

# Anglo- Saxon England 25

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

## Anglo-Saxon England 25

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With the present volume, *Anglo-Saxon England* reaches the first quarter-century of its existence. At the outset, the stated aim of the periodical was 'to promote fresh areas of knowledge and to invigorate growth in new directions'. Throughout its existence, the periodical has attempted to achieve this aim. In this respect the present volume follows in the footsteps of its predecessors. New material evidence is brought to light for the first time, including a recently discovered niello disc from Limpsfield Grange (Surrey) and two fragments of a composite Old English homily recently discovered in Westminster Abbey. Many previously accepted scholarly positions are reassessed and challenged. A comprehensive assessment of the palaeography of the Exeter Book situates it in the context of late-tenth-century book production, and shows that there are no grounds for thinking that the manuscript originated at Exeter itself and that its origin must as yet remain unknown. The well-known gloss to the Vespasian Psalter is subjected to fresh scrutiny, and is shown to be a copy of a lost manuscript rather than an original composition. The so-called 'Byrhtferth Glosses', printed in 1543 from a lost manuscript and regarded for the past half-century as a Carolingian compilation, are shown to be in all likelihood a genuine work of Byrhtferth of Ramsey, thereby opening up a new avenue of research on Byrhtferth's unusual learning. Two well-known archaeological sites – Northampton and Cheddar – are subjected to a probing reassessment of their original functions. And the reforms of Archbishop Wulfred at early-ninth-century Canterbury are reinvestigated in the light of Chrodegang's *Rule*.

As always, the interpretation of Old English poetry figures largely in the volume. One of the most intriguing of the Old English riddles is explained convincingly for the first time. The

*(continued on back flap)*

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*Her mon mæg giet gesion hiora swæð*

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## 25

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