



TOEBI Newsletter

TEACHERS OF OLD ENGLISH IN BRITAIN AND
IRELAND

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TOEBI Conference 2003

TOEBI met for the annual conference in Royal Holloway College on Saturday 1 November 2003. There were 31 participants and the theme was 'Metamorphoses: Teaching Old English in Multicultural Contexts'.

After a welcome from Jennifer Neville, the morning session was opened by Paul Cavill and Dee Dyas. Paul described and discussed the problems of students who come to the study of the Middle Ages knowing little about Christianity. Such students need to be provided with an easily accessible way of filling in on the Christian background of the subject. Dee then described and exemplified the CD-Rom that she is working on. This is designed to provide a framework for an understanding of the Bible and to be cheap, readily available and easily accessible by students. The CD-Rom will contain both written explanations on key Biblical themes, and also related images from the Middle Ages. It is planned that the CD-Rom will be available next summer and will be inexpensive to purchase, perhaps around £15.00. This dual session created a lot of interest and there were many enthusiastic comments and questions from the audience. An excellent lunch followed, which was served in the College's magnificent Picture Gallery.

The first paper after lunch was in three parts and was given by three post-graduates from Royal Holloway, describing the experience of learning Old English from the students' perspective. Jane Page gave some insights on being a mature student, while Pirkko Koppinen described learning Old English as a Finnish-speaker, and Mel Heyworth discussed the learning of the language from the point of view of an Australian. All three presentations had some interesting things to say about identity and its relationship to language learning, and all three were enthusiastically received. Karin Olsen's paper followed, on the problems and

challenges of teaching Old English in the Netherlands. She concluded with a sentiment familiar to many in the audience, that her courses were very popular when Old English literature was studied in translation, rather less so when the language had to be learnt.

The first paper following tea was given by the Bengali writer Ketaki Kushari Dyson, on the problems and delights of translating Old English poetry into Bengali, with reference to her knowledge of Sanskrit. The audience were equally delighted at her recitations in Bengali of parts of the *Wanderer* and of *Beowulf*. The final paper of the day was by Hugh Magennis who spoke about the problems facing at least some students in Northern Ireland. He discussed how some of his students feel culturally alienated, and the way that this might affect their learning of Old English. He compared this feeling to that which some students may have who live in multi-cultural England. Some very interesting discussion followed this paper too.

Altogether the participants felt that it had been a most stimulating day and were very grateful to all the speakers and to Jennifer Neville for arranging it.

TOEBI AGM 2003

The AGM immediately followed the conference papers.

In the Chair's address, Peter reviewed the events of the past year and thanked the committee for their work. The President, Eric Stanley, had completed his three years and Peter thanked him for the inspiring leadership that he had given the society. There was one nomination for President, Don Scragg, and he was duly elected with approval. The Secretary had also completed three years but indicated her willingness to stand again, particularly in light of the marked lack of other contenders for the post. This was duly accepted. Two committee members, Richard Dance and Carole Hough, had reached the end of their term of office and Peter thanked them both. Richard stood again for election to the

committee as did Clare Lees and Jennifer Neville and all three were elected. The new committee is listed at the end of the Newsletter.

The Secretary reported that there were currently 66 paid-up members, although this number has since risen to over 70. The bank balance was standing at a healthy £1913-63. In the light of this the Committee proposed that some small grants, in the region of £200 each, be offered to post-graduate students, to help them attend conferences. The details of this scheme are being worked out by the Committee and the grants will be advertised on the TOEBI web-page. Jennifer Neville has kindly offered to administer this scheme for 2003-04 and Jayne Carroll for 2004-05.

The report of the Newsletter editor was read for her as she was unable to attend the AGM. Since the previous AGM, three issues of the Newsletter had appeared and the plan is that it should appear regularly in October and May. Thanks to Margaret's efforts, the Newsletter now has an ISSN number, so is sent to copyright libraries and should reach a wider audience. Members are now sending in more material for the Newsletter and Margaret urged that they should continue to do so. The Reviews section has now been revived and new reviewers are being sought.

After thanking the Secretary and the Newsletter editor for their reports, Peter gave details of the next few TOEBI conferences. The 2004 conference will be held on Saturday 30 October at the University of Manchester with the title 'Why are we here?' and is being organised by Gale Owen-Crocker. Gale writes: "It is intended to cover the question of the place of Old English and its teachers in universities today. Should we be teaching Old English as part of general Medieval Literature modules, or as 'bites' in general Medieval History courses. Is our 'place' in English Language or English Literature or in neither? Do we, as individuals and representatives of our universities defend the traditional or embrace the popular? How do we teach our subject to MA students and generate potential PhDs?". Anyone who would like to offer a paper is invited to contact Gale as soon as possible: groc@man.ac.uk. The 2005 conference will be held in the University of Sheffield and in 2006 we hope to be in Belfast.

Under the final item of business, Mary Swan brought up a problem that had arisen during 2003. Elaine Treharne had asked if TOEBI would support her bid to acquire ring-fenced funding for doctoral awards from the AHRB, a bid that was indeed successful.

Although many members of the Committee were much in favour of this, it was felt that TOEBI as an organization could not offer public support without prior consultation of the membership at the AGM. After some discussion, a motion was proposed by Claire Fennell and seconded by Eric Stanley. This motion suggested that, in the event of a similar happening occurring in the future, the Committee be empowered to act on behalf of the TOEBI membership and look for retrospective endorsement at the next AGM. This motion was passed unanimously. There being no further business, the AGM concluded.

More about Tolkien ...

Stuart Lee's article 'Talking Tolkien' which appeared in the autumn 2003 issue of the *Newsletter* has inspired a certain amount of debate amongst TOEBI members on the merits of using modern material in the teaching of medieval texts. John Hines's views on the topic (see below) will no doubt prove similarly provocative and are followed by an invited response from Stuart Lee. The editor would be delighted to receive further contributions to this debate for publication in the autumn 2004 issue.

Courting Popularity

As expected, *The Lord of the Rings* easily won the BBC's 'Big Read' competition. Recalling that the BBC ran a poll to identify the greatest musical influence of the last millennium in which Robbie Williams beat Mozart, no one would read too much into such a result, not least when there was only one serious work of proven, lasting quality in the final five books, projected there by virtue of being the source of the most successful classic costume drama on TV in recent years. Still, high-quality adaptations have their own value as artistic experiences, and if they encourage people to read, that is to be welcomed. *The Lord of the Rings* film trilogy merits the near-universal praise it has received. But should teachers of Old English seek to cash in on the Tolkien phenomenon, and if so, how?

Stuart Lee (*TOEBI Newsletter*, XVII) is sure that the answer to the first question is yes, and urges us to pursue a diverse strategy, exploring the sources, modern medievalism, and the critical evaluation of Tolkien's fiction, in support of Old English studies. On the potential importance of Tolkien's success to our field, I can agree with him, although the

practical development of that seems to me to need deeper foundations. It is a curious inversion of the *FONTES* approach to Old English texts to see the latter as a mine of literary motifs and concepts themselves. However, source-hunting can be a sterile exercise, and as far as Tolkien's writing is concerned the intertextual flow dwindles not merely to a trickle but to an irregular spray. The direct adaptations from early English or Norse literature are relatively few, and often used in a simple way. 'Which Old English scholar cannot claim to have felt a sense of pride when watching ... Theoden [*sic*] reciting a classic Old English *ubi sunt* passage[?]'. Well, me for one. I suspect that the more familiar one is with the sources the less subtle one is likely to find Tolkien's casting of the Riders of Rohan and the Men of Minas Tirith as Anglo-Saxon poetic characters, interspersing their dialogues with narrative in Revised Standard Version Book of Kings prose. If you still find the elegiac lament moving, or even revitalized in its transposition, good for you. But can we really expect students to be thrilled and excited for long, just at recognizing where a quotation in *The Lord of the Rings* comes from?

