

# The Elizabethan Invention of Anglo-Saxon England

LAURENCE NOWELL, WILLIAM LAMBARDE,  
AND THE STUDY OF OLD ENGLISH

Quest. duodena.  
Question. Questio. onis. (?) Questuicula. e.  
dimin. ang. a lpght. simple, or small question  
Question darke, difficle, or hard. Enigma. tis.  
(?) Enigmatistes. tis. he that propoſeth luche  
darke or harde question  
Question in rebuke of one. Valgatio  
Quest man. Questionarius. ij  
Questmonger and questman. Idem

Qu Ante r.  
Quicke alme Ving. Cucu.

Chop.  
Hpad. Bald.  
Super. Chorus. ri  
Quibib. Quiperum. ri  
Quicke as of gesture. celer. ris. citus.  
a. um, dexter. ra. rum, Festinus. a. um, Gnauius. a.  
um, Impiger. ra. um, Nauus. a. um, Properus. a.  
rum  
Dupcke agapne. Rediuuius. a. um  
Dupcke bloude or sinew, wherein the lpuelp  
bloude walketh, Arteria

Dupckenes. Agilitas, celeritas, (?) Animofus. hpadm  
a. um, full of qupckenes  
Dupckenes of capacitpe or wytte. Indoles. is,  
solertia. e, ut puer bone Indolis, a boy hauiug  
a freshe or qupcke wytte  
Dupckenes of lpght. Perspicacitas  
Dupckenes or boldenes. Poke in Boldnes  
Animofus. a. um, full of boldnes  
Dupckenes or lpuelpnes. uinacitas. tis  
Dupet. Almus. a. um, Mitis. e, Ociosus. a. um, O stille.  
tiosus, Placidus. a. um, Silentus. a. um, Tranquils. 3 de p.  
lus. a. um, Tacitus. a. um, (?) Equi animus a  
quiet mynde  
Dupet, as careles. Animequus. a. um, Secu-  
rus. a. um  
Dupet from hence forth, or after thys dape.  
Transquietus. a. um  
Quiet or calme dape. Alma dies  
Dupet to be. Sileo. es, Sileco. scis, Taceo. es  
Dupet to make. Mitifico. as, Paco. as, Perpaco 3 fallan  
Dupet to ware, Miteco. scis, Quiesco. scis  
Dupetly

Quinborow. Cuningborow dici debere ait h. l. ad. r. ego poliy C. p. n. l. b. n. p. h.  
i. cal. in. st. u. r. u. i. t. Edwardy Windysora. g. de. Henricy 18.

Rebecca Brackmann

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OF ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND

LAURENCE NOWELL, WILLIAM LAMBARDE  
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THE ELIZABETHAN INVENTION  
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LAURENCE NOWELL, WILLIAM LAMBARDE  
AND THE STUDY OF OLD ENGLISH

*Rebecca Brackmann*

D. S. BREWER

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FOR MY PARENTS





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## Chapter 1

# THE ANGLO-SAXONISTS AND THEIR BOOKS: PRINT, MANUSCRIPT, AND THE CIRCULATION OF SCHOLARSHIP

We wish to argue that the early modern must be defined not in distinction from the medieval but through it, that the urge to periodise and the development of the concept of nationhood are wholly interpenetrated, and that the reading of the medieval in early modern England has in several ways bequeathed to us our understanding of both the medieval and the early modern.<sup>1</sup>

So David Matthews and Gordon McMullan, in the introduction to their *Reading the Medieval in Early Modern England*, set forth what has become a key issue in discussions of early modern historical writing and antiquarianism in England—the degree to which medieval studies exists as a product of early modern ideological and, particularly, nationalistic goals. The very act of separating ‘medieval’ and ‘early modern’ (or, especially, ‘Renaissance’) is agreeing to the terms of use laid down by sixteenth-century scholars, as James Simpson argues in the same volume: ‘when we draw lines sharply between periods whole unto themselves, *wherever we draw the line*, we are already falling victim to the logic of the revolutionary moment’ of Reformation historiography.<sup>2</sup> Because we have allowed this divide to shape our work, and even our institutional structures, ‘the study of the seventh to the fifteenth centuries is every bit as much a study of the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries.’<sup>3</sup> However, despite Simpson’s inclu-

<sup>1</sup> David Matthews and Gordon McMullan, ‘Introduction,’ *Reading the Medieval in Early Modern England*, ed. David Matthews and Gordon McMullan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 7.

<sup>2</sup> James Simpson, ‘Diachronic History and the Shortcomings of Medieval Studies,’ in Matthews and McMullan, *Reading the Medieval*, 26 (emphasis original).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

sion of the centuries before the Norman Conquest, little work has been done on how Anglo-Saxon studies contributed to this process of periodization and national identity formation, except in discussion of Archbishop Matthew Parker's Anglican polemic.<sup>4</sup> The essays in Matthews' and McMullan's important collection focus chiefly on early modern interactions with post-Conquest figures such as Chaucer or Langland, or broad institutions such as penance or the Order of the Garter. Such a focus might seem reasonable enough, given the linguistic divide between pre-Conquest and post-Reformation versions of English. Sixteenth-century writers could read Chaucer or Langland with some difficulty and occasional misunderstanding, but without extensive practice or exploration of vocabulary. Most of them, beneficiaries of humanist educations, could also easily read medieval Latin texts. The language of the Anglo-Saxons, on the other hand, had to be learned with difficulty and labor—an undertaking which, at the start of Elizabeth's reign, could not be supported by widely available grammars or glossaries. It could easily appear that here, at least, we have a clear and defensible break between 'Anglo-Saxon England' and 'early modern England,' on linguistic grounds if nothing else.

