

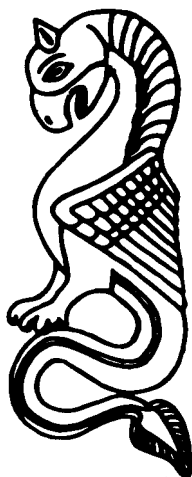
Leeds Studies in English

Article:

Janet Bately, 'The Compilation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle Once More', *Leeds Studies in English*, n.s. 16 (1985), 7-26

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Leeds Studies in English
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THE COMPILATION OF THE *ANGLO-SAXON CHRONICLE* ONCE MORE

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In an earlier study of the compilation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle I chose as my stopping point the annal for 890, reserving judgment on the authorship of the entry for 891, but observing that separate authorship for the annals that follow is indicated by a large number of features.² Even in an 'organic' work like the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle separate authorship does not, of course, necessarily mean chronologically distinct acts of compilation, nor does it rule out the possibility of one of the authors of a 'first compilation' subsequently playing some part in an extension of it. With this reservation, and with all the other reservations that I made in that study,³ I propose now to examine the evidence for authorship of the next major section of the Chronicle, namely the annals dealing with the later years of Alfred's reign, 891 to 896, comparing their usage with that of the '890 Chronicle' on the one hand and the Parker manuscript entries for 900 to 920 on the other.⁴

That a version of the Chronicle covering events in the first two-thirds of Alfred's reign must have been in existence by the year 893 at the latest, is indicated by Asser's use, in that year, of material from an annal which cannot have achieved its present form before the year 889.⁵ The annal for 890 is generally supposed to belong to this first version and since it is found in all surviving versions of the Chronicle as well as in Æthelweard's Chronicle⁶ and is compatible both in linguistic usage and in content with the preceding section,⁷ there seems no reason to doubt that it indeed belonged to the first compilation as I would define it. Yet to be resolved, however, is the question of the stage in compilation at which annals 891 and 892 were composed and inserted and the relationship between these annals and the entries that follow, in particular annals 893-896. The case for an 891 Chronicle has most recently been put by Malcolm Parkes, who argues from palaeographical evidence provided by the Parker manuscript, A.⁸ In this manuscript the annals BC 60 to AD 891, items 1 and 2,⁹ are copied in a single hand, which Parkes sees as consistent with the end of the ninth century, the scribe's booklet being "therefore probably contemporary with the revision itself"; indeed "his exemplar must have been extremely close to the original", changes in layout representing decisions taken by this scribe. Parkes also sees the blank entry for 892 on 16r as supporting the theory of a first compilation extending to 891.¹⁰ However, Dr Dumville has recently suggested that Hand 1 of the Parker MS may in fact be of considerably later date than is generally supposed and that the scribe was quite

possibly writing at the same time as scribe 2 (whom he sees as responsible for the whole section from 891, item 3, original dating, to 920, original dating), when the latter was engaged in his first stint of copying.¹¹ If he is right - and as a non-palaeographer I find his arguments totally convincing - then one of the strongest pieces of evidence for annal 891 as the final entry in the 'first chronicle' is invalidated, and the claims of annals 890, 892 and even 893 to mark the end of the first compilation have to be considered.¹²

The case for 892 as a break-off point rests mainly on the fact that this is the last annal which is found in all the surviving manuscripts and which therefore can be described as of the 'common stock'. Since the appearance of Plummer's edition, discussion of a 'first chronicle' ending with the annal for 892 has generally started from an assumption of its actuality and then mainly concentrated on the implications of this as an accepted fact. Thus, for instance, Professor Sawyer sees a continuity of purpose running through the chronicle right up to the entry for 892. His view is that it was interest in the great army that came to England in 892 that caused it to be followed round the continent in preceding annals:

In some years, the Chronicler reports nothing from England but follows with anxious care the movements on the Continent of the *here* that was to cross to England in 892. His concentration on this particular *here* must mean that it had already reached England when he was compiling the Chronicle for those years. The purpose of the Chronicle seems, indeed, to have been to provide the background to this invasion and to relate the struggle of Alfred against the raiders after 892.¹³

And again:

The Chronicle seems, in fact, to have been a work of propaganda, to remind men that it was the West Saxons alone who had successfully resisted the invaders. The achievements of *Æ*belwulf and his sons are rehearsed and praised while the failure of the Mercians is emphasised. It is a piece of propaganda produced at a time of great crisis, when the great *here* came to England from Boulogne.¹⁴

However, Sawyer not only takes for granted the inclusion of 892 in the 'first chronicle', he also suggests an intimate connection between this compilation and the section 893 to 896:

The annals for the years immediately after 892 deal exclusively with the campaigns against the *here* that arrived in England in that year, the *here* on which the Chronicler's attention had been so narrowly focused, and whose arrival in England seems to have

been the occasion for the compilation of the work. Only after its dispersal in the summer of 896 does the Chronicle turn to other subjects . . . It is as though the break up of the *here* in 896 meant that the Chronicler's immediate purpose had been fulfilled. It also means that whoever was responsible for the original compilation of 892 was probably also responsible for the annals for the next few years.¹⁵

In arguing that the 'first chronicle' was intended as propaganda, Professor Sawyer was developing a theory propounded by Professor Wallace-Hadrill¹⁶ and subsequently taken up by a number of historians - one of the most recent contributions being that of R.H.C. Davis.¹⁷ In Professor Davis's view the work was planned to glorify Alfred and restore the morale of his people. However, this interpretation has been forcefully challenged by Dorothy Whitelock.¹⁸ As Professor Whitelock points out, the first compilation includes a great amount of material completely irrelevant to the purpose of propaganda, particularly the high proportion of entries taken from Mercian sources:

If the compiler of the Chronicle had been mainly concerned to glorify the West Saxon royal house, as some have claimed, some of these annals would have been out of place; in particular, the recording of the deaths of early Mercian ecclesiastics and ealdormen would be alien to this purpose.

Moreover, she observes that the Chronicle "gives no impression it was compiled in haste for immediate use". Professor Whitelock accepts as plausible my arguments for a new author, responsible for the annals 879 or 880 through to 890,¹⁹ who could be either a collaborator or a continuer, though she appears to favour the former possibility. In these annals she agrees that "continental affairs loom fairly largely". However, whereas Sawyer, assuming 892 to be the final annal in the first compilation, which he takes to have been composed in or shortly after 892, sees interest in the great army that came to England in 892 as the reason for its being followed round the continent in preceding annals, Professor Whitelock, believing 890 to be the most probable break-off point, comments first that "it is not surprising that the movements of the great band of Vikings which returned to the continent from Fulham in 880 should have been watched by people in England, aware of the danger that it might return", and second that "one gets the impression that the Chronicler was interested in their doings on the continent only in as far as they affected English affairs, and that when he gives this small selection of their activities he was aware that the army did return in 885". By this, Professor Whitelock presumably means that the annals 881 to 884 were not composed earlier than 885.

