Leeds Studies in English

The Anonymous Old English *Legend of the Seven Sleepers* and its Latin Source

Hugh Magennis

The earliest extended treatment of the legend of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus in a western vernacular language is the anonymous Old English prose version preserved in British Library MS Cotton Julius E vii, the principal manuscript of Ælfric's *Lives of Saints*, and (in highly fragmentary form) in British Library MS Cotton Otho B x.[1] As was established by P. M. Huber in his wide-ranging study of the legend, published in 1910, the source of the Old English text is the Latin *Passio Septem Dormientium (BHL* 2316).[2] Huber refers to this Latin version as 'L$_1$' and he compares it to a number of other Latin versions of the legend.[3] Writing before the publication of Huber's researches, J. H. Ott had been unable to provide a satisfactory source for the Old English version, although he had noted that the text of the 'MS Ultrajectinum' referred to in the section on the Seven Sleepers in *ASS* (July, VI, 396-97), and from which quotations had been given there, seemed to correspond more closely to the Old English than did any of the Latin versions then available in print.[4] The text of this 'MS Ultrajectinum' represents a variant of the Latin version, designated *BHL* 2317 by the Bollandists.[5]

An edition of the *Passio Septem Dormientium* was published by Huber in 1902-03.[6] The base manuscript used for this edition was the ninth-century Munich Staatsbibliothek CLM 14540 (referred to below as M), one of two surviving ninth-century manuscripts. The other ninth-century manuscript, Vienna Cod. Lat. 420, which has a text similar to that of M, is not discussed by Huber.[7] There is considerable variation in the texts of L$_1$, and none of its manuscripts can be regarded as providing a faithful copy of the original composition. Moreover, none of these surviving manuscripts can be regarded as representing verbatim the source of the Old English version. Of the seven manuscripts collated in Huber's edition, however, it is clear that one in particular, London, British Library MS Harley 3037

(H), a thirteenth-century compilation, preserves a text in many respects similar to that used by the Old English writer. H is very closely related in its text of L_1 to an earlier manuscript, not mentioned by Huber, the eleventh-century British Library MS Egerton 2797 (E). As shown in articles by Dorothy Whitelock and the present writer,[8] the text of E corresponds even more exactly to what the Old English writer must have had in front of him, although some important discrepancies remain. Also omitted in Huber's collation of the manuscripts of L_1 are the two copies of the 'Cotton-Corpus legendary' (C-C), in which the legend occurs, British Library MS Cotton Nero E i, Part II, and Salisbury, Cathedral Library MS 222 (formerly Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Fell 1). This legendary, which Patrick Zettel has demonstrated to have been a major source for Ælfric's Old English saints' lives,[9] is also important for the study of the anonymous Old English *Legend of the Seven Sleepers*, although it is less close than EH to the actual source which the Old English follows.

The *Passio Septem Dormientium* is itself based on a Greek original,[10] but it also shows knowledge of the longer of the two versions of the legend written by Gregory of Tours.[11] It uses Gregory's forms of the names of the Sleepers and closely recalls some of his verbal expressions.[12] The *Passio* has been seen as a Frankish composition: a piece of linguistic evidence which points in this direction is its Frankish preference for the verb *mittere* instead of *ponere*.[13] The date of its composition is not known, but, as noted above, its earliest manuscripts date from the ninth century. There are no references to the legend from before this time which exhibit unambiguous dependence on this particular version. From the ninth century on, the *Passio* begins to circulate widely throughout western Europe. It was incorporated into the Cotton-Corpus legendary, which, according to Zettel, was 'probably composed somewhere in the north of France' in the later ninth century.[14] Later it became associated with other monastic legendaries,[15] as well as continuing to circulate in smaller-scale collections, such as E. The latter manuscript, which contains a number of other saints' lives, was probably written, in the eleventh century, in Hainault or the neighbourhood.[16]

In Anglo-Saxon England references to the Seven Sleepers are confined to the later part of the period.[17] The *Passio* appears to have been the main version of the legend known in England, and as well as surviving in the two copies of C-C, is a direct source of at least three of the possible four[18] remaining appearances of the Seven Sleepers in the literature of the Anglo-Saxons. The C-C manuscripts are from the eleventh century, but it is not known when exactly this collection first came to

England.[19] It is obvious, however, that the *Passio* existed in England in copies other than these of the C-C legendary. This is borne out not only by the text of the anonymous Old English *Legend of the Seven Sleepers* itself, with its non-C-C readings, but even perhaps by the two appearances of the Sleepers in the writings of Ælfric.

