

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. Texts and textual relationships

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The Anglo-Saxon
Chronicle

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relationships

Professor Janet Bately

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**The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle:
Texts and Textual Relationships**

by

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UNIVERSITY OF READING 1991

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Preface

Anne E. Curry

Publications Editor, Reading Medieval Studies

The Graduate Centre for Medieval Studies is pleased to produce its third monograph in addition to its annual publication, *Reading Medieval Studies*. Professor Bately delivered a lecture on the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle to the Summer Symposium of the Graduate Centre for Medieval Studies in 1987, and we are grateful to her for allowing us to publish an expanded version of that talk. This undertaking has been made all the more interesting by the need to develop an Anglo-Saxon font for use on the *Apple Macintosh* system which *Reading Medieval Studies* uses in the production of its volumes. We owe a considerable debt of gratitude to Paul Hughes and Paul Weston, final-year students in the Department of Typography and Graphic Communication of the University of Reading, for developing and designing the font for us. I would like to add a personal note of thanks for their enthusiasm and helpfulness at all stages in the production of this monograph. Now that we are able to publish easily material containing Anglo-Saxon and Middle English characters, we hope to attract articles on literature and language of these periods for inclusion in our annual publication, *Reading Medieval Studies*. Manuscripts should be sent to the Editors, Graduate Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Reading, Whiteknights, Reading RG6 2AA, from whom details of past publications and of the interdisciplinary programme for graduate study leading to the degrees of MA, MPhil and PhD can also be obtained.

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Texts and Textual Relationships

Janet Bately

Ever since the sixteenth century, the similarities and differences between the seven surviving versions of the composite work commonly known as the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle have aroused both interest and controversy.¹ That MS G is a copy of MS A,² that the bilingual MS F draws its vernacular material from MS A and an ancestor of E,³ that there is a very close relationship between MSS B and C,⁴ that MSS D⁵ and E contain what is in effect a revision of the 'first compilation' of the Chronicle as we know it from MSS A, B and C, and that this compilation has been extended by a number of continuations, some of which are shared by two or more manuscripts,⁶ are matters not open to question. However, the precise relationship of C to B and the place of A in the lines of transmission of the Chronicle have recently been the subject of much dispute,⁷ while other 'accepted facts', such as the extent of the 'first compilation' and the relationship between the surviving manuscripts and certain Latin versions, turn out on closer inspection to be not as secure as at first sight appears.⁸ In this paper I wish to take a new look at three of these areas of interest: the relationship between MSS A, B and C, the relationship between the *Annals of St Neot's*, Æthelweard's *Chronicon*, Asser's *Life of King Alfred* and the hypothetical late ninth-century 'first compilation' of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, and the relationship between MSS A, B and C and the Latin version of annals 1 to 99 in St John's College Oxford, MS 17.

I. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MSS A, B AND C.

The A-text of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is preserved in a manuscript written in a series of hands, the oldest of which dates from the late ninth or early tenth century, and the most recent is early twelfth century.⁹ Its last vernacular entry is the annal for 1070. The manuscript of the B-text is generally assigned to the late tenth century and the text itself extends to annal 977.¹⁰ The C-text, preserved in an eleventh century manuscript, continues to annal 1066.¹¹ All three texts have the same common core, viz. the whole of the so-called 'first compilation' to 890 or 891 and a series of continuations to 914. From 915 to 975 A on the one hand and BC on the other generally go their own ways, sharing material only in nine annals between 933 and 975.

Agreements between B and C at almost every possible level, combined with significant differences between them and other surviving Chronicle versions, led Charles Plummer to suppose that these texts were independently derived from a now lost copy of the Chronicle (MS Γ), which formed what was in effect a separate recension, extending to the mid-970s. The first part of Γ in its turn he took to be derived from a lost MS, α , ancestor also of A and of the hypothetical common source of D and E, identified by Plummer by the letter δ .¹² The abrupt cessation of regular annal-numbering in B after annal 652, and the existence of a significant body of annals where C provides a reading closer to that of the 'original' than B does,¹³ together clearly rule out the possibility of the whole of C to annal 977 being a direct and uncollated copy of B.¹⁴ However, the presence of certain distinctive letter-forms in the two manuscripts in the section prior to 653, first noted by Neil Ker,¹⁵ and close correspondences in spelling both there and in the section beginning at 947, subsequently caused some scholars to challenge Plummer's conclusions and to propose a theory of partial direct copying of B by C, with only the central section of C, from 653 to 946, necessarily derived from a manuscript other than B. Of the section 653-946 Dorothy Whitelock wrote that at this point B was copying a defective exemplar, which lacked the majority of annal-numbers. 'If the scribe of 'C' were copying 'B', he would now have to find some other authority for his dates; and he might then sometimes prefer the readings of this other authority.' However, in her view this scribe did not discard B (or B's exemplar, which she took to be similarly defective) at this point, but collated it with that other authority,¹⁶ a view which I repeated in my

British Academy lecture of 1978, commenting that 'on the evidence of the manuscript readings this other authority cannot have been MS A or indeed a manuscript of the 'northern recension'; however, it could have been an ancestor, or be derived from an ancestor, of B which had all the annal numbers and was free from some but not all of B's errors and variants, in which case there is no obligation to suppose that the scribe of C collated MS B and this second manuscript.'¹⁷ Dorothy Whitelock's theory that the other authority consulted by the C scribe from 653 onwards was B was also challenged by Peter Orton (1981) and Simon Taylor (1983). Orton's conclusion, based on an exhaustive study of variant forms in the verse of the Chronicle manuscripts, was that while C may well be a direct copy of B from the very beginning to annal 652, from 653 to 977 the scribe's source was *B/C, the exemplar of B's exemplar. He also concluded that the second scribe of C was an extremely accurate copyist and reproduced his exemplar largely as he found it.¹⁸ Simon Taylor's hypothesis was that the scribe of B had left his work in an unfinished state, envisaging a 'basic revision', which did not in fact take place¹⁹ and that B's exemplar, far from being itself defective, may have been the actual exemplar used by C for the section 653 to 946.²⁰ Lastly, shortly before the publication of Taylor's edition in 1983, and again independently of my earlier intervention as well as that of Orton, Cyril Hart put forward the revolutionary theory that the B text was almost certainly directly dependent on the A text for the annals right the way down to 845 and again from 934 to 958, that paradoxically the entries dated 971 to 975 in the A text were directly or indirectly dependent on the B text, that the entries 900-903 in B were copied from what he called the A text precursor, that the A text precursor was used alongside the A text for annals 851 to 900 and 906 to at least 910, that the C text (or its precursor) to 977 had no other exemplars than the A and B texts and the Mercian Register, and that the dissemination of the various versions of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle occurred not in the late ninth century but in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries.²¹ In Hart's view, the B chronicler's capriciousness in dating his annals was due not only to the fact that B was a transcript intended to become the stock of a new chronicle, but also to his uncertainty whether to adopt the chronology of the A text or that of its precursor:

'If this was indeed the case, he must have known at the time that whoever used his text as the stock of a new chronicle would still have

available both the A text and its precursor, so that the choice of chronology could be made effectively'.²²

Dr Hart's article is a thoughtful and stimulating one, full of complex arguments. However, these particular conclusions do not carry conviction. None of the evidence on which they are based requires us to suppose the use of MS B by any of the sequence of scribes who extended the text of MS A, or the use (or even knowledge) of MS A by the scribe of MS B. Hart's argument for the copying of B by A in the section 971-975, for instance, depends on three assumptions: the first that the surviving manuscript of the B text was compiled at the same time as it was written,²³ the second that MS B must have been written between early May 977 and 18 March 978, and was thus already in existence when scribe 5 of MS A was making his copy of that section of the Chronicle in 1002 or later,²⁴ and the third that at least one textual feature of A is inspired by a palaeographical detail in B.²⁵ The first two of these assumptions are to say the least unsafe, depending on 'the failure of the regnal list on the last leaf [of MS B] to complete the record of the reign of King Edward the Martyr', and the fact that the final annal in the B text is for 977.²⁶ Hart, observing that the panegyric on King Edgar which comprises the preceding entry makes 'a fitting epilogue to the chronicle', suggests that the annal concerning Bishop Sideman which ends the Chronicle may well have been an afterthought: 'If this is so it seems likely that the concluding annal was entered very soon after the news of the bishop's burial reached the chronicler, so that the chronicle was probably finished in the early summer of 977'.²⁷ I agree that the coincidence of the concluding of the B text with annal 977 and the updating of the associated regnal list to Edward the Martyr (975-8) but not beyond, may well indicate that this particular Chronicle recension was completed in or shortly after 977. However, the fact that the copy of the regnal list in MS B concludes abruptly in the middle of a clause with the words 'pa feng Eadward to, Eadgares sunu, ȝ heold', without giving the regnal length, does not require us to assume that this copy was made in Edward the Martyr's lifetime and cannot therefore be taken to confirm a similar date for the copy of the Chronicle in MS B.²⁸ Even if the words 'ȝ heold' could be conclusively attributed to the same scribe as the rest of the list and assumed to have been entered at the same time - and of this I have serious doubts -,²⁹ I do not find it plausible that a copyist writing at the very beginning of the reign of a young king would anticipate his death in this way. More probably the writer of the words ȝ heold entered

them in the expectation of being able to obtain information concerning the length of the king's reign, that is to say, some time after his death. At the same time, it has to be recognised that even if it could be demonstrated that MS B was written in 977/8, this would not rule out the possibility that the text it contains was itself copied from a now lost manuscript containing the 977 recension - a possibility which seems to be supported by the presence in it of a number of scribal errors up to and including annal 975.³⁰ MS B is quite probably early enough to have been available for copying at the time when scribe 5 of A was writing, but there is no conclusive evidence that this was so, nor that it was the compiler's own copy. The third assumption is based on the entering of the annal-number 974 at fo 28v line 17 in A and the use of a large offset capital *O* in the second word *on* ('and') at the beginning of fo 33v line 11 of B, corresponding to the twentieth verse-line of the account of Edgar's coronation, 'On þa on ðam þrittigþan wæs þeoden gehalgod'. Hart sees the enlarged letter form as resulting from an erroneous assumption on the part of the B scribe:

If the four lines 17-20 are read together, we find the laboriously worded statement that Edgar had spent twenty-nine years in this world, and then in his thirtieth year was consecrated king. Evidently the scribe considered, mistakenly, that this warranted a marginal capital, to indicate that a further year had passed. When the poem came to be transcribed from the B text into the A text, the significance of this capital was not missed by the scribe of A, who allotted the date 974 to the line in question in his transcript.³¹

However, in MS A the words *ȝ þa* are located not in the normal opening position for a new annal but towards the end of a manuscript line which reads: 'niðweorca heard . wintra on worulde . þis geworden wæs . ȝ þa on ðam'. The number 974 is in the margin not of this line but of the next, which contains the rest of the clause, 'xxx wæs ðeoden gehalgod'.³² The simplest explanation of MS A's 974 is that it is not a 'fruitful' but a 'barren' annal-number, set for the sake of economy (as so often in this manuscript) alongside one of the lines of the preceding annal.³³ That it happens to be adjacent to the final line of annal 973 rather than to the second line of that annal is probably due to the fact that a long run of annal-numbers beginning with 974 had been inserted in the left-hand margin from fo 28v7 to the middle of fo 29r but that the bulk of these had subsequently been erased when the material for annal 973 was

found to take up many lines of text. However, *AN. dcccclxxxiiii* was converted into *AN. dcccclxxv* to introduce the next annal entry, and the preceding *AN. dcccclxxxiii* was also retained, to be altered to *AN. dcccclxxxiii*.³⁴ The dates 973A and 975AC are generally taken to be the 'correct' ones.³⁵

Hart's arguments for the use by the B scribe of sections 60 B.C. to A.D. 845 of A are more complex but similarly untenable. Certainly A and B differ very little one from the other in the opening sections, running (in Hart's words) hand-in-hand right down to the mid-ninth century, with material in B but not in A easily explained in terms of additions by the B chronicler, who is seen to have drawn 'in most cases on his own general knowledge', or - I would add - on information in other parts of the text.³⁶ However, I do not agree with Hart that B's variation *feahrt* for A *gefeahrt* (607) and the absence of A's reading *giongne* from B (501) are convincingly accounted for by the presence of an obscuring blot on *g* in MS A in the first word and a stitch in the membrane between *gio* and *ngne* in the second.³⁷ Both *gefeahrt* and *giongne* remain perfectly legible and unambiguous in that manuscript.³⁸ The archaic *i*-longa form is not used 'uniquely' in front of *Ida* in the B text in 547 as Hart claims,³⁹ and although it is true that 'the same archaic form is found in the same entry in the A text', this could well be due to the use of a shared exemplar in which *i*-longa was of common occurrence.⁴⁰ As I have shown elsewhere, the 'sudden change of format by the scribe of A in the process of working on f. 4v' does not prove that he was using two (or more) consecutive sources, and that as a corollary he could not have been working from a single exemplar, but was at this point constructing his exemplar as he went along.⁴¹ Nor does the layout of B support the theory that 'with annal 449 the B chronicler decided on a radical change in policy' and that by entering 'the next four year numbers (for blank annals) successively beneath each other in the left-hand margin, alongside the four additional lines needed for this long entry', he makes an alteration in layout which copies exactly the format of the A text and which therefore must be based upon it.⁴² In fact what Hart sees as a 'new' layout in B had already been used earlier in that manuscript, while the practice of line-saving may well go back to the common archetype of all the surviving manuscripts.⁴³ As for those places where B has a correct reading and A a demonstrable error,⁴⁴ copying by B of an exemplar without the error is far more plausible an explanation for the discrepancies than intelligent correction⁴⁵ of A by the B scribe. Neither agreements nor differences cited by Hart⁴⁶ provide proof that the first section of B (to A.D. 845) is a copy

of A. There are no errors or textual modifications in this part of B which could only be derived from A, while close textual agreements between the two manuscripts up to the mid-ninth century need not indicate more than accurate reproduction of their respective exemplars.

Hart's arguments for dependence of B on A in other sections are equally unconvincing. The statement that 'in all cases B follows the A text pretty closely'⁴⁷ would more accurately read 'in all cases the B text agrees with the A text pretty closely', while Hart's claim for the annals 934-958 that it does not 'appear that both depended on some common predecessor, now lost'⁴⁸ is not substantiated by him. To explain the major differences between the two texts in the annals 915-964 he has to assume that the B chronicler first omitted the account of the last wars of Edward in order to accommodate the Mercian Register annals and then eliminated local items of Winchester interest when he transcribed from the A text the B annals of the mid-tenth century.⁴⁹ I find therefore no evidence to support the theory of a special relationship between MSS A and B in this section.

As for Hart's claim that after annal 651 groups of barren annal-numbers are usually recorded only when there is some change in the nature of the B chronicler's exemplar,⁵⁰ there are two other possible explanations for the scribe's 'capriciousness' here that do not presuppose use of both the A text and the A text precursor from this point and which in my view fit the facts better. The first of these is that when he reached the end of the first quire, the B scribe decided to leave all marginal numbers for later insertion (by a rubricator?) and only to enter strings of barren numbers, for which the text space, not the margin, was an appropriate location.⁵¹ The second is that the decision to leave marginal numbers for a rubricator was taken in a manuscript behind MS B - in which case it may be that this decision affected the entire manuscript and that the task of rubrication after the first quire remained uncompleted in that manuscript.⁵² Moreover, there are some differences between A and B which appear to rule out copying of the former by the latter, including a couple of 'better readings'.

The theory of a special relationship between MSS A and C is also without substantiating evidence. Hart's arguments here rest mainly on points of agreement between A and C against B. Anticipating a promised full study of MS C, Hart cites annals 675 and 758, where C has material which is missing from B and which he believes 'could have come from the A text (though not from its precursor, where the 758 annal was correctly dated 760)'.⁵³ However, there is no point of agreement between

these two manuscripts that cannot be explained as due to their common descent from the same ultimate exemplar, the now lost text which Hart calls the A precursor.⁵⁴ A on the one hand and BC on the other appear to be descended independently from a common exemplar.

As for the B and C texts, there is an undeniably close connection between them in every section, with agreements of substance against A, D and E.⁵⁵ However, the precise nature of their relationship needs reassessment, not just for the section 653-946 but from the very beginning of the Chronicle to annal 977, the last entry in MS B, as the following survey will show.

I. 60 B.C. to A.D. 652.

Taylor, as we have seen, like Orton, postulates use of MS B by scribes 1 and 2 of MS C from the first entry up to annal 652. The main arguments⁵⁶ put forward for this may be summarised as follows:

1. In the section from annal 491 (where hand 2 takes over from hand 1 in MS C)⁵⁷ up to 652 (after which annal-numbers cease to be entered on a regular basis in MS B), MSS B and C have a number of special letter-forms in common, notably *i*-longa,⁵⁸ an enlarged form of initial *c*,⁵⁹ and the letter-form *k*.⁶⁰ The distribution patterns of these forms are remarkably similar and indicate a particularly close connection between B and C at this point.⁶¹ In addition, the same words are accented in the two manuscripts and the faulty word-division *finngod ulfing* in C 547 corresponds to a reading *finngod/ulfing* in B, where *god* occurs at a line end.⁶²

2. There are a number of spellings which are confined in C to the section from 60 B. C. to A.D. 652 and to that part of it written by the second scribe, C2 (here referred to as section C2¹), but which are typical of B throughout, namely the spellings *manig*, *þæm*, *hie*, *heom*, *cing*, *apeostr*- and *Westseax*-.⁶³

3. MS B and that part of MS C written by the first scribe (here referred to as section C1) agree in their representations of the third person plural preterite indicative and the word *kyning*.⁶⁴

4. Significant agreements between B, C1 and C2¹ are the use of the form *heora*, a comparative lack of smoothing, and the treatment of the preterite and past participle of Class II weak verbs.⁶⁵

5. Textual differences between B, C1 and C2¹ are minor ones,⁶⁶ while there appears to be a direct connection between the layout of this section in B and certain discrepancies in C's dating of entries.⁶⁷

6. Those linguistic features which occur in C1 but not in B are found also in the verse which precedes the Chronicle in MS C and was written down by scribe C1, while features in which C2¹ contrasts with B are also found from 653 'until at least 977' and 'are thus best seen as characteristic of C2 himself'.⁶⁸

II. Annals 947-977.

1. Dependence of C on B from 947 (when 'regular dates start again in B'),⁶⁹ is suggested by textual agreements, including shared omission of annal-number 969, the back-mutation of *fela* as *feala*, the form *mynstre*, use of *cc* for *c* in forms of OE *mycel* and of *y* not *i* in this word, the return of the letter *k* and the sharing of many accented words.⁷⁰

2. The only features which can be said to militate against the hypothesis of direct dependence of C on B in this section are the layout of annal 974 and the absence of C's entry 976 from B, and for both of these features reasonably satisfactory explanations can be given.⁷¹

All these arguments for the dependence of C on B are founded on three basic but largely unstated assumptions. The first assumption is that the presence in C1, C2¹ and C2³ of forms not found in C2² but characteristic of B throughout can be used as evidence for dependence on B of all three of these sections. The second assumption is that changes in spelling-practice in section C2², that is after 652, must reflect a change of exemplar rather than a change within an exemplar, such as might have resulted from the intervention of a new scribe in that exemplar. The third assumption is that those linguistic features in which C2¹, C2² and C2³ together contrast with B are 'best seen as characteristic of C2 himself', and, as a corollary, that all such divergences from the readings of B in these sections must take them one step further away from B's own exemplar and, by implication, from the common archetype of all the surviving manuscripts.⁷² Related to these assumptions are two others, already mentioned, namely that the scribe of B had left his work in an unfinished state⁷³ and that when scribe 2 of C ceased to use B as his source he turned to B's exemplar (or at least a direct ancestor of B) for a model. Taylor's argument in this last instance is that from 653 B 'has many more features peculiar to itself than before 653 or from 956, with an average of approximately four per manuscript-page . . . C is much more conservative, with an average of one feature peculiar to itself in every two pages. This distribution strongly suggests that the text used by C as an exemplar for this section stood closer to the original *Chronicle* than did B'.⁷⁴

Both arguments and basic assumptions, however, leave a number of questions unanswered and a number of issues unfaced. Why should the second scribe of C return to B as his source after annal 946?⁷⁵ How many of the forms in B and C can be traced back to the common exemplar of all the surviving manuscripts? What allowances need to be made for the effect on its language of the Chronicle's textual history and its growth through accretion? The 'first compilation' is known to have been in circulation by 893, when it was used by Asser; the first continuation, covering the last wars of Alfred,⁷⁶ was arguably composed before Alfred's death in 899; the account of Edward's reconquest of the five boroughs may likewise have been composed shortly after the event,⁷⁷ and at least the first two of these units must originally have had early West Saxon linguistic features.⁷⁸ As for the material common to A, B, C and D in the annals for 933-946, this would seem to have been in existence by the 950s at the latest⁷⁹ and therefore to have been linguistically in a position half-way between the writings of Alfred and Ælfric,⁸⁰ while the language of the section 971-977 in A, B and C is appropriately standard late West Saxon,⁸¹ though the poetry it incorporates, like the poetry of annals 937 and 942, seems originally to have contained non-West Saxon dialect features.⁸² One might expect a 'modernising' scribe to need to make fewer modifications to the language of the final section than to that of earlier parts of the Chronicle. I propose therefore to reexamine the language of C section by section and to compare it not only with the language of B but also with that of A, D and E. I propose also to reconsider the evidence of layout and palaeography in an attempt to test some of the assumptions made about the nature of the relationship between B and C and the significance of B's missing annal numbers.

(a) 60 B.C. - A.D. 652

It is certainly true that MSS B and C share certain distinctive letter-forms and spellings in the second part of this section, where hand C2 takes over from C1. However, the conclusions that have been drawn from this fact by Whitelock and Taylor are unsafe. So, for instance, although 'special forms of *i*, extending either above or below the line, or both', are indeed to be found 'five times in BC only',⁸³ they are concentrated in three annals, where they occur in passages of genealogical material, and in each case the corresponding entry in MS A has been erased,⁸⁴ leaving open the possibility that *i*-longa was originally present there too. Moreover, C has six more instances of *i*-longa, one shared with B but not A, and two with A but not B,⁸⁵ while no fewer than nineteen of the words

with special *i*-forms found in B in any part of the text⁸⁶ occur with similar letter-forms in MS A.⁸⁷ A, moreover, has a significant number of special *i*-forms where B has ordinary *i*.⁸⁸ It has twenty-six instances of *i*-longa forms in the words *in*, *innan* and *in on*, where B has *on*.⁸⁹ Only on one occasion does A have an 'ordinary' *i* for an *i*-longa in B⁹⁰. The distribution of these forms is significant. The majority of *i*-longa forms in A are in words with initial *i* + nasal. Indeed, they are found invariably in this position in the section written by scribe 1 (that is in the section to 891, part 1), and in the material written by scribes 2a, 2b and 2c (that is, to the end of annal 920).⁹¹ The first examples of 'ordinary' *i* in initial position before *n* are in material written by scribe 3. In words with *i* + nasal in internal position, *i*-longa is restricted to proper nouns, never occurring in common nouns such as *cyning*, *æþeling*. Moreover, with the exception of the foreign name *Maelinmun* (891) with its string of minims, it is further restricted in this position to the final *-ing* of patronymics. Here it is found fourteen times, all in 'genealogical' entries written by scribe 1.⁹² No fewer than seven of these *-ing* forms are attached to personal names ending in a vowel.⁹³ Two others - 731 *Aldhelming* and 855 *Bełdging* - have the suffix *-ing* at the beginning of a new line, and *i* thus occurs in what is technically initial position; a third - 694 *Arcenbryhting* (divided *Ar/cenbryhting*) - has an enlarged 'capital' *t* as well as *i*-longa and may be derived from an exemplar where *-bryht* not *ar-* came at the line end.⁹⁴ The remaining instances are 597 *Cynricing* (with *i*-longa superimposed on an 'ordinary' *i*) and *Cerdicing* (also with possible alteration); 685 *Ceawlining*; and 855 *Itermoning* (with *i*-longa in initial position as well as in the suffix). 685 *Ceawlining* is written with a small gap between the personal name and the patronymic suffix, *ceawlin Ing*, a word-division which is found also, in a more pronounced form, in patronymics in the genealogical list in the late ninth century British Library Additional MS 23211, fo 1v, and which may have prompted the use of *i*-longa in formations of this type.⁹⁵ Before letters other than *n*, *i*-longa is confined to initial position in proper nouns (chiefly in hand 1), where it is almost invariable, in the noun and place-name element *ig-*, 'island', and in the pronoun *ic*.⁹⁶ In MS B, as Hart observes, *i*-longa is also found 'particularly before *n* and in proper names',⁹⁷ but its use is less wide-spread. Thus, in words beginning with *in-*, *i*-longa is found fourteen times. In proper names where initial *i* is followed by letters other than *n*, it occurs five times; there is also an instance of the Latin word *id* with *i*-longa (a word without equivalent in A). *I*-longa in patronymics occurs six times. Apart from 973 *Iulius*

(written with *i*-longa also in A and C), the last instance of *i*-longa is in annal 893. On the basis of this evidence it seems reasonable to conclude that the special *i*-forms cited by Ker and others, far from being an innovation by the scribe of B and thus demonstrating copying of B by C, were already a feature of a now lost text from which all three manuscripts were derived. Indeed, the manner in which forms are distributed among surviving manuscripts, with C occasionally agreeing with A against B, actually seems to rule out the possibility that C was a copy of B.

Similar conclusions may be drawn from the distribution patterns of enlarged *c*. Of the six instances of enlarged *c* shared by MSS B and C in the section 491 to 652, one is found also in MS A and a second is in an entry which has been lost from MS A through erasure.⁹⁸ The remaining four instances are in the names *Cerdic* (552), *Cynric* (597), *Cyngils* (628) and *Cyngilsing* (647B). Now although enlarged *c* is certainly shared by B and C in annal 552, it also appears twice more in this name in MS C where MS B has the normal letter-form.⁹⁹ Enlarged initial *c*, particularly before *y*, is, moreover, a common feature of MS A hand 1¹⁰⁰ and of the genealogical regnal list in British Library Additional MS 23211. In these circumstances the agreement between B and C cannot be said to demonstrate dependence of the latter on the former. Rather it suggests the presence of enlarged *c* in a copy or copies of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle at an early stage in that text's transmission.