My own position in this matter is closest to that of Professor Whitelock, though I would disagree with her in certain points of detail, and in particular with her supposition that the continental information was necessarily the result of regular intelligence-gathering, in the period of calm leading up to the autumn of 892, by

Anglo-Saxons aware of the danger that the Vikings might return. Since the *here* which leaves England in 880 does return in 885, it is perfectly logical that a chronicler writing after that date should seek information about its whereabouts during those years that it was away. If he were collecting this information at some specific date in the late 880s or early 890s it would be no less logical for him at the same time also to collect and record details of that *here's* subsequent activities on the continent, along with such information about other continental events as he had been able to obtain, regardless of whether or not it had already returned a second time to England. Moreover, it may be noted that in following this *here* after it left England, first in 880 and then again in 885, the chronicler is doing no more than his colleague or predecessor did in recording the activities of an earlier *here* in Mercia and Northumbria between 866 and 870 and again between 872 and 875. And in spite of Sawyer's claim of "anxious care", it must also be noted that the chronicler was either inadequately informed of events or, as Professor Whitelock observes, deliberately giving no more than a small selection of what he had learned of the *here's* activities.²⁰ Indeed, as a record of what actually happened in this period, the Chronicle entries are painfully inadequate. And perhaps most significant of all, although we hear a little about the *micel here*, we are told nothing at all about the continental adventures of Hæsten, whose arrival at this time must surely also have been a matter of great concern, and who had been campaigning in the vicinity of the channel for several years previously.²¹ So the fact that the *here* referred to as leaving England in 880 was to return there in 892 does not necessarily require us to conclude that the chronicle was first compiled in 892 or early 893 as a response to that threat, or that "the annals for 880 to 891 are unintelligible except in terms of a knowledge of what happened in 892".²² In any case, even if the Chronicle were compiled (or extended) in or shortly after 892 because of the arrival of the *micel here* in the autumn of that year, it does not follow that annal 892 itself necessarily formed part of that compilation.

None of the advocates of an 891 or 892 Chronicle has discussed the linguistic evidence for or against these stopping points, except to isolate the group of annals from 892 or 893 to 896 for their distinctive style.²³ However, although the linguistic material is scanty, so is the historical evidence, and a number of conclusions can be drawn from lexical and syntactical usage which, taken in conjunction with the palaeographical and textual evidence as well as that of subject-matter, may help to shed light on the way in which the Chronicle entries for the end of Alfred's reign were put together.²⁴

As I have suggested elsewhere, differences of linguistic usage indicate either that the first Alfredian compilation ended with the annals for the closing years of the 870s (or shortly after), and that the annals for the 880s and 890 may be, like the annals that follow, a continuation, or that the 'first chronicle', extending to at least 890, was a collaborative effort and that a new author was responsible for these annals.²⁵ Linguistic evidence does not allow greater precision than this. It does not tell us whether the 880

annals were added one by one or in a group, though the treatment of their subject matter may suggest the latter,²⁶ nor does it allow any sure conclusion to be drawn as to the status of annal 891. Since the first part of this annal, with its reference to the defeat of the Viking army by Earnulf, appears to report the decisive end of the *here's* continental venture which forms the greater part of the subject-matter of annals 880 to 891,²⁷ it is tempting to see the material which it contains as coming from the same continental source (or sources) as the preceding material and possibly at the same time. There is certainly nothing in the vocabulary of this first part to suggest any change of authorship at this point. However, the only potentially significant usage is the rendering of the concept 'to fight' by *gefeohtan*, and since this concept occurs only once here, there is no way of telling whether its user normally employed a variety of words for it (as did the author of the annals for the 870s) or just the one (as in the annals for the 880s and subsequently).²⁸ The second part of the annal deals with Irish matters and differs from the annals for the 880s in its use of *gefaran* for 'to die', not *forpfaran*,²⁹ while the third part (now dated 892 in MS A) has a couple of features which distinguish it from the 'first chronicle' as a whole, that is the use of *æteowan* not *opiewan*, and *þe mon hæ̅t* not, as in earlier sections, *þe is gecueden* or *þe is nemned*.³⁰ On their own these differences are not statistically significant. All together, and in the context of patterns of usage elsewhere, they amount to sufficient evidence to put the onus of proof squarely on those who wish to advocate single authorship for the annals 880 to 892 or indeed beyond. And it should in addition be noted that the 891 annalist not only comments that *cometa* is the Latin name for star; he also gives its native name and the reason for it, even though the 'first chronicle' had already included two references to comets without need being felt for any such explanation.³¹ Moreover, the palaeographical evidence of MS A, which provides the oldest copy of our text, is that the scribe - writing after 891 - appears to have had no knowledge of the existence of this material, not only inserting the annal number for 892 in readiness for the next entry but also using his normal symbol for an annal ending at this point.³² At the same time the textual evidence provided by other surviving manuscripts and derivative Latin chronicles suggests that more than one version of annal 891 may have been circulated. Thus, the Annals of St Neots have only material corresponding to item 3, with a reference to comets (in the plural), dated correctly 891;³³ the vernacular text of MS F has item 2 only (though versions of items 2 and 3 are provided by the Latin), and MS E omits the annal in its entirety, merely supplying the annal number and following it with an entry dated 893 (for 892) which agrees in important details with MS A against MSS B, C and D. MS D has all three parts of the entry but, like MS C, dates them 892 (like E leaving annal 891 blank) and follows them up with an entry dated 893 (for 892) which agrees textually with B and C against A and E. There is thus a very strong possibility that the material here, as in the subsequent entries, is derived from another - possibly C-type - manuscript, which was used to fill gaps in a copy of the northern recension which lacked this part of the Chronicle.³⁴ The possibility that

the annal for 891 did not take final shape until *after* copying and circulation of the 'first chronicle' had begun, with different pieces of material being added at different times,³⁵ perhaps by different hands, and either through accident, through variations in timing of circulation, or because of the piece-meal nature of the additions, not all being incorporated in all copies, cannot be ignored.

