

ALFRED AND AELFRIC: WISDOM AND POETRY IN ANGLO-SAXON EDUCATION

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In 1972, Donald Bullough published an important, if little-known, paper on Anglo-Saxon education. Bullough's central argument was that King Alfred established an educational tradition in England which persisted until the Norman Conquest. According to Bullough, this tradition lay in the use of two languages, Latin and English, as the media of education. After the Conquest, this tradition died out; Latin triumphed for educational purposes, and English did not re-emerge from obscurity until the end of the Middle Ages.¹

My concern in this paper is to develop Bullough's insight, to show that a continuity in educational tradition can be detected not only in the languages used as the media of instruction but also in the moral concerns of Anglo-Saxon educators like Alfred and Aelfric. I also wish to indicate something of the part played by Anglo-Saxon poetry in this tradition.

It is customary when discussing the educational programme of King Alfred to begin with reference to two texts: Asser's *Life of King Alfred*, and Alfred's own *Preface to the Translation of Gregory the Great's Pastoral Care*. Together they tell us about the educational problems with which Alfred was faced, and what he did about them. The story is well-known; having with much effort defeated the Vikings in the 870s, Alfred turned in the following decade to a programme of reconstruction and reform. One aspect of this was the foundation of *burhs*, or fortified defensive sites, combined with a reorganisation of his army; another was the extension of his royal power into Mercia, including London. But a key element in Alfred's 'plan' was to do with education, establishing a school by which the higher clergy and nobility were to be trained, and arranging for and taking part in the translation and dissemination of a number of important texts.² Some of these texts, such as the *Pastoral Care* itself and the translation of St Augustine's *Soliloquies*, are closely associated with the king and may be entirely, or largely, translated by him. Others, such as the translation of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* or Orosius' *Histories against the Pagans*, were more distantly part of his programme —perhaps patronised by rather than the product of collaboration with King Alfred. Yet others, such as Bald's *Leechbook* or the *Old English Martyrology*, can be considered simply as part of the surge in vernacular writing which the king inspired.

Alfred's choice of texts may seem idiosyncratic to us, but he plainly felt that

they were crucial; in the *Preface to the Pastoral Care* he is definite on this point. After justifying translation into his own language on the grounds that the Greeks and Romans had also done so, Alfred continues as follows:

Therefore it seems better to me —if it seems so to you— that we too should turn into the language that we can all understand certain books which are the most necessary for all men to know, and accomplish this, as with God's help we may very easily do provided we have peace enough, so that all free-born young men now in England who have the means to apply themselves to it may be set to learning (as long as they are not useful for some other employment) until the time that they can read English writings properly. Thereafter one may instruct in Latin those whom one wishes to teach further and wishes to advance to holy orders.³

Alfred, then, aimed his programme at 'free-born young men'. The last sentence suggests a further, Latin stage for clergymen; presumably the noblemen who formed an essential part of the Anglo Saxon body-politic would need to be literate in English alone.

But —why should they need to be literate at all? In our own culture, literacy has become the accepted measure of entry into civilised society. Yet many comparatively 'advanced' civilisations with complex but coherent social structures —the Inca and Aztec empires leap to mind— seem to have managed pretty adequately without any written language as we know it; the Inca quipu and the Aztec rebus seem to have functioned as mnemonics for the recording of tribute, and little more.⁴ The work of Patrick Wormald and, more recently, Michael Clanchy has suggested strongly that Anglo-Saxon governance was largely carried out through the *verbum regis*, the king's oral command; written messages, if sent at all, would be read out, perhaps by clergymen or by specially trained slaves, to a largely illiterate nobility. In Wormald's words, 'formal royal law-making may have remained oral, and our texts may be more in the nature of ecclesiastical records of decisions taken than legislative acts in themselves.'⁵ Attempts by Anglo-Saxon kings after Alfred to establish written law-codes seem to have petered out in the late Anglo-Saxon period; and this failure of 'literate technology' seems to have been a feature of the centuries immediately after the Norman Conquest as well. Clanchy cites the example of the compilation of the great Domesday Book. It appears to have been a 'symbolic memorial' of the Conquest rather than a practical reference-book, for it was not until the 1250s that kings began to use it in litigation. As Clanchy points out, 'A surprising fact about Domesday Book is that it seems to have been used so rarely in the two centuries after it was composed.'⁶

Yet Alfred insisted on literacy for those in power in his country. The reason for this is hinted at in Asser's *Life of King Alfred*, chapter 106, where the

biographer records the king's reaction to corrupt or mistaken judges. The passage is so important that it needs to be quoted at length.