The gulf between what Tolkien wrote and the realities of Old English texts is so wide that it is difficult to imagine how the canon of medieval literature could be anything but a disappointment to most Middle-earth enthusiasts. Nothing in the 'hippy bible' will prepare them for the overwhelmingly and explicitly Christian concerns of these texts. If such readers do respond positively to the interwoven gender and theological dramas of *Judith* and *Juliana*, it won't be for anything Galadriel has led them to expect. When one has to take in one's stride Ælfric's unforgettable but easily refuted explanation that because we have two eyes, ears, nostrils, hands and so on, God gave us two testaments and covenants, a rather different motivation to get into Old English is called for.

Learning to read Old, Middle, and even early Modern English, takes time and effort. It is only too predictable that courses on Tolkien in the context of 19th- and 20th-century medievalism, or the literary study of his works in their own right, will serve merely as further easy substitutes for the effort of acquiring language skills. Alongside texts in translation, these will offer more comfortable resting places, and will rarely be the stepping stones to an informed appreciation of early English literature.

'Can we afford to ignore this trend?' asks Stuart Lee. It is a tell-tale reflection. Like

the expression of affection for the *ubi sunt* passage from *The Wanderer* referred to above, this is a rhetorical question (albeit one that at least gets a question-mark this time), and it may be severe to subject it to deconstructive close reading. Here, though, the financial allusion is a significant Freudian slip, unless it actually was a conscious bow to the accountability and commercial profitability demanded throughout the higher education sector. Crudely, it's all about bums on seats, isn't it? Exceeding our student-number targets in some modules, which may then subsidize a more traditional, language-based course of the kind that usually gets three or four takers. And if we're lucky, adding one or two to those numbers.

So far, this will read like a reactionary and negative view. But in fact we can be a great deal more constructive, precisely by accepting all of these points. The practical problems and material limitations of early English literature were intrinsic to Tolkien's literary project, and that is an essential reason for integrating the serious reading of his fiction with the proper study of early English language and texts in a well-balanced programme. Tolkien did not anthologize the highlights of Old English and Norse literature in his works. He was, however, profoundly inspired by his knowledge and understanding of philology, and the scientific (i.e. secure and replicable) link with the past that language history offers. Where the textual, narrative, and verbal records of the past are particularly damaged, distorted or fragmentary, as in the case of England, the philologist has more to do, and more to contribute in re-establishing a richness of cultural experience.

The most fundamental reason for seeing Tolkien's writing not just as a pragmatic way-in to early English studies, but rather as a major and productive complement to that field, is that it did *not* attempt to reach back through historical materials to a lost fullness of the past — to retrieve a 'mythology for England' [not Tolkien's words] as is so commonly alleged. The fullness Tolkien strove to create was rather the *relationship* with the past in itself: an inclusive wholeness, unifying the surviving records of times gone, through the informed means of understanding them, with the imaginatively and morally enriching incorporation of both of those into the continuing life of the present. An educated, historical perspective thus legitimized his creativity. To write, deliberately using old literary sources, was to adopt a powerful and influential position within the inevitable course of cultural history. Remnants of the past decay

around us or are picked up and transformed in human hands: one can either passively ignore that, or actively direct the process. Tolkien's slightly older contemporaries James Joyce and T. S. Eliot did exactly the same. But where they were high-brow and modernist, Tolkien sought to write in a popular and accessible mode: work 'I could dedicate simply: to England; to my country'. As the 'Big Read' result has shown yet again, he succeeded.

To say so, however, is not to revert to the position that popularity is good enough reason for serious attention. It is valuable, from many viewpoints, to appreciate how Tolkien reflects artistic currents of his time, currents that affected everything from pulp fiction to the avant garde. The 20th century will stand out in literary history not least as the period in which visionary and utopian literature embraced the possibilities suggested by natural science on the one hand and the science of historical reconstruction on the other, having passed from spiritual and mystical allegories through travelogues and geographical exploration in the earlier modern period. *The Lord of the Rings* has critical importance and merit in that perspective alone. Meanwhile recognition of the uncompromising way Tolkien faced up to crucial artistic problems can inspire genuine respect.

Not every aspect of Tolkien's use of comparative philology is equally satisfactory. Perhaps the kindest way to characterize his handling of the racial and political implications of genetic linguistic and cultural transmission is as vague, and often clumsy. In relation to his England, though, Tolkien the authoritative scholar and controlling author was the Gandalf figure: the teacher and guide. The common people, the hobbits of the Shire, have little historical sense. They have a memorial to the Battle of Bywater by which the Shire was scoured rather than real memories, knowledge or understanding of what had happened. Representing the First World War officer and Oxford don who could never abolish the gap between himself and the men or the plain people of England, Gandalf (and Frodo) must sail from the Grey Havens with the magnificent elves that English folklore had allowed to disappear. Neither fictionally nor in actuality could Tolkien create a world in which the fullness he idealized was ultimately realized. But those insurmountable problems are not shortcomings that only the clever critic exposes. Tolkien recognized and wrote about them. They thus form the essential dramatic conclusion of his trilogy.

As teachers of Old English, we would be ludicrously naive and optimistic to imagine

that we can rally to the cause of achieving that goal after all. Things are very hard for Old English studies in the current academic climate; but there never was any golden age of philology for us to dream of re-establishing, nor could we turn the clock back even if there had been. If, however, we are to put the whole range of medieval English studies, and the adjacent fields of mythology and folklore, back into a respected and secure place in the English curriculum, there can be no doubt that explaining and emphasizing the intimate connection between Tolkien's field of academic specialization and his status as a major 20th-century English author should make a substantial contribution. We could even be unfeignedly proud, if that were done not merely as a piece of pragmatic opportunism, but rather in a manner that is fully consistent with informed critical reading and an appreciation of the essential motivation of Tolkien's whole professional work.

John Hines
All Souls College, Oxford

A Reply

It is always gratifying to read a reply to something you have written, and I welcome John's article above which follows on from my short piece in the previous *TOEBI newsletter*. John's lengthy reply is obviously more considered than my rather hasty tongue-in-cheek correspondence; and it is reassuring to note that overall we are in general agreement – Tolkien's fiction is of use to the teaching and study of Old English literature.

However, although the two of us generally agree I think (judging by the second part of his article at any rate), his opening paragraphs, which he himself recognises as potentially 'reactionary and negative' deserve some comment. Let us begin with the very title of his piece 'Courting Popularity'. Having read the opening attack it is quite clear that John sees this as a fault. I agree with him that any moves to sacrifice our academic ideals on the altar of popularity, purely to fill classes, are clearly wrong and should be avoided. However, I am not as quick as him to dismiss the need to offer popular courses. John playfully asks 'Crudely, it's all about bums on seats, isn't it?' Yet this is a far more complicated question than might seem at first. One entirely justifiable answer would be to use the Americanism 'Well yes, duh.' To put it bluntly in most institutions it is just that. As students exert their rights as consumers they

vote with their feet. They will not sign up for unpopular courses, and consequently unpopular courses will not run. Outside of a few institutions where the subject is still compulsory (and Oxford is no longer one of them, alas), Old English must survive in an increasingly cramped syllabus and therefore must seek to attract students.

The second answer to John's question re the position of posteriors, is of course 'no'. It is not a simple matter of us only running popular courses. If it was we could just show *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* week in, week out. We must safeguard the academic credentials of the subject, and we must not be afraid to present our students with challenging work that they may find difficult. So no, it is not just about piling them high for HESA returns.

Therefore I think the problem with John's argument is his assumption that 'courting popularity' is *inherently* wrong. I would argue that it is not; at least not if it is done correctly, i.e. maintaining the academic standards of the subject. The key to this though, is surely not a lengthy discussion of 'popularity', but more one of 'relevance'. They are not the same, but attempts to achieve the latter can lead to the former. When students come to University or College (especially the 18/19-year olds) what exposure to Old English will they have had at schools? Outside of those few institutions where their teachers are willing to stray from the confines of the national curriculum the last time most students will have encountered anything to do with the period will have been in primary schools – half their lifetime away. Furthermore we are not exactly overwhelmed with the amount of material related to the period in our heritage sites, or media. When they encounter Old English for the first time it is alien to them, and that can breed resentment. What we need to do in part (and I stress it is only a *part* of our task), is to overcome this, and one way to do this is to make it relevant – and not only to their present and future studies. In my view, and this was the thrust of the first letter, Tolkien provides us with an unrivalled means of doing this.