The annal for 892 (now dated 893 in MS A) provides a separate set of problems. As Sawyer has observed, it has close links with the annals that follow, 893 to 896. Indeed Professor Whitelock sees it as composed at the same time as these annals: "The account of the campaigns of 892 to 896 possibly once existed as a separate document",³⁶ while Cecily Clark comments that "the opening entries in the new hand, those from 892 to 896 especially, contrast markedly with those of the early Alfredian compilation. Not only are they longer and fuller of detail, but their syntax, in contrast with the scarcely varied coordination of the preceding entries, shows free use of subordination". In addition Dr Clark draws attention to the accompanying rhetorical patterning, the deliberate linkage between annals, and the occasional insight into purpose and motivation.³⁷ Most recently Professor Shippey, assuming a single author for the section 892 to 896 and possibly beyond, sees a unity of incompetence:

One could . . . say that the chronicler was not good at working out in advance what he would have to say and what he could omit, though he certainly showed foresight on occasion. But his overall method of narration, full of circuits and afterthoughts, would then be only a larger analogue of the structure of some of his sentences.³⁸

However, the instances of "particular difficulty with temporal correlations" which he cites from annal 892 have other possible explanations.³⁹ Moreover, as we have seen, in spite of the peculiar textual history of annals 891 and 892, the entry for 892 does occur in all the surviving manuscripts. Could the author of the annal for 892 be both one of the compilers of the 'basic chronicle' and responsible for the annals from 893 on? To answer this question it is necessary to identify the special linguistic characteristics of the annals from 892 to 897. And the first conclusion to be drawn from an analysis of the language of this section is that the material in annals 893 to 895 has certain features that give these particular annals coherence as a group and at the same time distinguish and differentiate them both from the bulk of the annal for 896 and from annal 897 as well as from earlier and later sets of annals.

First of all, they are characterised by the use of the construction verb of motion + *oppæt* or *pæt*, often with *gedon* in the subordinate clause: as 893 "7 for pæt he gewicode betwuh þam twam hergum"; 893 "Foron þa up be Temese oppæt hie gedydon at Sæferne"; 893 "7 foron anstreces dages 7 nihtes pæt hie gedydon on anre westre ceastre"; 894 "þa foron hie ofer Norðhymbra lond . . . oppæt hie comon on EastSeaxna lond"; 895 "foron micel dæl þara burgwara . . .

þæt hie gedydon æt þara Deniscana geweorc"; 895 "7 eodon ofer land þæt he gedydon æt Cwathbrycge". This construction is entirely absent from the Chronicle up to 890, though there is ample opportunity for it, at least in the later, fuller, entries. The only other instances in the whole of the Parker Chronicle are found in the annals for 914 and 917.⁴⁰

Second, they are characterised by their fondness for main clauses with the opening order verb + subject or verb + adverb with subject not expressed.⁴¹ Thus (i) with V^{AS}(O) . . . VP:⁴² 893 "hæfde se cyning his fierd on tu tonumen"; 893 "was Hæsten þa þær cumen mid his herge" (MSS B and C "was þa Hæsten . . ."); 893 "hæfde Hæsten ær geworht þæt geweorc æt Beamfleote"; 893 "hæfdon hi hiora onfangen ær Hæsten to Beamfleote come"; (ii) with VAdv(O) and subject unexpressed, 893 "foron [þa]⁴³ begen atgædere up be Temese"; 893 "Foron þa up be Temese"; 893 "besæton þeah þæt geweorc utan sume twegen dagas"; 895 "Worhton ða tu geweorc on twa healfe þære eas", beside 893 "Ne com se here oftor eall ute of þam setum þonne tuwwa" with inversion of subject and verb after the negative head-word *ne*. Except for single instances in annal 892 (MSS A, E and F only) and 896, to which I shall return later, the only comparable usage elsewhere in the Parker Chronicle is 658 "hæfde hine Penda adrifenne", with the verb and subject separated by the object, giving a construction V^{ASVP} which is never found in the annals for the 890s.⁴⁴ Indeed, in the first part of the Chronicle the order VS in main clauses is normally confined to constructions introduced by an adverb or adverbial phrase, and even here 'normal' word-order is very common.⁴⁵ In the section 900 to 920 the order in main clauses occurs only after an adverb or adverbial phrase as head.⁴⁶

Thirdly, the annals 893 to 895 are characterised by their use of correlative *þa* . . . , *þa* . . . , and their handling of *þa*, conjunction and adverb, in general. In this section conjunction *þa* is found 16x in all, including 8 instances with adverb *þa* in the same clause, viz. *þa þa* 1x and *þa . . . þa* 7x.⁴⁷ Adverb *þa* occurs 23x in head position in a main clause, with the order AdvVS(O); it occurs 2x after *and* with the order CADv . . . V and CADvVS, and 1x with the order Adv . . . SV. In one of these instances adverb *þa* is found twice in the same main clause (but in MS A only);⁴⁸ in ten instances the clause is preceded by a subordinate clause introduced by conjunction *þa*. Adverb *þa* in other than head position occurs 24x.⁴⁹

This is in marked contrast with both earlier and later sections of the work. Correlation with conjunction *þa* is never found in the annals up to and including 879, and it occurs only 1x in the section 880 to 891.⁵⁰ Subordinate temporal clauses of any type are in fact very rare in both parts of the 'first chronicle'.⁵¹ In this section adverb *þa* occurs 64x in all, with the order AdvVS(O) 13x, AdvVOS 3x, CADvVS 19x, CADvVOS 1x, AdvSV 2x, AdvSOV 1x (other versions conjunction), CADvSV 2x, CADv 5x. In other positions adverb *þa* is found 18x.⁵²

In the section 897 to 920, too, conjunction *þa* is very rare, occurring only 3x, two of these in correlation with a following main clause introduced by *þa*, but the third (in annal 910) with the

subordinate clause in second position and with no correlation. Adverb *þa* here occurs 55x, thirty-seven times as the head-word of a main clause, six times repeating adverb *þa* as a head-word, twelve times in other positions. The related construction *þa giet* occurs 4x. Inversion after *þa* as head-word is the norm, with AdvVS 24x, AdvVOS 2x, CADvVOS 1x, and CADvVS 8x, but the order CADvSV is found 2x in 917.⁵³

Fourthly, the annals 893 to 895 are characterised by their occasional use of the 'called' formula with place names, a formula typical also of the section 449 to 584, though here the verb used is *hatan*, instead of earlier *(ge)nemnan* and *(ge)cweþan*.⁵⁴ Fifthly, they are characterised by their use of a wider range of words for certain concepts than other parts of the Chronicle under discussion, or by their demonstration of different preferences from the rest.⁵⁵ Thus, for instance, where the 890 Chronicle distinguishes between transitive *forhergian* (3x), *oferhergian* (1x) and intransitive *gehergian* (3x), *hergian* (1x in ABC, DE *gehergian*), this section uses only *hergian*, both transitively (2x) and intransitively (1x), beside 893 *he wæs on hergað gelend* and 7 *wæs ut afaren on hergab*.⁵⁶ Where the 890 Chronicle has a marginal preference for *gefon* for the concept 'seize' (property, people), which it uses 3x, with *geniman* 2x and *geræcan* 1x, this section prefers *geniman* (4x) to *gefon* (1x) and uses *geræcan* (2x) in the sense 'get at, reach'.⁵⁷ Where the early sections of the 890 Chronicle use *in* freely (22x in A, but mostly before annal 709), *innan* and *into* each occurring 3x, the first in annals 868 and 870, the second in annals 876 and 877, this section has in only 1x in MS A (BCD on), with *in* on 2x in MS A (BCD *innan*), *innan* 1x in A (3x in BCD), and *into* 1x.⁵⁸ Where the 890 Chronicle uses *up on* (3x) and *up onlong* (2x) of travel along or up a river, this section has only *up on* 2x, with *up be* 5x for land travel. Where the 890 Chronicle has *ymsittan* 2x, with *besittan inne* 1x in a passage absent from A, this section uses *besittan utan* (3x), with *besittan* alone 2x and *ymsittan* 2x. Where the annals for the 870s use the construction *faran from* 3x, beside *faran of* 4x, this section has only *faran of*. Finally, where annals 914 to 920 use the construction *foran to* 6x for 'before' in the temporal sense, this section has *onforan* 2x in A (BCD 1x, with *on foreweard(ne)* 1x).⁵⁹