One of this book's main arguments is that this is not the case. The understanding of the period after the Germanic invasions and before the Norman Conquest as 'Anglo-Saxon England' is, by and large, a concept developed in the sixteenth century by Tudor researchers. After all, 'England' as it is now defined did not exist as a unified political entity for most of the period between the Germanic migration into southern Britain and the Norman Conquest of 1066. The Germanic invaders divided the portion of the island that they had conquered into separate, often warring, kingdoms. Even after Ælþelstan, King of Wessex and grandson of King Alfred the Great, achieved in the tenth century some hegemony over most of an area continuous with modern England, the northern portion still retained cultural and linguistic ties to Denmark as much as to its neighbors in southern Britain.<sup>5</sup> Yet, in 1596, William Lambarde (1536–1601) could

<sup>4</sup> For instance in Jennifer Summit, *Memory's Library: Medieval Books in Early Modern England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 101–135; and Allen Franzen, *Desire for Origins: New Language, Old English, and Teaching the Tradition* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1990), 27–47.

<sup>5</sup> Influential discussions of Anglo-Saxon history are Frank Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 3rd ed., (1943; repr., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Peter Hunter Blair, *An Introduction to Anglo-Saxon England* (1956; repr., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962); and *The Anglo-Saxons*, edited by James Campbell (1982; repr., New York: Penguin 1991); Susan Reynolds describes the disunity during the period in 'What Do We

call a short legal text in Old English an 'English (or Saxon) antiquitie,' affiliating the 'Saxon' (or as we would now say, 'Anglo-Saxon') text with a complex identity of 'Englishness' for his readers.<sup>6</sup> This book will trace some of the ways that the process of regarding the portion of history between the Germanic invasions and the Norman Conquest as somehow essentially 'English' in nature took shape in the sixteenth century. Understanding Lambarde's belief that 'Saxon' could be equated with 'English' requires us to examine not only Lambarde but his friend and mentor Laurence Nowell (1530–c.1570), probably the premier Anglo-Saxonist of his time. Nowell's work in the 1560s, much of which was done in collaboration with Lambarde and all of which passed into Lambarde's keeping, laid out avenues of investigation that guided future generations of scholars. Their studies also had the opportunity to be read by several of the leading writers and thinkers of the day—men such as William Cecil, Arthur Golding, Roger Ascham, Edward Coke, and Francis Bacon. Nowell's and Lambarde's work pioneered not only the focuses of Anglo-Saxon scholarship, but, I argue, its implications for defining what was quintessentially 'English' both in the sixteenth century and in the four centuries preceding the Norman Conquest.

Nowell and Lambarde's milieu indicates that a full understanding of the ways early modern scholars created themselves through the lens of the medieval should take into account the work of Anglo-Saxonists. So far, however, most recent studies of Tudor 'antiquaries' such as those by Andrew Escobedo and Philip Schwyzer have limited themselves to the study of Romano-Celtic Britain, or have (as Matthews' and McMullan's collection) primarily discussed printed texts and plays that engaged with post-Conquest writers and cultural elements.<sup>7</sup> Escobedo does not mention Tudor Anglo-Saxonists, and implies that concern with the Old English

Mean by "Anglo-Saxon" and "Anglo-Saxons"?' *Journal of British Studies* 24 (1985): 395–414. Rolf Bremmer observes that some late Anglo-Saxon texts try to suggest a unified identity in opposition to that of the Viking invaders, but this was not consistently maintained. Bremmer, 'The *Gesta Herewardi*: Transforming an Anglo-Saxon into an Englishman,' in *People and Texts: Relationships in Medieval Literature, Studies presented to Erik Kooper*, ed. Thea Summerfield and Keith Busby (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), 29–42.

<sup>6</sup> William Lambarde, *A Perambulation of Kent* (1826; repr., Bath: Adams and Dart, 1970), 450.

