THE CONYBEARE BROS.

“NARRATIVE HISTORY” AMOUNTS TO FABULATION,
THE REAL STUFF BEING MERE CHRONOLOGY
June 10, Thursday; John Josias Conybeare was born, a son of William Conybeare, DD. Rector of St. Botolph, Bishopgate and Mrs. Margaret Hester Olivier Conybeare, and a grandson of John Conybeare, Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, and afterward Bishop of Bristol. He and a younger brother William Daniel Conybeare would be educated at Christ Church, Oxford.

NOBODY COULD GUESS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NEXT
June 7, Thursday: William Daniel Conybeare was born in London, a son of Dr. William Conybeare, rector of Bishopsgate, and a grandson of John Conybeare, bishop of Bristol (1692-1755). He and his elder brother John Josias Conybeare would be educated at Christ Church, Oxford.

DO I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION? GOOD.
John Josias Conybeare was awarded an Oxford University Under-graduate prize, for a poem in Latin entitled “Religio Brahmæ.”

Henry Hallam graduated at Christ Church College of Oxford University. He would practice law for some years on the Oxford circuit.

**LIFE IS LIVED FORWARD BUT UNDERSTOOD BACKWARD?**
— NO, THAT’S GIVING TOO MUCH TO THE HISTORIAN’S STORIES.
**LIFE ISN’T TO BE UNDERSTOOD EITHER FORWARD OR BACKWARD.**
June 13, Sunday: John Josias Conybeare was ordained.

CHANGE IS ETERNITY, STASIS A FIGMENT
The Reverend John Josias Conybeare became prebendary of York in 1803.
Thomas De Quincey first took opium, while at Worcester College, Oxford, to cope with the pain of facial neuralgia.

In this year, also, he first met Charles Lamb.

The Reverend John Josias Conybeare, being an enthusiast for chemistry and geology, set up his own laboratory in Oxford.
William Daniel Conybeare, after being educated at Westminster School, went to Christ Church College of Oxford University.

THE FUTURE IS MOST READILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT
The Reverend John Josias Conybeare became Professor of Anglo-Saxon at Oxford University. His younger brother William Daniel Conybeare graduated from Christ Church College of Oxford University with a 1st in classics and 2d in mathematics.

THE FUTURE CAN BE EASILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT
William Daniel Conybeare received the MA degree from Christ Church College of Oxford University. He would enter holy orders. While in college he had been attracted to the study of geology by the lectures of Dr. John Kidd, and so upon leaving college he would make extended journeys in study of the geology of Britain and the continent. He would become one of the early members of the Geological Society.
The Reverend Professor John Josias Conybeare became Regius Professor of Poetry at Oxford University, and vicar of Batheaston near Bath.
The Reverend Professor John Josias Conybeare’s translation of Beowulf into English and Latin verse.\(^1\) The Reverend William Daniel Conybeare, his younger brother, became curate of Wardington (which is near Banbury, England), and accepted also a lectureship at Brislington, near Bristol.

February 21, Monday: The Emperor Napoléon I, at Nogent-sur-Seine, wrote to the Austrian Emperor Franz, offering a separate peace. Nothing would come of this.

Rumors were sweeping across London that the French emperor was dead and the war over.

Reverend Professor John Josias Conybeare got married with Mary Davies, daughter of the Reverend Charles Davies. The married couple would reside at Batheaston in Somerset.

---

1. The Finnsburg materials pertaining to a Beowulf epic had been known to speakers of English only since 1803, when they has first been mentioned by Sharon Turner, and had been published about in English only since Turner’s 1805 THE HISTORY OF THE ANGLO-SAXONS.
During this year and the following one, Mary Anning would be excavating the 1st nearly complete fossil Plesiosaurus.\(^2\)

In this year Gideon Mantell and William Buckland also discovered dinosaur remains.\(^3\)

Gideon Mantell discovered, in England, a fossil trunk of a tree resembling that of a tropical palm — evidence that once upon a time there had been there a much warmer climate.

