

INTRODUCTION

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IN 1971, W. F. Bolton opined, “Why, in fact, has so little work been done on Anglo-Latin?”¹ For context, Bolton was arguing on behalf of working with Anglo-Latin literature within an English department setting, as well as a focus on the relationship between Anglo-Latin literature and language with Old English. At the time Bolton wrote his article, very few Anglo-Latin poems had been recently edited. Those works that had been edited were by the prolific and better-known authors, such as Aldhelm, Bede, and Alcuin, for example.² These authors were considered to be of significance for the larger realm of Medieval Latin poetry, as opposed to the distinct and smaller Insular sphere of influence.

However, Bolton’s cry perhaps seems unfounded, given the amount of scholarship that had already been done at the time of his article’s publication. One notable oversight in Bolton’s article is the work of Alistair Campbell, whom Bolton cited but only for his *Old English Grammar*.³ Campbell’s contribution to Anglo-Latin literature—both poetry and prose—was immense; one might even say foundational. In his 1953 article, Campbell explained how Anglo-Latin poetry is ‘imitative’ and cannot be studied diachronically.⁴ Instead, Campbell argued, each author and each work must be approached individually and studied thoroughly for their Classical and Late Antique influences, as well as observing what other idiosyncratic imitations each author might bring to their text. Ultimately, Campbell observed two main stylistic distinctions (or imitations, one might say) in Anglo-Latin poetry: the more classically inclined, as exhibited by Bede, and what Campbell labelled the “hermeneutic,” as demonstrated by Aldhelm. Campbell noted that those so-called hermeneutic authors (e.g., Aldhelm, Frithegod) employed words that are rare in Classical works as well as Greek-derived words from glossaries. Further, Campbell argued that Anglo-Latin poets were, by far, more influenced by Christian Late Antique poets (e.g., Juvencus, Sedulius, Arator) than Classical authors, with the major exception being Ver-

1 Bolton, “Pre-Conquest Anglo-Latin,” 165.

2 Aldhelm, *Aldhelmi Opera*; Bede, *Bedae Venerabilis Opera*; Alcuin, *Carmina*.

3 Bolton, ‘Pre-Conquest Anglo-Latin,’ 159n35.

4 Campbell, “Some Linguistic Features,” 1.

gil. Lastly, Campbell showed how the Anglo-Latin poets attempted to imitate Classical metrical standards, while Late Antique metrical conventions were already embedded within the Anglo-Latin poetic standard from an early date, thus resulting in a number of abnormal scansion.⁵ From these studies there emerged the desire to distinguish Anglo-Latin poetry from Carolingian and medieval Hiberno-Latin poetry and present this tradition as a separate entity in its own right.

Campbell published editions of Anglo-Latin poems, including Æthelwulf's *De Abbatibus* (1967) with an English translation, Frithegod's *Breviloquium vitae Beati Wilfridi*, and Wulfstan of Winchester's *Narratio metrica de Sancto Swithuno* (1950).⁶ Additionally, he edited and translated the Latin prose text, *Encomium Emmae Reginae* (1949).⁷ These editions, especially his translations of *De Abbatibus* and the *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, made Anglo-Latin literature far more accessible to scholars of early medieval England.

Since Campbell's foundational work, scholarship on early medieval Anglo-Latin literature—both prose and poetry—has increased exponentially, led predominantly by Michael Lapidge. Whereas Campbell predominantly produced editions, Lapidge has contributed significantly to the literary criticism of Anglo-Latin poetry in addition to editions of Anglo-Latin texts. His literary criticism of the genre includes two seminal volumes, *Anglo-Latin Literature: 600–899* (1996) and *Anglo-Latin Literature: 900–1100* (1993), both of which contribute significantly to our understanding of the style, sources, and reception of key Anglo-Latin authors and poems from different centuries. These major works have enabled subsequent scholars to observe not only how Anglo-Latin poets were inspired by Classical and Late Antique traditions, but also how they deviated from conventions and created their own rules of poetic composition. Lapidge's published editions and translations of critical Anglo-Latin poetical works include the *Narratio metrica de Sancto Swithuno* (2003)⁸ and *Bede's Latin Poetry* (2019).⁹ The latter presents, for the first time, all Latin poetry attributed to Bede, as well as reconstructed versions of Bede's *Liber epigrammatum* and *Liber hymnorum*.