John seems to take a curious stance by arguing that there is such a 'gulf between what Tolkien wrote and the realities of Old English texts' that we should therefore abandon him as a lost cause. His rather outdated view of anyone who reads and enjoys Tolkien's fiction (or went to see the recent films) must be a hippy, is perhaps telling. He also argues that because *The Lord of the Rings* does not cover every aspect of Old English or

Anglo-Saxon culture and belief then it is useless to us. Well no, of course it doesn't, indeed no book can, but are we to dismiss it for that? Tolkien's fiction is a fusion of all kinds of source material and influences, blended into a unique experience (as John eloquently explains later on), but just because it does not hit every nail on the head that is no reason to abandon it as a teaching aid. John I suspect, agrees with this, as the rest of his article suggests, and perhaps (as I mentioned at the start of this piece) we are both thinking the same thoughts only expressing ourselves differently.

John also argues that Tolkien's use of Old English/Old Norse/*The Kalevala*/The Bible is unsubtle, which may be true, though Shippey (1992) or even Wilcox (2003) would suggest further discussion is needed. It may not be fine-tuned, it may not be what we would want, but *The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth Beorhthelm's Son*, 'The Lost Road', and 'The Notion Club Papers' are something to work on (even before one considers *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*).

Yet the single most obvious failing of John's reply is his forgetting what really counts in all of this – the students. John combines a certain amount of contempt to 'Middle-earth enthusiasts' implied in his unfounded belief that 'it is difficult to imagine how the canon of medieval literature could be anything but a disappointment' to them, with pessimism about ever being able to bridge the gap between a philologist and 'the plain people of England', or of being able to offer courses that are both high quality and attractive to students, making things less 'hard for Old English studies'. Tolkien's own example of a professor of Anglo-Saxon and an author of immensely popular and approachable fiction contradicts such view. Though it is true that 'Learning to read Old, Middle, and even early Modern English, takes time and effort', let us be honest: it is not an insurmountable task reserved for those with superior intelligence and the reason students shy away from this task may be the failing of the teaching method.

Let us put the 'T' back into TOEBI. John fails to find the appearance of the *ubi sunt* passage in any way moving and dismisses it rather cynically. I find that strange, and wonder what other 'teachers' think. I cannot recall at any point during the past few decades going to a cinema (and a full one at that) and hearing Old English verse, albeit in translation. To me, as a teacher, that is something to work on and work with. To add, friends of mine who saw the film, but had no background in medieval literature, said that this scene had

been their favourite. When I pointed out to them the origin of the lines they asked for a full copy of *The Wanderer*.

I also used that very clip from *The Two Towers* in my first lecture this year introducing Old English to the first-years at Oxford. It was after I had gone through my usual list of why Old English is important today – language, placenames, and so on. Yet when the film came on screen there was a visible increase in attention across the 180 or so students. This was something they had seen and discussed with their friends, this was something they could relate to, this had direct, approachable, cultural relevance. After the class several students came to ask me about the clip, and what else did Tolkien use in his books (which they knew) from Old English (which they didn't know). If that is a result of courting popularity, or more importantly making the subject relevant, and in turn that is to be considered a crime, then I hold my hands up. I will happily share a cell with Ælfric, a man who committed similar heinous acts. This really is all I was suggesting in my first piece. That rather than attempting to get inside the mind of Tolkien, we look on what he has left us as an opportunity to assist the teaching and promotion of Old English, regardless of his original intentions.

The proof of the pudding though is in the eating. TOEBI members may be interested to know that along with an Oxford colleague, Dr Elizabeth Solopova, I am currently working on a book for Palgrave/Macmillan which presents Medieval texts (in their original and in translation) linked to key passages in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. I am too aware of my own weaknesses to suggest that this might provide John's 'substantial contribution' but I shall undoubtedly send him a signed copy when it appears next year.

Stuart Lee
University of Oxford

Shippey, T. A. *The Road to Middle-earth* (Grafton, 1992).

Wilcox, M. 'Exilic imagining in The Seafarer' in J. Chance (ed.) *Tolkien the Medievalist* (Routledge, 2003), pp. 133-54.

Changing Faces

Prof. Peter J. Lucas (Chairman) has retired from University College Dublin and is now at Wolfson College, Cambridge. He is currently working on Anglo-Saxon scholarship printed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Congratulations to Dr Matthew Woodcock who has been appointed to a permanent lectureship at the University of East Anglia, Norwich. Matthew Woodcock has previously held positions at Birkbeck College, London and University College Cork.

Please send information about recent appointments or retirements in your department to the Editor. And encourage your new colleagues to become members of TOEBI! Application forms can be downloaded from the TOEBI website.

Anglo-Saxon Studies in North America

The teaching of Old English in North America has a long history going back to the well-known efforts of Thomas Jefferson to establish the subject in the state of Virginia. A noteworthy overview the early history of Old English studies in America is to be found in María José Mora and María José Gómez-Calderón, 'The Study of Old English in America (1776-1850): National Uses of the Saxon Past': *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 97 (1998): 322-26. In the twentieth century, North American scholarship gave us the invaluable *Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records* on which many of us have based our work. The teaching of Old English literature thrives at large numbers of universities despite the fact that at most of them the students have had to pick up the rudiments of the language within the space of a single academic term, generally no more than fifteen or sixteen weeks. Research has been responsive to recent theoretical developments; two examples I have enjoyed—taken from a long list—are Allen J. Frantzen's *Desire for Origins: New Language, Old English, and Teaching the Tradition* (1990) and Carol Braun Pasternak's *The Textuality of Old English Poetry* (1995). Anglo-Saxonists continue to be hired by departments in North American universities in respectable numbers given that the primary demand for pre-Renaissance literature is for

Chaucer. For many Anglo-Saxonists, teaching courses on the history of the English language or the structure of modern English grammar—often requirements for education students—is their bread and butter. The majority of my own students fall into this category, but even amongst this demographic there is a steady demand for me to teach Old English. I have no fears for its survival into the next generation.

It would be an impossible task to characterise in such a small space the range of research and scholarship on Old English in North America; in any event, North American scholars tend to collaborate closely with their counterparts in Britain and Ireland, particularly through the meetings of the *International Society of Anglo-Saxonists* and the online forum ANSAXDAT

(<http://www.mun.ca/Ansaxdat/>).

Another example of such trans-Atlantic collaboration is the *Electronic Beowulf*, edited by Kevin Kiernan

(<http://www.uky.edu/~kiernan/eBeowulf/guide.htm>).

The International Medieval Congress hosted each May by the Medieval Institute at Western Michigan University likewise serves as an international forum for the exchange of ideas. The Richard Rawlinson Center for Anglo-Saxon Studies and Manuscript Research at the Medieval Institute publishes an important resource for Anglo-Saxonists: the *Old English Newsletter*

(<http://www.wmich.edu/medieval/research/oen/>), which includes an *Annual Bibliography on Old English Studies* each summer and reviews based on it in the *Year's Work on Old English Studies* the following winter). A searchable online version of the bibliography is in preparation; details are available at <http://oenewsletter.org/OENDB/bib.html>. In addition to specifically medieval-oriented exchanges, the annual conference of the Modern Language Association

(<http://www.mla.org>), although dedicated to a vast range of subject matters, is particularly well attended by North American Anglo-Saxonists.

