

317. London, Lambeth Palace 487

Homilies

[Ker p. xix/282, Gneuss —]

HISTORY: The handwriting of the main scribe of this manuscript has been repeatedly dated to about the year 1200. Ker (*Cat.*, xix) notes that the manuscript stands as one of the cases in which the boundary between OE and ME is blurred, that it “may have been written before 1200,” and that it contains material that derives from extant OE sources. In an unpublished reassessment, he commented of the main scribe, “whether he was writing before or after 1200 who can tell? . . . I don’t see why it shouldn’t be before. . . . there don’t seem to be any features . . . which would suggest that a post-1200 date is likely” (quoted in O’Brien 1985: 1). An earlier assessment had arrived at the same conclusion, as recorded in a loose-leaf note inserted at the back of the manuscript: “On purely palaeographical grounds I should be disposed to date Lambeth MS. 487 somewhere in the forty years 1185–1225. (ff. 65b–67 later) The materials however for dating vernacular writing are so slight that any opinion must be tentative. I base the above mainly on the Latin scraps, the extent of which is small. J. P. G.” The note is dated in pencil to 1923 and attributed by Sisam (1951: 105, n. 2) to J. P. Gilson, Keeper of Manuscripts in the British Museum.

The collection was copied from various different materials assembled in two different main exemplars, as has been inferred from variations in the orthography (Sisam 1951), including some from OE (see items 2, 9–11 below). Nevertheless, the dialect of the works of the main scribe is fairly homogenous; it is close to the A scribe’s language of the so-called “AB” dialect of the “Ancrene Riwe” and is localizable to the West Midlands, specifically Worcestershire or somewhat more to the south-west (see Wilson 1935 and Hill 1977: 109). Item 19 was also added in a West Midland dialect (see Thompson 1958: lvi). That last item, “On Ureisun of Oure Louerde,” might suggest female ownership of the book in the Middle Ages: it belongs to a large body of religious literature “written for (and perhaps, in some cases, by) devout women”

(Thompson 1958: xv). There is little further evidence, however, for the medieval provenance of the manuscript.

Lambeth 487 was donated to Lambeth Palace Library by Archbishop Richard Bancroft (Archbishop of Canterbury 1604–1610) and is listed in two catalogues of his manuscripts from 1612 (Hill 1970–72: 271). Bancroft's ownership has led to the suggestion of a medieval provenance of Lanthony Priory, Gloucs., since many of his manuscripts came from there (Wilson 1935: 39), but Hill shows that such a provenance is unlikely since the manuscript is not identified in two Lanthony catalogues (Hill 1970–72: 278, n. 5).

The manuscript moved with the whole collection from Lambeth Palace to Cambridge between 1649 and 1664, where it was assigned the pressmark '#. C. Θ. 12' that is now recorded on the inside cover (see Hill 1970–1972: 271–72 and Cox-Johnson 1955: 114–26). The manuscript was catalogued again three times in the 17c on its return to Lambeth, and in one of these listings is given the pressmark 185 which is written on the inside cover ('4^o 185') and on f. i recto (Hill 1970–1972: 272). From the evidence of these catalogues, Hill infers that the manuscript was repaired and rebound (probably reusing its existing cover) during the primacy of Archbishop Sancroft, 1678–1691, and possibly before 1688 (1970–1972: 272). This is the most likely time for the displacement of the "Finnsburh Fragment," which Hickes found and transcribed from an anomalous single leaf in a collection of homilies "Semi-Saxonicarum" in the Lambeth Library—most probably this manuscript (see Hickes 1705: 192 and Hill 1970–72: 272–73). No trace of the leaf remains today.

CODICOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION: Leaves measure 176–178 x 134 mm. Most have been augmented in their width through the addition of mending strips: the original width of the parchment was ca. 127 mm. Parchment is arranged HFHF. Leaves are lined in ink (although the first few pages are incised both in ink and in drypoint) for 26–32 lines per page, with 28 lines the norm (except for 26 lines on ff. 34v–35r, 58v–59r; 27 lines on ff. 3r, 36v–37r, 39v–40r, 51v–53v, 54v–58r, 59v–65r; 29 lines on ff. 15v–16r, 26r–27r, 30v–31r, 32v–34r, 38v–39r, 67r; 30 lines at 66v; 31 lines at ff. 50v, 65v–66r; 32 lines at f. 44r–50r). Written area ca. 144–160 x 81 mm., with double bounding lines on either side and with some lines extended beyond the grid. Pricking is visible on some outer margins, with two sets visible on f. 1, approximately corresponding to the differently placed lineation on verso and recto.

