

### Alfred the Great.

The history of king Alfred, considering the time in which he lived, presents one of the most perfect examples on record of the patriotic monarch, united with the virtuous man.

He was born in the year 849, died in the year 900. he ascended the throne of England<sup>d</sup> in the year 872, at the time when the Danes and Norman<sup>s</sup> were formidable to the Saxons. As early as the year 787 they had extended their conquest and devastation very widely over the country. Alfred's efforts against them were at first unsuccessful and he concluded some treaties which were not kept on either side. He was obliged to flee in disguise, and remained for more than a year in the service of a shepherd. In this situation he formed the design of freeing his county. He ordered his subjects to hold themselves in rediness against the enemy, gave them intelligence of his retreat, and informed himself of the condition of the Danes.

He went, disguised as a harper, into the camp of king Guthrum, and having ascertained that the Danes felt them selves secure, hastned back to his troops, led them against the enemy, and gained such a decided victory, that the Danes begged for peace. Those who were already in the country he allowd to remain, on condition that they and their king should embrace Christianity.

Alfred now built a fortress and exercised a part of his people in armes, while the rest cultivated the ground. He soon after divided the kingdom into counties, whereby he secured the public tranquility. He made London the city capital of his dominions and held there twice a year a general assembly of the estates.

From time to time new swarm<sup>es</sup> of Danes sought entrance into the land, but the fleets of Alfred drove them from their coasts. He collected the laws of his predecesors, and endeavored to improve the condition of his subjects by an impartial administration of justice.

He translated the Pslams, the fables of AESop, and other writings into Anglo-Saxon and founded a school at Oxford. His familier acquaintance with the most learned men of his time informed his own mind and enabled him to do much for the good of his country.

[in pencil]

Atkinson Apr 14.<sup>th</sup> 1852.

Very well.