<sup>7</sup> Andrew Escobedo, *Nationalism and Historical Loss in Renaissance England: Foxe, Dee, Spenser, Milton* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004); Philip Schwyzer, *Literature, Nationalism, and Memory in Early Modern England and Wales* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2004).

period began in 1605 with Richard Verstegan.<sup>8</sup> Schwyzer comments that the Anglo-Saxons 'were held in remarkably low esteem' and concludes:

Later English nationalism, as it developed from the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries, would celebrate a trio of specifically English virtues: the English language, racial descent from the Anglo-Saxons, and parliamentary and legal traditions and privileges. By contrast, in the Tudor era all of these were objects of significant anxiety, if not of outright contempt.<sup>9</sup>

However, all three of these were studied in the sixteenth century, and related to the Anglo-Saxons, without anxiety or apology by Nowell and Lambarde. When common lawyers under the Stuarts read early laws, they drew on the previous research of Lambarde, who had an edition of Old English laws printed in 1568 and conveys neither contempt nor unease about his subject matter. Nor does Nowell's manuscript English translation of the Laws of Alfred betray anxiety about either the ancient laws or the modern language. Certainly several sixteenth-century authors express unease about the modern English language or the Anglo-Saxons.<sup>10</sup> It has been too readily assumed that such attitudes were universal, and that Tudor Anglo-Saxon studies had no cultural importance, despite F.J. Levy's discussion of Nowell and Lambarde in his 1967 *Tudor Historical Thought*.<sup>11</sup> I have not cited Schwytzer's and Escobedo's studies because I think their books are unconvincing; quite the contrary, I have focused on them because their arguments are cogent and provocative. Indeed, their analyses of the Celticizing bent of many early modern historical narratives can only gain in emphasis when one realizes that other, competing discourses were available in Elizabethan England, which on the whole was less polarized between 'Briton' and 'Saxon' than the subsequent centuries.<sup>12</sup> So far, though, 'Saxonist' discourses have not been visible in recent investigations of Tudor historiography.

<sup>8</sup> Escobedo, *Nationalism and Historical Loss*, 144.

<sup>9</sup> Schwyzer, *Literature, Nationalism, and Memory*, 5 and 6.

<sup>10</sup> This anxiety probably stemmed from the fact that Catholics, in turn, periodically used Anglo-Saxon authors to argue that Protestantism was a dangerous innovation. Christopher Highley, *Catholics Writing the Nation in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 80–117.

<sup>11</sup> F.J. Levy, *Tudor Historical Thought* (1967; repr., Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), especially 124–166.

<sup>12</sup> Colin Kidd has described how the seventeenth century, particularly, divided itself between these categories. Kidd, *British Identities Before Nationalism: Ethnicity and Nationhood in the Atlantic World, 1600–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

This critical blind spot stems, I think, from another conceptual division of the sixteenth century that still guides much of our own work: the split between printed works and manuscripts. The assumption, mostly unconscious, that what is printed is more culturally relevant, more widely read and therefore more significant than a text that remains 'locked up' in manuscript echoes the Protestant emphasis on the importance of printed, vernacular versions of religious texts and the Protestant figuring of Catholic practice as secretive, obscure, and hidden, and this, perhaps, has guided the majority of studies of Elizabethan antiquarianism to concentrate on printed works.<sup>13</sup> Such a division was central to the work of the early sixteenth-century antiquary John Leland, who, setting forth his plans for producing several massive printed chorographic works, states that he wishes to bring the 'monuments of aunycient wryters' 'out of deadly darkenesse to lyuelye lyght,' that is, to have them printed.<sup>14</sup> Cathy Shrank, in her discussion of John Bale, observes his similar 'emphasis on printing as a tool of enlightenment,' an emphasis shared by many modern students of sixteenth-century historicism.<sup>15</sup> Certainly, if the importance of Tudor Anglo-Saxon studies versus those of either Romano-Celtic or post-Conquest Britain were determined by weight of the published materials alone, we could justify ignoring them. And yet, it is just such distinctions as the one between manuscript and print that now need to be called into question. As Shrank goes on, 'we should remember (as [Bale] does) that publication occurred before and without printing'—even in the sixteenth century, after the presses had been firmly established.<sup>16</sup> Printed works had the potential to circulate widely, and were certainly favored for propaganda of the sort Bale wrote. Yet

<sup>13</sup> See, for instance, the discussion in Richard Ross, 'The Commoning of the Common Law: The Renaissance Debate over Printing English Law, 1520–1640,' *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 146 (1998): 342–352. This distinction was less regarded in the seventeenth century when, as Harold Love argues, 'texts of great political and intellectual importance were deliberately reserved for the scribal medium.' *The Culture and Commerce of Texts: Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (1993; repr., Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998), vii.

<sup>14</sup> *The New Year's Gift, 1546*, facsimile printed in *John Leland's Itinerary: Travels in Tudor England*, ed. John Chandler (1993; repr., Gloucestershire: Alan Sutton Publishing Limited, 1998), 1–2. James Carley also interprets Leland's statement as declaring his resolve to see manuscripts printed. James P. Carley and Pierre Petitmengin, 'Pre-Conquest manuscripts from Malmesbury Abbey and John Leland's letter to Beatus Rhenanus concerning a lost copy of Tertullian's works,' *Anglo-Saxon England* 33 (2004): 195–223, especially 198 and 221.

<sup>15</sup> Cathy Shrank, 'John Bale and Reconfiguring the "Medieval" in Reformation England,' in Matthews and McMullan, *Reading the Medieval*, 191.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 191–192.



manuscripts could still reach a select audience and could, within that circle, still become influential in cultural discourses.