2. This fossil when it would be reported in 1823 would demonstrate the correctness of an analysis offered in 1821 on the basis of more fragmentary remains by Henry De la Beche and the Reverend William Daniel Conybeare.

3. However, this term “dinosaur” is something of an anachronism as of 1820, as it would not even be coined as a word in the language for another 22 years, until 1842.
Henry De la Beche and the Reverend William Daniel Conybeare described, from fragmentary remains (the discovery by Mary Anning of a more complete skeleton in 1820 as yet being unreported), the saurian Plesiosaurus. Their analysis would be shown to have been accurate in 1823 by the skeleton that was being recovered by Anning.

At a Swiss natural history meeting, Ignaz Venetz expounded on the idea that many features of the Swiss landscape could be explained by glaciers. He would present this again in his (posthumously published) *MEMOIRE SUR L’EXTENSION DES ANCIENS GLACIERS RENFERMANT QUELQUES EXPLICATIONS SUR LEURS EFFETS REMARQUABLES.*
The Reverend William Daniel Conybeare was one of the founders of the Bristol Philosophical Institution. His *OUTLINES OF THE GEOLOGY OF ENGLAND AND WALES*. He and William Phillips named the Carboniferous system, a period associated with coal deposits. This time period will also become known as the Mississippian and Pennsylvanian Periods in the United States.
The Reverend William Daniel Conybeare became rector of Sully in Glamorganshire. The discovery of a fossil skeleton by Mary Anning demonstrated the correctness of the analysis of Plesiosaurus that he and Henry De la Beche had offered in 1821.

June 10, Thursday: While at the house of Stephen Groomsbridge, Esq. FRS at Blackheath, the Reverend Professor John Josias Conybeare was seized with an apoplexy.

In Newport, Rhode Island, Friend Stephen Wanton Gould wrote in his journal:

5th day 10 of 6 M / At Meeting Wm Forster preached, his testimony was sound & sweet. -- After meeting Hannah Dennis & her daughter Anne called & requested me to pay a visit with them to Thomas Hornsby in his room which Thos readily consented to receive. — I went up with them & it was a season of tenderness to us all, they both spoke with feeling & the visit was well received. —

June 20, Sunday: The remains of John Josias Conybeare were interred in the churchyard at Bath Easton. (False reports were circulating, that it had been his younger brother who had died.)

In Newport, Rhode Island, Friend Stephen Wanton Gould wrote in his journal:

1st day 20th of 6th M 1824 / It was rainy & our forenoon meeting was small. Our frd Ruth Davis had good acceptable service. — The Afternoon meeting was diered till 4 OClock by request of our Ancient frd Wm Jackson who attended Portsmouth Meeting in the forenoon & wished to be at ours in the Afternoon. — Wm Jackson attended in the Afternoon, & addessed the youth, particularly the “Little lads” which was very comfortable to my feelings - at a second rising he preached more generally & very acceptably. —

September: An obituary of John Josias Conybeare, from which I have paraphrased, appeared on page 162 of Annals of Philosophy.

Mary Godwin Wollstonecraft Shelley’s edition of her late husband Percy Bysshe Shelley’s POSTHUMOUS POEMS, which had been on sale since June, was suppressed at the insistence of his father Sir Timothy Shelley.
The Reverend William Daniel Conybeare became vicar of Axminster.
June 22, Thursday: David Henry Thoreau checked out, from Harvard Library, the Reverend John Josias Conybeare’s ILLUSTRATIONS OF ANGLO-SAXON POETRY, EDITED, WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES, INTRODUCTORY NOTICES, &C., BY HIS BROTHER WILLIAM DANIEL CONYBEARE (London: Harding and Lepard, 1826).

Friend Stephen Wanton Gould wrote in his journal:
5th day 22 of 6 M / Our Meeting was small but solid quiet & I thought sweet – Father had a few words to offer - In the Preparative Meeting, committees were appointed to Report Overseers & a Clerk for the Meeting the time of each appointment having expired.

