

131a. Exeter, Cathedral Library 3507
Hrabanus Maurus, “De computo”,
Isidore, “De natura rerum”,
astrological and computistical poems and prose
[Ker 116*; Gneuss 258]

HISTORY: A scientific collection mainly consisting of the computistical dialogue of Hrabanus Maurus (c. 780–856), “De computo”, authored in 819 or 820 and well known in Carolingian schools (Stevens 1992: 136–37) and the work on natural history and astronomy known as “De natura rerum” by Isidore of Seville (ca. 560–636), also widely known in A-S and Carolingian centers. Hrabanus’ “De computo” shares a corpus of glosses with two other later manuscripts (Avranches, Bibliothèque Municipale 114, ff. 98–132 and Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Riccardiana 885, ff. 312–46), and all may stem from the same, perhaps English, source (Stevens 1979: 197). The recension of Isidore’s “De natura rerum” is not the typical “long recension” but a unique longer and more elaborate version (Fontaine 1960: 19–83; Stevens 1992: 136). The now lost exemplar of Exeter 3507 (perhaps from Sherborne) also was copied in London, BL Cotton Vitellius A.xii [250], a manuscript from late 11c or early 12c Salisbury (Webber 1992: 69, 74; Stevens 1992: 136). Furthermore, some of the verses are also found, among other manuscripts, in the “Leofric Missal” (Oxford, Bodl. Lib. Bodley 579 [364]), a late 9c or early 10c northeast Frankish liturgical book brought to England by the 10c, when these verses were added (and much more), perhaps at Canterbury or Glastonbury, and later donated to Exeter by Leofric (Orchard 2002: 1.1–2; 132–205). Exeter 3507 was written in a stylized A-S square minuscule in the late 10c that shares some traits with the script of the “Exeter Book” (Exeter Cathedral Library 3501 [130]) and its sister manuscripts; moreover, the same hand is found for the main text in Oxford, Bodl. Lib. Bodley 718 and in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale lat. 943 [422] (the “Sherborne Pontifical”) and perhaps as a correcting hand in London, Lambeth Palace 149 [311], a manuscript in the same hand as the “Exeter Book” (Ker, *Cat.*, 154; Conner 1993: 19–20; Gameson 1996: 162–63). Ker dates the script to the sec-

ond half of the 10c, while Conner (1993: 44–47) suggests that the script of this trio of Exeter books is later than that of the “Exeter Book” itself, which would mean after about 970 or 980. Stevens (1992: 136) gives the more specific range, 960–86. Along with its sister manuscripts, Exeter 3507 is usually considered to have been written in Canterbury, perhaps at Christ Church, based on paleographical and art historical evidence (Gameson 1996: 178), though Conner (1993: 20 *et passim*) has argued extensively for an Exeter origin for this trio of books.

Based on the presence of Paris, BN lat. 943 in Sherborne by the early 11c (Ker, *Cat.*, no. 364), and the seemingly close ties between Sherborne and Exeter in the 10c and 11c (Webber 1992: 69), it is possible that the book came to Exeter from Sherborne. Exeter 3507 may have come to Exeter with Leofric or been there in the late 10c (Conner 1993: 19–20), but the book does not bear a Leofrician donation inscription, nor is it in Leofric’s 11c inventory. The manuscript was glossed in several hands, including the main one, and there are two OE glosses on f. 92v. Annotations in a 12c hand (as at f. 4v) show the book was read in the years after the Conquest. The 1327 inventory of Exeter’s holdings shows that it certainly had come to Exeter by then (Oliver 1861: 303), and Ker suggests that it had come to Exeter “much earlier” (Ker 1977: 2.814). Exeter 3507 does not appear to be present in the 1506 inventory (*contra* the error in Ker, *Cat.*, 154; corrected in Ker 1977: 2.814), though an untraced “Ysidorus de natura rerum” is found there (Oliver 1861: 373). There is a rust mark at the tail center of f. 1, indicating that in a previous binding the book was chained, most likely in the Exeter library. The book was still in Exeter in the late 17c, when Bernard noted it (1697: no. 25). It was rebound in the 18c, and this may have been the occasion of the list of contents now on the front pastedown. The manuscript was catalogued by Wanley (1705: 281), and Hickes (1705: 4 and table 2) printed its runic alphabets (f. 66r).

CODICOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION: iii + 97 + iii. Foliated in pencil at top center on both recto and verso; the first seven folios are misbound in the order 2, 4, 3, 6, 5, 7, 8, this misbinding predating the foliation, which numbers them ‘1–7’. A later pencil hand corrects the foliation according to the order of the text at top center recto with variations of ‘f.’ or ‘fo.’ with the corrected folio number circled. This pencil hand also left short notes on the misfoliation. The main foliating hand occasionally corrects itself.

The parchment is smooth and firm, well-prepared to the point that hair and flesh sides are difficult to discern. The first few leaves show some blotching from mold. Quires of eight arranged hair outside, all sheets

(HHHH), signed 'a-m' at tail center of the last folio verso in A-S minuscule with four dots around each letter, likely the hand of the main scribe. The leaves measure approx. 312–315 × 195 mm. with a text grid of 228–230 × 128–130 mm., pricked in the outer margins, and ruled in dry-point with vertical double bounding, 10 mm. in width, and 29 lines for writing; each line for writing is ruled top and bottom, making for very regular minimum height of approx. 3 mm., with a 5 mm. space between each line of writing. Generally, inner margins of ca. 15 mm., outer margins of ca. 30 mm., and 28–30 mm. at top, with ample margins of ca. 55–58 mm. at tail of each page (depending on wear at the leaves' edges and cropping). Laid out for long lines, though capitula, some of the alphabet lists, and poetry are in two columns, with special formats for calendrical tables at ff. 48v-49r. and for the tables on ff. 65v-66r.

The main text ink is dark brown; A-S square minuscule incipits and explicits in red ink, as are chapter numbers. First lines of prologue and main text of the two major works (Hrabanus and Isidore) are in three- and two-line monumental capitals in green and red. Large initial capitals of each chapter alternate red and brown of main text. Poems on ff. 49v, 58v-60v have large initial capitals for each line. Within text, litterae nobiliores are one-line capitals, at times washed in yellow. Diagrams in red and main text ink from Isidore's "De natura" at ff. 71v, 74r, 75v, 76r, 77r, 82r, 85r, 89v, 92r with unfinished diagrams at ff. 79v, 80v, and 97v. Very lightly glossed and corrected in main text hand, including the two OE glosses on f. 92v. Dry-point doodles and sketches: on ff. 12r, a sketch of a horse's head at f. 49v, and a crude head at f. 51r and other sparse dry-point marks, including runes at f. 66r.

Bound with three paper flyleaves at front and back in the 18c, which are blank except for contents, ownership, and shelf marks (given in "Contents," below); first seven and last two leaves restored, attached to thick paper stubs. Paper pastedowns on inside front and back covers. Worn brown leather cover and spine, tooled on front and back with a filigreed rectangular ornament. Three sewing stations, plus endbands, show on spine, where tooled in gold at head 'COD. | ECCLESIA | EXON.' Sticker with current shelfmark at top left corner of front cover. Described by Ker (1977: 2. 813–14) and Derolez (1954: 219–22).

COLLATION: three paper binding leaves (18c); I⁸ wants 1 (extant leaves detached and restored in wrong order 2, 4, 3, 6, 5, 7, 8; signed 'a', foliated '1–7'; refoliated acc. to text order); II-XII⁸ (ff. 8–95; signed 'b-m'); XIII²

two leaves, conjugate? (ff. 96–97; no quire signature); three paper binding leaves (18c).