The manuscript–print binary itself has come under question, at least in certain contexts. William Sherman's study of readers and their marks in early modern books cites instances where readers carried their reactions to texts, their 'marginalia,' into notebooks—making these notebooks, I would argue, into an extension of the (printed) texts they studied and blurring the division between the two categories.<sup>17</sup> Sherman's study of book use in early modern England argues that 'readers regularly transformed one printed book into another, and indeed, they occasionally turned one back into a medieval manuscript,' suggesting that the two categories were not always discrete.<sup>18</sup> His conclusion that 'looked at from the user's rather than the producer's perspective, there are significant continuities across the "Medieval–Renaissance" divide' should be extended to the 'manuscript–print' divide in our own categorizations.<sup>19</sup> Certainly, some studies of early modern medievalism have examined manuscripts produced in the Tudor period. Jennifer Summit, for instance, in addition to describing the forces that guided early modern collectors' selections of medieval manuscripts for their libraries, considers some of the notebooks that Robert Cotton compiled, as well as his pre-Reformation holdings, in her discussion of his library.<sup>20</sup> Summit's analysis proceeds to discuss how Cotton's collection, including his own autograph codices, affected printed texts such as William Camden's *Britannia*, however, and one could infer (although Summit certainly does not claim this) that the chief importance of Cotton's manuscripts, pre- and post-Reformation, lay in their ability to influence writers who then printed their work.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, her discussion of Matthew Parker's library coincides with an examination of Book II of the *Faerie Queene*, placing Anglo-Saxon studies in the context of polemic and again tying it to a printed work.<sup>22</sup> In the aggregate, discussions of Renaissance historiography reveal a marked bias towards works that appeared in print or that may have directly influenced printed texts.

Technological and institutional factors have probably also played a part in the emphasis on printed works, and the consequent overlooking of

<sup>17</sup> William Sherman, *Used Books: Marking Readers in Renaissance England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Summit, *Memory's Library*, 136–196.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 101–135.

Anglo-Saxon studies in the sixteenth century outside of Parker's immediate circle. Our idea of the cultural influence of printed works against those that existed in manuscript in the Renaissance may have been skewed by the instant availability of nearly every book printed in England through Early English Books Online (EEBO), which can elide the limited circulation of some of the volumes it includes. The advent of Google books has also made an ever-greater number of early printed books available to scholars, even those without the institutional resources to subscribe to EEBO. However, as EEBO and Google books make possible studies of early printed texts even by those who cannot travel to archives, they also, perhaps, increase the marginalization of manuscripts (figured in historical contexts as quintessentially medieval) compared to early printed works, which signal the Renaissance. The much greater availability *to us* of these printed artifacts must not be allowed to obscure the existence and influence of even non-literary manuscripts produced in the sixteenth century.<sup>23</sup>

The notion that manuscripts are 'medieval' leads to another aspect of Nowell's reception that has helped hide him in particular from students of early modern antiquarians—nearly all studies of him have been written by medievalists and published primarily in journals of medieval studies. The most recent book on the topic, *The Recovery of Old English: Anglo-Saxon Studies in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, was printed by a press that focuses entirely on medieval studies, and, as far as I have been able to determine, was not reviewed in any major journal of early modern studies.<sup>24</sup> In contrast to early modernists' concern with printed works, medievalists studying Tudor antiquaries have turned microscopic attention to the manuscript evidence from the period—especially that which was left in the margins of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts as they passed through early collectors' hands. In addition, medievalists have also burrowed their way through some of the antiquaries' transcriptions, editions, and notes, looking for clues about lost medieval manuscripts that the earlier scholars saw. Nowell, for instance, is probably most famous to Anglo-Saxonists as the first known owner of the *Beowulf* manuscript (sometimes even called the Nowell Codex), but his second-best claim to fame among Anglo-Saxonists is his full transcription of London, British Library Cotton Otho

<sup>23</sup> Also, as H.R. Woudhuysen observes, no catalogues exist of early modern manuscripts of the sort that make medieval manuscripts relatively easy to locate. *Sir Philip Sidney and the Circulation of Manuscripts* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996), 3–4.

<sup>24</sup> *The Recovery of Old English: Anglo-Saxon Studies in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. Timothy Graham (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2000).

B.xi, an Anglo-Saxon manuscript later destroyed by fire. If not for Nowell, that manuscript's version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and the Laws of Alfred, to say nothing of the poem 'Seasons for Fasting' and the calculation of the Burghal Hidage that allows modern historians to work out the size of Anglo-Saxon fortifications, would now be lost.

