

H.M. CHADWICK MEMORIAL LECTURES 12

RICHARD GAMESON

The scribe speaks?
Colophons in early English manuscripts



DEPARTMENT OF ANGLO-SAXON, NORSE, AND CELTIC

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Hector Munro Chadwick (1870-1947) was Elrington and Bosworth Professor of Anglo-Saxon in the University of Cambridge from 1912 to 1941. Through the immense range of his scholarly publications, and through the vigorous enthusiasm which he brought to all aspects of Anglo-Saxon studies — philological and literary, historical and archaeological — he helped to define the field and to give it the interdisciplinary orientation which characterises it still. The Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic, which owes its existence and its own interdisciplinary outlook to H.M. Chadwick, has wished to commemorate his enduring contribution to Anglo-Saxon studies by establishing an annual series of lectures in his name.

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Even the most serious among us remain susceptible to ‘human interest’: that is perhaps one reason why we tend to spend a disproportionate amount of time reading the prefaces of books as opposed to their main texts!¹ Early medieval scribes, engaged in copying other people’s writings, have not generally left us much overt evidence to go on in this respect – except colophons, in which, occasionally, one seems to catch a glimpse of the human being behind the manuscript.² In its original, broad sense of the ‘finishing touch’ or *explicit*, the colophon was widespread and can be traced back to the beginnings of book production;³ however our subject here is the subset of such material which may be defined as a formal scribal note which bears – or purports to bear – in some way on the scribe himself and his work. ‘The art of the scribes is the most difficult of the arts,’ wrote one Echternach scribe around

¹ The following abbreviations are used throughout: BAV = Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana; BBR = Bruxelles, Bibliothèque royale; BL = London, British Library; BM = Bibliothèque municipale; BNF = Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France; BodL. = Oxford, Bodleian Library; CCCC = Cambridge, Corpus Christi College; DCL = Durham Cathedral, Dean and Chapter Library; SCL = Salisbury, Cathedral Library; TCC = Cambridge, Trinity College; TCD = Dublin, Trinity College. In addition, the abbreviations for journal and series titles used in *Anglo-Saxon England* have been employed. The numbers in bold refer to the summary catalogue which follows the text.

² The standard conspectus of material is *Colophons des manuscrits occidentaux des origines au XVI^e siècle*, ed. Les Bénédictines de Bouveret, 6 vols. (Fribourg, 1965-82).

³ In the s. vi² Italian ‘Gospel Book of St Augustine’ (CCCC 286), which was certainly in England from an early date, each gospel ends with a colophon written in Rustic Capital in alternate lines of red and brown; those for Mt, Lk, and Jn include a formula of thanks to God. The s. vii Italian Gospel Book, BodL. Auct D. 2. 14, which was likewise in England at an early date, has the invocation *Christe faue* at the beginning of each gospel.

the millennium.⁴ A poem added in the twelfth century to the start of a Saint-Vaast book makes the same point from a different perspective: ‘The pen speaks thus: “Hold me firmly and put me down gently. If you have not written well, you will have a bad day.”’⁵ Some early readers thought that particular scribes had indeed had bad days: ‘This book is so ruined through the carelessness of an ignorant writer that it cannot be properly read or understood by anyone’; and again in the same manuscript, ‘This book is so wrecked by the fault of the scribe that it may not be corrected by anyone’.⁶ Conversely, scribes occasionally railed against over-officious correctors: in a ninth-century Sankt Gallen manuscript we read, ‘Don’t go mad with pen and pumice lest something worse gets you’.⁷ They could also take a dim view of readers in general: ‘May an evil pestilence torment him who shall have left you [the book] open’, wrote one,⁸ while another had his book say primly (though with dubious logic): ‘If you know how to

⁴ BNF lat. 8996, fol. 147r; *Colophons*, no. 20116: ‘Ardua scriptorum prae cunctis artibus ars est. / Nauta rudis pelagi ut seuis ereptus ab undis / In portum ueniens, pectora leta tenet’. Lines 2 and 3 come from a poem associated with Alcuin: MGH *Poetae Latini 1: Poetae Latini Aevi Carolini* 1, ed. E. Dümmler (Berlin, 1881), p. 284, no. iv; a version of the full text appears in CCC 326 (no. 19). The present manuscript is a huge volume, comprising three separable parts. The colophon appears at the end of an Augustine text copied by a single scribe (132v-47r).

⁵ Arras, Médiathèque, 924 (Cat. gén. 169), fol. 1r: a s. xii² addition to a s. x/xi or xi¹ book (*Colophons*, no. 21788): ‘Hec dicit penna: / Tene me fortiter / Et dispone suauius. / Si non bene scripseris / Malum diem habebis.’ This text was originally preceded by a couple of other phrases in the same hand, which have been erased; it was formerly followed by later copies of the same ‘tag’ (also now erased).

⁶ Einsiedeln, Stiftsbibliothek, 160 (s. xi addition to s. x copy of Gregory, *Homiliae*) (P. G. Meier, *Catalogus Codicum Manuscriptorum qui in Bibliotheca Monasterii Einsidlensis O.S.B. servantur*, I (Leipzig, 1899), p. 131; *Colophons*, no. 22123). Page 1, ‘Iste liber per incuriam ignari scriptoris ita est uiciatus quod a nullo bene potest legi uel intelligi’. Page 298, ‘Iste liber uitio scriptoris tantum deprauatus est ut nec corrigi a quoquam ualeat’. (Not seen.)

⁷ St Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, 261 (pt. III), p. 276 (s. ix): ‘Pennam et pumicam noli furare amplius, ne deterius tibi aliquid contigat’. See A. Bruckner, *Scriptoria Media Aevi Helvetica III: Schreibschulen der Diözese Konstanz, St Gallen II* (Geneva, 1938), p. 88; *Colophons*, no. 22846. Cf. Avranches, BM, 109, fol. 75r.

⁸ Tietze, Ross VIII. 144, fol. 107v (s. xi) (*Colophons*, 22521): ‘Mala pestis torqueat ipsum / Qui te dimiserit apertum’. (Not seen.)

read me, treat me well; however, if you don't know how to read me, hand me to a learned person'.⁹

Having raised your hopes with these gems, I must instantly dash them: while a few early medieval colophons are exceptionally interesting and a handful are amusing, most are predictable, repetitive, and – dare one say it – a little dull. Furthermore and more practically, limited though the body of material in question is, and famous though a few of its members are, the scholarly resources for studying it as a whole are hopelessly inadequate. There are few real editions of the texts in question, and many of the published discussions are haphazard and unscientific. The standard anthology of material,¹⁰ though an invaluable (albeit far from infallible) guide to where such notes occur, does not present reliable transcriptions of the texts and is of little help with regard to their authority.

There is a series of essential questions which one should ask of any colophon before attempting to deploy it. Is the note in a hand which is otherwise represented in the book? *Ora pro Wigbaldo* at the end of the Barberini Gospels was written by one of the main scribes (pl. 2);¹¹ 'Explicitur totum, pro amore Dei, da michi potum', which concludes a Rochester Berengaudus,¹² by contrast, was added three centuries after the book was finished – by which time it would have needed more than a drink to revive the scribe! Has the note been tampered with in any way? Several parts of the colophon in a late ninth-century computistical collection, for instance, were erased at an early date, and the detail 'from Winchester' which now follows the name 'Raegenbold the priest' is a tenth- or eleventh-century substitution (pl. 4).¹³ While the

⁹ BNF lat. 11278, fol. 28 (s. ix) (*Colophons* 23467): 'Si scis me legere, tracta me bene. / Si uero nescis me legere, trade me sapienti'. (Not seen.)

¹⁰ *Colophons* (see n. 2).

¹¹ BAV Barb. Lat. 570, fol. 153r (no. 6).

¹² Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Theol. Lat. Fol. 224: T. Brandis and P. J. Becker (ed.), *Glanz alter Buchkunst* (Wiesbaden, 1988), no. 17; A. Fingernagel, *Die illuminierten lateinischen Handschriften süd-, west- und nordeuropäischer Provenienz der Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin*, 2 vols. (Wiesbaden, 1999), I, no. 120; II, pl. XXII and pls. 339-41.

¹³ BodL. Digby 63 (no. 9): N. R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford, 1957), no. 319; A. G. Watson, *Catalogue of Dated and Datable Manuscripts c.*

subscription now sheds light on the provenance of the book in the late Anglo-Saxon period, it is of no value with regard to its place of origin.

If the note is not in a hand which appears elsewhere in the book, is it nevertheless broadly contemporary with it? Does it appear in other works from the same writing centre? If so, its authority may still be strong. We should hardly expect the note ‘obiit Edricus monachus et sacerdos qui scripsit hunc compotum’, added to the calendar-section of an eleventh-century Worcester homiliary¹⁴ to be by the scribe himself! However, as it is in a slightly later (xi^{ex}) hand of Worcester type, it inspires confidence. If the scribe was posterior – even considerably so – but appears to have been copying an earlier text, or re-presenting earlier information, and its details are consistent with what we know about the period in question, it may still deserve respect, albeit with circumspection. Aldred’s colophons in the Lindisfarne Gospels, which include the names and motives of people who (purportedly) worked on the book some two and a half centuries earlier, are cases in point.¹⁵

Are there correspondences between information in the colophon and the rest of the book? The colophon in the New Minster Prayer Book identifies Ælfwine as the owner of the volume, a claim supported by the reappearance of his name elsewhere in the manuscript; indeed he was probably also its second scribe.¹⁶ The inscription in the Benedictional of St Æthelwold,

435-1600 in *Oxford Libraries*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1984), I, no. 419; D. N. Dumville, ‘Motes and Beams: Two Insular Computational Manuscripts’, *Peritia* 2 (1983), 248-56.

¹⁴ BodL. Hatton 113+114: on fol. viii recto of 113; Ker, *Catalogue*, no. 331. The note presumably refers to the scribe who wrote Hatton 113, fols. ii v-xi v (and was also responsible for, e.g., CCCC 9, fols. 9r-13v/i).

¹⁵ BL Cott. Nero D. iv, fols. 89v and 259r (no. 14). Facsimile, *Codex Lindisfarneensis*, ed. T. J. Brown *et al.*, 2 vols. (Olten, 1956-60), with discussion of the colophon in II, 5-16 and Bk ii, pp. 5-11. Its general reliability, questioned by D. N. Dumville, *A Palaeographer’s Review*, I (Osaka, 1999), 75-9 and 89-99, has been defended by M. P. Brown, ‘*In the Beginning was the Word*’: *Books and Faith in the Age of Bede*, Jarrow Lecture, 2000; see also R. G. Gameson, ‘Why did Eadfrith write the Lindisfarne Gospels?’, *Belief and Culture in the Middle Ages: Studies presented to Henry Mayr-Harting*, ed. R. G. Gameson and H. Leyser (Oxford, 2001), 45-58.

¹⁶ BL Cotton Titus D. xxvii+xxvi (no. 30): E. Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts 900-1066* (London, 1976), cat. 77; *Ælfwine’s Prayerbook*, ed. B. Günzel, HBS 108 (London, 1993), p. 109 (with discussion of colophon at pp. 70-1). The colophon appears in Titus D.

which describes a volume containing ‘many frames well adorned and filled with various figures, decorated with numerous beautiful colours and with gold’, is unlikely to have been written for another manuscript.¹⁷ While such cases – sadly all too rare – inspire especial confidence, a measure of discrepancy is not necessarily fatal to the authenticity of a text, for it is quite clear that colophons were not, in general, designed either as accurate records of the size of the team responsible for a volume or of the circumstance in which it was made. The Echternach gospel-book at Trier was the product of collaboration between an Insular scribe-artist and a Merovingian one; the former (Thomas) included his name in his work on three occasions, the latter never.¹⁸ The scribe who wrote ‘Pray for Wigbald’ in the Barberini Gospels (pl. 2) was only one of four or five who laboured on the book. If the circumstances that his hand was the best and that he probably started and certainly finished the volume incline one to think that, as principal contributor, he might have felt entitled to name himself alone, equally he could have been including a prayer for a patron or recipient who had no hand in the manufacture of the manuscript, or even simply copying a coda which he had found in his exemplar. Whatever the truth of the matter, at least three of the contributors were left unnamed. The Old English gloss to John in the Mac Regol Gospels ends with the imprecation, ‘Whosoever uses me, may he pray for Owun who glossed this book’, followed

xxvii, fol. 13v. Facsimile plate: *The Liber Vitae of the New Minster and Hyde Abbey Winchester*, ed. S. Keynes, EEMF 26 (Copenhagen, 1996), pl. XVI, with translation and discussion on p. 117. Cf. the inscription in the miniature on fol. 65v.

¹⁷ BL Add. 49598, fols. 4v-5r (no. 17). Facsimile: *The Benedictional of Saint Æthelwold*, ed. G. F. Warner and H. A. Wilson, Roxburghe Club (Oxford, 1910), with trans. at pp. xii-xiii; trans. also given by F. Wormald, *The Benedictional of St Ethelwold* (London, 1959), pp. 7-8. Edition: M. Lapidge, ‘The Hermeneutic Style in Tenth-Century Anglo-Latin Literature’, *ASE* 4 (1975), 67-111, repr. in his *Anglo-Latin Literature 900-1066* (London, 1993), 105-49, Appendix II. There are further brief comments on the style in his ‘Æthelwold as Scholar and Teacher’, *Bishop Æthelwold: His Career and Influence*, ed. B. Yorke (Woodbridge, 1988), 89-117; repr. in his *Anglo-Latin Literature 900-1066*, 183-211 at 201.

¹⁸ Trier, Domschatz, 61, fols. 5v, 12r, 127v. He was also responsible for the colophonic prayer on 1r. See, in general, N. Netzer, *Cultural Interplay in the Eighth Century: The Trier Gospels and the Making of a Scriptorium at Echternach* (Cambridge, 1994).

immediately by another name, 'Farman the priest at Harewood'.¹⁹ While the fact that two scribes were responsible for the gloss might lead one to suspect that Farman was also a glossator and not simply the patron, it is only the presence of a separate colophon at the end of Matthew ('Farmon the priest glossed this book thus ...') which puts the matter beyond doubt.

Is the colophon indeed attached to and part of a particular text, rather than referring to the individual manuscript in which it has been transmitted? The content of the colophon in the Echtermach Gospels (a volume written around 700) which informs us that the text had been collated in 558, shows the former to have been the case (pl. 1).²⁰ The same is very likely to apply to the stichometric formulae in the Salisbury and Exeter Psalters,²¹ as also to the textual critique which concludes the Salisbury Plautus.²² The discrepancy in date between the probable author of the cryptic note in the prefatory matter to the Vitellius Psalter (Ælfwine, who became abbot of The New Minster, Winchester, in 1031 or 1032) and the age of that manuscript (c. 1062) implies that the same was true there,²³ while in Bodleian Library MS. Junius 121 it is the

¹⁹ BodL. Auct. D. 2. 19 (no. 16), Anglo-Saxon colophons on fols. 50v and 168v-9r: Ker, *Catalogue*, no. 292; J. J. G. Alexander, *Insular Manuscripts 6th to the 9th Century* (London, 1978), cat. 54. On the character of the gloss, the implication of the colophons, and the location see *The Gospel according to St John in Anglo-Saxon and Northumbrian Versions*, ed. W. W. Skeat (Cambridge, 1878), pp. xi-xv; A. S. C. Ross, 'Lindisfarne and Rushworth One', *NQ* 224 (1979), 194-8; 'The Use of Other Latin Manuscripts by the Glossators of the Lindisfarne and Rushworth Gospels', *NQ* 226 (1981), 6-11; A. Breeze, 'The Provenance of the Rushworth Mercian Gloss', *NQ* 241 (1996), 394-5; and R. Coates, 'The Scriptorium of the Mercian Rushworth Gloss: A Bilingual Perspective', *NQ* 244 (1997), 453-8. I am grateful to Eric Stanley for advice in relation to this text.

