

### 354. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 180 (2079)

“Old English Boethius” (prose); prayer

[Ker 305; Gneuss/Lapidge 555.5]

**HISTORY:** Little is known for certain about this 11/12c manuscript of the prose OE Boethius, whose text probably represents the initial translation of Boethius’ “De consolatione Philosophiae” later used for the prosimetrical version extant in London, BL Cotton Otho A.vi [208] (see Godden and Irvine 2009: 1. 44–46). Gneuss/Lapidge dates the manuscript to 11/12c, while Gameson (1999: no. 647) dates it to “xii” (1110 × 1130 in his system of dating). Godden and Irvine (2009: 1.10–13) argue it may fit paleographically in the late 11c. Annotations show the manuscript was being read in the 14c and 15c (Godden and Irvine 2009: 1.14). The front pastedown has a notation in pencil dated 1884: “12 leaves or fragments of leaves taken out of the binding of this volume are now MS Bodl Add. D. 98.” The same notation is added in pencil on the verso of flyleaf ii. F. 3r of the binding leaves (now Oxford, Bodl. Lib. Add. D.98) adds a title in a 16c hand, “Boecius de consolatione philosophie translated into the Saxonice tong by King Alfred” (Godden and Irvine 2009: 1.16). These leaves are from a 14c copy of the medieval text of Roman law known as the *Digest*, bks. 19–20 (Godden and Irvine 1.16; cf. Da Rold 2010). Franciscus Junius made a copy in the late 17c (= Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 12 [=S.C. 5124]), which he later collated against London, BL, Cotton Otho A.vi (Irvine 2005: 169–70; Kierenan 1998: 8–9). The *editio princeps* was published by Rawlinson (1698) using Junius’s unpublished collations. “Marks of sewing-cords on the former pastedowns suggest they belonged to a binding with wooden boards, and probably of the fifteenth century or at least pre-Reformation” (Godden and Irvine 2009: 1.16). The Summary Catalogue records that Bodley 180 was given by Thomas Draper M.A. in 1601 (II.1, 1922: 201). Draper was an alumnus of All Souls’ College, Oxford, and took his M.A. in 1588 (Foster 1891: 424; see also Godden and Irvine 2009: 1.16–18).

**CODICOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION:** Foliated i, ii, 1–94, 95 (numbered at the top right recto corners). There are three paper flyleaves, two at front and one at back, with the third flyleaf numbered ‘95.’ Flyleaf ‘i’ has ‘(2079) Bodl. 180’ written in ink on the recto. The 18c binding is leather over cardboard. A former shelfmark, NE. C. 3.11, is stamped on a fragment of a previous leather binding and pasted to the inside front cover of the manuscript. The bound volume measures 290 × 190 mm., with a writing space of approximately 210 × 160 mm. There are quire signatures at the lower margin for all except quires III and VI, signed I, II, III, V, VII–IX. Quires I and VIII are signed on the last verso of the quire; all others signed on the first recto. The parchment is not of the highest grade, and there are holes throughout: ff. 13, 37, 46, 49 (stitched), 53, 58, 59, 62, 64, 69, 74, 83, 85. The arrangement of sheets is continental. The folios are ruled on the hair side for 24 long lines. Quire 7 is ruled in dry-point for 27 long lines, but only 24 lines per page are written on, except for ff. 62–67 where there are 25 lines per page. Prickmarks are visible in the left and right outer margins. The ink is brown, though ranging from dark to light (for paleographic analysis see Godden and Irvine 2009: 1.10–13 and Da Rold 2010). There are contemporary corrections in the manuscript. Capital letters for individual chapters occur in red, blue, green, violet, and burnt orange. The letters were marked for the rubricator in the margin. Some chapters have been numbered in the text. Books 1–2 are missing incipits and explicits. There is a vertical cut through f. 93 beginning on l. 9 and running into the lower margin.

The hand appears to be the same for the following prayer (f. 94r) as for the “Old English Boethius,” though more compact, with a different pen or angle of the pen. It is less upright, the ink is a bit darker, but the shapes of ‘g,’ ‘ð,’ ‘f,’ ‘æ,’ ‘r’ are closely similar. On this page also, the scribe expected the rubricator to color the initial ‘D,’ since there is a carelessly written ‘d’ in the outer right margin as was the practice in either margin throughout the “Old English Boethius” for letters to be colored. This ‘D’ was filled in in what is now a muddy color, washed out black or grayed violet. There is a long vertical slash on f. 93.

**COLLATION:** ii paper flyleaves (ff. i-ii); I–VI<sup>10</sup> (ff. 1–60), VII–VIII<sup>12</sup> (ff. 61–84), IX<sup>12</sup> wants 11 and 12; the central sewing in the quire is between ff. 90 and 91 (ff. 85–94); i paper flyleaf (f. 95).