Accordingly, if the judges in question were to confess... that they had indeed passed judgement [corruptly or mistakenly] because they had not known better in the circumstances, then the king, admonishing their inexperience and foolishness with discretion and restraint, would reply as follows: 'I am astonished at this arrogance of yours, since through God's authority and my own you have enjoyed the office and status of wise men, yet you have neglected the study and application of wisdom. For that reason, I command you either to relinquish immediately the offices of worldly power that you possess, or else to apply yourselves much more attentively to the pursuit of wisdom.' Having heard these words, the ealdormen and reeves were terrified and chastened as if by the greatest of punishments, and they strove with every effort to apply themselves to learning what is just. As a result nearly all the ealdormen and reeves and thegns (who were illiterate from childhood) applied themselves in an amazing way to learning how to read, preferring rather to learn this unfamiliar discipline (no matter how laboriously) than to relinquish their offices of power. But if one of them —either because of his age or because of the unresponsive nature of his unpractised intelligence— was unable to make progress in learning to read, the king commanded the man's son (if he had one) or some relative of his, or even (if he had no-one else) a man of his own —whether freeman or slave— whom he had caused to be taught to read long before, to read out books in English to him by day and night, or whenever he had the opportunity.⁷

This theme of 'wisdom', *sapientia*, occurs again and again in Asser's account of Alfred. Alfred plainly sought it for himself, and then wished his subordinates in government also to possess it. Examination of the texts translated as part of Alfred's programme shows that all can be interpreted as 'works of wisdom', concerned with man's apprehension of his relationship with God, and the moral implications of this relationship. In fact, in the Anglo-Saxon modifications to the original Latin texts, the theme of 'wisdom' is often intensified. Thus the Alfredian translation of Boethius is augmented by ponderings on the way the universe is ordered and how man can perceive God,⁸ while the Orosius is modified to make more plain the central role of divine providence in the development of world history.⁹

The 'wisdom-literacy' required for reading such texts is not, in Parkes' useful phrase, 'pragmatic literacy', simply a matter of being able to read accounts, medicinal recipes and so on.¹⁰ It is not even directly designed for the reading of law-codes; 'learning what was just' is a moral rather than a legislative matter. Alfred's idea of wisdom, in fact, can find a parallel in the conception of *sapientia* current among Carolingian scholars —'concerned less... with the government of the state than the government of oneself'.¹¹ It was

practical only in the rather more distant sense that Alfred believed that a nation without wisdom could not prosper; and for this he had the evidence of many passages in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* (another text, incidentally, which formed part of his programme),¹² and of the ravages of the Vikings, which he seems to have looked on as the punishment for his people's sins.¹³

In this concern for 'wisdom', Alfred was not alone in Anglo-Saxon England. The tradition of 'wisdom' persists until the very end of the period, and it pervades the other great and well-known Anglo-Saxon educational programme, that designed and largely carried out by AElfric of Cerne Abbas towards the end of the tenth century.

AElfric's key educational works are the *Colloquy*, the *Grammar*, two volumes of *Catholic Homilies* and one volume of *Lives of the Saints*. The *Colloquy* (in Latin, with a later Old English gloss) and the *Grammar* are designed for those learning Latin, presumably clergy, while the homilies and saints' lives seem to be addressed primarily to lay-people. All these works show a guiding concern with 'wisdom'; to see this, it is necessary to discuss the contents of each in turn.

The *Colloquy* seems to have been designed for the teaching of oblates, children dedicated to a monastery. These novices would be expected to speak in Latin at all times; the *Colloquy* is an elementary Latin 'conversation class', whereby the boys would practise not only grammar and syntax and vocabulary but also correct and clear pronunciation. The *Colloquy* consists of a dialogue between master and pupils, the latter playing 'parts' (such as 'monk', 'shepherd', 'fisherman' and so on). Lapses in Latinity were punished severely, as the opening lines suggest:

Pupils: Oh master, we children beg that you will teach us to speak correctly, because we are unlearned and speak badly.

Master: What do you want to talk about?

