History of the Fontes Anglo-Saxonici Project

The project was begun in 1984 and was developed and managed by a group of scholars under the chairmanship of, successively, Peter Clemoes (Cambridge), Malcolm Godden (Oxford) and Joyce Hill (Leeds). Until 2007, its officers were:

> Chairman: Professor Joyce Hill, University of Leeds
> Director for Old English: Professor Donald Scragg, University of Manchester
> Director for Anglo-Latin: Professor Rosalind Love, University of Cambridge
> Director of the Database: Professor Malcolm Godden, University of Oxford
> Database Editor and Research Associate: Dr Rohini Jayatilaka, University of Oxford
> Hon. Secretary: Mr Peter Jackson, Oxford
> Research Officer: Dr Christine Rauer, University of St Andrews

Other members of the Committee were:

> Professor Janet Bately, King's College, London
> Professor Mary Clayton, University College, Dublin
> Professor Susan Irvine, University College, London
> Professor Clare Lees, King's College, London
> Professor Jane Roberts, King's College, London

The Committee was helped by an international Advisory Board whose members were:

> Professor Fred Biggs, University of Connecticut
> Professor Helmut Gneuss, University of Munich
> Professor Tom Hall, University of Illinois at Chicago
> Professor Tom Hill, Cornell University
> Professor Michael Lapidge, University of Notre Dame, Indiana
> Professor Andy Orchard, University of Toronto
> Professor Paul Szarmach, Medieval Institute, University of Western Michigan, Kalamazoo
> Professor Charles D. Wright, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champagne

The initial impulse for a large-scale project to study and record the written sources of Anglo-Saxon authors came at a one-day conference on sources at the University of Leeds in March 1984, organized to publicize a proposal made at the Symposium on the Sources of Anglo-Saxon Culture held in conjunction with the 1983 International Congress on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University to revise J. D. A. Ogilvy's Books known to the English, 597-1066 (Cambridge, MA, 1967). At the Leeds Conference, J. E. Cross and Malcolm Godden gave papers on the sources of some of the Vercelli homilies and of Ælfric respectively, and in the discussion which followed, the desirability of establishing a rather different project, along the lines of *Fontes Anglo-Saxonici*, was agreed by all present. A small steering committee was set up, which met subsequently on a number of occasions at King's College, London, during the summer of 1984. At some of its meetings representatives of the informal group of American scholars concerned with the 'revised Ogilvy' project (subsequently named Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture) were also present, and the separate aims and objectives of the two

schemes were clarified. The steering committee established an Executive Committee for *Fontes* with Peter Clemoes as Director, Joyce Hill as General Secretary, Michael Lapidge as Executive Secretary for Anglo-Latin, and Donald Scragg as Executive Secretary for Old English.

Planning and setting up the project in every detail necessarily formed a lengthy initial stage, but since then a substantial body of material has been assembled. First of all, the Executive Committee, on the basis of work done by various subcommittees, approved guidelines for the submission of entries to a computer database, housed at the University of Manchester. Then followed the recruitment of a body of scholars worldwide. Next the database was created by Dr Marilyn Deegan, whose work during a one-year full-time appointment as a Research Assistant to the project was funded by the University of Manchester's Research Support Fund. Processing of the contributions received from scholars and their incorporation in the database were achieved to begin with by the half-time appointment for two years of Mrs (now Dr) Wendy Collier as a Research Assistant, funded by the University of Manchester Research Support Fund. Subsequently continuation of Dr Collier's work was supported by grants from the British Academy. From 1991 onwards advances on the Old English side of the project were greatly assisted by a succession of appointments of research associates funded by the British Academy and its Humanities Research Board, and subsequently by the Arts and Humanities Research Board.

These research associates compiled material for a substantial range of material:

1992-3 Dr Joan Hart (now Joan Hart-Hasler): King Alfred's version of the *Regula Pastoralis*, the Old English Bede, Canons of Edgar, Apollonius of Tyre

1995-7 Dr Mark Atherton: anonymous homilies and saints' lives; Ælfric's *De Temporibus Anni*; as well as processing work from outside contributors

1995-2002 Dr Rohini Jayatilaka: Ælfric's Supplementary Homilies and Saints' Lives; Wærferth's translation of Gregory's *Dialogues*; Old English Orosius; Old English Benedictine Rule

1997-8 Dr Christine Rauer: Lives of St Machutus and Chad; the *Old English Martyrology*

1998-9 Prof Daniel Anlezark: Old English Daniel and Azarias; Old English Exodus

1999 Dr Brad Bedingfield: Ælfric's homilies Assmann 5 and 6; Ælfric's *Interrogationes Sigewulfi in Genesin*

Work on the Anglo-Latin side was substantially advanced in 1996 by the appointment of Dr Rosalind Love as Humanities Research Board Institutional Fellow at Robinson College Cambridge, to work on the project; she covered the Latin charters, the Latin saints' lives and the works of Bede. Following Dr Love's appointment to a lectureship in the Department of Anglo-Saxon Norse and Celtic at Cambridge, Dr Katharine Scarfe-Beckett succeeded to the HRB Institutional Fellowship in 2000 and completed work on the sources for Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*.

Other material has been contributed by members of the project, and by scholars elsewhere.

In 1995 the database was moved from the mainframe computer at Manchester to a PC-base using the Paradox database system, and Dr Orchard became database manager. In 1998 the main database was relocated at Oxford, with Dr Jayatilaka as database editor and Professor Godden as database director, and work began on creating a web-mounted version, with the help of Paul Groves of the Humanities Computing Development Team at the Oxford University Computing Service. This was made available to the public for the first time on 1 August 1999. In 2002 the present CD-ROM version of the database was created with the help of David Miles of Oxford Database Design.

For the most recent redesign of the *Fontes Anglo-Saxonici* database, please see the separate webpage '2020 Re-development of the Database'.

Spin Offs

In the course of its development the project has produced a series of research tools:

> M. Lapidge, *Abbreviations for Sources and Specification of Standard Editions for Sources* (Centre for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, SUNY, Binghamton, 1988)
> M. Lapidge and R. Love, A Handlist of Latin Texts written in Anglo-Saxon England
> J. Bately, *Anonymous Old English Homilies: a Preliminary Bibliography of Source Studies* (Centre for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, SUNY, Binghamton, 1993)
> J. Bately, J. Roberts et al., Archive of source-studies and source materials located in the Department of English, King's College London

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> University of Leeds: institutional support
> University of Cambridge: institutional support
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> University of Oxford: grant for hardware and web development 1997-9, and institutional support 1997-2002