Michael Lapidge's scholarship perhaps heralded a new era of research on Anglo-Latin poetry. Whereas Campbell produced editions based meticu-

5 Campbell, "Some Linguistic Features," 14.

6 Æthelwulf, *De Abbatibus*; Frithegod, *Frithegodi monachi Breuiloquium uitae Beati Wilfredi et Wulfstani cantoris Narratio metrica de Sancto Swithuno*.

7 *Encomium Emmae Reginae*.

8 Wulfstan of Winchester, *Narratio metrica de S. Swithuno*.

9 Bede, *Bede's Latin Poetry*.

lously on philology, sources, and manuscript transmission, Lapidge treated Anglo-Latin poetry as poetry in of itself, with its own literary qualities: much like how Old English scholars had long been approaching contemporary vernacular poetry. Ultimately, Lapidge was able to weave together textual and poetic criticism, manuscript transmission, and philological discourse with literary analysis. In this particular way, Lapidge was able to make Anglo-Latin poetry equal to its Old English counterpart.

Andy Orchard has contributed significantly to the field of Anglo-Latin poetry, primarily through his extensive publications on Aldhelm and the Riddle traditions. In particular, Orchard's scholarship has bridged both the Old English and Anglo-Latin poetic traditions to demonstrate how the two were interconnected, as seen in his monographs *The Poetic Art of Aldhelm* (1994) and *The Old English and Anglo-Latin Riddle Tradition*, and culminating in his paper, "Alcuin and Cynewulf," the published version of his 2019 Sir Israel Gollancz lecture.¹⁰

Other significant contributions to the field of Anglo-Latin poetry include Carin Ruff and Neil Wright on metrics,¹¹ and David Howlett on connections between Anglo-Latin and Hiberno-Latin traditions.¹² Also of note are Patrizia Lendinara and Mary Garrison's work on Abbo of Saint-Germain-des-Prés and Alcuin, respectively, for establishing connections and exchanges between the Anglo-Latin poetic tradition with that of the Continent.¹³ Additionally, while Rosalind Love has published extensively on Anglo-Latin prose, particularly that of Bede, she has also analysed a Maundy Thursday hymn attributed to Frithegod, which has made a significant contribution to scholarship on the poetic tradition.¹⁴

Emily Thornbury's *Becoming a Poet in Anglo-Saxon England* (2014) weaves together analysis of both Old English and Anglo-Latin poets. Her edited collection of essays, *Latinity and Identity in Anglo-Saxon Literature*, co-edited with Rebecca Stephenson, explores both Anglo-Latin prose and

10 Orchard, *The Poetic Art of Aldhelm*; Orchard, *The Old English and Anglo-Latin Riddle Tradition*; Orchard, "Alcuin and Cynewulf."

11 Ruff, "The Place of Metrics in Anglo-Saxon Latin Education"; Wright, *History and Literature*.

12 Howlett, "Bede, Lutting and the Hiberno-Latin Tradition."

13 Lendinara, "Alcuin's 'O vos, est aetas'"; Lendinara, "A Difficult School Text in Anglo-Saxon England: The Third Book of Abbo's *Bella Parisiacae Urbis*," Lendinara, "The Third Book of the 'Bella Parisiacae Urbis' by Abbo of Saint-Germain-des-Prés and its Old English Gloss"; Garrison, "The Emergence of Carolingian Latin Literature."