North American scholars are particularly active in the production of research and teaching resources, and I will use my remaining space to list some notable examples. At the head of the list must come the Dictionary of Old English project at the Centre for Medieval Studies at the University of Toronto (<http://www.doe.utoronto.ca/>). Until the project is finished, Anglo-Saxonists will find useful Sean Crist's searchable scanned version of Bosworth-Toller's *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary* at

http://www.ling.upenn.edu/~kurisuto/germanic/language_resources.html. This site also

includes scanned texts of Bright's *Anglo-Saxon Reader* and Clark Hall's *Concise Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*. Another valuable tool is Peter Baker's Old English font pack and Junicode font, which contains many symbols (including vowels with macrons and breve marks, ligatured characters, runes, and symbols from the International Phonetic Alphabet) valuable to scholars approaching the study of Old English from a wide variety of perspectives. Cathy Ball's Old English Pages

(http://www.georgetown.edu/faculty/ballc/oe/old_english.html)

contain links to electronic texts, internet sites on Anglo-Saxon art, coins, history, language, teaching resources, and more. There are a number of online courses available from North American scholars. Three worthy of note are Peter Baker's *Electronic Introduction to Old English*

(<http://www.wmich.edu/medieval/research/raw/IOE/index.html>),

Michael Drout's *King*

Alfred's Grammar (<http://acunix.wheatonma.edu/mdrout/GrammarBook/KAGrammar.html>), and Murray McGillivray's *Old English, An Introductory Course*

(<http://www.the-orb.net/textbooks/oeindex.html>).

The Internet Medieval Sourcebook hosted by Fordham University

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1n.html#Anglo-Saxon%20Britain>)

has a number of useful source texts for the study of Anglo-Saxon England and Old English literature. Recorded recitations of some Old English texts are available from Chaucer Studio

(<http://english.byu.edu/chaucer/oldeng.htm>). More general resources for medievalists also contain a wealth of information, particularly the Labyrinth web site hosted by Georgetown University

(<http://labyrinth.georgetown.edu/>). Finally, mention should be given to *Medieval Forum* (<http://www.sfsu.edu/~medieval/>), a new online journal which accepts submissions on Old English literature.

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Recent Books

Heather O'Donoghue

Old Norse Literature: A Short Introduction

Blackwell, 2003. 241 pp.

hardback 0 631 23625 2. £45

paperback 0 631 23626 0. £16.99

From runic inscriptions to sagas, this book introduces readers to the colourful world of Old Norse-Icelandic literature. It covers not only mythology and family sagas, but also looks at less well-known areas, such as oral story-telling, Eddaic verse and skaldic verse. An introduction describing the language and culture of the first settlers in Iceland helps readers to appreciate the background against which this literature was produced. The book acts as an introduction not only to Old-Norse Icelandic literature, but also to its reception through the ages and its influence on how a whole range of authors from Chaucer to Seamus Heaney have been influenced by this body of work, pointing out that even King Lear and Hamlet appear in Old Norse texts.

Old and Middle English c.890-c.1400 An Anthology (2nd edition)

edited by Elaine Treharne

Blackwell, 2004. xxix + 677 pp.

hardback 1 4051 1312 X. £75

paperback 1 4051 1313 8. £19.99

Spanning almost seven centuries, this anthology of literary texts ranges from the earliest writings in English up to the time of Chaucer. It encapsulates the foundation and consolidation of literature written in English, culminating in some of the finest works produced in the high Middle Ages. The first edition appeared in 2000; for the second edition the anthology has been extended to include newly-edited excerpts from key later fourteenth-century texts (*Piers Plowman*, *The Canterbury Tales*, and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*). The texts are arranged by date of manuscript, foregrounding issues of dating, textual transmission, authorship and audience. Full translations are offered for all the Old and earlier Middle English material, along with marginal glosses for the later texts, making them accessible to those who are not language specialists. A general introduction gives an outline of the key works and the historical context in which they were written.

Rory McTurk

Companion to Old Norse-Icelandic Literature

Blackwell, 2004. 512 pp.

hardback 0 631 23502 7. £95

This major survey of Old Norse-Icelandic literature and culture comprises thirty chapters written by leading scholars in the field, over a third of whom are Icelanders. At the same time, it conveys a sense of the mainland Scandinavian origins of the Icelandic people, and reflects the ongoing contact between Iceland and other countries and cultures. The volume highlights current debates among Old Norse-Icelandic scholars specializing in different aspects of the subject. Coverage of traditional topics is complemented by material on previously neglected areas of study, such as the sagas of Icelandic bishops and the fantasy sagas. Chapters on 'archaeology', 'social institutions' and 'geography and travel' make it possible to view the literature in its wider cultural context; while chapters on 'reception' and 'continuity' demonstrate the ways in which medieval Norse-Icelandic literature and culture overflow into the modern period.

The Christian Tradition in Anglo-Saxon England: Approaches to Current Scholarship and Teaching

edited by Paul Cavill

D.S. Brewer, 2004, 232 pp.

hardback 0 85991 841 6 £40 (\$70)

This is a collection of essays exploring a wide array of sources that show the importance of Christian ideas and influences in Anglo-Saxon England. The range of treatment is exceptionally diverse. Some of the essays develop new approaches to familiar texts, such as *Beowulf*, *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer*. Others deal with less familiar texts and genres to illustrate the role of Christian ideas in a variety of contexts: from preaching to remembrance of the dead, and from the court of King Cnut to the monastic library. Some of the essays are informative, providing essential background material for understanding the nature of the distinction between monastic and cleric in Anglo-Saxon England; others provide concise summaries of material evidence or genres; others still show how themes can be used in constructing and evaluating when teaching the tradition.

If you have a book at press or which has recently appeared, please ask your publisher to send a review copy to TOEBI.

Book Reviews

Textual and Material Culture in Anglo-Saxon England: Thomas Northcote Toller and the Toller Memorial Lectures

edited by Donald Scragg

Publications of the Manchester Centre for Anglo-Saxon Studies 1

D.S. Brewer, 2003. xx + 345 pp.

hardback 0 85991 773 8. £75 (\$130)

This volume is the first in a new series of publications from the Manchester Centre for Anglo-Saxon Studies. It reproduces the first ten Toller Memorial Lectures, given between 1987 and 1997 by Janet Bately, Audrey Meaney, Helmut Gneuss, Michael Lapidge, Roberta Frank, Katherine O'Brien O'Keefe, George Hardin Brown, Richard Bailey, Joyce Hill and David A. Hinton, and also contains the first printing of the Toller Lecture for 2002, Peter Baker's 'Toller at School: Joseph Bosworth, T. Northcote Toller and the Progress of Old English Lexicography in the Nineteenth Century'. In addition, there are three new pieces focusing on Toller's life and career: 'T. Northcote Toller and the Making of the *Supplement to the Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*' by Dabney Anderson Bankert, 'Items of Lexicographical Interest in the Toller Collection, John Rylands University Library of Manchester' by Alexander Rumble, and a biography of Toller by Joana Proud. All the reprinted lectures except Hill's have been provided with Postscripts, mostly comprising updated footnotes and additional bibliography items but in Meaney's case amounting to 20 pages of detailed engagement with subsequent scholarship. The volume begins with an Introduction by Donald Scragg documenting the history of the Manchester Centre since its inception in 1985.

As will be evident to everyone familiar with the Toller Lecture series, this is a valuable compilation of material comprising keynote papers in different areas of Anglo-Saxon studies. The topics of the reprinted lectures range from language, literature, literacy and orality to manuscripts, sculpture and metalwork; while each of the new pieces by Baker, Bankert and Proud makes a significant contribution to the neglected subject of the history of Old English lexicography. Rumble's discussion of books from Toller's personal library, including two annotated copies of the 1838 edition of Bosworth's *Dictionary*, is fascinating but all too brief. He concludes by noting that the two copies 'would repay much more study and comparison', and one wishes that he had extended his paper to do so.

The volume has been produced to a very high standard. The typeface and layout are clear, and the quality of illustrations is excellent. Particularly welcome are reproductions of annotated pages from the *Dictionary* and *Supplement* in Plates 18–21, offering a rare insight into the working practices of early lexicographers. According to Scragg's Introduction, minor typographical errors have been corrected from the first printing of the Toller Lectures; and no new ones have been introduced that I could see.