CONTENTS:

Pastedown, inner cover: Older shelfmarks, 'no. 25' at top left and larger 'No. 2' at center, below contents list; 18c contents list: '1. Hrabani Mauri de Computo exemplar probe ante 700 annos | exaratum, in quo habentur Alphabeta quadam & uoces nonnullæ | Latina Litteris Runicis scriptæ. vide, Grammaticæ Islendicæ | paginam quarta & Tabellam quartum sequentem in Tomo G. Hiccesii Primo.' In a different and lighter inked hand, '2. Accedit Isidorus Hispalensis Episc. de Natura Rerum | cum Schematibus & Figuris, a Clariss. Wanleio | in Catalogo suo Codd. MSs Anglo-Sax: Ecclesiæ | Exoniensis omissus'; in a black ink and different 18c hand, 'B. 97 Folio et 194 Paginæ | in hoc libro continentur'. Large printed Exeter book plate, dated 1749.

f. [i] recto 18c bibliographical note: 'S. Baluzius edidit Hunc Librum ex Vetere MSs. | vid. Miscellaneorum Lib P^m. Modern pencil just beneath, '? Paris 1698'. Inked stamp shelfmark '3507' and modern sticker of the Dean and Chapter of Exeter Cathedral.

[Note: Reference is to Étienne Baluze, *Stephani Baluzii Miscellaneorum Liber Primus, Hoc Est Collectio Veterum Monumentorum Quae Hactenus Latuerant in Variis Codicibus et Bibliothecis* (Paris, 1678).]

ff. [i] verso–[iii] verso blank [i verso – iii recto not photographed].

1. ff. 1r–58r Hrabanus Maurus, "De computo" (ed. Stevens 1979; coll. as siglum "E"):

a. f. 1r/1–1v/15 Prologue to "De computo": **Incipit p(ro)logus hrabani p(er)itissimi uiri | 'DILECTIO FRATRI MACHARIO | monacho hrabanus peccator in chr(ist)o | salutem . . . Et mihi remittas.' explicit p(ro)logus** (coll. Stevens 1979: 199–200);

b. ff. 1v/16–2vb/7 (two columns) capitula of "De computo": **Incipiunt kapitula libri sequentis | 'i De numeroru(m) potentia'; ends: 'xcvi De ætatibus' | expliciunt | kapitula** (coll. Stevens 1979: 201–4) [rest of f. 2vb blank];

[Note: The opening leaves (as originally foliated) are misarranged, 1, 3, 2, 4, 6, 7; the correct order is noted by circled pencil foliations; the original foliation is correct from f. 6 on and is noted on the top center of both rectos and versos.]

c. ff. 3/1–58r/28 "De computo": **Incipit ipse liber hrabani de compote. | 'QVIA TE VENERANDE | P(RE)CEPTOR SEPE AVDIUI | de numeris disputantem discipulisq(ue) tuis huius | artis disciplinam**

demonstrantem'; ends: 'qui est benedictus in | sæcula AMEN' (coll. Stevens 1979: 205–321).

[Note: Marginal 'M' and 'D' in red, at times oxidized to metallic, mark the speakers (Magister and Discipulus) in the dialogue. A dry-point interlace knot and circles at f. 12r top right corner. A notice (which is not the ch. title) at f. 28r/6–7 in the inner margin, boxed in red ink: 'DE ÆQUI/NOCTIIS'. Dry-point hashmarks at f. 32r in outer margin mid-page. Multicolumned calendrical table at ff. 48v–49r. In outer margin at f. 49v/10–12, a dry-point sketch of a horse's head. At f. 51r/21–23 in outer margin, a dry-point sketch of a human head.]

