In about a year's time, eight centuries after the death of William archbishop of Tyre, the first critical edition of his monumental work, the Chronicle of the Crusader States, will be published. The outstanding personality of the author and the scope and quality of his work, both as a historical source and as a literary masterpiece, ensure him a position among the most interesting of medieval historiographers.

William was born around 1130 in Jerusalem. He himself mentions that his progenitores lived in the Holy City, and so Hiestand is probably right in assuming that it was his grandparents rather than his parents who may have participated in the First Crusade (although the term progenitor is also used once (1,15,49) to mean a father, not a grandfather). The origins of the family, however, are unknown: William, who has so much to say about the genealogy of others, is, as Krey rightly observed, singularly reticent about his own, maintaining throughout his work a silence so complete as to remain impenetrable to the present time. His brother Ralph, of whose existence we know from other sources and who fell in battle, is not mentioned in the Chronicle, nor is his father. He himself tells us that in 1165 his mother was still alive; sixteen years later she had died. William was almost certainly neither of German nor of English descent; his use of the words ultra- and transmontanus, always denoting Europe in general

1 CC CM vols. 63/63A.
and more specifically France, strongly suggests a relationship with Italy; but personally I would be inclined to attribute this curious usage more to his own travels than to the remote origins of his family.

Some facts about his education can be gathered from an autobiographical chapter inserted by the author in the course of his book, the text of which seems to have survived in one manuscript only. A son of apparently well-to-do parents, young William spent as many as twenty years of his life travelling in France and Italy, studying divinity, philosophy and mathematics in Paris, Chartres and elsewhere, classics in Orléans, and law in Bologna. It is evident that our knowledge of the education and learning of the author necessarily exercises considerable influence on the process of editing his work, and I shall revert to this subject later on.

In 1165, a prodigy of learning, he returned to a patria which could boast few men of his erudition. Within a short period of time he was invested with high and no doubt lucrative offices, such as a canonry at Acre and the archdeaconries of Nazareth and Tyre. He became tutor to the future King Baldwin IV, and from 1174 onwards occupied the posts of chancellor of the Kingdom of Jerusalem and archbishop of Tyre. In addition, there were official missions to Constantinople and to the Third Lateran Council, of which he wrote a now lost account. In 1180, however, changes in the political climate shattered his hopes of being elected to the patriarchate of Jerusalem, and the prominent part he had played in the affairs of the realm belonged definitely to the past. His death occurred in 1186.

Of his two major works, one, a History of Oriental Rulers, seems to be lost; the other, the bulky Chronicle, is the subject of this paper. Most of the manuscripts of this work date back to the period shortly after his death, the oldest dating from the years around 1200 (V, Fr), and one of the Paris manuscripts (N) from the ten years between 1197 and 1207. But because of the fall of Jerusalem in 1187 and the radical political changes in the crusader states, William’s work lost most of its relevance practically the moment it appeared, a large part of it being based on older, already widely known and still extant histories, while the remaining (and for us priceless) part was no longer
topical. That is why nearly all the Latin manuscripts of William's Chronicle are early and his work only continued to live on in often beautifully illuminated Old French versions. The Chronicle has only come down to us incompletely (or so I still think): what we have is a long prologue written in 1184, fifteen books which, up to XIII, 21, go back to extant sources, a short second prologue introducing that part of the work the author wrote while availing himself of first-hand information, and following book XXII a third prologue of a pessimistic character, prefacing one single last chapter. I shall not offer any opinion here on the problems surrounding the abrupt ending of the work, except to say that my ideas on this subject seem to be open to argument. Rather, I shall deal with a few crucial problems which confront the editor of this text and give an account of my method of approaching these difficulties.

