

252. London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius A. xix
Bede, "Vita S. Cuthberti" (prose and verse)
[Ker 217, Gneuss 401, Lowe 2.184]

HISTORY: The main texts in the manuscript are Bede's prose and verse Lives of Saint Cuthbert, to which have been added an excerpt from Bede's "Historia ecclesiastica," miscellaneous epigrams, a prose note on the "Six Ages of Man," and neumed alleluia texts. Lapidge (1995: 143) describes the manuscript (his Siglum V) as "written in one of the mid-century phases of Anglo-Saxon Square minuscule script, and hence is dateable to c. 950." Dumville (1994: 139) characterizes the main script of Vitellius A. xix as phase II Anglo-Saxon Square minuscule, which he would date to the 930s. Ker (*Cat.*) notes that Vitellius A. xix comes from the same house as BL, Cotton Cleopatra A. iii [184] because each book was bound with a flyleaf from the same late-8c manuscript, Augustine, "De consensu evangelistarum" (cf. Lowe 1972: item 184). Bishop (1963: 93) connects Vitellius A. xix and Cleopatra A. iii to a group of manuscripts from St. Augustine's, Canterbury, of which Cambridge, Trinity College, B. 11. 2 (241) [77] is the chief, on the basis of the work of a common scribe. He also connects Vitellius A. xix to Harley 1117 [268] (see also Rollason [1989: 419] on the relationship of Vitellius A. xix to Harley 1117 and Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 183 [36]). Vitellius A. xix, Harley 1117, and Vatican City, Reg. lat. 204 [477] share a core of 13 glosses to the verse "Life" (Ker, *Cat.*, 283). In the 16c, John Leland made occasional marginal notes on names and, according to Sheerin (1977), "meagre extracts" from Vitellius A. xix in his "Collectanea" (Cotton Julius C. vi; pr. Hearne 1774: 3.157-60). The manuscript was owned by Sir Robert Cotton whose autograph appears on f. 9r.

CODICOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION: [iv] + 114ff. + [iv]. The flyleaves are stiff paper. The manuscript's leather binding is 19c, stamped in gold with Robert Cotton's arms; the binding is tight, with quires bound together in two- or three-quire bundles. Vitellius A. xix was repaired and rebound October 1866 and foliated in 1884. Pages are 213-218 x 130-135 mm., with a ruled area of 145 x 105-108 mm. (the ruling widens at f. 98r). Prick marks are visible in the outer margins at left and right. Rulings were made on the hair side with a hard

point, 22 lines to a page. The arrangement of sheets is predominantly continental, i.e., HFHF, but inconsistent in quires XI, XII, and XIII. F. 1r contains a list of contents in the hand of Richard James, Robert Cotton's librarian (a facsimile of his hand in Tite 1993: fig. 25), followed by shelfmark and library stamp.

The ink is dark brown, at times almost black; chapter headings are in red. There are a number of colored initials: f. 2r, 'D' filled in with blue/green; f. 4v, 'Q' filled in with blue; f. 9r, a 'P' with interlace design and a zoomorphic head is filled in with purple (Wormald Type II(a) [Wormald 1945: 107]; see also Temple 1976: no. 19 and ill. 63); f. 88v, 'D' is filled in with purple. Beginning on f. 91r section titles are in red. Capitals alternate green and red until f. 95r, after which all capital initials are in red. Oxidizing of the ink of the rubrics is common after f. 100r, and there is much variation in the orange/red spectrum. Gameson (1996: 168) believes that Vitellius A. xix, along with Oxford, Queen's College 320 and "Bald's Leechbook" (BL, Royal 12. D. xvii [298]) "provide formal parallels for the type of section initials used in the Exeter Book [130], in Bodley 319 [357] and on 96v of Lambeth 149 [311]." On f. 8v, on a background of purple (132 x 90 mm.), an incomplete figure (of Cuthbert?) is scratched into the surface.

The additional texts on ff. 7v–8r and on 88r ("De sacro baptisate") were entered in black ink in a late-10c hand. The alleluia texts on f. 88r are in a contemporary, though smaller hand in light brown ink. The "De sex aetatibus hominis" is in a late-10c hand.

There are some post-medieval annotations, including annotations by Leland (see Sheerin 1975). On f. 9r the notation "Ro: Cotton. Bruceus" occurs.

GLOSSES: The Cuthbert texts are glossed throughout in Latin. Construe marks also appear irregularly. Fifteen glosses in OE are described by Meritt (1945: 15, item 6) except for the following: an 11c copying note on f. 65r: 'læt her. 7 foh | on þone oþerne | captel.'; f. 92v/9: 'en' (gl.: 'nu') (both noted by Ker, *Cat.*, 283). There is an additional, scratched gloss on f. 15r/8: 'dominis' (gl.: 'hyra'), visible in sunlight and u.v. light.

COLLATION: I^{B+1} a singleton added after 7 (ff. 1–9), II–XIII^B (ff. 10–105), XIV^{B+1} a singleton before 1, i.e., f. 106 is now pasted to f. 114 (ff. 106–14). The tight binding makes the composition of the final quire difficult to ascertain. The quires are grouped: I–II, III–V, VI–VIII, IX–X, XI–XII, XIII–XIV.

CONTENTS:

1. Bede, prose "Vita S. Cuthberti" (ed. Colgrave 1940):

a. ff. 1v–4v/3 Preface: **INCIPIT PRAE | FATIO BEDÆ P(RE)S | BITERI DE VITA S(AN)C(T)I | CVTHBERHTI LINDIS | FARNENSIS EPISCOPI. | | ADEADFRIDVMEP(ISCOPU)M.** | 'Dominos(an)c(t)o ac beatissimo patri | eadfrido episcopo'; ends: 'dilectissimi fra|tres et domini mei'.

b. ff. 4v/4–7r/18 List of chapters: **INCIPIVNT CAPITVLA.** | 'I Quomodo puerd(e)i cuthberhtus per | infante(m) sit predicto episcopatu | admonitus'.