Pupils: We don't care what talk about, as long as it is accurate and useful conversation, and not frivolous and filthy.

Master: Are you prepared to be beaten while learning?

Pupils: We would rather be beaten for the sake of learning than be ignorant. But we know that you are kind and unwilling to inflict blows on us unless we compel you to.¹⁴

As a 'teaching-aid' the *Colloquy* is well-designed —in marked contrast to the later colloquies it inspired, whose 'authors were distracted by a dichotomy of interest. Ostensibly pedagogues, engaged in the laborious task of teaching school-boys to speak Latin, they were also at heart embryo philologists, too anxious to display the riches of their word-hoard...'¹⁵ However, AElfric's teaching in the *Colloquy* has itself two aspects, practical and moral.

The *Colloquy* can be divided into three parts:

- (a) an introduction;
- (b) a teaching 'playlet', as described;
- (c) a conclusion, in which one pupil, prompted by the master, speaks on his reasons for learning and then describes his life as an oblate. It is this last part of the text which is of interest here:

Master: Oh boys, how do you like this speech?

Pupil: We like it well, but you talk very profoundly and use speech beyond our ability; but talk to us according to our comprehension, so that we can understand the things you say.

Master: I ask you, why are so eager to learn?

Pupil: Because we don't want to be like stupid animals, who know nothing but grass and water.

Master: And what do you want?

Pupil: We want to be clever.

Master: With what kind of cleverness? Do you want to be subtle or cunning in deceit, crafty in speech, artful, wily, speaking good and thinking evil, given to bland words, nourishing guile within, just like a sepulchre, painted outside and full of a stink within?

Pupil: We don't want to be clever like that, because he who deludes himself with pretence is not clever.

Master: But how do you want to be?

Pupil: We want to be sincere, without hypocrisy, and wise, so that we turn away from evil and do good. However, you are still questioning us more deeply than our years can take; so speak to us in our own way, not so deeply.¹⁶

In other words, the pupil learns to become wise. This emphasis on wisdom becomes overt in the Preface to AElfric's *Grammar*.¹⁷ The *Grammar* is definitely a technical work, and it may be significant that it survives in more manuscripts than any other of AElfric's works—it was a very useful and practical book. Yet, despite its 'practicality', the book never loses sight of its principal aim: Grammar is the key to wisdom. As AElfric says in the Preface to the *Grammar*:

Whence shall wise teachers come among God's people, unless they learn while they are young? And how can the faith be propagated, if sacred doctrine and its teachers decay? Therefore, God's ministers and monks should take warning now, lest in our day sacred doctrine should lose its fervour and decay; as happened in England only a few years ago, so that no English priest could compose or thoroughly interpret a letter in Latin, until Archbishop Dunstan and Bishop AElthelwold restored learning in the monasteries.¹⁸

With the *Catholic Homilies* and the *Lives of the Saints*, AElfric was faced with a wider audience. He wrote two volumes of *Catholic Homilies*, forty in

each cycle, to be read to the laity over two liturgical years, in accordance with his own advice to parish priests in the *Letter for Wulfsgie*.¹⁹ The *Lives of the Saints* were compiled at the request of two noble patrons, Æthelweard (d.ca. 1002), ealdorman of Wessex beyond Selwood, and Æthelweard's son Æthelmaer, founder of the monasteries at Cerne Abbas and Eynsham where Ælfric was monk and abbot respectively.

Ælfric's aim in both the *Homilies* and the *Lives* is made overt in his prefaces to them. In the *Catholic Homilies*, he says, his intention is to convey the key points of Christian doctrine to lay people

Rash, or rather, presumptuous, though it is to have done so, nevertheless I have translated this volume out of Latin books... into the language to which we are accustomed, for the edification of the unlearned who know only this language, either through reading it, or hearing it read.²⁰

In the English preface to the *Lives of the Saints*, he addresses Æthelweard and Æthelmaer directly:

Ælfric humbly greeteth alderman Æthelwerd, and I tell thee, beloved, that I have now collected in this book such Passions of the Saints as I have had leisure to translate into English, because that thou, beloved, and Æthelmaer earnestly prayed me for such writings, and received them at my hands for the confirmation of your faith by means of this history, which ye never had in your language before.²¹

Ælfric's aim is not to discuss controversial points, as he makes clear in his Latin preface to the *Lives of the Saints* — interestingly, not directly addressed to his patrons

I do not promise, however, to write many [*Lives of the Saints*] in [English], because it is not fitting that many should be translated into our language, lest peradventure the pearls of Christ be had in disrespect. And therefore I hold my peace as to the book called *Vitae Patrum* wherein are contained many subtle points which ought not to be laid open to the laity, nor indeed are we ourselves quite able to fathom them.²²

Rather Ælfric has the entirely orthodox aim of guiding the laity for the 'confirmation of [their] faith'.