A slightly different picture emerges from a consideration of the distribution patterns of the letter *k*. According to Taylor, '*k*, which is a letter-form occurring throughout B, is found in C only before 653 (and after 946, five times). In the section [491 to 652] BC share *k* nineteen times.'¹⁰¹ Taylor's statement is misleading. In the section to 652 MS C certainly agrees with B quite frequently in its use of *k*-spellings, using *c* where MS B has *k* only three times,¹⁰² and it also shares *k*-spellings with B in the section 947-977.¹⁰³ However, *k*-spellings in MS C are not restricted to these sections: the form *king* is found also in annal 685. Moreover, *k*-spellings in MS B are not evenly distributed throughout the Chronicle, they are concentrated in the 'first Chronicle', between annals 449 and 888, with no instances before 449 and only eight instances after 888, five of them between 971 and 977.¹⁰⁴ In the section 449 to 888, the word in which *k*-spellings are most commonly found is *king* (34x), with (-)*kynn* and *kynne*/*kine*- each twice.¹⁰⁵ Of the remaining thirty-seven instances eight are in place names (including *Dorkeceastre* and *Kent* each 2x), and twenty eight in personal names (*Kenred*, *Karl* etc.) with the people-name *Kantwara* 1x.¹⁰⁶ After 888, the form *king* appears only once

more, and that is in the annal which Taylor dates 974 (973A). Apart from a single instance in *sake* (937),¹⁰⁷ B's *k*-spellings are otherwise concentrated in four annals¹⁰⁸ and are all in proper nouns, with *ƿurkytel* twice and *Lindkylne*, *Dorkeceastre*, *Kyrtlingtune* and *Oskytel* each once. What is more, MS A also has a number of *k*-spellings, and these too are concentrated in the 'first compilation'. In the section 888 (889B) - 1000, they are not found at all except in additions in post-Conquest hands.¹⁰⁹ Like B, MS A has *k*-spellings in the word *king* and in the names *Dorkeceastre* and *Karl*.¹¹⁰ The sporadic *k*-spellings in MSS D and E are similarly concentrated in the section to 888, with E, for instance, having forms such as *kining*, *cynekyn*, *kynecinn*, *Kynergils(ing)*, *Kynric*, *Kenred*, *Karl* and *Kent*.¹¹¹ MS D's forms include *kyning* and *Karl*.¹¹² Apart from the forms *Oskytel* and *Kenulf* in annal 905, *k*-spellings do not reappear in MS D until annal 975, with *kyning*, and in MS E until annal 992 with *Kenulf*.¹¹³ At the same time, and most significantly, MS C has three *k*-spellings not found in MS B, viz. 47 *kyning*, 639 *Dorkeceastre* and 647 *Kenwealh*, and, as we have seen, in spite of Taylor's assertion to the contrary, it actually has one *k*-spelling in the section after 652, namely 685 *king*, B *kyng*. Moreover, scribe C2 continues to use *k*-spellings after 977, with 992 *Kenulf* (as DE), 994 *Kentlande* (DE *Cent*-) and 999 *Kentingas* (DE *Cent*-). That B and C derived their *k*-spellings independently from a common exemplar that was similar to, but not identical with, MS A, and that such spellings were a feature of the 'first compilation'¹¹⁴ must be at least as likely an explanation of the distribution patterns as copying by C from B.¹¹⁵ Similarly, the word-division of *finn godulfing* in B and C and the shared use of 'accents' could well go back to a common exemplar and do not necessarily require us to postulate dependence of one text on the other,¹¹⁶ while the evidence for a close relationship provided by variations in annal-numbering and peculiarities of layout is at best inconclusive. Indeed, certain features of layout, far from supporting the theory of direct copying, appear on the contrary to rule out dependence of C on B. So, for instance, one apparently significant agreement, the entry of annals 70 and 71 on the same line in both B and C, also includes one significant difference: C, like A, B and D, introduces annal 71 with *Her*, B (presumably accidentally) omits it. So agreement in layout in this instance is more likely to derive from a common ancestor than from direct copying.¹¹⁷ Moreover, the arguments that have been put forward for a direct connection between the layout of B and certain discrepancies in C's dating of entries¹¹⁸ are in no way conclusive. Certainly, the layout on B's

opening pages is confused and confusing, with annal-numbers shifting from the right-hand margin (on rectos) to the left-hand margin (on versos) and with various kinds of space-saving employed, including the pairing of fruitful and barren annal-numbers.¹¹⁹ On the recto sides, as Taylor comments, 'it would seem that it is always the first date to appear at the end of the first line of the entry which is the relevant date for that entry. (If one follows this system the dates in B usually correspond to those of AE)'.¹²⁰ Certainly, too, some of C's discrepancies in dating could be explained if the scribe was supposed to have been using B and to have selected the second of B's pair of annal-numbers instead of the first as the fruitful one. So, for instance, where B pairs barren number 4 with fruitful number 3 and barren number 7 with fruitful 6, C assigns the dates 4 and 7 to the corresponding annal-material. However, we might then analogously expect B's pairing of 16 and 17 to result in C's adoption of 17 as the annal-number, not 15, while adoption of 29 not 30, 109 not 110 and (not noted by Taylor) 101 not 102 likewise remains unaccounted for.¹²¹ Moreover, unless Taylor is wrong in supposing that the correction *xxv* to *xxvi* in B was made by B's scribe,¹²² C's *AN xxv* for the annal dealing with Pilate's appointment to Judaea also remains unexplained. In any case, before pairing begins in B, there are two entries (annals 1 and 2), where the relevant annal-number is entered immediately to the right of the first line of annal-material, while the sequences 16-25 and 26-29 should have given a scribe selecting the second of two numbers on the right as the fruitful one cause for thought about the logic of his decision even before he turned the page.¹²³ At the same time, there are other factors to be taken into account apart from the layout of B, and other no less plausible explanations for the discrepancy of numbers, including the possibility that C was using an exemplar that was not B. First of all, B's use of right-hand margins on rectos as a location for annal-numbers is a feature not found in any of the other Chronicle versions up to 977. MS A never has a similar layout; in C the first use of right-hand margins is at annal 978, in D at 1052, and in E at 1124.¹²⁴ There is thus no evidence at all to support the theory that B's alternation was already present in a common exemplar.¹²⁵ On the contrary, the position of annal-number 167 (in the text space on the left-hand side of fo 2r) may well indicate that an exemplar behind B had numbers (whether paired or single) consistently on the left. Secondly, there are a number of features of layout in B that seem to indicate that the B scribe may have been rearranging the material of his exemplar as he went along and was doing so both ineptly and inconsistently. Problems seem to have begun at annal 16, where the

scribe has put the pair 16/17 not in the margin but in the text space, leaving the right-hand margin empty, and has then crammed eight annal numbers into the text space and margin of the following line. Shortly afterwards annal-number 39 is entered both before and after the annal to which it refers.¹²⁶ On a number of pages annal-numbers are entered in margin and in text space without any obvious attempt at consistency. Thirdly, neither errors in numbers nor special arrangements of annal-material in B and C are of a type to provide support for a theory of direct copying of B by C - though of course intelligent correction by the C scribes cannot be ruled out. Thus, where B duplicates the numbers 39, 73 and 186, C has the numbers once only. Where B omits the sequence 168-173 and the single annal-numbers 369 and 423, C includes all these numbers.¹²⁷ Errors found in C, such as the duplication of the numbers 302 and 384, are absent from B.¹²⁸ Only on two occasions does C share an error with B, writing *dcxix* for *'dcix* and initially omitting number 629, though subsequently inserting it through correction. Moreover, the C scribe obviously did not immediately identify annal-numbers 189 and 381 as fruitful ones, entering the number 189 in black - the colour normally reserved for barren numbers - ¹²⁹ and in text space, not in a margin, and similarly failing to rubricate and offset the *H* of the word *Her* that opens annal 381. Neither of these errors could be easily explained if B were the exemplar - that annal-material accompanied annal-number 189 is perfectly clear in that manuscript, while the *H* of *Her* in 381B is offset as usual, even though its associated number is on the line above, spilling into the right-hand margin. We may compare also the failure in C to adopt intelligent space saving where B has it, as for instance on fo.116r, where the entry for annal 29 (*recte* 39) is followed by a gap large enough to take several numbers. B uses this space, C does not. As for annal 449, this is entered on the same line as barren annal-number 448 in C, although in MS B it begins a new line and is set on its own in the margin. However, here the explanation could simply be that the C scribe did not have room for the number 448 on the preceding line and did not wish to waste a whole new line on it.

Fourthly, MS C begins not by entering the annal-numbers in the right-hand margin as B does, but by placing them (on the right) in the text space on the line above the annal-material.¹³⁰ Its apparent selection of 4 not 3 and 7 not 6 could have originated in careless relocation of a 3 and a 6 similarly placed in the preceding line in its exemplar or an exemplar behind that exemplar. We may compare the position of annal-numbers 381 on fo 3r and 430 on fo 3v of MS B.¹³¹

The phonological and morphological evidence for dependence of C on B appears at first sight more secure, with a significant change of usage but not of hand in C after annal 652. Given the previous closeness of C2 to B, this change of usage might seem to indicate a change of exemplar - though a change of scribe in an underlying copy might also be responsible. However, once again agreement between B and C in the section up to 652 does not require explanation in terms of derivation one from the other. In some of the instances cited by Taylor this agreement could be due to descent of both manuscripts from a now lost manuscript which already contained a number of typically late West Saxon spellings. In certain other cases it could result from retention in both B and C of forms from the common archetype of all the surviving manuscripts and arguably from the first fair copy of the 'first compilation'. In yet other cases it could be due to independent acts of 'modernisation' by two or more scribes, with standard late West Saxon spellings replacing early West Saxon ones. At the same time, certain differences between B and C in this section indicate use by C of an exemplar which was neither B nor A and which was in some respects closer to the 'original' than B is.

Heora, for instance, is the only form of the third person possessive plural used in MS B, where it occurs fifty two times,¹³² and it is also the only form in the first part of C to 652, that is in sections C1 and C2¹, where (as in B) it occurs four times.¹³³ However, since D and E likewise invariably have the spelling *heora* in those entries in this section which are derived from the 'first compilation',¹³⁴ and *heora* is the norm in base manuscripts of Ælfric and Wulfstan,¹³⁵ agreement between B and C against A in this section could either reflect changes made already in the hypothetical copy of the Chronicle which lies behind B and C, or be the result of independent acts of standardization or modernisation. The regular presence of *heora* in C1 and C2, therefore, is not evidence that this part of the manuscript was copied from MS B. *Manig*, a form which is used almost without exception in B and which is shared also by C1 and C2¹, occurring four times in annals 477, 584, 596 and 601, is likewise not only the most common late West Saxon spelling, but once again the form used in this section by MS E,¹³⁶ as is the form *Westseaxe*, while *hie* (found five times between 491 and 652 in C2¹, once in C1 in annal 2, and invariably in this section in B) is both the expected early West Saxon spelling and also found exclusively in the equivalent parts of MS A,¹³⁷ suggesting in this instance derivation from the common archetype of the 'first compilation'. The 'comparative absence' of smoothed forms

of *gear* noted by Taylor is typical of the corresponding sections of MSS A,¹³⁸ D and E as well as of B, C1 and C2¹. *Heom*, in contrast, found in both B and C in annal 577 but otherwise not used in C until annal 1049, is a typically late West Saxon form, replacing early West Saxon *him*, and in this particular annal appears also to be an addition to the text, confined to B and C.¹³⁹ It must have been inserted fairly late in the textual history of the Chronicle, at a time when *heom* was a common spelling. However, there is no reason to suppose that the other instances of *heom* recorded in B were necessarily substituted for original *him* at the same time. Potentially more significant are those types of agreement between B, C1 and C2¹ involving shared inconsistency of usage. However, although these clearly demonstrate the very close relationship between B and C, once again the evidence of other manuscripts is that there may well be explanations other than direct copying of B by the scribes of C. So, for instance, although B, C1 and C2¹ generally agree in their handling of the preterite and past participle of Class 2 verbs, C sharing with B all its *-ad* spellings in this section,¹⁴⁰ here we appear to have to do with the survival in both manuscripts of spellings from an earlier exemplar: every *-ad* spelling before 652 corresponds to an *-ad* spelling in A, D or E.¹⁴¹ Again, it is certainly significant that the only two instances of *pæm* in C2¹ (in 584 and 635) correspond to similar forms in B.¹⁴² However, B has four further examples of *pæm* where C has *pam*,¹⁴³ while MS A, which, like B, C, D and E, normally has *pam* in the section to 652, agrees with B and C in using *pæm* in 635. In the circumstances it is reasonable to suppose that the *pæm*-forms are derived from a common exemplar. B and C1 similarly share the dissyllabic forms *kyning* in 449 and 455 and *kining* in 601, although *cing* and *cyng* are the normal forms in both texts in this section,¹⁴⁴ but MS A likewise has *kyning* in annal 449, as well as a further example in 167 (BE *cing*, CD *cyng*), while C has an instance of *kyning* in 47, which was apparently overlooked by Taylor. We may compare MS D, which also uses a *k* spelling in the word 'king' in this annal, but in a rewritten passage.¹⁴⁵ The inference must surely be that far from being necessarily first introduced by the B-scribe, both dissyllabic forms and *k*-spellings were present in the shared archetype.

A somewhat more complicated situation arises in the case of preterite plural endings. Taylor, noting that MS B has a marked preference for *-an* endings, using them 377 times beside 139 occurrences of *-on*, saw the distribution of *-on* endings in MS B as 'roughly even throughout. In C on the other hand the *an*-endings are almost all concentrated in the section before 653'. And he comments that 'in C before 653 *-an* endings

make up about 85% of the total, whereas from that annal they constitute a mere 4%'.¹⁴⁶ *-an* is of course the later West Saxon spelling for an earlier *-un*, *-on*, and it is never found in the corresponding section of MS A, where *-on* is the norm.¹⁴⁷ It therefore represents an act of 'modernisation' which, in theory, could have first taken place in MS B. However, in fact the distribution patterns of *-on* and *-an* in B, C1 and C2¹, though confirming the very close relationship between the two manuscripts and bearing out Taylor's finding that 'in the main the third person plural preterite indicative endings in B and C before 653 correspond with each other',¹⁴⁸ do not support Taylor's theory of direct copying of B by C. In this section, *an* is the norm in both B and C, with *-on* ten times in B and nine times in C. However, C shares only six of the *-on* spellings with B.¹⁴⁹ On four other occasions it uses *-an* where B has *-on*.¹⁵⁰ It also has *-on* three times, where B has *-an*.¹⁵¹ These figures suggest that in C's exemplar as in B's, *-an* spellings had largely but not completely replaced original *-on*, but that this exemplar was not B itself. A close scrutiny of the arguments for dependence of C on B, then, not merely provides no substantive evidence in favour of the theory of direct copying of B by scribes 1 and 2 of C, but also reveals certain differences between the two manuscripts which seem to militate against it.¹⁵² What evidence there is points to descent of both B and C from a now lost exemplar which contained a mixture of forms from the ninth century original and forms typical of late West Saxon.

(b) 947-977.

Taylor, following Ker and Whitelock, notes the closeness between B and C from 947 to 977: 'With the blank annal-number 947 regular dates start again in B. From 956 (the first entry after 946) to 977, BC differ from the other texts more radically than at any previous point'.¹⁵³ As we have seen, Taylor takes this to indicate that scribe C2 had returned to B as his sole source. Audrey Meaney too claims that 'a close examination of the very slight differences in the BC annals from about 945 to 977 shows that here C could have been copied directly from B', though she does not rule out the possibility that for the poems in 973 and 975 BC were 'independent very close copies of a common original'. Orton, in contrast, agrees with Plummer that C 945-77 was not copied from B, but that its exemplar could have been a close antecedent of B's exemplar.¹⁵⁴ I agree here with Plummer and Orton. As with the first section, there is no detail in this final section which requires us to suppose that scribe C2 was copying from B rather than from a manuscript, or copy of a manuscript,

which was also an ancestor of B. Indeed, where A, B and C have material in common, there are very few features in B and C2³ which are not either shared with MS A or found also in C2².¹⁵⁵ This section is certainly characterised by the return of *k*-spellings to C. However, as we have seen, if the recurrence of *k*-spellings in C is a matter of surprise and speculation, then so is the recurrence of *k*-spellings in B. In view of the uneven distribution of these spellings in the manuscripts, it is perfectly plausible to suppose that they were already present in a common exemplar.¹⁵⁶ The fact that C2³ shares with B the reading *feala* in the verse of annal 975, whereas C2² has only the form *fela*,¹⁵⁷ is likewise of no special significance in this context, given that C2² agrees in usage with A and is probably reflecting the early West Saxon spelling practice of the 'first compilation' and first continuation, while C2³'s *feala*, being typically late West Saxon, is an appropriate spelling for an annal composed in or after 955. The form continues to be used, alongside *fela*, in C's entries after 977.¹⁵⁸ *y*-spellings in C2³ 974 *mycclum* and 977 *myccle* likewise have their counterparts after 977,¹⁵⁹ as does the *cc* spelling in this word.¹⁶⁰ Even more significantly, the form *myccl-* is also found in annal 976, present in C (where it seems to have been an insertion by scribe C2 after 977 was written), but not in B. That both *y* and *cc* spellings are untypical of C2², but found with some frequency in B is, therefore, no justification for the assumption that agreement between B and C in 977 indicates copying by C from B rather than from an exemplar with the same late West Saxon features. *Mynster*, on the other hand, is the standard West Saxon form and it is not C2³'s agreement with B in using this spelling that is remarkable but the use of the (unusual) variant *menster* in C2² and of *minster* in C1. Since the material found in section C2³ is patently a late accretion,¹⁶¹ and since the form *mynster* is found in subsequent additions by scribe C2, there is no need to interpret the *y*-spelling in annal 977 as in any way significant.¹⁶²

Finally, that all the dates in this part of C could have been obtained from B 'either directly by copying or indirectly by deduction'¹⁶³ is not evidence of dependence one on the other. Indeed, in order to make this claim, Taylor has had to assume that the C scribe interpreted annal-number 957 (in the writing space to the right of a single line entry on a recto) as a fruitful number, but then took annal-number 973 - in exactly the same position in relation to a single line entry - to be a barren number. He has also had to overlook the fact that if C was indeed copying B to 977, scribe C2 must have scrupulously transferred fruitful annal-numbers from right- to left-hand side of the page right up to annal

977, but as soon as he stopped using B as his exemplar, he discontinued this practice and began for the very first time to enter annal-numbers on the right. For me this change of practice on fo. 144r is a striking indication that up to 977 scribe C2 was using an exemplar which normally had annal-numbers on the left. The agreements between B and C, then, need not be more than the result of two late Old English scribes copying the same material in a late Old English spelling. There is no evidence of direct dependence one on the other and some features that even seem to militate against it.

c) 653-946

In this section there are certainly more marked differences between B and C than in other sections, but at the same time the linguistic and textual evidence indicates a continuation of the special relationship between these texts.¹⁶⁴ That there is a change in C round about annal 652, apparently coinciding with the point at which the scribe of B ceased to enter regular annal-numbers is not a matter for dispute. What needs to be determined is the nature of the relationship in this section. Sometimes forms in C seem closer than those of B to what may be assumed to have been the usage of the 'common archetype'; sometimes they seem further removed from it. Dorothy Whitelock, as we have seen, attempted to explain this in terms of use by the C scribe of both B and another text of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle; my own initial reaction, as also that of Orton,¹⁶⁵ was that B need not have been used at all. Taylor interpreted the two types of deviation as due to the fact that scribe 2 of C ceased to copy B at this point, turning instead to B's own exemplar, but that a number of the forms he used were 'characteristic of C2 himself', that is to say, they were introduced by this scribe.¹⁶⁶ Once again conclusions and evidence need reassessing. Certainly a number of 'divergent' forms in C2 correspond to similar spellings in MS A and sometimes in D or E and so were probably to be found also in an ancestor of B. C's form *him*, for instance, is patently the 'original' one, being the norm also in MSS A and D. It is the six *eo*-spellings introduced alongside forms with *i* in B in the section 755-905 that represent scribal innovation.¹⁶⁷ As for the regular use of preterite plural *-on* in C2, where B prefers *-an*, this too may well be a reflection of the usage of the common archetype to annal 914.¹⁶⁸ However, *-on* spellings continued to be used in Old English manuscripts right up to (and beyond) the Norman Conquest and restoration or generalisation of *on* cannot be entirely ruled out.¹⁶⁹

At the same time, it must be borne in mind that if the first section of C is derived not from B itself but from a manuscript behind B in which the entry of annal-numbers stopped with 652, then reversion by C in the second section to 'original' forms that are not recorded in either B or C in the first section must require us to rule out the possibility that C2²'s immediate exemplar was also that of B. So, for instance, the one example of *hiera* and the fifteen examples of *hira* in C2² recall the usage of MS A hand 1, which has *hiera* 22x and *hira* 1x, and the pre-c.930 hands 2b and 2c, which have only *hira* (21x),¹⁷⁰ while the twenty-seven instances of *hyra* in C are also best seen as reflexes of these forms rather than as substitutions for earlier *heora* spellings.¹⁷¹ Moreover it is *hyra*, not *heora* (the normal usage of MSS D and E as well as of B),¹⁷² that is the most common form in the section of MS D beginning with annal 893, where E ceases to share material with ABCD only and where D's usage abruptly changes.¹⁷³ From annal 894 to annal 941, *hyra* is found no fewer than eighteen times, while *heora* occurs seven times, *hira* twice, and *hire* only once.¹⁷⁴ Subsequently, *heora* once again becomes the norm.¹⁷⁵ The implication is that D was drawing on a source other than the 'Northern recension' for this section and that, like C's hypothetical 'second exemplar' and the corresponding parts of MS A, this source used varieties not of *heora* but of *hiera/hira*. So there are two obvious possibilities. The first is that the *heora* forms in the central section of B were first introduced by the scribe of that manuscript, in which case C could have been using B's exemplar from 652. The second is that the *heora* forms had already been generalised in a manuscript one or two removes from B, in which case C's text after 653 must go back to an even earlier copy of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. That *heora* is invariable in both B and C in the section to 652 seems to indicate that the second of these is the correct one.¹⁷⁶ However, consistency of usage in B cannot always safely be interpreted in this way, as can be demonstrated from an examination of the distribution patterns of variant forms of the verb *apīestran*. Taylor uses these variants to support his theory that C is based on B and B's exemplar, observing that B always writes *apēostr-* with *eo*, but C2 only does so before 652; 'after this date C2 spells it *apīestr-* consistently'.¹⁷⁷ It is true that before 652 MS C, like MS B, has only *eo*-spellings. However, Taylor's claims are inaccurate: after 652 C has not *ie* but *y*, and the spelling *apystrode* occurs in annal 879 (880BC) in B as well as in C. Moreover, although MS A regularly uses *ie* in this word, except in annal 827 where (like MS E) it has *i*, MS E has *eo* in annal 540 (MS F *e*), beside *e* (MS F *eo*) in annals 538, 664 and 733, *i* in

827 and *y* in 879 and 885, while *y*-spellings are also used in D 733, 827, 879 and 885. The possibility must at least be allowed that the common exemplar of B, C, D and E had *eo*-spellings in the earlier annals and, like MS A, *ie*- or *i*-spellings in the later ones.¹⁷⁸ It is the group of *eo*-spellings in B corresponding to C *y*, not the *eo*-spellings of the opening section, that represents a departure from what appears to have been the original usage.¹⁷⁹ The change in MS C 'after 652', therefore, does not provide support for the theory that up to 652 C was copied from B. At the same time, the fact that C2² seems to have preserved at least some of the spellings of the archetype of BCDE does not entitle us to claim that after 652 the scribe of that section must necessarily have been using B's own exemplar rather than a manuscript derived from a more remote archetype. Equally to be interpreted with caution is the presence of shared alternative forms in B and C1 but not in C2². So, for instance, whereas in the opening section C used both *-od* and *-ad* forms, in section C2² it has only *-od* and a handful of instances of *-ud*. B, however, uses *-od* and *-ad* in both sections, sharing not only with C but also with D one instance of *-ud* in 893.¹⁸⁰ Taylor cites C's *-ad* forms as support for the hypothesis that C1 and C2¹ had B as their exemplar in the opening section. However, since agreements between B and C in the use of *-ad* appear to be the result of the survival in both manuscripts of spellings from an earlier exemplar,¹⁸¹ and since *-ad* spellings return in C after B has come to an end, the absence of such spellings from C between 653 and 977 would seem to indicate that *-od* spellings where B has *-ad* in the central section were already present as innovations in C's exemplar and that as a corollary this exemplar could not also have been used by B.

Similar conclusions might also be drawn from the distribution patterns of the variants *þam* and *þæm*, though somewhat less securely. According to Taylor, it is significant that *þæm* and the specifically West Saxon *þam* are roughly equally distributed in B, 'with more *þam*-forms than *þæm*-forms towards the end of the text', whereas the only two examples of *þæm* in C occur at 584 and 635, where B also has *þæm*.¹⁸² However, *þam*-forms (the norm in MSS D and E) greatly outnumber *þæm* throughout the text of B.¹⁸³ Moreover, of the seventeen instances of *þæm* in B that I have found, no fewer than fourteen occur in the Chronicle to 897, and no fewer than seven are found also in MS A.¹⁸⁴ Of the two *þæm* forms in the first section of MS C, as we have seen, one is shared with A as well as with B.¹⁸⁵ There is no reason, therefore, to suppose that the scribe of B was responsible for introducing the *æ*-spellings in his manuscript - as Taylor's comments imply that he did -

and every reason to suppose that they were already present in his exemplar. So, unless we assume that the scribes of C themselves generalised *pam* (copying mechanically only twice), then it would appear that the alteration had already been made in C2²'s exemplar, in which case that exemplar could not have been also B's.

A more complicated situation emerges in the case of the alternation *hi/hy/hie*. In MS B the preferred form is *hie*, occurring 199x, beside *hi* 7x.¹⁸⁶ In MS C, in contrast, *hi* is the more common form, with the first instance occurring in annal 658 and the last in annal 1066.¹⁸⁷ Since *hi* is a derivative of *hie*, it might at first sight appear that it is the *hie*-spellings of B that represent the usage of the archetype throughout. However, although A continues to have the occasional instance of *hie* right up to annal 1001, *hi*-spellings are found already in this manuscript in hands 1 and 2a, where they are concentrated in annals 887-893, at the end of the 'first compilation' and beginning of the first extension. After 920 it is *hy* that is the preferred form.¹⁸⁸ In B, too, five of the six exceptional uses of *hi* are in the 'first compilation', four of them being concentrated in annals 894B - 896B. In D and E, in contrast - texts in which *hi/hy/heo*-spellings predominate - *hie*-spellings are confined to the 'first compilation'.¹⁸⁹ Thus, the possibility must be at least allowed that some of B's *hie*-spellings may have replaced older *hi*-spellings but that some of these *hi*-forms may in their turn themselves have been introduced in place of original *hie*.¹⁹⁰

Certain other variations of usage between B and C2² that are not normally found in other sections may be similarly explained. Thus, for instance, C's *ger*, found fifty-two times in this section, where B has a single instance of *ger* beside normal *gear*, is in linguistic terms the later form and so might be expected to reflect an alteration made to an original *ea*.¹⁹¹ Indeed, in spite of the occurrence of two instances of the dative *gere* in MS B annals 1 and 790, the first of these also in MS C before correction, there is no evidence that the 'first compilation' of the Chronicle to 891 used smoothed forms of this word,¹⁹² and it is never found in the late ninth century Hatton manuscript of the Pastoral Care. In MS A of the Chronicle the form *ger* first appears in annal 894 (written by hand 2b after the year 911 and probably as late as 920). However, in terms of spelling practice, it is B's *gear*-forms where C has *ger* which other evidence suggests may be the result of intervention. Although the spelling *ger* is common in manuscripts of the early tenth century such as the oldest copies of the Old English Orosius and Old English Bede,¹⁹³ and it is found with considerable frequency in manuscripts and texts of

the later eleventh century, its use in West-Saxon manuscripts seems virtually to have been discontinued in the second part of the tenth century. The Toronto microfiche concordance records no instances from the works of Wulfstan and only a handful of instances from the *Heptateuch*, where it occurs in late eleventh century copies.¹⁹⁴ In MS A of the *Chronicle* its last occurrence is in annal 920. In MS D, apart from some twenty-three examples of smoothed forms in the section 1037-1075, the only instance of *ger* is in annal 914, where it corresponds to C *ger*.¹⁹⁵ This concentration of smoothed forms in MSS A and D in annals of the first part of the tenth century may therefore suggest that C's spellings originated in an underlying manuscript of approximately the same date and, as a consequence, that C's exemplar could not have been MS B. Whether or not B's version also goes back to an exemplar with *ger*-spellings and so represents a standardisation of spelling, it is not possible to determine.¹⁹⁶ Similarly, although C's spelling *Wesseaxe* is certainly the 'later' form in linguistic terms,¹⁹⁷ being a development from *Westseaxe*, its absence from B and its restriction in C to annals after 652 is not of itself an indication of innovation by C. *ss*-spellings are a feature also of MS A hand 1, where they occur 31x from annal 559, beside *sts* 17x from annal 514, with subsequent hands normally using *sts*, apart from a couple of instances in hand 3 in annal 937, after which the word ceases to occur. The mix of *ss* and *sts* forms already in the earliest parts of this text makes it impossible for us to determine the usage of the archetype - if it was indeed consistent. Certainly *ss*-spellings could have been in BC's common exemplar and thus C's spellings may be 'original', with generalisation of the etymologically expected spelling *sts* a feature of either B or a manuscript lying behind B but not behind C at this point.¹⁹⁸

Finally, C's choice of variants for 'many' in this section seems to indicate an underlying exemplar which both retained forms rejected by B, C1 and C2¹, and by implication, by B's exemplar, and introduced new ones. B normally uses the form *manig*, with a single instance of *monig* in 897, corresponding to an *o*-spelling also in C2². In C2², however, *mænig* is the norm, occurring ten times, with *monig* four times.¹⁹⁹ One of these *o*-spellings, as we have seen, is found also in B; a second corresponds to an *o*-spelling in A, where it is the preferred form in hands 2a-d.²⁰⁰ D likewise has an instance of *monig* in this section, again corresponding to an *o*-spelling in A.²⁰¹ In the circumstances, it seems probable that all the *o*-spellings are derived from the common archetype of the surviving manuscripts, and that it was a manuscript behind MS B

and the first part of C (to 652) that adopted the *manig*- form as its norm. It also seems probable that the late West Saxon form *mænig* was introduced by the scribe of a manuscript behind C, not by scribe C2 himself. The importance of the distribution patterns of forms of 'many' in MS C, then, lies quite simply in the fact that they indicate that between 838 and 915 the scribe of C was copying not MS B but another manuscript, which in some respects was closer than B was to the common archetype, but which in its apparent inclusion of the late West Saxon form *mænig* was on occasion further removed from it.²⁰²

All the evidence then points to a special relationship between MSS B and C from the beginning of the Chronicle up to 977, where B comes to an end. At the same time, it also appears to confirm the theory of a change of exemplar (or scribe) behind C just at the point where B ceases to insert annal-numbers and where a new folio begins in both texts, and to indicate use by C2² of an exemplar which was in many ways closer to the common archetype of all the surviving manuscripts than B is. However, differences between B and C up to 652 and from 943 to 977 seem to rule out the possibility that for these sections C was using B as its exemplar, while a comparison of B and C's usage in the section 653 to 942 with B's usage in the surrounding sections suggests that C was not using B's exemplar here either. There are indications that the text used by C2² was not a direct ancestor of B, but was derived from an ancestor of an ancestor of B by way of at least one other copy.²⁰³ It may be that the change around 651 in C is due to the scribe of a manuscript behind both B and C leaving the entry of marginal annal-numbers to a rubricator, who failed to complete his work. The second scribe of C or a predecessor must then have sought another exemplar. Alternatively, it may be that in a copy of the Chronicle behind C, the first quire had become detached from the rest of the work, again necessitating the use of an alternative text. Whatever the explanation, MSS B and C emerge as important and independent witnesses of a branch of the Chronicle which is preserved otherwise only in part in MS D.

II. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SURVIVING CHRONICLE TEXTS, THE *ANNALS OF ST NEOTS*, ÆTHELWEARD'S *CHRONICON* AND ASSER'S *LIFE OF KING ALFRED*.

The starting-point for all modern investigations of the relationship between the surviving manuscripts of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and corresponding Latin material in the so-called *Annals of St Neots*, the *Chronicon* of Æthelweard and Asser's *Life of King Alfred* is the discussion by Charles Plummer in his monumental revision of John Earle's *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, published in 1899. In Plummer's view, Æthelweard, who was writing after 975, was, up to about 892, mainly dependent on a version of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle not 'differing very widely from those which have come down to us.'²⁰⁴ He admits that although Æthelweard omitted some of the material found in the vernacular versions he also has many details peculiar to himself even in the earlier period, and he suggests that these were probably drawn from some independent source. However, he is confident that the Chronicle used by Æthelweard was of the 'earlier southern type' represented by A, B and C and that

in several points he seems nearer to A than to B, C, and shows no affinity with the special peculiarities of B, C, or of C. On the other hand there are passages in which he seems to differ from A. On the whole, the conclusion seems to be that Ethelwerd used a Chronicle which was not our A, but was closer to it than to any other of our existing Chronicles.²⁰⁵

The version of the Chronicle used by Asser is similarly described as of the A, B, C or southern type; not our A and not sharing the peculiarities of C or B except in one point where it is nearest to C.²⁰⁶ To the version in the *Annals of St Neots*, in contrast, preserved in a manuscript of the twelfth century but not continuing beyond 913, Plummer assigns a far more important place in the transmission of the Chronicle, developing a point made by Stubbs in the introduction to the first volume of his edition of Hoveden²⁰⁷ and since 'worked out with great care and elaboration by Dr Ludwig Theopold in an excellent monograph' in 1872:²⁰⁸

Of little value in themselves for history, for they contain little or nothing which may not be found better elsewhere, [the Annals of St Neots] are of great importance for the criticism of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle; for, while founded largely on that Chronicle, they have preserved the true chronology, which in all our MSS. is disjointed.²⁰⁹

Plummer adds that

As to the form of Chronicle underlying the Annals of St. Neot, it follows from the fact that they imply a Chronicle older than the common original [æ] of our existing Chronicles that it must have been of the earlier or southern type; and of our three surviving Chronicles of that type, A, B, C they are, up to 892, nearest to A.²¹⁰

These conclusions were for a long time apparently accepted without question, along with Plummer's further assumption that 'this earliest form of the national Chronicle' was compiled under the direction and supervision of Alfred the Great,²¹¹ what little debate there was being concerned mainly with the question of which of the three 'southern-type' chronicles was nearest to the *Annals of St Neots*. Stevenson, for instance, challenged Plummer's linking of this work with the A-text of the Chronicle, suggesting instead that, like the source of Asser's *Life of King Alfred*, it bore the closest relationship to B and C.²¹² However, in 1925 Sir Frank Stenton put forward a major new theory, drawing attention to the fact that although Æthelweard's source shared the chronological dislocation, it was fuller than any of the extant texts of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle in the annals 882 and 885, and claiming that in the case of annal 885 this was due to the preservation in Æthelweard's source of a sentence lost by homoeoteleuton from an ancestor of all the surviving vernacular versions. The scribe of this ancestor, he says, was 'misled by the occurrence of the same words at the end of two contiguous or almost contiguous sentences, and omitted all that lay between them'.²¹³ Stenton's theory was adopted by Dorothy Whitelock, though she rejected his further suggestion of a south-western origin for the Chronicle: south-western elements in Æthelweard but not in surviving Chronicle manuscripts, she points out, 'could be a later accretion to the manuscript he was using'.²¹⁴ In 1962, however, Alistair Campbell rejected the theories of both Plummer and Stenton, explaining the greater detail in the 885 entry in Æthelweard's *Chronicon* in terms of collation and

suggesting that Æthelweard was using a copy of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle which was made from A either directly or with intervening links and which had undergone alteration, probably during the reign of Edward the Elder, by 'revisers deeply interested in West-Saxon genealogy and history'. This version, which extended to 975, was a 'fairly thorough revision, using mainly A, but referring to at least one older MS.'²¹⁵ Campbell's interpretation was in its turn challenged by E. E. Barker, who proposed as a counter-theory that, far from deriving from the 891 compilation, Æthelweard's exemplar was in fact pre-Alfredian and possibly of Mercian origin: 'we believe that if his copy were available to us it would prove to be written in one hand down to the annal for 855 and to have subsequent material added at various times in different hands.'²¹⁶ Barker's theory had as its starting point the fact that by far the largest number of the entries in the Old English manuscripts which are missing from Æthelweard were concerned with Kentish and/or ecclesiastical affairs, including Bede Epitome (the chronological summary at the end of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*). He argued that these annals were added to a version of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle later than Æthelweard's exemplar:

It seems . . . that after the compilation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle in the form used by Æthelweard, there became available a kind of 'Continuatio Bedæ' written at Canterbury during the second quarter of the ninth century . . . At some time in the ninth century these Canterbury Annals were added to an existing Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and, probably at the same time, the opportunity was taken to introduce a good deal of other matter, mainly in the seventh-century sections and consisting of items taken from Bede.²¹⁷

Cyril Hart, in his detailed study of the B-text which appeared in 1982, also disputed the conclusions of his predecessors. For him the theory that Æthelweard's source antedated what he describes as the lost A text precursor of 891²¹⁸ was 'embarrassing'. His solution was to postulate that the loss through homoeoteleuton noted by Stenton 'occurred in the A text precursor itself, and was rectified there as in the 855-85 annal [*sic*] by a marginal addition, with a caret mark for insertion, and that only Æthelweard's version brought the missing sentence back into the body of the text'.²¹⁹ He agreed with Campbell that this version was copied from a text much more akin to A than B, though with the qualification that the poem on King Edgar (annals 973 and 975) 'could only have

come from the B text or from a derivative'.²²⁰ At the same time Hart both accepted the theory of the chronological dislocation and transformed it, by supposing that it originated not in the A text precursor of 891, but in A itself. He saw 'good reason to believe ...that the A text precursor was likewise a precursor to the B text and to *Æthelweard's* and the *East Anglian chronicles* [i.e. the *Annals of St Neots*].²²¹ Finally, noting Stevenson's conclusion that Asser's source was much closer to B than to A, he found 'a simple hypothetical explanation for this, namely that Asser and the B chronicler had available the same chronicle source for this period... the lost A text precursor'. He considered it 'to be more than a simple coincidence that the B chronicler ceased to use the A text as his sole chronicle source at precisely the same annal, 851, as that used by Asser to commence his account of King Alfred's reign'.²²²

The most recent detailed discussion of these complicated and complex theories is in the important survey of publications on the Chronicle by Audrey Meaney. Professor Meaney accepts Barker's 'genealogical history' of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle ('unless further evidence is forthcoming'), the chronological dislocation of the second half of the eighth and first half of the ninth centuries being due to the accidental omission of annal-numbers for 755 and 756.²²³ She also accepts the views of her predecessors, that Asser's *Life of Alfred* was based on a chronicle manuscript derived from Plummer's *æ* and independent of all the surviving Chronicle versions.²²⁴ However, she regretfully finds Barker's thesis of a first Chronicle ending in 855 and of a set of Canterbury Annals added to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle after *Æthelweard's* exemplar and before Plummer's *æ* at the very least 'unproven' and 'unlikely'.²²⁵ She notes arguments for retrospective composition for the annals from 840 (*recte* ?843) until at least 860 and observes that it is difficult to see how the reference to Alfred's consecration as king in annal 853 could have got into the Chronicle during the lifetime of Alfred's father or, especially, of one of his elder brothers.²²⁶ Indeed she suggests that the passage might have been 'interpolated into the annal in *Æthelweard's* exemplar, after Alfred's accession; and the marginal crosses in the Parker manuscript may indicate something more than the scribe's overwhelming interest in Alfred's doings; but the problem remains'.²²⁷ She also rejects Barker's claim of a 'special Mercian interest', observing that all the annals which he lists as unique to *Æthelweard* and as showing this special interest are dated after 855, when Barker considered its first hand to have finished.²²⁸ For her the earliest version of the Chronicle that we can recognise is the

one used by the *St Neots* compiler. Entries which are not in the *Annals of St Neots* but which may have been already present in its source, she suggests, are 'some royal genealogies, and those annals concerning the life of Christ taken from the Bible, and lives of the Apostles from Jerome's *De Viris Illustribus*, with a chronology based on Isidore's *Chronicon* which also supplied a few entries of its own'.²²⁹ She observes that in its entries relating to 'world history', Æthelweard's *Chronicon* is sometimes actually closer to the *De Viris Illustribus* than the Old English is.²³⁰ 'Other sets of annals, one concerning the invasion of Sussex, another from Canterbury concerning Kentish and ecclesiastical affairs from the death of Bede until the early ninth century', she suggests, 'probably also formed part of the pre-*æ* compilation, even though they are not found in [the *Annals of St Neots*] and only the Sussex annals in [Æthelweard's *Chronicon*]'.²³¹ The second version of the Chronicle acknowledged by Professor Meaney is one for which she holds Æthelweard to be our witness. She follows Stenton in the belief that Æthelweard's version 'had evidently been maintained from about the middle of the ninth century in the south west of the country, for it has much local detail', and in the supposition that 'it was kept up only until about 893, though the manuscript may have had some additions made to it, very much later'.²³² She also agrees with Stenton that, although it had the chronological dislocation affecting annals for the late eighth and early ninth centuries, Æthelweard's source must have been 'fuller than that of any of the extant texts of the [Anglo-Saxon Chronicle] and Asser in the annals s.a. 882 and 885'.²³³ The third version is Plummer's *æ*. This, she suggests, was made from the second version, which had attracted the attention of Alfred's secretariat and was copied 'rather carelessly, since a passage from the annal for 885 was accidentally omitted by homoeoteleuton'.²³⁴ Meaney's conclusion is that from this copy, directly or indirectly, depend all our extant Old English versions of the Chronicle:

By comparing them with Æthelweard's *Chronicon* we can see that in *æ* a pious reviser or revisers added annals belonging to the first half of the first century A.D. from Rufinus' translation of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, and gave King Æthelwulf a respectable descent from Adam. Some West Saxon and specifically south-western detail may have been omitted by *æ* . . . in line with an aim to make these 'local annals' into a 'national Chronicle', but about this we can by no means be so certain, since Æthelweard's exemplar could

itself have been annotated and interpolated. Therefore, alas, we must still take Plummer's statement as unproven.²³⁵

As for Plummer's *æ* ('which was taken at least to 891'), she reconstructs the copying of this 'roughly as follows:

- (1) The A manuscript was copied to 891 from *æ* when *æ* was in its first state.
- (2) A few minor additions (e.g. s.a 787, 883) were made to *æ*, and it was then copied into the archetype of BC and D ('southern exemplar').
- (3) A few more minor additions (e.g. s.a. 787, 878), and a lot of identifying tags were added to *æ*, and it was then copied into the archetype of DE as far as 890.²³⁶

Meaney's paper was published in 1986 but commissioned much earlier.²³⁷ It therefore takes no note of discussions published after 1982, apart from her own study of MS D (1983). Simon Taylor's edition of MS B (1983) and David Dumville's edition of the *Annals of St Neots* (1984) were thus unknown to her. She seems also not to have seen my detailed examination of Barker's theories (1979) and my study of the compilation of the Chronicle to c. 890 (1980).²³⁸ These are therefore most conveniently treated as representing a later stage in Chronicle studies than Meaney's study, even though they actually appeared in print several years before it. In the following survey I propose, accordingly, to incorporate arguments made in these papers in my response to the theories summarised above, along with arguments that have appeared in print since 1984.

1. The *Annals of St Neots*

At first sight there appears to be an overwhelming case for the theory that the author of the *Annals of St Neots* drew on a version of the Chronicle at once older and more accurate than that lying behind all the surviving vernacular manuscripts. However, a closer examination of the arguments based on the presence of archaic spellings in, and the absence of the chronological dislocation from, the *Annals of St Neots* shows that neither set is in any way conclusive. So, for instance, the spellings *Koenuualch* and *Oisc* have been cited as suggesting that the annalist's source was more archaic and thus closer to the 'original' than any of the surviving manuscripts.²³⁹ However, they do not necessarily take us further back than to the time when the common exemplar of those manuscripts (Plummer's *æ*) was written and copies of it were being

made: *ch* and *uu* spellings are found also in early tenth-century entries in the *Annals of St Neots*, as, for instance 902 *Alchsuiithe*,²⁴⁰ while the spelling *oe* is not only still preserved alongside the variant *e* in other words in A such as 661 *Coenbryht*, but continues to be the norm in texts of Northumbrian and Mercian origin in the tenth century.²⁴¹ Moreover, the form *Oisc*, for the *Æsc* of the surviving manuscripts, could have been taken over directly by the *St Neots* compiler from his text of the *Historia Ecclesiastica*.²⁴² All that these spellings tell us then is that the *Annals of St Neots* was not derived from the A-text or indeed from any other of the surviving Chronicle manuscripts. As for the chronological dislocation, David Dumville has in my opinion demonstrated conclusively that the use of the correct series of dates in the *Annals of St Neots* could well be the result of intelligent editorial work by an author collating material from a number of different sources and becoming aware of discrepancies in the dates that these provided.²⁴³ As Dumville points out, an examination of the sixteen-year of Cuthred (740-756) would have shown where the beginning of the dislocation occurred; equally, the knowledge that Æthelwulf and Æthelbald between them reigned for twenty-one years to 860 would have shown where it ended.²⁴⁴

He concludes:

although the *Annals* as a whole have not received close scrutiny from scholars, they have been awarded extraordinary authority as a witness to a stage of the text-history of the *Chronicle* more archaic than that of any other surviving witness. Especially in the light of what has been said about the Compiler's chronological concerns and his evident skill and originality in that regard, very good evidence will be needed before that major text-historical conclusion can continue to be sustained.²⁴⁵

At what stage in the compilation and development of the *Chronicle*, then, might this chronological dislocation have arisen and why? As we have seen, the consensus of opinion is that the the mistake was made by a copyist or copyists in the course of the transmission of the finished text and not by the original compiler of this part of the *Chronicle*.²⁴⁶ Its beginning in 754 (*rectius* 756) is explained by Plummer as 'purely mechanical', and 'due to the scribe passing over now and again (as may easily be done) some blank annal against which nothing is recorded'.²⁴⁷ For him the restoration of the true chronology in 851 is 'owing in part to the occurrence of blank annals in the *Chronicle* between 845 and 851'.²⁴⁸

There are certainly a number of places in the surviving Chronicle versions where one or other of the texts falls out of step with the rest in respect of its annal-numbering. However, this state of affairs normally lasts only for a very brief series of annals, and agreement usually returns after the next barren annal-number or sequence of barren annal-numbers.²⁴⁹ Indeed, apart from the dislocation under discussion, there are only two instances of lengthy deviation in numbering: for A 865 to 914 MS C has the annal-numbers 866 to 915,²⁵⁰ while for annals 891 (part 2) to 920, MS A in its final form has the numbers 892 to 924. In the case of the dislocation in A, the cause is known: two sets of errors by the original scribes of that manuscript, which resulted in duplication of annal-numbers 892, 913, 914 and 915, were subsequently 'corrected' by erasure and alteration to 892, 893 and 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, with further adjustments to all the other annal-numbers from original 893 to 942.²⁵¹ It is quite possible that the shift in C likewise arose from an accidental duplication of a single annal-number.²⁵² In both these instances the manuscripts with the dislocation have annals dated one or more years in advance of the rest. In the case of the dislocation from 754 (*rectius* 756) to the mid 800s, however, the Chronicle manuscripts are not ahead in their numbering, but two (and later three) years behind and there is no simple explanation ready to hand. Certainly if an original annal 756 had come to be misnumbered 754,²⁵³ a reader or scribe, noting the words 'Sigebryht feng to Wesseaxna rice 7 heold an gear' which end the annal, might well have reacted to this misdating by altering the next annal-number *dcclxxvii* to *dcclxxv*, thus restoring the one-year regnal length for Sigeberht.²⁵⁴ However, that does not explain why he or some other person continued to enter his material two (and subsequently three) years too early for nearly fifty entries and for what in MS A is almost six pages of text, and then abruptly started to use correct numbering once more. There are a number of places before annal 851 where the author of the error might have been expected automatically to return to the correct numbering but does not, the first of these being at annal 758 (*rectius* 756),²⁵⁵ others including the turn of a page. I would, therefore, very tentatively propose another explanation for the chronological dislocation. This explanation has as its starting point two facts. The first of these is that although the annal referring to Cynewulf's accession twice describes the length of his reign as thirty-one years, the number actually allocated to him in the Chronicle as we have it is twenty-nine, and this is not only the figure generally accepted as the correct one but is found also in the *Annals of St Neots*. The second is that the original

contents of annal 757 (now numbered 755) have been tampered with. My explanation also depends on the assumption that at the time of the 'first compilation' a number of people were involved in collecting material of a variety of kinds from what appears to have been a wide range of sources.²⁵⁶ The entries for the eighth century were derived from texts in which dates could well have been calculated from the accession of the relevant king of Wessex.²⁵⁷ (In this connection, one might note the wording of the entry for 752, 'Her Cupred gefeagt þy .xii.²⁵⁸ geare his rices æt Beorgforda wiþ Eþelbald').²⁵⁹ The entries for the second half of the ninth century, however, appear to have been associated from the start with A.D. dating and a year beginning in the autumn.²⁶⁰ When the time came for the various contributions to be meshed together, the compiler(s) quite probably had before them a skeletal regnal framework which they had to reconcile with the 'world history' and Bede Epitome annals, and other assorted materials. In addition to the original annals for *757 and *786 dealing with Cynewulf's accession and subsequent death in battle, there was available to the compiler(s) an extended account of that battle, set in the context of revenge inspired by events in the year of Cynewulf's accession - probably drawing on a prose or verse lay commemorating the occasion. This account (apparently prepared by the author of the annals for the 870s)²⁶¹ was inserted in annal *757. As a result, the length of Cynewulf's reign is given not once (as the customary regnal length at the end of the annal) but twice:

755 Her Cynewulf benam Sigebyrht his rices 7 Westseaxna wiotan for unryhtum dædum buton Hamtunscire, 7 he hæfde þa oþ he ofslog þone aldormon þe him lengest wunode, 7 hiene þa Cynewulf on Andred adræfde, 7 he þær wunade oþ þæt hiene an swan ofstang æt Pryfetesflodan: 7 he wræc þone aldormon Cumbran. 7 se Cynewulf oft miclum gefeohtum feaft uuiþ Bretwalum; 7 ymb .xxx. wintra þæs þe he rice hæfde, he wolde adræfan anne eþeling se was Cyneheard haten . . . 7 se Cynewulf ricsode .xxx. wintra 7 his lic liþ æt Wintanceastre.

The skeletal regnal framework used by the compiler had allowed only twenty-nine years for Cynewulf's reign. However, thirty-one is also the figure in the genealogical regnal list associated with Chronicle MSS A and B and, as Plummer pointed out, 'where the length of a reign as given in the Chronicle is inconsistent with the dates given in the Chronicle itself, it, with one exception, agrees exactly with the length given in the

[genealogical regnal list]'.²⁶² Working backwards from his own time, and adding eighteen and a half years (Æthelwulf) to thirty seven years seven months (Ecgerht) to sixteen years (Beorhtric), a compiler would have realised that according to the information provided in the Cynewulf/Cyneheard annal, 755 not 757 ought to have been the date for the accession of Cynewulf, and the date 754 should have been allocated to the one-year reign of King Sigebert that immediately preceded it. *AN. dcclvi* and *AN. dcclvii* were duly altered to *AN. dccliv* and *AN. dcclv* respectively. The date of the accession of Cuthred, however, continued to be determined in relation not to what followed but to what went before, the regnal length and dates of accession and death of his predecessor Æthelheard being linked with A.D. dates established by Bede Epitome and its continuations.²⁶³ According to this hypothesis, the two-year chronological dislocation in the surviving copies of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle would have arisen in the final stages of compilation, perhaps as a direct result of the insertion of the new material relating to the fight between Cynewulf and Cyneheard. The extension of the adjustment not only up to but beyond the death of Cynewulf and the shift of a third year in the early-ninth-century section could then be explained as the result of misunderstanding or carelessness on the part of the person or persons given the task of implementing the 'corrections' to annal-numbers 756 and 757. That the dislocation does not continue into the entries for the 850s could be either because the 'corrections' were made before the section in which they occurred was joined up with the final section, or because that final section had what may be called 'secure' dates, familiar to the compilers.²⁶⁴

There is no obligation then to suppose that the author of the *Annals of St Neots* had access to a version of the Chronicle closer to the original than the archetype of the surviving vernacular texts was, or that the dislocation must first have occurred in a copy of the completed 'first compilation' after circulation had begun.

So what of Stevenson's theory, that the text which lay behind the *Annals of St Neots* was closest in type not to A (as Plummer had suggested) but to B and C?²⁶⁵ This theory appears to have been accepted by Meaney and Hart and most recently by Dumville, who concludes that the Compiler's source-Chronicle was 'generally related to the tradition of the *Chronicle* from which A diverged'.²⁶⁶ Dumville's arguments are too complex to rehearse fully here. However, his general thesis is that a copy of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle was available at Bury St Edmunds in the period ca 1120 x ca 1140 and that this was probably a full, vernacular

Chronicle. The final entry drawn from the Chronicle - that dated 912 - was not necessarily the last of the source. In fact, he argues,

on this theory the Compiler of the *Annals of St Neots* would not have wanted to include or abstract the Chronicle-account of the years 915-20 even if he had had them. The point remains undemonstrable. But that his source-copy of the Chronicle concluded its Alfredian-Edwardian continuations at 914, like the extant MSS. BCD, may nonetheless be an economical explanation of the facts.²⁶⁷

There are two possible starting points for an examination of the relationship between the *Annals of St Neots* and A, B and C. The first presupposes the existence of two branches for the continuations that were added to the 'first compilation', paralleling the two forms of the common stock - apparently the view of Stevenson and Meaney; the second depends on the assumption that different versions of the earliest extensions may have been added at different times and possibly in different places to copies of a previously circulated 'first compilation'. As Dumville observes, 'to argue from the continuations to the common stock would be an unsound procedure'.²⁶⁸ It is clearly necessary to examine the 'first compilation' and its continuations separately before reaching any firm conclusions as to the relationship between the *Annals of St Neots* as a whole and the surviving Chronicle versions.

(a) The continuations to 914.

The last piece of material from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle used in the *Annals of St Neots* is that for annal 912, which relates to the building by Edward the Elder of fortifications at Hertford and Witham, though the final entry (derived from Norman annals and telling of peace between Charles king of the Franks and Rollo of Normandy) is for 914. It is after annal 914 that A goes its own way, with a detailed account of the last years of the reign of Edward the Elder, and it is thus tempting to agree with Dumville that 'an economical explanation of the facts' may be that the source-copy of the Chronicle used by the Compiler of the *Annals of St Neots* concluded its Alfredian-Edwardian continuations at 914, as BCD do.²⁶⁹ The *Annals of St Neots* certainly agrees with BCD in describing Edward's cousin Æthelwold as having been elected king of the Danes (900) and in naming the father of *Brichtsinus* (B *Byrhsige*) as *Brichtnoth* (B *Byrhtnoð*) where A has the form *Beornod* (904).²⁷⁰ In the first of these two cases it has been argued that A's reading is the result of

rewording of material likely to be an embarrassment to Edward the Elder or his successor.²⁷¹ Other potentially significant divergences are (i) in annal 903, where A's 'mid þæm flotan þe he mid wæs' appears less close than B(CD) 'mid eallum þæm flotan þe he begitan mihte 7 him to gebogen wæs' to the *Annals of St Neots* 'cum classe magna', (ii) in annal 904, where A refers to Mercia (*Mercna land*) but BC and the *Annals of St Neots* speak of all Mercia (*eall Myrcna land; totam Merciam*), and (iii) in annal 910, where A names only king Ecwils among the many thousands slain in the battle, but BCD and the *Annals of St Neots* list a number of other dead in addition to *Eowils/Eouuilsus*. (It should be noted, however, that the list in the *Annals of St Neots* is longer than that in BC, while the list in D is, to quote Dumville, 'savagely abbreviated at this point'.)²⁷² However, there are no traces in the *Annals of St Neots* of the so-called Mercian Register annals of BC and D,²⁷³ while in its use of the river-name *Memeran* not *Meran* or *Mæran* as in BCD in annal 912, the *Annals of St Neots* agrees with A and, apparently, the 'original'.²⁷⁴ From at least annal 900 onwards then, and largely thanks to rewriting in A, it would seem that the text of the extension of the first compilation used by the *Annals of St Neots* was closer to the 'original' than A's text now is, but at the same time it may have differed in some respects also from the immediate ancestor of BC and of this section of D. Its version of annal 892, on the other hand, - on stylistic grounds probably an addition to the 'first compilation' of the Chronicle, but not part of the 'first continuation'²⁷⁵ - links the *Annals of St Neots* firmly with A (and E). In this annal the *Annals of St Neots* agrees with A and E against BC and D in referring to a great wood (*silua magna*, A *þæs miclam wuda*, BC *þæs ilcan wuda*). It is also slightly closer to A and E in giving the number of Viking ships mentioned in this annal as *ccl* (A *ccl hunde*, E *þridde healf hund*, BCD *twam hund*, *cc* and *cc hund* respectively).²⁷⁶ Certainty is of course impossible, but I would suggest that the readings *miclan* and *ccl* are the original ones. Similarly, in annal 893 it is with A and not BC or D that the *Annals of St Neots* agrees in its reading 'Qui, simul properantes, sursum trans Tamensem fluium, depredantes, quousque peruenerunt ad ripam Sabrine fluminis', beside A 'Foron þa up be Temese oppæt hie gedydon æt Sæferne', D 'foron þa up be Temese 7 be Sæferne'; no reading BC.²⁷⁷ Once again the conclusion must be that the *Annals of St Neots* is here more faithful to the 'original' than BCD are, rather than that it has A as its source.