CONTENTS.

N.B. The articles in italics have been added by the Editor.

   Advertisement to Essay ........................................... page iii
   First Communication to Antiquarian Society [reprinted from Archaeologia, vol. xvii.] ........................................... v
   Rising Poem, referred to in that Communication ................. xvi
   Second Communication to Antiquarian Society, [reprinted from Archaeologia, vol. xvii.] ........................................... xxvii
   Recalibration of Metrical Law ................................... xxxvi
   Comparative View of Icelandic and Ancient Teutonic Metres ... xxxix
   On the Alliterative Metres of the Celtic Nations ................ lvi
   On the Derivation of the later English Alliterative Metres .... lx

II. Arranged Catalogue of all the extant remains of Anglo-Saxon Poetry, with some specimens not noticed in the body of the work, particularly the Poem on the Death of Byrhtnoth. lxxv

III. Illustrations of Anglo-Saxon Poetry, as completed for the press during the Author’s life.
   1. Hymns of Ceddun and of Bede ................................ page 3
   2. Song of the Traveller ........................................... 9
   3. Beowulf: (Analysis and Metrical Versions of) ............... 30
      Original Text .................................................. 82
      Various readings ............................................. 137
      Notes .......................................................... 167
IV. Appendix; consisting of materials (not arranged during the Author’s life) but intended for the work, and in part previously published in vol. xvii. of the Archaeologia, &c.

Advertisement ........................................ page 171
I. Battle of Finborough.
   Introductory Notice ................................ 173
   Poem [as published in the British Bibliographer, vol. iv.] 175
II. Specimens from the Julian Cardmon.
   Introductory Notice ................................ 183
   1. Speech of Statu [reprinted from the notes to Octavian]............. 190
   2. Deluge [from Archaeologia, vol. xvi.] .......................... 193
   3. Overthrow of the Egyptians in the Red Sea [from notes to Octavian]..... 195
III. Specimens from the Exeter Manuscript.
   Introductory Notice ................................ 193
   4. Gnomic Poem [from MS. Lectures] ............................ 228
   6. Scaldic Poem [from the Author’s MS.] ......................... 235
   7. Exile’s Complaint ............................................ 244
   8. The Ruined Wall-stone [from the Author’s MS.] ............. 249
IV. Elfrician Version of Bocchus [from MS. Lectures].
   Introductory Notice ........................................ 256
   1st Metre. 1st book ........................................ 260
   4th Metre. 2nd book ........................................ 262
   9th Metre. 3rd book ........................................ 265
V. Norman-Saxon Poem on Death [Archaeologia, vol. xvii.] .......................... 270
   Corrigenda & Addenda (including historical notes on the Traveler and on Beowulf)..... 273

1 “An Analysis of the Norman Metrical Romance of Octavian,” of which a limited impression for private distribution was printed by the late Author.
The Reverend William Daniel Conybeare was appointed Bampton lecturer. A great landslip occurred near Lyme Regis, which he would describe for the benefit of other British geologists.
November 29, Monday: Henry Thoreau, having previously checked out from Harvard Library the 1st and 3d volumes of Alexander Chalmers’s The Works of the English Poets, from Chaucer to Cowper, on this date checked out the 21st and final volume of the set.

**PERUSE VOLUME XXI**
THE WORKS
OF THE
ENGLISH POETS,
FROM CHAUCER TO COWPER;
INCLUDING EICH
SERIES EDITED,
WITH
PREFACES, BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL,
BY DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON:
AND
THE MOST APPROVED TRANSLATIONS.

THE ADDITIONAL LIVES
BY ALEXANDER CHALMERS, F.S.A.

IN TWENTY-ONE VOLUMES.

