

218. London, British Library, Cotton Otho C. i., vol. 1
+ Cotton Otho B. x, f. 51
“West-Saxon Gospels”
[Ker 181, Gneuss 358]

HISTORY: A copy of the OE version of the Gospels, from the first quarter of the 11c. Textually very closely related to Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 441 (361). The colophon ‘Wulfi me wrat’ is written immediately after the end of John (f. 110r). Added material, ff. 68–69, suggests that the manuscript was in Malmesbury in the mid 11c and may have been produced there. Used by John Joscelyn (1529–1603); belonged to Sir Robert Cotton (1571–1631), where it was bound with an apparently unrelated copy of Gregory’s *Dialogues* (Cotton Otho C. i, vol. 2) (219). Damaged in the Ashburnham House fire of 1731. Described by Wanley (1705: 211–12).

CODICOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION: Foliated 1–110. The largest leaves measure ca. 255 x 154 mm.; written space is 230 x 115 mm. Ruling of 25 long lines. In one hand throughout. Plain metallic red initials with an angular majuscule ‘S’; the first words of Luke and John are in red capitals. Added material on ff. 68–69 is in two hands, the second beginning at ‘pæt clænnyss’, f. 69r/5. The first hand of this addition also made an alteration to the Gospel text at f. 87r (Jn 8:38): ‘ic mid `mine’ fæder geseah’. The Latin text of the bull in the margins of ff. 68–69 is in Joscelyn’s hand. A few corrections and glosses of the 12c are found on f. 48rv (in Lk 15, the parable of the prodigal son). Two notes in Joscelyn’s hand appear on f. 110r, the first apparently indicating the number of surviving leaves in the manuscript before the fire: “matth. 5, mar. 32, Luc. 57, Joan. 41.” The second, “the greatest b. hath in length 142 in breadth [...] the next B. hath in length 114 in breadth [...]4 the third B hath in length 101 in breadth [...]” is unexplained and may be unrelated to this manuscript.

Before 1731 the text began at Mt 27:6, according to Wanley (1705: 211); this has been lost, along with a quire at the beginning of Mark and

a number of leaves in Mark. Lk 24:7 *dæge* to 24:29 *7 se* is missing after f. 66; Ker (*Cat.*) points out that “the ruling and make-up suggest that ff. 61–68 formed a regular quire of 8 leaves” (234). The missing text would fit on one folio, and it may be that a half-sheet was added to a regular quaternion to allow Luke to be completed without starting a new quire (Ker suggests that the omission is an example of homoiarchon, but this is unlikely on such a grand scale). Joscelyn’s note “Luc. 57” on f. 110r suggests that one leaf was added to one of seven regular quires; this added leaf was probably the one missing after f. 66. Two leaves (containing Jn 19:27–20:22) are missing after f. 107; these were missing before the fire and do not figure into Joscelyn’s count of leaves. (Joscelyn’s note “Joan. 41” may be explained as follows: 5 x 8 [quires 11–15] = 40; -1 [the first leaf of quire 11, fol. 69, is not counted because it contained a different text] = 39; -1 [the last leaf of quire 15 is missing] = 38; + 3 [quire 16, consisting of four folios, is missing its first leaf] = 41.) A hand of the 16c notes a gap in the text on f. 107v with the words “here lacketh a leafe.” Binding of the 19c.

COLLATION: 110 leaves in Otho C. i + 1 in Otho B. x; the correct order of leaves is: ff. 1–7, Otho B. x, f. 51, reversed, 8–79, 81, 80, 82–110. Leaves are now mounted separately. Collation is necessarily hypothetical, but the ruling of legible leaves, the amount and location of missing text, the conjunction of hair and flesh sides of the leaves, and the analogy of other copies of the Gospels suggest that the surviving ff. 1–110 were distributed as follows: I⁸ (wants 1–4 before f. 1 and 7–8 after f. 2) (ff. 1–2), II⁸ (wants 5 after f. 6 and 7–8 after f. 7) (ff. 3–7), III⁸ (wants 2 after Otho B. x, f. 51; f. 13v/2–25 is blank) (Otho B. x, f. 51, ff. 8–13), IV⁸ (wants 1, probably blank, before f. 14) (ff. 14–20), V⁸ (ff. 21–28), VI⁸ (ff. 29–36), VII⁸ (ff. 37–44), VIII⁸ (ff. 45–52), IX⁸ (ff. 53–60), X⁸⁺¹ (the added leaf, containing Lk 24:7 *dæge* to 24:29 *7 se*, is now lost after 6, f. 66; f. 68r/5–25 and 68v were originally blank) (ff. 61–68) XI⁸ (ff. 69–76) (f. 69rv was originally blank), XII⁸ (ff. 77–79, 81, 80, 82–84), XIII⁸ (ff. 85–92), XIV⁸ (ff. 93–100), XV⁸ (wants 8 after f. 107) (ff. 101–107), XVI⁴ (wants 1 before ff. 108 and 4, probably blank, after f. 110; f. 110v is blank) (ff. 108–110).

CONTENTS:

1. ff. 1r–13v Gospel of Mark: fragments, beginning 7:22 ‘ofer[modignessa]’.

2. ff. 14r-68r/4 Gospel of Luke: [HE]R ONGIN[Ð] | Lucas Boc Ðæs Halgan God | spelleres. 'for þa(m) ðe witodlice manega | þohton þara þinga race geendbyrdan'.
3. ff. 68r/5-69v Translation (mid 11c) of a bull of Pope Sergius addressed to Aldhelm as abbot of Malmesbury on originally blank spaces between the Gospels of Luke and John: '†Sergius papa godes þeowa þeow' (ed. Edwards 1986: 16-17).
4. ff. 70r-110r/6 Gospel of John: 'On ANGINNE WÆS | word'.

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