Let me begin with a survey of those manuscripts I used for the establishment of the text. None of them, it cannot be emphasised enough, is either the autograph or was written where the text itself was composed, namely in the Holy Land — nor is this the case with the long fanciful title of the work used until now and which I have dropped altogether. I have shown elsewhere that neither Italy nor Germany plays any part in the manuscript tradition, and that all the manuscripts are to be classified into two main groups. One (a) consists of three manuscripts of English origin. These manuscripts are either very corrupt (C) or interpolated (BW), but are nevertheless highly important for the establishment of the text of the Chronicle. The second group is continental and consists of two sets of manuscripts of French origin, one (β) associated with Cistercian monasteries near Paris and the other consisting of a Vatican codex (V) and two folios in Chambéry (Fr) which are closely related to the Vatican manuscript. This Vatican manuscript is not only the sole copy which includes the autobiographical chapter but also contains a number of passages or parts of sentences which have been

lost in all the other manuscripts and in the *Eracles*, the Old French version which depends upon them. To complicate matters — although evidently V occupies a special place in the manuscript tradition and can be ascribed to almost the same date as the oldest copy of the three Cistercian manuscripts — this Vatican manuscript was written by a rather incompetent scribe, so that it ranks as one of mediocre quality. On the other hand, the oldest copy in group β (N), though it does not have as complete a text as the Vatican manuscript, stands out as a very good copy indeed.

A few words about the stemma. It is based on complete and repeated collations of all the manuscripts shown, and on tests taken at random from two eliminated ones — all in all representing more than a thousand printed pages of Latin text. But one must bear in mind that a stemma is no more than a diagram showing what the editor has found or thinks the relationship between the manuscripts he knows to be. Even if it is the truth, it is never the whole truth, let alone « nothing but the truth ». One may regard the Lachmann method as being fundamentally correct — as I do myself — without losing sight of its practical limitations: simply too much has happened that necessarily must escape us. Besides, one should
avoid the unfortunately common practice of taking into consideration insignificant readings and readings which may creep into various manuscripts through causes other than their having been copied automatically. Even the most convincing stemma, drawn up by the most competent editor, should not fool us into forgetting that the real difference between good and bad texts lies between readings, not between manuscripts.

We have no idea what the original manuscript was like, nor whether the author left it in a state fit for publication. If, shortly before his death, he had published it himself, it is most unlikely that it would have ended as it does now. It simply is a fact that the archetype, the oldest identifiable stage in the manuscript tradition, already contained a great number of corruptions which were either copied in each one of our manuscripts or were eliminated by conjecture in some of them. Even if one assumes that the manuscript with which it all started was perfectly legible and not too greatly abbreviated, the copyist's work was hampered by the length of the text and its scores of completely unfamiliar names and often excessively long and complicated phrases, containing subordinate clauses filled with ablative (or nominative or accusative) absolutes, all of which inevitably led to confusion and corruption. Several of these corruptions did not as yet occur in the manuscript from which V has been derived, but can already be traced back to the model of all the other manuscripts. This is the same with the loss of the autobiographical chapter, the one transmitted only by V. The fact that this chapter existed at all was known from the list of headings preceding book XIX. In this book William interrupts his account of the campaign in Egypt by suggesting that in that same year — 1165 — he too played his role in the affairs of the realm by returning from Europe as a very learned man. To us, this long chapter is of exceptional value because it is our only source for an important part of the author's life, and because it gives a detailed picture of higher education in twelfth-century Europe; but it breaks into the logical sequence of events as described in book XIX. So the scribe who, soon after William's death, decided to suppress the whole chapter, undoubtedly rendered his readers a service, but, fortunately for us, he had already noted the heading to the now missing
chapter some ten pages back, and forgot to erase it: it was only in 1961 that this sorely missed section of William’s Chronicle came to light.