²⁰ BNF lat. 9389, fol. 222v (no. 2): E. A. Lowe, *Codices Latini Antiquiores*, 11 vols. plus *Supplement* with 2nd ed. of vol. II (Oxford, 1934-72) [henceforth *CLA*], V, no. 578; Alexander, *Insular Manuscripts*, cat. 11; F. Avril and P. Stirnemann, *Manuscrits enluminés d'origine insulaire* (Paris, 1987), no. 1. The Serbandos colophon in *Codex Amiatinus* (no. 3) is another candidate – albeit a less clear-cut case.

²¹ SCL 150, fol. 138r; BL Harley 863, fol. 98v.

²² BL Royal 15 C. xi (no. 39): R. M. Thomson, 'British Library Royal 15 C. xi: A Manuscript of Plautus' Plays from Salisbury Cathedral (c. 1100)', *Scriptorium* 40 (1986), 82-7, esp. 86; T. Webber, *Scribes and Scholars at Salisbury Cathedral c. 1075-c.1125* (Oxford, 1992), p. 146 with n. 22.

²³ BL Cott. Vit. E. xviii, fol. 16r (no. 35): Ker, *Catalogue*, no. 224; P. Pulsiano, 'The Prefatory Matter of London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius E. xviii', *Anglo-Saxon*

circumstance that the colophon appears as part of one particular tract (itself duplicating a text which appears earlier in the volume) which indicates that it was taken over from the exemplar.²⁴ Sadly, delightful though the colophon in Bald's Leechbook is, its position (attached to the end of Book II, immediately before the content-list for Book III) must cast doubt on whether this very manuscript was indeed written by Cild for Bald and so dear to the latter.²⁵

Obviously, much graver doubts surround a text which is garbled in some way. The lapses and the apparent lacuna in the letter by a certain Burginda which is subjoined to an eighth-century Aponius make it unlikely that this was that woman's own work;²⁶ the corrupt form of much of the acrostic added to a copy of Felix's *Vita Sancti Guthlaci* makes one hope that it was not Eadwaldus who 'sketched' this version.²⁷ But the prize for the colophon which is least likely to have been composed by the scribe whose version of it has come down to us surely goes to that of the Winchester Bede: it is attached to the end of one item within the volume as a whole; a word or phrase has seemingly been left out; the scribe changed his mind about the spelling of the personal name; he also altered the final clause from 'May this be thus here for ever' to 'May this be thus here for the moment'; and immediately after this text he copied a blessing in garbled Irish.²⁸

Manuscripts and their Heritage, ed. P. Pulsiano and E. M. Treharne (Aldershot, 1998), 85-116, esp. 97-103.

²⁴ BodL. Junius 121, fol. 101r (no. 36): Ker, *Catalogue*, no. 338. Cf. BL Cott. Tib. B. v (no. 31).

²⁵ BL Royal 12 D. xvii, fol. 109r (no. 12): Ker, *Catalogue*, no. 264; facsimile in *Bald's Leechbook*, ed. C. E. Wright, EEMF 5 (Copenhagen, 1955), with discussion of the colophon at 13-14.

²⁶ Boulogne, BM, 74, fol. 61r: CLA VI, no. 738; P. Sims-Williams, *Religion and Literature in Western England 600-800*, CSASE 3 (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 212-19.

²⁷ CCC 307: M. R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1909-12), II, pp. 105-7, where the text is transcribed. The beginning has been illustrated by C. de Hamel, *The Parker Library* (Cambridge, 2000), pl. 37. For comment on the script see D. N. Dumville, 'English Square Minuscule Script: the background and earliest phases', *ASE* 16 (1987), 147-79 at 166-7.

²⁸ Winchester, Cathedral Library, 1 + BL Cott. Tib. D. iv (ii), fols. 158-66 (no. 23): Ker, *Catalogue*, no. 396; N. R. Ker and A. J. Piper, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries*, 4 vols. (Oxford, 1969-92), IV, pp. 578-9; *Venerabilis Baedae Opera Historica*, ed. C. Plummer, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1896), I, pp. cix-cxi (Irish blessing transcribed and discussed).

The catchy final clause in this last example, ‘sic sit hoc hic in aeternum/interim’ – which was probably recommended more by its sound than its lucidity – raises a further issue: does the same text feature in another book? This particular phrase reappears at a slightly later date in a copy of the Old English Gospels (pl. 6).²⁹ The lament, ‘Three fingers write but the whole body labours’ is, of course, widespread and well known; but, even if it were not, we could be sure that it was not invented by the scribe of a late tenth-century copy of Aldhelm,³⁰ because a similar phrase appears three centuries earlier in a southern English Pseudo-Isidore and Gregory (pl. 3a).³¹

Yet having made this long list of tests to apply – and it could easily be lengthened – and having seen that many examples fail in one way or another, I should stress that the point of such an exercise is not to eliminate the material but rather to evaluate it. One should try to distinguish between, on the one hand, the notes whose whole content applies to the very manuscript in which they occur, and, on the other, those which were devised for an earlier copy of the text or were part of a general scribal *koine*; nevertheless, they are all part of our subject. We know that the scribe of British Library Royal 6 A.vi did not invent the phrase ‘Three fingers write and the whole body labours; he who does not know how to write, thinks it no labour’, but he may still have believed it – especially after having copied Aldhelm’s *De uirginitate*!

A few colophons may have been transcribed essentially ‘passively’, as part and parcel of the primary text. The stichometric notes after the last psalms in the Salisbury and Exeter Psalters,³² for instance, are highly unlikely to have been included either to

²⁹ CCCC 140, fol. 45v (no. 27); Ker, *Catalogue*, no. 35; *The Old English Version of the Gospels*, ed. R. M. Liuzza, 2 vols., EETS 304 and 314 (Oxford, 1994-2000), I, pp. xxv-xxxiii. Seemingly exemplifying the text-critic’s axiom *lectio difficilior stet*, it is the reading *interim* which appears here – although paradoxically the colophon goes on to beg eternal blessings for the scribe.

³⁰ BL Royal 6 A. vi, fols. 5-109 at 109r (no. 20).

³¹ BNF lat. 9561, fol. 81v (no. 5); CLA V, no. 590; Avril and Stirnemann, *Manuscripts enluminés*, no. 5; R. G. Gameson, ‘The Earliest Books of Christian Kent’, *St Augustine and the Conversion of England*, ed. R. G. Gameson (Stroud, 1999), 313-73 at 360-1.

³² See n. 21, above.

calculate payment for the scribe or even as proof of the integrity of the text: they were doubtless part of the corresponding rubric in the exemplars, and the Anglo-Saxon copyists in question saw no reason to discard them. In general, however, it seems reasonable to presume that the repetition of a colophon was a more positive process. The verses copied at the end of the Salisbury Plautus were worth preserving both for their own merits and because they artfully alluded to the irremediable deficiencies of the (ultimate) exemplar.³³ The note in the Echternach Gospels – ‘I emended it as best I could [in 558], following the codex from the library of Eugippius the priest which, they say, belonged to St Jerome’ – was an invaluable testimony to the authority of this particular recension (pl. 1).³⁴ Recording that a Latin gospel-text could be traced back to Jerome was the equivalent of tracking the lineage of a Greek bible-text to Origen (as happened for a couple of books within *Codex Sinaiticus*).³⁵ Correspondingly, the belief that a particular text had been transcribed by a holy man was a supreme recommendation of its authority which it was of the utmost importance to transmit – although when this was a record of venerable penmanship and when it was instead pious fraud is now unknowable. Was Columba indeed responsible for the exemplar of the Book of Durrow,³⁶ or did someone decide (doubtless for the best possible motives) to bolster the importance of a copy of the gospels, effectively making the manuscript a relic in its own right, by trying to associate it directly

³³ BL Royal 15 C. xi (no. 39). For comment on the text of this copy see *The Captivi of Plautus*, ed. W. M. Lindsay (Oxford, 1900), p. 6, and Thomson, ‘Manuscript of Plautus’ Plays’, pp. 86-7.

³⁴ See n. 20, above. The text is collated in *Nouum Testamentum Latine: Quattuor Euangelia*, ed. J. Wordsworth and H. J. White, as ‘Ep’; and by B. Fischer, *Die lateinischen Evangelien bis zum 10. Jahrhundert*, 4 vols. (Freiburg, 1988-91), as ‘Ge’. Its similarity to DCL A. II. 16 as far as fol. 24 was pointed out by C. D. Verey, ‘Lindisfarne or Rath Maelsigi? The Evidence of the Texts’, *Northumbria’s Golden Age*, ed. J. Hawkes and S. Mills (Stroud, 1999), 327-35.

³⁵ BL Add. 43725 + Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, gr. 1 (notes at the end of Ezra and Esther): ‘Collated with an exceedingly ancient copy which was [itself] corrected by the hand of the holy martyr, Pamphilos; and at the end of the same ancient book was a note in the autograph of the same martyr to the effect “Copied and corrected against the Hexapla of Origen. Antonius collated; Pamphilos corrected”’.

³⁶ TCD 57, fol. 247v. Facsimile: *Evangeliorum Quattuor Codex Durmachensis*, ed. A. A. Luce, L. Bieler and P. Meyer, 2 vols. (Olten, 1960); colophon page repr. in colour by B. Meehan, *The Book of Durrow* (Dublin, 1996), p. 78.

with the saint? The circumstance that at least one eighth-century Kentish volume was, by the late Middle Ages, included among the books believed to have been sent to Augustine by Pope Gregory,³⁷ and the number of volumes to which inscriptions like *De manu Bedae* were subsequently and improbably added,³⁸ attest to the human urge to associate artefacts with the good, the great and the holy.

The very absence of saintly figures from the colophons of the Lindisfarne Gospels adds to their credibility despite their very late date. Be that as it may, a crucial (and incontestable) function of these records – one which is often neglected – was to immortalise and gain spiritual benefits for Aldred, the ‘unworthy and most miserable’ tenth-century glossator, himself: associating his own work with the original writing and binding of this magnificent volume, done by Bishops Eadfrith and Æthilwald – not forgetting Billfrith the anchorite – for God, St Cuthbert and all the saints whose relics were on Holy Island, was a very effective way of achieving this. These circumstances in turn lend support to the historical details which Aldred supplied (at the very least we can be reasonably certain that he believed them): the unworthy glossator is very unlikely to have tried to pull the wool over divine eyes when he was seeking blessings for himself. Moreover, even if collectively a community might have strong reasons to want its books to have been written by holy men or great scholars, individually scribes would have been inclined to preserve the hopes, prayers and (if applicable) names of people like themselves. In fact, this philosophy is made explicit in another early English colophon. The collection of ecclesiastical institutes, homilies and penitential texts written at Worcester in St Wulfstan’s day includes the following note: ‘Wulfgeat, scribe of Worcester, wrote me. Pray, I beseech, to the creator of the universe for his faults. Amen.

³⁷ BL Cott. Vesp. A. i.

³⁸ For example, TCC B. 10. 5 + BL Cott. Vit. C. viii, fols. 86-90: R. A. B. Mynors, *Durham Cathedral Manuscripts to the End of the Twelfth Century* (Oxford, 1939), no. 8. The phenomenon continues: written on the flyleaf of my copy of *Codex Vaticanus Graecus*, ed. P. Canart and C. M. Martini (Vatican City, 1965), bought second-hand in Worcester in 1990, is the claim that Donald Coggan had received it from Pope Paul VI!

And may he who has transcribed me be happy for ever.’³⁹ This is almost the early medieval equivalent of a chain letter, and, appropriately, the version which has come down to us was almost certainly copied from its exemplar.

If we take the colophons in early English manuscripts as a whole, the first point to make is how few of them – comparatively speaking – there are. I am aware of just over forty books up to the early twelfth century which bear scribal colophons (a handful have more than one). While a few examples have doubtless escaped me, and although some manuscripts may have lost the pages which once bore such notes, the total is unlikely ever to have amounted to more than about five per cent of the material; it is certainly less than that now. Our basic corpus is a small one. The volumes in question were always the exception, not the rule.

Consideration of the type of books which bear colophons is not particularly revealing. They appear (in very small quantities) in any and every sort of text – liturgical, para-liturgical, and ‘library’ books; works in Latin and Old English; the writings of Classical, Patristic, and Insular authors, as well as *uerba sacra*. The corpus is too small and the losses too great and uneven for statistics to be meaningful, except perhaps in relation to the preponderance of gospel-books. These comprise nearly a third of our sample (e.g., pls. 1, 2, 6 and 7a). The survival rate of gospel-books is, of course, higher than that of many other classes of material; nonetheless, it is unlikely to be accidental that the most sacred text – hence the most efficacious as a channel for spiritual blessings – should have been favoured in this respect. Also notable – although its significance is debatable – is the fact that four examples (just under a tenth of the total) are associated with new additions to older books.⁴⁰ As these all date from the tenth century, one might claim that they reflect a phase in English bibliographical history when the garnering of pre-existing resources was particularly important. If such seems additionally plausible when one considers that they represent over a quarter of our tenth-century material, conversely the fact that two of the four were done by Aldred of Chester-le-Street raises the

³⁹ BodL. Junius 121, fol. 101r (no. 36).

⁴⁰ DCL A. IV. 19; BL Add. 40618; Cott. Nero D. iv; BodL. Auct. D. 2. 19 (nos. 15, 10, 14, 16).

possibility that the sample was grossly inflated by one man who liked writing his name in books.

The chronological spread of the colophons largely mirrors the ebb and flow of English manuscript production (and survival) as a whole: exiguous in the seventh century, rising in the eighth, falling dramatically in the ninth, rising again in the tenth (especially its second half) and then remaining stable in the eleventh century – predictably, half of our examples appear in manuscripts produced in the century before the Norman conquest. At no point in the Anglo-Saxon period were colophons noticeably more – or less – popular than at others. The only time-band which departs from this pattern is the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, when the number of extant manuscripts being copied rises dramatically but the quantity of colophons decreases. A new fact can henceforth be deployed to invigorate the tired debate about the effects of the Norman conquest – it stifled colophons. Now, this seemingly had more to do with the circumstances in English scriptoria after 1066 than with the Normans themselves, since colophons were at least as popular in the Duchy as they had been in Anglo-Saxon England. Indeed, a couple of the Norman books imported into England in the wake of the Conquest bear elaborate examples of the genre.⁴¹ Similarly, no fewer than twelve of the manuscripts written at Mont Saint-Michel before about 1100 have scribal subscriptions, one of which, moreover, immortalises the work of the Scollandus who subsequently became abbot of Saint Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury.⁴² Yet whatever customs he may have transplanted from the community of St Michael to that of St Augustine, the habit of including colophons in books was not among them.

The geographical distribution and density of early English colophons is likewise fairly predictable, echoing the distribution and density of the surviving manuscripts as a whole. Canterbury and Winchester are the best represented centres (with five or more

⁴¹ DCL B. II. 13 (Robert Benjamin): Mynors, *Durham Cathedral Manuscripts*, no. 31, pl. 20. Cf. B. II. 14 (*ibid.*, no. 32). BodL. Bodley 717 (Hugo Pictor): R. G. Gameson, 'Hugo Pictor: enlumineur normand', *CCM* 44 (2001), 121-38.

