

227. London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius B. i
OE Orosius; "Menologium," "Maxims II," Anglo-Saxon
Chronicle (C-text)
[Ker 191, Gneuss 370]

HISTORY: The manuscript is a composite. Ker dates Part 1 (ff. 3–111 containing the Orosius [Bately's siglum C]) to "s. xi¹" and Part 2 (the verse texts and the C-text of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle) to s. "xi²." The ascription of an Abingdon provenance for the C-text of the Chronicle is owing mostly to tradition and is difficult to sustain (O'Brien O'Keefe 2001: lxxiv–xcii). In the early modern period the manuscript was known or used by a number of antiquarians. Robert Recorde (d. 1558) made extracts from the Chronicle, probably while it was in the possession of Robert Talbot, prebendary of Norwich (d. 1558) (Wright 1937: 170–71; Graham 1997); in the upper margin of f. 3, Talbot has written 'Rex Alfred(us) Orosiu(m) interp(re)tat(us) (est) Boetiu(m) (et) Beda(m) de histo(ria) eccl(esi)astica.' Talbot underlined names in Tiberius B. i and made marginal notations throughout. John Leland (d. 1552) copied Talbot's inscription, his underlined Anglo-Saxon place names, and a few of his English and Latin glosses into his own "Collectanea" (BL, Cotton Julius C. vi, ff. 99v–100v; Hearne 1774: 4.122–25). Laurence Nowell made a partial copy of the C-text in BL, Additional 43,704, ff. 94r–107v (Lutz 1982: 324–30). John Joscelyn (1529–1603) had access to Tiberius B. i, and he filled in lacunae in the C-text at the years 1055, 1065, and 1066, supplied 'Humbran' and 'mid ðreom hund scypum', both in 1066, and supplied 'god man 7 clæne 7 swiðe æðele' to the incomplete end of 1056 C. When Joscelyn knew the manuscript, Tiberius B. i was in the possession of William Bowyer (d. 1576), keeper of the records in the Tower (BL, Cotton Nero C. iii, f. 208r). By 1621 Robert Cotton had acquired the manuscript from Robert Bowyer by exchange (see the 1621 Cotton catalogue, BL, Harley 6018, ff. 154v, 158r). Across the top margin of f. 112r Robert Cotton notes 'Cronica Saxonica Abbingdoniæ ad annum 1066'. William Somner made a transcript of Tiberius B. i in the process of compiling his 1659 dictionary (now Canterbury Cathedral Library, Lit. C. 5, ff. 5–74, rectos only; for Somner's use of Tiberius B. i see Lutz 1988: 7–15).

CODICOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION: v + 163 + ii; foliated [i–ii] i, 1–165 [166, 167]. The older foliation by Planta made the first folio of Orosius = f. 1. The current pencil foliation numbers the Orosius and the Chronicle material ff. 3–164. Ker counts seven preliminary flyleaves in his foliation, but the manuscript was rebound in January 1957 and the number of flyleaves was reduced. At present there are three front paper flyleaves, with the first two unnumbered flyleaves modern heavy paper. The third flyleaf is old paper now pasted in with a contents list almost identical to that in the 1706 Catalogue. On this paper flyleaf, numbered 'i', is pencilled "Tiberus [sic] B. i | VIII F". This is a Montague House pressmark in use from about 1810–27 (identification by Andrew Prescott, p.c.). The two parchment flyleaves are now foliated 1, 2. F. 1r has a contents list in the hand of Richard James, Cotton's librarian, ca. 1625–38 (Tite 1994: plate 25a). F. 2r bears one of Robert Cotton's engraved title pages (Tite 1994: fig. 19).