I shall not go into a description of the two eliminated manuscripts, one of the thirteenth century, the other of the fifteenth and both of French origin: suffice it to say that they are of no value at all for the establishment of the text, and cannot even be adequately fitted into the stemma. As for the remaining ones: V, the three other French manuscripts (β) and the English group (α), their general relationship has been definitely established, even if in a few cases C, the most recent copy (fourteenth century), has a reading in common with N. Unfortunately, and in spite of all this, « outside interference » must already have set in at a very early stage in the manuscript tradition. When looking at the stemma one could think that the editor’s task would be an easy one: Vα against β, or Vβ against α should yield the correct reading, and in the « case of αβ versus V » the choice would be open. But the matter is more complicated than that, since this process of logical elimination quite often yields nothing but an unacceptable reading. That is why I should like to repeat: the real difference between good and bad texts lies between readings, not between manuscripts, and that is also why I have hinted at the value of the English group and of BW in particular, even if, basically, my text rests upon the continental tradition (Vβ).

As I have already stated, codex C is a late and corrupt one, and BW present an interpolated text. But the lost manuscript from which both B and W have been derived is the most perfect instance of a medieval critical edition that I have ever come across. It was evidently made by someone who was thoroughly acquainted not only with Latin idiom but also with the whole Chronicle and the idiosyncrasies of the author, and one who, though he introduced a considerable amount of unnecessary changes in the text, also did away with many errors in his model. He even knew the text so well that he added a heading of his own (XXII, 9) where he did not find

one in his model, it being absent from all the manuscripts. In addition he suppressed the useless heading of the missing autobiographical chapter as well as that of another chapter (XII, 25) which he dropped altogether. He also added a list with short biographical notes on the main characters in the Chronicle and he saw fit no less than eight times to complete the narrative by inserting chapters from Baldric of Bourgueil, whose Chronicle William had himself not used. So even where he does not interfere, his text is important because, although he did overlook errors, he makes the modern editor more cautious in his approach to those readings he might otherwise reject out of hand. It is also here that we grasp the value of C in spite of its very poor text, because its readings and corruptions show which ones were proper to the English group as a whole and which ones to the entire manuscript tradition, or to α and β, but have been corrected in the BW model. Quite often these corrections of BW are borne out by, or coincide with, readings in V. In other cases, they do not correspond to the original text as preserved in V or Vβ or VβC, but nevertheless stand out as remarkable conjectures. This explains why in many places I have adopted readings from BW to correct the text or readings transmitted by the other manuscripts, even where the incriminated terms, if considered out of context, might seem justifiable. It is evident that such BW readings are to be considered as conjectures only, but also that they agree to such an extent with the tenor and style of the text that I have adopted them without hesitation: I do not think that modern corrections, or any of my own for that matter, are necessarily preferable to those made by a colleague eight hundred years ago. Of course, this method of emendation has to be applied with extreme caution, because I am producing a critical edition, not a school text-book: wherever I suspect a corruption to be too deep-seated and corrections too uncertain, the text still stands as it has come down to me in the manuscripts. But in such cases, which I am afraid are rather numerous, the critical apparatus often bears additional witness to the skill and resourcefulness of the maker of the BW text. To go even further: there are quite a few readings in these two manuscripts which I genuinely regret to be not the original ones. Indeed, if the Chronicle of William of Tyre
had been known only from BW, the editor's task would have been much easier, and the reader's admiration for the author even greater than it always has been, and should be.

Now I come to a crucial point, namely the moment when the editor has to make the decision whether to adopt this or that reading or to introduce a correction. Readings should be judged by one criterion only: not whether they make sense, but whether they stem from the author himself, or not. That is why I insist on the importance of our knowledge of the author's personality and state of learning as it can be gathered from both his work and his autobiography. William's great learning has been touched upon at the beginning of this paper. But I must make one important reservation. Apart from Latin and French (and perhaps Italian), the archbishop has been credited with knowledge of Greek, Arabic and even some Hebrew and Persian. Of the last two there is, of course, not even the slightest serious trace. As for Greek, there is no evidence either, unless, like Manitius, we consider as proof the fact that he knows *polamos* means *river*, or the fact that he acted as an envoy to Constantinople. As for Arabic, he should have mastered it, as all Jerusalemites should. But unfortunately, here again there is no proof at all. The inscription of the Dome of the Rock may have been translated for him, and so may the manuscript sources for his History of Oriental Rulers. In the Chronicle, William's own renderings of Arabic names are either elementary and easily come by, or erroneous. So although I am sorry to have to say so, we had better forget about our author's gift for languages — at least until some real evidence turns up.