Since the most famous early modern collector of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts was Archbishop Parker, medievalists, when they have enlarged their field of view from the manuscripts, have largely assumed that the impetus for all Tudor Anglo-Saxon research was Parker's polemical needs in his pamphlet wars.<sup>25</sup> Broad statements to this effect generally preface discussions of Tudor Anglo-Saxonism, and, in the case of Parker himself and his secretary John Joscelyn, they are true.<sup>26</sup> But I do not think they tell the story for Nowell and Lambarde. Carl Berkhout, the most active researcher in establishing Nowell's biography and identifying Nowell's manuscripts, observed over ten years ago that their notes do not point to any polemical aim:

It has often, too often, been remarked that the impetus for the sixteenth-century genesis of Anglo-Saxon studies was polemical, not altogether scholarly, and thus suspect or reprehensible. Old English texts were to be preserved and quarried for their ancient vindication of the established Anglican church. Such a motive was to some extent true of the immediate Parker circle. ... As for Nowell, and for that matter Lambarde, there is no evidence of any such motive.<sup>27</sup>

Berkhout is unquestionably right. Even when Nowell focused on religious texts, such as the Old English homilies in London, British Library Cotton Vespasian D.xiv, his notations are entirely lexical in nature and do not reflect the manuscript's content, in contrast to the notes of John Joscelyn in

<sup>25</sup> For Parker's use of medieval manuscripts in producing polemic, see R.I. Page, *Matthew Parker and his Books* (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications: 1993); more recent are two articles by Aaron Kleist, 'Monks, Marriage, and Manuscripts: Matthew Parker's Manipulation (?) of Ælfric of Eynsham,' *JEGP* 105 (2006): 312–327; and 'Matthew Parker, Old English, and the Defense of Priestly Marriage,' in *Anglo-Saxon Books and Their Readers: Essays in Celebration of Helmut Gneuss's 'Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts'*, ed. Thomas N. Hall and Donald Scragg (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2008), 106–133.

<sup>26</sup> An early example is Eleanor Adams, *Old English Scholarship in England from 1566–1800* (1917; repr. Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1970), 11–41; see also Franzen, *Desire for Origins*, 27–50; and Kidd, *British Identities*, 106.

<sup>27</sup> Carl Berkhout, 'Laurence Nowell (1530–ca. 1570),' in *Medieval Scholarship: Biographical Studies on the Formation of a Discipline*, vol. 2, *Literature and Philology*, ed. Helen Damico with Donald Fennema and Karmen Lenz (New York: Garland, 1998), 14.

the same manuscript. Nowell and Joscelyn had different uses for these texts. Lambarde's interests, while they lay more in the direction of religious debate, were not exclusively concerned with polemic either. I would go even further, however, and query the very notion that medieval studies arising from political or social goals were 'suspect and reprehensible'. The motives and the uses of medievalism in the early modern period are a large part of what makes it interesting and important, as Allen Frantzen has argued in his ground-breaking *Desire for Origins* and as the early modernists' studies of Tudor antiquarianism have shown.<sup>28</sup>

In this book, I borrow an approach from literary studies to show how this boundary between medievalists-who-study-manuscripts and early-modernists-who-study-culture might be broken down. Scholars of literary texts provide a counterpoint to the focus on print, as they have worked extensively on manuscripts and in this context have demonstrated the 'social and interpretive value placed on the products of scribal production.'<sup>29</sup> Somewhat revising the binary of print/manuscript from public/secretive to public/intimate, many early modern authors worked in close relationships with their friends and patrons and produced highly valued, hand-written artifacts that were shared among members of these groups. Arthur Marotti, in his influential work on John Donne, outlines this culture of manuscript circulation in early modern England and describes how Donne sent his manuscript verse to an audience of friends in a practice that Marotti terms 'coterie poetry.'<sup>30</sup> Donne's poetry was written for this audience, and their shared interests and experiences provided him with some of his subject matter. The notion of similar 'literary circles' as key to textual interpretation has guided much subsequent study of sixteenth-century and seventeenth-century authors and led to an emphasis on manuscript circulation of their writings before, sometimes long before, they were printed.<sup>31</sup>

The potential analogy of scholarly circles to literary circles, and the

<sup>28</sup> Franzen, *Desire for Origins*, especially 1–26.

<sup>29</sup> Cathy Shrank, "'These few scribbled rules': Representing Scribal Intimacy in Early Modern Print," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 67 (2004): 295.

<sup>30</sup> Arthur Marotti, *John Donne, Coterie Poet* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986), especially 3–34.

<sup>31</sup> For instance, Woudhuysen argues about the importance of understanding manuscript culture and circulation in *Sir Philip Sidney*. The circle metaphor has itself been questioned, however; the introduction and essays in *Literary Circles and Communities in Renaissance England*, ed. Claude J. Summers and Ted-Larry Pebworth (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2000), give examples both of the utility of this avenue of study, and also some of the questions now being raised about it.

consequent importance of manuscripts even 160 years after Caxton, provides a valuable perspective on Tudor Anglo-Saxon studies. Stewart Mottram's examination of English nationalism also indicates that audience is crucial:

But the study of Tudor literature should surely be alert to the cultural conditions within which that literature was produced. If it were, then all Tudor texts would be approached as political documents, read in relation to whatever we can glean about the author's political leanings and client relationships, whatever we can surmise about their reasons for writing and intended readership.<sup>32</sup>