The manuscript has suffered from wetting (especially towards the back), presumably one of the consequences of the 1731 fire at Ashburnam House. British Library binding records indicate that the manuscript was "repaired and rebound" in 1839, rebound again in 1865, and most recently in 1957. Part 1 of the manuscript (the Orosius) is laid out in two different grids, with quires I–IV (ff. 3–34) ruled for 25 lines and a writing space of 212–217 x 135–136 mm. At f. 35 the ruling changes to 27 lines per page, and the measurements of the written space of the Orosius from this point on (quires V–XIV) shifts to 215–218 x 130 mm. The writing grid of f. 111 (= quire XIV of the Orosius) is 213 mm. long. The ruling strategy of Part 2 suggests that it was designed to fit with the pre-existing Part 1. Part 2 is ruled for 27 long lines, and the outer sheet of quire XV has been ruled to match the ruling grid for the last folio of the Orosius. The writing grid of quire XV is ruled consistently to be 130 mm. wide. And while the outer sheet of the quire is ruled for a length of 212 mm. (to match f. 111), its inner two sheets are ruled for 215 and 218 mm. (matching the normal dimensions for the second writing grid of the Orosius). Prick marks are no longer visible, the manuscript having undergone considerable clipping. Ruling was done on the hair side, as is usual. In Part 1 the arrangement of sheets is continental (HFHF) in the first seven quires, but quires VIII through XIII are arranged in the older, insular manner where hair meets flesh: HHHH. The recto of the singleton f. 111 is a hair side. Quires XV–XXI are arranged so that hair meets hair and flesh meets flesh, but the 12c supplement (quire XXII) is at present arranged FH. The notation on f. 164v, 'Cons. Fol. 162' (presumably the annotation for the 1706 Catalogue, now London, BL MS. Add. 1996)

suggests that the last quire has been reversed, i.e., f. 164v was at some earlier point the last sheet.

In Part 1 the color of ink ranges from brown to virtually black. Chapter headings and ornamental capitals are in a range of colors, including red, metallic red (often oxidized) orange, green and ivory, mauve, and black. The first line of each chapter through f. 44v is in red. In Part 2 the color of ink ranges from brown to brown-black. Annal numbers are rubricated throughout. Blanks were left for the annal numbers for 1055, 1056, 1065, and 1066.

There are two decorative initials in Part 2: on f. 112r the body of initial capital 'C' is in brown ink decorated with interlaced biting beasts (Wormald's Type IIb). On f. 115v, 'Æ', drawn in the dark brown-black ink of the page, is ornamented with two biting beast-heads, interlace, and foliage (Wormald 1945: 121–22; Temple 1976: ill. 116, misattributed to f. 7v). There are the remains of crude black capitals, '[I]N NOMINE PATR[IS ET F]IL', on f. 165r at the top.

COLLATION: [ii] iii, I–XI⁸ (ff. 3–90), XII⁸ + 1 leaf after 8 (ff. 91–99), XIII¹⁰ + 1 leaf after 9 (ff. 100–110), XIV¹ a singleton now pasted to XV (f. 111), XV–XX⁸ (ff. 112–59), XXI⁴ (ff. 160–63), XXII² (ff. 164–65), [ii].

[**Note:** The order of the leaves in quire XXI, disturbed possibly after the Cotton fire, should be ff. 161, 163, 160, 162. The final quire of two was added to the manuscript in the 12c. On f. 164r is a supply text, in a script of the mid-12c, supplementing the ending of the entry for 1066. The 11c account breaks off in the middle of the battle of Stamford Bridge (after '7 þa Normen') with the apparent loss of one or more folios.]

CONTENTS:

Part 1:

1. ff. 3r–111v "The Old English Orosius" (coll. Bately 1980 as C; ff. 10v–21r used as the basis of the text of Book I.i ['bið swiðe god to sciprapum']–viii; Bately 1980: 15.1–28.11):
 - ff. 3r/2–7r/19 Chapter headings, Books 1–6: **Her onginneð seo boc þe man orosius nemneð.** | 'Vre ylðran ealne ðysne ymbhwyrft on þreo | todældon'; ends: 'Hu god gedyde romanum his miltsunge'.
 - ff. 7v/1–28v/11 Book 1: 'VRE YLDRAN EALNE | ÐYSNE YMBHWYRFT | ÐYSES MIDDANGEARDES. CWÆT OROSIUS'; ends: 'Her | endað sio forme boc 7 Onginð sio æftere'.
 - ff. 28v/12–42r/2 Book 2: 'IC WENE CWÆÐ OROSIUS. | ÐÆT NAN WIS MAN NE | SY. BVTAN HE GENOH GEARE WITE'; ends: 'Ne wene

| ic cwæð orosius. nu ic lange spell hæbbe to secgenne. || þ(æt) ic hy on þysse bec geendian mæge. ac ic oðere ongin |nan sceal’.

