

300. London, British Library, Royal 13 A. xv

Felix's "Life of St. Guthlac"

[Ker 266, Gneuss 484]

HISTORY: A volume of the Latin life of St. Guthlac (673–714) written by Felix, an East Anglian monk, before 749. Gneuss says the manuscript is mid-10c, probably from Worcester. Ker says the A-S minuscule is of 's. x¹' and the caroline minuscule of 's. x²' which probably means that the scribes were contemporaries of different age and training. The quires (I, V) containing the A-S minuscule may be replacements of lost or damaged quires in the original manuscript (see below). A late 11c hand has systematically revised the text, and this revised version forms the basis of the texts in Dublin, Trinity College B.1.6 (13c) and Gotha, Herzogliche Bibliothek 1.81 (early 14c) (cf. Colgrave 1956: 30, 43–44). A-S glosses (inked and scratched) of the first half of the 11c. Lumley's signature erased at bottom of f. 1r; the mark at top of f. 1r (like the symbol for "Jupiter") perhaps indicates ownership by John Dee (1527–1608) (see Ker, *Cat.*, citing James 1926: 8, though the latter says that Dee marked his books with this sign "thrice repeated").

CODICOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION: i + 45 + i, flyleaves are modern paper.

A small, worn book, containing only the "Life of St. Guthlac." Membrane is medium thick, somewhat limp, tan on hair sides and lighter on flesh, arranged HFHF. The front outside leaf is dirty and probably was uncovered for some time; it also has glue marks, perhaps indicating that it was once glued to some sort of cover; the last quire is damaged, lacking its edges, and the last two leaves are quite reduced, as much as 55 mm. on the fore-edge (quire VI has been repaired with vellum inlays). Rust marks on last leaf may be of a clasp (Colgrave 1956: 29). Original signature on last verso of quire 3.

Page size ca. 240 × 165 mm. Writing area 185 × 110/112 mm. Pricked and ruled rather unevenly for 20 lines, with double bounding lines. One hand writes A-S minuscule on quire I and a slightly different A-S minuscule appears in most of the small quire V (ff. 36r–38v); the A-S script of ff. 7v–8v

resembles that of quire V and all the A-S minuscule script may be by the same hand; it is in various shades of brown, from very dark to reddish; the remaining pages and quires are written in a single anglo-caroline hand using darker ink. Colgrave (1956: 29) plausibly suggests that quires I and V are replacement quires to a damaged manuscript. In quire I, ff. 1r–4r, the large and small initials have oxidized from red and from f. 4v they are in text ink, also in the A-S script on ff. 36r–38v. Large initials and some in-text capitals by the anglo-caroline hand are oxidized from red to gray, other in-text capitals are in the text ink. Binding is of the 20c.

COLLATION: I⁸ 3 and 5 half-sheets (ff. 1–8), II⁸ (ff. 9–16), III⁸ (ff. 17–24, sig. 'iii'), IV⁸ (ff. 25–34), V⁴ 1 & 4 half-sheets (ff. 35–38), VI¹⁰ 8, 9, 10 cancelled (ff. 39–45).

CONTENTS:

ff. 1r–45r/2 Felix, "Life of St. Guthlac" (lacking the prologue and capitula), chapters indicated by a colored initial (no indentation), no ch. titles; on f. 1r added titles: (13c) 'Vita S(an)c(t)i Gvhtlaci Confessoris', (17c) 'Vita S(an)c(t)i Guthlaci Confessoris': (ch. 1) 'Fuit itaque in dieb(us) æpelredi inlustris anglo|rum regis'; ends (ch. 53): 'grates d(e)o soluen[s dignas] | quas nullus reddere nescit'; rest of f. 45r blank (ed. and tr. Colgrave 1956: 72–170, even-numbered pages).

f. 45v Various 12c ecclesiological scribbles; a late-medieval cursive library note, partly cancelled 'Guthlac(us) (con)fessoris 7 anachorita . . .'; a 17c historical note on contents.

OE Glosses (19) pr. Napier 1900, no. 36; additional (19) scratched glosses pr. Meritt 1945, no. 16.

[**Note:** Correction to Napier, 'levar': 'he' is on 16v; f. 33v/17 text has 'þ' with Latin gloss above 'uelu' and in right margin '7 swa'. Scratch Glosses, comments on Meritt: f. 13r/2 'comis': 'loc' scratched in right margin and 'loch' scratched above 'comis'; f. 27r/20 'remeabili': 'hwyrf' in right margin; f. 30v 'presage': 'gewittigre' is in the left margin between lines 2 and 3; f. 30v 'prouidentia': 'forescea' is in the left margin between lines 3 and 4; f. 34v 'con|tigerunt': 'curon' is in left margin between lines 7 and 8.]

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