Taken individually and in isolation these forms do not occur often enough to be statistically significant. Cumulatively, however, they add up to a substantial body of evidence that cannot be ignored. What is more, the annals for 893 to 895 disagree with the annals of the first compilation up to 879 in their use of *sige habban* not *sige niman*, and of *iegland* not *ealand*.⁶⁰ In spite of their length and their subject matter they are also free from the use of the near-formulaic *þær wæs micel (ungemetlic) wæl geslagen*, *ahton wælstowe gewald*, *lytle (micle) werede*, *on gehwæpere hond*, and of expanded verb forms such as *winnende wæron*.⁶¹ Although they refer on several occasions to interception and obstruction, to putting to flight and camping (*forridan foran* and *offaran hindan*, and *forwyrcean*, *geflieman* and *(ge)wician*), they never use the concepts 'encounter' (*gemetan*), 'drive out', 'break the peace', 'defend', 'surrender', 'submit', 'take up winter quarters'. At

the same time they lack certain distinctive features of the annals of the 880s, such as the construction *wip þa gefeohtan*.⁶²

Furthermore, in spite of their balanced structure the annals 893 to 895 lack the distinctive features of another coherent unit, the annals 915 to 920 (original dating), which are unique to MS A. Perhaps the most obvious feature of this section is the use of word-pairs linked in sound, sometimes by alliteration, sometimes by the use of similar endings (the rhetorical device of *similiter cadens* or *similiter desinens*), once by repetition of a preposition. Thus, 916 *friþe 7 fultume*; 917 *budon 7 bytledon*; 916 *getimbrede 7 gestaðolode*, and 917 *mid gewinne 7 mid unfriðe*. A number of instances have either the same head-word or the same second (or third) element as other word-pairs. Thus 917 *gebette 7 geedneowade* (2x), 918 *gebetan 7 gesettan*; 919 *gebetan 7 gemannian*, and 919 *gewyrca . . . 7 gesettan 7 gemannian*; 920 *gewyrca . . . 7 gemannian*; 916 *friþe 7 fultume* and 917 *his friþ 7 his mundbyrde*. One such set reverses the order of the items in the word-pairs: thus, 917 *to hlaforde 7 to mundboran* (2x), 920 *to fader 7 to hlaforde*. In marked contrast the entries up to 890 rarely contain word-pairs, what instances there are being mainly concentrated in the latest annals. Thus, 597 *feaht 7 won*; 823 *him to friþe 7 to mundboran*; 878 *geridon Wesseaxna lond 7 gesaton*; 880 *gesæt 7 gedælde*; 882 *forslægene 7 forwundode*; 887 *oft 7 gelome*. The annals for the section 893 to 895 similarly make little use of word-pairs, though they stand out from the rest in their use of a range of balanced clauses. And their word-pairs usually consist not of near-synonymous variants but of semantically different elements. Thus, for instance, 893 *wudufæstenne 7 wæterfæstenne*; *hloþum 7 flocradum, gesetenne . . . 7 genotudne, healfe æt ham, healfe ute* etc. In the section 900 to 912, the only instance of a word-pair is 912, *worhte 7 getimbrede*.⁶³

To these linguistic features we may add certain other characteristics that appear to indicate that the account of the last wars of Alfred, which for the moment I shall assume to begin with annal 893 and extend to the opening of annal 896, was originally conceived and composed as a single continuous narrative, structured in terms of campaigning years, with a basic opposition of winter and summer, which was then made to conform in some but not in all respects to the existing Chronicle framework, possibly by someone other than its author.⁶⁴ First of all, there is in MS A what Parkes has termed the "history layout" which is adopted from f.18r annal 894 on. Second, there is the temporary abandonment of the normal annal markers. Instead of a series of independent annals introduced by a new annal number followed by *Her*, we find near-continuous narrative, divided into segments by dating in terms of the arrival of the *here* in England, placed at or near the end of the annal. And thirdly though the opening of each annal within the group usually includes the phrase 'in this year', this takes second place to a different type of time reference, which looks back to the preceding entry and provides the basic link between it and what is usually the new campaigning year. Thus 893/4 "7 þæt wæs ymb twelf monað þæs þe hie ær hider ofer sæ comon. (894) Ond þa sona æfter þam on ðys gere . . ."; 894/5 "þæt wæs ymb twa ger þæs þe hie

hider ofer sæ comon. (895) On[d] þy ilcan gere worhte se foresprecena here geweorc be Lygan . . . þa þæs on sumera foron micel dæl þara burgwara"; 895/6 "þæt was ymb þreo ger þæs þe hie on Limene muðan comon hider ofer sæ. (896) [Ond] þæs on sumera on ðysum gere tofor se here".⁶⁵ To these may be added the opening of annal 893 "On þys geare, þæt was ymb twelf monað þæs þe hie on þam eastrice geweorc geworht hæfdon, Norþhymbre 7 Eastengle hæfdon Ælfrede cyninge apas geseald . . . þa gegaderade Ælfred cyning his fierd . . .". The entries for 894 and 896, it should be noted, would be improved stylistically by the omission of the words "in this year", which could well have been introduced by a compiler or scribe,⁶⁶ seeking to make a continuous narrative conform to the annal lay-out of the previous section of the Chronicle, while on grounds of sense and historical accuracy I would argue that this same person also twice divided up the material incorrectly, inserting the annal numbers for 893 and 895 prematurely.⁶⁷ This of course would suggest that he could not have been the author of it.

The annals for 893 to 895 then have a number of features that cumulatively mark them off from the constituent parts of the 890 Chronicle and from the annals from 900 on. Where do the annals for 892 and 896 stand in relation to the two groups? Unfortunately, the brevity of annal 892 and the absence from it of most of the concepts discussed above rule out more than the most tentative observations. However, what evidence there is separates the annal from both the section up to 890 and that from 893 onwards. That is to say there are differences of choice which are not compensated for by similarities. Thus,

(a) the annal for 892 differs from both earlier and later sections in its use of relative clauses. Two of the three that occur here, "[se here] þe we gefyrn ar ymbe spræcon" and "[seo ea] þe we ar ymbe spræcon" are without parallel in those sections, the only usage that is comparable in substance, 885 and 895 *se foresprecena here*, having a participial adjective where 892 has a clause. The third, "[se wudu] þe we Andred hatað" corresponds to passive constructions with *nemnan* and *cweþan* in the 890 Chronicle (e.g. 477 "þone wudu þe is genemned Andredes leage"; 577 "þære stowe þe is gecueden Deorham"), and to the passive *seo is . . . gehaten* and *þæt is haten* in annals 893 and 894, *þe mon . . . hæt* in 891 item 3.⁶⁸ It should be noted that the first person nominative plural, *we*, is found only once in the 890 Chronicle and then not in a comparable context, while the annals for 893 to 896 have only singular *ic*.⁶⁹

(b) The 892 annal has the construction verb of motion + *westweard*, where the other sections have invariable *west*, *east*, *suþ*, *norþ*.⁷⁰

(c) The 892 annal uses the collocation *cuman up on* (2x) for 'to land at or on', with a construction (*cuman up*) paralleled only in the genealogical material associated with MSS of the Chronicle.⁷¹ In the 890 Chronicle the corresponding construction is *cuman in or on*; in the annals 893 to 896 *cuman* is construed with the prepositions *to* and *on*.

(d) "Sæton feawa cirlice men on 7 was samworht." This sentence

in the 892 annal is unique in two respects; first in its order VS at the beginning of a main clause⁷² and second in its non-expression of the pronoun subject in a coordinate clause where the subject is different from that of the main clause. If we except constructions with a shift from singular to plural or vice versa for the same referend, the only comparable usages in the other sections are MS A 755 "7 þa gatu him to belocen hæfdon", where B, C, D and E all read 7 hie . . . , and 855 "Æpelwulf . . . him hamweard for 7 him þa Carl Francna cyning his dohtor geaf him to cuene 7 æfter þam to his leodum cuom".

(e) In "7 þær abracon an geweorc" the 892 annal has the word order 7 þær VO, which is never found in the annals 893 to 896 and occurs in the 890 chronicle only 3x, in annals 457, 477 and 835.⁷³

The annal for 896 contains considerably more material than annal 892; however, it falls into three parts, each of which has to be considered separately. The first reports the departure of the Vikings for the continent and as I have shown above conforms to the pattern of time-markers adopted by the 893 annalist; the second comments on the three-year conflict just brought to an end; the third has as its main subject Alfred's building of ships and a sea-battle that took place in this year. There is no linguistic detail in the brief first part that prevents us from supposing that its author was not also the 893 annalist, and in view of the subject matter it is logical to believe that he was one and the same man. The language of the second part is for the most part similarly neutral, though in its use of *ealles forswiðe*, *micle swiþor* and *ealles swiþost* it has affinities with part 3, which has *swiþe*, *ealra swiþust*, *swiðe unedelice* and *swiðe forwundode*, making in all 7 instances of *swiþe*, a word which is otherwise found only 2x in the whole of the Chronicle to annal 914 and not at all in the entries 915 to 920.⁷⁴

Part 3, however, stands apart from the annals that precede it. First of all, it has no instance of the construction verb of motion + *oppæt*, *þæt*, which helps to characterise annals 893 to 896. Second, it has only one instance of the construction V^{as} . . . VP, and only one instance of correlation of *þa* . . . *þa*, adverb *þa* being found 8x in head position with the order AdvVS, 1x in the construction and SAdvV, and 1x in correlation. There is never more than one *þa* per clause.⁷⁵ Thirdly, its subsidiary time markers, with the exception of *þy ilcan geare*, are different from those in the section 893 to 895, with *þy ilcan sumera* and *þa æt sumum cirre þæs ilcan geares* each 1x, beside 893 and 894 *onforan winter* and 895 *þa þæs on sumera*, *þa þæs on hærfeste*, *þa sume dage*. Fourthly, it has a predilection for the nominative plural of the demonstrative pronoun without accompanying relative clause, using it four times to the once of the section 893 to 895.⁷⁶ Fifthly, for the tendency to use balance in annals 893 to 895 it substitutes a predilection for repetition of a kind rare in the annals 893 to 895, though it does occur in part 2 of annal 896, with *ealles forswiðe gebrocod* . . . *micle swiþor gebrocde* and *ealles swiþost*,⁷⁷ beside part 3 *swiðe* . . . *ealra swiþust*; *asæton* . . . *aseten* . . . *asæton* . . . *aseten*; *ahëbbad* . . . *beëbbade*; *oðreowon* . . . *berowan*. Finally,

and perhaps most significantly, it differs markedly in general sentence structure from the annals 893 to 895. Whereas there, main clauses in the individual annals account for between 25% and 33% of the total, averaging 23.5%, in annal 896 part 3 there are only slightly fewer main clauses (47.7%) than subordinate ones and the relationship between main and subordinate clauses in the two parts is quite different.⁷⁸

Although annal 892 provides us with relatively little linguistic evidence, therefore, none of it actively supports a theory that the man responsible for the 892 annal was also one of the major contributors to the 'first chronicle' to 890 or that he composed it as part of the account of the last wars of King Alfred. As for the author of annal 896 part 3 (and possibly also part 2), he could be identified with the author of annals 893 to 895, but surely only if it were assumed that some considerable time had elapsed between his composing of the latter and the addition of 896 part 3, and that in the meantime he had abandoned some of his more stylised mannerisms.⁷⁹ Also a matter for conjecture is the date or dates when these authors were writing. The fact that annal 892 is found in MS E but subsequent annals are not, while Æthelweard seems to have alternative material for 893 onwards, seems to indicate that it was circulated independently of that section, though the possibility of an underlying defective exemplar cannot be ruled out.⁸⁰ However, there is one detail of presentation which may provide some illumination on the compilation of this part of the chronicle, though any conclusions drawn from it must be highly tentative. This is the reference to "se micla here, þe we gefyrn ær ymbe spracon" which opens the annal (MSS A and F omit *ær*, but BCDE all have it). *Gefyrn ær* normally refers to the distant past or (in a book) a widely separated reference.⁸¹ Yet the last reference to the *here* that went to Boulogne occurs in the annal for the preceding year and only twelve and a half lines earlier in MS A. One explanation is that the author of annal 892 was composing this entry some years after 892 (and that some considerable interval had elapsed between the writing of it and the annal for 891). Another is that "se micla here þe we gefyrn ær ymbe spracon" is the *micel here* of 866, and that the identification is the result of careless reading of the 'basic chronicle', and in particular of annal 880 "Her for se here of Cirenceastre on Eastengle . . . 7 þy ilcan geare for se here ofer sæ þe ær on Fullanhomme sæt on Fronclond . . .", with the *micel here* of 892 identified not with the Fulham *here* (previously described merely as a *hloþ*) but with the Cirencester force, the *here* whose fortunes had been carefully followed since its arrival in 866, when it too was described as *micel here*.⁸² Alternatively, we have to do with the independent composition and subsequent incorporation (possibly with condensation) of a more expansive narrative whose material originally overlapped that of the 'first chronicle' and thus had its own earlier references to a *micel here*. This is mere speculation. However, it could find support from the presence of one linking phrase in the following group of annals that does not in fact link - that is the reference now sited at the beginning of annal 893 to a previously unmentioned fortification built in the *eastrice*; from the silence about Hæsten's origins; and