As for William's personality, I should like to offer a few ideas based upon careful and repeated reading of his entire work. Unfortunately, works like William's are hardly ever read for their own sake these days, but only consulted. This regrettable but undeniable fact not only has its consequences for the annotation, but it also accounts for a considerable amount of the current generalizations about the work and its author. There can be no doubt that William was a man who used his sources critically, who did not merely register but also looked for cause and effect, for reasons and connections, and would go to great lengths to discover these. But often
his sources and the notes and files his secretaries compiled on his behalf must have contained errors which he was unable to detect or simply overlooked. One comes upon amazing and quite often inexplicable flaws, especially in his chronology, even of the events of his own times (in fact, in spite of all the efforts and interest Hans Mayer and I have devoted to the matter, we have no clear idea at all of how William really worked). There can also be no doubt that he was objective in his consideration of friend and foe, at least when he was not carried away by unmistakable and often undisguised bias and personal dislike, and that his tolerance was more than the sum, however important, of political common sense and the lawyer’s respect of agreements; a man who would take pity on innocent victims of circumstance, but quite as often consider the most appalling atrocities as all too well-deserved punishment for being on the wrong side; a man also who was quite aware of his uncommon and varied capacities and who frequently wrote beautiful, if not seldom complicated phrases, and who, if given more leisure or more years to put the final touches to his work, might have avoided hundreds of cases where without any apparent reason words and expressions have been repeated within a few lines or where the reminder *ut premisimus, sicut dictum, or sicut premissum, est* is no more than a stop-gap. But when referring to his often beautiful Latin, and thus repeating what has always been said, I must again make an important reservation. It is true that Classical Antiquity left its mark on William’s medieval Latin. But we should not forget that his contact with Classical Antiquity was made through manuscripts — those very manuscripts which pose so many problems for us — and that his Latin was also heavily influenced by both the language of the Vulgate and of Roman juridical literature, all of which takes us already far away from the classical constructions in our own often rigidly normalized editions. Apart from that, either because he did not care, or because he had no time to re-read carefully what he had written or dictated, or because he simply had his own reasons for not following established classical practice, many of his phrases are constructed in the same loose way in which a language is spoken. When I came
to analyze my critical apparatus, and sorted out what until then had been isolated readings, I felt rather disappointed. The Latin of twelfth-century authors has been studied little, common consent being that it represents the height of medieval Latin. And rightly so. But whatever William may have learned in Europe, we shall have to recognize that the Latin he wrote in ‘Outremer’ has a very marked Romance colouring which is far removed from the *purity* Max Manitius (III, 438) so generously attributed to it; indeed, never have I found so many vulgarisms in any of William’s great contemporaries. Some of it may not stem from William himself at all, because the addition or omission in one of the earliest copies of his work of a single word or even of a small stroke over or through a single letter may have changed the whole phrase. But the editor, faced with constructions he did not expect and of which he not infrequently disapproves, cannot always substitute, like a *deum ex machina*, a scribe for the author. And so, even though the manuscript tradition is faulty, we shall have to accept, along with beautifully constructed periods, a great many highly inelegant constructions: nominative and even accusative absolutes, omissions of conjunctions, consecutive *ut* with an indicative, contaminations of all kinds, parataxis, instances of attraction, double negations and other pleonasms, and so on and so forth. Now it is interesting indeed to see that the two English manuscripts BW (and much less frequently the whole English group or the French manuscript P), have changed a large proportion of these constructions, which they too felt were incorrect. They may have overlooked some of them, but they certainly did not take offence at others and even added a few of their own, a fact which underlines how very careful we should be in weighing all these readings.