A point that struck me about these papers as a group is how superbly entertaining many of them are. Frank's 'audience of mice and ducks' is of course now legendary, but other contributors too are adept at combining serious scholarship with wit and humour. Perhaps this is partly because the lectures were originally written for oral delivery — although Meaney's Postscript also incorporates a wonderful joke against herself in footnote 53! Are academic papers in other disciplines such fun to read, or is this a trait of Anglo-Saxon studies? It would be interesting to know.

Carole Hough
University of Glasgow

Introduction to Old English

by Peter S. Baker

Blackwell Publishing, 2003. xv + 332 pp.

paperback 0 631 23454 3. £17.99

This book and its associated online resources is claimed to be a 'a revolutionary new approach to teaching Old English', and so in many ways it is. It goes a long way towards disarming students and anyone else who might feel that grammar is an unnecessary penitential discipline. It explains terms carefully, it proceeds logically, it illustrates points with frequent and apposite examples, and it addresses the reader in friendly, even avuncular, style. There are tips, minitexts, tables, explanations, web-addresses for exercises; and there is a consistent effort to point out that Old English spelling and syntax are orderly and regular rather than random. All these features show the fruit of years of sensitive, thoughtful and student-responsive teaching.

The book starts with a general introduction to the Anglo-Saxons and their language and moves on to the sounds. Then it gets to basic grammar: parts of speech, case, pronouns, nouns, verbs, adjectives, numerals, adverbs, conjunctions and prepositions and concord. Basic syntax is covered by a chapter

on word-order. Three chapters cover metre, style and the grammar of poetry. And a final chapter before the appendices, the anthology of texts, glossary and bibliography, deals with Old English manuscripts. The anthology of texts does not include the old favourites *The Battle of Maldon*, *The Dream of the Rood* and *Beowulf*. In short, there is a whole course of study here, with most of what is needed preliminary to reading and enjoying the literature.

Minor errors and infelicities may be pointed out. I felt uneasy that the book should start with asserting that Bede's *Historia* was completed in 735 and that the last Roman legions left Britain in 410 (p. 1). A note to the story of Cædmon is seriously misleading (p. 183, note 8). There are a few typos: p. 19, note 6 has [sk] for [k]; OE words on p. 56 are garbled (frbond for frëond etc.); there is an unhelpful variation of -þ and -ð verbal endings at several places, e.g. p. 69, table 7.5; an intrusive comma p. 102, 16 lines down; confusing lack of italics, second example middle of p. 39 (*by*), first example middle of p. 115 (*Do*). English users need to be aware that the phonology is basically American (this is clearly stated), and the syntax likewise (not stated).

Carping aside, this work is a huge step forward in imaginative course design. It is accessible in manner and genuinely tries to address the needs of the modern student and teacher, taking them through a course step by step. I still doubt that it is accessible enough, that it deals effectively with those with 'no expertise in traditional grammar'. But this is to my mind by far the best attempt yet to introduce Old English, and I enthusiastically commend it to members.

Paul Cavill
University of Nottingham

Apocryphal Texts and Traditions in Anglo-Saxon England

edited by Kathryn Powell and Donald Scragg

Publications of the Manchester Centre for Anglo-Saxon Studies 2

D. S. Brewer, 2003. xi + 170 pp.
hardback 0 85991 774 6. £50 (\$85)

In the nine contributions that make up this well-edited collection of essays a relatively neglected aspect of Anglo-Saxon studies is brought into the foreground. In recent publications some scholars have begun to look at the apocrypha in Anglo-Saxon England in a

more concerted way than has been the case in the past, and this book, in which some of these scholars figure centrally, opens out the subject still further. The book consists of a wide-ranging introductory survey of apocryphal writings and their use in Anglo-Saxon England, by Frederick Biggs, who presents a masterly introduction to the subject, followed by seven specialised studies of the use of particular apocrypha by the Anglo-Saxons, with a concluding short overview and reflection by Joyce Hill.

The specialised studies are by Charles Wright, on *The Apocalypse of Thomas*, including a synoptic edition of six new texts of the Latin version; Thomas Hall, on Ælfric's acceptance of the Epistle to the Laodicians as canonical; Patrizia Lendinara, on the Signs of Judgement and the use of the acrostic *Versus Sibyllae de Die Iudicii*, which, though classical in origin, was used as an apocryphal text; Aideen O'Leary, on 'when and in what forms apostolic apocrypha reached Anglo-Saxon England and in what centres of learning they circulated', with discussion in particular of Bede, Aldhelm and the Book of Cerne and a glance at vernacular texts; Daniel Anzelark, on one of the less studied accounts of the Fall of the Angels, that in *Solomon and Saturn II*, which is shown to have significant correspondences with the Book of Enoch; Elizabeth Coatsworth, on the Book of Enoch and Anglo-Saxon art, with particular reference to the Hexateuch and Junius 11; and Catherine Karkov, on the context and sources of the pictorial representation of Judgement and Salvation in the New Minster *Liber Vitae*, which presents the only surviving narrative depiction of the Last Judgement in Anglo-Saxon art.

These studies, uniformly of very high scholarly quality, suggest the fruitfulness of this area of research and indicate the scope for further study. The studies are mostly unrelated to each other (though the Book of Enoch emerges as recurring theme, and, as we might expect, Aldhelm, Bede and Ælfric figure widely) but they raise common issues of definition and perception, which are picked up in the 'framing' essays by Biggs and Hill. Such issues are highlighted in Biggs's opening sentence, 'The very idea of apocrypha involves making distinctions' (p. 1), and their implications are sensitively explored by Hill at the end of the book. In commenting on the significance of *Apocryphal Texts and Traditions in Anglo-Saxon England* as a contribution to our understanding of Anglo-Saxon culture, I can do no better than quote one of Hill's closing sentences: 'By providing

us with a set of essays that put the apocryphal at the centre instead of at the dismissive outer edges, this book begins to shift the focus onto what were, for the Anglo-Saxons, traditions that were far more important and influential than we often allow ourselves to admit' (p. 168).

Hugh Magennis
Queen's University Belfast

'Lastworda betst': Essays in Memory of Christine E. Fell with her Unpublished Writings

edited by Carole Hough and Kathryn A. Lowe

Shaun Tyas, 2002. xvi + 298 pp.
hardback 1 900289 53 9. £35

'Lastworda Betst', the *denkschrift* for Christine E. Fell, 'reflect[s] her own interests in lexicology and semantics, the history of editing, early medieval literature, the position of women in the Middle Ages, and the importance of interdisciplinary studies' (p. vi). Part 1 is a collection of essays written by Fell's colleagues and former students. Part 2 consists of eight of her previously unpublished works. The volume also contains an invaluable bibliography of Fell's publications from 1963.

Paul Cavill's 'Bede and Cædmon's *Hymn*' combines an assessment of past scholarship regarding the relationship between the Latin and vernacular versions of Cædmon's *Hymn* with linguistic evidence and interpretation in order to 'build a plausible case' (p. 3) in support of the standpoint that Bede paraphrased Cædmon's Old English *Hymn*.

Roberta Dewa's 'Of Editors and the Old English Poetry of the Exeter Book: A Brief History of Progress' surveys the development of editorial functions, values, practices and self-consciousness in the context of the Exeter Book. Her article makes an appeal for our continued self-reflection regarding the subjectivity that editing, or simply reading, Old English poetry requires.

Carole Hough, in her lengthy article 'Women in English Place-Names', answers the call for a review of the fundamental principles, now considered untenable, upon which Frank Stenton based his seminal 1943 article on women in English place-names.¹ Hough's

¹ F. M. Stenton, 'The Historical Bearing of Place-Name Studies: The Place of Women in Anglo-Saxon Society', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 4th series 25 (1943),

important contribution outlines the methodology behind, and her analysis of, her much extended corpus of feminine personal names in English place-names. This corpus is appended to her article. Hough would have profited from separating her analysis from her methodology and critique of previous scholarship, since the significance of the wide-ranging evidence she presents is sometimes lost in the quantity of information that frames it.