⁴² See J. J. G. Alexander, *Norman Illumination at Mont St-Michel 966-1100* (Oxford, 1970), pp. 216-31; M.-C. Garand, G. Grand and D. Muzerelle, *Catalogue des manuscrits en écriture latine...VII: Ouest de la France et Pays de Loire*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1984). Scollandus is one of six scribes named in Avranches, BM, 103, fol. 220v.

examples apiece – although in the case of the latter these are distributed among the three houses there), followed by Worcester (with three). Then come Bath, Chester-le-Street, and Wearmouth-Jarrow (with a couple each); and finally Exeter, Malmesbury, Rochester and Salisbury, as well as possibly Lichfield and Lindisfarne (each with a lone example to its credit). The circumstance that a disproportionately high percentage of our manuscripts is of known as opposed to unknown origin is not surprising, given that some of the colophons themselves provide evidence of origin. One of the scribes of an Old English Gospel Book, for instance, noted helpfully, ‘I, Ælfric, wrote this book in the monastery of Bath’ (pl. 6). The centre with the largest number of examples (at least seven) is Christ Church, Canterbury; but, given its relatively high number of attributable manuscripts and the diachronistic spread of those with colophons, it is debatable whether this is of particular significance. More remarkable is the effective absence of examples from the fairly numerous books of its near neighbour, Saint Augustine’s Abbey; and altogether more noteworthy is the instance attesting writing in a location which would not otherwise be associated with scribal activity – Oakley to the south of Woodyates (between Salisbury and Blandford).⁴³

Let us now turn to the form of the colophons – in particular their length, language, and whether or not they include a name. Most of our examples are fairly brief, the shortest being the two-word *Deo gratias* and *Finit amen*⁴⁴ followed by the three-word *Deo gratias amen* (pl. 7a), ‘John wrote me’, ‘Pray for Wigbald’ (pl. 2), and ‘Wulfwi wrote me’.⁴⁵ If we (fairly arbitrarily) define a long colophon as one which (like the present sentence) has more than fifty words, then only four members of our corpus qualify – those of the Durham Gospel fragment, the Lindisfarne Gospels, the Benedictional of St Æthelwold, and the Old English Bede, all obviously atypical even within a field notable for its flexibility.

⁴³ DCL A. IV. 19 (no. 15).

⁴⁴ Boulogne, BM, 10; Hereford, Cathedral Library, P. I. 2; Florence, Biblioteca Medicea-Laurenziana, Amiatino 1 (nos. 11, 8, 3). I have not attempted to provide a full listing of manuscripts with these phrases (cf., e.g., no. 32).

⁴⁵ Reims, BM, 9; BAV Barb. lat. 570; BodL. Bodley 311; BL Cott. Otho C. 1 (i) (nos. 33, 7, 21, 28).

The first offers a Greek text of the Lord's Prayer in Latin characters. The second meditates on the inspired nature of the gospel-text itself, immortalises the work of the original manufacturers of the Lindisfarne Gospels and their motives, and then waxes lyrical about the activities and desires of the tenth-century glossator. The verses in the Benedictional are largely devoted to celebrating the virtues of the book's patron, Æthelwold, his vigorous orthodoxy and his strenuous care for his 'fleecy lambs', and they clearly belong to the genre of dedication-inscription which thrived in Carolingian and Ottonian milieu. Yet, like some of their Continental relatives, they also immortalise the name – and hopes – of the scribe and thus qualify for inclusion here. The poem in the Old English *Historia ecclesiastica* directly follows (and echoes) Bede's own invocation for salvation, and it is a moot point to whom among the author, translator, and scribe it refers.⁴⁶

The vast majority of the texts, more than three quarters indeed, is (as one would expect) written in Latin. Only eight and a half are in Old English, all but one of them, unsurprisingly, associated with vernacular texts – the Gospels, Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica*, Ælfric's version of Bede's *De temporibus*, medical material, continuous gospel-glosses, and a short treatise on cryptic writing. The exception is Aldred's main colophon in the Durham Collectar, which specifically relates to a group of Latin collects. Did the scribe of Chester-le-Street express himself more readily in the vernacular? (He used Latin as well as Old English in the colophons of the Lindisfarne Gospels and in the subsidiary one of the Durham Collectar.) Did he think that he would be more easily understood in Old English than in Latin? (If so, he evidently had the human rather than the divine reader at the forefront of his mind.) In one case the situation is reversed – the colophon in another copy of the Old English Gospels is in Latin (pl. 6)⁴⁷ – while Farmon's envoi

⁴⁶ See F. C. Robinson, 'Old English Literature in its most immediate context', *Old English Literature in Context: Ten Essays*, ed. J. D. Niles (Cambridge, 1980), 11-29 and 157-61; and M. O. Budny, *Insular, Anglo-Saxon and Early Anglo-Norman Manuscript Art at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge: an Illustrated Catalogue*, 2 vols. (Kalamazoo, 1997), I, p. 506.

⁴⁷ CCCC 140 (no. 27).

to his gloss in the Mac Regol Gospels is partly in Old English, partly in Latin.⁴⁸ The end of Saint Matthew in a now-fragmentary seventh-century gospel-book is marked by a Greek text of the *Pater Noster* in Latin script,⁴⁹ while a couple of high-status, early eighth-century volumes (*Codex Amiatinus* and a closely related gospel-book) have a colophon in Greek.⁵⁰ Whether or not the prayers in question were taken from Italian or Italo-Byzantine exemplars, the fact that both were written at Wearmouth-Jarrow in the early eighth century is consonant with our picture of that centre in Bede's day as cosmopolitan and erudite.⁵¹

Many of the texts are in prose. The verse-forms used for the others are characterised more by variety than by consistency. Unquestionably the most skilful are the artfully arcane hexameters used in the Benedictional of Æthelwold and the punning Plautian ones at the end of the Salisbury Plautus.⁵² The vernacular colophon in the Old English Bede is competent but unremarkable;⁵³ the Latin one in the Eadwig Gospels (if verse it be) is remarkable but incompetent.⁵⁴ The longer colophon in the Mac Regol Gospels – which is wholly in Old English – is part prose, part verse, the shift in form coinciding exactly (be it by accident or design) with a

⁴⁸ BodL. Auct. D. 2. 19, fol. 50v (no. 16). While one might hypothesise that Farmon chose Old English as the logical way to express how he had glossed the book but felt that Latin was the more appropriate language in which to address the Deity, this is merely speculation.

⁴⁹ DCL A. II. 10 (no. 1).

⁵⁰ Florence, Biblioteca Medicea-Laurenziana, Amiatino 1, fol. 87v; Utrecht, Universiteitsbibliotheek, 32, fols. 94-105 at 101v (nos. 3, 4) – R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, *The Art of the Codex Amiatinus*, Jarrow Lecture (Jarrow, 1967), pls. VIII(2) and XX. I am very grateful to Richard Marsden for the loan of a microfilm of *Codex Amiatinus*.

⁵¹ Material for knowledge of Greek in the British Isles as a whole prior to the ninth century has been presented by D. Howlett, 'Hellenic Learning in Insular Latin: an essay on supported claims', *Peritia* 12 (1998), 54-78. Greek characters also appear in the subsidiary colophon of DCL A. IV. 19 (no. 15).

⁵² BL Add. 49598 (no. 17): for brief comment see Lapidge, *Anglo-Latin Literature 900-1066*, p. 124 (one might contrast the rather more laboured ones at the end of a copy of Bede's verse Life of St Cuthbert (BL Harley 1117, fol. 62v), which commemorate the commission of an Abbot Wigbert). BL Royal 15 C. xi (no. 39).

⁵³ CCCC 41 (no. 26). See n. 46, above.

⁵⁴ Hannover, Kestner Museum, WM XXIa 36 (no. 29). Its metrical character has been set out by D. N. Dumville, *English Caroline Script and Monastic History* (Woodbridge, 1993), p. 121. Cf. Aldred's hexameters in BL Cott. Nero D. iv (no. 14).

change in page.⁵⁵ The Latin inscription in a dialectical collection and most of that in the Paris Psalter are heptasyllabic.⁵⁶ The remaining pair of Latin verses – one in vigorous rhyming couplets, the other characterised by little metre but strong internal rhyme –, though charming in their way, invite comparison with the genre of greeting-card poetry.⁵⁷

Just under two thirds of our examples include a name which is, may be, or purports to be, that of the scribe. A few of the remaining third do still refer to a scribe, but anonymously: ‘I wrote...’, ‘pray for the scribe...’ and so on. In certain scriptoria at particular times (for example, that of Saint-Bertin around the millennium) there seems to have been a culture of ‘signing’ manuscripts; but such was never the case in England. What led to the inclusion of a name in one early English instance but not in another is now largely unknowable and need not detain us for the moment. It should, however, be noted that since some of the names which are included may have been taken over from an exemplar, while a couple could be those of someone other than the copyist, the number of our scribes who named themselves is unlikely to amount to more than 50% of our small sample. The quantity of early English scribes as a whole who did so is tiny, certainly less than 1%.

A handful of subscriptions record their writer’s status. Thus we learn that Raegenbold and Farmon were priests, Edward a deacon, Godeman, Eadwig Basan and Ælfsige monks, Aldred (eventually) a provost. Others just offer a single name – Iohannes, Sistan, Wulfwi – or qualify it with a byname or patronym: Wulfwine Cada, Edilbericht son of Berictfrid (pl. 3b). The lack of a specific clerical designation need not imply that these men were not ecclesiastics: on the contrary, most – possibly all – of them very probably were. The Ælfric who contributed to an Old English Gospel Book⁵⁸ says nothing specifically about his status, but the fact that he worked ‘in the monastery of Bath’ for a Prior makes it likely that that he was a monk (pl. 6). A couple of laymen may lurk in our

⁵⁵ BodL. Auct. D. 2. 19, fols. 168v-9r (no. 16).

⁵⁶ CCCC 206; BNF lat. 8824 (nos. 13, 32).

⁵⁷ CCCC 448 (supplement); TCC B. 3. 32 (nos. 24, 40).

⁵⁸ CCCC 140 (no. 27).

corpus (there is a reasonable chance that Wulfgeat of Worcester was a ‘paid professional’ at least) but, if so, none saw fit to declare the fact.⁵⁹ The most remarkable revelation is that offered by the scribe of Bodley 451, who, though remaining anonymous, identified herself as a *scriptrix*.⁶⁰

Very few of our colophons provide (auto)biographical information about their ‘signatories’ – Aldred of Chester-le-Street is the outstanding exception in this respect – however, armed with a name, we can occasionally pursue a scribe a little further in the documentary record. Eadfrith and Æthilwald, the men identified as the scribe and the binder of the Lindisfarne Gospels, both became bishop of Lindisfarne, while its glossator, the loquacious Aldred (who tells us that he was known as Aldred son of Alfred, adding modestly that he was the outstanding son of a good woman), climbed the career-ladder from priest to provost between this and his work in the Durham Collectar.⁶¹ Godeman of Winchester may subsequently have become abbot of Thorney;⁶² Wulfgeat *scriptor* of Worcester could be identical with the beneficiary of a charter issued by Ealdred, bishop of Worcester, in 1051x1055;⁶³ and the Wulfwinus *cognomento Cada* who ‘signed’ the Paris Psalter may be the same as the *Wulfwinus scriptor frater noster* whose obit

⁵⁹ Cf. BNF lat. 8658A (s. ix), fol. 128 (*Colophons*, no. 16356): ‘Ragambertus quamuis indignus laicus barbatus hunc codicem scripsit’; however, *Manuscripts datés III*, I, p. 727 points out that nothing proves this to have been the scribe of the manuscript. (I have not myself seen this manuscript.) For a survey of the exiguous evidence for early ‘professional’ scribes in England see M. Gullick, ‘Professional Scribes in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century England’, *English Manuscript Studies* 7 (1998), 1-24 (Wulfgeat is treated on p. 6).

⁶⁰ See further P. Robinson, ‘A Twelfth-Century *Scriptrix* from Nunnaminster’, *Of the Making of Books: Medieval Manuscripts, their Scribes and Readers: Essays presented to M. B. Parkes*, ed. P. R. Robinson and R. Zim (Aldershot, 1997), 73-93.

⁶¹ BL Cott. Nero D. iv (no. 14); DCL A. IV. 19, fol. 84r (no. 15): *The Durham Ritual*, ed. T. J. Brown *et al.*, EEMF 16 (Copenhagen, 1969), esp. pp. 23-9. Beside the line, ‘And Aldred unworthy and most miserable priest’ in the Lindisfarne Gospels, Aldred wrote, ‘ælfredi natus aldredus uocor : bonae mulieris filius eximius loquor’, then glossing ‘bonae mulieris’ with ‘id est tilw’.

⁶² BL Add. 49598 (no. 17). D. Knowles, C. N. L. Brooke and V. London, *The Heads of Religious Houses, England and Wales 940-1216* (Cambridge, 1972), p. 74.

⁶³ BodL. Junius 121 (no. 36). P. Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters: an Annotated List and Bibliography* (London, 1968), no. 1409; *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, ed. A. J. Robertson, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 1956), no. 111.

appears on 30 September in the Martyrology and Obit Book of St Augustine's Abbey.⁶⁴ The Theodricus immortalised in an early twelfth-century Christ Church volume (pl. 7b)⁶⁵ is likely – whatever the status of this problematic note – to be identifiable with one or more of the Theoderici with which that house seems to have been awash then: in 1104-6 Anselm addressed a couple of letters to a Thidricus who was evidently copying his works and may have been based there; a Theodericus attested a charter of Ralph d'Escures in 1115x1122; a pen-trial at the end of a Canterbury copy of Anselm's letters dating from after 1122 says 'The other things were written by the hand of the humble Thidricus'; and a Priscian and a volume of poetry associated with a Thodoricus are listed in the fragmentary, late twelfth-century Christ Church library-catalogue.⁶⁶ Whatever the truth of these matters individually, as a whole such cases remind us that being a scribe was generally only one part of a portfolio of activities.

Turning now to the content of the colophons, we find that very few are simply a record of writing – *Iohannes me scripsit, Wulfwi me wrat*.⁶⁷ More commonly, they praise God and solicit blessings for the scribe – themes which we shall explore later. Occasionally, there is flattery of the patron, an expression of concern for the fate of the work, or even some comment on the text or the task of writing itself. Thus Aldred's colophon to the Lindisfarne Gospels – admittedly an extreme example – begins with a declaration of the divinely established, eternal nature of the text and the spiritually inspired work of the four evangelists;⁶⁸ and a copy of Augustine's *Enchiridion* finishes with an etymological

⁶⁴ BNF lat. 8824 (no. 32). See R. Emms, 'The Scribe of the Paris Psalter', *ASE* 28 (1999), 179-83.

⁶⁵ TCC B. 3. 32. The relation of the colophon – and above all the name therein – to the main body of the book is uncertain: see the discussion under no. 40.

⁶⁶ *Sancti Anselmi Opera Omnia*, ed. F. S. Schmitt, 6 vols. (Edinburgh, 1946-61), V, epp. 334 and 379 (pp. 270 and 322-3). J. Greatrix, *Biographical Register of the English Cathedrals of the Province of Canterbury c. 1066-1540* (Oxford, 1997), p. 302. London, Lambeth Palace Library, 59, fol. 190r/i/9: 'Que restant modici sunt scripta manu Thiderici'. M. R. James, *The Ancient Libraries of Canterbury and Dover* (Cambridge, 1903), List Ia, items 3 (p. 7), 'Priscianus magnus Theodorici in asseribus', and 4 (p. 13), 'Versus Theodorici'. Cf. List II (Henry of Eastrey), item 105 (pp. 28-9).

⁶⁷ BodL. Bodley 311; BL Cotton Otho C. 1 (nos. 21, 28).