2a. f. 7v/1–16 Added verses:

DE QVATTVOR CLAVIBUSSAPIENTLÆ. IDEST | INDVSTRIA LEGENDI. ASSIDVITAS INTERROGANDI. | CONTEMPTVS DIVITIARVM. HONORIFICENTIA | DOCTORIS. | '[D]ilige care d(e)o scripturae discere causas'; ends: 'Vt precibus d(omi)no semper co(m)mendes in almīs' (ed. Bayless and Lapidge 1998: item 26 and note; ed. Sheerin 1977).

2b. ff. 7v/17–8r/6 Extract from Iuvenius, "Evangeliorum libri quattuor," 1.590–600: **VERSVS DE ORATIONE DOMINICA** | '[S]idereo genitor residens in vertice caeli'; ends: 'Aeque malis tua nos in lucem dextera tollat' (ed. Huemer 1891; variants from Huemer's text pr. Sheerin 1977; Schaller and Könsgen 1977: no. 15347).

2c. f. 8r/7–9 Epigram, possibly by Milred of Worcester: 'Hos tibi. mil. lyrico. red. feci carmine uersus' (ed. Sheerin 1977; Sims-Williams 1982).

f. 8v Portrait panel with image (of Cuthbert?) scratched on a purple field.

1c. ff. 9r/1–84v/22 Bede, prose "Vita S. Cuthberti": **.I. QVOMODO PVER D(E)I CVTHBER(HT)VS | PER INFANTE(M) SIT PREDICTO EPIS | COPATVI ADMONITVS.** | 'PRINCIPIVM NOBIS | scribendi de uita beati cuth|berhti hieremias propheta | consecrat'; ends 'in bonis desideriu(m) n(ost)r(u)m. sua | nos in perpetuu(m) misericordia et mi|seratione coronat. Amen'.

3. Two chapters from Bede, "Historia ecclesiastica" (ed. Colgrave and Mynors 1969: 444–48):

ff. 85r/5–86v/8 Book 4, ch. 29 (30): **ITE(M) EX LIBRO HISTORIAE ECCLÆ | SIASTICÆ GENTIS ANGLO | RVM. QVARTO KAPITVLO. | ET VICESIMO NONO.** 'III. ERat in eodem monasterio frat(er) | quidam nomine beaduðegn'; ends 'Sicut in uolu | mine uite et uirtutum eius. quisq(ue) | legens inueniet'.

- ff. 86v/9–88r/8 Book 4, ch. 30 (31): ‘XXVIII. | NEc silentio pretereundu(m) quod | ante trienniu(m) per reliquias ei(us) | factum’; ends: ‘ac si nihil umqua(m) | in eo deformitatis. ac tumoris | apparuisset. d(e)o gratias’.
- 4a. f. 88r/9–11 Added verses: **DE SACRO BAPTISMATE.** | ‘Fons sacer est fidei qui culpas abluit om(ne)s. | Tinguitur hoc quisquis incipit esse nous’ (ed. Sheerin 1977).
- 4b. f. 88r/12–18 Three neumed alleluia texts: 1. ‘Sacerdos magnus sanctus martinus’; 2. ‘Tu es sacerdos in | aeternum’; 3. ‘Dum comple|rentur dies pentecostes’ (cf. Schlager 1968: 435–36; 510–11; 141–42).
5. Bede, verse “Vita S. Cuthberti” (ed. Jaeger 1935: 58ff., as ms. V; Schaller and Könsgen 1977: no. 9848):
- a. ff. 88v/1–89r/14 Prefatory letter: **INCIPIT EPISTOLA BEDAE PR(ES)B(ITER)I. | AD IOHANNE(M) PRESBITERV(M).** | ‘D(OMI)NO in d(omi)no dominorum. dilectissimo | iohanni pr(es)b(iter)o. bēda famulus chr(ist)i | salutem’; ends ‘pro me interce|dere memineris’.
6. ff. 89r/15–20 Added verses: Two alleluia texts with neumes [in a lighter brown ink and a different Anglo-Caroline minuscule from that on 88r]: 1. ‘NoNNe cor nostrum’; 2. ‘Clamauerunt iusti’ (cf. Schlager 1968: 333–34; 72–73).
- 5b. ff. 89v/1–114r/12 Verse “Vita S. Cuthberti” (text): **INCIPIT LIBER DE MIRACVLIS S(AN)C(T)I | CVTHBERCHTI EP(ISCOP)I.** | ‘Multa suis d(omi)n(u)s fulgescere lumina seclis’; ends: ‘Vita manens castis lumenq(ue) salusq(ue) p(er) æuum’.
7. ff. 114r/13–15 **SEX AETATES HOMINIS SVNT** | ‘Prima infantia. (gl.: ‘s. ætas .vii. ann(i).’) ii^a. pueritia’ (gl.: ‘.xiii.’) (pr. Sheerin 1977).
- [Note: Item 7, a prose note, added in a later 10c hand, is glossed in Latin with the ages of each stage. See Isidore, *Differentiae* 2.19–21 (PL 83: 81–82) and Bayless and Lapidge 1998: item 378 and note.]

PHOTO NOTES: There are notable erasures at ff. 20r/13; 35v/22; 65r/16; 76v/8; 77v/4 and 7. On f. 8v the figure of a man with a nimbus is best seen in bright, angled light. It is indistinct on the fiche.

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