(b) The 'first compilation'.

An examination of the text of the 'first compilation' as preserved in the various versions likewise produces evidence that suggests that the source of the *Annals of St Neots* did not differ to any great extent from the hypothetical original. Apart from variations in annal-numbering, which, as we have seen, could be the result of intelligent collation and calculation by the author of the *Annals of St Neots*, there are few potentially significant differences between this work and individual Chronicle texts.²⁷⁸ One is the description of the Viking army's move to Swanage, *partim equitando, partim navigando*, the second part of which corresponds to A 877 'ǰ þa mette hie micel yst on seǰ', a clause accidentally omitted by an ancestor of B and C. Another involves the reference to the Vikings' raven banner in annal 878 (dated 879 in [B]C). The possible importance of the presence of this reference in the *Annals of St Neots* has long been recognised.²⁷⁹ According to BCDE not only was the brother of Inwær and Healfdene slain in the battle of 878 (879B) but 'þær wæs se guþfana genumen ðe hi Hrefn heton.' These words, or their equivalent, are absent from both A and Æthelweard. The *Annals of St Neots*, however, concludes a passage describing the battle (taken from Asser) with the words (not found in Asser): 'Ibique acceperunt spolia non minima. In quo etiam acceperunt illud uexillum quod Reafan nominant', followed by a further, unique, comment about the standard,

Dicunt enim quod tres sorores Hynguari et Hubbe, filie uidelicet Lodebrochi, illud uexillum texuerunt et totum parauerunt illud uno meridiano tempore. Dicunt etiam quod, in omni bello ubi praecederet idem signum, si uictoriam adepturi essent, appareret in medio signi quasi coruus uiuus uolitans; si uero uincendi in futuro fuissent, penderet directe nichil mouens - et hoc sepe probatum est . . .

According to Dumville, the appearance of a reference to the Vikings' raven banner in Chronicle-texts BCDE but not A is the only detail which allows the extension of the conclusion drawn from what he sees as the evidence of the continuations - that the *Annals of St Neots* is to be linked with BCD(E) rather than A.²⁸⁰ It is certainly quite possible that the first of the *St Neots*' sentences about the standard was drawn directly or ultimately from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, though, until we know the source of the additional details, an alternative origin must remain possible: the compiler clearly had knowledge of legends about the family of Ragnar Lothbrok not found in the Chronicle.²⁸¹ What is not

certain is the point at which the raven banner reference was incorporated in the Chronicle-texts. Was it added to a copy behind BCDE and the *Annals of St Neots* but not A, Æthelweard or Asser? Were BCDE and the *Annals of St Neots* the only texts to remain faithful to the original at this point?²⁸² Or is the reference in the *Annals of St Neots* the result of interpolation in either the text of Asser used by the compiler or his version of the Chronicle? That texts of the Chronicle were collated and material transferred from one to another can be demonstrated from MS A, where, for instance, an entry for annal 710, accidentally omitted by scribe 1, was inserted many years later by scribe 3, and where a number of items relating to the early history of the Anglo-Saxons were added by the post-Conquest scribe 8.²⁸³ Similarly, the 'Northern recension' is known to have acquired a considerable amount of additional information from some now lost 'northern' annals relating to the period from 733 to a little after 800.²⁸⁴ In the case of the *Annals of St Neots*, Dumville has suggested that material in annals 286, 565 and 726 might also be the result of collation of the base-text with other Chronicle manuscripts:

If we are not to conclude that the Compiler of the *Annals of St Neots* had access to a complex, conflate *Chronicle*, we must suppose that in addition to his basic source-text of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* he was able to refer to a copy of the 'Northern recension' and just possibly to MS A or G. We could explain most of these facts if he had access, in the 1120s or 1130s, to the library of Christ Church, Canterbury.²⁸⁵

Dumville's conclusions are based on the following facts:

- (i) *St Neots* annal 286 has as its second item 'Hoc tempore sanctus martyr Albanus passus est,' corresponding to 286E 'Her þrowade sanctus Albanus martyr'.
- (ii) The second part of *St Neots* annal 565, 'Anno eodem Æthelbrihtus rex Cantuariorum regnum optinuit, et gubernauit annis .liii.', corresponds to 565E 'Her feng Æðelbriht to Cantwara rice ȝ heold .liii. wintra'.

(iii) The reference in *St Neots* 726 to Ine as having built a monastery at Glastonbury, 'monasterium constructum atque dedicatum apud Glastoniam', corresponds to a marginal insertion in MS A s.a. 688, 'ȝ he getimbrade þæt menster æt Glæstingabyrig', and otherwise only to a reference in a genealogical tract which in its present form belongs to the year 969.²⁸⁶

Dumville's theory is an attractive one. However, the facts can be interpreted in more than one way. So it is certainly true that the E(F)-text is 'unique among Chronicle-manuscripts' in both entering St Alban's martyrdom s.a. 286 and recording Æthelberht's corrupted reign-length of fifty-three years (*rectior* 56), and it 'seems impossible to doubt that our Compiler at least had access to the same source of information'.²⁸⁷ However, the information concerning Æthelberht is found also in MS A, in the form of an insertion by scribe 8,²⁸⁸ who had access to a copy of the 'Northern recension' and who likewise added the 'Northern recension' information about St Alban. The only problem - that in MS A the Alban material is inserted against annal-number 283 not 286 - is not an insuperable one. As Dumville himself points out in connection with the E text, 'The date and fact could have been drawn from the body of Bede's *Historia* (I. 6-7)'. Moreover, pace Dumville, neither Chronicle entry is an 'exact Old English equivalent of our Compiler's annal'.²⁸⁹ Whereas A and E both open with the specific *Her*, the *Annals of St Neots* has the deliberately non-specific 'Hoc tempore', following the statement 'Diocletianus et Maximianus [imperant]'. This corresponds to Bede I. vii, where the martyrdom is said to have occurred 'when infidel rulers were issuing violent edicts against Christians', which in its turn relates to the end of I. vi, with its reference to the persecutions of Diocletian and Maximianus Herculius, whose rise to power was assigned to the year 286 at the beginning of that chapter.²⁹⁰ We may compare Chronicle entries such as that reporting the arrival of Hengest and Horsa in Britain in the 'first compilation': 'Her Mauricius ȝ Ualentes onfengon rice ȝ ricsodon .vii. winter. On hiera dagum Hengest ȝ Horsa . . . gesohton Bretene.'

At the same time, it should be noted that the physical appearance of MS A is such that someone collating it with another manuscript containing the basic Chronicle would be able immediately to identify the 'new' material.²⁹¹ So the possibility cannot be ruled out that the *St Neots*' compiler obtained all the 'new' material in annals 286, 565 and 726 as a result of comparison of his own primary Chronicle source with A and with Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*.

It would appear then that the Chronicle-text which formed one of the primary sources of the *Annals of St Neots* was a direct descendent of none of the surviving manuscripts of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. If it is safe to reach any conclusion at all from the very scanty evidence provided, it is that wherever these chronicle texts diverge, the *Annals of St Neots* generally agrees with whichever of them it is that preserves the reading of the original, that is to say, it is usually free from any errors that may have arisen in the course of transmission.²⁹²

2) Æthelweard's *Chronicon*

As we have seen, a number of hypotheses have been produced to account for differences between the *Chronicon* of Æthelweard and surviving texts of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. The most important is that postulating loss by homoeoteleuton of a sentence from annal 885 in a manuscript behind all the surviving vernacular versions but not from that used by Æthelweard.²⁹³ Other hypotheses have included use by Æthelweard of a version of the Chronicle that had undergone collation and revision;²⁹⁴ use by Æthelweard of an 855 chronicle, to a copy of which (in the ancestor of surviving Chronicle texts) a set of Canterbury annals was subsequently added²⁹⁵ and use by Æthelweard of a version of the Chronicle in which some 'world-history' material found in the surviving vernacular chronicles had not yet been inserted²⁹⁶ and in which the 855 genealogy terminated at Scaef.²⁹⁷ In my view, however, there is no evidence that requires us to accept any of these hypotheses:

(i) First of all, Barker's theory of a chronicle to A. D. 855, to which a set of Canterbury annals was subsequently added, is not supported by the evidence. As I have attempted to show in detail elsewhere,²⁹⁸ none of the annals of either the Bedan or the post-Bedan period that are absent from Æthelweard's *Chronicon* show a special Kentish bias.²⁹⁹ Moreover, although many of the items found in the Chronicle but not in Æthelweard indisputably relate to ecclesiastical affairs, this does not necessarily mean that they must be later additions and, as a corollary, that the hypothetical first version of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle dealt almost exclusively with secular matters. A detailed comparison of the *Chronicon* with the Chronicle yields no detail inconsistent with a theory of relatively careful cutting in the former by someone for whom ecclesiastical detail held little interest - except, that is, where it dealt with the conversion either of the nations that came to make up the kingdom to which he belonged, or of members of the West Saxon and Mercian royal families.³⁰⁰ Lastly, there is no evidence whatsoever to suggest that the

material in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle drawn from the Epitome at the end of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* was not entered all at the same time, and the theory that best fits the facts is that Æthelweard, interested primarily in the deeds of his ancestors, made drastic cuts to his source-material.³⁰¹

(ii) Evidence for loss through homoeoteleuton in annal 885 is not conclusive. Certainly in this annal all surviving vernacular versions agree in first referring to the Danes at Rochester as going overseas and then immediately afterwards describing Alfred's sending of a fleet to East Anglia. Thus, according to MS A:

Her todgelde se foresprecena here on tu, oþer dgel east, oþer dgel to Hrofesceastre, 7 ymbsæton ða ceastre 7 worhton oþer fæsten ymb hie selfe, 7 hie þeah þa ceastre aweredon oþþæt Ælfred com utan mid fierde. Þa eode se here to hiera scipum 7 forlet þæt geweorc, 7 hie wurdon þær behorsude 7 sona þy ilcan sumere ofer sę gewiton. 7 þy ilcan geare sende Aelfred cyning sciphre on Eastengle.³⁰²

Certainly, too, Æthelweard, in his much fuller entry for this year, has two nearly identical sentences ending with the words 'ultra petunt marinas partes' and 'petunt ultra partes marinas' respectively and separated by a passage without equivalent in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle:

Ergo post annum partiuntur in sortem sibi arua telluris ipsius in duas partes, unam ad Lofenum, alteram ad Hrofecestre partem uidelicet pertinentem, obsederuntque oppida prædicta. Nec non alia sibi struunt uilia castra. Et iam defectus dominatur accolis priscis, usque dum aduenisset rex Ælfred occidentali cum manu. Superata tandem lues inmundæ: auxilia quærunt, rex iussit Sarauara duci, equis non exiguis littora petunt, proprias sedes. *Quidam eorum ultra petunt marinas partes.* Cursu in eiusdem anni præsentis obsidatum cum renouant Anglis omissi, bisque numerant fraude prædas in anno telluris in condenso adhærenti notheas fluuio partes Tamesi. Petias sub dant plebs inmundæ quæ tum Orientales continebat Anglos, repente extraneum petunt uestigio cursum ad locum Beamfleote. Ibiq; lurido motu partitur socia manus, quidam manent, *quidam petunt ultra partes marinas.* Itaque classem mittit in eodem anno in orientales partes Anglorum rex præfatus. . .

However, not only does the Chronicle-entry as we have it make perfectly good sense, but the clause supposedly left after the hypothetical loss through homoeoteleuton had taken place corresponds to neither of the nearly identical clauses in Æthelweard. Loss through homoeoteleuton should have resulted in the first sentence being retained but used to lead into the material that originally followed the second. Admittedly, Æthelweard's clauses agree not only in their endings but also in their beginnings; however, these beginnings both refer to 'some' of the Vikings, while the single sentence in the Old English versions refers to the entire force. If we accept the theory of loss through homoeoteleuton, then we have also to suppose that this was accompanied by a rewriting of the surrounding material by a scribe of a defective copy of the Chronicle, even though that material still made perfectly good sense. At the same time, the similarities of the clause endings could be due to a mannerism of Æthelweard's style, not necessarily to the providing of almost identical translations of *ofer sæ gewiton* by the ealdorman.³⁰³ What is more, there is ample evidence that Æthelweard had access to a body of information not found in the Chronicle. His *Chronicon* ceases to be dependent on the Chronicle as we have it after 892. The now lost source from which he drew material for his lengthy entry for 893, such as the account of a battle between the ætheling Edward and the Danes at Farnham and the role played by Æthelred of Mercia in the subsequent engagements, could also have included information about the earlier activities of the Danes at Elsloo and Louvain and in particular at Benfleet (mentioned as the site of a Viking camp in Chronicle annal 893 and named in the passage of Æthelweard's *Chronicon*, the Old English equivalent of which scholars suppose to have been lost from annal 885 by homoeoteleuton).³⁰⁴

3. Thirdly and perhaps even more significantly, there is another annal where Æthelweard's *Chronicon* differs from surviving Chronicle versions: the annal dated 851 in A (853 in C). This is the annal in which a reference to the battle of Sandwich appears in different positions in A on the one hand and BCDE on the other. Æthelweard's *Chronicon* has comparable material not here but in an entry to which Campbell assigns the date 844 (for 845) and which is matched by a duplication of the Sandwich reference in MS A at the end of its annal 845 (now erased) in a hand other and later than that of the main scribe of this section. This follows the words 'ȝ pær micel wēl geslogon ȝ sige namon' and seems to have read as follows:

ḡ þy ilcan geara Æþelstan rex ḡ Ealhchere dux micelne here ofslogon
æt Sondwic on Kent ḡ .viii. scipu gefengon ḡ þa oþru geflimdon.

The version in the main hand 1 of A is located in annal 851 after the first three clauses of that annal. It follows the words 'ḡ þær micel wæl geslogon ḡ sige namon' and differs from the erased version only in a handful of spellings³⁰⁵ and in reading *cyning* not *rex*. B(C)'s entry, in contrast, is located at the very end of the annal (dated 851DE, 853BC) where it follows the words 'ḡ þær sige naman' and reads,

ḡ þy ilcan geara Æþelstan cing ḡ Ealhere ealderman gefuhtan on
scipum ḡ mycelne here ofslogon æt Sandwic on Cænt ḡ .viii. scipu
gefengon ḡ þa oþre aflymdan,

while D(E)'s version (in the same position as that in BC) reads,

ḡ þy ilcan geara Æþelstan cyning ḡ Ealhhere dux gefuhton on scipum,
ḡ mycelne here ofslogon æt Sandwic, ḡ .viii. scipu gefengon, ḡ þa
oðre geflymdon.

The equivalent passage in Æthelweard, located at the end of the entry for 844 (recte 845), follows the words 'superato exercitu Danorum' and reads,

Etiā in ipso anno Æthelstan rex ḡ Ealhere dux bellum gesserunt
contra prædictæ gentis exercitum in Cent prouincia iuxta oppidum
quod Sanduic nuncupatur, nimiumque ab eis interimunt, fugatas
turmas eorum capiunt et nouem dromones.

There are a number of possible ways of accounting for these differences of position, all based on the assumption of omission through homoeoteleuton and subsequent restoration of the missing words. However, the most satisfactory of these presuppose that the version behind Æthelweard's *Chronicon* was one of the copies that replaced the missing material in the wrong place, viz. either:

(a) The correct position of the account is after the first three clauses of annal 851, the accidental misplacing of the material being caused by the presence of the words 'ḡ þær micel wæl geslogon ḡ sige namon' in both annal 845 and annal 851, a scribe's eye travelling forwards from some point in the last two clauses of annal 845 (as they now stand in the vernacular versions) to the identically worded second and third clauses of

annal 851. The scribe would then have copied the remainder of annal 851. Subsequently, he, or a collaborator, noticing the omission of the annal-number 851 and the opening words of the annal, would have made good this omission by removing the first two lines immediately after the proper end of annal 845 (the account of the battle of Sandwich) to an appropriate empty space in the margin with appropriate *signes de renvoi* and inserting in its place *in rasura* the two missing opening lines of annal 851. In such a case the scribe of A (or an ancestor) may be supposed to have noted the *signes de renvoi* and entered the material in its correct position in his copy; the scribe of Æthelwulf's source and the scribe of the text of the Chronicle collated with A by scribe Ia of that manuscript³⁰⁶ must be assumed to have overlooked the *signes de renvoi* and inserted the material at the end of annal 845, its nearest neighbour; the scribe of the ancestor of the other versions must have realised too late the material's correct position in annal 851 and inserted it at the end of that annal, along with some additional information. or :

(b) The correct position of the account is after the third clause at the beginning of annal 851, immediately followed by the words 'ǰ hæþne menærest [on Tenet]³⁰⁷ ofer winter sæton ǰ þy ilcan gear. . . ' and the accidental omission of the material was caused by the presence of the words 'ǰ þy ilcan gear' which opens both the account of the battle of Sandwich and the clause which follows almost immediately after. The missing material in this case would have included not only the battle at Sandwich but also the reference to heathen men for the first time overwintering in southern England. The scribe or a subsequent corrector, noticing the omission, could have inserted the passage in any one of two or three different places. If the layout resembled that of MS A, he could have copied the bulk of it in the space between annals 845 and 851, with, perhaps, the final clause, 'ǰ hæþne menærest [on Tenet] ofer winter sæton', in the space between annal-numbers 852 and 853 to the left of annal 851. An omission mark placed in the text beside the word *namon* which ended the third clause of annal 851 could have been taken to apply only to that final clause by the copyist of the textual ancestors of Æthelweard and BCDE (hence its position in these versions), the scribe of Æthelweard's vernacular source would have assumed from the position of the rest of the material between annals 845 and 851 that this belonged at the end of 845,³⁰⁸ and the scribe of the hypothetical ancestor of BCDE would have realised that it belonged to 851 and inserted it at the end of that annal, at the same time adding a reference to a naval battle.³⁰⁹ The scribe of A would have entered the material correctly. Either

of these scenarios appears to me more convincing than those which presuppose 845 (the annal in which Æthelweard and scribe 1a of MS A put the battle of Sandwich) or the end of annal 851 (where BCDE have it) to be the correct location for the material.³¹⁰

Taken separately, then, the 'special' features of the entries for 885, 845 and 851 in Æthelweard's *Chronicon* do not support Stenton's theory that Æthelweard was translating a version earlier than that underlying the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle as we can reconstruct it from the surviving vernacular versions. Taken together they must surely rule it out entirely.

4. Fourthly, there is nothing in those parts of Æthelweard's *Chronicon* which deal with 'world history' and King Æthelwulf's ancestry that can be said to prove the primacy of his vernacular source.

(a) Audrey Meaney's detailed and thoughtful discussion, as we have seen, starts from the premiss that a copy of a south-western copy of the Chronicle with the chronological dislocation reached King Alfred's secretariat and that the materials added at that time included an extended genealogy to Adam.³¹¹ Certainly the West Saxon regnal list to Æthelwulf and his descendants underwent a number of modifications.³¹² However, one cannot assume either that it is Æthelweard's version³¹³ that contains the pedigree of the original chronicle, or that Æthelweard would necessarily have wished to preserve a version of his family tree that traced his ancestry back to Noah and beyond had such a version been available to him:³¹⁴ it is surely no less possible that he (or his family) considered the connection with the Germanic origins of Cerdic more immediately attractive. He had already replaced *Bældæg* by *Balder*, the Scandinavian god. To replace *Sceldwea - Heremod* by *Sceldua - Sceaƿ*, and thus presumably to link up with the Danish Scylding dynasty, might have seemed more important to him than to claim - along with the rest of mankind - descent from Noah and Adam.³¹⁵

(b) Meaney's second major contribution has as its starting point my 1978 study of the 'world history' material at the beginning of the Chronicle. Accepting my conclusions as to the sources used by the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, she reexamines the material found in Æthelweard to see if the assumption of abridgement by Æthelweard made by Campbell and accepted by me is necessarily justified.³¹⁶ Comparing the Chronicle material with corresponding entries in Æthelweard's *Chronicon*, she suggests on the one hand that some of that material was added to the Chronicle after the version used by Æthelweard had been completed, and on the other hand that there is 'a misdating visible in both Æthelweard and the [Anglo-Saxon Chronicle]

of the annals dated 44 (dated retrospectively from 69), 62, 63, and 69.³¹⁷ To these annals she adds the Chronicle entries 70 and 71, which are not recorded in Æthelweard's *Chronicon*. This misdating from 44-71, she suggests, is the result of a chronological dislocation similar to that proposed for the Chronicle from 754 onwards. She finds it 'remarkable that none of the annals which the [Anglo-Saxon Chronicle] has from Rufinus-Eusebius. . . are present in Æthelweard' and she concludes, "That these Rufinus annals were not in [Æthelweard's] exemplar is. . . virtually proved by the fact that the last annal from this source in the [Anglo-Saxon Chronicle] concerning the second Herod, did not share the chronological dislocation."³¹⁸ The Titus entry of 81 is correct because it was added after Æthelweard's exemplar had been made. However, although it may well seem to us today that 'if we judge from what he includes in his *Chronicon*, the ealdorman would surely have been interested in the three Magi, the Massacre of the Innocents, and the deaths of the two Herods, even if we can easily imagine his being unmoved by the division of Judea into tetrarchies or Pilate's rule over the Jews,'³¹⁹ it would be highly dangerous to base a theory of textual transmission in the Middle Ages on an assumption of this sort alone. Æthelweard did after all make a number of changes at the beginning of his chronicle, including the addition of a brief account of the first five ages of the world and the omission of any reference to the invasion by Julius Caesar.³²⁰ It is also hard to see why material apparently drawn from a single source (Isidore's *Chronicon*) was entered on two separate occasions.³²¹ Potentially far more attractive is Audrey Meaney's theory of a chronological dislocation shared by Æthelweard and the Chronicle, yet not affecting annal 45, which is the last of the annals from Rufinus-Eusebius and is not found in Æthelweard's *Chronicon*.

Meaney's case for the beginning of the dislocation at annal 44 is based on the fact that

Jerome dates Paul's death to Nero's fourteenth year, the thirty-seventh after the passion, which should be 70 A.D. In his account of St. Peter in the *De Viris*, Jerome again dates his death as in Nero's fourteenth, and says that he held the 'sacerdotal throne' at Rome for twenty-five years.³²²

Her argument is that the compiler calculated the beginning of Peter's episcopacy retrospectively as twenty-five years before his death and that the date A.D. 44 was arrived at because the dislocation affecting annals

63-72 had already taken place and as a result Nero XIV was dated 69 not 70 A.D. That the Claudius annal is correctly dated 46 and yet 'probably belongs to an earlier stratum than the Rufinus-Eusebius annals' is explained by Meaney as possibly due to the fact that

the calculations for the A.D. dates of the 'world history' annals were made separately, and the annals only afterwards entered *en bloc* against the mostly blank annal numbers at the beginning of the *Chronicle*. It is at this point that the error could have crept in, and the annals which should have been dated A.D. 63-72 all put against year numbers one too low. The beginning of Peter's episcopacy would have been calculated afterwards, by counting back from A. D. 69.³²³

I do not find these arguments convincing. Certainly the dating of Peter's episcopacy at Rome is wrong if the chronicle is supposed to have calculated it retrospectively from Peter's death in A.D. 70. However, it is in fact correctly dated if we take it to have as its basis the comment in Jerome, *De Viris Illustribus*, that Peter came to Rome in the second year of Claudius's reign, and if we accept the dates of A.D. 39 for Gaius's accession and A.D. 43 for that of Claudius. Annal 46, with its account of Claudius's invasion of Britain, takes its date from Bede's Epitome and through its other date of Claudius IV reinforces arguments for the placing of Claudius's accession in 43.³²⁴ We thus have a cluster of consecutive annals 44, 45, 46, all apparently correctly dated and their relative positions fixed.

The remaining annals with the alleged dislocation are those for 62, 63, 69 (derived from *De Viris Illustribus*, where the material they contain is dated Nero VII, VIII and XIV respectively), 70 and 71 (corresponding to Vespasian I and II).³²⁵ Since the first two of these are separated from the rest by a sequence of five barren annal-numbers, it is hard to justify a theory of continued dislocation after annal 63, if misnumbering of a single annal by a careless scribe was initially responsible.³²⁶ On the other hand, as I have shown elsewhere, the dislocation affecting the reigns of Nero and Vespasian is easy to explain if we assume that the compiler used for his regnal lengths a manuscript of Isidore, *Chronicon* giving Nero's predecessor, Claudius, thirteen instead of fourteen years. However, this theory too has its problems. It does not account for the return to 'correct' dating with annal 81 and the accession of Titus. My first solution was to propose a second incorrect regnal length in the compiler's exemplar, allotting eleven years to Vespasian;³²⁷ yet although

a scribal error *xiii* for *xiiii* is plausible;³²⁸ a scribal error *xi* for *x* is not. It is at this point that Meaney's hypothesis of the misplacing of a single annal becomes attractive. I would develop and modify it as follows, as an alternative to, and possible improvement on, my own first theory:

1. I would assume that (as in the case of the 754 dislocation) the chronological error arose not in a manuscript of Isidore, *Chronicon*, but at the time of compilation, when the chronological calculations were being made. In such a case return to correct dating with annal 81 could be explained as due to the fact that what may be loosely called the framework and the annal-material were composed separately. A scribe merging a series of annals dated according to regnal lengths with an A.D. framework based on regnal lengths which allocated fourteen years to Claudius, fourteen to Nero and ten to Vespasian, might accidentally have entered the first annal relating to Nero's reign - an annal dated Nero VII in Latin sources - against the number 62 instead of the planned 63. He or a collaborator would then automatically have translated Nero VIII and XIV (the final year of Nero's reign) as 63 and 69 A.D. respectively and continued, again automatically, with Vespasian I and Vespasian II as 70 and 71 A.D. Since these two last are the only entries for Vespasian's reign, the scribe might then be expected to have returned to the regnal framework for the date of Titus I and the dislocation would be over. This is only one of several possible scenarios.³²⁹ However, it provides, I think, a plausible explanation for Meaney's 'first chronological dislocation' and this, in conjunction with the fact that there is no reason to suppose that the dislocation began as early as annal 44, is enough to demonstrate that what we have in the surviving manuscripts of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle could also have been present in the version used by Æthelweard. We do not have to posit two distinct stages in the history of the 'first compilation'. The onus of proof is on those who would maintain that Æthelweard's exemplar must have contained a version of 'world history' radically different from that found in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle as it has come down to us. Indeed even the absence of the 'Rufinus annals' can be explained as due to Æthelweard's deliberate selectivity. Apart from one Bede Epitome entry (referring to the invasion of Britain by Claudius *s.a.* 46) which is of obvious relevance to British history,³³⁰ only the three major events in the life of Christ plus a group of annals referring to the apostles and evangelists are used in the section to A.D. 100, and these follow logically on Æthelweard's new opening with its progression Adam - Noah - Abraham - Moses - Solomon. References to the Coming of the Magi, the Massacre of Innocents and events in

Jewish history after the birth of Christ are of secondary importance and are omitted.