The manuscript is foliated in ink i–iii on the flyleaves and 1–67 at the top right corner of the rectos, except that the second folio was omitted. The

foliation postdates at least some of the mending of the leaves since '11' is written in ink on the mending strip rather than on the original parchment. The second leaf is numbered '1' in pencil and the same penciled hand repeats the numbering of a few other folios on the mending material. The endleaves are not foliated. This foliation is used throughout this description. A modern penciled hand records (incorrectly) quire signatures at the bottom right verso of various folios: the numbering corresponds to the (impossible) quiring described by James (1925: 673).

Most of the manuscript is written by a single scribe who wrote ff. 1r–65r. Rubrics and Latin quotations are generally written in red by the main scribe, although he uses black for this in the opening item and some of item 2. Within item 18 a number of English phrases are written in red. Space is left for a decorated enlarged initial to start every item, but these have never been filled in. Generally the missing decorative letter is the start of the rubric, although sometimes it is the start of the text following the rubric. In some cases a small guiding letter is evident written in one or other margin in red or black (namely at the start of items 2, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17 (now illegible), and 18 (now illegible)). In item 10 (ff. 37v/4–45r/11), the rubrication was even more ambitious: as well as extended Latin quotations, the Latin name for each sin and important capitals in the English text are written in red. The program is generally carried out successfully, although the scribe has omitted some words and capital letters throughout the homily as a result. A second scribe, who dates to the mid-13c, wrote ff. 65v–67r (item 19). His text is ruled for 30–31 lines per page, creating a written space 153 x 90 mm. and with no use of color.

The scribe makes various corrections, such as underpointing an error at f. 21v/16, supplying missing text in the margin (e.g. at ff. 18r/24, 21v/23) or above the line (f. 64v/1), and, frequently, crossing out mistakes (e.g. at f. 25v/27). These alterations are probably by the main scribe, even though the script sometimes varies in aspect (e.g., at f. 33v/14). Apart from such corrections, there is little evidence for medieval use except for a brief partly legible inscription in a different hand at the top inside margin of f. 65v. A note on f. 30r/9 demonstrates the attention of a 17c hand: the annotator has pulled out a passage from the text, recording 'Haly chirch all | Christen folk', written over the mending material. Harder to date are the penciled marking of certain passages for attention, as with one on the Lord's Prayer at f. 23v/1–21. A pencilled hand also makes short underlinings in item 1 and inserts a marginal *yogh* at f. 1r/8.

The manuscript is bound in a fairly thick, coarse leaf of parchment with hairside on the outside. '487' and '8' are now written on the spine and there are three tears where previous spine labels have been removed. Two older pressmarks, '#. C. Θ. 12' and '4^o 185', appear on the inside cover. The endleaves include two paper bifolia cut down to the size of the manuscript, bound upside down as ff. i–ii and rightway up as ff. [69–70]. These are from Thomas Aquinas's "Summa theologica," 2, ii, leaf sig. a¹⁰, printed by Peter Schoeffer of Mainz in March 1467 (identification by Hill 1970–72: 271). A clue to the identification, 'Hain * 1459', is written in pencil at the foot of ff. i recto and [70v] (see Hill 1970–72: 271, n. 2). The blank margin of f. i recto is used for various Lambeth Palace library pressmarks. The other flyleaves, ff. iii and [68], were originally blank paper. F. iii verso has received a table of contents headed 'Old Saxon Homilies' in the hand of Archbishop Sancroft (James 1925: 673) and identifying the 18 items keyed to the present foliation, while f. [70v] has marks of identification corresponding to the opening.

COLLATION: iii + 68 + iii, foliated i–iii, 1, 1^a, 2–67. Ff. i–iii and [68–70] are paper flyleaves, i–ii and [68–69] reusing a printed book (see above). **I**¹² (ff. 1, 1^a, 2–11), **II**¹⁴ (ff. 12–25), **III**¹⁸ (ff. 26–43), **IV–VI**⁸ (ff. 44–67).