In the Latin preface to the *Lives of the Saints*, Æthelweard and Æthelmaer are described as honouring Ælfric's translations *lectitando* normally translated as 'perusing', but 'reading aloud' is also a possible interpretation. Certainly, the *Catholic Homilies* were designed both for private and public reading, as is indicated by the reference to 'reading or hearing it read' quoted

above. However, whoever did the reading, there is strong evidence that

Elfric's homilies were primarily designed for oral delivery. The most obvious manifestation of this is his distinctive 'rhythmical style', whereby stress-patterns and alliteration are deployed, both in the *Lives* and (less systematically) in the later *Catholic Homilies*, in a manner very like Old English poetry. As Needham has indicated, 'It is clearly an oral style, which depends for its effect on being heard'.²³

Whether AElfric wrote poetry or prose is a question which has bedevilled editors and critics of his writing since the nineteenth century. Certainly, it is hard to tell from the manuscripts; Old English poetry and prose were written down in the same way, i.e. continuously, and there is nothing like the modern distinction in *mise en page* between the two discourses. The general view now is that the question does not much matter; the dividing line between poetry and prose was evidently blurred in Anglo-Saxon times.²⁴

Nevertheless, the presence of 'poetical' features in work composed to be read aloud to the laity does, I think, fit AElfric into an educational tradition which is distinct from that which I have discussed so far: the use of Old English poetry as a medium of education.

According to William of Malmesbury, writing in the twelfth century, Bede's older contemporary St Aldhelm had the habit of standing on a bridge leading to Malmesbury 'improvising Old English verses to the harp and successfully attracting the attention of his straying flock'.²⁵ At first sight, this may seem an isolated instance of something rather like a 'folk-mass'; the congregation is attracted by the icing, and the cake is then successfully force-fed. However, there is evidence that Old English poetry was not entirely a matter of escapist entertainment. Bede himself appears to have been a skilled poet, and we have *Bede's Death Song* —as its name suggests, a serious matter— to prove it. We do not know, quite, what the poet who sang the song of the creation of the world by God was doing at Hrothgar's (apparently) pagan court at the beginning of *Beowulf*; but his presence there at least suggests that religious poetry had a place in a king's entertainment —as did saints' lives beside romances in the courts of kings and noblemen later in the Middle Ages.²⁶ That poet may even have been declaiming something like Caedmon's famous *Hymn to the Creator*, as recorded by Bede.²⁷

And then there is King Alfred himself. A key passage here is chapter 23 of Asser's *Life*:

One day, therefore, when his mother was showing him and his brothers a book of English poetry which she held in her hand, she said: 'I shall give this book to whichever one of you can learn it the fastest.' Spurred on by these words, or rather by divine inspiration, and attracted by the beauty of the initial letter of in the book, Alfred spoke as follows in reply to his mother, forestalling his brothers (ahead in years, though not in ability): 'Will you really give this book to the one of us who can understand it the soonest and recite it to you?' Whereupon, smiling

with pleasure she reassured him, saying: 'Yes, I will.' He immediately took the book from her hand, went to his teacher and learnt it. When it was learnt, he took it back to his mother and recited it.²⁸

In the preceding chapter, Asser tells us that Alfred 'remained ignorant of letters until his twelfth year, or even longer. However, he was a careful listener, by day and night, to English poems, most frequently hearing them recited by others, and he readily retained them in his memory.'²⁹ Asser's phrase 'or even longer' is characteristically and irritatingly vague; however, this does not matter for our purposes. The important thing to notice is the part played by poetry in the king's education —and, indeed, in the education of his children: Edward and AElfthryth, Asser tells us, 'have attentively learned the Psalms, and books in English, and especially English poems'.³⁰ Asser evidently considered Alfred's liking for poetry to be praiseworthy and, in the context of the *Life*, an indication of moral worth. As Wormald has pointed out, it may also be significant that the king's mother seems to have been closely involved in introducing Alfred to poetry. 'There is reason to suppose,' he says,

that, throughout much of the period, women were often better educated than men. Laywomen are surprisingly prominent as the owners, dedicatees, even authors, of books, and as the decisive influence upon the education of their families.³¹