Taking Fell's discussion regarding Old English *wicing* as her starting point,² Judith Jesch reappraises the semantic range of *vikingr* and *viking* in Old Norse, in her 'Old Norse *vikingr*: A Question of Contexts'. Her argument draws on the contemporaneous yet geographically distinct and little compared genres of runic inscription and skaldic poetry.

In "A Fine and Private Place": *The Wife's Lament*, ll. 33-34: the Translators and the Critics', Kathryn A. Lowe employs lexicological, semantic and grammatical analysis of *The Wife's Lament* to assert a correct (or at least more satisfactory) translation, and thus understanding, of these lines. It is interesting that, in an essay about translators and so centred on translation, Lowe herself does not translate the Old English examples she adduces: this omission is striking in an article where translation carries a substantial burden of her argument.

Sam Lucy's 'From Pots to People: Two Hundred Years of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology' is the archaeological equivalent to Dewa's essay on editors, dealing as it does with the methodological developments in Anglo-Saxon archaeology, changing trends of inquiry and interpretation in the field, and the ways in which archaeological evidence has been used in relation to textual/historical evidence. Lucy also reviews the current archaeological debates concerning Anglo-Saxon settlements and cemeteries of the fifth and sixth centuries.

In 'Old English *lōt, Dialect *loot*, a Salt-Maker's 'Ladle'', David N. Parsons strengthens the view voiced by Eilert Ekwall

1-13, repr. in *Preparatory to Anglo-Saxon England: Being the Collected Papers of Frank Merry Stenton*, ed., D. M. Stenton (Oxford, 1970), pp. 314-324. Also repr. in *New Readings on Women in Old English Literature*, ed. by H. Damico and A. H. Olsen (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1990), pp. 79-88.

² C. Fell, 'Old English *wicing*: A Question of Semantics', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 72 (1986), 295-316.

in 1964 that the first element in the curiously named *Lootwic* in Worcestershire may have derived from OE **lōt* meaning an implement used in salt-making. Through thorough investigation of the semantic range and cognates of *loot*, Parsons convincingly argues this case, and further speculates as to the actual geographical location of *Lootwic*.

The final essay in Part 1 by Tania Styles, ‘Crook-Neb’d Corslets and Barefaced Cheek’ stems from Fell’s 1995 paper and explores the semantic range of OE *neb*. Styles convincingly argues for a metaphoric and hitherto unacknowledged sense of *neb* as ‘impudence’.

The eight previously unpublished works of Fell span her research from the mid 1980s to that which she was undertaking when she died in 1998. They reflect the diversity of her interests; her writings on women, semantics and lexicography, and correspondence are represented here. All these essays were unfinished or were intended for oral presentation. Thus, much (although not all) of the referencing and footnoting is editorial, and the essays were not intended for publication in the state in which they were at Fell’s death.

A criticism that might be made of this volume is that its collection lacks continuity and is bereft of points of connection to link the individual articles. That the principle for inclusion in Part 1 of this volume – essays that would have interested Fell – is a noble and reasonable one for a *festschrift* (or indeed *denkschrift*) is undeniable, but some reorganisation of Part 1 might have provided some unity to a volume which admits to representing diverse interests. For example, Lowe’s article, specifically on *WL*, is a convincing extension of Dewa’s more general discussion on the Exeter Book, and it would have been profitable to group them rather than separating them by eighty-odd pages.

However, a recurring concern in Fell’s essays does provide one kind of continuity. Her repeated caution against basing our interpretations unquestioningly on the ‘scholarly tradition’ (p. 229) of previous (perhaps misguided or wrong) editors, translators, or lexicographers is one that is repeated, with varying degrees of explicitness and force, in all the essays in this volume. It is in this call for continual reassessment, and thorough and self-reflective research, that the value of this volume truly lies.

Melanie Hayworth
Royal Holloway College, London

Beowulf: A Verse Translation

Translated by Seamus Heaney. Edited by Daniel Donoghue.

Norton, 2002. 224 pp.

paperback 0 393 97580 0. £7.95

Beowulf: A Prose Translation, 2nd Edition

Translated by E. Talbot Donaldson. Edited by Nicholas Howe.

Norton, 2001. 224 pp.

paperback 0 393 97406 5. £7.95

Michael Alexander

A History of Old English Literature, 2nd Edition

Broadview 2002. 200 pp.

paperback 1 55111 322 8. 12.99

Students of Old English, particularly those following introductory courses, will be glad to see the reappearance of these translations and introductory literary/historical survey.

Both translations follow the usual formula of the Norton critical editions series, offering an authoritative text, contextual and source materials, and a wide range of interpretations ‘from contemporary perspectives to the most current critical theory’. This sensible combination of text and criticism is perennially attractive to cash-strapped undergraduates, but to be successful the selection of material is of crucial importance. Both volumes are somewhat lightweight in terms of the amount of contextual material they provide, but a nice balance is achieved on the critical front. Heaney’s new translation of the poem is matched with several ‘old’ pieces of criticism. The oldest, Tolkien’s 1936 essay ‘The Monsters and the Critics’, is by now almost as venerable a classic as the poem itself; other pieces date from the 1960s and 1980s, along with four pieces written in the last decade. E. Talbot Donaldson’s 1966 translation of the poem is teamed with seven newer essays, the majority of which are from the 1990s; the oldest contribution, by Roberta Frank dates from 1982. This essay inexplicably appears in both volumes, but this is the only overlap; the contextual material is different in both cases, and although each volume concludes with a glossary of proper names and a selected bibliography, these have been devised differently. Overall the volumes make a nice pair and between them illustrate the different choices available to translators of poetic texts.

Michael Alexander’s *A History of Old English Literature*, originally published by Macmillan in 1984, has now been reissued by Broadview in a revised edition. The essential

structure of the book remains intact: it has the same ten chapters with the same subdivisions. Rewriting is only evident at a minor level in the form of some tinkering with expression. Revisions have affected the bibliography which has been thoroughly updated and augmented in terms of critical material. The maps which appeared in the original volume no longer feature; the plates have been rearranged; and there has been some pruning in the Chronological Table, where some of the more erudite references have been removed; the table itself has been relocated at the front of the book. So much for revisions and rewriting, but this is still a good recommendation for beginners in the subject, offering a simple historical and cultural context for the study of Old English literature. Michael Alexander states in the preface that this is exactly the type of book that *he* would have liked to have had when he was a student. As someone who did, in the 1980s, have the first edition of this book available when I was learning Old English, I can testify to its attractions at first hand. Of course there are now other introductory volumes, and those teaching Old English language also tend to be more aware of the need to draw in students' interest by way of archaeology and history. But this does not diminish the volume's effectiveness; it is a lucid, eminently readable survey, altogether a cosy hearth-companion, and its reappearance is welcome.

Margaret Connolly
University College Cork

New reviewers are always welcome. If you would be interested in reviewing for the TOEBI *Newsletter* please let the Editor know.

Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts in Microfiche Facsimile

Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts in Microfiche Facsimile is a project designed to make available the entire corpus of the Old English language in its manuscript contexts to all interested researchers. It aims to do this in a relatively short time and at considerably lower cost than conventional book-format facsimiles; the entire series of over 500 manuscripts will cost individual subscribers about £1,500 (\$3,000), over about 10 years.

The aim is to make this resource available in a convenient and economical form as an everyday study and reference tool, not only in large research libraries, but also in the libraries of smaller institutions and individual scholars. Each manuscript is accompanied by a scholarly description, and the whole series will be concluded by a general index of contents to make the vast amount of material contained in the series readily findable.

Every Anglo-Saxonist is aware that manuscripts are the basis of all the literary, historical, and linguistic work that is undertaken in the field, but hitherto, direct knowledge of most of these manuscripts throughout the profession generally has been limited by distance, cost, and difficulty of access to collections. The manuscript reality for textual, artistic, and cultural questions has been left to a few dedicated and fortunately-placed specialists within the field who have tended to concentrate on editing. Since the vast majority of extant manuscripts reside in British and European research libraries, available without a visit only on expensive and individually-acquired microfilms, in practice many Anglo-Saxonists have to rely on second-hand sources (editions and specialized studies) for their knowledge of primary and fundamental materials.

