

A CONSPECTUS
OF SCRIBAL HANDS
WRITING ENGLISH,
960–1100

Donald Scragg

gastas. þ̅h̅in emagon gelleaffulra
manna heortan sparniclum costman.
þ̅a̅ hi þ̅yllað. **P**rincipatus s̅yn̅d.
ealdor scipas þ̅a̅ ð̅a̅ ð̅a̅ godra engla
g̅ymað. 7 hi be heora dihte þ̅a̅ godcund
lican ge s̅yn̅u gef̅yllað. **D**ominati
ones s̅yn̅d hlafora scipas gecpedene.
forðam þ̅e̅ him geh̅ysumað oþre
engle peƿod mid micelre under
þ̅eodnesse. **Þ**rom s̅yn̅d þ̅r̅ymf̅ecl.
þ̅a̅ beoð gef̅yllede mid sparnicelre
g̅eƿe þ̅e̅re ælmihtigan godcund
nesse. þ̅se eall ƿealdenda god on h̅y
ƿunað. 7 god þ̅urh h̅y his domas to s̅c̅e.
Cherubim is gecpeden gef̅ylledness.
in geh̅ydes. oððe gepitces. h̅is̅yn̅d
af̅yllede mid gepitte sparn̅ycele
sp̅yðor þ̅a̅ hi gehendran beoð. heora
sc̅yppende þ̅urh ƿurðscipe heora
geaƿmunga. **S**epa þ̅him s̅yn̅d
gecpedene b̅yr̅nende oððe on ælende.

Uigilate ergo. & reliqua.

Macheus se goospelleƿe. ut s̅æde on ð̅yrum god
spelle. þ̅a̅ ƿe h̅ælend crist. þ̅a̅ þ̅a̅ he heƿ on l̅yƿe
ƿæƿ. on s̅oðre meniscn̅yƿe. be cƿux mannum
ƿunigende. þ̅ he g̅eƿaƿode his apostolas. þ̅y s̅u

PUBLICATIONS OF THE MANCHESTER CENTRE FOR ANGLO-SAXON STUDIES

Volume 11

A Conspectus of Scribal Hands Writing English, 960–1100

PUBLICATIONS OF THE MANCHESTER CENTRE FOR ANGLO-SAXON STUDIES

ISSN 1478-6710

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D. S. BREWER

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First published 2012

D. S. Brewer, Cambridge

ISBN 978-1-84384-286-6

The publication of this volume is supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council



D. S. Brewer is an imprint of Boydell & Brewer Ltd
PO Box 9, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 3DF, UK
and of Boydell & Brewer Inc,
668 Mt Hope Avenue, Rochester, NY 14620, USA

website: www.boydellandbrewer.com

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available
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Printed in Great Britain by
CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon, CR0 4YY

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To Helmut Gneuss

se is uðwita ælces ðinges

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MAP. Locations associated with scribal hands

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Acknowledgements

The long gestation period of this book means that I have many debts. I first set out my ideas for it publicly at a conference in honour of Nick Doane at Madison in 2007, and received useful feedback there from other delegates. I discussed the ideas in detail then and subsequently with Elaine Treharne and she has continued to give me support and encouragement. Simon Keynes was always available at the end of a phone, and promptly, patiently and fully answered many questions about charters. Among others who have contributed in various ways I should mention Alex Rumble, Kathryn Powell, Susan Thompson, Peter Stokes

and particularly Stewart Brookes, who picked up many foolish errors. Gathering material for the book has involved spending many weeks in libraries, and I am especially grateful for the help I have had from librarians at the British Library, and from Martin Kaufmann at the Bodleian, and for the unfailing welcome I have received from everyone at the Parker Library. As always, Caroline Palmer and her team at Boydell and Brewer have been supportive, helpful and enthusiastic, while Clive Tolley set out the material imaginatively, and patiently put up with my many changes of heart.

Abbreviations

ASE	<i>Anglo-Saxon England</i>	Ker	N. R. Ker, <i>Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon</i> (Oxford, 1957)
Barker, 1968	<i>The York Gospels</i> , ed. Nicolas Barker, Roxburghe Club (London, 1968)	NM	New Minster
BL	British Library	OM	Old Minster
CC	Christ Church	P	David A. E. Pelteret, <i>Catalogue of English Post-Conquest Vernacular Documents</i> (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1990)
Chambers, 1933	<i>The Exeter Book of Old English Poetry</i> , with introductory chapters by R. W. Chambers, Max Förster and Robin Flower (Bradford, 1933)	StA	St Augustine's
Coll.	College	Sawyer, S	P. H. Sawyer, <i>Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography</i> , Royal Historical Society Guides and Handbooks 8 (London, 1968), now supplemented by the electronic Sawyer
EEMF	Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile	Surtees Soc.	<i>Liber vitae ecclesiae Dunelmensis</i> , A collotype facsimile, with an Introduction by A. Hamilton Thompson, Surtees Society, vol. 136 (Durham, 1923)
EETS	Early English Text Society	Whitelock, 1968	<i>The Will of Æthelgifu: A Tenth-Century Anglo-Saxon Manuscript</i> , ed. Dorothy Whitelock (Oxford, 1968)
os	original series		
Gollancz, 1927	<i>The Caedmon MS of A-S Biblical Poetry: Junius XI: in the Bodleian Library</i> , ed. Israel Gollancz (Oxford, 1927)		
Kendrick, 1956	T. D. Kendrick, R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, H. Roosen-Runge, A. S. C. Ross, E. G. Stanley, A. E. A. Warner, <i>Evangeliorum quattuor Codex Lindisfarnensis</i> , 2 vols. (Lausanne, 1956–60)		