Mottram's argument about 'client relationships' can clearly extend past texts now considered literature to other textual productions, including antiquarian ones. Understanding patronage circles can illuminate Nowell's Anglo-Saxon studies as well as more literary works, and makes clear the ways that even documents with (in our view) no obvious political motive further nationalist goals. Lateral relationships among people who were engaged with the same powerful figure potentially form part of the 'intended readership,' even if few traces remain that allow us clear knowledge of manuscript circulation. Admittedly, Nowell's manuscripts could not have been recopied as easily as Donne's poetry was, especially when he wrote in Old English (which he usually did in an imitation insular minuscule script that would have taken some practice to master even if the copyist could understand the text). However, copying was not impossible, either, as Francis Thynne later transcribed some of Nowell's manuscripts after they passed into Lambard's keeping.<sup>33</sup> Considering (especially) Nowell's efforts as a kind of 'coterie scholarship,' texts produced in and for a network of colleagues and associates, drives home both the ways that even non-literary manuscripts such as transcriptions and lexical compilations could circulate and become influential, and the ways that cultural concerns could shape the studies of a man who had, by all appearances, no interest in seeing his works printed.<sup>34</sup> Nowell sent nothing to a press in his

<sup>32</sup> Stewart Mottram, *Empire and Nation in Early English Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2008), 5.

<sup>33</sup> Woudhuysen, *Sir Philip Sidney*, 122.

<sup>34</sup> Cathy Shrank has a similar approach of 'viewing manuscripts as a publishing medium' even with texts that are not now considered 'literary.' *Writing the Nation in Reformation England 1530–1580* (2004; repr., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 21. Shrank also shows that, conversely, printed works could try to imitate manuscripts to give the impression of intimacy normally associated with handwritten works. "These few scribbled rules," 295–314. Achsah Guibbory has even expanded the notion of a literary circle in the

lifetime and was not particularly interested in Romano-Celtic Britain, as many if not most of the other antiquaries were. However, neither did he engage in Protestant polemic. Working as secretary to William Cecil, Queen Elizabeth's Secretary and one of her most important ministers, he focused his labors in Anglo-Saxon studies on lexical research, law codes, and place names, all topics that spoke to the sense of English national identity that Cecil wished to foster. Cecil is at the center of Nowell's coterie, which must be understood as Timothy Raylor describes another 'literary circle': 'less a single unitary circle than a complex solar system' with the most politically and socially powerful figures at the center.<sup>35</sup> Nowell's social and professional circumstances therefore not only indicate but helped form the impetus for his scholarly work, which then had the opportunity to circulate among thinkers and statesmen orbiting near the top of the Elizabethan power structure.

Lambarde did not have Nowell's ties to Cecil, and his environment is less easily conceived of as a 'coterie,' but his residence in Lincoln's Inn and his positions in the Court of Requests and Chancery would have brought him into contact with several influential statesmen and writers during the later Elizabethan period. Lambarde did see some of his works through the press, but not all, and even some of the ones that remained in manuscript were read by men such as Edward Coke and Francis Bacon. Works in manuscript could be influential if they found the right audience, as the 'literary circles' concept and the history of Lambarde's works make clear, and both the manuscripts and the audience must be fully considered if we are to understand the ways that the early modern centuries constructed the early medieval ones. For the rest of this chapter, I will briefly discuss Nowell's and Lambarde's lives and the major figures in their immediate social and professional circles, and describe Nowell's annotated copy of Richard Howlet's *Abcedarium Anglico-Latinum*, which perhaps more than any other artifact demonstrates the need to examine both sixteenth-century manuscripts and sixteenth-century culture together to understand the importance of Anglo-Saxon studies in Elizabethan historical writing.

seventeenth century to include printed works. Guibbory, 'Conversation, Conversion, Messianic Redemption: Margaret Fell, Menasseh Ben Israel, and the Jews,' in Summers and Peabworth, *Literary Circles*, 210–234.

<sup>35</sup> Timothy Raylor, 'Newcastle's Ghosts: Robert Payne, Ben Jonson, and the "Cavendish Circle,"' in Summers and Peabworth, *Literary Circles*, 96.

NOWELL, LAMBARDE, AND THE *ABCEDARIUM*

Laurence Nowell has been fortunate in his modern biographers, especially Carl Berkhout, who has put together the most complete picture of the antiquary's life.<sup>36</sup> Nowell was born in 1530 or 1531 in Whalley, Lancashire. After taking a B.A. at Christ Church, Oxford in 1552, he traveled on the Continent and throughout Britain and Ireland in the 1550s and early 1560s, and was employed by William Cecil in 1562 as a tutor for Cecil's ward, the young Earl of Oxford, who lived in Cecil's house. The first solidly datable evidence of Nowell's interest in Anglo-Saxon studies dates from the same year: his transcription of Cotton Otho B.xi, completed in 1562. He lived with Cecil and continued his research until he left for the Continent in 1567 to search for medieval manuscripts in Continental repositories. Nowell's close association with Cecil gave his Anglo-Saxon studies the opportunity to circulate broadly among some of the most influential people of his day, but his time in Cecil's household is not well understood. He was certainly the tutor to the Earl of Oxford for a time, and Berkhout observes that, although no record remains 'of the primary capacity in which Cecil employed him,' most of Cecil's correspondents refer to Nowell as Cecil's secretary.<sup>37</sup> Archbishop Matthew Parker probably had Nowell in mind when he referred, in a letter to Cecil, to Cecil's 'singular artificer,' indicating that Parker and Cecil knew of Nowell's skill with medieval manuscripts.<sup>38</sup> Cecil was an avid manuscript collector, proud of his Greek and Latin learning, and Nowell may have helped with his collection.