(c) Other arguments for a source for Æthelweard's *Chronicon* more venerable than that of all the surviving Chronicle manuscripts depend on details in which Æthelweard appears to provide a 'better' reading than those manuscripts do:

i. 'Æthelweard is sometimes much closer to *De Viris Illustribus* than are the surviving manuscripts of the Chronicle'.³³¹

This certainly appears to be true in the case of Æthelweard's entry for A.D. 62. Here he includes a piece of information which is not in the Chronicle manuscripts but which is given in *De Viris*: the fact that James had been the first bishop of the church at Jerusalem.³³² Moreover, as Meaney has pointed out, in his material for A.D. 69, where the Chronicle entry reads 'Her Petrus 7 Paulus þrowodon', Æthelweard appears to echo *De Viris*, with the reading 'truncantur pro Christo Petrus et Paulus in ministerio ambo constantes, ambo florentes', *De Viris* '[Paulus] eodem die quo Petrus Romae pro Christo capite truncatur'.³³³ However, these similarities do not require us to suppose use by Æthelweard of a fuller Chronicle version than that behind the surviving manuscripts. On the one hand, as we have seen, Æthelweard did have sources other than the Chronicle,³³⁴ and he could either have known *De Viris* at first hand, or have had access to another text incorporating similar material. That James became first bishop of Jerusalem after the Crucifixion is information available not only from *De Viris* but also from texts such as the Old English Martyrology and its sources.³³⁵ On the other hand, in the case of annal 69, we do not even have to posit independent knowledge. The word *truncare* 'to kill' is a favourite of Æthelweard's, which he uses on a significantly large number of occasions:³³⁶ So, for instance, in his entry corresponding to annal 508, he renders *ofslogon* by *truncant*, in that for 782 (784A) he renders *ofsloh* by *truncat*. What is more, *De Viris Illustribus* has not *truncare*, 'to kill', but the more specific *truncare capite*, 'to decapitate' - providing a detail not found in Æthelweard's *Chronicon*, and relating only to Paul, since Peter suffered crucifixion.

ii. 'Æthelweard has early material not in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle that could only have been provided by a contemporary annalist'.

For those who hold this point of view, one of the most significant pieces of evidence for the independence of Æthelweard is his fuller entry on the

plague of birds. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle entry for 671 reads merely 'Her wæs þæt micle fugla weġ'. According to the corresponding *Chronicon* entry:

Itaque post decursu anni unius facta est auium magna ruina, ita ut et in mare et in arida spurcissimus foetor uideretur tam de minutis auibus quam de maioribus.

It is argued that this is detail of a kind which could not be invented.³³⁷ However, there is support enough for ingenuity and imagination in the expansion of references to natural phenomena in other translations of the period. So, for instance, in the *Old English Bede* a reference to an eclipse in the Latin version, 'Eodem autem anno dominicae incarnationis DCLXIIIo, facta erat eclipsis solis' is expanded to 'þa wæs geworden ymb syx hund wintra 7 feower 7 syxtig æfter Drihtnes menniscnesse eclipsis solis, þæt is sunnan asprungennis, þæt heo sciman ne hæfde 7 wæs eatolice on to seonne', while a reference to the second plague in Orosius, *Historiarum adversus Paganos Libri Septem*, 'post horridos ranarum squalores per omnia munda inmundaque reptantes' appears in the Old English as

þa wæs þæt æfterre þæt froxas comon geond eall Egypta land, swa fela þæt man ne mihte nan weorc wyrcan, ne nanne mete gegyrwan, þæt þa wyrma nære emnfela þæm mete, ær he gegearwod wære.³³⁸

(iii) 'The status of Æthelweard's *Chronicon* is demonstrated by its use of a few early name forms, including *Merscuuari*, s.a. 796 and the place-names in 882 and 885'.³³⁹

Certainly, the spelling *Merscuuari* in Æthelweard's 'Cantiam uastauit Ceolf rex Myrciorum, et prouinciam quæ dicitur Merscuuari', where B has *Merscware*, looks at first sight to be an 'early form'. However, although it seems likely that B(CDE) *Merscware* and not A *Mersc* was the 'correct' reading,³⁴⁰ we cannot rule out the possibility that Æthelweard is quite simply using a Latin inflection for the non-historical OE -e as he does for OE-um in *Baiuueri*, A *Bægerum* (891),³⁴¹ corresponding to Latin *Baiouarii*. And in any case even if the *i* were derived from a copy of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, the fact that all the surviving vernacular manuscripts have the standard West Saxon spelling may merely be due to independent modernisation on their part. As for the inclusion of the place-names Elslou and Louvain in the entries for 882

and 885, I have already argued that Æthelweard's source at this point may well have incorporated a number of details that were not present in the 'first compilation'.

There is no evidence then that requires us to suppose an order

Chronicle version I- - - - - Æthelweard:

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|
|

Chronicle version II- - - - - surviving Chronicle texts.

At the same time, although it can be demonstrated that Æthelweard's Chronicle-source did not belong to the same manuscript tradition as B and C or D and E,³⁴² there is no evidence that requires us to accept Campbell's theory that this source was either A or a descendant of A. Certainly A and Æthelweard occasionally share unusual readings or give details not found in BCD or E. So, for instance, both describe the Æthelbriht killed by Offa in 792 as 'king' (a description missing from BCDE)³⁴³, and both seem to have used an exemplar that omitted the main verb in the first sentence of annal 853 (854 *Chronicon*), with the *Chronicon* reading 'Igitur post triennium Burhred rex subsidium ab Æthelulfō rege ad subiiciendum Aquilonales Brittanos . . . ipseque concessit', and A reading 'Her 'bēd'³⁴⁴ Burgred Miercna cyning ȝ his wiotan Æþelwulf cyning þæt he him gefultumade þæt him Norþwalas gehiersumade'. Certainly, too, A and Æthelweard lack certain pieces of information found in these other texts - as, for instance, the identification of Paris as the Danes' winterquarters in 886, and references to the death of a jarl named Sidroc at Englefield in 871, to the capture of the raven banner in 878 and to the pope's gift to Alfred of *lignum vitae* and the sending of alms abroad in 883. However, in all of these cases agreement between A and Æthelweard might merely be due to the use of a common exemplar which was not also the exemplar of BCDE.³⁴⁵ More significantly, far from demonstrating dependence of Æthelweard on A, as Campbell would have it, both the fact that the *Chronicon* enters the reference to the battle of Sandwich under 844 (for 845, *recte* 851) and its reading 'totamque iuxta Signiam uastant usque ad Mæterne et super uerticem ipsius usque ad Catsig, ibique constituunt ter hiberneos status' in the entry for 887 actually provide significant arguments against it.³⁴⁶ Other places where there are substantial differences between A on the one hand and Æthelweard and BCDE on the other include annal 851, where

BCDE have a reference to Thanet not found in A, and Æthelweard refers to 'insula Tenet, quæ non longe a Brittaniam sita est';³⁴⁷ annal 871, where BCDE have a reference to Reading as the destination of the *sumorlida*, a detail not found in A, and Æthelweard refers to *loco Readingon*; and annal 828, where A reads 'j he hie to eapmodre hersumnesse gedyde' and Æthelweard has the phrase *subiectis omnibus*, corresponding to a version of the Old English such as is found in BCDE, 'j he hie ealle him to eadmodre hysumnesse gedyde'.³⁴⁸ In 796, as we have seen, Æthelweard agrees in substance with BCDE on *Mersware*, beside A *op Mersc*, where A's is probably the less good reading.³⁴⁹ According to this evidence it would seem that Æthelweard's source was not A nor a descendant of A, but that in some respects it was closer to A than BCDE are.³⁵⁰

3. Asser's *Life of King Alfred*.

In the case of the relationship between the Chronicle manuscript used by King Alfred's biographer, Asser, and surviving texts, there has been little or no controversy - at least since the publication of Stevenson's edition of this work.³⁵¹ Asser, according to the consensus, used a version of the Chronicle which reflected both the chronological dislocation and the loss through homoeoteleuton of material in annal 855, but which was independent of the immediate ancestors of any of the surviving Chronicle manuscripts. In Stevenson's words,

It would . . . seem that none of the four families of MSS. was copied from a lost original that agreed exactly with the copy of the Chronicle used by the author, and the genealogy of the MSS. has to be carried beyond the lost original of each of the four groups. The copy used by the author cannot, therefore, have been far removed from the archetype of the Chronicle, for the variations represented in the four groups had clearly not yet arisen.³⁵²

Most commentators have also agreed that Asser's version was closest in type to B and C, though, as Meaney has pointed out, this 'may only have been because BC have fewer idiosyncratic and peculiar readings than A, D or E.' For her the A text was copied to 891 and Asser translated to 887 from æ independently of each other but when æ was in its first state.³⁵³ We may compare Dorothy Whitelock's comment that the text Asser used

sometimes supports the readings of the other manuscripts against 'A', though there are places where his text, and the version used by Æthelweard, and 'A' all agree against the combined evidence of 'B', 'C', 'D', and 'E', to an extent which suggests that these four manuscripts all descend from a common version which contained several new features.³⁵⁴

Hart, too, sees Asser's version as based on the lost A text precursor. He concludes that

whereas (because of their frequent agreement with each other) the versions in Asser and the B text reproduced faithfully the text of their exemplar, the A chronicler modified his source pretty radically when making his copy. But whereas the modifications introduced by the A chronicler mainly take the form of omissions, both Asser and the B chronicler introduced some extraneous matter into their accounts for these years.³⁵⁵

I accept that Asser's vernacular source was the lost exemplar of neither BC nor DE. For instance, the *Life* agrees with ADE against BC in naming the ealdorman of annal 860 as Osric not Wulfheard, and it agrees with ABC against DE in its fuller entries in annals such as 873, where DE lack the information that the Viking army, having moved to Northumbria, had its winter-quarters in Lindsey, and that the Mercians made peace with them. At the same time that it was not a copy of A is shown clearly by readings such as c. 52

Cui ille exercitus electos obsides, quanto [ipse] soles nominavit, sine ulla controversia dedit necnon et sacramentum in omnibus reliquiis, quibus ille rex maxime post Deum confidebat, iuravit,

beside 876A 'ȝ him þa aþas sworon on þam halgan beage, þe hie ær nanre þeode noldon' and B 'ȝ him þa gislas sealdan, þe on þam here weorðoste wæron to þæm cinge ȝ him þa aþas sworan on ðæm halgan beage, þe hie ær noldan nanre þeode'.

Æthelweard also has a reference to hostages here.

The position of Asser *viz à viz* the surviving vernacular manuscripts is perhaps most clearly demonstrated from his version of the battle at Sandwich.

Eodem quoque anno Æthelstan et Ealhere comes magnum paganorum exercitum in Cantia, in loco, qui dicitur Sandwic, occiderunt et ex nauibus eorum novem naves ceperunt; ceteri per fugam elapsi sunt.

Asser's source would seem to have agreed with BCDE in reading *ealdorman* not *dux* (as in the passages in A and Æthelweard quoted above), but with A and Æthelweard in the absence of any reference to fighting on ships, in giving the number of ships as nine not eight and in locating the material at the end of annal 851.³⁵⁶

I cannot, however, agree, with Stevenson, that the presence of the early spellings *Coenred* and *Sceapieg* in Asser is an indication that his Chronicle source was necessarily 'earlier' than the Chronicle source of MS A.³⁵⁷ As for the theory that A and Asser's Chronicle version shared a common immediate source (*æ* or the A precursor), this cannot be considered independently of a simultaneous reassessment of the relationship between ABC and all three Latin texts under discussion.³⁵⁸ However, before any conclusions can be drawn, it is necessary first to look at yet one more piece of evidence concerning the nature of the 'first compilation' of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle - that provided by the Latin annals of St John's College Oxford, MS 17.

III. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ST JOHN'S COLLEGE ANNALS AND THE ANGLO-SAXON CHRONICLE

One of the most significant of Cyril Hart's contributions to the study of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle has been his discovery that the compiler of the brief series of Latin annals on fos 111r and 111v of Oxford, St John's College MS 17 had as his source some of the annals from the section A.D.1 to A.D. 99 of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.³⁵⁹ Fo. 111r, Hart points out, contains that part of Bede, *Chronica majora* which refers to the birth of Christ during the reign of the emperor Octavian. 'At the foot of the same folio, and running on to the foot of f. 111v, a commentator has entered in Latin the text for the years A. D. 1 to 99 of another chronicle, for the most part quite different in content from Bede's *Chronica majora*' and apparently previously unknown to scholars.³⁶⁰ Hart identifies it as a direct translation of the Chronicle annals:

Whoever incorporated the Latin chronicle into the commentary on Bede's *Chronica majora* in the *Ramsey scientific compendium* must... have had at his disposal either a version of the *Anglo-Saxon chronicle* very close to the A, B or C texts for the annals of the first century of the Christian era, or a Latin translation of such a text.³⁶¹

Hart goes on to argue that it was the B text and no other that was 'the ultimate source utilised for our Latin chronicle'.

I would quarrel with Hart on only one point: his identification of the B text as the ultimate source. Hart's arguments are as follows:

1. A can be ruled out straight away as a source for the St John's Annals. 'The text of the Latin chronicle has incorporated within it the year numbers in little groups, when there are no annals for these years. This format in the Latin chronicle is precisely the same as that of the B and C texts, but differs radically from the A text, which lists the year numbers in two columns for this period. Moreover, annal [26] in the Latin text is dated [27] in the A text and this is not due to any late alteration in the latter'.³⁶²

2. C is also less close than B. 'Whereas all the dates given for individual annals in the Latin text are identical with those of the B text, only thirteen out of the twenty-five dates are identical with those of the C text, the remainder being a year earlier or later'.³⁶³

3. In the Latin text the entry for annal 34 'commences with a large capital A in the left-hand margin, a distinction afforded to no other annal. Examination of the manuscripts of the *Anglo-Saxon chronicle* shows the reason for this treatment: in the B text (but not in the A or C texts) the annal heads a fresh folio. There can be little doubt, therefore, that either the Ramsey Latin chronicle in the surviving text of the scientific compendium, or its precursor, included the large capital because the text being translated was the B text'.³⁶⁴

I would not dispute Hart's conclusion that the St John's annals cannot be based on MSS A or C (though A does not in fact erroneously assign the date 27 to the Pontius Pilate annal, but like BCDE originally entered the material *s.a.* annal 26).³⁶⁵ However, his arguments for B as their only possible source do not stand up to close scrutiny. First of all, the St John's annals disagree with B in having (apparently) originally assigned the figure *lxii* to the year of Octavian's reign in which Christ was born. What Hart - I believe rightly - sees as the readings *lxvi* and *l.]i*³⁶⁶ before alteration in annal 1 correspond to *lxvi* and *lxii* before alteration in A but *lxvi* and *lii* before alteration in B.

Secondly, the format in the Latin chronicle is not precisely the same as that of B. First of all, grouping of barren numbers does not begin until after annal-number 7. Barren annal-numbers 4 and 5 each have a separate line assigned to them as in MS A. Secondly in the St John's annals all fruitful annal-numbers are entered to the left of their annal-material, as in A, C, D and E, whereas in B their position depends on whether the scribe was writing on a recto or a verso. So, for instance, barren annal-number 7 in MS B is entered in the right-hand margin immediately after the fruitful annal-number 6.³⁶⁷

Thirdly, there is a simpler explanation for the large capital *A* of *Anno xxxiv* than the presence of annal 34 at the top of a new page in MS B. Unlike the surviving Anglo-Saxon Chronicle texts,³⁶⁸ the St John's annals do not normally use the abbreviation *AN* to introduce their annal-numbers, and the alternative *anno* is extremely rare. Apart from the entry 'Anno xxxiiii Stephanus martyrizatur et Paulus conuertetur', indeed, the only instances we find are 'II Anno magi ueniunt' and the beginning of a series of barren annal-numbers, 'Anno xl. xli. xlii . . .', which is located part way along the fourth line of the entry on fo. 111v. The entry 'II Anno magi ueniunt' corresponds to a somewhat fuller entry in the Chronicle, with the annal-number entered to the left of the entry and at the beginning of a line as in A, whereas in B it immediately follows the end of the preceding annal and is placed on the right hand side of the page on the line above the annal-material to which it refers.³⁶⁹ The word *Anno* may have been used with *xl* in the St John's annals merely because it was the first of a string of numbers, and this argument might also apply to *Anno xxxiiii*. However, in the case of the latter number there is an even more powerful reason for using the identificatory *Anno*; the annal-number follows immediately after a series of numerals which forms part of the text of the preceding annal. A scribe might well have considered that a sequence 'Huc usque transacti anni ab initio mundi. v. & cc. & xxvi. xxxiiii. Stephanus martyrizatur' was liable to cause confusion to his readers. In these circumstances an explanation of the use of a large capital *A* in terms of the layout of other manuscripts is unnecessary and irrelevant.³⁷⁰ However, there is yet another reason why the capital should not prove use of MS B as a source. The large *A*, offset in the margin, parallels the partly offset and even larger *A* of *Anno* in the text of Bede on the same page, and the word in which it occurs is the only instance of *Anno* introducing an annal-number at the beginning of a line in these annals apart from annal 2, where *Anno*, as we have seen, far from introducing the annal-number, follows it in the collocation *II. Anno*. On

these grounds, then, the St John's annals would seem to be derived from a version of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle that was different from that in any of the surviving manuscripts.

A close examination of the text of the St John's annals reveals further details of importance. In particular it shows that where the surviving vernacular texts differ, the version of the St John's annals generally agrees with those that have what is generally accepted as the 'original' reading.³⁷¹ Two entries are of special interest:

1. Lxxxv. Hic iohannes euangelista in pathmos suscepit apocalypsim.

85 is the date also in MSS B and C. A has 84, subsequently altered to 87, D and E both have 87.

2. xcix. Hic iohannes euangelista dormitur.

99 is also the date in MS A, after alteration from an original *AN. xc*. In BCDE the entry is s.a. 100.

Now in Æthelweard's *Chronicon* (although there is no gap in Savile's text), some material immediately before the annal referring to John on Pathmos has obviously been lost and the text now reads as follows:³⁷²

(i) Sexta autem serie post numerum annalem truncantur pro Christo Petrus et Paulus in ministerio ambo constantes, ambo florentes. (ii) In ipsius quippe anni præcurso Iohannes euangelista in insula Pathmos edidit librum Apocalypseos, id est 'Reuelationis', quæ illi data coelitus erat, mysteria aperire mundo diuina. (iii) Expleto equidem annorum numero quindecim pace requieuit ab Effeso urbe stadia sexdecim; et in ipso anno suspenditur Simon apostolus. (iv) Impletusque est annorum numerus a natiuitate saluatoris nostri Iesu Christi bis quinquaginta.

Campbell assigns the dates 69, 84, 99 and 100 to the sections marked (i) to (iv) above, thus bringing Æthelweard's dates in line with those of A after alteration. However, I can see no good reason for treating section (iv) separately from section (iii) and assigning a different date to each. According to my reading, Æthelweard intended both (iii) and (iv) to refer to the year 100.³⁷³

Working backwards, that gives us the date 85 A.D. for the writing of the Apocalypse. 69, 85 and 100 are of course the dates assigned to the corresponding entries in the B and C texts.³⁷⁴ Unfortunately we can only guess the grounds on which the compiler of the world history annals in the Chronicle assigned dates to John's composition of the Apocalypse and his death. According to the *De Viris Illustribus*, the former should be

Domitian XIV,³⁷⁵ although other texts refer to John's writing of the Apocalypse as coinciding with the death of Domitian, i.e. Domitian XVI, A.D. 98.³⁷⁶ As for the latter, *De Viris Illustribus* claims that John was still alive in the time of Trajan, and Trajan's accession would be 100 Chronicle dating.³⁷⁷ MS A seems to be ten years out for this event as for the next - the death of Clemens, 102 BDE but 92 A - a relatively simple error.³⁷⁸

The St John's annals, therefore, appear to be in agreement with the 'original' (and incorrect) Chronicle reading for John on Pathmos, but disagrees in assigning John's 'falling asleep' to 99 A.D., a date which now appears also in MS A, as a result of alteration by the post-Conquest scribe 8.³⁷⁹

CONCLUSIONS

Any attempt to determine the relationship between the surviving vernacular manuscripts of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and the Latin chronicle-material in Asser, Æthelweard, the *Annals of St Neots* and St John's MS 17 must necessarily be based on hypothesis. My interpretation begins with the assumption that the theory of loss through homoeoteleuton from entries for 885 in ABCDE and Asser is untenable. It also assumes that there is no evidence that the vernacular source(s) of the *Annals of St Neots* did not share the chronological dislocation found in the other surviving versions. Starting from these two assumptions, I would suggest that:

1. A (to 891) and Æthelweard's *Chronicon* derive from a common ancestor V. Characteristics of this manuscript include on the one hand the presence of certain readings not found in BCDE or Asser and on the other hand the absence of certain readings found in those texts. Thus, in 792 A and Æthelweard both describe Æthelbriht as king, BCDE do not; in Æthelwulf's genealogy in annal 855 A and Æthelweard agree in naming Cerdic as father of Cynric but BCDE and Asser³⁸⁰ have the descent Cerdic - Creoda - Cynric; in 885 A and Æthelweard refer to Alfred's fleet as sailing to East Anglia, while BCDE and Asser describe it as sailing from Kent to East Anglia; in 886 neither A nor Æthelweard name the place on the Seine where the Vikings made their winter-quarters, but BCDE and Asser state that it was Paris; in 871 neither A nor Æthelweard refers to the death of a jarl at Englefield, while BCDE and Asser do.³⁸¹ Also of possible significance is the absence from A and Æthelweard of any reference to the death of the ealdormen Ealhhere and

Huda (853). However, since Æthelweard is here paraphrasing,³⁸² an agreement of silence between A and Æthelweard may not in this particular instance be significant.

V seems to have been transmitted to Æthelweard via at least one other manuscript (V¹), containing additional material;³⁸³ whether A's distinctive features are its own or also derived from a second intervening copy is uncertain.³⁸⁴

2. B and C (to 977) derive from a common exemplar Y. In the case of B this is via an intermediary Y¹, from which C1, C2¹ and C2³ are also descended. C2² on the other hand is derived from Y, either directly or via another lost manuscript, Y².³⁸⁵

Characteristics of Y include the naming of the ealdorman of Hampshire in annal 861 as *Wulfheard*, ADE, Æthelweard and Asser *Osríc*; omission of the words 'on hæþnum herige' in 851, Asser *ex eis*;³⁸⁶ omission of a reference (found in ADE and probably also the ancestor of Asser) to the Viking ships sailing west in 877; and the use of the numbers sixty (men) and eight (ships) in 878 and 851, where ADE have the numbers forty and nine respectively.³⁸⁷

3. Y was in its turn derived from X, ancestor also of Z, the 'Northern recension', and ultimately of MSS D and E (to 890). Characteristics of this manuscript include a number of items not found in A, Æthelweard or Asser, notably references to fighting on ships (851), the Vikings' raven banner (878), the gift of the *lignum vitae* and the sending of alms abroad (883).³⁸⁸

4. X was in its turn derived from a lost MS W, ancestral source also of Chronicle material to 887 in Asser's *Life of Alfred*. Apart from the positioning of the Sandwich material at the end of annal 851 (853BC), the characteristics of this manuscript are those already described in 1. above, with reference to the distinctiveness of A and Æthelweard: for instance, naming of Creoda as father of Cynric in 885; reference to Alfred's fleet as sailing from Kent in 886; naming of Paris as the location of the Vikings' winter-quarters; and reference to the death of a jarl at Englefield.³⁸⁹

Only one feature appears at first sight not to fit the above: 851A does not name the Vikings' first winter-quarters; Asser refers to Sheppey; Æthelweard agrees with BCDE in giving the location as Thanet. If Keynes and Lapidge are right, and Asser's OE source like A lacked the name of the wintering-place, then we must assume that Æthelweard had access to information not present in the common source the *Chronicon* shared with A. Alternatively, Asser himself may have been responsible

for the adoption of the name Sheppey from annal 855, rewriting the material from both annals.³⁹⁰

5. The St John's annals are not derived from any of the surviving manuscripts. Alterations associated with the 'Northern recension' and the absence of early annal-material from Asser's *Life of Alfred* prevent us from determining their relationship to Z and W with any degree of certainty. However, the date 46 for the annal reporting Claudius's invasion of Britain (so A; BCDE 47) and the figure 62 (? , altered to 52) for the year of Octavian's reign in which Christ was born appear to indicate that they were not copied from X.³⁹¹

6. The lost manuscript from which A, hand 3, derived the 710 annal, accidentally omitted by the first scribe,³⁹² is neither V nor Y. Rather it appears to have been either Z or a now lost copy of Z. It lacks some of the material unique to DE, but in its readings it is closer to those two manuscripts than to B, C or Æthelweard.³⁹³

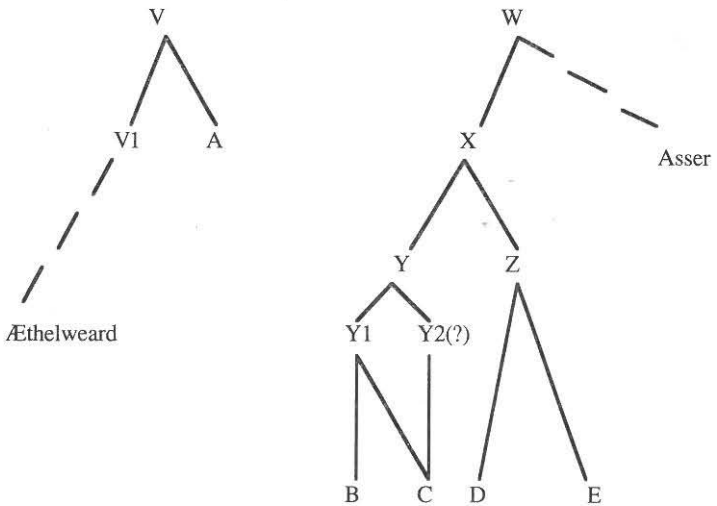
7. The lost manuscript from which A hand 1a's 845 insertion was derived could - on grounds of position - be the lost manuscript used by Æthelweard or a close relative.³⁹⁴

8. The precise relationship of the *Annals of St Neots* (to 891) to the other texts is impossible to define, since the compiler made use of very few passages from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, and in most of these there is no disagreement between the surviving vernacular manuscripts. Agreement with A and Æthelweard against BCDE in respect of annal 883 (with references to the *lignum vitae* and sending of alms abroad in the latter but not the former) is one of silence. Presence of the reference to the raven banner in 878 could, as has been shown, have more than one explanation.³⁹⁵ Finally, some of the spellings in the *Annals of St Neots* are certainly 'early' and it is tempting to conclude that the compiler's main vernacular source to 891 was V or W ; however, this cannot be confirmed. There is one apparently decisive feature - the reference in 787 to the three pirate ships as 'iii naves Normannorum "id est Danorum" ', corresponding to A 787 *iii scipu*, but BCDE *iii scipu Norðmanna*. However, this, as we have seen, is not in fact admissible as evidence.

What then is the relationship between V and W? Major differences in content between the two traditions they represent may be explained as due either to omission (mainly in V) or to expansion (mainly in W). In spite of Plummer's opinion, that from 851 A is 'a rather careless copy of an older original', the latter seems more plausible than the former - in which case W is a later version of the 'first compilation' than V is. However, unless we suppose that the 851 loss through homoeoteleuton

occurred in a now lost manuscript behind both V and W, and that the marginal insertion in that manuscript was faithfully copied as a marginal insertion into V, then the most likely explanation of the different positions of the Sandwich passage is that the marginal insertion originated in V and that as a result V and W were one and the same manuscript (V) which was modified after completion (to 891). A and the Chronicle version used by Æthelweard are derived from V^a, the unmodified version; BCDE and Asser from the interpolated or annotated V^b.

