

Anglo- Saxon England 27



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Of the present volume of *Anglo-Saxon England* it might be said (in the words of *Beowulf*) *þa wæs eft swa ær*, or in other words, that it follows the model of its predecessors in bringing to light new evidence and providing fresh perspectives on familiar subjects, across all disciplines – whether literary, philological, legal, historical or palaeographical – in the field. The discovery in Sondershausen of a fragmentary psalter glossed in Latin and Old English allows new inferences to be drawn regarding the study of the psalter in Anglo-Saxon England, and of the transmission of the corpus of vernacular psalter glosses. A detailed textual and palaeographical study of the Wearmouth–Jarrow bibles leads to the exciting possibility that the hand of Bede can be identified, annotating the text of the Bible which he no doubt played an instrumental role in establishing. Two Latin texts from the circle of Archbishop Wulfstan (indeed from his own ‘commonplace book’) are published here in full for the first time; their publication will permit closer appreciation of liturgical practice in early-eleventh-century England. And new light is thrown on two brief but problematical runic texts.

The legacy to Anglo-Saxon England of classical antiquity is explored here in two complementary essays: in one, the question is posed (and answered comprehensively) of how much of the system of classical rhetoric could have been available, and understood, and applied, in pre-Conquest England. In the other, careful analysis of such sources as Aldhelm’s *Enigmata* and the ‘Leiden Glossary’ shows how much classical mythology was understood (and misunderstood) in early England. Aspects of the later transmissional history of two important Anglo-Latin texts are the subject of two detailed investigations: a neglected continental witness to the anonymous Lindisfarne *Vita S. Cuthberti* is shown to yield important information

(continued on back flap)

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Her mon mæg giet gesion hiora swæð

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Contents

<i>List of illustrations</i>	page vii
Record of the eighth conference of the International Society of Anglo-Saxonists, at Università di Palermo, 7–12 July 1997	1
Classical rhetoric in Anglo-Saxon England GABRIELE KNAPPE <i>University of Bamberg</i>	5
<i>Cyniges fedesl</i> : the king's feeding in Æthelberht, ch. 12 LISI OLIVER <i>Louisiana State University</i>	31
The Minster-in-Thanel foundation story STEPHANIE HOLLIS <i>University of Auckland</i>	41
<i>Manus Bedae</i> : Bede's contribution to Ceolfrith's bibles RICHARD MARSDEN <i>University of Leeds</i>	65
The transmission and reception of Graeco-Roman mythology in Anglo-Saxon England, 670–800 MICHAEL W. HERREN <i>York University, Toronto</i>	87
A neglected early-ninth-century manuscript of the Lindisfarne <i>Vita S. Cuthberti</i> DONALD A. BULLOUGH <i>University of St Andrews</i>	105
The transmission of the 'Digby' corpus of bilingual glosses to Aldhelm's <i>Prosa de virginitate</i> SCOTT GWARA <i>University of South Carolina</i>	139
Exeter Book Riddle 74 and the play of the text JOHN D. NILES <i>University of California at Berkeley</i>	169

Contents

Body and law in late Anglo-Saxon England	209
KATHERINE O'BRIEN O'KEEFFE <i>University of Notre Dame</i>	
Two composite texts from Archbishop Wulfstan's 'commonplace book': the <i>De ecclesiastica consuetudine</i> and the <i>Institutio beati Amalarii de ecclesiasticis officiis</i>	233
CHRISTOPHER A. JONES <i>Idaho State University</i>	
A newly-found fragment of an Anglo-Saxon psalter	273
HELMUT GNEUSS <i>University of Munich</i>	
Two runic notes	289
R. I. PAGE <i>Corpus Christi College, Cambridge</i>	
Bibliography for 1997	295
CARL T. BERKHOUT, <i>University of Arizona</i>	
CAROLE P. BIGGAM, <i>Strathclyde University</i>	
MARK BLACKBURN, <i>Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge</i>	
DEBBY BANHAM, <i>Newnham College, Cambridge</i>	
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Abbreviations listed before the bibliography (pages 295–7) are used throughout the volume without other explanation

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