VOL. III
SPENSER, DANIEL

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON, J. NICHOLS AND SON; L. BALDWIN; F. AND C. RIVINGTON; W. OTTENOE AND SON; LEAGH AND BOUTHBY; J. BALDWIN AND SON; G. NICHOL AND SON; T. PATIN; G. BOISSON; WALKER AND BOISSON; C. HAY; T. ROBINSON; MONTGOMERY AND LEIGHTON; J. WALKER; TEMPLE, BOND, AND ARNUP; B. LEA; A. WHIT ; LATHUM, LACEY, AND CO.; J. MYRDHAL; CUTHELL AND WYATT; CLEARE AND HORN; J. STORR AND CO.; LANDOR, BELL, ET AL.; BY: CUMBERLAND AND DAVIES; J. FULLER; JOHN RICHARDSON; J. S. PARNELL; N. ROBERTSON; T. CROSBY; N. BAWDEN; J. MURRAY; W. MILLER; A AND A. ARCH; BLACK; PARK; AND KIMBERLY; J. BONNER; A. ROBERTS; A. HUNTING; A. MACKIE; A. HUNTING; B. H. STAUN; HAYTON AND LEE; J. MANN; J. B. SMITH; J. B. SMITH; J. H. SMITH; HAYTON AND LEE; AND WILSON AND BOW AT YORK.

1810.
Thoreau also checked out, again, the Reverend John Josias Conybeare's ILLUSTRATIONS OF ANGLO-SAXON POETRY, EDITED, WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES, INTRODUCTORY NOTICES, &c., BY HIS BROTHER William Daniel Conybeare (London: Harding and Lepard, 1826).

(He also checked out one or another miscellaneous collection bearing the title POETICAL TRACTS.)

Since we do not have the 2-volume 1807 edition accessed by Emerson from the Boston Athenaeum and by Thoreau from the Harvard Library available electronically, here we present you instead with the 3-volume edition of 1836 (see following screen).
Nov. 29 [1841], Cambridge. — One must fight his way, after a fashion, even in the most civil and polite society. The most truly kind and gracious have to be won by a sort of valor, for the seeds of suspicion seem to lurk in every spadeful of earth, as well as those of confidence. The president and librarian turn the cold shoulder
to your application, though they are known for benevolent persons. They wonder if you can be anything but a
thief, contemplating frauds on the library. It is the instinctive and salutary principle of self-defense; that which
makes the cat show her talons when you take her by the paw.
Certainly that valor which can open the hearts of men is superior to that which can only open the gates of cities.
You must always let people see that they serve themselves more than you, — not by your ingratitude, but by
sympathy and congratulation.
The twenty-first volume of Chalmers’s English Poets contains Hoole’s and Alickle’s Translations. In the shape
of a note to the Seventh Book of the Lusiad, Mickle has written a long “Inquiry into the Religious Tenets and
Philosophy of the Bramins.”

November 30, Tuesday: Henry Thoreau began to spend some of his days in the “Poetry Alcove” at Gore Hall, the
new Harvard Library, reading in Geoffrey Chaucer and Sir Walter Raleigh.

We suppose he didn’t find in that alcove anything quite as pretty as the page shown on a following screen,
from an original copy of Poet Laureate John Gower’s Confessio Amantis.

4. William Julius Mickle’s translation of Luis Vaz de Camões’s Os Lusiadas:

He also checked out, again, the initial volume of *The Canterbury Tales of Chaucer; with an Essay on His Language and Versification, an Introductory Discourse, Notes and a Glossary* by Tho. Tyrwhitt, Esq.... (London: W. Pickering, 1830).
Nov. 30. Tuesday. Cambridge. — When looking over the dry and dusty volumes of the English poets, I cannot believe that those fresh and fair creations I had imagined are contained in them. English poetry from Gower down, collected into one alcove, and so from the library window compared with the commonest nature, seems very mean. Poetry cannot breathe in the scholar’s atmosphere. The Aubreys and Hickeses, with all their learning, prophane it yet indirectly by their zeal. You need not envy his feelings who for the first time has cornered up poetry in an alcove.