If my hypotheses are correct, the relationship between the vernacular versions of the Anglo-Saxon chronicle to 891 and the texts of Asser and Æthelweard may then be represented as follows,³⁹⁶ with a broken line indicating descent combined with translation.



V and W are either both descended from a now lost MS U or the siglum W represents V after annotation.

NOTES

¹ For the early history of Chronicle-studies see Angelika Lutz, 'Das Studium der Angelsächsischen Chronik im 16. Jahrhundert: Nowell and Joscelyn', *Anglia* 100 (1982), 301-56, and the introductions to individual volumes of *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, A Collaborative Edition*, general editors David Dumville and Simon Keynes (in progress).

² Or a copy of a copy of A. For MS G (London, British Library MS Cotton Otho B.xi) see Angelika Lutz, *Die Version G der Angelsächsischen Chronik. Rekonstruktion und Edition* (Munich, 1981); for MS A (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 173) see *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. A Collaborative Edition*, vol 3: MS A, ed. Janet M. Bately (Cambridge, 1986).

³ For MS F (London, British Library MS Cotton Domitian viii), see *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, according to the Several Original Authorities*, trans. and ed. Benjamin Thorpe (London, 1861). For MS E (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 636) see *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel, with Supplementary Extracts from the Others. A Revised Text on the Basis of an Edition by John Earle*, ed. Charles Plummer (Oxford, 1892-9; rev. imp., by Dorothy Whitelock, 1952).

⁴ For MS B (London, British Library MS Cotton Tiberius A.vi) see *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. A Collaborative Edition*, vol. 4: MS B, ed. Simon Taylor (Cambridge, 1983); for MS C (London, British Library MS Cotton Tiberius B.i) see *The C-Text of the Old English Chronicles*, ed. Harry August Rositzke (Bochum-Langendreer, 1940).

⁵ For MS D see *An Anglo-Saxon Chronicle from British Museum, Cotton MS., Tiberius B. iv*, ed. E. Classen and F.E. Harmer (Manchester, 1926). It should be noted that there is a lacuna in MS D from annal 262 to the middle of 693, caused by the loss of a gathering, and that any statistics based on material from the opening section of D are necessarily therefore distorted.

⁶ For useful discussions of the Chronicle versions and their relationships see *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, ed. Plummer, II. xxxvii-cii, Dorothy Whitelock, *English Historical Documents c. 500-1042* (2nd ed., London, 1979), pp. 109-25, and the editions by Lutz, Taylor and Bately cited above. MS F will not be considered here. Where MSS differ in their annal-numbering, the number given is normally that

of A before revision. Annal-numbers missing from B are silently supplied from Taylor's edition.

⁷ See, e.g., Cyril Hart, 'The B Text of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle', *JMedH* 8 (1982), 241-99, Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge, *Alfred the Great. Asser's Life of King Alfred and Other Contemporary Sources* (Harmondworth, 1983), pp. 277-81 and *MS B*, ed. Taylor, pp. xxxiv-lxii.

⁸ For a detailed and valuable survey of rival theories see Audrey L. Meaney, 'St Neots, Æpelweard, and the Compilation of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*: a Survey', *Studies in Earlier Old English Prose*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach (Albany, N.Y., 1986), 193-243. See also Audrey Meaney, 'D, an Undervalued Manuscript of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle', *Parergon*, New Series 1 (1983), 13-38. Studies published before 1986 but appearing too late for consideration by Meaney include Janet Bately, 'Bede and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle', *Saints, Scholars and Heroes*, ed. M.H. King and W. Stevens (Collegeville, Minnesota, 1979), I, 233-54 (rejecting *inter alia* E.E. Barker's theories as to the development of the Chronicle), Janet Bately, 'The Compilation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle 60 B.C. to A.D. 890: Vocabulary as Evidence', *PBA* 64 (1978), 93-129 and *MS B*, ed. Taylor. See also *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. lxxii-cxxvi, written before the publication of Audrey Meaney's study, and Janet Bately, 'Manuscript Layout and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*, 70 and separately, Manchester Centre for Anglo-Saxon Studies, (1988), 21-43, written after it. For my view of the apparent extent of the 'first compilation' (to 890), see Bately, 'The Compilation' and J.M. Bately, 'The Compilation of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* Once More', *Leeds Studies in English*, N.S., 16 (1985), 7-26. For recent discussions of the relationship between later sections of C, D and E see Sten Korner, *The Battle of Hastings, England and Europe 1035-1066* (Lund, 1964), 1-24, and David Dumville, 'Some Aspects of Annalistic Writing at Canterbury in the Eleventh and Early Twelfth Centuries', *Peritia* 2 (1983), 23-57.

⁹ See *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. xxi-xliii.

¹⁰ On the basis of palaeographical evidence the manuscript has been dated respectively s. x² (by N.R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts containing Anglo-Saxon*, Oxford, 1957, pp. 249-50), and 977 x ca 1000 (by Taylor, *MS B*, p. xxiii). Plummer quotes G. F. Warner of the British Museum as assigning the hand to about the year 1000 (*Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, II xxix). For attempts at more precise dating based on other types of evidence, see further above, p. 4.

¹¹ For the suggestion that the bulk of *MS C* was written in 1045, ending with the annal for that year, but that a number of further entries

were then made, taking the Chronicle to 1066, see Ker, *Catalogue* p. 253, *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. xxxiv and *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, ed. Plummer, II. xxxi: 'Mr Warner saw no reason why the later hands from 1049 to 1066 should not be contemporary or almost contemporary with the events described'. Warner assigns the whole manuscript, including a copy of the Orosius, to 'about the middle of the eleventh century'.

¹² See *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, ed. Plummer, II. lxxxvii-xciv, also *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. xxxiv. Plummer dismisses the B-text as 'a mere pale reflexion of C' (II. lxxxii).

¹³ See *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, ed. Plummer, II. lxxxviii and *MS B*, ed. Taylor, esp. pp. xlii-xlvii.

¹⁴ That Chronicle MSS were sometimes collated is shown clearly by alterations and additions to A; see *MS A*, ed. Bately, esp. pp. xciv-xcv.

¹⁵ *Catalogue*, p. 252. Ker is cautious in the conclusions he draws from these similarities: 'For the annals from 491...to 652 the relationship is so close as to suggest a common exemplar, if not direct copying of B.i from A.vi.' It should be noted that he does not propose direct copying for the section from 947 either, merely observing that 'from about 945 to 977 the relationship is again very close.'

¹⁶ *English Historical Documents*, p. 112.

¹⁷ 'The Compilation', p. 97, n.1. For a refinement of this view, see Bately, 'Manuscript Layout', p. 24.

¹⁸ Peter Orton, *Aspects of the Transmission of Old English Poetry*, doctoral dissertation (Exeter, 1981), pp. 46-181, esp. pp. 143-148. Orton (p. 147) considers it possible that the source of the annals up to 491 in C was *B/C or some text other than B. But he observes that 'it has not been shown that this first section of the C manuscript cannot possibly be copied directly from B; and if this is the case, the evidence for C's direct dependence on B for annals 491-652 can be explained by the change of scribe at 491. Otherwise we would need to account for the coincidence of a change of exemplar with a change of scribe at this point...It would be remarkable if his predecessor in the copying of C were somewhat less accurate - sufficiently so to disguise his sole dependence on B.' See also *ibid.*, p. 147: '*B/C was evidently somewhat older linguistically than its descendant B.'

¹⁹ *MS B*, ed. Taylor, pp. xxx-xxxi and xxxvi and xliii. See also Hart, 'The B Text', p. 271 and *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, ed. Plummer, II. lxxxix, 'It is pretty clear that B is a transcript made with a

view to its becoming the stock of a new Chronicle, and that for some reason or another this stock remained barren'.

²⁰ *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. xxxvii. See also *ibid*, p. xliii, 'It is plausible to assume that C was using B's exemplar from 653 to 946'. Elsewhere Taylor is more tentative: '[The] distribution [of features peculiar to B and C respectively] strongly suggests that the text used by C as an exemplar for this section stood closer to the original *Chronicle* than did B. Whether this exemplar was also B's exemplar, it is impossible to tell' (*MS B*, p. xlii). However, his assumption of copying by C of B's exemplar is supported by Dumville and Keynes, *ibid*, General Editors' Preface, pp. vii-viii: 'If it can now be shown - and we think that Mr Taylor has provided the evidence - that the compiler of C had before him at Abingdon both B and B's exemplar, then the only economical conclusion from this text-history and the Abingdon matter in 977 BC, 981 C and 982 C is that B was itself copied at Abingdon from an exemplar which also probably remained there.' Taylor's introduction seems to have been written before the publication of Bately, 'The Compilation', though appearing some years after it.

²¹ Hart, 'The B Text', *passim*, esp. pp. 243, 246, 253, 260, 286-7. For the term Mercian Register (MR) see, e.g., *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, ed. Plummer, II. lxxii, cxviii and 116-7. For an earlier suggestion of derivation of B from A see Ludwig Theopold, *Kritische Untersuchungen über die Quellen zur angelsächsischen Geschichte des Achten Jahrhunderts* (Lemgo, 1872), quoted in *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, ed. Plummer, II. xci, n. 3.

²² 'The B Text', p. 271. See also *ibid*, p. 292, '[B] was not designed merely as a transcript of the A text brought up-to-date, nor was it intended solely as an exercise in collating the information of the A text with that of its precursor. Significant modifications and additions to his primary sources were introduced by the compiler, and in them a well-defined theme can be observed. It seems that he intended, as far as lay within his power, to place a Mercian gloss on what was essentially a West Saxon chronicle'.

²³ *Ibid*, p. 289.

²⁴ 'If . . . the work of Ker's scribe no. 5 in the A text was all written in 1002 or later, it follows that he was dependent directly or indirectly on the B text for the entry concerning the death of the ætheling Edmund in 971, and for the long poem concerning King Edgar . . . It is theoretically possible that the A text chronicler utilised a lost archetype of the C text for his entries for 971-75, but this appears unlikely, since he made no use

of the long annals from 980 onwards that we find in C. . . (ibid, pp. 260-1; see also ibid, pp. 289 and 242).

25 Hart, 'The B Text', p. 261.

26 Ibid, p. 242. Hart is not alone in this assumption. See, e.g., Ker, *Catalogue*, p. 249, Meaney, 'St Neots', p. 195 (with the date 977 x 979); Taylor, *MS B*, p. xix: 'The Regnal List, on this leaf, breaks off in mid-sentence, leaving open Edward the Martyr's reign-length, which fits exactly with the *Chronicle's* extension only to A.D. 977'. See also D.N. Dumville, 'The West Saxon Genealogical Regnal List: Manuscripts and Texts', *Anglia*, 104 (1986), 9: 'The joint evidence of Chronicle and Genealogical Regnal List suggests that the whole text was written 977/8, but it is formally possible that we have here a slightly later copy of a recension first created 977/8; even if so, the evidence of the script suggests that the book is unlikely to have been written much later than the 980s'.

27 Hart, 'The B Text', p. 242. MS A's sharing of annal-material with B and C also ends with this annal.

28 Cf., e.g., MS G, where the chronicle-version continues to 1001 but the regnal list ends with King Alfred, and (for comparison with other texts, such as the *Historia Brittonum*, where comparable information is not updated in later manuscripts), see also *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. xxiii.

29 I am not convinced that either script or colour of ink supports the theory of contemporary entry.

30 See, e.g., 971 *witenena* and *bisceos*, 975 *welhræc* and *weard*. Meaney ('St Neots'), p. 228, considers the error *welhræc* 'improbable' if the scribe were the composer: 'A's version appears to rely on an earlier exemplar than B's'. See also Orton, *Aspects*, pp. 140 and 160 where it is suggested that in the case of annal 975 A, B and C are all independently derived from a now lost *X (though identification of X with *B/C cannot be ruled out). For an instance of a reading in 975A which is in my opinion preferable to that of B and C see *MS A*, ed. Bately, p. cxxii. For agreements in the use of capitals and paragraphing between A, B and C, see Bately, 'Manuscript Layout', pp. 25-6.

31 'The B Text', p. 261. Hart here distinguishes between the scribe of the B text and the author of what he sees as a single poem: 'it is clear from both the content and the format that the scribe of the B text did intend to assign the events described in the poem to their respective years, for lines 1, 20, 21, and 36 of the poem each commence with a capital in the margin, as was customarily used by the scribe at the commencement of a fresh annal'.

- 32 MS C also has *ɔ̄pa*, in the middle of a line of annal material.
- 33 See further *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. xlvi-lxii. The terms 'fruitful' and 'barren' are used of numbers with and without accompanying annal-material respectively.
- 34 *Ibid.*, pp. xlviiii, lxi-lxii and 77.
- 35 See, e.g., *English Historical Documents*, ed. Whitelock, pp. 227-8, annals 973 and 975. Hart assigns the date 973 to MS B's verse entry on Edgar's coronation; cf., however, Taylor's text, p. 55, where *An. dccccclxxiii* is interpreted as a barren annal-number and the poem given the date 974 (as in MS C), and see also Bately, 'Manuscript Layout', pp. 28-9 and n. 48. The number 973 is in the writing space to the right of the last word of an annal which Taylor gives the date of 972. See further above, pp. 19-20.
- 36 Hart, 'The B Text', p. 244, with which compare Meaney, 'St Neots', p. 228. I do not agree with Hart that in 798 B's *Merscwara* (*recte* B 795 *Merscware*) is a replacement for A *Mersc*. See *MS A*, ed. Bately, p. lxxvi and cf. Meaney, 'St Neots', p. 241, n. 90. (Pace Professor Meaney, MS B in fact reads *Mersc-* not *Merc-*, though she is right and I was wrong (*MS A*, p. lxxvi) in citing *Merc-* in MS C). Three pieces of knowledge cited by Hart (that *Æsc* was son of Hengest, 457; that Beornwulf was a Mercian, 825; that Cynegils was a king, 635), are, as Hart implies, found elsewhere in the Chronicle in MS A as well as in MS B.
- 37 'The B Text', p. 245; cf. Meaney, 'St Neots', p. 241, no. 91.
- 38 For the variant readings *gefeht/feht* and *gefuhton/fuhton* elsewhere in the Chronicle texts, see Bately, 'The Compilation', p. 122 and n.2.
- 39 'The B Text', p. 245. Hart (*ibid.*, p. 267) distinguishes between 'an archaic capital' *I* found at 5r20 and *i* as 'an ascender, particularly before *n* (17v23) and in proper names (10r 7, 19)'. The 'archaic capital' is not, however, confined to 5r20 *Ida*, being found in the same name at 9r18. Taylor (*MS B*, p. xxvi) cites also *Iceling* 7r12 and *Id* 17r10, which he prints with initial *J*.
- 40 Hart, 'The B Text', p. 245. See further above, pp. 10-11.
- 41 For this claim see Hart, 'The B Text', p. 244, also *ibid.*, p. 243. For detailed discussions of format see *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. xlvi-xlix and Bately, 'Manuscript Layout', especially pp. 31-2. See also Meaney, 'St Neots', p. 227, where it is argued that the presence of 'world history' annals in *Æpelweard's Chronicle* proves that the scribe of A cannot himself be copying from two separate exemplars on fo 4v.

- 42 Hart, 'The B Text', p. 269.
- 43 Bately, 'Manuscript Layout', pp. 29 and 31-2. See further above, pp. 13-15.
- 44 For scribal errors in this part of MS A, see *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. xcvi-xcvii and c-ci. See also Orton, *Aspects*, p. 105. For errors in B see *MS B*, ed. Taylor, pp. xxviii-xxxi and l-liii. An analysis of features peculiar to A suggests that A stands apart not only from B but also from C, D and E: see *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. ci-cxxvi. In the majority of the cases cited by Hart, A is alone in its incorrect reading. In 796 however, A *Ceolwulf* has the support of Æthelweard, D and E, with BC *Cynulf* apparently a late spelling. See *MS A*, ed. Bately, p. lxxvi.
- 45 See Hart, 'The B Text', p. 246.
- 46 *Ibid*, pp. 244-5. One reading in which A and B agree against CD is in annal 893 where AB describe the English attacks on the Vikings as taking place 'mæstra daga ælce, oþþe on niht', but CD read 'mæstra daga ælce, oþþe on dæg, oððe on niht'. In view of the use of somewhat similar constructions elsewhere (cf., e.g., Prognostics, ed. Max Förster, 'Beiträge zur Mittelalterlichen Volkskunde VII', *Archiv* 128, 297-300, I. 3, 2 'Gif mon biþ acenned on mannandæg oððe on niht'), it is not safe to conclude that the difference is due to accidental loss from AB.
- 47 *Ibid*, p. 260, referring to the section 934-58.
- 48 *Ibid*, p. 260.
- 49 *Ibid*, pp. 255 and 290. However, the layout of MS A for annals 924-955 appears rather to suggest that scribe 3 of that manuscript was drawing his material from several different sources and that 'omitted' annals were not in the exemplar shared by A, B and C. See *MS A*, ed. Bately, p. xlix, and see further below, n. 161.
- 50 Hart, 'The B Text', pp. 269-70. Hart suggests, for instance, that the entering of the line of barren annal-numbers 842 and 844 was 'in order to record the resumed synchronisation of chronology between the A text and its precursor' (*ibid*, p. 269).
- 51 Unfortunately, damaged edges and shrinking caused by the Cotton fire make exact calculation impossible. My impression is that the B scribe has not left sufficient space for all the numbers.
- 52 There is in fact a definite system underlying the B scribe's 'capriciousness'. If we exclude MR 920-MR 923, where annal-material for 921 has been lost, all strings of four or more barren numbers are entered up to 946, apart from the sequences 695-702 and 857 to 860, and

there is also one string of three numbers (842, 843 and 844). After 915 we find one pair (the extra long 938 and 939) and a singleton (941). No fruitful annal numbers are written in this section except for two entered on the same line in the MR material, for which see nn. 69 and 117. The only other possible exception - the entry *AN. dcccclxxii* (for 772) seems to me not only 'smudged, as if an attempt had been made to erase it while the ink was still wet' (*MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. 27), but also of different aspect from the rest of the material on this page and probably in another hand. What is more, it is entered in the text space and on the right-hand side of a verso and according to the scribe's usual practice should not therefore relate to the material that precedes it. The scribe or (more probably?) a predecessor could have calculated that singletons, pairs and most groups of three could be accommodated in margins, or they may have been so entered in an earlier manuscript along with fruitful annal-numbers.

53 See Hart, 'MS B', p. 287.

54 For a discussion of some of the more major differences between A and C see *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. lxxv-lxxviii and lxxxix-xciii.

55 See *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, ed. Plummer, II. lxxxvii-lxxxviii.

56 I do not include here Taylor's statistical evidence based on numbers of agreements per page (*MS B*, pp. xxxvii-xliii and xlvi-1), for which see the review by E.G. Stanley, in *RES* 36 (1985), 546-9.

57 See Ker, *Catalogue*, p. 253. Scribe C1 was also responsible for the copy of the *Menologium* in this manuscript. Ker's allegations of 'a particularly close connexion' from 491-652 (above, p. 2 and n.15) are usually taken to imply that scribe C2 copied his exemplar far more faithfully than did scribe C1; see, e.g., Orton, *Aspects*, p. 147. However, cf. *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. xxxviii, where it is pointed out that the text itself from 491 to 652 does not display any closer affinity with B than it does before 491.

58 Ker, *Catalogue*, pp. xxx and 252, *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. xli.

59 See Ker, *Catalogue*, p. 252. Ker cites four instances of the archaic enlarged form of c; cf. *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. xli, where the number given is seven. However, Taylor's form *Cynegilsing* (628) does not in fact exist.

60 So already *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, ed. Plummer, II. lxxxviii.

61 *MS B*, ed. Taylor, pp. xli and xxxviii.

- 62 Ker, *Catalogue*, p. 252, *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. xxxvi, n.20.
- 63 *Ibid*, p. xl.
- 64 *Ibid*, p. xxxviii.
- 65 *Ibid*, p. xl.
- 66 *Ibid*, pp. xxxviii-xxxix and xli-xlii. I do not propose to discuss here the many close textual agreements which link B and C against A, D and E.
- 67 *Ibid*, p. xxviii.
- 68 *Ibid*, pp. xxxviii and xl. Cf. Orton, *Aspects*, p. 147, 'The annals from the beginning to 491 in [MSS. B and C], though similar, are not, apparently, so close as to suggest C's direct and sole dependence on B; Ker would doubtless have mentioned evidence for this if it existed. And so it is possible that the source for the annals up to 491 was *B/C or some text other than B. However, it has not been shown that this first section of the C manuscript cannot possibly be copied directly from B; and if this is the case, the evidence for C's direct dependence on B for annals 491-652 can be explained by the change of scribe at 491. Otherwise we would need to account for the coincidence of a change of exemplar with a change of scribe at this point.'
- 69 *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. xlvi. The statement that regular dates start again with annal-number 947 is misleading. What we have is a slightly modified form of the scribe's previous practice of entering strings of barren annal-numbers but very little else. However, it is true that from this point the nature and distribution of the material used resulted in fewer annal-numbers being omitted. So, if we adopt the allocation of numbers made in Taylor's edition, we find twenty-one barren annal-numbers out of twenty-three recorded, all but one of these in strings, and four fruitful numbers out of eight. We may compare the interpolated group of MR annals with nine barren and two fruitful numbers entered. See further above, p. 7 and n. 52 and below, n. 117.
- 70 *MS B*, ed. Taylor, pp. xlvi-xlviii. Meaney ('D', pp. 15-16), taking the words *þæt he wæs*, inserted above the line in the B text, annal 971, to be written in another hand, sees C's inclusion of these words as a further argument for dependence of C on B. Cf., however, *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. 54, where the words are assumed (probably rightly) to be in the hand of the main scribe.
- 71 *MS B*, ed. Taylor, pp. xlviii-xlix. In his discussion of the layout of annal 974B, Taylor refers to what he sees as an error in *MS B*, viz. *on* for 'and': see also Orton, *Aspects*, p. 139, Meaney, 'St Neots', p. 241, n. 92

and eadem, 'D', p. 15. However, *on* is a not uncommon variant of *ond* in Old English manuscripts: see *The Old English Orosius*, ed. Janet Bately, EETS s.s. 6 (1980), p. xlix and *MS A*, ed. Bately, p. clx.

72 *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. xl. Taylor lists these features as follows: 'B's *y* is more likely to appear as *i*; *ie* is more likely to appear as *i*; *i* is more likely to appear as *y* in both full-and low-stress position; and inorganic *h*.'

73 For arguments based on the absence of many annal-numbers see above, p. 3 and note 69. For other arguments, based on the presence of erasures in B, see *MS B*, ed. Taylor, pp. 1-li. Of the twenty 'noticeable erasures in the text', Taylor believes that seven would appear to be due to this lack of completion or basic revision: 'It is a fair assumption that at these points the scribe decided to leave the insertion of the correct version until he had finished copying his exemplar. Whether or not scribe and manuscript were separated before he was able to carry this out we are unlikely ever to know'.

74 *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. xlii. See also *ibid*, p. xliii, where Taylor pursues the implications of Whitelock's suggestion (accepted by Orton, *Aspects*, p. 145) that B's exemplar did not supply annal-numbers from 653 to 946, a suggestion which he sees 'no particular reason to endorse'. If it were indeed correct, he says, we would have to assume for C an exemplar at two or more removes from B. Hart's promised views on the precise relationship between B and C have not yet been published. However, he appears to be suggesting that the compiler of the C text collated B and A when writing this section.

75 Taylor (*MS B*, pp. xxxvii and xlvi) implies that it was because of the 'resumption' of annal-numbers in B at this point and that scribe C2 had deliberately been making only temporary use of an alternative to B. However, a high proportion of fruitful annal-numbers are still being omitted (see above, p. 9 and n. 69), while there is no evidence that scribes necessarily gave preference to the more recent of two manuscripts in selecting an exemplar, or that the scribe of C might be expected to have been awaiting an opportunity to return to the B-text. A more plausible explanation for a return to B (if this could be shown to have happened) would be that both C's exemplar and a major extension to the Chronicle came to an end at 946 (see below, n. 161) and so the scribe had to turn to B for the annals 956 to 977.

76 See Bately, 'The Compilation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle Once More', pp.7-26. For bias in the first continuation which appears to suggest composition in Alfred's lifetime see Ruth Waterhouse, 'The Hæsten Episode in 894 *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*', SN 46 (1974), 136-41,

and Thomas A. Shippey, 'A Missing Army: Some Doubts about the Alfredian Chronicle', *In Geardagum* 4 (1982), 41-55. For the theory that the A text precursor may have ended at 914, see Hart, 'The B Text', p. 270.

77 Edward died in 924. Plummer (*Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, II.xxvii, n. 2) quotes G.F. Warner as dating the hands of MS A to annal 920 as 900x930 and c. 930: cf. D. Dumville, *Wessex and England* (forthcoming), ch. 3, where the first three hands are dated between ca. 915 and ca. 930. I follow Ker and T.J. Brown in assigning hand 1 to the end of the ninth or beginning of the tenth century and (on the assumption that we have to do with three main scribes working together, rather than one scribe writing on three separate occasions) hands 2a, 2b and 2c to the period ca. 920 x ca. 930. See *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. xxv and xxx-xxxiv. For 915-920A as a discrete unit, see Bately, 'The Compilation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle Once More', p. 15.

78 For early West Saxon features in MS A to 920, see *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. cxxxii-cxlii.

79 The version in MS A was probably copied in the mid-tenth century. See *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. lviii-lix and xxxiv-xxxvi, and see further nn.161 and 164.

80 The language of the prose entries is again West Saxon. For non-West Saxon linguistic features in the verse see *The Battle of Brunanburh*, ed. A. Campbell (London, 1938), esp. pp. 11-13 and Orton, *Aspects*, pp. 54-162, esp. pp. 115-7, 130, 149 and 162.

81 For the language of B and C see *MS B*, ed. Taylor, pp. lxiii-lxxxix; for the language of A, hands 3, 4 and 5, see *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. cxlii-cxlv. D and E have a mixture of standard late West Saxon forms and of other spellings typical of the transitional period that preceded Middle English proper.

82 See, for instance, the use of *o* + nasal (*MS A*, ed. Bately, p. cxlii), *a* + *l* + consonant (*ibid.*, p. cxlii), *e* for long and short *ie* (*ibid.*, p. cxliv), *ea* for *a* (*ibid.*, p. cxliv) and *e* for long and short *æ* (*ibid.*, p. cxliv). I do not wish to pursue here the interesting suggestion (Hart, 'The B Text', pp. 262-5) that the verses of annals 973 and 975 (which he takes to be a single poem and assigns to 973 only) are the work of Byrhtferth of Ramsey.

83 *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. xli.

84 See 547 *Ida* (second occurrence) and *Freopulfing*, 552 *Gewising* and *Wiging* (both of these with *i*-longa in the suffix), and 626 *Iceling* (with initial *i*-longa only).