Wormald goes on to point out that, amongst Germanic noblemen, there are indications of active hostility to learning. He quotes Procopius on Theodoric the Ostrogoth:

Theodoric's daughter, the regent Amalasintha, wished to give her son a Roman education, but the Goths protested: "'Letters,' they said, 'are far removed from manliness... The man who is to show daring... and be great in renown ought to be freed from the timidity which teachers inspire, and take his training in arms... Even Theodoric would never allow any of the Goths to send their children to school; for he used to say... that, if the fear of the strap once came over them, they would never withstand sword and spear.'³²

As Wormald shows, this tradition persisted until late in the Middle Ages. Alfred's liking for letters may, in fact, have shown him to be something of a namby-pamby —and perhaps explains why Asser feels he has to emphasise the king's hunting abilities just after discussing his interest in books: such skills show that Alfred possessed the necessary Germanic manliness which a taste for learning might bring into question.³³

It is, of course, dangerous to extrapolate too far from the royal household to the households of the Anglo-Saxon nobility. However, it is at least

suggestive that Alfred's earliest education was through poetry. The next question is: what kind of poetry?

Most surviving Anglo-Saxon poetry appears in four MSS: the Exeter and Vercelli Books and the Junius and *Beowulf* manuscripts,³⁴ all of them dating very roughly from ca. 1000 A.D. All are miscellanies, containing a variety of poetic (and, in some cases, prose) texts. All of the MSS seem to have been regarded as somewhat anachronistic when they were copied: the Exeter book, despised and subjected to use as a cutting-board and a fire-guard in the years after its compilation, seems to have been copied by a scribe who had difficulty in understanding parts of the poems he was writing; the Vercelli Book was abandoned for some reason in North Italy; the Junius MS seems to be unfinished; and the *Beowulf* MS seems to have been nothing more than a collection of monster stories.³⁵

In fact, these MSS date from roughly the period when the writings of AElfric and other Old English homilists begin to be circulated. It is hard to argue from the absence of older poetic codices that these MSS represent an attempt to harness a new technology for recording an ancient literary tradition. On the other hand, it could be argued that they represent a decaying method of education which the Benedictine Revival of Dunstan, AElthelwold and Oswald was supposed to remedy, and which found its vernacular expression in AElfric's writings.

My suggestion is, therefore, that Old English poetry played a significant part in the education of the laity —and maybe also those aristocratic clergy who lived in the manner of St Wildred—³⁶ up until the time of AElfric, and had done so even before Alfred; and that AElfric's 'poetical' prose fitted into, revived and transmuted this tradition. The character of surviving Old English poetry would appear to bear out this interpretation. Overtly Christian poems like *Exodus*, *Genesis B* and *The Dream of the Rood* are written in an 'heroic' manner,³⁷ while, in *Beowulf*, heroic attitudes are clearly contained within an all-pervading Christian outlook on the world, as Dorothy Whitelock convincingly argued in *The Audience of Beowulf*.³⁸ In *Poems of Wisdom and Learning in Old English*, T.A. Shippey collected a number of works which have been given names like *Precepts*, *Vainglory*, *The Fortunes of Men*, *Maxims*, *Soul and Body*, *Judgement Day*. They are, says Shippey,

poems which aim primarily neither at narrative nor at self-expression, but deal instead with the central concerns of human life —what it is; how it varies; how a man may hope to succeed in it, and after it... They are... perhaps the commonest type of poem in Old English, and their influence is strong even in the most familiar works.³⁹

In other words, they are concerned with the things which Alfred considered 'wisdom'. *Beowulf* is full of such 'set-pieces', and it could be argued that passages such as 'Hrothgar's Sermon' and 'They Lay of the Last Survivor' are

at the very heart of the poem. In the shorter 'elegy' from the Exeter Book known as *The Wanderer*, we hear how an exile, deprived of kinsmen and outside the bonds of society, experiences sorrow —yet somehow hope is there. Then a wise man ponders on a ruin and comments on the transient nature of human existence. Yet, in the end, God's providence and God's grace are granted to the exile, as is indicated in the opening line: 'Oft him ānhaga āre gebided.'⁴⁰