A comparison has often been made between Cecil's employment of Nowell and Parker's employment of John Joscelyn.<sup>39</sup> If their relationships

<sup>36</sup> Berkhout, 'Laurence Nowell,' 3–17. The first modern discussion of Nowell's life and work was that of Robin Flower, 'Laurence Nowell and the Discovery of England in Tudor Times,' *Proceedings of the British Academy* 21 (1935): 46–73; reprinted in *British Academy Papers on Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. E.G. Stanley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 1–27. All quotations are from the 1990 reprint. Perhaps the single most significant biological find was the evidence put forth by Retha Warnicke in 'Note on a Court of Requests Case 1571,' *English Language Notes* 11 (1974): 250–256, demonstrating that Laurence Nowell the Anglo-Saxonist was not Laurence Nowell the dean of Lichfield (the two were first cousins). Other significant studies include Pamela Black, 'Some New Light on the Career of Laurence Nowell the Antiquary,' *Antiquaries Journal* 62 (1982): 116–123; Thomas Hahn, 'The Identity of the Antiquary Laurence Nowell,' *English Language Notes* 20 (1983): 10–18; and Carl Berkhout, 'The Pedigree of Laurence Nowell the Antiquary,' *English Language Notes* 23 (1985): 15–26.

<sup>37</sup> Berkhout, 'Laurence Nowell,' 7.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> Robin Flower first suggests this comparison in 'Laurence Nowell and the Discovery of

to their employers were similar, then perhaps Nowell as well as Joscelyn was influenced in his antiquarian research by his patron's interests. This is certainly true of Joscelyn, who researched sermons extensively and helped Archbishop Parker translate the Paschal sermon of the Anglo-Saxon homilist Ælfric of Eynsham for publication as Protestant propaganda. Nowell, I believe, similarly let his research interests be led by Cecil's concerns. Although Cecil was not himself an Anglo-Saxonist, as Parker was, and may not have directly governed Nowell's work and its directions, the patronage system alone would have encouraged Nowell to focus his research in areas that his employer would find interesting and useful. Perhaps Nowell hoped to be advanced in his position in Cecil's household, for the position of personal secretary to an official of Cecil's stature could be both influential and lucrative.<sup>40</sup> Cecil's concern with national identity formation in the 1560s probably helped motivate and guide Nowell's Anglo-Saxon studies, and Cecil formed the center of the circle in which Nowell 'orbited.'

Cecil (1520–1598), made first Baron of Burghley in 1571, was called by his most recent biographer 'the most powerful man in Elizabethan England'; during the time Nowell worked for him he was royal Secretary and Secretary of the Privy Council.<sup>41</sup> Cecil influenced many of Elizabeth's policy decisions, and he was also keenly aware of the power of propaganda. Conyers Read, in a ground-breaking essay on Cecil's use of pamphlet literature, describes how the Secretary often penned tracts himself in order to swing popular opinion to support the Queen and her causes.<sup>42</sup> Many of these centered on the issue of religion, for Protestantism was the main focus of English identity formation in this period. In addition, the Privy Council (probably guided by Cecil) also encouraged the printing of anti-

England,' 6. For an extensive study of Joscelyn's work in Old English, see Timothy Graham, 'John Joscelyn, Pioneer of Old English Lexicography,' in Graham, *Recovery of Old English*, 83–140.

<sup>40</sup> Alan G.R. Smith, 'The Secretariats of the Cecils, circa 1580–1612,' *English Historical Review* 83 (1968): 481–504.

<sup>41</sup> Stephen Alford, *Burghley: William Cecil at the Court of Elizabeth I* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), xi. For other studies of Cecil's career, see Michael Graves, *Burghley: William Cecil, Lord Burghley* (New York: Longman, 1998); and Conyers Read, *Mr. Secretary Cecil and Queen Elizabeth* (1955; repr., The Bedford Historical Series, London: Jonathan Cape, 1965).

<sup>42</sup> Conyers Read, 'William Cecil and Elizabethan Public Relations,' in *Elizabethan Government and Society: Essays Presented to John Neale*, ed. S.T. Bindoff, J. Hurstfield, and C.H. Williams (1961; repr., London: Athlone, 1964), 21–55.



quarian texts.<sup>43</sup> The printer John Day, with whom Cecil was closely associated, printed Parker's *Testimony of Antiquity*.<sup>44</sup> He also printed John Foxe's antiquarian works, as well as Lambarde's *Archaionomia*, so Cecil's associate put to press works that intimately concerned several areas of antiquarian research. Cecil and Day understood that ancient English history could provide support for several nationalist rallying-points, and this probably encouraged Nowell's work as well as giving it a potential audience.