Keeping these points in mind, let us return to the text as it has come down to us. Although the author obviously could not have wanted this, his text presents scores of errors, both factual and textual. Some would have been made by William himself, others must have crept in at a later stage. For the editor the decision whether to emend and what to emend is not dictated by the stemma, but, in Bentley’s words, by *ratio*
and the *res ipsa*. The editor should consider himself an executor, acting both in the best interest of the readers and in accordance with the author's intention that his work should not be corrupted nor rewritten. Since we lack the autograph we are unable to decide which errors were actually made by William himself and which were not. Accordingly, all we can do is take into account his personality and, very cautiously, give him the benefit of his learning, of his mastery of the Latin tongue, however willful, and of his intimate familiarity with the topography of large parts of the Near East. In trying to distinguish between one type of error and another, the editor in turn is liable to make mistakes. But even so he has to carry out his task and to emend those readings, for which he sees no reasonable explanation but corruption by later and distant copyists: the manuscripts, even their consensus, only constitute a point of departure. The same principle holds good for matters concerning orthography. Here the editor of medieval Latin texts has to tackle a much more complicated problem than his colleague in the Classics department. The latter is used to follow standards which are, on the whole, both accepted and acceptable, but the editor of medieval texts should face his responsibility and not take refuge behind the copyists. In our particular case, all the extant manuscripts were copied in Western Europe by scribes who had their own habits and were unacquainted with most of the names they were writing. Sometimes one can observe a certain regularity in orthography, especially in the case of names occurring very often. The insular group (a), for example, always has *Baldewinus* instead of *Balduinus*, the name Joscelin is spelled *Ioscelinus* in BC but *Iocelinus* in V and BW, Queen Melisende's name occurs in at least five spellings — but no one can tell us which, in the end, was the spelling William used himself. And still the editor must make a choice. Besides, apart from textual corruptions, the scribe of the archetype must already have introduced many more spellings of his own than the consistent barbarism of the double s alone, which is so characteristic of both V and N; but when we see how, along with purely medieval spellings, the oldest manuscripts consistently present extremely old-
fashioned, hyperclassical forms such as *loquutus*, *sequutus*, *exsequutus*, *prosequutor* and the like, and how common both in V and the rest of the continental group are dissimilated forms such as *inmensus*, *inmanis*, *inpietens*, *inprudens*, *obpositus*, *subfossus*, *subponere* and many others, then it does seem likely that William's orthography really had this very marked, varied and rather pedantic flavour, which seems to fit in so well with our general impression of his personality.

Another problem is the right spelling of the more or less latinized names of many nobles, especially those who participated in the First Crusade, the more so because the sources from which William took these names have rarely been edited with any special attention to matters of orthography. The fact that these nobles and their contemporaries may have spelled their own names in more than one way, and that William himself was not consistent, still leaves us where we were. Sometimes proper names present a certain fixed spelling in certain books, another one in others, but the extant manuscripts of William's sources are but rarely of any help. Another example: the name of one of the priors of the Holy Sepulchre was *Acardus*, at least that is the way in which he wrote it himself in an acrostic. But would he always write his name like that, and did William? His contemporaries, and charters dating back to his day, also spell his name as *Achardus* and *Aicardus*, and all of these spellings are used indiscriminately in the manuscripts of William's Chronicle — for his editor to struggle with.

I should like to conclude with a personal remark. I started this particular work twenty years ago; then I let it rest, because I did not feel equal to the task. More than one consideration urged me to make a new start. If I had realized the difficulties ahead, I would have abandoned the whole thing — the more so because the Netherlands Organization for the Advancement of Pure Research (Z.W.O.), which should have helped, decided not to, having been advised by colleagues that a new edition of William of Tyre was not at all urgent because of the existence of ... a good (I) English translation (Babcock-Krey, 1943)! A decisive role, however, was played
by such eminent friends as Rudolf Hiestand, Hans Mayer and Giles Constable. Without the generous assistance of the Director and Senior Fellows of Dumbarton Oaks (Washington, D.C.) and, indirectly but not less generously, of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft the work would have been much harder and still very far from completion. But now, quite soon, quod severint metent.

University of Leiden