

DESCRIBERS' PREFACE

All of the manuscripts in this volume have a medieval provenance in Exeter and/or other connections with the Anglo-Saxon foundation there (with the possible exception of Paris, BN lat. 943 [422]). This is evidenced in a number of inscriptions and library inventories. Because the histories and codicological descriptions throughout the present volume refer to this evidence, I itemize it here.

Leofric, bishop of Exeter (1050–1072), donated numerous manuscripts to the Exeter foundation, and in so doing had the scribes of his episcopal household write donation inscriptions into these books. Nine manuscripts survive with individual donation inscriptions: these are Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 41 [25]; Cambridge, Trinity College B.11.2 [77]; Cambridge, University Library Ii.2.11 [100]; Oxford, Bodl. Lib. Auct. D.2.16 [340]; Oxford, Bodl. Lib. Auct. F.1.15 [343] (originally two MSS with two inscriptions, now bound as one volume); Oxford, Bodl. Lib. Auct. F.3.6 [345]; Oxford, Bodl. Lib. Bodley 579 [364]; Oxford, Bodl. Lib. Bodley 708 [365] (for the list of MSS and a discussion, see Nicholson 1913: lx–lxi; Förster in Chambers et al. 1933: 11–12 n.3; Drage 1978: 29–41; Conner 1993: 13–16). All of these manuscripts are described in this volume, except Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 41 (described by Grant in ASMMF vol. 11 [2003]: 1–27) and Oxford, Bodl. Lib. Bodley 579. The inscriptions have been printed variously: Förster (in Chambers et al. 1933: 11–12 n.3) prints an edited version of the inscription text, collating all nine of the manuscripts; Drage (1978: 32–36) prints each individual inscription with an analysis of wording and the hand of the two Exeter scribes responsible; Conner (1993: 14) prints the basic text.

Famously, Leofric's bequests to the foundation at Exeter were inventoried and this document was drawn up between 1069 and his death in 1072 (Förster in Chambers et al. 1933: 14–15). Copies of this OE text were appended to two gospel books: the Latin gospels in Oxford, Bodl. Lib. Auct. D.2.16 and the OE gospels in CUL Ii.2.11. The copy in the OE Gospels was subsequently removed, probably at the instigation of Matthew Parker, and replaced in the Exeter Book (Exeter, Cathedral Library 3501 [130]; see the description of the Exeter Book

in this volume for an account). The inventory has been discussed many times, most pertinently by Förster (in Chambers et al. 1933: 10–32), Lloyd (1972: 32–42), Drage (1978: 41–70 et passim), Gameson (1996), and Treharne (2003). There are two excellent recent editions and analyses of Leofric's donation inventory: Lapidge (1985, repr. 1994 and 2001: 132–45) prints just the list of books, and identifies list items with surviving manuscripts; Conner (1993: 226–35) edits and translates the entire text. I refer to both of these editions throughout these descriptions.

Fortuitously, from the centuries after Leofric's death, several more records of the Exeter foundation's holdings survive that shed light on the history of the A-S manuscripts kept there. In 1327, Richard Brailegh composed a Latin inventory of books, vestments, and other cathedral furniture and it survives in the 14c MS Exeter Cathedral Library 3671, a page of which can be seen in Muir's digital facsimile (2006) and edited by George Oliver (1861: 301–10). Interestingly, there is a 15c ME translation of Leofric's OE donation inventory extant in Exeter, Cathedral Library 2750, written on a single sheet of paper. Förster (in Chambers et al. 1933: 14) surmises that it must have been based on some earlier ME version and provides a diplomatic edition (in Chambers et al. 1933: 30–32). An image of the face of the sheet can be seen in Muir (2006, though Muir incorrectly heads this image as the 1506 inventory). Because the ME translation is entirely derivative of Leofric's OE donation inventory, no use of it is made in the histories here. More important for the histories of the A-S books in Exeter is the Latin inventory drawn up in September 1506 by cathedral personnel; the manuscript is no longer extant (Erskine 1972: 43) but it was printed by Oliver (1861: 320–76, with the library's inventory at 366–76). Throughout this volume, the 1327 and 1506 inventories (as printed by Oliver 1861) are frequent terms of reference.

M.T.H.

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