

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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H.M. CHADWICK MEMORIAL LECTURES 9

DONALD SCRAGG

Dating and Style in
Old English Composite Homilies



DEPARTMENT OF ANGLO-SAXON, NORSE, AND CELTIC

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Dating and style in Old English composite homilies

DONALD SCRAGG

In memory of Edward B. Irving Jr who died a few days before this lecture was delivered

It is a truth universally acknowledged that many Old English homilies are composite, that is they consist of selections of pre-existing homilies conjoined. It is also a fact that the composite nature of many surviving homilies has helped the investigation of their dating, their style, and ultimately their authorship. One has only to think of Malcolm Godden's study of items in Cambridge, University Library Ii.4.6¹ and Andy Orchard's essay on Wulfstan.² In this lecture I wish to investigate further some aspects of date of composition and authorship in such composite pieces.

Dating vernacular homilies is a notoriously difficult business. There are few problems with homilies by the two named writers of the period, of course: we know that Ælfric published the first and second series of so-called Catholic Homilies between 989 and 991 and continued producing more and emending them for twenty years or so.³ We also know that Archbishop Wulfstan was working at much the same time, probably starting slightly

¹ M. R. Godden, 'Old English Composite Homilies from Winchester', *ASE* 4 (1975), 57-65.

² A. P. McD Orchard, 'Crying Wolf: Oral Style and the *Sermones Lupi*', *ASE* 21 (1992), 239-64.

³ See P. A. M. Clemoes, 'The Chronology of Ælfric's Works', *The Anglo-Saxons: Studies . . . presented to Bruce Dickins*, ed. P. Clemoes (Cambridge, 1959), pp. 212-47.

later, and continuing to write and revise until his death in 1023.⁴ But Ælfric's condemnation of it makes clear that there was an established vernacular tradition before the 990s.⁵ The question is, how long a tradition was it.

King Alfred's preface to his translation of the *Cura pastoralis* maintains that scholarship in England in the later ninth century was at a very low ebb, and now, thanks to the work of Helmut Gneuss and others,⁶ we have no reason to doubt that. This suggests - although it doesn't prove - that there would have been few opportunities for the creation of a written vernacular preaching tradition based on Latin antecedents in the ninth century. If we accept that, we are still left with the question of how early in the tenth century such a tradition might have arisen. I have to admit that I can't offer you a detailed answer to that here. What I can do is to suggest a distinct possibility of pushing back the composition of some of the earliest vernacular homilies from the date of their recording in surviving manuscripts. In this we are concerned especially with the Vercelli Book and the Blickling manuscript. The first is dated palaeographically to the middle of the second half of the tenth century⁷ - approximately the 970s - and although the second was written at the end of the century, a reference in one of the items to the current date 971, reproduced by the scribe from an earlier copy, suggests that this piece at least was in existence by that date.⁸ There has been, until recently, no firm evidence on which to base an argument for

⁴See *The Homilies of Wulfstan*, ed. D. Bethurum (Oxford, 1957), pp. 101-4.

⁵ See *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The First Series, Text*, ed. P. Clemoes, EETS ss 17 (Oxford, 1997), Old English Preface, lines 50-2.

⁶ H. Gneuss, 'King Alfred and the History of Anglo-Saxon Libraries', *Modes of Interpretation in Old English Literature: Essays in Honour of Stanley B. Greenfield*, ed. P. R. Brown, G. R. Crampton and F. C. Robinson (Toronto, 1986), pp. 29-49.

⁷ Dates throughout are taken from N. R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford, 1957).

⁸ *Ibid.* p. 453.

earlier composition, although there has been plenty of speculation.⁹

A new situation has arisen thanks to a recent advance in source studies. Charles Wright of the University of Illinois-Champaign has discovered a Latin source for the opening section of Vercelli homily IV.¹⁰ In itself this is nothing remarkable, in that Latin sources for vernacular homilies have been found frequently during the last 120 years.¹¹ But like many of the items in the Vercelli Book, Vercelli IV exists in a number of later copies. It is repeated complete down the margins of a manuscript of the Old English Bede, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 41; part of it survives in a fragmentary manuscript, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 367;¹² and the opening alone survives as the opening of a composite homily recorded in a five-quire appendix to Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 201, an appendix which was originally independent of that manuscript.¹³ The largest part of this last homily is derived from a Latin vision of the body and soul after death attributed to the early hermit Macarius, a source which was identified by Julius Zupitza over a century ago, whereas Vercelli IV has a different dialogue of the body and soul in the afterlife, presumably again from a Latin source but one which remains as yet unidentified. For

⁹ See my *The Vercelli Homilies and Related Texts*, EETS os 300 (Oxford, 1992), pp. xxxviii-xxxix, and J. M. Bately, 'Old English Prose before and during the Reign of Alfred', *ASE* 17 (1988), 93-138.

¹⁰ It will be published in 'The Old English "Macarius" Homily, Vercelli Homily IV, and Ephrem Latinus, *De Paenitentia*', in a forthcoming volume of essays in memory of J. E. Cross, ed. T. N. Hall, T. D. Hill and C. D. Wright.

¹¹ See my 'Source study', *Reading Old English Texts*, ed. K. O'Brien O'Keefe (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 39-58.

¹² It would seem that this manuscript also once had a complete copy of Vercelli IV.

¹³ The homily was published by B. Thorpe *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England* (London, 1840), pp. 394-401, and see also H. Sauer, *Theodulfi Capitula in England*, *Texte und Untersuchungen zur Englischen Philologie* 8 (München, 1978). The text here is taken from my *The Vercelli Homilies*.

convenience I will refer to the CCCC 201 item as the Macarius homily. Because there are three distinct sections in the piece, the opening which it has in common with Vercelli IV, a short *Ubi sunt* passage similar to but not identical with other such passages in Old English, and the Macarius vision of hell, it seemed not improbable that it was a late Old English composite piece not untypical of many found in such mid-eleventh-century manuscripts as the one in which it is recorded. But while Wright's discovery does not in itself disprove that assumption, it does allow us to modify it.

Wright has shown that the opening of the Macarius homily, which it shares with Vercelli IV, derives from a Greek text known in Latin as *De paenitentia*.¹⁴ The text in the two vernacular pieces is not identical, although they are in places sufficiently close verbally to show that they derive from the same Old English translation. Vercelli IV includes everything that is in Macarius, but the latter has only part of the Vercelli material. In my edition of the Vercelli homilies, I assumed that the opening of Macarius was an abbreviated version of the text in Vercelli, in part, no doubt, because it was already clear that the Macarius homily was composite, drawing on a variety of sources, whereas it hadn't then been shown that Vercelli IV was anything other than a single, coherent composition. Now that Wright has shown that not only does *De paenitentia* lie behind the opening of both homilies, but that Macarius is actually closer to the Latin, it is obvious that Vercelli IV is also composite. And this, it should be stressed, is one of the most important conclusions that should be drawn from Wright's study. Because part of Vercelli IV can now be shown to be an *expanded* version of something which must already have been in existence in English before

¹⁴ Wright attributes the *De Penitentia* to Ephrem the Syrian. On the attribution, see P. Sims-Williams, 'Ephrem the Syrian in Anglo-Saxon England', *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England: Studies presented to Peter Clemoes*, ed. M. Lapidge and H. Gneuss (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 205-26, at 225. But the authorship of the text is not in question here.

Vercelli IV was put together, we can say something about its date.

I noted above that there is no certain evidence to date vernacular homilies before their earliest recording in the 970s. But we have here a homily which was copied into the Vercelli Book in the 970s, and which is itself a composite piece, drawing on yet earlier vernacular material. This gives us two textual strata, the translation of *De paenitentia* witnessed only in the late copy of Macarius, and the incorporation and expansion in Vercelli IV. Since the Vercelli scribe was clearly, from other evidence of his work, not competent to create an original composition, it follows that the piecing together of the composite Vercelli IV from pre-existing vernacular materials took place earlier than the writing of the Vercelli Book. So we must postulate a more extended transmission history: the original translation, the incorporation in expanded form of that translation in a composite piece, and the copying of that expanded item into the Vercelli Book. Now while it is true that all three of these might well have been made within the one year, within a month of one another, or even within a single day, this is inherently unlikely. More probable is that the original translation of the *De paenitentia*, as represented by the opening of what is now the Macarius homily, took place at least as early as the 960s and perhaps yet earlier in the tenth century. There can be little doubt, then, that what survives as the opening of two composite homilies was in existence in English at least as early as the first phase of the Benedictine Reform movement.¹⁵

I move on to consideration of the style of the piece. If one compares the *De paenitentia* material in the two versions, the Vercelli homily may be seen to expand 25 lines in Macarius to 71 lines. The expansion is largely by the insertion of words,

¹⁵ A *terminus a quo* lies in the date when the *De Penitentia* first arrived in England, but since this could be as early as before 800, that is not particularly fruitful. See Sims-Williams, 'Ephrem the Syrian'.

phrases and even sentences which parallel those in the original, in other words there is little extension of idea, merely a fuller expression of what was already there. Without going into a detailed intertextual analysis, which anyway is available in Wright, I offer the opening sentences, with three phrases in Vercelli (here in bold type) which expand the Macarius version:

De paenitentia:¹⁶ Effundamus lachrymas donec tempus est suscipiendi lachrymas ne euntes in seculum illud sine aliqua utilitate plangemus. Ibi enim lachryme pro nihilo reputabuntur . . . Hic ornatus vestium, ibi cruciatus vermium . . .

‘Macarius’ homily (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 201, s. xi med.):¹⁷ Ic bidde eow 7 eadmodlice lære, men þa læofestan, þæt ge wepen on þisse medmiclan tide for eowrum synnum, for þan þe on þæm towardan life ure tearas for naht beoð getealde . . . Ðær beoð þonne ure hrægla fretwodnes on þam ecan fyre widnode.

Vercelli homily IV (Vercelli, Biblioteca capitolare CXVII, s. x²):¹⁸ Men þa leofestan, ic eow bidde and eaðmodlice lære þæt ge wepen **7 forhtien** on þysse medmiclan tide for eowrum synnum, for þan ne bioð eowre tearas **7 eowre hreowsunga** for noht getealde on þære towardan worulde ... Þær beoð ura hrægla frætwednesse **7 ures lichoman glengo** on þone ungeendodan cyle gehwyrfed.

The incipit in both versions, *ic bidde eow 7 eadmodlice lære* ‘I beg you and humbly urge’ (which is slightly differently ordered in Vercelli), shows that the underlying rhetorical flourish of near-synonymous doublets is intrinsic to the piece as translated in Macarius, and without the source it is enough in itself to lead one

¹⁶ Quotations are from Kilian Fischer, *Libri Sancti Effrem* (Freiburg-im-breisgau, c. 1491-2) as cited by Wright.

¹⁷ Text from my *The Vercelli Homilies*, no. IV.

¹⁸ Text from *The Vercelli Homilies*.

to assume, as I did in my edition, that the Vercelli version is the older. But it is now clear that I was wrong.

It is notable that this feature forms so great a part of the expansion in Vercelli. Here we have in bold three perfect examples. The insistent use of pairs of near synonyms in homilies is particularly associated with the work of Archbishop Wulfstan. It is, of course, much older than Wulfstan - as part of vernacular rhetoric it extends back into Alfredian prose. But Wulfstan uses it so universally in his homiletic writings that it has come to be linked particularly with him. Here in Vercelli IV, however, we have evidence of a preacher at least a generation older than Wulfstan who took pre-existing vernacular material and added to it a series of words and phrases in a manner not unlike that of Wulfstan. Throughout the eleventh century Wulfstan's homilies enjoyed great popularity, if we are to believe the evidence of manuscript copies, and it would be easy to suggest that the use of pairs of words and phrases in a Wulfstanian manner by compilers of composite pieces in the eleventh century was to build on the popularity of Wulfstan's style. But the introduction of the same stylistic device into tenth-century pieces shows that the real situation is the reverse: Wulfstan was merely capitalizing on a style that had already proved its worth.¹⁹

I turn now to another of the Vercelli homilies to examine the development of the same rhetorical device in a borrowing from Vercelli homily IX. The latter is a sermon which draws on an Irish text similar to the *Catechesis celtica* printed here. (Although there are some discrepancies between the Latin and the Old English, they do not affect the argument that in the former we have a text which offers some assurance that Vercelli, with all its imperfections, is basically a translation.) Some time

¹⁹ Andy Orchard's article 'Crying Wolf' has an appendix which shows very clearly how Wulfstan adapted pre-existing material to his own style by the addition of semantic doublets.

in the second quarter of the eleventh century, a composite homily was created using existing vernacular materials, including parts of four of the homilies in the Vercelli Book.²⁰ This composite piece is now known as Napier's 'Wulfstan' homily XXX from its inclusion in Napier's edition of homilies attributed to Wulfstan.²¹

Catechesis celtica:²² Nam oculi calignant, aures sordescunt, gustus non bene discernit, odoratus uitatur, tactus rigescit; sed et dentes denudantur, lingua balbutiat, pectus licoribus grauatur, pedes tremore et tumore tumescunt, manus ad opus debilitantur, canities floret, et corpus omne infirmatur, sed sensus diminuitur.

Vercelli homily IX: . . . him amolsniað þa eagan for ðære oferylðo ða þe wæron gleawe on gesyhðe, 7 þa earan adimmiað ða ðe ær meahton gehyran fægere sangas, and sio tunge awistlað ðe ær hæfde gerade spræce, 7 þa fet aslapað þe ær wæron ful swifte 7 hræde to gange, 7 þa handa awindað þe ær hæfdon ful hwate fingras, 7 þæt feax afulað [=afeallað] þe ær wæs on fullere wæstmæ, 7 þa teð ageolewiað þa þe [ær] wæron hwite on hywe, 7 þæt oroð afulað þe wæs ær swete on stence.

Napier's 'Wulfstan' homily XXX (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 113, s. xi third quarter):²³ Him amolsniað 7 **adimmiað** þa eagan, þe ær wæron **beorhte** 7 gleawe on gesihðe, and sio tunge awistlað ðe ær hæfde **getinge** spræce 7 gerade, 7 ða earan aslawiað þa þe ær wæron ful swifte 7

²⁰ For the details see my 'Napier's "Wulfstan" Homily XXX: its Sources, its Relationship to the Vercelli Book and its Style', *ASE* 6 (1977), 197-211, and the Appendix to my *The Vercelli Homilies*.

²¹ *Wulfstan: Sammlung der ihm zugeschriebenen Homilien*, ed. A. Napier (Berlin, 1883, repr. with a bibliographical appendix by K. Ostheeren, Dublin and Zürich, 1967). Quotations are cited by page and line.

²² The text is from my *The Vercelli Homilies*.

²³ Text from the Appendix to my *The Vercelli Homilies*; cf. Napier 147.29-148.7).

hræde to gehyrenne fægere **dreamas** 7 sangas, 7 þa handa awindað þa ðe ær hæfdon ful hwæte fingras, and þæt feax afealleð þe ær wæs **fæger on hiwe** 7 on fulre wæstmæ, 7 þa teð ageolwiað þa ðe wæron ær hwite on hiwe, 7 þæt oreð **stingð** 7 afulað þe ær wæs swete on stence.

Napier recognized that not all the writings he printed were what one might call authorized Wulfstan. Some undoubtedly are by him, some are merely based on him, perhaps abstracts from true Wulfstan writings, some are clearly not by him. The history of the Wulfstan canon is that the sixty-two items in Napier's collection were first reduced to the four that are attributed to him by the name *Lupus* in manuscripts,²⁴ and later these were increased to the twenty-one in Dorothy Bethurum's definitive edition of 1957.²⁵ Each of Napier's items was examined in great detail by the Swiss scholar Karl Jost in 1950,²⁶ and more succinctly by Dorothy Whitelock in the introduction to the third revision of her edition of the *Sermo Lupi* in 1963.²⁷ As far as Napier's no. XXX is concerned, there is some authentic Wulfstan material in the compilation, enough to help us date the piece as post-Wulfstan, but much of the homily consists of anonymous material that survives in other homilies, especially some of those in the Vercelli Book. The quotations indicate what happens to the Vercelli material in the compiler's hands (again, added words are in bold). In each case single words and phrases are expanded into near-synonymous doublets, producing an insistent rhetorical patterning to press home a message.

The same stylistic feature also occurs in a borrowing in Napier XXX of that part of Vercelli IV which was itself expanded from material translated from *De paenitentia*:

²⁴ See Ker, p. 50. The items are nos. II, XXXIII, XXXIV and LIX in Napier's edition.

²⁵ *Homilies of Wulfstan*.

²⁶ K. Jost, *Wulfstanstudien* (Basel, 1950).

²⁷ *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*, ed. D. Whitelock, 3rd ed. (London, 1963), pp. 17-28.

De paenitentia: Non liberabit frater proprium fratrem nec iterum pater filium suum, sed unusquisque stabit in ordine suo, tam in vita quam in incendio.

‘Macarius’ homily: Ne mæg þær þonne gefultumian se fæder þæm suna, ne se suna þæm fæder; ac sceal þonne anra gehwile æfter his agenum gewyrhtum beon demed.

Vercelli homily IV: Þær þonne ne mæg se fæder helpan þam suna, ne sunu þam fæder, *ne nan man mæg oðrum*; ac anra gehwilecun men sceal beon demed æfter his agenum gewyrhtum.

Napier XXX (149.27-31): Þær þonne ne mæg **ænig man oðres** gehelpan, se fæder þam suna, ne se sunu þam fæder, **ne seo modor þære dehter ne seo dohtor þære meder**, *ne nan mæg oðrum*; ac anra gehwilecun men byð demed æfter his agenum gewyrhtum.

De paenitentia warns that at doomsday a brother won’t be able to help his brother nor a father his son. The translator - in the text represented by the Macarius homily - was perhaps less concerned with ghostly relatives than with those tied by blood, and he takes up only the second of these, underscoring the point by adding the same in reverse, neither the father the son nor the son the father. When we get to Vercelli, the compiler can’t resist a little expansion, underlined here - nor no man another. In Napier XXX, the underlined expansion is still there (showing that Napier XXX is derived from a Vercelli-type transmission, not from that represented by Macarius), but there is still further expansion (in bold type): not the father the son, nor the son the father, nor the mother the daughter nor the daughter the mother. It may be that this expansion is related to audience, that it is intended for both sexes, perhaps even for seculars. But it is worth noting the bold type expansion of the first line quoted from Napier XXX: no person can help another, the father the son, etc. This is not only repetition for emphasis, but it is linguistically

interesting in that while in the Vercelli version (and in Macarius) *helpan* takes a dative object: *þam suna, þam fæder, oðrum*, each of which is repeated in Napier XXX, in the opening expansion in Napier XXX, *ne mæg ænig man oðres gehelpan*, the verb takes a genitive object.²⁸ Whoever made the expansion presumably normally used a genitive after *(ge)helpan* and he failed to notice that in the material that he was copying, *helpan* was followed by a dative.

The general pattern that emerges from these examples is that this type of verbal expansion, repetition of an idea in slightly different words, is a feature of the passing down of homiletic material from one generation to another. Compilers of what are sometimes called scissors and paste homilies don't just cut material from earlier homilies and stick pieces together verbatim, as the term scissors and paste rather unfortunately implies. Throughout the history of the vernacular homily, from the tenth century to beyond the end of the Anglo-Saxon period, they adapt, they re-order, they re-word. And when they expand, they do so usually, as here, in very insignificant ways in terms of overall meaning, but in ways which they felt were highly significant in terms of impact on their audience, in other words they alter style but not substance. And the *helpan* instance suggests that they occasionally made such stylistic changes mechanically. At this point I wish to refer back to the paper by Andy Orchard. This is for the most part concerned with Wulfstan's style, and the argument is very well supported by quotations and statistics. But in his conclusion the author turns to a comparison of Wulfstan and anonymous writers:

Wulfstan alters and adapts, according to the tenets of his own characteristic style, whilst others simply parrot. Many, if not

²⁸ In the other bold type expansion, the mother the daughter, the daughter the mother, according to traditional grammar –the grammar of the textbooks – these are back in the dative, but unfortunately late Old English grammar isn't the grammar of the textbooks, and these might just as well be genitives.

most, eleventh-century homilies are almost wholly composed by such *verbatim* repetition of other works (my emphasis).²⁹

His point is basically that Wulfstan never goes in for *verbatim* repetition, even when he is quoting his own work, which he does, as we can all agree, very frequently, and this marks the archbishop off from other writers. But I think we need a fuller analysis of the methods of composition of anonymous writers before we can be sure that most - or even many - eleventh-century homilies consist only of *verbatim* repetition. And this is especially true if we are to take this as a test of authorship. Is Wulfstan the only one who can be credited with reworking his own material?

I begin with the compiler of Napier XXX, who, as well as drawing on anonymous homilies such as those in the Vercelli collection, also used Wulfstan material. Compare the following short passage from near to the end of Napier XXX, here preceded by its presumed source, a homily printed by Napier as his no. XXIV:

Napier XXIV (121.6-122.9): God is ure ealra fæder, and he gecyðde þæt þa þa he asende his agen bearn hider, Crist of heofenum, and her wearð man geboren þurh clæne mæden, sancta Marian, and he for eall mancyn deað þrowade, **eal swa ic ær sæde**, and us ealle þa þurh his deað alyside of ecan deaðe and us gestrynde to ecum life. Ðurh clæne mæden Crist wearð geboren, and þurh clæne fulluht we syndon cristene gewordene; þæt we scylon eac on ealre clænnesse healdan, gif we **aht gefaran** scylan. Crist þrowode for us synleas, þonne mote we be gewyrhtum fela for urum synnum þrowian and þolian and æt Gode geearnian þæt he us for his mildheortnesse huru wið ecne deað ahredde and us on ðam towardan life reste geunne. Utan **don, swa us mycel þearf is**, habban us **a** on gemynde þone timan þe us toward is ðonne se earma lichama and seo sawul hi todælað, þonne us

²⁹ 'Crying Wolf', p. 257.

forlætað ealle ure weoruldfreond **and nede scylon**. Ne magon hy us þonne ænige gode, ac bið æt Gode anum gelang eal hwæt we gefaran scylon.

Napier XXX (150.23-151.14): God ys (ure) ealra **cristenra manna** fæder, and he þæt gecyðde þa þa he asende his agen bearn (hider), Crist of heofonum, and her wearð mann geboren þurh **þæt** clæne mæden, sancta Marian, **þe næfre nahte weres gemanan**, and he for eal manncynn deað þrowode and us ealle þa ðurh his deað alyside of **ðam** ecan deaðe and us **ealle** gestrynde to **þam** ecum life. ðurh clæne mæden Crist wearð geboren, and ðurh clæne fulluht we syndon **ealle** cristene geworden; þæt we sceolon eac on ealre clænnysse healdan, gyf we **ænige miltse begytan** sceolon **æt Gode**. Crist þrowode for us synleas, þonne moton we be gewyrhtum fela for urum synnum þrowian and ðolian and æt Gode geearnian þæt he us for his **micclan** mildheortnesse huru wið ecne deað ahredde and us on þam towardan life reste geunne. Utan us habban **symble** on gemynde þone timan þe us toward ys þonne se earma lichama and seo **werige** sawul hi **totwæmað and** todælað, þonne us forlætað ealle ure woruldfrynd. Ne magon hi us þonne ænige gode, ac bið æt Gode anum gelang eal hwæt we gefaran sceolon.

Napier XXIV is accepted by most commentators as being an authentic Wulfstan item, although it is not included in Bethurum's edition.³⁰ I have highlighted words in each text

³⁰ J. P. Kinard, *A Study of Wulfstan's Homilies: Their Style and Sources* (Baltimore, 1897), says of Napier XXIV that it has 'features of Wulfstan's style though probably not written by him', p. 54; Bethurum, *Homilies of Wulfstan*, p. 36, writes of 'excerpts of Cnut's laws' making up parts of it, and considers it 'connected with the Pastoral Letter' (her XIII), by which she appears to mean that they are drawn from it, while not constituting an independent homily. Jost, *Wulfstanstudien*, pp. 196-9, believes them to be drawn from a lost work by Wulfstan. Whitelock has no doubts as to the genuineness of XXIV (*Sermo Lupi*, p. 20).

which don't appear in the other.³¹ The additions in Napier XXX are again stylistic rather than substantive, and they fall into two categories. First are those which can be shown to be influenced by other parts of Napier XXX: *þe næfre nahte weres gemanan*, which echoes a phrase used earlier in Napier XXX of the Virgin in a passage drawn from Vercelli homily XXI (*scta Marian butan ælces weres gemanan*), and the insertion of *ðam/þam* in *of ðam ecan deaðe* and *to þam ecum life* which - although hardly distinctive in eleventh-century writings - in fact follows the pattern of another sentence in the material drawn from Vercelli XXI, where the preacher speaks of *þæs ecan deaðes*.³² Even more distinctive is the phrase *seo werige sawul*, where the adjective can't mean 'weary' but must be a variant of *wearg* 'cursed, damned'. With such a meaning - and yet spelt as if it is part of 'weary' - it too occurs in Vercelli XXI,³³ although in this case not in a part that the compiler of Napier XXX borrowed. All this is evidence that the compiler knew a version of Vercelli XXI very well, and did not just use his scissors on it but consciously or unconsciously repeated phrases from it in his copying of other material, in this case Wulfstan material. Second there are extra phrases not unknown to Wulfstan himself: *ealra cristenra manna* and *ænige miltse begytan æt Gode*. Here it is impossible to know if the compiler had access to a fuller version of the Wulfstan text than now survives elsewhere, or again - as I believe - we have the compiler of Napier XXX expanding his material with phrases well known to him from his immersion in Wulfstan's other writings. Taken together, the number of

³¹ The two words in brackets are not in Napier's text of his homily XXX but do occur in another, partial version, Cambridge, University Library, Ii 4.6, item 28, not collated by Napier; this suggests that they existed in an earlier version of Napier XXX than survives.

³² *The Vercelli Homilies*, XXI.93.

³³ *Seo werie sawl* (XXI.212) where the source is Vercelli homily II *seo werige sawl*; see *The Vercelli Homilies*, p. 360.

examples of the compiler's alterations in this passage³⁴ are sufficient to show that he was not working in a strictly scissors and paste fashion, in the sense that he was not copying verbatim. As he copied, he made small but meaningful stylistic adjustments. In other words, the compiler who added tautological words and phrases for stylistic effect to material drawn from Vercelli homilies IX and IV, as shown above, has done the same thing to Wulfstan.³⁵

I turn finally to some items in that complex and fascinating eleventh-century manuscript of the Cotton collection, Tiberius A.iii, which has excited a lot of attention over the years because of its varied contents in English and in Latin, sometimes both together, e.g. the Latin Rule of Benedict and the *Regularis concordia*, both glossed in Old English, and Ælfric's Latin colloquy, again glossed in Old English.³⁶ It also has two important full-page drawings which have been frequently reproduced, one of monks presenting a copy of their Rule to St Benedict and another of a king between two ecclesiastics, usually assumed to be a representation of Edgar with Dunstan and

³⁴ There are numerous further examples in other passages drawn from Wulfstan, most of them minor. For example, the next section of Napier XXX has links with a section of Napier XLVI and a text associated with *Polity*; among many verbal differences there is one that is pertinent to the present argument: *Die 'Institutes of Polity, Civil and Ecclesiastical'*, ed. K. Jost (Bern 1959), p. 245, §70, reads *se man bið swa blind 7 swa deaf 7 he bið swa heard swa stan, 7 he ne mæg ongytan ða godcundan lare* (so also Napier XLVI. 241.24-6); Napier XXX.151.24-5 has: *we syndon swa heardre heortan þæt we ne magon ongytan þa godcundan lare*. The phrase *swa heardre heortan* is found in Vercelli homily IV (*The Vercelli Homilies*, line 62) in a paragraph used by the compiler of Napier XXX (149.12). See also footnote 39 below.

³⁵ He also omits a couple of distinctively Wulfstanian phrases: *don swa us mycel þearf is* and *and nede scylon*.

³⁶ The most recent study of the whole manuscript is H. Gneuss, 'Origin and Provenance of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: the Case of Cotton Tiberius A.III', *Of the Making of Books*, ed. P. R. Robinson and R. Zim (Aldershot, 1997), pp. 13-48.

Æthelwold. Amidst this and other much discussed and well-thumbed material is what Neil Ker describes under item 19 as ‘Twelve short homiletic pieces pr[inted] or coll[ated] by Napier’.³⁷

The work of Wulfstan, as I have noted already, has been very fully analysed by distinguished scholars over a long period of time. But there has been no new review of the Wulfstan canon of English writings for thirty years, and it is time this was remedied. What follows is intended as a small contribution to a Wulfstan reappraisal. It is fashionable nowadays to see all texts first of all in their manuscript context. Bethurum did this for some Wulfstan manuscripts, but not for Tiberius A.iii. In fact, no-one has ever printed these twelve texts as a sequence. Ker lists them as a single item but subdivides them into sections, *a-l*, here reproduced in tabular form with an indication of contents:

³⁷ Ker, *Catalogue*, p. 245.

Table of the sections of Tiberius A.iii, item 19

<u>section</u>	<u>folios</u>	<u>edited text</u>	<u>contents</u>
a.	88v	collated Napier XIX	christian duties
b.	88v-90r	collated Napier XX-XXII, plus para. 1 of XXIV	fuller exposition of christian duties
c.	90r	collated Napier XXIV para. 2	God and man
d.	90r-v	collated Napier XXIV para. 3	doomsday
e.	90v-91r	printed Napier XXXVI	three-day fast
f.	91r-v	collated Napier XXIII	tithing and fasting
g.	91v-92r	collated Napier XXVII	sins of the nation
h.	92r-v	printed Napier LI	lawbreaking and penance
i.	92v	collated Napier XXV	baptism
j.	92v-93r	collated Napier XXVI	Paternoster and Creed
k.	93r-v	printed Napier LII	priestly duties
l.	93v	printed Napier LIII	priestly duties

As the table shows, Napier printed *e*, *h*, *k* and *l*, but collated the rest against texts printed from other manuscripts.³⁸ In other words the distinctive readings of Tiberius A.iii are hidden away in the apparatus. The pieces also appear out of sequence in Napier's edition, section *f* (his no. XXIII) appearing in the middle of sections *b* to *d* (in Napier, nos. XXII and XXIV), and effectively *c* and *d* are not marked as separate divisions. Thus in Napier the texts appear as discontinuous items, not always clearly presented as they appear in the manuscript, and it is difficult to read them in Ker's terms as parts of a single item. The first task is to put the pieces together again, to see what they have in common that has caused Ker to conflate them as one item in his *Catalogue*.

All twelve pieces are short, much shorter than most Old English homilies. Indeed sections *c* and *d* are respectively only 15 and 10 manuscript lines long. So why assume that they are separate pieces? First, they all begin in the same way, with an upper case heading addressing them *to eallum folke* 'to all the people', except the last two which are addressed exclusively to priests.³⁹ They are structured. Each has a clear opening, often beginning with the Wulfstanian formula *Leofan men* 'Dearly beloved', and each similarly has a concluding formula, again often following a Wulfstanian pattern. Each draws extensively on Wulfstan for content, yet rarely do we find the pieces according precisely, in every detail, with known Wulfstan writings. The object of my enquiry is to discover if there is any strong evidence for or against the thesis that this collection was put together by Wulfstan himself. For although all the pieces consist entirely of Wulfstan material, their lack of exact conformity with authentic homilies recorded elsewhere would

³⁸ Bethurum collates sections *a* and *b* (except for the part of Napier XXIV) in her homily XIII, but makes no other use of Tiberius A.iii; note her comment that 'the version of XIII given [in this manuscript] is not very reliable', *Homilies of Wulfstan*, p. 7.

³⁹ Similar headings appear in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 201.

suggest, according to the Orchard principle quoted above, that Wulfstan was responsible for them.

What follows is section *c* in two manuscript versions, that in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 113, a generally fairly reliable Wulfstan manuscript,⁴⁰ and the text in Tiberius A.iii, where it is marked off in manuscript as an independent piece.

Hatton 113 (Napier 121.6-122.3): God is ure ealra fæder, and he gecyðde þæt þa þa he asende his agen bearn hider, Crist of heofenum, and her wearð man geboren þurh clæne mæden, sancta Marian, and he for eall mancyn deað þrowade, **eal swa ic ær sæde**, and us ealle þa þurh his deað alydde of ecan deaðe and us **gestrynde** to ecum life. Ðurh clæne mæden Crist wearð geboren, and þurh clæne fulluht we syndon cristene geworden; þæt we scylon eac on ealre clænnesse healdan, gif we aht gefaran scylan. Crist þrowode for us synleas, þonne mote we be gewyrhtum fela for urum synnum þrowian and þolian and æt Gode geearnian þæt he us **for** his mildheortnesse **huru** wið ecne deað **ahredde** and us on ðam towardan life reste geunne.

Tiberius A.iii: **TO EALLUM FOLKE**

Georne we witan þæt God is ura ealra fæder, **and we geswuteliap swa we pater noster singap þæt we þæs gelyfab**; and he gecyðde þæt **ful mildelice** þa þa he asende Crist his agen bearn hider of heofonum, and her werþ man geboren þurh **þæt** clæne mæden, sancta Marian, and for eal mankin **syþþan** deap þrowade and us ealle þa þurh his deap us alydde of ecan deape and **gerymde** us to ecan life. Þurh clæne mæden Crist wearþ geboren, and þurh clæne fulluht we sind cristene geworden; and we sceolan **us** eac on ealre clænnesse healdan, gif we aht gefaran sceolan. **And utan gemunan eac gelome þæt** Crist þrowode for us **swiþe** sinleas, þonne motan we be gewyrhtum **huru** feala for urum

⁴⁰ Bethurum bases her text throughout her edition upon Hatton 113 ‘wherever possible’, *Homilies of Wulfstan*, p. 4.

sinum **hwilan** þrowian and þolian **and ealles we sceolan Gode þancian, gif we riht doþ**, and æt **him** gegearnian þæt he þurh his **micelan** mildheortnesse us wiþ ecne deað **gescylde** and us on þam towardan life reste geunne. **Uton on ælcne wisan nu georne Gode gecweman; þonne beorge we us sylfe wiþ ece wite [and] gegearniaþ us heofonan rice**

As the table shows, section *c* of Tiberius A.iii is collated by Napier as part of his homily XXIV (which is represented above as having been used, in part, by the compiler of Napier XXX).⁴¹ The differences between the two versions of Napier XXIV, Hatton and Tiberius, are marked here in bold type. Either the Hatton text is a cut-down version of that surviving in Tiberius (and that of course is a possibility that we must take into account, since neither manuscript witness dates from Wulfstan's own day), or Tiberius represents an expansion of the Hatton type. There are a number of features which lead me to suspect that the latter is the case: the Tiberius text is an expanded one. It must be admitted that almost all the extra words and phrases in Tiberius can be paralleled elsewhere in Wulfstan's writings. They are genuine Wulfstan. And I accept that Wulfstan very frequently reused his own phraseology - it is intrinsic to his style. But the problem here is that everything is *too* Wulfstanian. It seems to me to be a perfect example of a scissors and paste exercise, but the scissors were, by chance or design, at work only on writings which are known to be by the archbishop.

The point may be made by working through some of the changes in more detail. The opening sentence seems to have been

⁴¹ The compiler of Napier XXX appears to have introduced the doublet *totwæmað and todælað* to the passage quoted earlier. Although this doublet is not found in Wulfstan, both words are found elsewhere in his writings. In the two texts of Napier XXIV considered here, that in Hatton 113 has a reference to the division of the soul and body after death using the verb *todælað* where Tiberius A.iii (section d) has *totwæmað*. It is possible that there was an earlier version of Napier XXIV that had both, and Napier XXX was drawing on this.

created by merging that in the Hatton text with a sentence drawn from Bethurum's homily VIIIb.57-9: *He is ealra fæder, 7 þæt we geswuteljað þonne we singað ure pater noster*. I can't find a parallel for the use of *mildlice* in Wulfstan, but the *ful* plus adverb construction is a familiar one. It might be argued that the Bethurum VIII sentence was somewhere at the back of Wulfstan's mind and that he simply re-used it when composing what is now in Tiberius A.iii.⁴² So far, then, this could be his reworking of a paragraph he had used in another context.⁴³ The same is true too for the other changes in the middle of the piece, until again in the last sentence, as in the first, the expansion is principally by the addition of sequences familiar elsewhere in his writings. But there are differences here. First there is the curious *ælcne* in *Uton on ælcne wisan*, curious because *wisan* is a feminine noun and *ælc* is clearly marked masculine. It is probable that this is just a scribal slip - the scribe is remarkably incompetent - yet it has to be said that the adding of a letter rather than the loss of one is an unusual copying error. Second, there is a parallel for the last sentence in Bethurum's homily XIII.105-6: *þonne beorge we us sylfum wið ece wite, 7 gearniað us heofona rice*, so again this is genuine Wulfstan as the opening expansion is. However, Bethurum's homily XIII was earlier printed by Napier in separate parts as his homilies XX to XXIV, and the table of the parts of Tiberius A.iii, item 19, shows that this has already been used in this sequence of twelve items, for it forms part of section *b*, where exactly this phrasing appears. Furthermore, the whole of the last sentence of the Tiberius version of Napier XXIV appears yet again in section *f*: *utan on ælce wisan georne Gode gecweman; þonne beorge we us sylfan wið ece wite 7 gearniaþ us heofonan*

⁴² Similarly the expansion that includes *gif we riht do*, a phrase he uses three times in the *Institutes of Polity*.