CONTENTS:

f. iii verso Table of contents (17c).

1. ff. 1r/1–3r/3 [C]um appropínq(u)asset ie(su)s ierosolímam. & cet(er)a | Godemen hit is an heste dei to dei þe is on | .xii. monþe' (ed. Morris 1867: 3–11, no. 1).
2. ff. 3r/4–9r/10 **hic dicendum est de quadragesima.** | [E]cce nu(n)c tempus acceptabile . . . Gode men nu beoð icumen | þa bicumeliche dages 7 þa halie dages uppen us' (ed. Morris 1867: 11–25, no. 2; mostly an adaptation of a Wulfstan homily; ed. Bethurum 1957: 251–54, no. 19).
3. ff. 9r/11–15v/26 [I]n leintén tíme uwilc mon gað to scifte; | þer beoð summe' (ed. Morris 1867: 25–41, no. 3).
4. ff. 15v/27–18v/9 **In diebus dominicis.** | [L]eofemen gef ge lusten wuled 7 ge wil|leliche hit understonden' (ed. Morris 1867: 41–47, no. 4; Hall 1920: 76–79, no. 10).
5. ff. 18v/9–21v/15 **Hic dicendum est de p(ro)ph(et)a.** | [M]is[s]us est ieremías ín puteum . . . Leofemen we uínded ín halie | boc. þ(et). ieremie þe p(ro)ph(et)e stod ín ane putte' (ed. Morris 1867: 47–53, no. 5; Hall 1920: 79–82, no. 11).

6. ff. 21v/16–25r/26 Poem: [P]ater noster qui es in celis & cetera. | ‘Vre feder þ(et) ín heouene is þ(et) is al soð ful | iwis’ (ed. Morris 1867: 55–71, no. 6; short rhyming couplets written as prose).
7. ff. 25r/27–27v/4 [T]ria sunt hominum saluti necessaria. | fides. bap-tis-mus. mundicia uite. || ‘pro þing bod þ(et) ech. m(an). hadde mot þ(et) wile his | cristíndom folge’ (ed. Morris 1867: 73–77, no. 7) [ends imperfectly].
8. ff. 27v/6–30v/16 [H]omo quídam descendebat ab ier(usa)l(e)m i(n) | ierico & c(etera). ‘God almihti seið an forbis|ne to h’i’s folk in þe halie godspel’ (ed. Morris 1867: 79–85, no. 8 [begins imperfectly]).
9. ff. 30v/17–37v/3 Ælfric, CH I.22: ‘[F]ram þan halie hester dei; boð italde. fiftí. | daga to þisse deie 7 þes dei is ihaten pe(n)tecostes’ (ed. Morris 1867: 87–101, no. 9; Clemons 1997: 354–64).
10. ff. 37v/4–45r/11 De octo uicíis. & de duodecím abúsíus hui(us) | seculi. | ‘[O]mnia nímia nocent. & temp(er)a(n)tía | mater uirtutum dicitur. | þet is on englisc. alle ofer doneþing denað. | 7 ímetnesse is alre mîhta moder’ (ed. Morris 1867: 101–19, no. 10 and 296–304, appendix 2; while most of the material is by Ælfric, he is probably not responsible for its final form: see Pope 1967–1968: 63–64).
11. ff. 45r/12–47r/17 [F]actus est filius dei omnib(us) sibi obtemper-a(n)|tib(us) causa salutis et(er)ne . . . ‘Vre | drihtnes halie passíun. þ(et) is his halie þrowunge | þe he for moncun(e) underfeng. is nu icume(n) | in’ (ed. Morris 1867: 119–25, no. 11; includes an extract from Ælfric, CH I.14, ed. Clemons 1997: 295–97, ll. 164–92; cf. f. 46r).
12. ff. 47r/18–49r/5 [Ch]ri(st)u(s) passus est p(ro) nobis . . . ‘Al þet mé ret 7 singeð on þisse tíman ín hállie chirché’ (ed. Morris 1867: 125–31, no. 12).
13. ff. 49r/6–51v/21 [Q]ui parce semínat; parce & metet. | ‘Vre lauere seinte paul heges lardewen | eft(er) ure helende seolfe’ (ed. Morris 1867: 131–39, no. 13).
14. ff. 51v/22–54r/7 [R]euerenda est nobis h(ec) dies s(an)c(t)a q(ue) dicit(ur) | domínica . . . ‘Muchel man ach | to wurþen þis halie dei þat is sunnen dei | icleoped’ (ed. Morris 1867: 139–45, no. 14).
15. ff. 54r/8–56r/9 [Q]ui uult ueniet post me. abneget semet ip-su(m) . . . ‘wa is | þ(et). m(an). þ(et) wa is 7 me hím mare bihat’ (ed. Morris 1867: 145–49, no. 15).
16. ff. 56r/10–57v/22 [E]stote fortes in bello & pugnate cu(m) antiquo | serpente . . . ‘Þis word þe ich nu þe for tech; seide ure | drihten et sume time’ (ed. Morris 1867: 151–55, no. 16).