The microfiche series will provide material to ground the currently ongoing large-scale Anglo-Saxon projects such as *Fontes Anglo-Saxonici*, *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture*, and *The Dictionary of Old English*, which refer constantly to manuscripts as edited. New concepts of citation and accuracy will doubtless emerge. The ability to "browse" and cross-check manuscripts unhindered by cost, location, or consideration of manuscript wear and tear, will inspire many new lines of inquiry. The systematic introduction of manuscript studies to students early in their studies will come to seem easy and natural.

The project is well-advanced, thanks in large part to ongoing grants from the NEH since 1994. Of about fifty volumes planned, ten, containing the fiche images and descriptions of about 100 manuscripts, have already been published (by *Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies*, Arizona State University). The publication will proceed at the rate of four or five volumes (40-50 MSS) per year until completion. Further information can be found at the Project's Website: <http://mendota.english.wisc.edu/~ASMMF/index.htm>

Lynne Grundy Memorial Trust

Lynne Grundy was Researcher and Lecturer at the University of London from 1988 to 1997, and died in 1997 when she was forty. The Trust was established with help from her students, colleagues, and friends, to commemorate her life and continue her work.

The Trust gives several grants every year (up to £500 each) to scholars and students in the disciplines of Old English / Anglo-Saxon or Humanities Computing (who do not already have a permanent full-time academic post or adequate funding), to contribute towards knowledge and to continue Lynne's passionate involvement in these disciplines. Award winners also receive Lynne's *Books and Grace*, and her *Memorial Volume* along with their cheque (these both generously donated by KCLMS)

In 2003 the Trust made five more awards to scholars and students in the fields of Anglo-Saxon / Old English and Humanities Computing. The five awards were to:

- Pirkko Koppinen from Royal Holloway towards presenting her paper on *Judith* at the Leeds Medieval Congress in July 2003
- Rachel Becker towards her international rate fees for her DPhil on Anglo-Saxon verse in Auden and 20th century poetry
- Janina Maleczek towards a project for her PhD at York on the symbolism of birds in Anglo-Saxon art
- Abigayle Smyth to help complete her Cambridge DPhil on Aelfric and attend the Leeds Congress
- Dr Adam Mearns to develop for publication his Newcastle PhD on Anglo-Saxon monsters and devils.

LGMT awards have enabled publication of several books, many papers, and an adaptation of *Beowulf* for the Edinburgh Fringe. In the last few years at least two PhD students giving papers at each annual Leeds Medieval Congress have been enabled to be there by support from the Trust. The calibre of past award winners ensures that recipients are now recognised within the academic community as having a special contribution to make, and the awards themselves have become a recognised achievement. Indeed, quite a few award winners are now our colleagues rather than our students!

How to apply for an award:

Send full details of your proposal, along with a copy of your CV and academic references to the Trust at the address below. The deadline for applications is Easter each year; awards are made in June. Every application is confidential.

How to support the Trust:

Every year more excellent candidates apply with important projects and work that just isn't being funded by the system. The income of the Trust is derived solely from donations and interest on invested donations (which continues to be low). This means that any financial help given by individuals or departments is enormously important in ensuring the continuation of this increasingly vital support for students and scholars in the field.

Of every £10 donated to the Trust, £9.70 goes directly to students and scholars in the form of awards. The other 30p is spent on mailing information about the Trust. Any donation can be worth nearly 30% more to the Trust through the Gift Aid scheme.

The Trust welcomes donations by cheque, and any enquiries to:

Lynne Grundy Memorial Trust

2A East Mount Street

London E1 1BA

☎ 020 7377 2171

details:

www.art.man.ac.uk/ENGLISH/Projects/manca/ss/grundy.html

Charity Commission Number: 1072150

AHRB Funding for Old English

In October 2003 the Postgraduate Committee of the Arts and Humanities Research Board announced that it had selected five subject areas for ring-fenced funding. These were chosen as areas of strategic importance and intellectual urgency whose needs might be well served by the provision of ring-fenced doctoral awards in the 2004-06 competitions.

One of the five subject areas is defined as 'Early Languages of the British Isles and their Literatures'. This ring-fenced area covers the study of Old English (seventh to twelfth centuries) and Celtic languages and literatures (all periods). A strong motivation

for ring-fencing this area was the concern that few students were able to access original material because they lacked the necessary language skills. Although there is a burgeoning interest in this area overseas, there is a clear need to sustain and develop within the UK the capacity and capability in research into the early literature and language of the British Isles. The Board felt that it would be entirely appropriate for the UK to have a leading role in this area and ring-fencing doctoral awards is one way in which the AHRB can contribute.

Possible areas of study include the socio-history of language and ideas, and comparative dialectology, textual criticism and editing, and may extend to broader issues of identity, gender, nationhood and ethnicity. The Board will expect students to develop skills in: linguistics; language, literary and stylistic analysis; literary criticism; manuscript studies; source studies; historical contextualisation; and cross-reference to other materials. It is also anticipated that they will employ innovative methods of working, such as computer-based research, modern theoretical approaches and integrated interdisciplinary techniques.

The areas selected for ring-fencing will be listed in the AHRB's *Guide for Applicants for Postgraduate Awards*. Any student wishing to apply within a ring-fenced area will be asked to identify the area on the application form, using the tick box provided. The doctoral applications will be assessed against the same criteria as those submitted under responsive mode. At the point of making recommendations for funding, the Committee will ensure that six awards are made in each area, providing that there are six applications that meet the quality threshold. Whereas the Committee will act to ensure that at least six awards are made in each ring-fenced area, providing there are sufficient applications of fundable quality, it will not exclude candidates who would otherwise have been funded on the grounds that six awards in a ring-fenced area have already been made. It is also important to note that the Board will be ring-fencing awards rather than a sum of money.

For further details about ring-fenced doctoral awards see the AHRB website:

<http://www.ahrb.ac.uk>

Forthcoming Conferences 2004-05

'Discovering the Other': 800-1600

University of Leicester

2-4 July 2004

This conference aims to bring together scholars from the medieval and early modern fields in order to engage in the exchange of ideas and lively debate on the theme of 'otherness', with specific reference to travel writing, although in the interests of inclusiveness this should be regarded as a guideline that can be interpreted loosely. It is envisaged that topics such as cultural encounters and cultural clashes, gender and racial 'otherness' and issues of identity, as well as harmonious encounters with different races and faiths, will be the subject of papers.

Confirmed speakers include: Professor Mary Baine Campbell and Professor Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (plenary lectures), and Dr Suzanne Akbari, Dr Catherine Clarke, Dr Elizabeth Herbert-McAvoy, Dr Alfred Hiatt, Dr Claire Jowitt, Dr Christina Lee, Professor Hugh Magennis, Dr Melanie Ord, Dr Kathryn Powell, Dr Philippa Semper, Dr Joanna Story, Dr Louise Sylvester, Professor Elaine Treharne, and Professor Scott Westrem.

Contact:

Jasmine Kilburn

✉ e-mail: jalk1@le.ac.uk

International Medieval Congress 2004 and 2005, University of Leeds

IMC 2004 'Clash of Cultures': International Medieval Congress, University of Leeds

12-15 July 2004

TOEBI members are reminded that the 2004 IMC will be from July 12-15, and that it will include a full and interesting strand of sessions on Anglo-Saxon topics. Mary Swan is organising the annual Anglo-Saxonists' dinner at the IMC, and this will take place on the evening of Monday 12 July. Anyone interested in attending the dinner should contact Mary (on medieval-studies@leeds.ac.uk) by 11 June to let her know.