2. ff. 58r/28–66v/23 computistical poems:

- a. f. 58r/28–58v/9 excerpt from Virgil, "Georgics" (1.231–239): **versus | de duodecim mensibus anni** || 'Idcirco certis dimensionum partibus orbem . . . Obliquus quase signorum uerterit ordo' (as Mynors 1969: 1.36; SK 7632);
- b. ff. 58v/9–59r/29 **tetrasticon autenticum. de singulis mensib(us) | 'Hic iani mensis sacer est en aspice ut aris . . . Nunc tibi cum d(o)mi(n)o ludere uerna licet'** (as Bailey 1982: no. 391; SK 6489);
- c. f. 59v/1–13 excerpt from Ausonius, "Eclogues" 9: **versus de singulis mensibus | 'Primus romanas ordiris iane kalendas . . . Imbrifer ast mensis. tumque dece(m)ber ad e(st)'** (as Combeaud 2010: 94–96; SK 12559), with a different last line (cf. Bullough 1991: 32–33 nn. 64 and 66; Combeaud, textual note);
- d. f. 59v/14–26 **versus de mensibus et signis .xii. | 'Dira patet iani romanis ianua bellis . . . Vnde december amat. te genialis hiemis'** (as Bailey 1982: no. 390; SK 3727);
- e. ff. 59v/27–60r/10 Pseudo-Bedan poem: **versus de duodecim signis | 'Primus adest aries obscuro lumine labens . . . Ex insquamigeri [sic, PL "Squammiferi"] serpentes ludere pisces'** (as PL. 94.637 with significant variants; SK 12524);
- f. f. 60r/11–28 **versus de cursu anni | 'Bis sena mensium uertagine uoluitur annus . . . Per nonas idus decurrens atq(ue) kalendas'** (as Baker and Lapidge 1995: 384; SK 1716);
- g. f. 60r/29–60v/8 Pseudo-Bedan poem: **de octo tramitibus circuli decennouenalis || 'Linea chr(ist)e tuos prima est q(ue) continet annos . . . Aetatem lune monstatq(ue) nouissimus. ordo'** (as PL 90.860; SK 8931);
- h. f. 60v/9–16 **versus de septem dierum uocabulis | 'Prima dies phoebi sacro nomine fulget . . . Et micat alma dies saturno septima summo'** (as Riese 1895: 1.2.40, no. 488; SK 12491).

3. Geographic, Scientific, and Computistical Notes and Alphabets:

- a. ff. 60v/17–61v/15 on the Seven Wonders: **de septem miraculis manu factis** | ‘Primum capitolium romę saluu(m) tutius q(ua)m ciuitas . . . et | viii. colu(m)næ finem faciunt ta(m) mirabilis ædificii’ (cf. as Omont 1882: 47–50; related to Ps.-Bedan account of seven wonders as PL 90.961);
- b. ff. 61v/17–63v/6 (one line left blank for absent rubric) Hyginus, “De imaginibus coeli” / Pseudo-Bedan “Descriptio poli”: ‘Duo sunt extremi uertices mundi’; ends: ‘ad ipsum usq(ue) | decurrit accipiens’ (as Hasper 1861: 11–15; PL 90.368–69) [two lines blank at end];
- c. f. 63v/9–26 list of the twenty-four Egyptian Days: **Incipiunt dies egyptiaci q(ui) debeant obseruari** | ‘Non interscias. Nec sanguis laxetur . . . Mense dece(m)bri. die. xi^{mo}. et ante quam exeat die quinto’ (similar formularies [actual unlucky dates differ] occur in BL Cotton Caligula A. xv [179], ff. 129v-130r and Cotton Tiberius C. vi [233], f. 114, as pr. Chardonnens 2007: 373);
- d. ff. 63v/27–64r/12 on the three Egyptian Days: **Item dies ægyptiaci** | ‘Quos maxime obseruare debemus . . . sicut supra scriptum est sedisti tres per | omnia obseruandi sunt’ (ed. Chardonnens 2007: 343, from BL Cotton Vitellius A. xii [250], f. 44rv);
- e. f. 64r/12–64v/3 on the readings for the year: **Incipit ordo librorum | catholicorum in circulo anni legendorum** | ‘In primis. in .lxx. ponunt eptaticum. usque in .xv^{ma}. | die ante pascha . . . De natal(e) d(omi)ni ponunt epistolas pauli usq(ue) in lxxam’ (cf. Andrieu 1931: 2.481–88);
- f. f. 64v/5–29 (line 4 left blank for absent rubric) pronunciation of Latin alphabet: ‘Om(ne)s u(ero) litt(er)æ a similitudine uocis caract(er)as accep(er)unt | A. Sub hiato ore congruo solo sp(irit)u memoratur Z. Vero appius claudius testatur. Dentes moti | Dum exprimitur imitatur’ (cf. Hagen 1870: 307–8, ultimate source being Martianus Capella, as Dick 1969: 95–96; cf. Holtz 1981: 419–20);
- g. f. 65ra/1–65va/5 Greek and Hebrew alphabets with interpretations (Hebrew letters approximate forms in MS): (f. 65ra/1–24) ‘A alfa. agricola . . . Ωoo. finis’; (f. 65rb/1–65va/5) ‘Ⲁ aleph int(er)p(re)tat(ur) doctrina. . . τ [τ?] tau. errauit uel consummauit’(on the Greek alphabet and its interpretation, see Bischoff 1951: 33–34; forms printed in Singer 1922: 290–91; on the Hebrew alphabet and its forms, see Thiel 1973: 84–96, 121–24; Fleming 2006: 107–9) [f. 65vab/6–7 blank];
- h. f. 65va/8–29 and 65vb/8–12 list of Greek letters with numerical values: ‘A mia [sic] .i. . . Ψ niacusin [sic] .dcccc’;
- i. f. 65vb/16–27 in boxed outline, Greek names for groups of thousands and for Jesus Christ: ‘chile. | dischile. . . CHristus. χpc’;