⁶⁸ BL Cott. Nero D. iv (no. 14).

definition ('It is said to be an "inch" (*enchy*) because it can be contained in the hand').⁶⁹ The colophon to a tenth-century copy of Boethius' *Opuscula sacra* and Alcuin's *De dialectica* stands out as one of only two light-hearted examples in our corpus. It cheerily declares: 'Every scribe who writes has fun, as writing scribes are happy ones'.⁷⁰ (Even though tastes change, it is difficult to believe that someone transcribing this material was having a riotous time!) Conversely, it is in an English manuscript that we find one of the earliest, if not indeed *the* earliest version of the famous scribal lament, 'He who does not know how to write does not think it is a labour. Writing is done with three fingers but the whole body labours' (pl. 3a).⁷¹ Equally, our material includes an early (eighth-century) witness to the celebrated expression of relief, 'Just as the port is welcome to sailors, so is the final verse to scribes' (pl. 3b).⁷²

The scribe of a florilegium humbly begged 'the wise reader that he should kindly deign to correct this', explaining, 'scarcely was the scribe able to write this thus, because he was not able to get his hands on a reliable exemplar'.⁷³ A similar warning, altogether more artfully expressed, appears at the end of the Plautus made at Salisbury in the early twelfth century, and this was itself probably taken from the exemplar.⁷⁴ Such pleas – I was doing my best: don't

⁶⁹ Cambridge, Pembroke College, 41 (no. 25). At the end of the work Augustine himself observes, 'You can yourself decide whether you need call it a manual or keep it for one'; and in his *Retractationes*, II, 63, he noted, 'I wrote also a book concerning faith hope and charity, its recipient having asked me for a little work of mine that should be always in his hands – the kind of work the Greeks call an *enchiridion*'.

⁷⁰ CCCC 206 (no. 13). The manuscript is difficult to date; however, if the suggestion of x^{med-2} be correct, then the colophon makes irresistible the further speculation that it was the product of one of the communities of clerics which so worried the monastic reformers! The other 'light-hearted' colophon is that of the Salisbury Plautus (no. 39).

⁷¹ BNF lat. 9561 (no. 5).

⁷² BAV Pal. lat. 68 (no. 6). The version of the 'tag' herein (*Sicut portus oportunitus nauigantibus ...*) is less common than forms beginning *Sicut nauigantibus*. The more fulsome and eloquent Alcuinian expression of the same idea appears in CCCC 326 (no. 19).

⁷³ CCCC 448 (supplement) (no. 24). The text preceding the colophon is an account of the seven wonders of the world.

⁷⁴ BL Royal 15 C. xi (III) (no. 39). The scribe of BBR, II, 1015 (Cat. 1208) (xii^{med}; Saint-Martin, Tournai) warned, 'Huius lectorem certum uolo corporis esse / Propositi tantum finem sermonis abesse' ('I wish the reader of this corpus to be clear that a large quantity of the end of the present sermon is missing'). Some early colophons (though none of our

blame me – are the scribal counterparts and ripostes to the various monitions which some authors subjoined to their texts. By the time when Ælfric exhorted scribes of his *Sermones Catholici* to correct their work against the exemplar since they would be held accountable for errors at the Day of Judgment,⁷⁵ the practice was already very old. Irenaeus of Lyon († c. 200), for instance, concluded one of his treatises with the well-conceived invocation (reported with admiration by Eusebius): ‘I adjure you who shall copy out this book, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by his glorious advent when he comes to judge the living and the dead, that you compare what you transcribe and correct it carefully against this manuscript from which you copy’, cunningly adding, ‘and also that you transcribe this adjuration and insert it in the copy’.⁷⁶ But the most stirring example – one which must indeed have made the scribe’s pen tremble in the inkpot – occurs (inevitably) at the end of the Apocalypse (22: 18-19): ‘If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the Book of Life ...’. Scribes had good reason, then, to record when their exemplar was at fault.

A handful of colophons preserves snippets of information about the making of the manuscript (or its exemplar). Outstanding in this respect is Aldred’s long note in the Lindisfarne Gospels, which records that three craftsmen participated in the original phase of work, specifying what each did: Eadfrith wrote the volume, Æthilwald bound it, and Billfrith furnished some sort of treasure cover. The hexameters in the Benedictional of Æthelwold indicate that the bishop of Winchester had carefully defined the details of the book which he wanted Godeman to create: ‘The great Æthelwold ... ordered a certain monk subject to him to write the present book ... He commanded also to be made in this book many

English ones) make allusion to the fallibility of the scribe – ‘I wrote as I was able, not as I wanted’.

⁷⁵ Ælfric’s *Catholic Homilies: The First Series*, Preface, ed. P. Clemoes, EETS ss 17 (Oxford, 1997), p. 177; *The Second Series*, ed. M. Godden, EETS ss 5 (Oxford, 1979), p.

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⁷⁶ Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica*, V, 20.

frames well-adorned and filled with various figures decorated with numerous beautiful colours and with gold'. The book which he received certainly corresponded to his specifications. Aldred's colophon in the Durham Collectar, which notes that he was working 'at Oakley to the south of Woodyates ... before Tierce, for Ælfsige the bishop, in his tent', provides a vivid corrective to the assumption that scribal work was done in a fixed environment. How many other texts or volumes, one wonders, were copied far from home?⁷⁷ If this reveals the movement of scribes, and other notes allude to the circulation of exemplars, Bald's desperate wish that no one steal his little book attests to the illegitimate movement of volumes – a reality documented in other sources.⁷⁸

Where the testimonial of colophons comes into its own is in shedding light on scribal motivation. I noted above that a good number of our examples (as of early medieval ones in general) articulate hopes and prayers. Occasionally, scribes seem to have sought a blessing on the work which they were then doing: χb (*Christe benedic*) was, following an Irish custom, inscribed at the head of numerous pages in a computistical collection,⁷⁹ while, following an Italian one, 'χρε faue' was written at the start of Matthew's Gospel in *Codex Amiatinus*.⁸⁰ Similarly, Eadfrith of Lindisfarne marked the start of his first gospel with a Xp monogram, plus the words 'Jesus Christ'.⁸¹ The verse petition at the end of an Old English Bede used that work as a springboard for the

⁷⁷ Even, as the colophon in a s. ixⁿ continental *Vitae sanctorum* (BBR 8216-18) attests, while on military campaign: Th. Glorieux-De Gand and A. Kelders, *Formules de copiste: Les Colophons des manuscrits datés* (Bruxelles, 1991), no. 1.

⁷⁸ BL Royal 12 D. xvii (no. 12). Cf., e.g., *The Vita Wulfstani of William of Malmesbury*, ed. R. R. Darlington, Camden Soc. 40 (London, 1928), III, 25 and 26 (pp. 64-5); and *Memorials of Saint Dunstan*, ed. W. Stubbs, RS 171 (London, 1874), no. V (p. 362).

⁷⁹ BodL. Digby 63 (no. 9), fols. 30v, 49v, 50v, 51v (M. Drogin, *Medieval Calligraphy: Its History and Technique* (Montclair, 1980), pl. 4), 52v, 53v, 54v, 55v, 56v, 57v, 58v, 59v, 60v, 61v, 62v, 63v, 64v, 65v, 66v, 67v, 68v, 73v. The device also appears in the final section of BL Royal 15 A. xvi (a s. x³⁴ Anglo-Saxon supplement to a s. ix⁴⁴ volume from northern France).

⁸⁰ Florence, Biblioteca Medicea-Laurenziana, Amiatino 1, fol. 805r (no. 3). See further in general M. Huglo, 'Christe Fave Votis', *Scriptorium* 8 (1954), 108-11.

⁸¹ BL Cott. Nero D. iv, fol. 27r. In Boulogne, BM, 10 (no. 11) thanks are offered to God at the end of the first major rubric, the explicit to the Preface to St Matthew (vol. I, fol. 4v).

next, beseeching everyone ‘who may read this book and take hold of these covers, that he advance with kindly power the scribe who wrote this book with his two hands, so that he might complete many more with his hands according to his lord’s desire’.⁸² Hands were the focus of two further imprecations: while one scribe simply begged, ‘God help my hands’, the related wish appended to a collection of works on Mary was more ambitious – ‘Blessed Virgin preserve the hand of the scribe for ever’ (pl. 8).⁸³ This last plea was presumably meant metaphorically rather than literally (although, given that when Aidan implored that King Oswald’s hand should not perish, that member was precisely what was preserved, one would not wish to be dogmatic on the point!).

Certain appeals focused on or embraced earthly well-being: Ælfsige of New Minster and Eadwig Basan of Canterbury both wanted long-lasting good health.⁸⁴ Some scribes sought both mortal and spiritual good fortune: Ælfric of Bath desired to live in peace both in this world and the next (pl. 6),⁸⁵ while the loquacious Aldred declared that his work in John’s Gospel was ‘so that through the grace of God [he] may gain acceptance into heaven, happiness and peace, and through the merits of St Cuthbert advancement and honour, wisdom and sagacity on earth’.⁸⁶ Others specified eternal benefits alone. The anonymous *scriptrix* of Winchester wanted to remain safe and sound for ever; Theodricus wished God to spare him; and Farmon implored the Lord to ‘set aside all his sins, should he come into the Lord’s presence’.⁸⁷ Godeman went straight to this last point: he wanted to abide in heaven.⁸⁸

Occasionally, heaven was addressed directly – the Greek inscription interwoven into the general incipit of the Wearmouth-

⁸² CCCC 41 (no. 26): see n. 46, above.

⁸³ BL Cott. Tib. B. v (no. 31); TCC B. 14. 30 (no. 37).

⁸⁴ BL Cott. Tit. D. xxvii; Hannover, Kestner Musuem, WM XXIa 36 (nos. 30, 29).

Although *salus* could, of course, imply salvation, nevertheless in the context of the phrase *sit illi longa salus*, which both colophons use, ‘good health’ seems more likely.

⁸⁵ CCCC 140 (no. 27).

⁸⁶ BL Cott. Nero D. iv (no. 14).

⁸⁷ BodL. Bodley 451; TCC B. 3. 32; BodL. Auct. D. 2. 19 (nos. 42, 40, 16).

⁸⁸ BL Add. 49598 (no. 17).

Jarrow Gospels implores, ‘Holy Mary help the scribe’⁸⁹ – ; moreover, one presumes that perusal by the eyes to whom all hearts are open and from whom no secrets are hidden was implicit in every written appeal. More frequently, however, the specific addressee was the human reader. After complaining about the laboriousness of his task, the scribe of the eighth-century Southumbrian Pseudo-Isidore and Gregory continued, ‘Pray for me, whosoever may read this book’ (pl. 3a).⁹⁰ Raegenbold the priest stated that ‘whoever reads [his little book] always prays for him’ (pl. 4); all who looked upon Æthelwold’s Benedictional – presumably a fairly small but very select group – were to ‘pray always’ for Godeman; Ælfric of Bath begged, ‘may he who reads [be] a benefactor [to the scribe] for ever’ (pl. 6); whoever read the book which Sistan had written was to pray for his soul; and ‘whosoever shall read what’ Wulfwine Cada had written was likewise to ‘seek out for his soul a prayer’.⁹¹ In the same vein, the Anglo-Saxon scribe of the supply-leaf at the end of a small-format Irish gospel-book concluded – rather audaciously, one feels, given that he had contributed but a single page – ‘He who may read this prays for the scribe, Edward the Deacon’.⁹² As it was almost invariably any and every reader who was invoked, these scribes were, in effect, seeking human intercessions for ever.

From time to time the reader was implicated more directly in the process. The cryptic envoi at the end of a copy of Bede’s *Vita Sancti Cuthberti* declares, ‘May he who wrote live, and may he who may read, rejoice!’ (pl. 5);⁹³ Owun’s colophon in the Mac Regol Gospels not only instructs the reader to pray for Owun and Farmon but admonishes him ‘to use the written book with good intent and always with true faith’, concluding gnominically, ‘Peace is dearest to

⁸⁹ Utrecht, Universiteitsbibliotheek, 32, fol. 101v (no. 4). See also TCC B. 14. 30 (no. 37).

⁹⁰ BNF lat. 9561 (no. 5).

⁹¹ BodL. Digby 63; BL Add. 49598; CCC 140; BL Royal 8 B. xi; BNF lat. 8824 (nos. 9, 17, 27, 18, 32). It is a nice thought that Wulfwine ought, then, to have been remembered in the prayers of Jean, duc de Berry!

⁹² BL Add. 40618 (no. 10).

⁹³ Copenhagen, KB, GKS 2034 (4^o) (no. 22). BL Royal 5 D. vii, fol. 252v (no. 41), simply wishes the users well, without seeking anything for the scribe: ‘Pax legentibus et audientibus in xpo. Amen’.

everyone'.⁹⁴ Theodricus' inscription gives the reader an extra motive to pray for him since it also begs God to be merciful to the latter should he do so: 'The well-intentioned servant, Master Theodricus, wrote me / For whom, say reader: "Spare him, God, O holy ruler". / And, O God, spare this man who will thus have been mindful of the other' (pl. 7b).⁹⁵ Wulfgeat of Worcester used a similar philosophy to get his colophon re-copied: 'Pray, I beseech, the Creator of the universe for [Wulfgeat's] faults. Amen. And may he who has transcribed me be happy for ever.'⁹⁶ As the extant version is almost certainly a copy, the ploy appears to have worked at least once!⁹⁷ Edilberict (*Æthelberht*) was altogether more generous: 'May whoever should read this, pray for the scribe; he himself likewise desires eternal health for all peoples, tribes and tongues, and for all humankind in Christ' (pl. 3b).⁹⁸

Some colophons are presented in exactly the same script, ink and way as the main text which they accompany. This is the case, for instance, with the early *tres digites* lament in the Pseudo-Isidore and Gregory (written in Uncial: pl. 3a), and the later version of the same text in the Aldhelm (written in Caroline Minuscule).⁹⁹ A couple are very modestly distinguished: *Ora pro Wigbaldo* in the Barberini Gospels is written in the same script but to a smaller gauge than the main text (and much smaller than the enlarged hand of the formal explicit which immediately precedes it) (pl. 2); the note in one Old English Gospel Book, though the same size as the rest of the writing, is differentiated by being a Latin text in Caroline Minuscule within a vernacular volume in Old English Minuscule (pl. 6).¹⁰⁰ Many other colophons, by contrast, are highlighted via

⁹⁴ BodL. Auct. D. 2. 19, fols. 168v-9r (no. 16).

⁹⁵ TCC B. 3. 32 (no. 40).

⁹⁶ BodL. Junius 121, fol. 101r (no. 36).

⁹⁷ The Winchester Bede (no. 23) reminds us that not all scribes were quite as fortunate as Wulfgeat in the later copyists in whose hands their fate rested.

⁹⁸ BAV Pal. lat. 68, fol. 46r (no. 6).

⁹⁹ BNF lat. 9561; BL Royal 6 A. vi (nos. 5, 20). Also the case in, e.g., BL Cott. Nero D. iv; Cott. Otho C. i (I); Cott. Tib. B. v; Cott. Vitellius E. xviii (though encrypted); Royal 15 C. xi; BodL. Auct. D. 2. 19; Junius 121; BNF lat. 8824; BAV Pal. lat. 68; Winchester Cathedral 1 (nos. 14, 28, 31, 35, 39, 16, 36, 32, 6, 23).