I can hardly be serious with myself when I remember that I have come to Cambridge after poetry; and while I am running over the catalogue and collating and selecting, I think if it would not be a shorter way to a complete volume to step at once into the field or wood, with a very low reverence to students and librarians. Milton did not foresee what company he was to fall into. On running over the titles of these books, looking from time to time at their first pages or farther, I am oppressed by an inevitable sadness. One must have come into a library by an oriel window, as softly and undisturbed as the light which falls on the books through a stained window, and not by the librarian’s door, else all his dreams will vanish. Can the Valhalla be warmed by steam and go by clock and bell?

Good poetry seems so simple and natural a thing that when we meet it we wonder that all men are not always poets. Poetry is, nothing but healthy speech. Though the speech of the poet goes to the heart of things, yet he is that one especially who speaks civilly to Nature as a second person and in some sense is the patron of the world. Though more than any he stands in the midst of Nature, yet more than any he can stand aloof from her. The best lines, perhaps, only suggest to me that that man simply saw or heard or felt what seems the commonest fact in my experience.

One will know how to appreciate Chaucer best who has come down to him the natural way through the very meagre pastures of Saxon and ante-Chaucerian poetry. So human and wise he seems after such diet that we are as liable to misjudge him so as usually.

{1/4th page missing}

vulgar — lies very near to them.

{3/4ths page blank}

{1/4th page missing}

The Saxon Poetry extant seems of a more serious and philosophical cast than the very earliest that can be called
English— It has more thought, but less music. It translates Boethius, it paraphrases the Hebrew Bible, it solemnly sings of war—of life and death— and chronicles events— The earliest English poetry is tinctured with romance through the influence of the Normans, as the Saxon was not— The ballad and Metrical Romance belong to this period. Those old singers were for the most part imitators or translators. — Or will it not appear when viewed at a sufficient distance — that our brave new poets are also secondary as they, and refer the eye that reads them and their poetry too, back and backward without end?5

Nothing is so attractive and unceasingly curious as character. There is no plant that needs such tender treatment, there is none that will endure so rough. It is the violet and the oak. It is the thing we mean, let us say what we will. We mean our own character, or we mean yours. It is divine and related to the heavens, as the earth is by the flashes of the Aurora. It has no acquaintance nor companion. It goes silent and unobserved longer than any planet in space, but when at length it does show itself, it seems like the flowering of all the world, and its before unseen orbit is lit up like the trail of a meteor. I hear no good news ever but some trait of a noble character. It reproaches me plaintively. I am mean in contrast, but again am thrilled and elevated that I can see my own meanness, and again still, that my own aspiration is realized in that other. You reach me, my friend, not by your kind or wise words to me here or there; but as you retreat, perhaps after years of vain familiarity, some gesture

---

5. This paragraph needs to be understood in the context of the various texts upon which Thoreau had relied while a student at Harvard College, texts which have been identified as: the Reverend Joseph Bosworth’s THE ELEMENTS OF ANGLO=SAXON GRAMMAR … (London: Printed for Harding, Mavor, and Lepard, 1823), the Reverend John Josias Conybeare’s ILLUSTRATIONS OF ANGLO-SAXON POETRY, EDITED, WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES, INTRODUCTORY NOTICES, &C., BY HIS BROTHER WILLIAM DANIEL CONYBEARE (London: Harding and Lepard, 1826), the three volumes of Lord Bishop Thomas Percy’s RELIQUES OF ANCIENT ENGLISH POETRY (London: J. Dodsley, 1765), the three volumes of Joseph Ritson’s ANCIENT ENGLISH METRICAL ROMANCES (London: W. Bulmer, for G. & W. Nicol, 1802), the four volumes of Thomas Evans’s OLD BALLADS, HISTORICAL AND NARRATIVE, WITH SOME OF MODERN DATE COLLECTED FROM RARE COPIES AND MANUSCRIPTS… A NEW EDITION, REVISED AND CONSIDERABLY ENLARGED FROM PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COLLECTIONS, BY HIS SON, R.H. EVANS (London: Printed for R.H. Evans, by W. Bulmer and co., 1810), and the two volumes of Robert Jamieson’s POPULAR BALLADS AND SONGS, FROM TRADITIONAL MANUSCRIPTS AND SCARCE EDITIONS; WITH TRANSLATIONS OF SIMILAR PIECES FROM THE ANCIENT DANISH LANGUAGE, AND A FEW ORIGINALS BY THE EDITOR. (Edinburgh: A. Constable and co.; [etc. etc.], 1806).
or unconscious action in the distance speaks to me with more emphasis than all those years. I am not concerned
to know what eighth planet is wandering in space up there, or when Venus or Orion rises, but if, in any cot to
east or west and set behind the woods, there is any planetary character illuminating the earth.