IMC 2005

The call for papers for IMC 2005 has been issued, and TOEBI members are encouraged to submit papers and session proposals. The full call for papers, and proposal forms, are available on:

www.leeds.ac.uk/imi/imc/imc.html

The special theme for IMC 2005 is Youth and Age, and submissions are welcome on this topic. The Anglo-Saxon Studies strand will run as usual in 2005, so paper and session proposals on any aspect of Anglo-Saxon Studies are also very welcome. Anyone who would like to discuss ideas for papers or sessions for the Anglo-Saxon Studies strand should contact its coordinator, Mary Swan, on m.t.swan@leeds.ac.uk

For general information contact:
Axel. E. Muller or Claire Clarke,
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<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/imi/imc/imc.htm>

**Envisaging Heaven in the Middle Ages
Clifton Hill House, University of Bristol
16-18 July 2004**

This conference is devoted to issues concerning the representations and functions of heaven in medieval art, literature, popular and academic thought. Plenary speakers include Bernard McGinn (University of Chicago) and Barbara Newman (Northwestern University).

Contact:
Dr Ad Putter
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**The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle
An Interdisciplinary Conference
Centre for Medieval Studies, University of
York
28-30 July 2004**

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle has long had a central place in the study of Anglo-Saxon culture. It is the earliest vernacular chronicle in Western Europe, a near-contemporary record of political history from the ninth to the twelfth centuries, a major component of the Old English prose corpus and an important document for the development of Old English poetry. With the publication of Susan Irvine's edition of MS E all the main texts of the Chronicle will be available in the Collaborative Edition series. It is thus an appropriate time for a conference that will review the state of our knowledge about the

Chronicle, bringing together a wide range of scholarly approaches and suggesting directions for future research.

Featured speakers will include Anton Scharer, David Dumville, Janet Bately, Susan Irvine and Andrew Reynolds. Papers will cover all aspects of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle including:

- the production of the Chronicle
- the Chronicle in its historiographical contexts
- literary and linguistic aspects of the Chronicle
- the Chronicle as historical evidence

For further details see the conference website at <http://www-users.york.ac.uk/~adc108/> to which details of the programme will be added as they are confirmed; to be put on the conference mailing list please contact:

Alice Cowen
Centre for Medieval Studies
King's Manor
York YO1 7EP.
✉ e-mail: adc108@york.ac.uk

**7th Cardiff Conference on the Theory and
Practice of Translation in the Middle Ages
20-24 July 2004**

Hosted by the Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris.

Contact:
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<http://www.ucalgary.ca/~jenkinsj/MTC>

**Gender and Medieval Studies
University of Leeds
6-7 January 2005**

The 2005 Gender and Medieval Studies conference will be held at the University of Leeds on January 6 and 7 2005. The theme of the conference will be 'Geners and Sexualities', and the keynote speaker will be Jacqueline Murray. The call for papers and registration details will be posted shortly on the GMS website:

<http://www.medievalgender.org.uk/>

TOEBI members are warmly invited to submit paper proposals, and to register for the conference. The host department for the conference is the Institute for medieval

Studies, and enquiries about it should be addressed to Mary Swan on medieval-studies@leeds.ac.uk

Advertisement

Taught Postgraduate Programmes at the University of York

MA in Medieval English Literatures

This unique new course combines the study of writings in Old and Middle English, placing them in the context of other medieval literatures. In the Middle Ages several literary languages were used in England itself and the influence, at different times, of Latin, Old Norse, French and Italian was particularly strong: hence the focus on plurality. Approaches are theme-based rather than chronological, paying attention to both medieval and modern ideas about literature. A particular concern is to think across the Norman Conquest and reconceptualise the relationship between the early and late Middle Ages in challenging new ways. The course teaches a range of linguistic and technical skills which are essential for further medieval research.

There are two core modules in the Autumn Term. The first (20 credits) provides methodologies for approaching the study of medieval literature. All seminars deal with both early and late medieval texts. Topics include *Negotiating the Norman Conquest*; *What is 'English' Literature?* *Cloister, Court and Household*; *Orality*; *Books before Print*; *Authors and Authorship*; *The Uses of Poetry* and *The Postmodern Middle Ages*. The second core module (20 credits) is on texts which influenced the thought and writing of the Middle Ages, when ideas of 'authority' were very powerful. The focus is both on the texts themselves and on their medieval reception. Texts include the Psalms, writings by Virgil, Ovid, Augustine, Boethius, Bede and Cistercian authors, and the letters of Heloise and Abelard. Students write one 4,500 word essay linking these two modules.

Students also take an ancillary module (10 credits) on Old and Middle English, covering *Linguistic Change*; *Geographical Variation*; *Social Variation*; *Gender*; *Spoken and Written Language*; *Rhetoric* and *Medieval Ideas about Language*. All students also take a skills module over the first two terms (10 credits), which includes Latin, Old English, textual criticism and palaeography.

In the Spring Term, students choose two literary modules (each 20 credits). In 2004 the options will probably be *Edda and Saga*; *Cultural Identity in Anglo-Saxon Literature*; *Medieval Latin Poetry*; *Chaucer and Discourse of Dissent*; *Vernacular Voices: Late-Medieval Texts and Themes* and *Dante in Context*. Tuition in Old Norse, French and Italian can be available. Students write two 4,500-word essays, one relating to each module.

In the Summer Term and vacation, students write a 20,000-word dissertation (80 credits) on a subject of their choice, under individual supervision. The subject may relate only to early-medieval and/or late-medieval literatures. Students will be based at the Centre for Medieval Studies, which has a lively interdisciplinary research culture. Applicants need not have studied medieval literature before, but must have intelligence, enthusiasm and a desire to learn.

For further information consult the website:

www.york.ac.uk/depts/engl/gsp/taughtma/ma_med_eng_lit.htm

MA in Medieval Studies, 400-1550

Old English may also be studied as part of the interdisciplinary MA in Medieval Studies, 400-1550. Under this programme a full range of modules in both the early (400-1200) and later (1100-1550) medieval periods is offered, enabling students to specialise in one of these periods if they wish.

For further details contact:

Centre for Medieval Studies,
University of York,
King's Manor,
York YO1 7EP

☎ 01904 433910

✉ e-mail: lah1@york.ac.uk

www.york.ac.uk/inst/cms/gsp/ma-new.htm

TOEBI Committee

The dates refer to when members of the committee are due to retire or to stand for re-election.

President: Professor Don Scragg (2006)

Chair: Professor Peter Lucas (2004)

Secretary: Dr Elisabeth Okasha (2006)

Newsletter editor: Dr Margaret Connolly (2004)

Committee members:

Dr Mary Swan (2004)

Professor Elaine Treharne (2004)

Dr Jayne Carroll (2005)

Dr Gale Owen-Crocker (2005)

Dr Richard Dance (2006)

Professor Clare Lees (2006)

Dr Jennifer Neville (2006)

For membership details and general enquiries contact the secretary:

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Send submissions for the next Newsletter by 30 September 2004 to the Editor:

Dr Margaret Connolly
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University College Cork
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☎ 00 353 21 4902583

✉ e-mail: mconnolly@english.ucc.ie

Remember!

The new web-site address is: www.toebi.org

Action points for Members:

- **Send topics or proposals for the November TOEBI meeting** to the Secretary or to Gale Owen-Crocker, groc@man.ac.uk
- **Contribute to the Newsletter:** responses to this issue; book reviews; short articles on your Old English courses or assessment procedures; material about professional practice; student howlers
- **Please send information about the following items for inclusion in the Newsletter:**
 - Conferences on Anglo-Saxon Studies
 - Special Lectures by Anglo-Saxonists
 - Postgraduate Courses and Opportunities in Old English in your Department
 - News about promotions, or general (non-salacious) news about lecturers in your Department
 - The publication of new books or articles useful for teaching Old English

In search of good homes

Bruce Mitchell would like to give to a University Library or University teacher:

- A (near) complete run of *Old English Newsletter*
- A (near) complete run of *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* from 1959 to 2004

He asks that the recipient pay the carriage and associated costs.

He also has a complete set of *Anglo-Saxon England* and asks for quotations for the complete set.

Please contact:

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39 Blenheim Drive
Oxford OX2 8DJ

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