Certain linguistic and codicological features of the Exeter Book have been taken to indicate that it is a copy of an earlier, Early West Saxon text, put together at the time of King Alfred.⁴¹ Such matters are controversial; what is not in doubt is that powerful images, such as this one of the exile-figure, are to be found both in Old English poetry and in Alfred's own writings. For instance, in his translation of St Augustine's *Soliloquies*, Alfred introduced many personal touches, especially in Book III:

The good, then, who have complete freedom, see both their friends and their enemies, just as in this world powerful men often see both their friends and enemies together. They see and perceive them in the same way even though they do not love them. And again, the righteous, when they are out of this world, frequently remember both the good and the evil which they experienced in this world, and rejoice exceedingly that they did not forsake their Lord's will, either in easy or in difficult matters, during the time they were in this world. Likewise, a powerful man in this world may have expelled one of his favourites from him, or against both their wishes the man may have been banished, and the man might then experience many torments and many misfortunes on his journey of exile, and return nevertheless to the same lord with whom he previously had been, and be received there with greater honour than he had formerly been. At that point he will recall the misfortunes which he had experienced on his journey of exile, and yet will not be any the more unhappy for that.⁴²

This passage, according to the latest editor of the work, is Alfred's own, and 'not from any source —and it parallels directly the concerns and images of Old English poetry.'⁴³

To conclude: it is in Old English poetry, then, that we can detect a significant strand of Anglo-Saxon education. By the time that the great poetic codices were written, this tradition was in decay —perhaps because the 'barbarian Christianity' of poems like *Beowulf* was no longer fashionable at the time of the Benedictine Revival.⁴⁴ However, it seems significant that, in order to teach the laity, AElfric had to adopt quasi-poetic techniques, and it is heartening for those who see in Old English poetry more than 'semi-Christian sentiment'⁴⁵ that Alfred —despite the help given him by learned monks like Asser— continued to be so deeply concerned with the issues he must have learnt at his mother's knee.

Notes

1. D. Bullough, 'The educational tradition in England from Alfred to Aelfric: teaching *utriusque linguae*', *Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo* XIX, 1972, 453-494.
2. A good, brief account of Alfred's educational programme appears in the introduction to S. Keynes and M. Lapidge trans., *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of King Alfred and other contemporary sources*, Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1983, 23-41.
3. Translated in Keynes and Lapidge, *op. cit.*, p. 126. An accessible text of the Preface appears in D. Whitelock rev., *Sweet's Anglo-Saxon Reader*, OUP: Oxford, corrected edition, 1970, 4-7.
4. See, for instance, N. Davies, *The Ancient Kingdoms of Mexico*, Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1982, 238-239, and J. Hemming, *The Conquest of the Incas*, Macmillan: London, 1970, 61-62.
5. C.P. Wormald, 'The uses of literacy in Anglo-Saxon England and its neighbours', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th series 27, 1977, 95-114.
6. M.T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, Arnold: London, 1979, p. 19.
7. Translated in Keynes and Lapidge, *op. cit.*, 109-110. The standard edition of Asser's *Life* is that edited by W.H. Stevenson, OUP: Oxford, 1904.
8. See Keynes and Lapidge, *op. cit.*, 30-31; also K. Otten, *König Alfreds Boethius*, Studien in englischen Philologie n.f.3, Niemeyer: Tübingen, 1964.
9. See Keynes and Lapidge, *op. cit.*, p. 33.
10. On 'pragmatic literacy', see M.B. Parkes, 'The literacy of the laity', in D. Daiches and A. Thorlby eds., *Literature and Western Civilisation: the medieval world*, Aldus: London, 1973, 555-577.
11. Wormald, *op. cit.*, p. 107.
12. e.g. Book II, chapter 2.
13. See the *Preface to the Pastoral Care*, *ed. cit.*, lines 25-29, translated in Keynes and Lapidge, *op. cit.*, p. 125.
14. Translated in M. Swanton, *Anglo-Saxon Prose*, Dent: London, 1975, p. 108; a useful edition of the *Colloquy* is that by G.N. Garmonsway, revised edition, University of Exeter: Exeter, 1978.
15. G.N. Garmonsway, 'The Development of the Colloquy', in P. Clemoes ed., *The Anglo-Saxons: studies in some aspects of their history and culture presented to Bruce Dickins*, Bowes and Bowes: London, 1959, p. 260.
16. Swanton, *op. cit.*, p. 114.
17. J. Zupitza ed., *Aelfrics Grammatik und Glossar*, Weidmannsche Buchhandlung: Berlin, 1880, 1-3.
18. Translated in K. Sisam, *Studies in the History of Old English Literature*, OUP: Oxford, 1953, p. 301.
19. The *Letter for Wulfsgie* is printed in B. Fehr ed., *Die Hirtenbriefe Aelfrics*, Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Prosa IX, Henri Grand: Hamburg, 1914, 1-34.
20. Translated in G.I. Needham ed., *Aelfric: Lives of Three English Saints*, revised edition, University of Exeter: Exeter, 1976, p. 16.
21. Translated in W.W. Skeat ed. and trans., *Aelfric's Lives of the Saints*, Early English Text Society, original series 76: Oxford, 1881, p. 5.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
23. Needham, *ed. cit.*, p. 23; on Aelfric as 'poet', see A. McIntosh, 'Wulfstan's Prose', *Publications of the British Academy* 35, 1949, 109-142, and F.R. Lipp, 'Aelfric's