Packed in my mind lie all the clothes
Which outward nature wears,
For, as its hourly fashions change,
It all things else repairs.
My eyes look inward, not without,
And I but hear myself,
And this new wealth which I have got
Is part of my own pelf.
For while I look for change abroad,
I can no difference find,
Till some new ray of peace uncalled
Lumines my inmost mind,
As, when the sun streams through the wood,
Upon a winter’s morn,
Where’er his silent beams may stray
The murky night is gone.
How could the patient pine have known
The morning breeze would come,
Or simple flowers anticipate
The insect’s noonday hum,
Till that new light with morning cheer
From far streamed through the aisles,
And nimbly told the forest trees
For many stretching miles?
The Reverend William Daniel Conybeare was awarded the Wollaston medal by the Geological Society of London.

The Reverend Professor Edward Hitchcock resigned as state geologist of Massachusetts.
The Reverend William Daniel Conybeare became dean of Llandaff.
August 12, Tuesday: William Daniel Conybeare died at Itchenstoke near Portsmouth shortly after the death of his son the Reverend William John Conybeare (a loss which had weighed heavily on his mind).

A filing:

    District of Columbia, County of Washington, to wit:
    Before the subscriber a Justice of the Peace in and for the County aforesaid in the District of Columbia, personally appeared Jonas P. Keller and made oath on the Holy Evangel of Almighty God that Albert Bouldin and Prissy, his wife, and Kate the mother of said Albert and Maria known as Maria Smith, are each and every of them free persons of color, and are now residing in the District of Columbia, to the best of his knowledge and belief.
    Sworn to before me this eleventh day of August 1857.
    N. Callan, J.P.  


“MAGISTERIAL HISTORY” IS FANTASIZING, HISTORY IS CHRONOLOGY

6. RECORDS OF THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA RELATING TO SLAVES, 1851-1863. (National Archives Microfilm Publication M433, Roll #3: “Manumission Papers, 1857-1863.”)
This stuff presumably looks to you as if it were generated by a human. Such is not the case. Instead, someone has requested that we pull it out of the hat of a pirate who has grown out of the shoulder of our pet parrot "Laura" (as above). What these chronological lists are: they are research reports compiled by ARRGH algorithms out of a database of modules which we term the Kouroo Contexture (this is data mining). To respond to such a request for information we merely push a button.
Commonly, the first output of the algorithm has obvious deficiencies and we need to go back into the modules stored in the contexture and do a minor amount of tweaking, and then we need to punch that button again and recompile the chronology—but there is nothing here that remotely resembles the ordinary "writerly" process you know and love. As the contents of this originating contexture improve, and as the programming improves, and as funding becomes available (to date no funding whatever has been needed in the creation of this facility, the entire operation being run out of pocket change) we expect a diminished need to do such tweaking and recompiling, and we fully expect to achieve a simulation of a generous and untiring robotic research librarian. Onward and upward in this brave new world.

First come first serve. There is no charge.
Place requests with <Kouroo@kouroo.info>. Arrgh.