¹⁰⁰ BAV Barb. lat. 570 (no. 7). CCCC 140 (no. 27); see also BL Royal 12 D. xvii (no. 12).

distinctions of script-type, presentation or even position. The subscription in Raegenbold's computus, for example, was accorded a more spacious layout, a larger gauge and a more formal script (a hybrid of minuscule and majuscule forms: pl. 4).¹⁰¹ The colophons in *Codex Amiatinus* are (like the explicits and incipits which they accompany) generally written in Rustic Capital, alternately red and black – a presentation echoing that of some late Antique manuscripts.¹⁰² The two invocations *Ora pro me* (one appearing at the incipit to Deuteronomy, the other at the end of the Apocalypse, the final page of the volume as a whole) are additionally distinguished by being set out in the form of a cross.¹⁰³ Other scribes, too, employed their usual display-script for their colophon: both Iohannes of Worcester and the *scriptrix* of Winchester, for instance, used their customary Rustic Capital, while the anonymous scribe of the Boulogne Gospels deployed his idiosyncratic colour-washed monumental ones.¹⁰⁴ Eadwig Basan wrote the last verse of John's Gospel in Rustic Capital, then reverted to his characteristic minuscule for the colophon which follows; however, whereas the former was done in ordinary ink, the latter was written in blue, green and red (in the Canterbury manner) – though simple, the result is eye-catching and elegant.¹⁰⁵

In a different class altogether are the colophonic prayer in the Durham Gospels and the verses in the Benedictional of St Æthelwold. The former is presented within a structure of three interlace-adorned arches which occupies the height of the page. The framework creates a repeating pattern of mighty Roman Capital **Ds** and **Bs**, which might even be perceived to evoke divine blessing – *Domine benedic*. The latter, consonant with its nature as a dedicatory inscription, occupies an opening at the front of the

¹⁰¹ BodL. Digby 63 (no. 9).

¹⁰² See E. A. Lowe, *Palaeographical Papers*, ed. L. Bieler, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1972), I, 251–76 at 272. The verse colophon in CCCC 41, incidentally, is presented in alternating lines of brown/black and red Old English minuscule.

¹⁰³ Fols. 146v and 1029v, the latter being the final page of the book as a whole.

¹⁰⁴ BodL. Bodley 311 (no. 21) (albeit in ordinary ink, not red); BodL. Bodley 451 (no. 42) (written, in addition, over a wavy brown line); Boulogne, BM, 10 (no. 11).

¹⁰⁵ Colour reproduction: H. Härtel, *Handschriften des Kestner-Museums zu Hannover* (Wiesbaden, 1999), pl. IV. Colour-washed capitals were used in Boulogne, BM, 10 and Reims, BM, 9 (nos. 11, 33).

book between the depicted choirs of heaven and the decorated opening for the first blessing; it is written in gold Rustic Capital with an enlarged initial.¹⁰⁶ As with other aspects of Æthelwold's volume, this, too, echoes Carolingian practices. A good parallel for such presentation of a dedicatory poem is provided by the Gospels of Ebo, archbishop of Reims, whose patronage is likewise celebrated at the beginning of his manuscript in a bombastic poem written in golden Rustic Capital.¹⁰⁷

Six of our colophons make use of simple codes wherein vowels are replaced either by dots or by neighbouring consonants (pl. 5).¹⁰⁸ Given how widespread such systems were, how easy it is for even the 'innocent' reader to divine the solution, and given also that a couple of the phrases in question are acclamations – 'Thanks be to God' and 'Live, flourish, happy with Christ' – whose sense there can never have been any intention to conceal,¹⁰⁹ this is more reasonably seen as a conceit which distinguished such notes from the authorial text than as a bid to obscure scribal identity or thoughts. Preparing such word-games (like composing riddles and acrostics) doubtless provided a few moments of welcome and justifiable diversion in an otherwise regimented life. The user was clearly intended to read sentiments like 'May he who wrote, live; and may he who may read, rejoice';¹¹⁰ and the only example whose meaning is genuinely challenging to construe accompanies a text on cryptic writing – hence its greater difficulty.¹¹¹

A couple of volumes contain visual colophons. The decorated incipit to Psalm 1 in the Bury Psalter includes an image of a monastic scribe or artist at work, which was originally surrounded

¹⁰⁶ BL Add. 49598, fols. 4v+5r (no. 17). On its relation to the depicted choirs of heaven see R. Deshman, *The Benedictional of Æthelwold* (Princeton, 1995), pp. 148-9 and 157.

¹⁰⁷ Epemay, Médiathèque, 1, fols. 3r-v: MGH, *Poetae Latini Aevi Carolini* 1, ed.

Dümmler, pp. 623-4. Further on the manuscript see W. Koehler and F. Mutherich, *Die karolingischen Miniaturen, VI: Die Schule von Reims, I, Von den Anfängen bis zur Mitte des 9. Jahrhunderts*, 2 vols. (Berlin, 1994), I, pp. 73-84.

¹⁰⁸ CCCC 326; TCC B. 3. 25; Copenhagen, KB, GKS 2034 (4^b); BL Cott. Tit. D. xxvii; BL Cott. Vit. E. xviii; Reims, BM, 9 (nos. 19, 38, 22, 30, 35, 33). Valenciennes, BM, 59 (Jerome; Fleury, 806; provenance, Saint-Amand), written by Agambertus, provides an example of a particularly complex, encrypted colophon (*Colophons*, no. 313).

¹⁰⁹ Reims, BM, 9; CCCC 326 (nos. 32, 19).

¹¹⁰ Copenhagen, KB, GKS 2034 (4^b) (no. 22).

¹¹¹ BL Cott. Vit. E. xviii (no. 35).

by a short inscription (this is now, unfortunately, so degraded as to be indecipherable).¹¹² The context implies that the calligrapher/illuminator is to be seen as a ‘blessed man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, whose delight is in the law of the Lord ... [who] shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, which brings forth his fruit in due season, whose leaf shall not wither, and whatever he does shall prosper’ – an implicit but supremely resonant version of the hopes articulated in so many written colophons. Whether the image was intended to represent the principal scribe responsible for the main body of the Psalter, the artist, or was rather conceived as a personification of the scriptorium as a whole is a moot point. The full-page miniature which appears at the end of the Psalms in the Arundel 155 Psalter undoubtedly represents the community of Christ Church in general.¹¹³ Although one figure (conceivably representing the master scribe, Eadwig Basan, who wrote the book,¹¹⁴ but more probably the dean¹¹⁵) is singled out, nevertheless this visual prayer shows how the community as a whole is devoted to St Benedict and his Rule under God, thereby enjoying a special relationship with the Divine. This reminds us that even if a book was commissioned by, say, a dean or prior and written by a single scribe, the project still presupposed the resources of the community as a whole.

¹¹² BAV Reg. lat. 12, fol. 21r (no. 34). Reproduced in colour: R. G. Gameson, ‘L’Arte nell’Inghilterra meridionale e in Fiandra’, *apud* L. Castelfranchi Vegas *et al.*, *L’Arte dell’Anno Mille in Europa 950-1050* (Milan, 2000), 161-98, ill. 135. See further R. Kahsnitz, *Der Werdener Psalter in Berlin* (Düsseldorf, 1979), pp. 220-1, contrasting this image with the more generalised pair of scribes in the initial B of the broadly contemporary Werden Psalter.

¹¹³ BL Arundel 155, fol. 133r: Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts*, ill. 213, cat. 66. Colour plates: J. Backhouse, D. H. Turner and L. Webster, *The Golden Age of Anglo-Saxon Art* (London, 1984), pl. XVIII; R. G. Gameson, ‘Books, Culture and the Church in Canterbury around the Millennium’, *apud* R. Eales and R. Gameson, *Vikings, Monks and the Millennium: Canterbury in about 1000 AD* (Canterbury, 2000), 15-40, pl. 9. For further comment see R. G. Gameson, *The Role of Art in the Late Anglo-Saxon Church* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 84-6.

¹¹⁴ As a contemporary parallel for the very prominent commemoration of a master-scribe (Albertus) one may cite Arras, Médiathèque, 734, fol. 6r (xi¹; Saint-Vaast, Arras): see R. G. Gameson, “‘Signed’ Manuscripts from Early Romanesque Flanders: Saint Bertin and Saint Vaast”, *Pen in Hand*, ed. M. Gullick (forthcoming).

¹¹⁵ Given that the volume is datable to 1012x1023, he might then be Æthelnoth, who became archbishop in 1020.

At the very end of our period, an anonymous tonsured scribe is depicted at the incipit to the second part of a Rochester copy of Gregory on Ezechiel,¹¹⁶ while a named one (Samuel) appears at the start of Book I of 'The Jewish War' in a Christ Church Josephus.¹¹⁷ The importance of Samuel's role in transmitting the work of his author, the way in which scribes in general made long-dead authors speak, the ideal of having an accurate text from which to transcribe, and what made this work in particular so valuable are all articulated by the presence of Josephus himself, holding the exemplar from which the Christ Church monk copies and which is open at the famous reference to Christ (*De antiquitate iudaica*, 18, 3, 3).

What then are the general points which the material here surveyed raises? It should be reiterated that scribal colophons were not a prominent feature of early English manuscripts, and, of course, a small crop can at best give a very modest harvest. There are few significant patterns in the chronological or geographical distribution of the examples, while their forms of expression and presentation generally adhere to a limited number of models. A few English scribes transmitted or adapted colophons which they found in their exemplars; a handful composed their own; the vast majority did neither. Nor, incidentally, were they prone to making observations in the margins.¹¹⁸ (When Alcuin begged scribes to refrain from inserting silly remarks in the texts which they copied, he is unlikely to have had his compatriots in mind.¹¹⁹) Yet, the Irish aside, the Anglo-Saxons were not more reserved in this respect than many of their early medieval European counterparts. For what even a cursory survey of all the pre-thirteenth-century material in the published conspectus seems to show is that interest in colophons was, on the whole, modest and piecemeal (exactly as in England),

¹¹⁶ BL Royal 4 B. 1, fol. 4v (no. 44). The first part of the collection is not known to survive.

¹¹⁷ Cambridge, St. John's College, A. 8, fol. 103v (no. 43): C. M. Kauffmann, *Romanesque Manuscripts 1066-1190* (London, 1975), cat. 44, ill. 118.

¹¹⁸ Irish evidence (of a very broad chronological range) was learnedly and charmingly surveyed by C. Plummer, 'On the Colophons and Marginalia of Irish Scribes', *PBA* 12 (1926), 11-44 (also published separately).

¹¹⁹ Alcuin, 'On Scribes': *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance*, ed. P. Godman (London, 1985), no. 11. It is a nice irony, however, that one of only two texts in our corpus which display levity (no. 13) appears after Alcuin's *De dialectica*.

but that certain scriptoria at particular times had a much greater penchant for them than others. Thus the taciturnity of late Anglo-Saxon scribes is paralleled by that of many of their French counterparts, although it is in sharp contrast to the loquacity of some of their Flemish neighbours. A good many of the books produced at the abbey of Saint-Bertin in Saint-Omer under Abbot Odbert about 1000 have colophons or colophonic images, and the same is true of Saint-Vaast, Arras, in the second quarter of the eleventh century.¹²⁰ Equally, the relative abundance of purely verbal colophons from eleventh-century Mont Saint-Michel in Normandy I noted earlier. At Saint-Bertin, Saint-Vaast, and Mont Saint-Michel, not to mention Echternach, Marchiennes and some other centres in north-west Europe, colophons of divers forms were, for a generation or more, an established part of scribal culture. In so far as the surviving evidence is a reliable guide, this never seems to have been the case in early England.¹²¹

While this means that we have less material, it suggests that the motivation behind the scattered English examples may sometimes have been a little more individual – reflecting particular personalities (notably Aldred) or circumstances (for instance, an exemplar with a colophon, or an unusual commission). One might reasonably conjecture, for example, that it was the obligation of composing verses about Æthelwold which provided the impetus for Godeman's modest memorialisation of himself. The circumstance of a special commission, seemingly for export to Germany, may have encouraged Eadwig Basan to include his name and a request for prayers in his eponymous gospel-book. And it is hardly surprising that Owun and Farmon attached colophons to their glosses when both the book in which they were working (the Mac Regol Gospels) and the principal exemplar which they appear to have been copying (the Lindisfarne Gospels) had prominent examples. In general, however, the specific contexts and catalysts are now irrecoverable.

¹²⁰ Gameson, ““Signed” Manuscripts” (where I have only considered the examples which include personal names).

¹²¹ One could speculate that, if we had more early books from Irish-influenced centres like Lindisfarne, the picture might be rather different; needless to say, this must remain conjecture.

For the modern student, manuscripts with colophons stand out: though formulaic, such notes give us a heightened sense of the human beings behind the books, while a few provide crucial information about the date or location of their production. In their original contexts, however, these considerations were largely irrelevant, and the distinction between manuscripts with colophons and those without them was a fine one. Indeed, the stylisation of these subscriptions, their lack of specific detail and above all their general rarity itself – the very qualities which make them frustrating for the modern historian – are a direct reflection of the scribal culture from which they issued. For both positive and negative reasons, we tend to look for and admire individuality, readily focusing on identifiable – preferably named – individuals; but collectivity and self-effacing humility and obedience were (or should have been) the norms for the monastics who undoubtedly comprised the vast majority of scribes in our period. The colophonic image in the Arundel 155 Psalter, which presents the community of Christ Church as a whole, is particularly worth contemplating in this connection. True, one monk is singled out – but he is still not named, and the point stressed is that he is supremely humble. Of course, contemporary members of the same house would have known very well who the scribes were and probably have recognised at least some of their handwriting – thus towards the middle of the twelfth century Hermann of Tournai could celebrate the work done a generation previously by the scribe Godfrey, enumerating his manuscripts with the comment, ‘one could easily see from the similarity of the penmanship that they had been written by him’.¹²² But communities would equally have been in no doubt that even a holograph manuscript presupposed the support and resources of the foundation as a whole and was to that

¹²² Hermannus Tornacensis, *Narratio de restauratione S. Martini Tornacensis*. c. 77 (of 1142x1146), ed. G. Waitz, *MGH Scriptores XIV* (Hannover, 1883), 274-317 at 311: ‘Unus ex hiis supra memoratis, Godefridus, scriptor peritissimus fuit multosque codices in ecclesia nostra scriptos dimisit ... qui ex similitudine penne ab eo conscripti fuisse facile possunt aduerti’. The work in question was accomplished in the early twelfth century. For extant manuscripts which might be associable with Godfrey see A. Boutemy, ‘Odo d’Orléans et les origines de la bibliothèque de l’abbaye de Saint-Martin de Tournai’, *Mélanges dédiées à la mémoire de Félix Grat*, ed. E. A. van Moé and P. Marot, 2 vols. (Paris, 1949), II, 179-222, esp. 189-91 and 209-215.

extent a communal product. Even the humblest monastic scribe was neither anonymous nor isolated in his own day – no scribe, not even an Insular one, was an island! Indeed, they were all labouring in the same cause.

Toiling over books – and colophons like ‘Three fingers write but the whole body labours’ and ‘Just as the port is welcome to the sailor, so is the last line to the scribe’¹²³ underlined the point that transcription was a demanding task – was in itself virtuous. As Alcuin declared in his poem on scribes, ‘It is an excellent task to copy holy books / and scribes do enjoy their own rewards. / It is better to write books than to dig vines: / one serves the belly, the other serves the soul’.¹²⁴ Correspondingly, scribes were well aware that their highly durable handiwork could play a crucial role in their bid for immortality, both physically and metaphysically. The point is crystallised in the phrase, ‘Every labour has an end, but its reward has no end’ which, though not appearing in any of our manuscripts, was a colophonic commonplace.¹²⁵ The older exemplars from which scribes copied and the venerable volumes in communal libraries not only attested the durability of the written word but also defined a great, enduring tradition into which their individual labours fitted. Aldred’s colophon in the Lindisfarne Gospels provides a clear example of how a particular generation of scribes might work in the shadow and with the memory – in the company, indeed – of their predecessors. Re-using well-tried colophonic formulae could itself have contributed to reinforcing this sense of continuity and community. Correspondingly, when scribes addressed the reader directly, it was not just their contemporaries but *quisquis, quicumque legat*, everyone throughout

¹²³ See nos. 5, 6.

¹²⁴ See n. 119.