Cecil, of course, was also one of the main architects of Elizabethan foreign policy, which, Jane Dawson argues, he saw in terms of Britain, not just England; he wished to solidify relations with Scotland and conquer Ireland so that the Atlantic archipelago should be more or less united under the English crown.<sup>45</sup> His reasons for doing so stemmed from his desire for national security—identical, in his mind, with the security of Elizabeth on the throne. If Scotland were not allied with France, nor Ireland with Spain, then England itself could not be attacked from a near neighbor, and Elizabeth's country would be more secure from threat of invasion. The relationship with Scotland was particularly troubling to Cecil, as Mary, Queen of Scots had some claim to the throne of England and was one of the logical successors to Elizabeth, making her attractive to foreign and domestic conspirators who might plot to kill or depose Elizabeth.<sup>46</sup> Part of his view was therefore geographic, and Nowell, as part of his chorographic writings, produced what is perhaps the first modern map of Britain and Ireland. Nowell's studies could provide Cecil with tactical, geographical, and political information; they could also provide propaganda, the use of which Cecil knew well.

Cecil was also the patron of a number of scholars and writers, and, as J.A. van Dorsten points out, 'Cecil House was England's nearest equivalent

<sup>43</sup> Elizabeth Evenden and Thomas Freeman, 'Print, Profit and Propaganda: The Elizabethan Privy Council and the 1570 Edition of Foxe's "Book of Martyrs,"' *English Historical Review* 119 (2004): 288–307.

<sup>44</sup> Cecil, through an intermediary, rented land in Lincolnshire to Day so that, as 'Michael Wood,' he could print tracts against Mary Tudor while she reigned, and 'unless one of the great statesmen of the sixteenth century was being uncharacteristically naïve, William Cecil rented the land in the full knowledge that Day would print illicit works there.' Elizabeth Evenden, 'The Michael Wood Mystery: William Cecil and the Lincolnshire Printing of John Day,' *Sixteenth Century Journal* 35 (2004): 388.

<sup>45</sup> Jane Dawson, 'William Cecil and the British Dimension of Early Elizabethan Foreign Policy,' *History* 74 (1989): 196–216.

<sup>46</sup> Read describes Cecil's concern with Scotland, in particular, in the early years of the 1560s in *Mr Secretary Cecil*, 218–238; Alford also argues that Scotland was a major concern in Cecil's years as Secretary. *Burghley*, 121–138.

of a humanist salon since the days of More.<sup>47</sup> Nowell moved in this circle of Tudor intellectuals who centered themselves on Cecil's house, where Nowell lived. The writer and pedagogue Roger Ascham was a frequent visitor; he had been one of Cecil's tutors at St. John's, Cambridge and the two remained friends.<sup>48</sup> Nor was Nowell the only scholar actually living in Cecil's house; John Hart, who wrote extensively about the English language, lived there also in the 1560s. So did Arthur Golding, who translated several works from classical Latin, including Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.<sup>49</sup> Nowell and Golding must have known each other especially well, as Golding was in charge of the affairs of the Earl of Oxford, whom Nowell was tutoring. Nowell's Anglo-Saxon researches might seem quite different from the classical humanism of Golding, but he applied the same concern with textual accuracy to Old English as Golding had done to Latin; his subject was different but his methods familiar. The two also appear to have similar (and perhaps mutually reinforcing) ideas about translation into English and shared goals for the language they 'edified' by their labors.

In addition to his wealth of contacts as a resident of Cecil's home, and the potential areas of study that these contacts could have introduced to him, Nowell was, of course, closely associated with Lambarde who studied at Lincoln's Inn during most of the 1560s. They collaborated in their study of the Old English laws, and Lambarde shared Nowell's interest in topography and mapping. When Nowell departed for the Continent to look for more manuscripts in 1567, he left his books in Lambarde's hands; when Nowell died abroad some time in 1570 or 1571, Lambarde inherited them. As Nowell's literary executor he extended their Anglo-Saxon studies to the nationalist discourses of the later Elizabethan period. Born in 1536, Lambarde was the oldest son of John Lambarde, a wealthy draper who died when William was eighteen. Retha Warnicke observes a passage in Lambarde's *Alphabetical Description* that could indicate that he studied for a time at Oxford, but nothing of his education is known for certain until he entered Lincoln's Inn at the age of 19.<sup>50</sup> As Berkhout has now placed

<sup>47</sup> J.A. van Dorsten, 'Mr. Secretary Cecil, Patron of Letters,' *English Studies: A Journal of English Language and Literature* 50 (1969): 548.

<sup>48</sup> Alford discusses Cecil's St. John's connections, many of whom remained lifelong friends of his. *Burghley*, 12–23.

<sup>49</sup> Alford, *Burghley*, 147–148. The standard biography of Golding, which discusses his time at Cecil House, is Louis Thorn Golding, *An Elizabethan Puritan: Arthur Golding the Translator of Ovid's 'Metamorphoses' and also of John Calvin's 'Sermons'* (New York: Richard R. Smith, 1937).

<sup>50</sup> Retha Warnicke, *William Lambarde: Elizabethan Antiquary* (London: Phillimore, 1973), 14.