## CONTENTS:

1. ff. 1r–94r/6 “Old English Boethius” (prose divided into the prefatory proem and 42 chapters, but with some incipits and explicits following the Boethian five book structure) (ed. Godden and Irvine 2009):
- f. 1r/1–15 Proem: ‘ÆLFRED KVNING. WÆS WE|ALHSTOD ÐISSE BEC 7 HIE OF | boclædene on englisc wende swa hio nu is gedon . . . 7 don þ(æt) þæt he deþ’ (ed. Godden and Irvine 2009: 1.239)
- ff. 1r/16–3r/23 List of chapters (unnumbered): ‘Ærest hu gotan gewunnon romana rice. 7 hu boetius | hi wolde `eft` berædan’; ends: ‘HV we sceoldan eallon mægne spyrian æfter gode. ælc be his | andgites mæþe’ (ed. Godden and Irvine 2009: 1.239–43).
- ff. 3v/1–94r/6 “Old English Boethius”: ‘ON ÐÆRE TIDE ÐE GOTAN | of sciððiu mægðe wið romana rice gewin up ahofon’; ends: ‘7 þam ælmehtigan gode doð eall þæt | þæt ge doð eall he hit gesihð. 7 eall he hit forgilt. AMEN. | FINIT.’ (ed. Godden and Irvine 2009: 1.243–382).
- [Note: Internal divisions track the Latin books 3, 4, and 5: ff. 30r/23–30v/1 ‘[H]er endað nu seo æf`t`re froferboc Boeties. 7 onginð | sio ðr[i]dde. Se boetius wæs oðre naman gehaten || seuerinus. se wæs heretoga romana’ (=end of ch. 21, Godden and Irvine 2009: 1.286/48–50); f. 30v/2 ch. 22 (*Consolation* 3p1) begins: ‘[P]a se wisdom þa ðis lioð asungen hæfde’ (=Godden and Irvine 2009: 1.286/1); f. 64v/17 ‘[H]er endað `nu` seo þr[i]dde boc. boeties. 7 onginð seo feorðe’ (=end of ch. 35, Godden and Irvine 2009: 1.338/255); f. 64v/18 ch. 36 (*Consolation* 4p1) begins: ‘[Ð]A SE wisdom þa ðis leoð swiðe lust|bærlice 7 gesceadwislice asungen hæfde’ with the chapter number ‘xxx.vi.’ fitted into the blank space at the end of l. 18 (=Godden and Irvine 2009: 1.338/1); f. 87v/17–18 ‘Her endað þio | feorðe boc boeties 7 onginnd seo fifte’ (=Godden and Irvine 2009: 1.372/72); f. 87v/19 ch. 40/73 (*Consolation* 5 pr. 1) begins: ‘Pa se wisdom þa ðis spell areht hæfde’ (=Godden and Irvine 2009: 1.372/73).]
2. f. 94r/7–21 Old English prayer written on remainder of page originally left blank: ‘Drihten ælmihtiga god wyrhta 7 wealdend ealra gesceafta ic | bidde þe . . . min trew|nes. 7 m[i]n tohopa. si þe lof 7 wylder. nu. 7 a. a. a to worulde | buton ægwilcu(m) ende Amen’ (pr. Sedgfield 1899: 149).
- f. 94v blank
- f. 95 r and v blank paper flyleaf

PHOTO NOTES: Some initials too faded to be legible on the film. On f. 87r/5 a dittography ‘sa(m) hio sie’ has been erased, and on f. 87r/20 dittography ‘þy læs he hine for þære wynsuman’ has been erased. Neither is visible on film. Film does not include f. 95v or back pastedown.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

- Da Rold, Orietta. "Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 180." In *Production and Use of English Manuscripts 1060–1220*, ed. Orietta Da Rold, Takako Kato, Mary Swan, and Elaine Treharne. University of Leicester, 2010–13. [<http://www.le.ac.uk/english/em1060to1220/mss/EM.Ox.Bod1.180.htm#EM.Ox.Bod1.180-summary-1>]
- Foster, Joseph. *Alumni Oxonienses: The Members of the University of Oxford, 1500–1714*. Vol. 1. London: Parker, 1891.
- Gameson, Richard. *The Manuscripts of Early Norman England (c. 1066–1130)*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999. No. 647.
- Godden, Malcolm and Susan Irvine, eds. *The Old English Boethius: An Edition of the Old English Versions of Boethius's 'De Consolatione Philosophiae.'* 2 vols. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Irvine, Susan. "Fragments of Boethius: The Reconstruction of the Cotton Manuscript of the Alfredian Text." *Anglo-Saxon England* 34 (2005): 169–81.
- Kiernan, Kevin S. "Alfred the Great's Burnt *Boethius*." In *The Iconic Page in Manuscript, Print, and Digital Culture*, ed. George Bornstein and Theresa Tinkle, 7–32. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1998.
- Rawlinson, Christopher, ed. *An. Manl. Sever. Boethi Consolationis Philosophiae libri V. Anglo-Saxonice redditi ab Alfredo, inclyto Anglo-Saxonum Rege. Ad apographum Junianum expressos*. Oxford, 1698.
- Sedgefield, Walter J., ed. *King Alfred's Old English Version of Boethius De Consolatione Philosophiae*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1899.