¹²⁵ E.g.: Karlsruhe Aug. Perg. 107, fol. 105 (x^m), ‘Legite felices / Gaudete legentes / Omnis labor / finem habet / Sed premium eius / Non habet finem’ (‘Read happy people, rejoice as you read. All labour has an end, but its reward has no end’) (*Colophons*, no. 22472); and Berlin Theol. 2° 338, fol. 270v (s. x) and Theol. 2° 354, fol. 220r (s. viii²), ‘Omnis labor finem habet, premium autem finem non habet’ (*Colophons*, nos. 22721 and 22723). (Not seen.) A particularly cheeky use of the first phrase appears in Rouen, BM, A. 320 (33), a s. ix copy of *Epistolae Pauli* from Jumièges: in the later eleventh century a small lapet of parchment was inserted between fols. 63 and 64 (now ‘63bis’) supplying the omitted *argumentum* for *Ad Philippenses*, and this very modest contribution was given its own colophon.

the ages, who was invoked. (This, of course, includes us: the least that we who still profit from their labours can do is occasionally to respect their wishes, whatever our personal beliefs.¹²⁶)

By and large, early medieval colophons were written less to tell the reader something about the scribe than as an expression of scribal activity itself and in order to get the reader to do something for the transcriber. The fact that the sentiments which they articulated were predictable and repetitive, their expression often clichéd, in no way undermined their validity: on the contrary, it made them all the more effective in defining for their writers a fitting place in the eternal community of scribes. For the modern student, the phenomenon should underline how pervasive was the culture in question. Whatever colophons fail to reveal about the makers of their manuscripts – and frankly we know very little more about most of the named Anglo-Saxon scribes than about the countless anonymous ones – they lay bare the primary assumptions and functions of early medieval book-production. It was a spiritual task, using spiritual tools for potentially immediate and eternal spiritual benefits. Taste in texts might change, individual volumes might fulfil different functions, certain scribes might even be paid for writing them, but no one doubted that books were a crucial means of communication between God and man. All scribes of early medieval manuscripts believed this;¹²⁷ for reasons which are generally unclear – and are likely to remain so – but probably differed from one case to another, a small number chose to articulate this belief a little more personally and permanently than others.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ ‘Concede, domine, quaesimus, ut animae scriptorum illuminatorumque omnium qui in honore nominis sancti tui laborabant, in caelesti scriptorio glorioso semper exultent.’

¹²⁷ Wulfgeat of Worcester may have been a paid ‘professional’, but his transmitted colophon still requested the reader to beseech God on his behalf.

¹²⁸ Riceheard me hraðe wrat in þæs reniges wintres scortestan monðe: gebidde fore his sawle.

THE COLOPHONS

The following is a summary catalogue of the principal colophons on which the foregoing text is based. The items are arranged in approximate chronological order, according to the date of the colophons (which, it should be noted, is not invariably the date of the main part of the manuscript). Where several items belong to the same time-band, they are ordered therein by their modern shelfmark. There is a concordance, arranged by shelfmark, at the end of the catalogue. In a couple of cases, where the text is particularly long or complicated and a reliable edition is relatively accessible, reference is made to that (**nos. 1, 14**); otherwise a transcription is offered. Standard abbreviations have been silently expanded and word-division modernised. The translations are deliberately fairly literal and are simply designed as a guide to the originals (those for **nos. 12, 15, 17, 26** are based on versions in the cited publications). References are limited to facsimiles, or other publications which reproduce the page in question, and to works which specifically discuss the colophons.

1 Durham, Cathedral Library, A. II. 10, fols. 2-5, etc.

Gospel-book fragment; vii^{med}; probably Northumbria.

Fol. 3v: Explicit/incipit; then Greek text of the *Pater noster* in Latin characters (now very faded and difficult to read), all presented within an elaborate, decorated frame.

Colour reproductions: C. Nordenfalk, *Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Painting* (London, 1977), pl. 1; L. Webster and J. Backhouse (ed.), *The Making of England: Anglo-Saxon Art and Culture AD 600-900* (London, 1991), p. 112.

Transcription: D. Howlett, 'Hellenic Learning in Insular Latin: An Essay on Supported Claims', *Peritia* 12 (1998), 54-78 at 57-8.

2 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, lat. 9389

Gospel-book ('The Echternach Gospels'); vii/viii; ?Northumbria (Lindisfarne); Echternach. See plate 1.

Fol. 222v (penultimate verso): (a) 'Amen deo gratias'; (b) 'Finit euangelium secundum Iohannem'; (c) 'Pro emandauī, ut potui, secundum codicem de bibliotheca Eugīpi praespiteri, quem ferunt fuisse sancti Hieronimi indictione ui, post consulatum Bassilii u.c. [?uiri clarissimi] anno septimo decimo' ('I emended [it] as best I could, following the codex from the library of Eugippius the priest which, they say, belonged to St Jerome, in the sixth indiction, in the seventeenth year after the consulate of [the most distinguished man] Basilius' [i.e., 558]).

Notes. The text is in three parts, as indicated. The first (a) is written in the formal minuscule of the main text of the volume. Parts b and c are written in

a less formal – though still calligraphic – semi-cursive minuscule by the same scribe.

3 Florence, Biblioteca Medicea-Laurenziana, Amiatino 1

Bible (*Codex Amiatinus*); viiiⁱⁿ (before 716); Wearmouth-Jarrow.

The individual books of the Bible generally have a formal explicit/incipit, which is often spaciously set out and written in Rustic Capital in alternate lines of red and black. To a few of these are appended short colophonic phrases, notably:

fol. 87 (86)v (Inc. Leviticus) 'Lege feliciter / O KYPIΣ [sic] ΣΕΡΒΑΝΔΟΣ / ΑΙ ΠΟΙΗΣΕΝ' ('The master Serbandos made [it]');

fol. 112v (Inc. Num.) [written in smaller Rustic Capital] 'Gloria indiuiduae Trinitati. Amen' ('Glory to the indivisible Trinity. Amen');

fol. 146v (Inc. Deut.) 'Deo laudes / Lege feliciter. Amen / [then, set out in the form of a cross] Ora / pro me' ('Praises to God. Read happily. Amen. Pray for me.');

fol. 634r (Inc. Daniel) 'Deo gratias';

fol. 657r (Inc. Joel) 'Deo gratias semper';

fol. 796r (Expl. Maccabees) 'Deo gratias amen / Feliciter qui legis. Amen';

fol. 805r [in the upper margin above the start of Matthew's Gospel, in Uncial written to a much smaller gauge] 'Christe faue';

fol. 934v (Expl. Acts) 'Deo gratias. Amen';

fol. 1003r (Expl. Ep. ad Hebreos) 'Deo gratias. Amen';

fol. 1016r (Expl. Ep. Iudae) 'Deo gratias. Amen / Feliciter qui legis';

fol. 1029v (Expl. Apoc.; last page of volume) 'Deo gratias / [then, set out as a cross] Ora pro / me'.

Notes. Fol. 87 (86)v was reproduced by R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, *The Art of the Codex Amiatinus*, Jarrow Lecture (Jarrow, 1967), pl. XX.

4 Utrecht, Universiteitsbibliotheek, 32, fols. 94-105

Gospel-book fragment; viiiⁱⁿ; Wearmouth-Jarrow.

Fol. 101v: +ΑΓΙΑ ΜΑΡΙΑ ΒΟΗΘΗΣΟΝ ΤΩ ΓΡΑΨΑΝΤΙ ('Holy Mary, help the scribe').

Notes. The text is interwoven into the arcades which fill the decorative roundel containing a general incipit to the four gospels.

Colour facsimile: *Utrecht-Psalter*, ed. K. van der Horst and J. H. A. Engelbrecht, *Codices Selecti 75* (Graz, 1984).

5 Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 9561

Ps.-Isidore, *De ordine creaturarum*; Gregory, *Regula pastoralis*; viiii; southern England. Plate 3a.

Fol. 81v: 'Qui nescit scribere laborem esse non putat. Tribus digitis scribitur totum corpus laborat. Orate pro me qui istum librum legerit. F[iat/init]. Per nomen sanctum filium tuum dominum nostrum Iesum Christum' ('He who does not know how to write does not think it is a labour. Writing is done with three fingers, but the whole body labours. Pray for me whosoever shall have read this book. [May it be so / It is finished.] Through the holy name, your son, our Lord, Jesus Christ').

Notes. The colophon begins on a new line immediately after the end of the Gregory; it is written in the same Uncial script as the rest of the book.

6 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. lat. 68

Catena on the Psalms (39-151); viii; ?Northumbria; Lorsch/Mainz. Plate 3b.

Fol. 46r: 'Finit liber psalmodorum. In Christo Iesu domino / nostro; lege in pace. Sicut portus oportunus nauigantibus ita uorsus [*sic*] / nouissimus scribentibus. Edilberict filius berictfridi scripsit hanc glosam / quicumque hoc legat oret pro scriptore. Et ipse similiter omnibus populis / Et tribubus [*sic*] et linguis et uniuersi generi humano aeternam salutem optat / In Christo. Amen, amen, amen.' ('Here finishes the book of the Psalms. In Christ Jesus our Lord; read in peace. Just as the port is welcome to sailors, so is the final verse to scribes. Edilberict son of Berictfrid wrote this gloss. May whosoever should read it, pray for the scribe. He himself likewise desires eternal health for all peoples, tribes and tongues and for all humankind, in Christ. Amen, amen, amen').

Notes. The colophon begins mid-line, immediately after the end of the text and is written in exactly the same flowing, semi-cursive, informal Insular minuscule. The final words, 'In Christo. Amen, amen, amen' are centred and flanked by mildly decorative dots and dashes. The personal names suggest that the book is the work of an English hand despite the rather Irish aspect of its script.

7 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Barb. lat. 570

Gospel-book ('The Barberini Gospels'); viii²; England. Plate 2.

Fol. 153r: 'Ora pro Uuigbaldo' ('Pray for Wigbald').

Notes. This colophon appears immediately below the formal 'Explicit Euangelium secundum Iohannem'; whereas that is presented in an enlarged Insular Half-Uncial, washed in yellow, the personal colophon is written in a smaller version of the script with projecting ascenders and descenders. It is the work of the skilled scribe responsible for a long stint at the end of the book (and possibly also for the start).

8 Hereford Cathedral Library, P. I. 2

Gospel-book ('The Hereford Gospels'); viii²; Wales/West of England. Provenance (by xi¹ at the latest): Hereford.

Fol. 35v (end Mt): 'Finit amen deo gratias ago' ('It is finished. Amen. I give thanks to God'). Fol. 59v (end Mk): 'Amen deo gratias finit'. Fol. 101v (end Lk): 'Finit amen'. Fol. 134r (end Jn): 'Finit Amen'.

Notes. The colophons appear immediately after the end of the gospel-text, exactly filling the remainder of the last line on the pages in question. They were written by the single scribe of the book, in the same formal Insular Minuscule used for the rest of the text.

9 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Digby 63

Computistical collection; ix² (867x892); Northumbria (at Winchester by s. xi). Plate 4.

Fol. 71r: 'Finit liber de computa/cio Raegenbold[us (written *in rasura*)] sacerdos [de / Wentonia (written *in rasura* in a different, later hand)] ... [a couple of erased words, ending with an e] scrip/sit istum libellum et quicumque le/git semper pro illo orat / [rest of line filled with punctuation. There follows one original line which has been erased, the beginning of which remains fairly legible:] Et pro ____ bar?nini ??patrem ('Here ends the book on the Computus. Raegenbold, priest [of Winchester] ... wrote that little book and whoever reads it always prays for him ... and for? father').

Notes. Much, possibly all, of the original volume is the work of a single scribe with a variable and poorly controlled hand. He wrote this colophon in his enlarged, more formal display-script, washing many of the letters in yellow. The scribe subsequently recommenced writing, beginning a new text at the bottom of 72v, and continuing for a further two quires. However, the fact that the colophon is followed by two wholly blank pages (71v, 72r) and one which is nearly so (72v) – which, moreover, is the end of the quire – suggests that this may at one stage have been the end of the book. Whether the name Raegenbold was taken from the exemplar or was that of this scribe, the inscription would seem originally to have sought prayers both for him and for someone else. The manuscript had clearly moved south by xi¹, when additions were made to the calendar, and, while certainty is impossible, it is likely that the colophon was altered around the same time.

10 London, British Library, Add. 40618

Final leaf (66) supplied to an Irish gospel-book of s. viii²; date of the supply-script xⁱⁿ⁻¹; England.

Fol. 66r: 'Qui legat orat pro scriptore Eduardo diacone' ('He who may read this prays for the scribe, Edward the deacon').

Notes. Fol. 66, which brings John's Gospel to a close, is a supply-leaf written in an idiosyncratic Anglo-Saxon minuscule, probably of early tenth-century date. The colophon, which is presented in Rustic Capital, appears immediately after (below) the end of the text. The book was further reconditioned – gold initials added in the text, Incipit initials re-done, new portraits supplied – about 1000.

Colophon reproduced: D. N. Dumville, 'English Square Minuscule Script: the Background and Earliest Phases', *ASE* 16 (1987), 147-79, pl. III.

11 Boulogne, Bibliothèque municipale, 10

Gospel-book; x¹; Southern England.

Vol. I, fol. 4v (following the explicit to the Preface to Matthew): DEO GRATIAS.

Notes. The explicit itself is presented in monumental capitals, washed in colour; the colophon is written in smaller display-capitals, washed in the same colours.

12 London, British Library, Royal 12 D. xvii

Old English recipes; x^{med}; ?Winchester.

Fol. 109r: 'Bald habet hund [for hunc] librum cild/ quem conscribere iussit. / Hic precor assidue cunctis in nomine Christi / Quo nullus tollat hunc librum perfidus a me. / Nec ui nec furto nec quodam fame falso. / Cur quia nulla mihi tam cara est optima gaza. / Quam cari libri quos Christi gratia comit.' ('Bald is the owner of this book which he ordered Cild to write/compile. Here I earnestly beg everyone in the name of Christ that no deceitful person should take this book from me, neither by force nor by stealth nor by any false statement. Why? Because no priceless treasure is as dear to me as my dear books, which the grace of Christ adorns.')

Notes. The colophon appears at the top of 109r, immediately after the end of Book II (108v, bottom), followed straightaway by the chapter-list for Book III. Though in the same hand as the rest of the text, it is distinguished by being in Latin (rather than Old English) and is set out as verse, with a capital heading each of the six lines.

Facsimile: *Bald's Leechbook*, ed. C. E. Wright, EEMF 5 (Copenhagen, 1955).

13 Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 206

The colophon appears in section 3 (fols. 72-119) of a now imperfect volume of four separable parts. Section 3 contains Boethius, *Opuscula sacra* I-III and V; Alcuin, *De dialectica*. Date: ?x^{med-2}; ?Western England.

Fol. 119v: 'Finit dicendo: Ludit. Quicunque scriptor scribit / Leti ut scribunt scribae' ('He finishes saying, "Every scribe who writes has fun, for writing scribes are happy ones"').

Notes. The colophon is written in modest capitals in the same ink and by the same scribe as the preceding text (who was certainly responsible for fols. 49r onwards and may have begun at 40r). The Alcuin ends on 119v/16. The colophon occupies lines 17 and 18. The next three lines are blank. The final two lines of the text-space appear formerly to have carried writing which has been erased. Much of the large lower margin has been excised, seemingly carrying away some script (the tip of one upstroke remains). Although the same scribe wrote the following section, prepared to the same format (fols. 120-31; Augustine, *Principia dialectica*), this is structurally separate, comprising two quires which were made differently from the rest (being pricked in the inner margin). Thus, while the colophon is now at the end of one text within the volume, it may at one stage have appeared at the end of the book as a whole. The manuscript is an enigmatic one, with script-types which find no easy point of comparison elsewhere and which are consequently difficult to place and date.

