



UNIVERSALITAS & PERVASIVITAS

IL COSTITUIRSI E DIFFONDERSI DELLA S.J. E SUOI ECHI (1540 - 1773)

di A. Pisani

Schede autori Contesto teologico e filosofico

Thomas Walsingham

Thomas Walsingham (died c. 1422) was an English chronicler.

Life

He was probably educated at St Albans Abbey at St Albans, Hertfordshire, and at Oxford.

He became a monk at St Albans, where he appears to have passed the whole of his monastic life, excepting a period from 1394 to 1396 during which he was prior of Wymondham Abbey, Norfolk, England, another Benedictine house. At St Albans he was in charge of the scriptorium, or writing room, and he died about 1422.

Works

Walsingham is the main authority for the history of England during the reigns of Richard II, Henry IV and Henry V, including the Peasants Revolt rising under Wat Tyler in 1381. He shows considerable animus against John Wycliffe and the Lollards.

Walsingham's most important work is his *Historia Anglicana*, covering the period between 1272 and 1422. Some authorities hold that Walsingham himself wrote only the section between 1377 and 1392, but this view is criticised by James Gairdner in his *Early chroniclers of Europe* (1879).

The *Historia*, which from the beginning to 1377 is largely a compilation from earlier chroniclers, was published by Matthew Parker in 1574 as *Historia Angliae brevis*. Covering some of the same ground Walsingham wrote a *Chronicon Angliae*; this deals with English history from 1328 to 1388. His other writings include the *Gesta Abbatum Monasterii Sancti Albani*, the *Ypodigma Neustriae*, the *Arcana Deorum*, the *Dictys Cretensis*, the *Historia Magni Principis Alexandri*, the *Prohemia Poetarum*, and the *Defensio de praerogativis et dignitatibus ordinem monasticam concernentibus*.

The *Gesta* is a history of the abbots of St Albans from the foundation of the abbey to 1381. The original work of Walsingham is the period between 1308 and 1381, the earlier part being merely a compilation.

The *Ypodigma* purports to be a history of the dukes of Normandy, but it also contains some English history. Compiled about 1419, it was dedicated to Henry V and was written to justify this king's invasion of France. It was first published by Matthew Parker in 1574.

The *Arcana Deorum* is a commentary on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*; the *Dictys Cretensis* is a history of the Trojan War; the *Historia Magni Principis Alexandri* is a history of Alexander the Great; the *Prohemia Poetarum* is a commentary on the lives and works of many classical and Christian authors; the *Defensio de praerogativis et dignitatibus ordinem monasticam concernentibus* uses historical examples to defend monastic institutions.



BIBLIOTECA UNIVERSITARIA DI GENOVA – PERCORSI TEMATICI

UNIVERSALITAS & PERVASIVITAS

IL COSTITUIRSI E DIFFONDERSI DELLA S.J. E SUOI ECHI (1540 - 1773)

di A. Pisani

Schede autori Contesto teologico e filosofico

Another history of England by Walsingham dealing with the period between 1272 and 1393 is in manuscript in the British Museum. This history agrees in many particulars with the *Chronicon Angliae*, but it is much less hostile to John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster.

References

This article incorporates text from a publication now in the public domain: Chisholm, Hugh, ed. (1911). *Encyclopædia Britannica* (11th ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Cfr.: Wikipedia.en - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Walsingham - This page was last modified on 13 November 2012 at 04:31 - Text is available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License