14 E.g., Bede: *On First Samuel*; Love, "Frithegod of Canterbury's Maundy Thursday Hymn."

poetry. Particularly significant contributions to our understanding of Anglo-Latin poetry in this volume include Thornbury's on Æthelwulf's distinctive style, Leslie Lockett's on Oswald the Younger of Ramsey's retrograde verses, and Elizabeth Tyler's on connections between the Cambridge Songs manuscripts and the Exeter Book. In more recent years, Rob Gallagher has published on Anglo-Latin acrostic poetry,¹⁵ Erica Weaver on the *opus geminatum* tradition in early medieval England,¹⁶ Benjamin Saltzman on Old English and Anglo-Latin hermeneutic writings,¹⁷ and Tristan Major on interplay between Old English and Anglo-Latin literary traditions.¹⁸

Another significant advancement of the field of Anglo-Latin poetry is the publication of the Consolidated Library of Anglo-Saxon Poetry (CLASP) database.¹⁹ The CLASP database presents, for the first time, all poetry purported to be Anglo-Latin, nearly 30,000 lines of verse in one single entity. The database also includes all known Old English verse, too. The database also features metrical scansions for every Anglo-Latin poem, translations for Frithegod's *Breviloquium*, Æthelwulf's *De Abbatibus*, Aldhelm's *Carmen de Virginitate*, *Carmina Ecclesiastica*, *Carmen rhythmicum*, and the *Miracula Nyniae Episcopi*, among others. The database also allows users to search for metrical patterns and rare words, while also providing a concordance for both Old English and Anglo-Latin. Lastly, the database also includes manuscript information for over 1,500 manuscripts that contain Anglo-Latin verse, as well as transcriptions from select manuscripts. With the Anglo-Latin poetic corpus (and initial analyses) now more readily available than ever, it is hoped that future scholarship in this field will continue to flourish.

This edited collection aims to contribute to the advancement of this field with eight chapters on Anglo-Latin poetry, ca. 650–1100. The volume emerged from a conference held at Corpus Christi College, University of Oxford, in March 2022, having been delayed significantly by the Covid-19 pandemic; it was organized by me with assistance from Claire Selby. The conference featured thirteen papers from fifteen speakers, and seven of those are represented within the present volume, with one later addition. Rachel Burns' paper on layout of Latin texts written in early medieval Eng-

15 Gallagher, "Latin Acrostic Poetry in Anglo-Saxon England: Reassessing the Contribution of John the Old Saxon."

16 Weaver, "Hybrid Forms."

17 Saltzman, *Bonds of Secrecy*, 161–241.

18 Major, *Undoing Babel*.

19 CLASP. "A Consolidated Library of Anglo-Saxon Poetry." August 31, 2022. <https://clasp.ell.ox.ac.uk/db-latest/>.

land will be published in her forthcoming monograph.²⁰ Christine Rauer's paper on Mercian literature will be likewise published as part of her next monograph.²¹ Megan Cavell and Jenny Neville's paper on Boniface's Latin riddles will be published as part of their AHRC-funded project, "Group Identity and the Early Medieval Riddle Tradition."²² At the conference, Nicholas Stone presented considerable statistical evidence concerning metrical structure in Anglo-Latin poetry, especially compared against Classical conventions. Likewise, Samuel Holmes presented a paper on a little-known praise poem written on behalf of Archbishop Wulfstan. Both authors intend to publish these papers in the future. Additionally, Nick White, the IT expert on the *CLASP* project, gave a paper with me that explored how the *CLASP* database was constructed and what features users could anticipate. I am also grateful to Ciaran Arthur, Sarah Corrigan, Rob Gallagher, Patricia O'Connor, Rafael Pascual, and Daniel Thomas for chairing the conference panels. Lastly, I am very thankful to Rosalind Love for delivering the keynote address that deftly summarized each of the papers and their place within furthering the study of Anglo-Latin poetry.

The papers in this volume speak to Anglo-Latin poets and poetry in general, but also to these poets' positions within the wider medieval Latinate poetic tradition. Claudia Di Sciacca explores Isidore of Seville's influence on the riddle and elegiac traditions in early medieval England, both from the Old English and Anglo-Latin corpora. In particular, Di Sciacca focuses on the tension between the oral and written word and the blend of grammar and encyclopaedic knowledge in Anglo-Latin and Old English poetry, while also focusing on the manuscript transmission of these materials. Richard Hillier examines the circulation and manuscript transmission of Arator's *Historia Apostolica* in early medieval England. Through intertextual readings, Hillier demonstrates that Aldhelm, Bede, Alcuin, Ædiluulf (Æthelwulf), and Wulfstan of Winchester were familiar with the Vigilius letter; however, only Alcuin knew of the Parthenius letter, and no writer in pre-Conquest England was familiar with the Florianus letter until the tenth century. Using a critical manuscript, Hillier proposes an enticing theory about the transmission of the Arator dossier between the Continent and pre-Conquest England.