possibly from the absence of a reference to the building of the Benfleet camp.⁸³ If either of these alternative explanations is accepted - and I find both preferable to the first - it must surely follow that the author of the annals for the 880s could not have been responsible for this reference.

However attractive it may be from a historian's point of view, therefore, to postulate either a chronicle written in 892 in the face of Danish threats, with an extension from 893 to 896, or an independent account of the last wars of Alfred grafted on to an 891 stock, the linguistic evidence points firmly to what I would call an 896 annalist, responsible for the material now in annals 893 to 896 part 1 but actually referring as far back as autumn 892, with annals 892 and 896 parts 2 and 3 composed by other hands.⁸⁴

NOTES

- 1 An early version of this paper was read to the Cambridge University Medieval Society in 1981.
- 2 Janet Bately, "The Compilation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle 60 B.C. to A.D. 890: Vocabulary as Evidence", *Proceedings of the British Academy* 64 (1978) and separately (1980) p.111, n.3.
- 3 Notably about statistical validity, and variation within the usage of a single author. See also M.R. Godden, "Ælfric's Changing Vocabulary", *ES* 61 (1980) pp.206-23, and Janet Bately, "Lexical evidence for the authorship of the prose psalms in the Paris Psalter", *ASE* 10 (1982) pp.69-95.
- 4 For annal 897 see below, p.25, n.74. Annals 915 to 920 are found in MS A only. Unless otherwise stated quotations are from MS A, with the dating of the original, not the corrected version printed by Plummer. References are to the four 'primary' versions, as follows: MS A: Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 173; MS B: London, British Library MS Cotton Tiberius A vi; MS C: London, British Library MS Cotton Tiberius B i; MS D: London, British Library MS Cotton Tiberius B iv; MS E: Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Laud Misc. 636; MS F: London, British Library MS Cotton Tiberius A vi; MS G: London, British Library MS Cotton Otho B xi, ff.39-47 and Addit. MS 34652, f.2. New editions of all these texts are under preparation in *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, A Collaborative Edition*, under the general editorship of David Dumville and Simon Keynes. Volume 4, *MS. B*, ed. Simon Taylor (Cambridge, 1983) and vol.3, *MS. A*, ed. Janet Bately (Cambridge, 1985) are already in print or about to be published. For MS C see *The C-Text of the Old English Chronicle*, ed. H.A. Rositzke, in *Beiträge z.eng. Phil.*, 34 (Bochum-Langendreer, 1940); for D see *An Anglo-Saxon Chronicle from British Museum Cotton MS., Tiberius B.iv*, ed. E. Classen and F.E. Harmer (Manchester, 1926); for the text of E see J. Earle and C. Plummer, *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel* (2nd ed., Oxford, 1952).
- 5 See *English Historical Documents*, I, ed. D. Whitelock (2nd rev. ed., London, 1979) p.121f. The entry for 887 contains references to two general engagements which are taken to be the battles of Brescia (autumn 888) and Trebbia (spring 889). Although Asser's continuous use of Chronicle material begins with annal 851, he also knows, though in garbled form, the tradition preserved in annals 530 and 534. See Asser's *Life of King Alfred*, ed. W.H. Stevenson (Oxford, 1904; repr. with article by D. Whitelock, 1959).
- 6 *The Chronicle of Æthelweard*, ed. A. Campbell (London, 1962). One unusual feature of this annal is that the activities of the here take second place to non-military events in England.
- 7 For instance, it uses the words *forþferan*, *gefeohtan*, and the collocation *sige habban*. See Bately, "Compilation", p.109f.
- 8 M.B. Parkes, "The Palaeography of the Parker Manuscript of the *Chronicle*, Laws and Sedulius, and Historiography at Winchester in the Late Ninth and Tenth Centuries", *ASE* 5 (1976) pp.149-71. Sprockel too sees the change in hand as corresponding to the beginning of what he calls the 'official continuation': see C. Sprockel, *The Language of the Parker Chronicle*, I (The Hague, 1965) pp.xix-xxi.
- 9 The three constituent items are the reference to the battle in the *eastrice*, the account of the coming of the three Irishmen and the death of Swifneh, and the comment on the appearance of a comet.

- 10 Parkes, pp.153-4. See however, Bately, "Compilation", p.115, n.2.
- 11 D. Dumville, "The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and the Origins of English Square Minuscule Script", forthcoming.
- 12 I do not agree with Dorothy Whitelock, in her forthcoming *Alfred the Great*, ed. Janet Bately and Simon Keynes, chapter 19, that Asser is likely to have received his copy of the Chronicle a year or so before he finished his work in 893.
- 13 P.H. Sawyer, *The Age of the Vikings*, 2nd ed. (London, 1971) p.19.
- 14 Sawyer, p.20.
- 15 Sawyer, p.21.
- 16 J.M. Wallace-Hadrill, "The Franks and the English in the Ninth Century", *History* 35 (1950) p.213: "Whatever its source-material, it reads like a reflection of an urgent political need - the need, not of a people but of a dynasty, the House of Wessex, for historical background in the form of a prose Geste".
- 17 R.H.C. Davis, "Alfred the Great: Propaganda and Truth", *History* 56 (1971) pp.169-82.
- 18 See D. Whitelock, "The Importance of the Battle of Edington", Report for 1977 of the Society of the Friends of the Priory Church of Edington, Wilts. (also printed separately) and Whitelock, *Alfred the Great*, chapter 19.
- 19 See Bately, "Compilation", pp.93-129, and Whitelock, *Alfred the Great*, chapter 19. For 880 as the starting-point see n.20.
- 20 The chronicler's source(s) could have been oral or written; in view of the amount of detail recorded in Frankish Latin annals, there appears to be no need to suppose, with Dr Dumville, that the main informant was a Breton. It should be noted that the activities of the Vikings on the continent are not reported before 880, although these include one venture which might be expected to have been of considerable interest in England, at least among Alfred's entourage - the sack of Grimbold's home monastery of St Bertin in 879.
- 21 For a valuable summary of Hæsten's career see *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of Alfred and other contemporary sources*, translated with an introduction and notes by Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge (Harmondsworth, 1983) p.284f. It is odd that contrary to the normal practice in this part of the Chronicle, whereby named persons are described as 'king' or 'eorl' or 'Friesa' etc., Hæsten is not identified in any way.
- 22 See Dumville, "Anglo-Saxon Chronicle". Whether or not the chronicler was seeking to boost national morale in a time of crisis, it is strange that he did not place greater emphasis on Frankish victories over the Vikings in this period, since the propaganda value of these would surely have been enormous.
- 23 Sprockel compares the usage of the different scribes of Parker 1 but does not seek to use his findings to determine authorship.

