

PREFACE

Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts in Microfiche Facsimile provides students and scholars with a fundamental tool in the field of Anglo-Saxon studies. The project aims to produce complete microfiche facsimiles of the five-hundred or so manuscripts containing Old English. Each volume presents facsimiles and descriptions of complete manuscripts (typically between 8 and 16 items). The descriptions are prepared by experienced scholars basing their work on first-hand examination of the manuscripts and extensive research. Images in most cases are from existing microfilm stock provided by the holding libraries. New photography is limited to those manuscripts that had not yet been photographed or were poorly photographed in the early period of the project when images were generally being acquired, plus supplemental photos on a case-by-case basis as seems necessary. The images are up to the standards of good black-and-white microfilm reproduction.

The fiche images are presented on DVDs. Despite obvious advantages to this format, users should keep in mind that these are still the fiche images, generated from the microfilm stock, and are not intended to compete in quality with true digital images. Whenever the editors or describers are aware of available on-line or DVD digital images of a particular item, they call attention to them in the descriptions. The editors would appreciate being made aware of any such digital versions we may have overlooked. In a future volume we will publish a list of digital facsimiles corresponding to the manuscripts in this series.

Manuscripts are reproduced *in toto*, even though the post-Anglo-Saxon material that is found as part of many of them may demonstrate no immediate or ultimate relationship with Anglo-Saxon interests. Many or most manuscripts are basically in Latin, with small amounts of Old English text. To have edited the facsimiles, presenting only confirmed Anglo-Saxon parts, or Old English words, would eliminate important material to be noticed or discovered and in any case would remove Anglo-Saxon vestiges from their actual material and cultural contexts. Users must decide for themselves the relevance of the images presented in this series.

Each manuscript is assigned a main index number for this series; that number is given before the shelf-mark and always appears bolded and in square brackets after the shelf-mark when a manuscript in this series is mentioned in the body of a description. The index number is concorded with the catalogue of numbers of Ker and Gneuss/Lapidge. A complete handlist of all manuscripts included in this project has been published in Vol. 15. An interim cumulative index of volumes 1–10 has been published as a separate volume (2006) and a further interim cumulative index of volumes 1–25 is forthcoming; a final comprehensive index will follow the completion of the volumes of descriptions, now projected as about forty in number. Users of these descriptions (and of the indices) are requested to bring any errors, omissions, or relevant new scholarship to the attention of the publisher or the editors.

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