the men of today to future generations'

The author of the article expresses his gratitude on behalf of himself and us as representatives of those future generations.

Primary Sources

Orderic Vitalis – The Ecclesiastical History as edited and translated by Marjorie Chibnall (6 vols., Oxford, 1969-1980) and titles 'The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis'

This source is extensively referred to especially volume iii which contains Book 6 of the original.

Orderic Vitalis and Robert of Torigny, 'The Gesta Normannorum Ducum of William of Jumieges' edited and translated by E. van Houts (2 vols., Oxford, 1992-95).

This is the an early work by Orderic Vitalis copying and adding to the work of William of Jumieges.

Orderic Vitalis Ecclesiastasticae Historiae Libri Tredecim, edited and translated by A. le Provost (5 vols., Paris, 1838 – 55).

This is the first modern edition of Orderic's work containing a lengthy introduction regarding Orderic's sources. I have been unable to source this book except as untranslated (in Latin).

Gesta Francorum (anon). Y.N.Harari 'Eyewitnessing in accounts of the first crusade: The Gesta Francorum and other contemporary narratives'.

I suspect this work contains quotes and comments from these primary sources and perhaps not a full translation of the Latin original.

Dudo of St Quentin: History of the Normans, translated by E.Christiansen (Woodbridge, 1998

Dudo was an 11th century Norman historian from whose work Orderic extracted reports of 'Viking Savagery' which went some way to explain the destruction of written records.

Acta Sanctorum ordinis sancti, edited by J.Mabillon (9 vols., Paris, 1668-1701)

I believe this is an edition or an original source but can not find any details of this. The author of the article states that this was written by the monks of Rebais in about 1131.

Archives

There is no reference in the identification or use of any archives in this article.

Online Sources

There is no reference to any online source.

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