- 24 For phonological evidence, see below, p.25, n.66.
- 25 See Bately, "Compilation", *passim*.
- 26 The annals relating to Viking activities in these years are highly selective and usually give details of the situation at the beginning of the campaigning year only, regardless of the subsequent movements of the *here*. The one exception is annal 892. Thus, for instance, in 883 (the year in which, according to the Chronicle, the *here* went up the Scheldt to Condé and stayed there for the entire year, the *here* actually remained in Condé only until the spring, when it left for the coast of Flanders. It then campaigned there for 5 months, departing for the Somme in the late autumn. Specifically Frankish material, in contrast, is inserted in chunks, with events covering several years grouped in a single annal. In view of Dorothy Whitelock's comments (cited above, p.9) it should be noted that the first of these is found in annal 885, relating to events in the years 879, 882 and (December) 884.
- 27 The Chronicle's account is, however, misleading. Although defeated in battle the Vikings remained at Louvain for the winter, and their continental activity did not slacken until the end of 892, although famine drove them west in the summer, to join another Viking force which had been ravaging down the Rhine.
- 28 See Bately, "Compilation", pp.104f and p.112.
- 29 See Bately, "Compilation", pp.109f., 114, 115 n.1 and p.121. Although it seems reasonable to accept the generally held supposition that the report of Swifneh's death was brought by the three Irishmen, the possibility that this forms an independent item cannot be ruled out.
- 30 See further below, p.14.
- 31 See 678 "Her opiewde cometa se steorra"; 729 "Her cometa se steorra hiene opiewde"; beside 891 "py ilcan geare ofer Eastron ymb gangdagas opþe ær, ateowde se steorra þe mon on boclaeden hæst cometa. Sume men cwepað on Englisc þæt hit sie feaxede steorra, forþam þær stent lang leoma of, hwilum on ane healfe, hwilum on ælce healfe". The leisureliness of this account and of the description of the voyage of the three Irishmen (we are even told how many hides the boat was made of) does not support the theory of a propagandist approaching the climax of his narrative and writing with urgency in the face of a national threat.
- 32 The fact that the scribe not only used the appropriate abbreviation for the end of an annal but also entered the annal number for 892 must show conclusively that he cannot have been writing before the end of 891 and that he did not expect to receive new material for this annal. The subsequent extension of 891 must be explained as due either to the receipt of unexpected new material or to the form taken by the exemplar. If Dumville's theory of two scribes working as a team is correct and the second scribe had to recopy the first part of his own contribution to dovetail it with the first scribe's work, then the exemplar was presumably split at this point (see *The Old English Orosius*, ed. Janet Bately, EETS SS 6 (London, 1980) p.xxxii, n.4.). The point at which the split occurred would presumably correspond to an existing manuscript division.
- 33 See *The Annals of St.Neots*, ed. David Dumville and Michael Lapidge, vol.17 of *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, a Collaborative Edition*, op.cit., (1985).

- 34 See Whitelock, *English Historical Documents I*, pp.113f. and *The Peterborough Chronicle, a Facsimile*, ed. D. Whitelock, *Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile 4* (Copenhagen, 1954) pp.28f.
- 35 Item 1, referring to the battle of the Dyle, August 31 or later, chronologically should come after item 3, referring to the appearance of a comet on May 11. For evidence that scribes did add supplementary material well after the event see, e.g., annal 924 of the Parker Chronicle (Plummer 925).
- 36 See Whitelock, *English Historical Documents I*, p.123.
- 37 C. Clark, "The narrative mode of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle before the Conquest", *England before the Conquest: Studies in Primary Sources presented to Dorothy Whitelock*, ed. P. Clemoes and K. Hughes (Cambridge, 1971) pp. 221-4.
- 38 T.A. Shippey, "A missing army: some doubts about the Alfredian Chronicle", *In Geardagum 4* (1982) pp.41-55.
- 39 See Shippey, p.48f: "One notices it more when the cross-checkings are not quite exact, as in the 892 annal . . . the chronicler has not actually spoken about the river before, apart from naming it, and someone who did not know that 'Andred' was also 'the Weald' would still be confused". However, to name a river is surely to mention it, while *weald* is a common noun with the meaning 'wood' as well as being, apparently, the proper name Weald.
- 40 Cf. 900 with a similar construction with the verb *ridan*.
- 41 Inversion after *and* is, however, more widely distributed.
- 42 V is here used for Verb, with V^a and VP for auxiliary verb and past participle respectively, Adv for Adverb, S for Subject, O for Object, and C for Conjunction.
- 43 *þa* from BCD; no reading A. This is the only instance in this category with preceding subordinate temporal clause.
- 44 This instance is in a passage of retrospective material which need not be by the author of the rest of the annal. For omission of pronoun subject in this section other than after *and* see annal 167 "sende stafas, bæd þæt he wære Cristen gedon", an annal whose structure may be influenced by that of its Latin source. See also 491 "ne wearþ þær forþon an Bret to lafe".
- 45 For instance, although from 860 to 890 the order *Her VS* is universally used in A, before that *Her SV* is the norm, occurring 61x, beside *Her VS* 38x.
- 46 In the section 900 to 914 the order *VS* is the norm here; however, in annals 915 to 920 the order *SV* occurs 3x. There is also variation in the Mercian Register annals of B, C and D, and also from annal 918 in E.
- 47 For details of manuscript variation see note 49.
- 48 895 "þa þæs on hærfeste þa wicode se cyning . . ." (BCD "on hærfeste wicode").
- 49 Adverb *þa* with accompanying *þa* conjunction is found 3x in A only, 2x in AD