While both Di Sciacca and Hillier focus on connections between the Continent and pre-Conquest England, Grace Attwood considers the connections

20 Burns, *A History of Old English Verse Layout*.

21 Rauer, *A Literary History of Mercia*.

22 "Group Identity and the Early Medieval Riddle Tradition," <https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=AH%2FS013202%2F1>.

England and another neighbour across a body of water: Ireland. Attwood explores the use of “marked diction” in *Adelphus Adelpha Meter* and provides a philological exploration of several key Grecisms in the text. In particular, Attwood considers the practice of glossing this text (especially these Grecisms) in the English manuscript in which it survives, and suggests that the glossator was not making mistakes as previous scholarship has argued, but instead was reading Patristic sources alongside this text.

Cameron Scott Laird begins the series of specific case studies on Anglo-Latin authors with an essay on the metrical program in Aldhelm’s *Aenigmata*. Laird demonstrates that Aldhelm commences his *Aenigmata* by exemplifying a variety of metrical structures in shorter riddles, but ultimately ends the collection with longer, metrically uniform riddles. Rather than see the *Aenigmata* as a stand-alone metrical pedagogical tool, Laird suggests that Aldhelm’s complete program of metrical pedagogy is three-fold: *De Metris* as a text to instruct the principles of Latin metre, *De pedum regulis* to instruct in metrical values of Latin vocabulary, and the *Aenigmata* to illustrate applications of techniques found within the previous two works.

Following the recent publication of Michael Lapidge’s *Bede’s Latin Poetry*, it is perhaps no surprise that Bede is the most represented Anglo-Latin author in this volume. John Joseph Gallagher focuses on the Classical and Late Antique styles and formulae that are present in Bede’s metrical versions of certain Psalms. Christopher Scheirer examines the influence of epigraphic poetry on Bede’s verse. Rounding out the papers interested in Bede is Frederick Biggs’ re-examination of Bede’s *De die iudicii*, which has significant ramifications for our understanding of the poem. While there is a chronological jump in this volume between Bede and the tenth century, Tristan Major deftly explores how Frithegod used but also embellished (and even deviated from) his eighth-century source, Stephen of Ripon’s *Vita Wilfredi*. I would like to express my gratitude to all the authors in this volume for their participation in both the volume and the conference, and for their faith and trust in my editing.

While the chapters in this volume provide stimulating new approaches to a range of topics within early Anglo-Latin poetry, it must be noted that not every Anglo-Latin author is covered, and there are chronological gaps, as well. But rather than see this as a flaw, I hope that readers of this volume will be inspired by the many different methodological approaches that these authors utilize, and perhaps will be inspired to use some of these approaches within their own studies of, say, Latin poetry from Alfred’s court, or apply it to Wulfstan of Winchester and beyond, or maybe even begin to look at those women represented in the corpus, such as Berhtgyth.

But most importantly, I hope that these essays demonstrate the potential of working with the *CLASP* Anglo-Latin databases and what research might come from them. Indeed, these eight essays display the major areas of research that the Anglo-Latin *CLASP* databases allow users to do throughout the Anglo-Latin corpus: intertextuality, sources, transmission, manuscript collections, rare words and intense philological scrutiny, formulae, and metrical analyses, amongst many others. It is my sincerest hope that both this volume and the Anglo-Latin databases available on the *CLASP* website will generate further interest in and scholarship on the Anglo-Latin tradition, now with the entire corpus being readily accessible, so that Bolton's lament might indeed have been in vain.

And now, to quote Alcuin:

Heia age, carta, cito naveum conscende paratam...
 Sed fuge, rumpe moras, propera, percurre volando
 Incolomes sanos gaudentes atque vigentes
 Invenies utinam nostros gratanter amicos.²³

Right, now, letter, board the ship; it is ready to leave...
 But fly, do not delay, speed ahead, you must take flight.
 I hope you find our friends in good health,
 enjoying life and in good spirits.

23 Alcuin, *Carm.* 4, 1.

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