[Note: These last four lines note an alternative poetic prologue, Fontaine's "Epistula Sisebuti" (1960: 329–35) not usually found in the insular 'long recension' (Fontaine 1960: 38); they also suggest that some consider the text's author Gildas. Derolez (1954: 226) suggests "British influence" on the textual transmission of this and the runic texts.]

- c. ff. 68r/4–97v/12 (text) Isidore, "De natura rerum": **de diebus | DIES EST SOLIS ORI|ENTIS PRESENTIA QVO VSQ(UE) | ad occasum perueniat**; ends: 'Terre autem | totius mensuram geometrici .clxxx. milium sta|diorum estimauerunt. Cuius terre expositione(m) | In medio ociano subiecta declarat formula | Finiunt expositiones numero quadraginta | NOVEM' **Explicit liber isidori psalensis episcopi | de natura rerum** (as Fontaine 1960: 173–327).

[Note: The last sentence and colophon here 'Cuius terre . . . Finiunt . . . novem' are not included in Fontaine 1960.]

- OE Content: Two OE glosses on f. 92v: line 7, 'luligines' gl. 'i(d est) mere-swin', line 8 'delphini' gl.: 'i(d est) simones v(el) seolas' (cf. Napier 1900: no. 41, as pr. from BL Cotton Domitian i [187]).
5. f. 97v (lower half of the page) Isidorean T-O world diagram with notes on the sons of Noah and division of the world and its provinces: 'Trés filii noę diuiser(un)t orbem terrarum in .iii. (gl.: 'tres') partes | post diluuu(m). Sém In asiæ. Chám in affrica | Iaphet In europa'; in the three compartments: 'In asia s(un)t p(rovinciæ .xv. . . . egyptus. libia'; 'In affrica sunt .xii. p(ro)uinciæ . . . et mi|nores'; 'In europa sunt p(ro)vincie | xiiii brittannia. | hybernia. austral|irias [sic]' (on this type of map, see Woodward 1987: 1.295–97; text from Nennius, see Morris 1980: 63, §17).

PHOTO NOTES: ff. [i] verso - [iii] recto (all blank) are not included in the images. Pencil foliation is on top center of both recto and verso is faint and is seldom visible on fiche.

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