Introduction

DURING THE LAST FIFTY YEARS there have been considerable advances in the study of the earliest phase of written English, from its beginnings in the eighth century up to the immediate post-Conquest period, facilitated by the publication of Neil Ker's *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*,¹ which brought the foundation work of the eighteenth-century scholar Humfrey Wanley² into the modern age. Ker's work on the vernacular has recently been put into the larger context of all manuscripts, Latin and English, written or owned in pre-Conquest England by Helmut Gneuss's *Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts*,³ while the totality of single-page documents, excluded by Ker, was comprehensively surveyed in Peter Sawyer's *Anglo-Saxon Charters*,⁴ which concluded at 1066 but which was later extended by David Pelteret's *Catalogue of English Post-Conquest Vernacular Documents*.⁵ The present work cannot pretend to compete with these, in scope, range or scholarship, nor is it intended to do so. It is designed to supplement them in one particular respect, the information on

the distribution of scribal hands that they supply. Although Ker, for example, gives very full information about the contents and the collation of all the manuscripts he considers, his information on those who wrote them is patchy. Whereas for the most part he is very full on the letter forms and the distribution of the work of the principal scribes of the manuscripts that he includes, his *Catalogue* is often far from detailed in listing the stints of more minor contributors.⁶ A full account of the work of writers making marginal and interlinear additions to vernacular manuscripts was outside his scope, although the occasional comments he does make are of considerable value. Sawyer and Pelteret assign dates to the documents they list, but they afford little information on the scribes, except where an individual is known to have copied more than one document, though the electronic version of Sawyer's catalogue does supply some additional information and many digital reproductions, which allow readers to access and compare the hands for themselves. In the light of these limitations, it is clear that there is room for more work on scribal hands writing English in Anglo-Saxon England.

The present work is a limited attempt to fill this gap, limited because it, in itself, has a particular aim. For many years it has been my ambition to compile a history of late Old English spelling, a largely neglected area of Anglo-Saxon studies. More examples of written English survive from the eleventh century than from any other comparable period until the fourteenth, and although it is generally understood that most scribes in this period were trained to write Standard Old English,⁷ the degree of standardization

¹ N. R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford, 1957). Towards the end of his life, Ker added to his *Catalogue* with 'A Supplement to *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*', *Anglo-Saxon England* 5 (1976), 121–31, and this in turn was subsequently expanded by Mary Blockley, 'Addenda and Corrigenda to N. R. Ker's "A Supplement to *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*"', *Notes and Queries* ns 29 (1982), 1–3, revised and reprinted as 'Further Addenda and Corrigenda to N. R. Ker's *Catalogue*', in *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: Basic Readings*, ed. Mary P. Richards (New York and London, 1994), pp. 79–85. Further discoveries from the following ten years are described in Helmut Gneuss, 'More Old English from Manuscripts', in *Intertexts: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Culture Presented to Paul Szarmach*, ed. Virginia Blanton and Helene Scheck, *Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies* 334 (Tempe, AZ, 2008), pp. 411–21.

² Humfrey Wanley, *Librorum vett. septentrionalium . . . Catalogus historico-criticus*, volume II of George Hickes, *Antiquae literaturae septentrionalis libri duo* (Oxford 1703–5).

³ Helmut Gneuss, *Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: A List of Manuscripts and Manuscript Fragments Written or Owned in England up to 1100*, *Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies* 241 (Tempe, AZ, 2001).

⁴ P. H. Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography*, *Royal Historical Society Guides and Handbooks* 8 (London, 1968), now revised, updated and expanded by Susan Kelly and others in an electronic form. It is intended that the latter will ultimately be available in book form.

⁵ David A. E. Pelteret, *Catalogue of English Post-Conquest Vernacular Documents* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1990).

⁶ A useful instance is BL, Harley 3271, for which Ker lists the distribution of the work of the two scribes involved in copying the principal item of the manuscript, Ælfric's *Grammar*, but gives no information about the many other scribes who copied further items in the manuscript, except to remark that they were contemporary with the principal scribes. In the course of working on an essay on this manuscript, I discovered that Sándor Chardonens was also studying it, and my entries in the *Conspectus* now rely on his work, László Sándor Chardonens, 'London, British Library, Harley 3271: The Composition and Structure of an Eleventh-Century Anglo-Saxon Miscellany', in *Form and Content of Instruction in Anglo-Saxon England in the Light of Contemporary Evidence*, ed. Patrizia Lendinara, Loredana Lazzari and Maria Amalia d'Aronco, *Textes et Études du Moyen Age* 39 (Turnhout, 2007).

⁷ For the use of the term, see Mechthild Gretsch, 'Winchester Vocabulary and Standard Old English: