

**153. Lawrence, Kansas, Kenneth Spencer
Research Library Pryce MS C2:1**
(with 63 Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 557)
Fragment of "Legend of the Holy Cross before Christ"
[Ker 73 Supplement, Gneuss 117]

HISTORY: A trimmed-down single leaf from an early or mid-11c fragment of the "The Legend of the Holy Cross before Christ," probably written at Worcester and containing glosses by the "tremulous hand" of Worcester. The leaf was discovered pasted as padding between the leather and the board in the same volume as Pryce C2:2 [154] (see the "History" of that item), under the opposite cover. Two small strips from another leaf from the same manuscript and text are preserved as CCC 557 [63]. The initial identification of the Kansas and Corpus leaves as being from the same manuscript was by N. R. Ker, p.c. to B. Colgrave, 4 July 1961 (Colgrave and Hyde 1962: 61–62). The only known copy of the complete text is in the very late OE/early ME version in Bodley 343 [359], a late 12c manuscript from the West Midlands, which very likely had this OE manuscript as its ancestor, if not its exemplar (ed. Napier 1894; see Colgrave and Hyde 1962: 76). Probably from a manuscript acquired by and mutilated by Parker (see the "History" of CCC 557 [63]). Based on Ker's initial identification of one of the Corpus fragments (Ker 1940), Colgrave and Hyde (1962) speculate that it may once have formed part of Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 198 [41] (Ker's scribe 9, cf. *Cat.*: 82), a mid-11c homily collection with additions made later in the century and glossed by the 13c "tremulous hand" of Worcester. It is not known how leaves excised from a manuscript in the 1570s could find their way into the binding of a book dated after 1636. It is not unlikely that these leaves (including CCC 557) and Pryce MS. C2:2, a leaf from Bodleian Library Hatton 115 [385], were removed by Parker, or by an agent of Parker's (Joscelyn) when the manuscripts were still at Worcester. This leaf had the former shelfmark MS. Y 103. It is unmounted.

CODICOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION: A single trimmed-down sheet of thick but somewhat limp, well-prepared, tan vellum that was used as a padding between the leather cover and a pasteboard stiffener in the same book as

Spencer Library, Pryce MS. C2:2 [154]. Recto is glue side, now stained a reddish brown from glue and leather, and appears to be the hair side; the drypoint ruling is from the verso and only traces of the bounding lines remain. The trimmed-down leaf is 219 x 163 mm. No pricking remains. The leather cover (simply two squares of leather almost exactly the same dimensions as the leaves, outsides simply tooled, impossible to tell which cover was front and which back) to which the recto was glued, preserves an almost perfect offset impression, which can be easily read with a mirror. Pryce C2:2, a leaf from a different manuscript, was treated exactly the same way for the opposite cover. (On the leather covers, which have been removed from their book, see Colgrave and Hyde 1962: 60–61 and description of Pryce MS C2:2 [154].)

Text area is 150 mm. wide x 185+ mm. high. Twenty-three full long lines and descenders of a twenty-fourth top line remain, the lines varying between 132 mm. to 157 mm. The uncropped leaves seem to have originally had 27 lines, that is, a total of 3 lines were cropped from the top, judging from the amount of text missing in comparison to Napier's edition (so Colgrave and Hyde 1962: 65). Bottom margin is 32 mm.

Very dark brownish-black ink, in-text initials are filled in with reddish-orange wash. A plain, not particularly distinguished or consistent 11c Insular minuscule. The last line of the verso has exaggerated decorative descenders. The text of the recto (glue side) has some passages in the middle of lines 7–14 that are difficult to decipher, but the faintest letters on the vellum show the strongest offsets on the cover.

Colgrave and Hyde (1962: 74; cf. Franzen 1991: 54) identify 16 Latin glosses in light brown ink to the OE, as well as other marks and points, by the early 13c "tremulous hand" of Worcester; glosses by this hand occur on every side of the three fragments (Kansas + 2 Corpus). Two of these glosses on verso, left, are partly cropped (at lines 10 and 22).

CONTENTS: Fragment of "The Legend of the Holy Rood before Christ" (the complete text in a unique 12c copy is ed. Napier 1894; transcription of the text on this leaf, Colgrave and Hyde 1962: 62–64):

Recto (glue-side): [three? lines cut off from top, the descenders of the nearside cut-off line visible] 'Ðridde æt his wynstran sidan. ON morgen þe he arás. þa wundrode he . . . oð þ<æt> he hine to his drihtne gebæde þ<æt> he for his mild heort|nyse' (= Napier 2.10–4.8);

Verso: [three? lines cut off from top, descenders visible] '[. . .] wæron. þ<æt> þurh heora mægen seo biternes ðæs wæteres to þære | nihte . . . 7 fer|de

forð on his wege. to þa(m) tune þe genemned is. robathi' (= Napier 4.12–33).

[**Note:** The Kansas leaf is from the beginning of the text and the Corpus passages correspond to the text as printed 10 pages further along in Napier's edition; Kansas has hair recto, and Corpus has flesh recto: Page, Budny, and Hadgraft (1995: 527) suppose that Kansas and Corpus could have formed conjoint outside leaves of their quire, with six intervening leaves.]

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- Colgrave, Bertram, and Anne Hyde. "Two Recently Discovered Leaves from Old English Manuscripts." *Speculum* 37 (1962): 60–78.
- Collins, Rowland L. *Anglo-Saxon Vernacular Manuscripts in America, Exhibited at the Pierpont Morgan Library, 1 April–9 May 1976*. New York: The Scheide Library, The Pierpont Morgan Library, 1976. [no. 6]
- Franzen, Christine. *The Tremulous Hand of Worcester: A Study of Old English in the Thirteenth Century*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991.
- Ker, N. R. "An Eleventh-Century Old English Legend of the Cross before Christ." *Medium Aevum* 9 (1940): 84–85.
- Napier, Arthur S., ed. *History of the Holy Rood Tree, a Twelfth-Century Version of the Cross-Legend*. Early English Text Society, o.s. 103. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1894.
- Page, R. I., Mildred Budny, and Nicholas Hadgraft. "Two Fragments of an Old English Manuscript in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge." *Speculum* 70 (1995): 502–29.