⁴³ This appears to be Bethurum's position when she states that some of the pieces in Tiberius item 19 are based on her VIIIa, which is the Latin text on baptism which lies behind her VIIIb.

rice (in this case with an etymologically correct form of *ælc*). So precisely the same wording occurs in *b*, *c* and *f*. It seems very unlikely, given what is shown by Orchard as the usual method of composition of Wulfstan, that he would have repeated himself verbatim three times in so short a space. Whoever put these twelve pieces together, it was surely not Wulfstan. And if Wulfstan was not responsible for putting the pieces together, it is very unlikely that he was responsible for their final form and their precise wording.

There are further examples of repetition throughout these twelve pieces. I cite only one: three of the them, *e*, *h* and *l*, end with the prayer *hali(g) drihten, gemiltsie(-a) us eallan(-um) Amen*, and this formula is added again by a near-contemporary scribe to *b*. I can find no other instance of this, either in Wulfstan or elsewhere in Old English. Again, it may be by Wulfstan, but it adds to the impression that this collection of twelve pieces was put together with care by someone else, though in saying that I am aware that what I am also saying is that I believe that there was an individual in the second quarter of the eleventh century capable of producing prose so heavily indebted to Wulfstan that it can hardly be distinguished from authentic writings by him. A Wulfstan imitator, no less.

Finally, I should like to put the twelve pieces into a slightly wider manuscript context. They are followed by a Latin ordo for the ordination of a bishop and by English directions for a confessor. In terms of content these may have some relationship with the homiletic pieces, but textually they have none. What they may indicate is that the homiletic pieces were put together by - or at the instigation of - an archbishop, for his use. The three items that precede the homiletic group are more significant textually. Each is a homiletic piece which is found in some form elsewhere in Old English, yet here it is considerably adapted. They are first Ælfric's Second Series Palm Sunday homily so far removed from the text of Ælfric that Malcolm Godden prints it as an appendix (it incorporates some passages from Vercelli homily

I);⁴⁴ second a version of the so-called Sunday Letter, printed by Napier as his no. XLIV, which again has passages from Vercelli homilies (nos. IX and X), and which is a variant of the Sunday Letter piece printed by Napier as no. XLIII;⁴⁵ and third a text printed by Fred Robinson called ‘The Devil’s Account of the Next World’⁴⁶ which yet again has material drawn ultimately from a version of Vercelli homily IX.⁴⁷ There is a common trait here, and one which extends into the Wulfstan material: adaptation of earlier homiletic material. It is possible that whoever was responsible for adapting the Ælfric and the anonymous material was also responsible for doing the same with Wulfstan’s. There are clearly openings for a fuller investigation here.

I end this paper on a lighter note in quoting Charles Lamb. This is from one of the essays of Elia, ‘Oxford in the Vacation’, first published in the *London Magazine* in October 1820, and - perhaps wisely - heavily cut in later reprints:

What a place to be is an old library! It seems as though all the souls of all the writers, that have bequeathed their labours to these Bodleians, were reposing here, as in some dormitory, or middle state. I do not want to handle, to profane the leaves, their winding-sheets . . . Still less have I curiosity to disturb the elder repose of MSS. There is something to me repugnant at any time in written hand. The text never seems determinate. Print settles it. I had thought of the Lycidas as of a full-grown beauty - as springing up with all its parts absolute - till, in an evil hour, I was shown the original written copy of it, together with the other minor

⁴⁴ *Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies: The Second Series, Text*, ed. M. Godden, EETS ss 5 (London, 1979), 381-90.

⁴⁵ See my ‘The Corpus of Vernacular Homilies and Prose Saints’ Lives before Ælfric’, *ASE* 8 (1979), 223-77, at pp. 248-9.

⁴⁶ F. C. Robinson, ‘The Devil’s Account of the Next World’, *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 73 (1972), 362-71.

⁴⁷ See my ‘“The Devil’s Account of the Next Word” Revisited’, *American Notes and Queries* 24 (1986), 107-10.

poems of its author, in the library of Trinity, kept like some treasure, to be proud of. I wish they had thrown them in the Cam, or sent them after the latter cantos of Spenser, into the Irish Channel. How it staggered me to see the fine things in their ore! interlined, corrected! as if their words were mortal, alterable, displaceable at pleasure! as if they might have been otherwise, and just as good! as if inspiration were made up of parts, and those fluctuating, successive, indifferent! I will never go into the workshop of any great artist again.

It seems that Lamb liked his literature mint! Those of us whose professional activities involve regular handling of manuscripts, on the other hand, take much pleasure from entering the workshop of any writer, however minor, and I hope I've said enough to convince the reader of its value for our studies, and of the dangers of failing 'to disturb the elder repose of MSS', and reading Old English only in print. It may be thought that homilies have little intrinsic interest for students of Anglo-Saxon. But because they survive in such numbers from the period (more than any other item except legal documents), they offer the potential of a great variety of information, on the movement of ideas and of books into Anglo-Saxon England, on the making and dissemination of books in the vernacular, on scribal habits and training, on the transmission of texts, on intertextuality leading to an awareness of the renegotiation of Latin antecedents, and on language. It is towards a greater understanding of all of these that this paper is directed.