17. ff. 57_v/23–59_v/4 [E]untes ibant 7 flebant. mittentes semina | sua ‘Ðe halie p(ro)ph(et)e dauíd | specð on ane stude ín þe sauter’ (ed. Morris 1867: 155–59, no. 17).
18. ff. 59_v/5–65_r/11 “Poema Morale” or “Conduct of Life”: ‘[**ich em nu alder þene ich wes a wintre 7 | a lare . . . to | gung ich em on rede.** Vnnet lif ich habbe | iled’; ends imperfectly, presumably through faulty exemplar: ‘Ða boð nu míd hím ín helle | fordon 7 fordemet’ (ed. Morris 1867: 159–83, no. 18; Hall 1920: 30–46, no. 8, ll. 1–270; see also Hill 1977) [f. 65_r/12–27 blank].
19. ff. 65_v/1–67_r/29 Prayer “On Ureisun of Oure Louerde”: ‘I(es)u soð god. godes sone. ie(s)u soð god. soð mon. mon | maidene bern’; ends imperfectly: ‘þah he sende. moder þ(et) þu wult’ (ed. Morris 1867: 183–89, no. 19; Thompson 1958: 1–4) [f. 67_v blank].

PHOTO NOTES: The red ink of rubrics is often completely invisible on the microfiche.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- Bethurum, Dorothy, ed. *The Homilies of Wulfstan*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957.
- Clemons, Peter, ed. *Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies: The First Series*. Early English Text Society, s.s. 17. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997. [= CH I]
- Cox-Johnson, Ann. “Lambeth Palace Library 1610–1664.” *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 2 (1955): 105–26.
- Hall, Joseph. *Selections from Early Middle English, 1130–1250*. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1920.
- Hickes, George. *Linguarum vet. septentrionalium thesaurus grammatico-criticus et archaeologicus*, vol 1. Oxford: Sheldonian Theatre, 1705.
- Hill, Betty. “Early English Fragments and MSS Lambeth Palace Library 487, Bodleian Library Digby 4.” *Proceedings of the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society, Literary and Historical Section* 14 (1970–72): 269–80.
- . “The Twelfth-Century *Conduct of Life*, Formerly the *Poema Morale* or *A Moral Ode*.” *Leeds Studies in English* n.s. 9 (1977): 97–144.
- James, M. R. *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Lambeth Palace*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1925.
- Morris, Richard. *Old English Homilies and Homiletic Treatises*. Early English Text Society o.s. 29, 34. London: Trübner, 1867.

- O'Brien, Sarah M. "An Edition of Seven Homilies from Lambeth Palace Library MS. 487." D Phil. thesis, University of Oxford, 1985.
- Pope, John C., ed. *Homilies of Ælfric: A Supplementary Collection*. Early English Text Society, o.s. 259–60. London: Oxford University Press, 1967–1968.
- Sisam, Celia. "The Scribal Tradition of the *Lambeth Homilies*." *Review of English Studies* n.s. 2 (1951): 105–13.
- Thompson, W. Meredith, ed. *De Wobunge of Ure Lauerd*. Early English Text Society, o.s. 241. London: Oxford University Press, 1958.
- Wilson, R. M. "The Provenance of the Lambeth Homilies with a New Collation." *Leeds Studies in English and Kindred Languages* 4 (1935): 24–43.