14 London, British Library, Cott. Nero D. iv

Gospel-book ('The Lindisfarne Gospels'). Original book: vii/viii; Lindisfarne. The colophons accompany the interlinear Old English gloss done in $x^{3/4}$ at Chester-le-Street.

Fol. 89v: Old English colophonic prayer. Fol. 259r: A pair of Latin hexameters; five Latin sentences on the divinely established gospel and the inspired work of the four evangelists; and a lengthy account, mainly in Old English, of the original manufacture of this copy (by Eadfrith, Æthilwald and Billfrith) and the subsequent activities and hopes of its glossator, Aldred.

Notes. All the texts are reproduced, printed, translated and discussed in *Codex Lindisfarnensis*, ed. T. J. Brown *et al.*, 3 vols. in 2 (Olten, 1956-60), II, 5-16 and Book ii, 5-11.

15 Durham, Cathedral Library, A. IV. 19

Collectar ('The Durham Collectar'). The original book: x^1 ; southern England. The Old English colophon accompanies additions of x^2 and is datable to 970.

Fol. 84r: 'Besuðan wudigan gæte æt aclee / on westsæxum on laurentius / mæssan dægi on wodnes dægi / ælfsige ðæm biscope in his getelde aldred se p'fast / ðas feower collectæ on fif / næht aldne mona ær / underne . awrat' ('Aldred the Provost wrote these four collects at Oakley to the south of Woodyates, among the West Saxons, on Wednesday, Lawrence's feast-day

(the moon being five nights old), before Tierce, for Ælfsige the bishop, in his tent’).

Notes. Aldred contributed an Old English gloss to the original collectar (and the first few lines of the additions), and was responsible for most of the added liturgical and educational texts on three supplementary quires (IX-XI, fols. 66-88). The colophon specifically relates to the four main items on 84r, which it follows; it is written to a smaller gauge and less formally than are they. The unusual circumstances of this work may have evoked the record.

On the same page, to the left of the text just considered, appears a subsidiary colophon, probably also written by Aldred but in a mixture of capitals and minuscules, with Greek as well as Latin characters. Most of this text is now illegible. It has been reconstructed as: ‘Deus omnipotens et (?) Maria et Helena et sanctus Cudbertus [...] gilanon Aldred’ (‘God almighty and Mary and Helena and St Cuthbert [...] rewarded Aldred’).

Facsimile: *The Durham Ritual*, ed. T. J. Brown *et al.*, EEMF 16 (Copenhagen, 1969); also *Codex Lindisfarnensis*, ed. Brown *et al.*, II, Book ii, pp. 25-8.

16 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Auct. D. 2. 19

Gospel-book (‘The Mac Regol Gospels’). Original book: Birr (Co. Offaly), before 822. Colophons accompany the continuous Old English gloss added by two scribes: x²; Harewood (?Lichfield).

Fol. 50v: ‘Far[mon] pbr. þas boc þus glesede dimittet ei dominus omnia peccata sua si fieri potest apud deum’ (‘Farmon the priest glossed this book thus. May the Lord set aside all his sins, should he come into the Lord’s presence.’).

Fol. 168v-9r: ‘Ðe min bruche gibidde fore owun þe þas boc glesede. Faermen ðaem preoste aet / harawuda [169r] haefe nu boc awritne bruca mið willa symle mið soðum gileofa sibb is eghwaem leofost.’ (‘Whosoever uses me, may he pray for Owun who glossed this book [and for] Faermon the priest at Harewood. Now have/hold the written book, use it with good intent and always with true faith. Peace is dearest to everyone.’).

Notes. Fol. 50v is the end of Matthew’s Gospel, and the page has a simple frame. The main text finishes on the bottom line of the page, below which – in the space below the frame – is the colophon. Apart from the last few words, done in a more calligraphic and cursive script, it is written in the same minuscule script as the rest of the gloss. The main text on both fols. 168v and 169r (the end of John’s Gospel) is presented within a more elaborate, patterned frame. The Old English colophon is written below the frame, in the lower margin, presented in the same script as the rest of the gloss. Fol. 169v bears Mac Regol’s own colophon: ‘Mac Regol dipincxit hoc euangelium: quicumque legerit et intelligerit istam narrationem orat pro Mac Reguil

scriptori' ('Mac Regol illuminated this gospel-book: whoever shall read and understand this story, prays for Mac Regol the scribe').

17 London, British Library, Add. 49598

'The Benedictional of St Æthelwold'; x² (971x984); Winchester.

Fols. 4v+5r. Dedicatory poem written in golden Rustic Capital (each line headed by a stylised Uncial letter, the initial P being greatly enlarged). Principally in praise of Æthelwold, it records something of the circumstances of the commission and includes the name and prayers of the scribe (Godeman). The relevant sections (lines 1-3, 11-14 and 36-8) read: 'Presentem biblum iussit perscribere presul / Uuintoniae dominus quem fecerat esse patronum / Magnus a[th]eluuoldus ... / [11] Quendam subiectum monachum, circos quoque multos / In hoc precepit fieri libro bene comptos / Completos quoque agalmatibus uariis decoratis / Multigenis miniis pulchris, necnon simul auro ... / [36] Omnes cementes biblum hunc semper rogitent hoc / Post metam carnis ualeam caelis inherere / Obnix hoc rogitat scriptor supplex godemannus' ('A bishop, the great Æthelwold, whom the Lord had made patron of Winchester, ordered a certain monk subject to him to write the present book ... He commanded also to be made in this book many frames, well-adorned, and filled with various figures decorated with manifold beautiful colours and with gold ... Let all who look upon this book pray always that after the term of the flesh, I may [be able] to abide in heaven. This earnestly asks, as a suppliant, the scribe Godeman').

Facsimile: *The Benedictional of Saint Æthelwold*, ed. G. F. Warner and H. A. Wilson (Roxburghe Club, 1910); transcription, p. 1 (with translation at pp. xii-xiii); trans., also published by F. Wormald, *The Benedictional of St Ethelwold*; edition by M. Lapidge, *Anglo-Latin Literature 900-1066* (London, 1993), pp. 143-4.

18 London, British Library, Royal 8 B. xi

Paschasius Radbertus, *De corpore et sanguine Domini*; x²; Worcester.

Fol. 145r: 'Qui istum librum / legat precat pro anima Sistan me / scripsit Amen' ('May whoever should read this book, pray for the soul [of] Sistan [who] wrote me, Amen').

Notes. The volume was entirely written by a single hand. The text ends on 145r/14. The next 15 lines were left blank, and the colophon was inscribed at the bottom of the page. It is written in red (now darkened) in the same hybrid capitals (a mixture of Uncial- and Rustic Capital-based forms) as were used for rubrics within the main text.

19 Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 326

Aldhelm, *De uirginitate* (prose); Abbo of Saint-Germain; Glosses, Poems, etc.; x^{ex}; Canterbury, Christ Church.

Page 105 (end of c. 48 of the Aldhelm): cryptic inscription (dots substituted for vowels): ‘Viue uale felicom Cristo Amen’ [doubtless for ‘Viue uale felix] cum Cristo Amen’ = ‘Live, flourish, happy with Christ’].

Notes. This appears in the middle of scribe ii’s stint, where there is no obvious rationale for it – one might speculate that it marked the end of a scribal stint in the exemplar. The note is written in black ink in capitals (and dots), and, although one cannot be certain that it was by the scribe of this section, it is surely contemporary with the rest of the book. It is slightly awkwardly placed – too much space was left after the end of the text, with the result that this projects well into the margin.

Page 137: ‘[N]auta rudis pelagi ut seuis ereptus ab undis / [I]n portum ueniens pectora leta tenet / [S]ic scriptor fessus calamum sub colle laboris / [D]eponens habeat pectora laeta quidem / [I]lle deo dicat grates pro sospite uita / [P]roque laboris agat iste sui requie’ (‘Just as the sailor, snatched from the wild waves of the rough sea, coming into harbour, has a happy heart, so may a certain scribe, putting down his pen, weary under the mountain of labour, have a happy heart. May he say thanks to God for his comfortable life, and may he give thanks for the rest from his labour’).

Notes. This poem, associated with Alcuin (cf. MGH *Poetae Latini 1: Poetae Latini Aevi Carolini*, ed. E. Dümmler (Berlin, 1888), p. 284, no. iv), is one of the short texts added by several scribes to the blank leaves in the final quire. The same scribe (vi) also wrote the item which follows it, and the start of the next; all are simply presented in Caroline Minuscule. The initial letters for each line were never supplied. It would seem to illustrate how colophonic texts could be transcribed and transmitted outside colophonic contexts.

Page 140 (the end of the book) a largely effaced cryptic inscription (partly in runes) appears above a Rota: ‘...?um Uilframno s[c]ripsit, Amen’ (‘[X] wrote [this book] for Uilframno’).

20 London, British Library, Royal 6 A. vi, fols. 5-109 [fol. 107 = post-medieval supply-leaf]

Aldhelm, *Epistola ad Heahfridum*; *De uirginitate* (prose); x^{ex}; Canterbury, Christ Church.

Fol. 109r: ‘Tres digiti scribunt totum corpusque laborat / Scribere qui nescit nullum putat esse laborem.’ (‘Three fingers write and the whole body labours. He who does not know how to write thinks it no labour.’)

Notes. Notwithstanding the changes of scale in the writing, this appears to be a holograph manuscript. The colophon is the work of the same scribe and was added immediately after the end of the text in the same ink and script

(Caroline Minuscule), albeit to a slightly smaller gauge. The rest of this final leaf was originally blank (Richard of Worcester's *Clerus pastore ...* was added to the verso in s. xii).

21 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 311

Penitential collection; x^{ex}; Worcester (prov. Exeter).

Fol. 85r: 'Iohannes me scripsit' ('John wrote me').

Notes. The manuscript was written by a single scribe. Immediately after the last word of the text, he added the colophon, which is presented in his typical Rustic Capital in the same ink as the text (elsewhere he used red for Rustic rubrics).

22 Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek, G.K.S. 2034 (4^o)

Bede, *Vita Sancti Cuthberti* (lacks start); Ps.-Columbanus, *Praecepti uiuendi*; x/xi; southern England. Plate 5.

Fol. 22v (at end of *Vita Sancti Cuthberti* immediately before incipit to the Ps.-Columbanus): encrypted (dots replacing vowels): 'Qui scripsit uiuat et qu [sic] legat letetur' ('May he who wrote, live; and may he who may read, rejoice').

Notes. The main text of the book is the work of a single scribe. The position of the colophon at the end of one item within the volume (and at the centre of a quire) suggests that it may have been 'attached' to that text. The Ps.-Columbanus ends (26v) with the *envoi*, 'Explicit liber Columbani deo gratias'.

23 Winchester, Cathedral Library, 1 + London, British Library, Cott. Tib. D. iv (II), fols. 158-66

Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*; Æthelwulf, *De abbatibus*; x/xi; prov. Winchester.

Fol. 108v (immediately after the Bede, immediately before the Æthelwulf, and followed by two and a half lines of garbled Irish): 'Finit deo gracias ago quicumque legerit hunc li/brum uel scrutauerit ut det benedictionem / pro anima aedaelelmo (> aedelelmo) qui scripsit hoc. Sit / sic hoc hic in aeternum (> interim)' ('It is finished. I give thanks to God. Whosoever shall have read or perused this book so that he may say a blessing for the soul of Ædelhelm who wrote this. May this be thus here for ever (> for the meantime)').

Notes. The colophon was written by the scribe of the text in his ordinary Caroline Minuscule and is introduced by a simple red initial F.

24 Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 448, Supplement (= fols. 87-103)
Sibylline verses; *De die iudicii*; extract from Physiologus; Ps.-Virgil; Augustine; Seven Wonders of the World, etc.; x/xi-xiⁱⁿ; prov. ?Winchester or Glastonbury (s. xii).

Fol. 103v: 'Lectorem prudentem obsecro humiliter / Ut hoc corrigere dignetur benigniter / Uix hoc sic scriptor poterat scribere / Quia rectum exemplum non ualuit ad/quirere' ('I humbly beseech the wise reader that he should kindly deign to correct this. Scarcely was the scribe able to write this thus, because he was not able to get his hands on a reliable exemplar').

Notes. The colophon immediately follows the explicit to the Seven Wonders of the World. Whereas that is presented in red Rustic Capital, the colophon is written in the ordinary Caroline Minuscule of the text. It was the work of the scribe who was responsible for all of this section. This part began as a supplement to the original s. x¹ Prosper, its first two folios (87-8) being leaves at the end of the final quire (XI) which were originally blank. Given that the text of this section is not hopelessly corrupt, one might suspect that the colophon was taken from an exemplar. On the other hand, in view of the wide variety of material which the section contains, probably compiled from different sources, the verses might be an allusion to the problems of acquiring it all.

25 Cambridge, Pembroke College, 41

Augustine, *Enchiridion*; xiⁱⁿ; Canterbury, Christ Church; prov. Bury St Edmunds.

Fol. 88v: 'Explicit liber enchyridion. / Enchy dicitur quod manu potest astringi' ('Here ends the book, The Enchiridion. It is said to be an "inch" because it can be contained in the hand').

Notes. The main text ends on 88v/13. The explicit and the colophon follow immediately afterwards (lines 14 and 15 respectively). They are written in the same ink and script (Caroline Minuscule) as the rest of the text, and are the work of main scribe ii (responsible for fols. 33r-88v). The remainder of the page is blank. The recto of the endleaf (89r) has a contemporary Anglo-Saxon drawing of a bird biting its foot.

26 Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 41

Old English Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica* (to which masses, homilies, prayers and charms were subsequently added); xi¹; origin unknown; prov. Exeter.

Pp. 483-4 (Old English metrical epilogue): 'Bidde ic eac æghwylcne mann brego rices weard þe þas boc ræde and þa bredu befo fira aldor þæt gefyrðrige þone writre wynsum cræfte þe ðas boc awrat bam handum twam [p. 484] þæt he mote manega gyt mundum synum geendigan his aldre to willan and him þæs geunne se ðe ah ealles geweald rodera waldend þæt he on

riht mote oð his daga ende drihten herigan. Amen. ge weorþe þæt'. (Translation from F. C. Robinson, 'Old English Literature in its most immediate context': 'I also pray each man, prince, guardian of the kingdom, lord of men, who may read this book and take hold of these covers, that he advance with kindly power the scribe who wrote this book with his two hands, [p. 484] so that he might complete many more with his hands according to his Lord's desire. And may he be granted this by him who has power over all, the Lord of heaven, so that he might rightly praise the Lord until the end of his days. Amen. So be it.')

Notes. The colophon is the final item that was written by the second of the two scribes who collaborated on the original text (a sketch of Christ, a homily, and then Leofric's inscription were subsequently added to pp. 484-8). It appears as the third in a series of petitions – the first two being Bede's – which were appended to the end of the text (pp. 482-3). Nonetheless, it is clearly distinguished from Bede's invocations, both 'internally' (being verse) and 'externally' (being the only one written in alternate lines of black and red). None of the three had its initial supplied (in common with many chapters in the text). The red on p. 484 has all darkened; that on p. 483 is better preserved. The fact that two scribes were responsible for the book does not in itself debar this text from being a scribal colophon, since such texts often recorded only one name when a team was involved (cf., e.g., nos. 7 and 27).

27 Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 140

Old English Gospels, etc.; xi¹; Bath. Plate 6.

Fol. 45v (end Mt): 'Finit amen. Sit sic hoc hic interim. Ego Ælfricus scripsi hunc librum in monasterio baðþonio et dedi brihtwoldo preposito. Qui scripsit uiuat in pace, in hoc mundo et in futuro seculo, et qui legit legator in eternum.' ('It is finished, Amen. May this be thus here for the meantime. I Ælfric wrote this book in the monastery of Bath and I gave it to Prior Brihtwold. May he who wrote it live in peace in this world and the next, and may he who reads [be] a benefactor [to the scribe] forever.')