- 85 MR 912 *Inuentione* (no equivalent in A), 30, 85, 99 *Iohannes*. See also 977 *Iulius*, where *i*-longa is found in A, B and C, and 855 *id*.
- 86 Taylor refers to 'about twenty occurrences' of *i*-longa in B (*MS B*, p. xxvi). I have noted twenty-four in the section to 891 and two subsequently. Taylor includes amongst these forms an '*i*-longa which extends below the line and curves off to the left' (see 5r20, 9r18, 7r12, 17r10). It should be noted that the same letter-form is used in annal-numbers in this manuscript: see, e.g., the use of *ij* on fos 3v19-20 and 5r16 and see Hart, 'MS B', p. 267.
- 87 See annals 381 *in*, 670 *Iding*, 685 *Ida*, 688 *Ine*, 694 *Ine*, 715 *Ine*, 718 *Ingild*, 718 *Ines*, 721 *Ine*, 856 (855A) *Ingild*, *Ines*, *Bældæging*, *Itermon*, *Iaered*, 869 (868A) *innan* (2x), 877 (876A) *into*, 893 (892A) *inne*, 975 *Iulius*. I do not include here slightly enlarged *i*-forms in B corresponding to *i*-longa in A.
- 88 In annal 547, for instance, where A has an erasure corresponding to the second instance of *Ida* with special *i*-form in B, the first (non-erased) occurrence of the word has *i*-longa in A, but not in B or C. I do not include here the *i* in ligature with *t* which is a feature of hands 2b and 2c: see, e.g., 905 *Yttingaforda* and 912 *Martines*.
- 89 For the alternation *in/on* see Bately, 'The Compilation', p. 126 and *MS A*, pp. cxiv and cxvii-cxviii.
- 90 In the *-ing* suffix of 688 *Ceaulininges* (B *Ceawlinginges*); cf. C *Ceaulinges*, also with ordinary *i*. There are two further instances of *i*-longa in B where A has an erasure, viz. 100 *in* and 547 *Inguing* with initial *i*-longa in B and ordinary *i* in C.
- 91 In the words *in*, *inne*, *innan*, *into* and in the proper names *Ine*, *Ingild*, *Ingilding*, *Inwær*. Cf. annal 710, an insertion in hand 3, where *Ine* is written with 'ordinary' *i*. The last instance of initial *i* + *n* in hand 2c occurs in annal 914. There is a further instance with *i*-longa in hand 3, in annal 933, *in*, alongside a word with ordinary *i* (*inwidda*, 937). After 933 no further instances of initial *i* + *n* appear in pre-conquest hands.
- 92 It is never found in those patronymics that are not part of a genealogical list.
- 93 *Cuþaing* 597, 685 and 731 (B *Cuþing*); *Osweoing* 685; *Alweoing* 716, *Sceldwaing* 855, *Hraþraing* 855. The only instances of words in vowel + *ing* where ordinary *i* is used are *Cuþaing* and *Tætwaing* 855. Cf. forms like 855 *Freawining*, where the final *e* of *Freawine* is not retained and the *i*-longa not used.

- 94 Cf., however, 685 *Coenbryhting* with *T* followed by ordinary *i*.
- 95 Other manuscripts with initial *i*-longa (mainly before *n*) include the late ninth century Hatton and Cotton MSS of the *Pastoral Care* and the early tenth century Lauderdale MS of the *Old English Orosius*. In the 'genealogical regnal list' which precedes the copy of the Chronicle in MS A, *i*-longa is found in initial position only, in *Ine* (2x), *Ingild* and *Ingilding* (each 1x).
- 96 See, e.g., 71 *Iudea*, 110 *Ignatus*, 918 *Ioþwel*, 716 *Bearddan igge*, 832 *Sceap ige*, 893 *ic*. After annal 920, *i*-longa is very rare in A in any position, partly through lack of opportunity, though there are sporadic instances, particularly in personal names and in post-conquest hands (cf., e.g., 975 *Iulius* and the insertion by hand 8 in 99, *Iohannes*).
- 97 Hart, 'The B Text', p. 267.
- 98 626 *Cinges* (A *Cyninges*); 626 *Cynewald* (passage erased A).
- 99 In 552 (2nd occurrence) and 597. Enlarged *c* occurs in this word in B but not C in 495.
- 100 See, e.g., 661 *cyning*, 676 *Cynegils*, 728 *Cynebald*, all with enlarged *c* in A but the ordinary letter form in B and C. Instances of enlarged *c* before letters other than *y* in MS A include 754 *Cantwara*, 755 *Cumbran*, 787 *cuomon*, 805 *Cantwarum*, *Ceolburg*, 840 *Carrum*; 878 *Cippanhamme*, 883 *Cundop*. MS A also has occasional instances of enlarged *c* in non-initial position: see 780 *Franca* (divided *Fran can*), 878 *wicum*. Enlarged *c* is a feature of the Lauderdale MS of *Orosius*, and is also occasionally found in the Hatton MS of the *Pastoral Care*.
- 101 MS B, ed. Taylor, p. xli, also pp. xliii and xlvi. For instances in MS C after 946 see below, p. 189. For the distribution of *c*- and *k*-spellings in the word 'king', see Orton, *Aspects*, p. 69.
- 102 In annal 616 (B *king*), 639 (B *king*) 597 (B *Kynricing*).
- 103 See above, p. 18-19.
- 104 I exclude from consideration instances of *k* in *kalendas*.
- 105 B *kyning* 449 and 455; *kinig* 601; *king* 577, 588, 616, 627, 635, 639, 640, 641, 644, 651, 654, 670, 673, 704, 708/9, 716/7, 718, 740, 755 (3x), 760, 794, 805, 823, 853, 872 (2x), 879, 888; *kyng* 685, *kynn* 755, 783/4, *kinecynn* 547, *kynerice* 872. Inflected forms are included under their headword.
- 106 *Dorkeceastre* 635, 636; *Kent* 568 and 687; *Kentland* 456; *Kymenesora* 477; *Kynemæresforda* 800; *Turkesege* 874; *Kantwara* 673;

Earkenbriht 664; *Karl* 812, 886 (4x); *Kenbriht* 661; *Kenred(ing)* 688, 704, 708/9, 856; *Kentwine* 676; *Kenwealh* 641, 642, 644, 645, 652, 658, 660, 661, 672; *Kymen* 477; *Kynegils* 611; *Kyneheard* 754, 755; *Kynewulf* 755; *Kynricing* 597, 688.

107 B's reading here is an inflected form of *sacu*, ACD's *sæcce* an inflected form of *sæcc*. The latter appears to be the original reading: see *The Battle of Brunanburh*, ed. A. Campbell (London, 1938), pp. 11 and 24-5 and Orton, *Aspects*, p. 72.

108 915, 942, 971 and 977.

109 See, e.g., hand 7 *akænned* 924. After annal 1000 *k* occurs in *Kola* (1001) and *king* (1017, 1040, 1042, 1043, 1066); annal 1070 has *k*-spellings in *ærendrakan*, *Kadum* and *Kant*.

110 See *kyning* 755, 785, 878, 887, *Dorkeceastre* 635 and *Karl* 885, 887. An erased passage in 845, written by scribe 1a, has the form *Kent*.

111 *Kining* 603 (new material); *cynekyn* 547 (also preface *kynecinn*); *Kynegils(ing)* 611, 614, 628, 635, 641; *Kynric* 519, 527, 552, 556; *Kenred* 702, 704; *Karl* 812, 855; *Kentland* 456. See also *kasere* Preface (2x) and 380.

112 D *kyning* 47, *Karl* 47, 885 (6x), 887. See also *kasere* preface (2x), *Kenulf* 905, *Oskytel* 905 (but cf. 915 *þurcytel*).

113 *K* is also frequently found in the 'Peterborough' interpolations in E: see, e.g., annal 963 *makode*, *kyng*.

114 *K*-spellings are a feature also of the Hatton MS of the *Pastoral Care*. It should be noted, however, that in the Chronicle texts the distribution patterns of forms with *k* and with enlarged *c* vary from manuscript to manuscript, and that *k*-spellings in one manuscript occasionally correspond to spellings with an enlarged *c* in another. See, e.g., 800 *Kynemæres B*, *Cynemæres A*.

115 For another possible indication of separate descent see the very different distribution patterns of *þ* and *ð* in B and C.

116 There is certainly a high measure of agreement between B and C in the use of 'accents'. However, C has instances not found in B and *vice versa*. Those patterns that I have been able to identify need not indicate more than a shared archetype or a common practice. As for the 'faulty word division' *finngod ulfing* for *finn godulfing* in 547 C (erasure in A), cited by Ker and Taylor, this would certainly be explicable if *god* came at a line-end in the exemplar as it actually does in B. However, two manuscripts of a work can, and not infrequently do, have line-endings

that correspond, even where there is no question of one being a copy of the other, as a comparison of MSS L and C of the *Old English Orosius* shows. Interestingly, A has a similar line-division in annal 855: see fo 13r 26-7 *fin god/wulfing*. For another possible explanation see the review of MS B by Donald Scragg, *Anglia* 104 (1986), p. 473: 'in a lengthy genealogy such as 547 contains, it is hardly surprising that word-division in abstruse . . . names should falter'.

117 'Correction' by scribe C1 cannot of course be ruled out; however, there are other annals without *Her* in C and these are not so corrected: see, e.g., 2 and 12. Although B and C both enter these two annals on a single line, comparable arrangements are found in C but not B for annals 34 and 35, and in B but not C for MR 904 and MR 905. I am not convinced that annal-number MR 904 in B is original.

118 Taylor (*MS B*, p. xxviii) cites ABE 3, but C 4; ABE 6, but C 7; ABE 16, but C 15; ABE 26, but C 25 ('in B the annal-number 26 was originally written .xxv., with the *i* written by the original scribe over the dot which separates this annal-number from the next'); ABE 30, but C 29; ABE 110, but C 109.

119 See Bately, 'Manuscript Layout', pp. 28-9. The manner in which annal-numbers are entered on the first page might suggest that it was the text that was written first here and the annal-numbers that were added second. Compare MS A, where whole sequences of annal-numbers appear on occasion to have been entered before the corresponding pieces of text and have had subsequently to be erased or altered. For other instances of ineptness in B see, e.g., fruitful annal-number 69, following three barren numbers and shifted into the annal space, and 381, entered on the line above the annal to which it refers and straddling text space and margin as though it were part of the long string of barren numbers that precedes it.

120 *MS B*, p. xxviii.

121 In MS B, annal-number 29 is the last of a sequence of barren numbers on the line above the entry for A.D. 30, with *AN. xxx* in the right-hand margin of the line containing the annal-material; 101 is in the right-hand margin alongside the second line of the entry for 100.

122 *MS B*, p. xxviii.

123 After the first page I have not noted any pairs of fruitful and barren annal-numbers on rectos, though on fo 2r a single line entry is twice followed by a string of numbers, the first of which is the fruitful one.

124 See Bately, 'Manuscript Layout', p. 27.

- 125 Of course foliation may not have been the same there.
- 126 Cf. Taylor's comment (*MS B*, p. 2), that the scribe no doubt 'erroneously thought himself, for a moment, to be writing on a recto-page'. However, annal 39 is not at the top of a page, but follows two entries with annal-numbers correctly placed in the left-hand margin. Moreover, it is entered not in the margin but in the text space, and is followed by annal-numbers 40, 41 and 42. *MS C* has a single number, *xxix*, entered in the left-hand margin, and leaves the rest of the line free of annal-numbers.
- 127 The missing sequence 168-173 should have immediately followed the annal-material for 167, so either it must have been entered in the margins of the exemplar or the exemplar did not give barren sequences. I exclude here differences in dating between A, B and C.
- 128 Repetition of number 384 in C occurs at the beginning of the line, that is, in the same position as the single number in B. One might have supposed that a scribe would have been unlikely to duplicate the first number in a line in his exemplar.
- 129 See Bately, 'Manuscript Layout', p. 27. Fruitful annal-numbers are normally in red in this manuscript.
- 130 A similar layout is found occasionally after 977: see Bately, 'Manuscript Layout', pp. 27-8. for the special nature of the first three entries see *ibid.*, p. 33.
- 131 Yet another explanation might be that a pair of annal-numbers in the right-hand margin had been transferred bodily to the left-hand margin in C's ancestor. It should be noted that in the case of five of the discrepancies listed by Taylor (above, p. 8 and n.121) B has the number corresponding to that given by C on the line above on the right, and in three other cases, in the text space.
- 132 Figures from *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. lxxvi.
- 133 In annals 430, 449, 461 and 534.
- 134 Beside *hyra* 2x in new material in E: see annals 560 and 605.
- 135 The Toronto microfiche concordance (*A Microfiche Concordance to Old English*, ed. A di Paolo Healey and R.L. Venezky, Toronto, 1980) records no more than about 77 instances of *hyra* and four instances of *hira* in Ælfric.
- 136 I include here the variant *maneg-*. Hand 1 of A, in contrast, has exclusively *o*-spellings (see *MS A*, ed. Bately, p. cxxxiii). D is defective at this point.

- 137 See *MS A*, ed. Bately, p. cxl, and *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. xl. Alternation of *hie* and *hi* is, however, already found in the late ninth century manuscripts of the *Pastoral Care*. Late West Saxon *hy* is found four times in C1 where B has *hie* (60 B.C., 418 each lx, and 449 2x, beside *Menologium hi* 2x); see further *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. lxxxv, n.118 (where the instance of *hie* in annal 2C has been overlooked).
- 138 See further above, pp. 23-24.
- 139 *MS B*, ed. Taylor, pp. xl and lxxvi and n.74. After 1048 *heom* is a common spelling in C, preferred to *him*.
- 140 *Ibid*, p. lxx: 'In the preterite and past participle of weak verbs of Class II the predominant vowel is the usual West Saxon *o*. The distribution of the few *a*-spellings is very uneven: up to and including 652 30% of the preterites and past participles in question have the *a*-spelling. This applies to C as well; it shares all the *a*-spellings with B.' Taylor also draws attention to 596 *godspelledan* BC, beside *rixedan* 409, B only.
- 141 In the section to 490, BC *gefulwad*, in annal 30, corresponds to *gefullad* D, beside A *gefulluhtud*, E *gefullod*; 62 *prowade* to E *prowade*, A *prowode*. In the section 491-652 B and C have *-ad* 6x (all between 632 and 645). Five of these instances are found also in *MS A*, the sixth instance (in annal 634) corresponds to *-ad* in E but *-ud* in A. A has four further instances of *-ad* unique to itself, three of them in the word *gefulwad*. In connection with the representation of past participles, it should be noted that in annal 449 C agrees with A in reading *genemned*, where B and E have *nemned*, while in annal 477 (first occurrence) A and B have *nemned* and CE *genemned* beside (second occurrence) AC *genemned*, BE *nemned*.
- 142 *MS B*, ed. Taylor, pp. xl and lxxi, n.41.
- 143 In annals 85, 455 (2x) and 508, beside *pam* 11x; other MSS *a* only.
- 144 Taylor also lists *cing* among the 'significant linguistic features typical of B throughout, and found in C2 only before 652' (*MS B*, p.xl). However, it is in fact of frequent occurrence in C2 from 740 onwards: see *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. lxxx. A number of the details given by Taylor on this page are inaccurate. For 602, 676 read 601, 876 and add 888 and 872, and in n. 91 (twice) for 602 read 601.
- 145 D 'Claudius Romana kyning', C 'Claudius oþer Romana kyninga'.

- 146 *MS B*, p. lxxix and n. 88. I am unable to ascertain the grounds for Taylor's claim that *-on* spellings are roughly evenly distributed in B; I would describe them as occurring sporadically and usually in clusters.
- 147 With *-un* 7x and *-an* 1x, all but two of these corresponding to *-an* in B. For A's *-un* spellings (found in hands 1, 2a and 3) see further *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. cli-cliv and cliv-clv. For *-an*, which is infrequent in A before annal 924 and the section written by hand 3, see *ibid.*, pp. cli, cliv and clvi. A reference to hand 1 *geþingodan* (694) has been accidentally omitted from p. cli.
- 148 *MS B*, p. lxxix, n. 88.
- 149 449 and 604 *onfengon*, 449 and 456 *fuhton*, 461 and 614 *gefuhton*.
- 150 7 *wæran* (AB 6), 449 *gesohtan*, 455 *gefuhtan* and 519 *onfengan*. *MS E* has only two instances of *an* before 653, namely 2 *coman*, 409 *ricsodan*. See further below, n. 169.
- 151 456 *flugon*, 473 *gefuhton* and 519 *gefuhton*.
- 152 For the significance of these and other features in this section in the context of forms in the section 653-946 see above, p. 20.f (section C). For *ȝ heold* 641C, *ȝ þæt heold* B see Scragg's review of *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. 474.
- 153 *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. xlvi.
- 154 'D', p. 15; Orton, *Aspects*, p. 145. See also Scragg's review of *MS B*, p. 474. As an instance of a 'better reading' in A and C than in B I would cite 975 *þæs ðe gewritu secgað* (B *þæs gewritu secgað*); see also Orton, *Aspects*, p. 138.
- 155 I do not agree that A could be a copy of B at this point. For a detailed study see Orton (*Aspects*, p. 140).
- 156 See above, pp. 12-13. For a *k*-spelling in the (originally Norse) suffix *-kytel* see also D 905 *Oskytel*. Only 974 *kinge* occurs in a passage in BC shared also with A, which here reads *cyninge*.
- 157 7x between 871 (872C) and 911, beside B *feala*.
- 158 The distribution is *feala* 1009, 1010, 1014, 1052, *fela* 1016, 1039, 1041, 1049, 1049.
- 159 See *MS B*, ed. Taylor, pp. lxxv, n. 64 and xxxviii, where *y*-spellings in C1 are attributed to the scribe's own preferences.
- 160 See *ibid.*, p. lxxxviii. Taylor reports that C has doubling directly before *l* in this word only in C2³ (in 974, 976, 977), but notes the form

myccelum in 1043. See, however, *mycclum* 1054. *cc*-spellings are also a feature of post-977 entries in D and E.

161 The preceding section 934-946 forms a more or less discrete unit, which was in existence by the 950s at the latest (see *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. xxxiv-xxxv and lix), though it was probably drawn from more than one source and in some manuscripts was subsequently added to. After 946 B and C go their own way, though A shares the two poems of annals 973 and 975, and D has some material in common with C.

162 The distribution of forms is *minster* 565; *menster* 654, 669, 673, 755, 872, *mynster* (*mynstre*) 977, 978, 981, 982 (2x), 985, 997 and 1046. For another form, more typical of C22 than of those parts allegedly copied directly from B, namely 959 *Wessexum* C, beside *Westseaxum* B, see above, p. 24. For occasional agreement between B and C in the use of *p/ð* in annal 975, see Orton, *Aspects*, pp. 154 and 162.

163 See *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. xxxiv.

164 For a detailed analysis of differences between ABCD in annals 937 and 942, demonstrating that 'A, *B/C and D' are independent witnesses to the archetype and that B cannot be a copy of A, see Orton, *Aspects*, pp. 79-105 and 122-127. See also *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. ci-cxxvi.

165 Bately, 'The Compilation', p. 97, n.1. Cf. Orton, *Aspects*, pp. 143-144.

166 *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. xl.

167 See annals 755, 835, 869, 875, 901, 905; C *him/hym*. For the interpolated *heom* of annal 577 see above, p. 17.

168 See further above, pp. 17-18. *MS A* has *-an* only 1x in the section to 891 and 8x in the section 892-920, with a preponderance of *-an* endings not occurring until the parts copied by hands 3 and 5. C has *-un*-spellings in 755 *gemettun*, 774 *gefuhtun*, 886 *gewitun* and (as A) 856 *sætun*.

169 *MS D*, for instance, continues to use *-on* to 1079, even altering an original *-an* to *-on* on at least one occasion. See 915D *bestælon*.

170 *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. cxxxvi and cxl-cxli. A agrees with C in using *hira* in annals 887 and 895 (2x) and *hiera* in 755. cf. hand 2a with *heora* 2x and *hiora* 8x.

171 *Heora* occurs only 1x in this section, in annal 755, which also contains C's single instance of *hiera*. After 977 the form *heora* is found 2x beside *hiora* 8x.

172 E's two exceptions before 977 (560 and 605 *Lyra*) are both in new material. After 977 *Leora* continues to be the preferred form in E, with occasional variants: see, e.g., 1016 *hira*, 1070 *hiora*, 1006 *hyra*.

173 It has been suggested that the D text from this point is using a C-type see *The Peterborough Chronicle*. (*The Bodleian Manuscript Laud Misc. 636*), ed. D. Whitelock and C. Clark (Copenhagen, 1954), pp. 28-9. D is certainly in a number of respects closer to C than to B in this section. However, that D's material here was derived from a manuscript behind the common ancestor of both B and C appears to be indicated by readings such as 'Foron þa up be Temese oppæt hie gedydon æt Sæferne, þa up be Sæferne' 893 A, beside 'foron þa up be Temese ȝ be Sæferne' 894 D; no reading BC. See further above, p. 37. For a comprehensive examination of this matter we must await the appearance of the new editions of C and D.

174 See *hira* 897 and 941, *hire* 897D (*hira* 896A), *heora* 893 (*hiora* A), 894, 895 (2x) and 897, 914 (2x) and 937. cf. *hiora* 896. For *hyra* see 894, 895, 896, 897, 905, 916, MR 924, 937 (all but two shared with C).

175 With occasional variants: see, e.g., 1001 *hiera*, *hyora*.

176 *Heora* is used only once in the Hatton MS of the *Pastoral Care* (211,14), the preferred forms being *hira*, *hiora*. However, it is common in the early tenth century manuscripts of the Orosius (where it occurs 284x, beside *hiora* 120x, *hiera* 77x, *hira* 7x) and the Bede. cf. Vespasian Psalter gloss *heara* and later Mercian glosses *hiora*.

177 *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. xl.

178 These *eo*-spellings could have been present already in the first compilation, being subsequently replaced by *ie* in *MS A* or an exemplar of *A*; alternatively an original *ie* could have been replaced by *eo* in the hypothetical common ancestor of BCDE. See also E 802 *ædoestrade* and 806 *adïstrode* (D *apÿstrade*, *apÿstrode*, without equivalent in ABC).

179 Compare the various representations of *opiewan/ætiewan*, with B using *eo*-spellings in four places, viz. 540, 678, 729, 774 (not three as Taylor claims, *MS B*, p. lxxxiv) and *y* in three (892, MR 905, 975). C, however, has *y* consistently (except in 540), corresponding on all but one occasion (in an annal found only in BCD) to *MS A* *ie* and *y*. D agrees with C against B in MR 905, reading *æt-* where B has *op-*, but disagrees with both in using *eo* not *y*. See also 47B *underþyðde* (corresponding to 46A and 47C *underþeodde*) and MR 918 *underþyðed*.

180 893 *gescipude*, 892A *gescipode*. Taylor does not refer to this form either on p. lxx (where he reports incorrectly that after 652 B has only

eight *a*-spellings, while C has none until 978) or on p. lxxviii of his edition. He also omits from his list on p. lxx the form *dennade* (937). *-ad* forms are in fact very unevenly distributed not only in C but also in B (see *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. lxx) and in A (see *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. cli and cliv), being concentrated in the earlier parts of the Chronicle. See further above, p. 17. Some shared instances of *-od* in CD where AB have *-ad*, *-ed* may be the result of independent change.

181 This assumption appears to be supported by the fact that up to the point where they cease to share a common text, D and E agree with B in the use of *-ad(e)*.

182 *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. lxxi.

183 My figures are *þam* 106x, *þæm* 17x.

184 A and B share two *þæm*-spellings in 887; further instances of *þæm* are also found in hand 1 of A in 794, 797, 887 (4x) and 891. Hands 2a and 2b of A have a preference for *þæm* (54x, beside a single instance of *þam* in hand 2b); hand 2c prefers *þam* (21x) to *þæm* (1x). See *MS A*, ed. Bately, p. cxli. A marked preference for *þæm* is shown in surviving texts by Ælfric. However, *æ*-spellings continue to occur in Chronicle MSS C and D after 977.

185 See above, p. 17.

186 *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. lxxxv and note 118. Although Taylor gives the figure as 'a mere seven', I have been able to find only six instances of *hi* in B (in annals 878, 894, 895, 896 (2x) and 905).

187 Taylor (*MS B*, p. lxxxv) gives the numbers of occurrences as 155. *Hie* spellings in C2 begin in annal 495. For C1 *hy* 4x see above, p. 000, n. 137.

188 None of C's *hi*-spellings coincide with A's *hi*-spellings, the majority of which are concentrated between 887 and 893. See *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. cxxxvi, cxi-cxli, cxliii, cxlvi and cxlvii. *Hie* occurs 85x in A, hand 1, *hi* 8x from 887; hands 2ad have *hi* 6x, hands 2a-f *hie* 114x; hands 3, 4 and 5 have *hy* 12x, *hie* 3x and *hi* 3x. Hand 3 also has *heo* 1x in 937.

189 *MS D* has *hie* in 755 (2x), 787, 871 and 892 (all 1x), *MS E* has *hie* in 871. After 977 C has *hi* and *hy*.

190 For the gradual adoption of *hie* spellings by the scribe of *MS G* see Lutz, *Die Version G*, and my review of this book in *Anglia* 104 (1986), p. 476. See also J.M. Bately, 'Linguistic Evidence as a Guide to the Authorship of Old English Verse', *Learning and Literature in Anglo-*

Saxon England, ed. Michael Lapidge and Helmut Gneuss (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 409-31.

191 Campbell, *Old English Grammar*, §§. 312 and 329.

192 The reading *g'e'are* of C, annal 1 (B *gere*) must be compared with *Menologium* 9 *ge'a'res*, written by the same scribe, C1. See *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. lxxxii, no. 100.

193 See *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. cxxxvii and cxli; also *The Old English Orosius*, ed. Bately, pp. xli and l.

194 Other texts with *e*-spellings are the *Poenitentiale Pseudo-Egberti*, Byrhtferth's *Manual*, the West Saxon Gospels, and the Mercian Vespasian Psalter, Lindisfarne and Rushworth glosses.

195 Smoothing of *ea* to *e* is more common with other words, especially before [X], where proportions are very similar in B and C, with 53 out of a possible 142 in B, 64 out of a possible 141 in C: see *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. lxxxii. In A, smoothed forms are virtually confined to the section written by hands 1 and 2bc: see further *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. cxxxvii, cxli and cxlvii.

196 Taylor (*MS B*, p. lxxxii, no. 100) notes that smoothing seems to be a particular characteristic of C2, or rather of C2's exemplar. The fact that the only instance of *ger-* in B after 652 corresponds to *MS C gear* may be another indication that C's exemplar from 653 was not also that of B.

197 *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. lxxxviii. For simplification of *sts* to *ss* see Campbell, *Old English Grammar*, § 477.

198 The genealogical regnal list which precedes the Chronicle in *MS A* has *Wess-* and *Wes't's-*, with 't' possibly in another hand.

199 *MS C* *mænig* is found in annals 838, 854, 891, 894, 895, 905 (2x), 910, 914 and 915; *monig* in 897 (2x), 914 and 937; there is a further instance of *monig* in 1003.

200 See *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. cxxxiii-cxxxiv and cxli.

201 Annal 895. D also has the spelling *monig* in its preface.

202 It is found also in A 937 and is occasionally used by D and E.

203 As a corollary, it is not possible to assume that B, C and B's exemplar were all together at Abingdon (see above, n. 20).

204 *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, ed. Plummer, II. ci: 'from that point to the end he is largely, if not entirely, independent of it'.

205 *Ibid.*, II. ci-cii.

