

A CONSPECTUS  
*of*  
SCRIBAL HANDS WRITING ENGLISH,  
700–1100



Donald Scragg

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DONALD SCRAGG

D. S. BREWER

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For Tim



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## Preface

I originally designed the predecessor of this volume (*A Conspectus of Scribal Hands Writing English, 960–1100*, published in 2012) as a stepping-stone towards a history of late Old English spelling, and as such its scope was limited to manuscripts and documents generally ascribed to the latter half of the tenth century and the entirety of the eleventh. That projected history having now been abandoned, I felt there would be value in expanding the *Conspectus* by taking the starting date back to the year 700, thereby allowing for the inclusion of around 300 new entries.

For ease of reference, I have retained the layout of the 960–1100 volume, with holding libraries listed alphabetically and individual hands numbered sequentially. To preserve the sequence, new entries have been inserted into the list with a decimal point in the hand number (e.g. 298 Chichester, 298.5 Cologne, 299 Copenhagen). Hand 671 (previously blank) has been added, and hand 1004 has been changed to 1005.2; otherwise, the hand numbers from the 960–1100 volume are unchanged. In places, discontinuous numbering of the decimal points has been used to allow for further additions by future scholars and, particularly in the case of some continental libraries, to allow for future discoveries. Errors that occurred during the composition of the earlier volume have been silently corrected, sporadic

instances of English in Latin charters have been noted, and more information regarding facsimiles has been supplied (particularly in relation to the more recent volumes in the Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts in Microfiche Facsimile series, which have useful bibliographies). ‘App’ before a number in the column listing Ker numbers is now used to signify an entry in his Appendix. In the apparatus, a small number of new entries has been incorporated into the Indices of Names and Places and the Subject Index has also been expanded to accommodate new material. The Appendix to the 2012 volume has been omitted, however, in that it has no bearing on the present work.

Unchanged and unchanging is my debt to Simon Keynes for his assistance with charters, and my appreciation of the unremitting helpfulness and patience shown to me by everyone at Boydell, especially Caroline Palmer. Above all, words cannot convey my gratitude for the help given to me by my son Tim, without whose assistance, when I became too ill for sustained academic work, this project could never have come to fruition.

D. G. S. 2021



## Procedures and Conventions

*Hand numbers.* Lower case letters after numbers suggest either contrary arguments among authorities about the number of hands involved, or my own uncertainty about whether differences are the result of a change of hand or a new stint by the same hand at a different time. Within each number, all manuscripts and documents thought to have been written by the same hand are listed in alphabetical order of libraries.

*Libraries and shelf-marks.* These are strictly alphabetical, hence Cambridge University Library follows individual Cambridge colleges, in contrast to the procedures of Ker and Gneuss, and Trinity College Cambridge O shelves precede R shelves, against common practice. ‘BL’ signifies British Library. The + sign links parts of manuscripts now in more than one location which are believed to be part of a single book.

*Gneuss numbers* are to entries in Gneuss and Lapidge’s *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts*.<sup>1</sup>

*Ker numbers* are to entries in Ker’s *Catalogue*.<sup>2</sup> ‘S’ after a number indicates a reference to Ker’s own Supplement and ‘B’ indicates Blockley’s further additions. ‘G’ followed by a number represents the addenda supplied by Helmut Gneuss, ‘More Old English from Manuscripts’, the number representing the item in that list.

<sup>1</sup> Helmut Gneuss and Michael Lapidge, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts* (Toronto, 2014).

<sup>2</sup> 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*’, *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’, *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.

*Sawyer / Pelteret numbers.* Sawyer references are to entries in Sawyer’s *Anglo-Saxon Charters*.<sup>3</sup> Pelteret numbers, preceded by P, are to entries in Pelteret’s *Catalogue*.<sup>4</sup>

*Ker hand no.* When Ker assigns numbers to individual scribal hands in his *Catalogue* entries, those numbers are shown here, since in such instances there is usually a full description of the hands.

*Folios.* Folio numbers and, where appropriate, line numbers are listed for all but the main hands of large manuscripts. Line numbers for single-page documents are generally omitted. Manuscripts numbered in pages (largely those in Corpus Christi College Cambridge) are signalled by p(p).

*Date.* Dates are usually palaeographic, by quarter century, and in general follow those in Ker’s *Catalogue* or Sawyer / Pelteret. For an explanation, see Ker, *Catalogue*, pp. xx–xxi.

*Location.* I have striven to locate scribal hands where possible, recognizing that this is the most uncertain element of the Conspectus since scribes were mobile and the distinction between where a document or manuscript was made and where it spent its early years is both a fine one and ultimately incapable of proof. Even when the location of a manuscript is fairly certain, there is no assurance that the scribes involved received their training at the same place. A good example lies in the many scribes who produced London, BL, Royal 7 C XII at the monastery of Cerne in Dorset: although it would appear that the manuscript was written there, its initial writing and many alterations all occurred within a year or so of the founding of the monastery, and the principal scribes probably came from elsewhere. A plentiful use of question

<sup>3</sup> 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..

<sup>4</sup> David A. E. Pelteret, *Catalogue of English Post-Conquest Vernacular Documents* (Woodbridge, 1990).

## *Procedures and Conventions*

marks in the location column gives evidence of the difficulty of reaching certainty on this subject when such a large part of written material from the period is lost. Nevertheless the exercise of listing such locations as are known or supposed and indexing them seems worthwhile since it may well give rise to further scholarship on this most vexed subject, and an ability to identify variant spellings as regional may ultimately prove valuable. Not all locations for particular manuscripts which have been argued for are included. I have avoided the blanket terms ‘south-east’ and ‘south-west’ where other authorities have made such distinctions, but occasionally used ‘Kent’ when this seemed appropriate. In such cases, the term probably should be seen as meaning the old kingdom of Kent rather than the modern county.

*Facsimile references.* It is obviously desirable that the reader should be able both to check my decisions on scribal hands and to attempt to link disparate stints in different manuscripts or documents. However, to cite all reproductions of individual manuscript pages is quite beyond the scope of this work. Accordingly, I have confined references in the facsimile column to complete manuscript reproductions, those which are most widely available in permanent form. All of the magnificent EEMF series

(cited by volume number), and the less good but certainly useful and inexpensive ASMMF series (cited by volume)<sup>5</sup> are included, plus a number of other generally available books, usually cited by Author-Date. References to facsimiles are confined to the first scribal hand cited for each manuscript.

*Contents.* Brief reference to the content of manuscripts very often repeats information which may be found in Ker’s *Catalogue* or Gneuss and Lapidge’s *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts*, but is intended to help in identifying the material without reference to either of those works. It may also be found useful in showing the distribution of material copied by each scribe in manuscripts worked on by a number of hands, and in identifying the work of hands altering or adding to existing texts.

*Notes.* This column offers some further information helpful to isolate the hands, or elucidates the contents.

<sup>5</sup> Now published by the Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Tempe, Arizona (Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies series).