- Old English Prose Style', *Studies in Philology* 66, 1969, 689-718 and references there cited.
24. See D.A. Pearsall, *Old English and Middle English Poetry*, RKP: London, 1977, pp. 66 ff.
 25. M. Alexander, *Old English Literature*, Macmillan: London, 1983, p. 91.
 26. See J.C. Hirsh, 'Havelok 2933: a problem in medieval literary history', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 78, 1977, 339-349.
 27. *Ecclesiastical History*, Book IV, chapter 24.
 28. Translated in Keynes and Lapidge, *op. cit.*, p. 75.
 29. *Ibid.*, p. 75.
 30. *Ibid.*, p. 91.
 31. Wormald, *op. cit.*, p. 98.
 32. *Ibid.*, p. 98.
 33. See Asser, *Life of King Alfred*, chapter 22 (translated in Keynes and Lapidge, *op. cit.*, pp. 74-5).
 34. For descriptions of the manuscripts, see G.R. Krapp *et al. eds.*, *The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records* I-IV, Columbia U.P.: New York, 1931-1953.
 35. Accounts of the history of these MSS appear in Sisam, *op. cit.*, *passim*.
 36. A useful description of this 'alternative', aristocratic Anglo-Saxon Christian tradition appears in C.P. Wormald, 'Bede, *Beowulf* and the Conversion of the Anglo-Saxon Aristocracy', in R.T. Farrell ed., *Bede and Anglo-Saxon England* (British Archaeological Reports 46), 1978, 32-95.
 37. In *Exodus*, Moses becomes the war-chief of the Israelites; in *Genesis B*, Satan becomes a thane disloyal to his Lord; and, in *The Dream of the Rood*, Christ becomes a young hero, and part of the power of the poem lies in how the Cross is forced to violate the bonds of loyalty it, as a tree in origin, owes to God (see R. Woolf, 'Doctrinal Influences on *The Dream of the Rood*', *Medium AEvum* 27, 1958, 137-153).
 38. D. Whitelock, *The Audience of Beowulf*, OUP: Oxford, 1951.
 39. T.A. Shippey ed., *Poems of Wisdom and Learning in Old English*, Brewer: Cambridge, 1976, p. 1.
 40. An accessible edition of *The Wanderer* is that by T.P. Dunning and A.J. Bliss, Methuen: London, 1969, on *ār*, see especially pp. 40-41.
 41. See Sisam, *op. cit.*, especially chapter 6; but also see Dunning and Bliss, *ed. cit.*, pp. 3-4 and references there cited.
 42. Translated in Keynes and Lapidge, *op. cit.*, 151-152; the latest edition of the *Soliloquies* is by T.A. Carnicelli, *King Alfred's Version of St Augustine's Soliloquies*, HUP: Cambridge, Mass., 1969.
 43. As Carnicelli points out in his edition of the *Soliloquies*, the image here is not drawn from the original text or from any Latin source, and seems to be Alfred's own.
 44. See note 36 above, and reference there cited.
 45. D. Wilson, *The Anglo-Saxons*, 3rd edition, Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1981, p. 36.