- but not BC, and lx in BCD not A. *þa þa* is in AD only, BC *þa*. *þa* in other head positions is found lx in AD, not in BC, lx in BCD, not in A and lx in A only. In addition there are four further instances in D only, 1 in C only.
- 50 However, B has an instance in annal 835, "þa he þæt hyrde, þa ferde he".
- 51 There are 5 subordinate clauses introduced by *ær*; 2 by *sipþan*; 7 by *op*, *opþæt*; 4 by *ymb* . . . *þæs þe*; 3 each by *þy geare þe*, *þone dæg* . . . *þe* 3x, and 2 by *þa*.
- 52 These figures include 2 instances of *þa* found in BCD but not A, also 5 instances of *þa* found in ADE but not in BC. Not included is an instance in BC but not in ADE and another in DE and - in a later hand - in A but not in BC.
- 53 From annal 915 figures relate to a section confined to MS A. It should be noted that in these annals the construction *þa þa* occurs only lx.
- 54 See further below, p.16 and note 68.
- 55 It must be repeated, however, that some patterns of usage may be coincidental. The relationship of annal 891 to the following annals is impossible to determine.
- 56 Cf. 893 "hergode 'on' his rice þone ende . . .", with *on* added above the line in a later hand; CD as the first version of A; B "hergode on his rices þone ende . . .".
- 57 In the section up to 850 the preference is for *gefon*. (*Ge*)*niman* there is used mainly of capturing a town. Cf. however, 584, where *geniman* is used with *tun*, followed by *herereaf*.
- 58 The combination *in on* is otherwise found in MS A only in 933.
- 59 This list is not exhaustive.
- 60 See Bately. "Compilation", pp.104, 110, 117-19, 121.
- 61 See Bately, "Compilation", pp.110, 120, 110-12 and cf. the apparently rewritten passage in MS D, 893 "7 þa Ðæniscan þær wearð swiðe mycel wæl geslægen", with the formula *ahton sige* immediately above, for B and C "7 þara Ðeniscra þær wearð mycel geslegen" (A is defective at this point) and ABC *hafdon sige*. Formulae return in annal 905.
- 62 See further below, p.17.
- 63 Other distinctive features of vocabulary include the use of *gefaran* in the sense 'to capture' (5x), beside *begietan* and *gegan* each lx.
- 64 The author may not even have had a copy of the Chronicle in front of him when he wrote.
- 65 *On[d]* and *[ond]* are from MSS BCD. For *on* as a spelling variant of *ond* see Bately, *OE Orosius*, p.xlix. I anticipate subsequent arguments by including the opening section of annal 896 here; see below, p.17.

- 66 An examination of the phonology of MS A, though it does not shed light on the problem of where the 'first chronicle' ends, produces what may be evidence of changes of scribe in the exemplar behind this MS for the closing years of the 880s and the opening of the 890s. Thus, of 10 exceptional instances of *þæm* in the part copied by Scribe 1, 6 occur in annal 887, and 1 in annal 891, part 1, at least one of the others being a later alteration; the forms *hi* and *hira*, beside normal *hie*, *hiera* are confined to 887 and 891, where they occur 8x and 1x respectively. In the part copied by scribe 2, for whom *þæm* is the norm up to the break at annal 912 (the sole exception being in the substandard script on f.21r, which is probably the work of another hand) *hi* occurs only in 892 and 893 (5x), with the last example at the bottom of f.17r. *Hira* begins on f.18, with the preceding material using *heora* (2x) and *hiora* (8x), both forms which are never found again in the manuscript in pre-Conquest hands except for *hira* for *Ira-* in annal 937. The spelling *fierd* is also last found on f.17v, with *fird* appearing from f.18 on; the spelling *sio* is found 5x in hand 2¹, all in annal 893 before f.18, with the first instance of *seo* in annal 892 and the next on f.18.
- 67 The opening of annal 895 "On[d] þy ilcan gere" uses a formula normally found as an annal subdivider; the opening of annal 893 uses *hie* to refer back to the *oper here* of the last sentence of 892, although according to the practice everywhere else in the Chronicle in similar contexts we might have expected *se here*. Moreover the formula is used in conjunction with an allusion to the Northumbrians and East Angles breaking their truce (an allusion which refers not only to this year but to the whole time the *here* was in England). The campaigning year begins with Alfred taking up his strategic position. One might have expected the truce to have been made in 892. I would suggest therefore that this opening was composed as a link between an existing entry for 892 and the annals for 893-896.
- 68 See Bately, "Compilation", pp.104 and 123, also cf. 891 parts 2 and 3 with "þus hie wæron genemnde" and "þe mon . . . hæst cometa". These two naming formulae are not necessarily mutually exclusive, as the evidence of other texts, such as the *OE Orosius*, shows. In its leisurely approach annal 892 is closer to items 2 and 3 of annal 891 than to other sections. See Clark, p.221.
- 69 However, *ic* and *we* are used together in the same work by Ælfric, and occur together in annal 904.
- 70 Cf. 893 "7 þa wolde ferian norþweardes", and "þa he þa wæs þiderweardes 7 sio operu fierd wæs hamweardes".
- 71 Cf. the adverbial construction in 860, "cuom micel sciphere up".
- 72 So MSS A and E; cf. B, C and D "in on þæm fæstenne".
- 73 Compare the annals 855, 893, 895 and 896 with the order 7 þær OV.
- 74 In annals 755 and 893. 896 part 2 is also linked with 896 part 3 in its use of *forþferan* not *gefaran*. Cf. annal 897 where the use of both *forþferan* and *gefaran* and the repetition internally of *her* suggests the conflating of two separate entries by different people. See further above, note 7.
- 75 Of the instances of *þa* in head position 1 is in A only, 1 in BCD but not A.
- 76 Cf. *wip þa* and *þa wæron* in the annals for the 880s.

- 77 For A *ealles* BCD read *ealra*.
- 78 Note also the single instance in A of omission of the subject, where BCD have negative + VS, "naron hi nawoer", also single instances of V^{as} . . . VP and negative V^{as} . . . VP.
- 79 Ælfric is the most obvious instance of an Anglo-Saxon writer modifying his style.
- 80 Instances of manuscripts where different parts of a single text come from different sources are MSS Florence Riccardiana 627 and Cambridge Corpus Christi College 23 of Orosius' *Historiarum adversum paganos Libri septem*. See Bately, *OE Orosius*, pp.lvii-lviii.
- 81 See, however, Alfred's translation of Boethius, where it is something of a mannerism and can refer to recent material.
- 82 Every annal from 867 to 889 begins with the words *Se here*. However, as a result of the introduction of a second *here* in the middle of annal 880, there is a change of reference from 881 on which could easily have passed unnoticed by a careless reader.
- 83 892/3 *eastrice* should refer back to 891/2. However, the previous annal refers not to the building of a fort in the *eastrice* but departure from it. And the camp at Louvain was in fact first constructed in autumn 891: see the *Annales Fuldenses* and the *Annals of Regino of Prum* for this year.
- 84 Cf. the entry for 892 in Æthelweard's *Chronicle*, which begins with the words "Deinde post annum ex quo bella gessere barbari contra regem Earnulfum, quin Bononiam petunt". The entry for 893, in contrast, merely gives the date as 893.