- 206 Ibid, II. lxxxiii, n. 4.
- 207 Ibid, II. cii-ciii. See *Chronica Rogeri de Hoveden*, ed. W. Stubbs (London, 1868), I. xcff.
- 208 *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, ed. Plummer II. ciii; Theopold, *Kritische Untersuchungen*.
- 209 *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, ed. Plummer II. ciii-civ.
- 210 Ibid, II, note 6 to p. ciii (on p. civ). For Plummer's 'æ' see *ibid*, p. cii.
- 211 Ibid, II.civ. For the possibility of a connection between the Chronicle and Alfred's court, see Simon Keynes, 'A Tale of Two Kings: Alfred the Great and Æthelweard the Unready', *TRHS* 36 (1986); see also Bately, 'The Compilation', pp. 127-9.
- 212 *Asser's Life of King Alfred, together with the Annals of Saint Neots*, ed. William Henry Stevenson (1904, new impression with article by Dorothy Whitelock, Oxford, 1959), p. lxxxvi.
- 213 Frank Merry Stenton, 'The South-Western Element in the Old English Chronicle', *Essays in Medieval History Presented to T.F. Tout*, ed. A.G. Little and F.M. Powicke (Manchester, 1925), repr. in *Preliminary to Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Doris Stenton (Oxford, 1970), 111-2.
- 214 Whitelock, *English Historical Documents*, p. 118. Stenton, 'South-western Element', p. 112, comments that the portion of Æthelweard's work dealing with the period between 750 and 891 records no facts which may not have been drawn from an early version of the Chronicle.
- 215 *The Chronicle of Æthelweard*, ed. A. Campbell (London, 1962), xxvii, see also *idem*, pp. xviii, xlv and xxxii and p. xxix: 'the revised version of [annal 893] must be regarded as part of a revision of the *OEC* account of Ælfred's later wars, intended to be a more fitting introduction to the account of Eadweard's conquests'.
- 216 E.E. Barker, 'The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle Used by Æthelweard', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 40 (1967), 74-91, at p. 78.
- 217 *Ibid*, p. 77.
- 218 'The B Text', p. 247. For a 'provisional stemma', with the lost A text precursor dated 891 see *ibid*, p. 248.
- 219 *Ibid*, pp. 248-9.
- 220 *Ibid*, p. 285.
- 221 *Ibid*, p. 279.

222 Ibid, p. 247.

223 Meaney, 'St. Neots', pp. 229 and 205.

224 Ibid, pp. 200 and 243: see p. 200, 'All in all, Asser's *Life* is useful in any attempt to discover the exact form of Plummer's *æ*, because it is an independent witness. But it is no more valuable than A alone, or BC (with the corresponding parts of D) or E(F) with the corresponding D annals'.

225 Ibid, p. 213.

226 Ibid, pp. 205-6; cf. Whitelock, *English Historical Documents*, p. 123.

227 Meaney, 'St. Neots', pp. 205-6. I am unconvinced by Meaney's suggestion, for which she finds possible support in the fact that the passage is 'placed . . . somewhat awkwardly between Æthelwulf's expedition against the Welsh and the defence of Thanet against a Viking force'. The two crosses on fo 13r are elaborate and ornamental and written in red, apparently intended to draw attention to an event of importance; cf. the marginal cross on fo 20v by the 'Frithestan' annotator and see further *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. xliii-xliv.

228 Meaney, 'St. Neots', p. 206.

229 Ibid, p. 229. For these sources see Janet Bately, 'World History in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: its sources and its separateness from the Old English Orosius', *Anglo-Saxon England* 8 (1979), pp. 177-94.

230 Ibid, p. 216.

231 Ibid, p. 230.

232 Ibid, p. 230.

233 Ibid, p. 202.

234 Meaney, 'St. Neots', p. 230. See also *ibid*, pp. 209-210: 'there is nothing in Æthelweard's *Chronicon* which appears to me to be decisively against the thesis that it was relying on a copy of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* midway between that used by the St Neots compiler and Plummer's *æ*.'

235 Ibid, p. 230.

236 Ibid, pp. 200-1.

237 Szarmach, *Studies*, p. 14: 'the contributors have made a reasonable effort to incorporate OE bibliography through the end of 1982 in their essays.'

- 238 *The Annals of St Neots with Vita Prima Sancti Neoti*, ed. David Dumville and Michael Lapidge, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, A Collaborative Edition*, ed. David Dumville and Simon Keynes, vol. 17 (Brewer, Cambridge, 1985); Bately, 'The Compilation', 93-129; Bately, 'Bede', 233-54. *The Annals of St Neots* is referred to henceforward in the notes as SN.
- 239 See, e.g., *Life of Alfred*, ed. Stevenson, p. 105, citing annals 642, 672 and 455. For the spelling *Coenred* see *ibid.*, p. lxxxv. See also *St Neots*, ed. Dumville, p. xxxv, 'the form *Koenuualch* is older than the *Cenwalh* of all the vernacular texts and it is difficult to see from what other source the Compiler could have drawn this.'
- 240 See also SN 904 *Sigeberchtus* and *Eochricus*, SN 910 *Eouuilsus* and *Ochter*, and, for initial *k*, SN 904 *Kenulfus*. For the use of *k*-spellings in manuscripts of all dates see part 1, pp. 12-13 above.
- 241 Cf. A 704, 709, 716 *Coenred*, beside 855 *Cenred*. SN has *Coenredo* 704 and *Kenred* 709, corresponding to A *Coenred*. For *oe* in Anglian texts see Campbell, *Old English Grammar*, §. 198.
- 242 See e.g. *St Neots*, ed. Dumville, p. xxxv, n. 25, and Meaney, 'St Neots', p. 201, where regnal lists or genealogies are given as an alternative source for SN's forms,' though it would certainly have been easier to have taken them from their context in the *Chronicle* annals'. For another objection see Harrison, *The Framework*, p. 35. Stevenson (*Life of Alfred*, pp. 105-6) suggests that the form *Æsc* 'was more intelligible to the copyist'; however, it is possible that an original *Oesc* was copied in its later form *Esc* and then interpreted by a West-Saxon compiler or scribe as a non-West Saxon variant of *Æsc*.
- 243 *St Neots*, ed. Dumville, pp. xxxv-xxxvi. For another difference between SN and the *Chronicle* which Dumville argues plausibly 'may of course be a further witness to the chronological astuteness of the Compiler' see the entry for 642 and *ibid.*, p. xxxv, n. 26.
- 244 *Ibid.*, p. xxxv.
- 245 *St Neots*, ed. Dumville, p. xxxii.
- 246 *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, ed. Plummer, II. ciii.
- 247 *Ibid.*, II. ciii.
- 248 *Ibid.*, II. 77, citing Theopold, *Kritische Untersuchungen*, pp. 60ff.
- 249 A single barren number is not always enough for a 'correct' chronology to be restored.

- 250 See *MS B*, ed. Taylor, p. 33, note to 866, where it is argued that the manuscript from which B is copied shared C's chronology.
- 251 See further Lutz, *Die Version G* and *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. xcvi-xcix.
- 252 Annal 865 is preceded by a multi-line entry and a sequence of barren annal-numbers.
- 253 The correctness of annal-number 752 appears to be confirmed by a reference in the annal to the twelfth year of Cuthred's reign. The next annal, 753, takes up only half a line.
- 254 When there is no such contra-indication, non-consecutive dating is generally remedied in the surviving manuscripts by insertion of the missing annal-number(s).
- 255 Not only is the annal an exceptionally long one, but it is followed by two barren annal-numbers; other obvious places would have been after 764 (*rectius* 766), or 772 (*rectius* 774) or after what are now the strings of barren annal numbers 781-783 and 806-811.
- 256 See Bately, 'The Compilation'.
- 257 Although some additions to a copy of Bede Epitome with A.D. dating cannot of course be ruled out. See Whitelock, quoted by Bately, 'Bede', p. 252, n. 53.
- 258 In *MS A* there is an unusually large gap between the numeral *xii* and the word that follows in annal 752. However, there are no signs of erasure to suggest that the number was originally *xiii*.
- 259 Numbering according to the year of a king's reign is of frequent occurrence in Bede; see, e.g., Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, ed. Charles Plummer (Oxford, 1896) IV.5 and 11, with dating according to the reign of King Ecgfrith. See also the important discussion in Kenneth Harrison, *The Framework of Anglo-Saxon History to A.D. 900* (Cambridge, 1976), esp. pp. 76-98 and 128-132. Alternatively, this material could have been in a form resembling that used in Æthelweard's *Chronicon*, 'in the following year . . .; two years after that . . .' etc. See also 787 'in his days', *on his dagum*, and cf. the entries concerning the last wars of Alfred, which in the text are regularly dated from the arrival of the Viking fleet.
- 260 See Dorothy Whitelock's note in *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, ed. Plummer (rev. ed.), II. cxxxix-cxliid; also A.J. Thorogood, 'The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle in the Reign of Ecgberht', *EHR* 48 (1933), 359ff, where it is argued that the annals after 839 have 'all the marks of

retrospective writing', being intended as 'stop-gaps to fill in the years between the end of an existing Chronicle and the point, early in Alfred's reign, when contemporary annalistic writing began again'.

261 See Bately, 'The Compilation', pp. 106-7 and 111-115, also eadem, 'Old English Prose before and during the Reign of Alfred', ASE 17 (1988), at p. 93, no. 2. (See also *ibid.*, p. 132, note 219). With Meaney's suggestion, 'St Neots', p. 207, that the 755 author might also be the author of annals 835 to about 842 (*s.a.* 832-839), cf. Bately, 'Compilation', p. 112, where similarities between annals 755, 835 and 855 and the annals of the 870s are noted.

262 *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, ed. Plummer, II, p. 3. Has there been a confusion of the idioms *an wana þritig* and *an and þritig*?

263 Up to and including Beorhtric, regnal lengths are given in the annal recording the king's accession. From Beorhtric's successor Ecgbriht onwards the tendency is to give them in the year of death; the major exceptions relate to Æthelwulf's two eldest sons.

264 851 is, of course, within King Alfred's lifetime and quite possibly that of the compiler(s).

265 Above, p. 27.

266 Meaney, 'St Neots', p. 201; Hart, 'East-Anglian Chronicle', pp. 254-5; *St Neots*, ed. Dumville, p. xxxvi.

267 *Ibid.*, p. xxxiv; see also pp. xxxi-xxxii.

268 *Ibid.*, p. xxxvi.

269 For Dumville's arguments see *ibid.*, p. xxxii-xxxiv. Cf. Hart, 'The B Text', p. 279, where it is suggested that the A text precursor may have been SN's sole vernacular source: 'Close agreement between [SN] and the B text for the period 900 to 914 suggests that the latter was also dependent on the same precursor.'

270 *Beornod* is generally taken to be the 'correct' reading.

271 However, the opposite is also possible, with embarrassing references avoided at the time of composition but subsequently introduced by a reviser. For an earlier instance of delicacy of this sort compare the Chronicle accounts of rejoicing at the return of King Æthelwulf from abroad (855) and Asser's account of a revolt by one of his sons during his absence.

272 *St Neots*, ed. Dumville, p. 106, note 7 to annal 910. A *Ecwils* (Æthelweard *Eyuuysl*, for *Egwysl*?) may be the better reading.

- 273 Dumville (*St Neots*, p. xxxiv, n. 22) observes that they are 'perhaps anyway a late insertion in the immediate ancestor of MSS. BC'.
- 274 Hart, 'The B Text', p. 288 misinterpreting the accent over *Meran* in B as an abbreviation mark and reading *Memeran*, explains C's *Meran* as due to failure to notice this mark in B.
- 275 Its usage is typical of neither section. See Bately, 'The Compilation once more', Meaney ('D', p. 17) suggests that the 892 annal in E was copied into E's archetype by scribe F from A.
- 276 Perhaps as a result of misunderstanding of the OE idiom *þridde healf* for two and a half. SN 891 provides a different set of problems; it corresponds to only one sentence in the Chronicle MSS, and refers to comets in the plural, not the singular, perhaps indicating use of another source: 'comete apparuerunt post pascha circa rogationes'. Dumville (*St Neots*, p. 95, note 1 to annal 891) observes that none of the extant vernacular texts of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle has this correct date. However, the scribe of A who added the comet reference to scribe I's contribution did originally intend it to be dated 891, entering the next annal as 892.
- 277 Occasionally in these sections SN has information not found in the surviving Chronicle manuscripts; see, e.g., the inclusion of the name *Eagellus* in the list of dead and the description of the battle as taking place *apud Wodnesfeldam* in annal 910. Moreover, the beginning of annal 896 is incorporated in annal 895. However, although this might be taken as support for a theory that annals 893-7 (part 1) were originally composed as a single continuous narrative (see Bately, 'The Compilation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle Once More', pp. 15-16), it is more likely to be yet another instance of intelligent editing.
- 278 Intelligent guess-work also probably accounts for the assumption of victory in annal 495, while apparent agreement with BCDE against A in 757, where SN refers to 'naves Normannorum, id est Danorum', A *scipu*, BCDE *scipu Norðmanna*, may merely be due to the tendency of SN's compiler to refer to Danes or the Viking *here* as *Nordmanni*.
- 279 See, e.g., *Life of Alfred*, ed. Stevenson, p. 106.
- 280 *St Neots*, ed. Dumville, p. xxxvi.
- 281 See *ibid*, pp. 78, lxiii, n. 124 and xxxvi.
- 282 For the possible implications of an enlarged *O* in the word *ond* immediately following this passage in BC, see Bately, 'Manuscript Layout', p. 26. A second unusual feature of MS B at this point is the use of *gfor æ* (in *hræfn*). See Hart, 'The B Text', p. 250 and *MS B*, ed. Taylor,

- p. xxvii. For the suggestion that A lacks the raven banner reference because of loss through homoeoteleuton, see Karl Horst, *Zur Kritik der altenglischen Annalen* (Darmstadt, 1896), p. 26.
- 283 See *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. xxxiv and xl-xli.
- 284 See Whitelock, *English Historical Documents*, p. 113.
- 285 See *St Neots*, ed. Dumville, pp. xxxviii-xxxix.
- 286 See *ibid.*, p. xxxvii, and *idem.*, 'The Anglian Collection of Royal Genealogies and Regnal Lists', *ASE* 5 (1976), p. 43.
- 287 Scribe 8 seems to have been writing ca. 1100 (see Dumville, 'Some Aspects', p. 43; *MS A*, ed. Bately, p. xli. Dumville (*St Neots*, p. xxxii) dates SN ca. 1120-ca.1140. That SN preserves this error is surprising, if we share (as I do) Dumville's belief in the compiler's chronological skills.
- 288 *St Neots*, ed. Dumville, p. xxxviii.
- 289 *Ibid.*, p. xxxviii: 'It seems clear, therefore, that the Compiler of the Annals of St Neots had access to a copy of the 'Northern recension' of the *Chronicle* or to a Latin derivative, or perhaps less likely to the Latin source which supplied much of the information used to make that recension so distinctive'.
- 290 *Recte* Marcianus and Valentinianus.
- 291 Moreover the hand 8 material in *MS A* not found in SN is either of a type that the SN compiler might have been expected to exclude or corresponds to entries in Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* which have been used by him.
- 292 See further above, p. 61. However, although SN preserves a handful of 'early' spellings (above, pp.31-32), it also uses a number of 'later' forms: see, e.g., 654 *Ycanho* (A *Icanho*, BC *Yceanho*, 672 *Sexburch* (A *Seaxburg*, E *Sexburh*) and 789 *Brychtricus* (A *Beorhtric*, B *Byrhtic* etc.) In its reading 455 *Aegelesthrep* it is closer to BCDE than to A, which has *Agelesþrep*.
- 293 Above, p. 27. Æthelweard's entry for 882 has also been cited as retaining readings lost from the vernacular versions.
- 294 Above, pp. 27-28.
- 295 Above, p. 28.
- 296 Above, pp. 30-31.

- 297 Barker, 'The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle', p. 297. See further Hart, 'The B Text', p. 289, where it is suggested that Æthelweard's *Chronicon* depended on the A text and its precursor and on the B text.
- 298 See Bately, 'Bede'.
- 299 Bately, 'Bede', pp. 235-6.
- 300 Bately, 'Bede', p. 236.
- 301 *Ibid.*, p. 239.
- 302 Variants include B(CDE)'s readings *Ælfred cing; eft ofer sæ; of Cent on Eastengle* beside A *Ælfred; ofer sæ; on Eastengle*; and the omission of the words *oper dæl east* from BC.
- 303 For 878 *ofer sæ adræfdon* Æthelweard has 'trans pellunt Gallias mare in oras'. However, he has a fondness for constructions with *partes*: see, e.g., 880, 887, 893 *Gallias partes*.
- 304 *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. lxxxii-lxxxiii and *Chronicon*, ed. Campbell, pp. xxviii-xxix. Given the nature of the Chronicle additions of significant factual material must surely be more likely than omissions, except where there is some good contextual reason for the latter.
- 305 Including *ix* for hand la *viii*; cf. D *viii*, BC *viii*, E *ix*.
- 306 Could they have been one and the same?
- 307 These words are missing from A; see further above, pp. 52-53.
- 308 I see no reason to suppose that it was Æthelweard himself.
- 309 And possibly a reference to Thanet; see above, p. 60.
- 310 For fuller details see *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. lxxxii-lxxxviii.
- 311 Meaney, 'St Neots', p. 230.
- 312 See, e.g., Kenneth Sisam, 'Anglo-Saxon Royal Genealogies', *PBA* 39 (1953), 287-348, esp. pp. 301-2.
- 313 Located like those of ABC, in annal 855. For Asser's version see above, p. 59 and n. 380.
- 314 Meaney, 'St Neots', p. 210: 'Surely the pious ealdorman would have been delighted to trace his ancestry back to Adam if the possibility had presented itself to him'; cf. Stenton, 'South-western Element', p. 114, n.3, where it is suggested that the Biblical ancestors were 'substituted after the work had passed into monastic hands'. In such a case Æthelweard might of course have restored the original sequence (or a version of it) from his own archive. See further Alexander Callender

Murray, 'Danish Invasions and Royal Genealogy, *The Dating of Beowulf*, ed. Colin Chase (Toronto, 1981) pp. 104-8. As Chase points out (p. 106): 'Æthelweard was himself a descendant of Æthelwulf and his interest in family matters was considerable.'

315 Did Æthelweard know something of the legend of Scyld as told in *Beowulf* and so refuse to accept a descent Scyld-Heremod, replacing it by Scyld-Sceaf?

316 Meaney, 'St Neots', pp. 213-220, Bately, 'World History', pp. 177-94.

317 Meaney, 'St Neots', p. 217.

318 See Meaney, 'St Neots', p. 218. For Rufinus' translation of Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* as a source see Bately, 'World History', esp. pp. 178-85.

319 Meaney, 'St Neots', pp. 218-9..

320 Ibid, p. xvii. Reference to Caesar's invasion would have disrupted the build up to the birth of Christ in Æthelweard's new opening section. For Æthelweard's interests see *Chronicon*, ed. Campbell, pp. xxxiv-xxxvi.

321 Bately, 'World History', esp. p. 188. The Titus entry, like annal 71, is apparently from Isidore, *Chronicon*, which was also used for annals 100 (90A) and (probably) 85 (84A).

322 Meaney, 'St Neots', pp. 216 and 219.

323 Ibid, pp. 218-9.

324 Bately, 'World History', pp. 183-4.

325 See above, p.47.

326 *De Viris Illustribus*, PL 23, cols. 643, 654, 638 and 647.

327 Bately, 'World History', p. 185. I commented that I had found no authority for the latter in Latin MSS.

328 Some Isidore MSS actually give the figure as *xiii*: see *Chronica Minora*, ed. T. Mommsen, II *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Auct. Antiq.* 11 (Berlin, 1894), p. 455.

329 For another possible explanation see *ibid*, p. 185, n. 2.

330 For the omission of a second Bede epitome entry, that for B. C. 60, see above, note 320.

331 See Meaney, 'St Neots', pp. 215-7.

332 Ibid, p. 215.

333 Ibid, pp. 215-6.

334 Some as yet unidentified, e.g. that for the burial of John 16 stadia from Ephesus.

335 *An OE Martyrology*, ed. George Herzfeld, EETS o.s. 116 (London, 1900), 100/5-6.

336 See, e.g., entries for 508, 823 and 839. As for the expression *pro Christo*, this is frequently added by Æthelweard in his translations of this part of the Chronicle: see, e.g., 62 'pro Christo patitur', 102 'migrat passione pro Christo suscepta'.

337 See, e.g., Meaney, 'St Neots', p. 208, following a comment in Harrison, *The Framework*, p. 133: 'In this form, the annal must have been entered by a contemporary. The Old English versions omit the main point, which could never subsequently have been restored.'

338 Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica* III. 27.1; *The English Version of Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. T. Miller, EETS o.s. 95, 96 (1890-1, repr. 1959), 240/19-20. *Pauli Orosii Historiarum adversus Paganos Libri Septem*, ed. C. Zangemeister, CSEL (Vienna, 1882), I. x. 10; *The Old English Orosius*, ed. Bately, p. 25/17-20. Some pieces of unique material could have been derived from sources available locally; see above, p. 27. For the reference to victory in 495 as Æthelweard's inference, however, see Campbell's edition, p. xxxi, n. 2, and see above, n. 207, for a similar assumption in SN.

339 Meaney, 'St Neots', p. 210.

340 See *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. lxxv-lxxvi.

341 See Campbell, *Old English Grammar*, §. 610 (7).

342 See further *MS A*, ed. Bately, p. lxxxi.

343 *Æpelbryhte rex* corresponds to Æthelweard *Ethelbyrhti regis*, B(CDE) *Æpelbrihte*. The use of the Latin word *rex* in A might indicate a gloss in a common ancestor of A and Æthelweard. Cf., however, the use of *rex* and *dux* in versions of 851 quoted above, p. 44.

344 Inserted in very small script above the bottom line on fo. 12v, apparently in the same hand as the rest of this annal; a later hand has entered 'bædon' at the top of the next folio, for insertion before the word *Æpelwulf*; BC read *Her bæd*; in DE the passage has been rewritten. Campbell (*Chronicon Æthelwardi*, p. 26, n.4) charges Æthelweard with reproducing A's reading in perverse literality. However the omission

could have been a feature of a common exemplar of A and Æthelweard's vernacular source and the scribe of A could have become aware of it as he copied.

345 See above, pp. 59-60.

346 I do not agree with Campbell that Æthelweard, like A, has lost a passage through homoeoteleuton here. cf. A 'þa up andlang Sigene oþ Mæterne oþ Cariei', beside B 'þa upp ondlang Signe æt Mæterne 7 þa upp on Mæterne oþ Cariei'. See further *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. c-ci and cv and n.310. That Æthelweard *Catsig* is closer to DE and Asser *Caziei* than to ABC *Cariei* may be due to independent correction (cf. 885 *Sture*-, Asser and DE, beside *Stufe*, ABC and Æthelweard, and see also Keynes and Lapidge, *Alfred the Great*, p. 266, where it is pointed out that Asser's 'superior knowledge' may be responsible for identification of *Caziei* as *villa regia*). However, we may here have to do merely with independent misreading by several scribes of *z* as an angular *r* of the type found in MS A (see *MS A*, ed. Bately, p. xxiii).

347 See above, p. 45.

348 *MS A*, ed. Bately, p. cxiii and lxxxi-lxxxii. For other points of disagreement see *ibid.*, pp. lxxxi-lxxxii.

349 See *ibid.*, p. lxxvi.

350 See further above, pp. 59-60.

351 Earlier views cited by Stevenson (*Life of Alfred*, p. lxxxviii, n. 1) are those of Grubitz ('C type'), Horst ('C or D type') and Kupferschmidt ('a text medium between A, G and B, C', a view 'more in accord with our own').

352 *Life of Alfred*, ed. Stevenson, pp. lxxxvii-lxxxviii.

353 Meaney, 'St Neots', p. 200.

354 Whitelock, *English Historical Documents*, p. 118.

355 Hart, 'The B Text', p. 247.

356 See above. p. 43-46. Asser, like C, fails to mention Essex among the kingdoms ruled by Æthelbriht (851).

357 *Life of Alfred*, ed. Stevenson, p. lxxxv. The spelling *ie* is of frequent occurrence in MS A, hand I; for *oe* spellings see above, p. 32 and n. 241. Stevenson (*ibid.*, p. lxxxvi) is wrong in using the readings *feala* and *Wihtgaras* of A as evidence here: they are alterations in a later hand (hand 8).


- 358 See further above, p. 59-60.
- 359 Hart, 'The B Text', pp. 274-78 and 295-6.
- 360 Ibid, p. 275.
- 361 Ibid, p. 275.
- 362 Ibid, p. 275. In Hart's paper [26] and [27] have been misprinted as '36' and '37'.
- 363 Ibid, p. 275. B in fact differs from the St John's annals (and A) in entering Claudius's invasion of Britain *s.a.* 47, instead of 46.
- 364 Ibid, pp. 275-6.
- 365 It was moved to annal 27 by the post-Conquest hand 8.
- 366 For *Ixii*?
- 367 See Bately 'Manuscript Layout', especially pp. 27, 28 and 33.
- 368 Ibid, p. 25.
- 369 See *idem*, p. 27. I have argued elsewhere ('Manuscript Layout', p. 33) that annals 1 to 3 may have had a layout different from that of the rest of the Chronicle and the unusual *II anno* possibly reinforces my arguments.
- 370 In MS B the A of *AN* is not particularly large.
- 371 Sometimes, however, they reveal a surprising ignorance of Latin grammar: see *annis* for expected *annos* (1), and *Iacobus* for acc. sg. *Iacobum* in annal 45. Could an original 'Her Herodes aswalt, se þe Iacobum ofslog' have been 'corrected' to 'Her Herodes aswalt, se þe Iacobus ofslog' in an underlying MS?
- 372 The subdivisions are mine.
- 373 See Bately, 'World History', p. 184.
- 374 A 69, 84 and 90, DE 69, 87 and 99.
- 375 Bately, 'World History', p. 184, n. 1. The date given here should be A.D. 96.
- 376 Cf. Ælfric, *First Series of Catholic Homilies*, IV (p. 61 of the edition by Benjamin Thorpe, London 1844).
- 377 See, e.g., Bately, 'World History', pp. 183-4.

- 378 For the death of Clement see *idem*, pp. 183-4. Was the sequence of numbers *xc* to *xcix* perhaps accidentally entered twice? Cf. the accidental loss of annal-numbers 330 to 339 in A.
- 379 I have not yet found a possible source for the 99 A.D. date, though Ælfric (*Catholic Homilies* I. iv, p. 74) assigns John's assumption to his ninety ninth year.
- 380 Asser's list has been incorporated into the first chapter of the *Life of Alfred* as an introduction to his biography.
- 381 See further above, p. 52.
- 382 He also omits the earlier reference to these ealdormen.
- 383 See above, pp. 42-43.
- 384 See further above and, for a detailed survey of differences between A and other vernacular manuscripts, see *MS A*, ed. Bately, pp. ci-cxxvi. Some of these differences are clearly due to careless copying in or behind A. See, e.g., the omission of a reference to hostages in 887, the loss of a passage through homoeoteleuton in 887 and of Reading as the *here's* destination in 871 (above, pp. 54-55).
- 385 See above, pp. 7-25.
- 386 Æthelweard rewrites: 'nec duriorem unquam audiuimus pugnam ante istius diei praesentiam'; cf. DE *æfre*, A(BC)'oþ þisne ondweardan dæg'.
- 387 Asser also refers to nine ships in 851; in his rewritten version of 878 the number of slain is given as 1200.
- 388 See above, pp. 38-39 and 45 and 52. See also the reference to Sidroc at Englefield (871). However, the absence of the name from Asser's account may be the result of paraphrasing: he also omits the names of other Vikings given in this annal.
- 389 See above, pp. 52-53.
- 390 *Alfred the Great*, ed. Keynes and Lapidge, p. 231, n. 14: 'it looks as though Asser is here mistaken . . . ASC MS 'A' does not name the wintering-place in 851, and it may be that the manuscript used by Asser was similarly defective at this point'.
- 391 See above, pp. 56-57 and n. 366.
- 392 See *MS A*, ed. Bately, p. xlvi and n. 151.
- 393 See 'Nun his mæg' and 'Gerente Wala cyninge' ADE, beside *Nunna* and 'Gerente þam cyninge' BC.

394 See above, pp. 43-46.

395 See above, pp. 38-39.

396 No attempt is made here to assess the relationship between D and E nor to take account of the possible incorporation of B/C type features in C.

The background of the page is a solid light grey. Overlaid on this are large, white, stylized letters. In the upper half, the letters 'L', 'R', and 'D' are visible, partially cut off by the top edge. In the lower half, a large 'E' is visible, also partially cut off by the bottom edge. The letters have a classic, slightly decorative font style.

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