Notes. The colophon appears immediately after the end of Matthew's text and is written in Caroline Minuscule by the scribe of that Gospel. (Each gospel was largely the work of a different scribe; the other three simply end with 'Amen'.) Our scribe seems initially to have written *scripsit* and *dedir*; the *ts* were subsequently erased. In addition, one or two letters seem to have been erased from before the first *et*.

28 London, British Library, Cotton Otho C. i (I)

Old English Gospels + (at the end of Luke) documents. The volume was badly damaged in the Cotton Library fire and is now incomplete, the leaves mounted within paper surrounds; xi¹; ?Malmesbury.

Fol. 110r (end of John): 'Wulfwi / me wrat' ('Wulfwig wrote me').

Notes. The original book was the work of a single scribe. The text of John ends on 110r/5 with an 'Amen' in Rustic Capital. This is followed immediately (lines 5-6) by the colophon, presented in the same ink and script (Old English Minuscule) as the main text.

29 Hanover, Kestner Museum, WM XXIa 36.

Gospel-book ('The Eadwig Gospels'); xi¹; Christ Church, Canterbury (in Germany by xi^{2/4}).

Fol. 183v (end of John): 'Pro scriptore precem ne tempnas fundere pater. / Librum istum monachus scripsit Eaduiius cogno/mento Basan, Sit illi longa salus. Vale seruus / d[e]i. N[omen], et memor esto mei' ('Do not disdain, Father, to pour forth a prayer for the scribe. The monk Eaduiius with the surname Basan, wrote this book. May long-lasting health be his. Farewell, servant of God, n[ame], and be mindful of me').

Notes. The colophon is written in the elegant Caroline Minuscule of the single scribe responsible for the Anglo-Saxon stratum of the book but is done in coloured inks (the four lines being blue, green, red and blue respectively).

Colour plate: H. Härtel, *Handschriften des Kestner-Museums zu Hannover* (Wiesbaden, 1999), pl. IV; see also R. G. Gameson, 'The Colophon of the Eadwig Gospels', *ASE* (forthcoming).

30 London, British Library, Cotton Titus D. xxvii+xxvi

Prayer-book (Ælfwine's prayer-book); xi¹ (before c. 1030); Winchester, New Minster.

Fol. 13v: (cryptic inscription) 'Fr̄btr̄ h̄xm̄kll̄im̄us̄ ft̄ mp̄nb̄ch̄xs̄ afl̄sk̄n̄xs̄ mf̄ scr̄k̄ps̄kt̄ sk̄t̄ kl̄lk̄ lp̄nḡb̄ sb̄lx̄s̄. B̄mf̄n̄. / afl̄fw̄k̄np̄ mp̄nb̄ch̄p̄ aēq̄xf̄ df̄cb̄np̄ cp̄mp̄pt̄xm̄ k̄st̄xm̄ pp̄ss̄k̄df̄p̄. mf̄ pp̄ss̄k̄df̄t̄. B̄mf̄n̄.' = 'Frater humillimus et monachus Ælsinus me scripsit, sit illi longa salus. Amen. Ælfwino monacho aequae decano compotum istum possideo (> Ælfwinus monachus aequae decanus me possidet)' ('The most humble brother and monk, Ælsinus [Ælfsige] wrote me; may he have long-lasting good health, Amen. I possess that computus for Ælfwine, monk and dean [> Ælfwine, monk and dean, possesses me]').

Notes. Ælsinus (Ælfsige) was the first of the two scribes who were responsible for the original volume; the second scribe was probably Ælfwine. Facsimile plate: *Liber Vitae*, ed. Keynes, pl. XVI.

31 London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius B. v

Computistica; lists; astronomical texts; Priscian, *Periegesis*; Marvels of the East; etc.; xi^{med}; southern England; provenance (xii) Battle.

Fol. 28v: 'God helpe minum handum' ('God help my hands').

Notes. The colophon ends the text of Ælfric's version of Bede's *De temporibus anni* (fols. 24-8) and is written in the same script (late, standardised Old English Minuscule) and by the same scribe as the rest of this text; the scribe in question was the main scribe of the volume as a whole. If the circumstance that this is the only copy of this text to end thus raises the possibility that these words were added by our scribe, conversely, the fact that the colophon is attached to one tract within the body of the book hints that it may have appeared in his exemplar for this particular work.

Facsimile: *An Eleventh-Century Anglo-Saxon Illustrated Miscellany*, ed. P. McGurk *et al.*, EEMF 21 (Copenhagen, 1983).

32 Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 8824

Bilingual Psalter, canticles, litany, prayers ('The Paris Psalter'); xi^{med}; Canterbury.

Fol. 186r: 'Hoc psalterii carmen / inclyti regis dauid, / Sacer dei wulfwinus [.] cognomento cada], / manu sua conscripsit, / Quicumque legerit scriptum, / Anime sue expetiat / uotum.' ('This song of the psalter / by the famous King David / the priest of God, Wulfwine [who is surnamed Cada] wrote with his own hand / whosoever shall have read what he has written / may he seek out for his soul / a prayer').

Notes. The colophon appears immediately after the (Latin) prayers, exactly filling the last seven lines of column two on the final page of the book. It is written by the scribe who was responsible for the rest of the manuscript, in his customary Caroline Minuscule, albeit to a slightly smaller gauge and with slightly thinner strokes. The superscript addition is contemporary with the rest; given the difference in scale and context, certainty is impossible but this, too, could be the work of the same scribe.

33 Reims, Bibliothèque municipale, 9

Gospel-book; xi^{med}; England; prov. Saint-Rémi, Reims. Plate 7a.

Fol. 154r: 'DFPGRBTKBS.AMEN' = 'Deo gratias. Amen'.

Notes. The inscription fills the final part of the last line of John's Gospel. It is written in capitals, washed in red or blue, and is the work of the single scribe responsible for the text of the book. Vowels are replaced by the consonants which follow them.

34 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. lat. 12

Psalterium gallicanum, etc. ('The Bury Psalter'); xi^{med}, ?Canterbury (Christ Church) or Bury St Edmunds; prov. Bury.

Fol. 21r: The decorated incipit to Psalm 1 includes, on the stem of the initial **B**, a roundel which contains a cowled figure writing (or drawing) in a book on a draped lectern. Around the roundel was originally an inscription; this is now so eroded as to be almost illegible, but it seems to include the word *pictor*.

Facsimile plate (on which the traces of the lettering can just be perceived): E. G. Millar, *English Illuminated Manuscripts from the Xth to the XIIIth Century* (Paris, 1926), pl. 19.

35 London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius E. xviii

Psalter; xi^{3/4} (c. 1062); Winchester.

Fol. 16r: 'ÆlxxnfiE fxx m-rt diirae cð.=ðxiinxn:- = 'Æluunfie emuuast.derae cðeðuenen' = 'Ælfuine me uurat raed ðu ðe cenne' ('Ælfwine wrote me. Read, you who might be able').

Notes. This is the final line of a short tract in Latin and Old English on secret writing, which was the last of the original prefatory texts (fol. 17 was written at various points in the later Middle Ages). It is in the same neat hand as the rest of the text.

Reproduced and discussed: P. Pulsiano, 'The Prefatory Matter of London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius E. xviii', *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts and their Heritage*, ed. P. Pulsiano and E. M. Treharne (Aldershot, 1998), 85-116 with pl. 12.

36 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 121

Old English ecclesiastical institutes and homilies; penitential texts; xi^{3/4}; Worcester.

Fol. 101r : 'Me scripsit Wulfgeatus scriptor Wigornensis. Ora obsecro pro ipsius neuis cosmi satorem. Amen. Et qui me scripsit semper sit felix. Amen' ('Wulfgeat scribe of Worcester wrote me. Pray, I beseech, to the Creator of the universe for his [the scribe's] faults. Amen. And may he who has transcribed me be happy for ever. Amen').

Notes. This appears at the end, and as an integral part, of a short section (a penitential extract) labelled 'XXVIII' which begins at line 7 on this page. The colophon is distinguished only by being a Latin text written in Caroline Minuscule, as opposed to a vernacular one in Old English Minuscule. The last five lines of the page are blank. The same scribe then continued on the next page (101v) with a new item, introduced by a new rubric. The context thus suggests that this colophon was copied from the exemplar.

37 Cambridge, Trinity College, B. 14. 30, fols. 1-57

Sermons and lections on BVM by Augustine, Odilo of Cluny, Jerome, etc.; xi^{8x}; Exeter (subsequently Leicester). Plate 8.

Fol. 55r (at end of the second lection on BVM): ‘Virgo beata manum salua scriptoris in eum’ (‘Blessed Virgin preserve the hand of the scribe forever’).

Notes. MS. B. 14. 30 was originally two volumes, written by the same scribe and prepared to the same format – (A) fols. 1-57 and (B) fols. 58-129 – as contemporary quire-signatures, blank leaves, and the contents themselves show. The colophon was appended to the penultimate item of part A, a couple of leaves before the end of that book (one more such text follows: 55r-56v). It is the work of the scribe who wrote the main text and is presented in his normal Caroline Minuscule, though to a slightly smaller gauge. Was the colophon included here because this was at one stage the end of the book (*Sollemnem memoriam...* being added – by the same scribe – subsequently); because it appeared in the exemplar; or because, in view of the flattery of the Virgin in the text – which is effectively a paean of praise for and supplication to her – this seemed the most resonant place for it?

38 Cambridge, Trinity College, B. 3. 25

Augustine, *Retractatio*; *Confessiones*; *De diuersis haeresibus*; xi/xii; Canterbury, Christ Church.

Fol. 99v: ‘FKNKTP LKBRP. XpP PRFCPNKB RFDDP’ = ‘Finito libro Chr[ist]o praeconia reddo’ (‘The book finished, I render joyous thanks to Christ’). This is followed by half a line of erased text, of which only an initial ‘S’ and a final ‘T?AS’ remain visible to the eye.

Notes. The volume was written by a single scribe who supplied this coded colophon in ink capitals immediately after the end of the main text. The second half of the inscription was very carefully erased with a minimum of damage to the surface of the page.

39 London, British Library, Royal 15 C. xi, part III (= fols. 113-94)

Plautus, *Comoediae*. Isidore, *Etymologiae* I, 21; xi/xii-xiiiⁱⁿ; Salisbury.

Fol. 194r: ‘Exemplar mendum tandem me compulit ipsum / Cunctantem nimium Plautum exemplarier istum. / Ne graphicus mendis proprias idiota repertis / Adderet, et liber hic falso patre falsior esset.’ (? ‘In the end, the exemplar compelled me, exceedingly hesitant though I was, to make that Plautus the same false example. May not an idiot transcriber add his own slips to the faults which have been found, and this book/child be falsier than its false father’).

Notes. Plautus’ *Epidicus* finishes fol. 194r/34, followed immediately by a formal explicit in red Rustic Capital. One line was left blank, then the colophon was written in ordinary Caroline Minuscule, with capitals at the

beginning of each line, exactly like the main text; its first line is indented. (The verso is occupied by an extract from Isidore on punctuation, written by a contemporary Salisbury scribe.)

40 Cambridge, Trinity College. B. 3. 32

Augustine *et alii*, Sermons; xiiⁱⁿ; Canterbury, Christ Church. Plate 7b.

Unnumbered front leaf, verso: ‘Seruus [written *in rasura*: Thiodricus dms; then added superscript: Thidericus] me scripsit amicus./ Pro quo dic lector. Sibi parce deus pie rector/ Huic et parce Deus qui sic fuerit memor eius’ (‘The well-intentioned servant, Master Thiodricus, wrote me’ [or, if one expands *dms* to *dominis*: ‘The well-intentioned servant Thiodricus wrote me for the masters’]; ‘for whom [i.e. Thiodricus] say reader, “Spare him God, O holy ruler”. And, O God, spare this man who will thus have been mindful of the other’).

Notes. The three-line inscription is written in a typical Christ Church ‘prickly’ hand. The name and *dms* were, however, erased and re-written at an early date (xii¹). Around the same time, the name was repeated in the upper margin, presumably to avoid any confusion arising from the mess. The three lines are each headed by a coloured capital – red, green, red. The rest of the page was originally blank, but a list of contents was added *s.* xii², plus, in the later Middle Ages, a further text. A *s.* xii title appears on the recto of the leaf, to which the medieval shelfmark was added. The manuscript itself is composed of two contemporary but separable main sections – (A) fols. 4-41, and (B) fols. 42-end – which were clearly together by xii² (*teste* the content-list). Both parts were largely written in one (or two very similar) hand(s). A different but broadly contemporary scribe contributed the final homily in A (38v-41v) and copied *De aduentu Domini* on a self-contained gathering with a different layout which was prefixed to A (fols. 0-3). The colophon was copied on to the originally blank first verso of this preliminary quire. It is clearly not in the hand of these prefatory leaves. It may be – making allowances for changes in scale – in the hand of the main portion, but this is debatable; and, whatever the truth of the matter, a different scribe, otherwise unattested in the book, re-wrote the personal name. The relationship of the colophon to the main body of the manuscript, and the status of the name ‘Thiodricus’, are thus unclear.

41 London, British Library, Royal 5 D. vii

Augustine, *Retractatio, De ciuitate Dei*; xiiⁱⁿ; England or Normandy; prov. ?Bath

Fol. 252v: ‘Pax legentibus et audientibus in Christo. Amen’ (‘Peace to the readers and hearers, in Christ. Amen’).

Notes. The main text ends 252v/ii/27, followed by a four-line explicit in red display-capitals. The colophon, written in red minuscule by the scribe of the main text, then appears, at the end of column ii.

42 Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 451

Smaragdus, *Diadema monachorum*; moral treatise; sermons (mainly by Caesarius); xiiⁱⁿ; Winchester, Nunnaminster.

Fol. 119v: ‘Salua et incolomis [*sic*] maneat per secula scriptrix’ (‘May the [female] scribe remain safe and sound forever’).

Notes. The inscription appears immediately after the end of the text. It is written in the stylised Rustic Capital – red, now darkened – used for rubrics throughout the volume, which (with the exception of a couple of supply-leaves) was the work of a single scribe.

43 Cambridge, St John’s College, A. 8 (cat. 8)

Josephus, *De antiquitate iudaica XV-XX*, *De bello iudaico*; xii¹; Canterbury, Christ Church.

Fol. 103v (in the initial C to *De bello iudaico*, I): The image of a seated monastic scribe, labelled ‘Samuel’, copying from an open book held by a standing figure labelled ‘Iosephus’.

Kauffmann, *Romanesque Manuscripts*, ill. 118.

44 London, British Library, Royal 4 B. i

Gregory, *In Ezechielem* (II); xii¹; Rochester.

Fol. 4v: The initial Q[*uoniam*] contains a drawing of a seated, tonsured figure, who writes in a book balanced on a draped lectern; he holds a pen in his right hand and a knife in his left. The absence of a halo raises the possibility that this was intended to be a representation of a contemporary scribe. The letter is rendered in ink outline alone – as is the only other decorated initial in the book (fol. 1r) – and the slightly divergent underdrawing is clearly visible. The first part of the collection is not known to survive.

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Key to the plates

- 1 BNF lat. 9389, fol. 22v
- 2 BAV Barb. Lat. 570, fol. 153r
- 3a BNF lat. 9561, fol. 81v
- 3b BAV Pal. Lat. 68, fol. 46r
- 4 BodL. Digby 63, fol. 71r
- 5 Copenhagen, Kongelige Biblioteket, G. K. S. 2034 (4°), fol. 22v
- 6 CCCC 140, fol. 45v
- 7a Reims, BM, 9, fol. 154r
- 7b TCC B. 3. 32, front leaf, verso
- 8 TCC B. 14. 30, fol. 55r

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