ff. 42r/3–63r/7 Book 3: ‘ÆFTER ÐAM ÐE ROME |BVRH GETIMBRAD WÆS. | III. HUND WINTRA. 7 LUII’; ends: ‘Ne furþon þ(æt) þa woldon gefryn beon. þe wæron ge |broðra. of fæder 7 of meder’.

ff. 63r/8–83r/18 Book 4: **INCIPIIT LIBER QUARTUS.** | ‘ÆFTER ÐAM ÐE ROMEBURH GETIMBRED | wæs .cccc. hund wintru(m). 7 lxiiii. gum þ(æt) taren |tine þ(æt) folc plegedon’; ends: ‘Swa þonne is me nu | swiðe earfeðe heora mod to ahwettanne. nu hit na |ðor nele beon. ne scearp ne heard’.

f. 83r/19–83v/26 Chapter headings, Book 5: ‘I Hu orosius spræc ymbe romana gylp’. Ends: ‘XV Hu sume ispania wæron agustes wiðerwinnan’.

ff. 84r/1–96r/14 Book 5: ‘IC WATCWÆÐ OROSIUS. HWÆT SE ROMANA | gilp swiðost is’; ends: ‘her endað seo .v. boc. 7 ongingð seo .vi.’

ff. 96r/16–97r/2 Chapter headings, Book 6: ‘i Hu orosius wæs sprecende ymb þa .iiii. anwealdas | þara .iiii. heafodlica þisses middangeardes’; ends: ‘Hu god gedyde romanum his miltsunge’.

ff. 97r/3–111v/21 Book 6: ‘NV IC WVLE CWÆÐ OROSIUS. ON FOREWEARDRE | þisse .vi. bec gereccean’; ends: ‘Sume on affrice’.

Part 2:

2. ff. 112r/1–114v “Menologium”: ‘CRIST WÆS ACEN |NYD. CYNINGA WVLdor’; ends: ‘on þas sylfan tiid’ (ed. Dobbie 1942: 49–55; O’Brien O’Keefe 2001: 3–10).

3. ff. 115r–115v/22: “Maxims II”: ‘CYNING SCEAL RICE HEALDAN’; ends: ‘þær he sylfa wunað’ (ed. Dobbie 1942: 55–57; O’Brien O’Keefe 2001: 11–13).

4. ff. 115v/22–164r: “Anglo-Saxon Chronicle MS C” [to 1066]: ‘ÆR CRISTES GEFLÆ |scnesse. lx wintra gaius iulius se casere’ (ed. O’Brien O’Keefe 2001). [The 11c text ends imperfectly on the now out of order f. 162v: ‘þa normen’. F. 164r contains eight lines of 12c supply text, ‘... flugon þa engliða Ða wes ðer an of norwegan ... ham to norweie mid alle þa scipe’.]

PHOTO NOTES:

f. 7v ff. the early modern notations are not often unclear, but the underlinings done in light brown ink are invisible on the fiches. Hairstrokes and added accent marks are not always visible.

ff. 23r–24r plummet glosses are mostly unreadable on the fiche.

- f. 96v some rubricated numbers are indistinct, and some letters very faint in the manuscript, i.e., /20 .xxxi. /21 xxxii /22 xxxiii /23 .xxxiiii /24 .xxxv gratinianus /26 xxxvi (with the first 2 x's apparently retouched).
- f. 97r/1 the tight binding obscures the chapter number (= xxxvii); f. 97r/2: part of initial 'x' is in the binding (= xxxviii).
- f. 104v/10 an orange-red 'xxv.' follows '.m.' /18: an orange/red 'xxvi' follows 'getim'.
- f. 105v/16 '7 his bearn. þa onfeng' under repair tape.
- f. 111r/17 '7rædgota' following 'tan' erased; the letters not visible on the fiche.
- f. 113v/6 'Wide': the red capital *wynn* indistinct on the fiche.
- f. 114r/18 a red initial 'H' in the margin before 'wæt'.
- f. 115r/1 and 115v/23 see the incipits for the red capitals not visible on the fiche. Repeated images: ff. 81v–82r, 83v–84r, 95v–96r, 103v–104r, 105v–106r, 113v–114r, 130v–131r.

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