The first reference to the legend of the Seven Sleepers by Ælfric is the brief narrative, 'Sanctorum Septem Dormientium', appended to the sermon on the Nativity of St James the Apostle in *Catholic Homilies II*.[20] Zettel has argued for the influence of the C-C textual tradition in this version by Ælfric, although he points out that Ælfric's treatment is so abbreviated that, even if his source manuscript had substantial variations from other MSS of L_1, it would probably be difficult to make a clear choice as to which particular version of the Latin he was following.[21] Ælfric's second mention of the story of the Sleepers comes in the course of an addition of seventy-eight lines which he made, in the period 1002-05, to his homily in *Catholic Homilies I* for the First Sunday after Easter. The passage in question, which occurs in six of the eleven surviving manuscripts of the homily, is not given in Thorpe's edition,[22] but will appear in the EETS edition being prepared by P. A. M. Clemoes, and it is discussed by M. McC. Gatch in his *Preaching and Theology in Anglo-Saxon England: Ælfric and Wulfstan*.[23] The addition includes a brief reference to the Seven Sleepers as an exemplum of the resurrection of the body.[24]

In this reference, as in his other treatment of the Seven Sleepers, Ælfric gives the length of the sleep of the saints as 372 years.[25] This figure is peculiar to the *Passio* and appears in most of its manuscripts, but it contrasts with that given at the corresponding point in the C-C copies, which have 370 years (although they have the correct figure in another reference later in the narrative). Zettel may well be right about Ælfric's use of C-C for his treatment of the Seven Sleepers in *Catholic Homilies II* – especially if we accept that he used C-C for many of his other saints' lives – but if he did base his 'Sanctorum Septem Dormientium' on the version of L_1 which appears in C-C, it is notable that he was able to correct this 370 to 372. The appearance of the figure 372 could be seen as suggesting Ælfric's knowledge of another manuscript tradition of the *Passio* as well as C-C, for he would have found corroboration of the correct figure in any manuscript which did not belong to the C-C tradition.

It is not proven indeed that Ælfric did use C-C as his source for his Seven Sleepers homily, probable though this may appear to be. The one piece of evidence which Zettel adduces for Ælfric's employment of this version, apart from the

circumstantial evidence that he seems to have used C-C elsewhere, is that in a passage near the end of his account Ælfric follows a C-C reading which contrasts with that found in Huber's base manuscript M. Ælfric's statement that the emperor Theodosius and his bishops raised up a glorious church over the bodies of the saints, 'Se casere ða and his biscopas arærdon mære cyrcan ofer heora lichaman' (229-30), corresponds to the C-C reading, '. . . fecerunt ibi memoriam maximam', rather than to that which appears in M, '. . . fecerunt ibi memoriam Maximiani' (Huber's ed., p. 78). However, Zettel does not point out that M is aberrant at this point and that most manuscripts of L_1, including EH and NB (two manuscripts discussed below), have the reading 'maximam' instead of 'Maximiani'.

There is one other possible Anglo-Saxon reference to the legend of the Seven Sleepers, in addition to those represented by the Old English *Legend* and the two Ælfric texts. In the anonymous *Vita Ædwardi Regis* there occurs the episode of Edward the Confessor's vision of the Seven Sleepers turning over onto their left sides.[26] The reference is too allusive to enable us to identify any precise version which the writer might be following. Frank Barlow, the editor of the *Vita*, notes that the length of the sleep given here is 272 years and suggests that this figure represents a harmonization of more than one tradition.[27] The similarity of the figure to the 372 years of the *Passio* makes it appear likely that the latter version was one of the traditions being harmonized. It is also possible that the figure 272 derives simply from an erroneous reading of the 372 of the *Passio*. With regard to the *Vita Ædwardi*, however, it should be noted that the original manuscript is deficient at the point where the Seven Sleepers episode occurs and that the section in question is supplied only from later revised versions of the text. Barlow is suspicious of the episode, but he suggests that in truncated form it may well have been in the original version of the life, composed perhaps as early as 1067.[28]

Detailed comparison of the text of the anonymous Old English *Legend of the Seven Sleepers* with that of manuscripts of the Latin *Passio* reveals significant discrepancies not only between the Old English and C-C but also between the Old English and EH. It rapidly emerges from such comparison that no simple identification of EH with the immediate source of the Old English is possible. Instead we have indications of a complicated textual history of the *Passio* in Anglo-Saxon England, our small number of witnesses incorporating elements from what have been thought of as disparate textual traditions.

Huber was particularly struck by a series of agreements between the Old English and readings in a much later manuscript, the thirteenth-century Brussels MS

9290 (B).[29] These were all the more remarkable as they seemed unparalleled in any other manuscripts. An examination of the text of the *Passio* in a manuscript not collated by Huber, however, Namur 53 (N), a manuscript of the first half of the twelfth century,[30] reveals the presence of all the distinctive B readings. This Namur manuscript represents a better text of the B tradition and broadens the context for our comparison in a very useful way. I wish to argue that it is of considerable significance in assessing the source of the Old English.

Huber also notes occasional agreements – sometimes unexpected – between the Old English and certain other Latin manuscripts. There are several ways in which this irregular pattern of apparent agreements and contrasts might be explained. It should be borne in mind, for example, that the Old English writer is highly imaginative in his treatment of his material. Some of the similarities between the Old English and Latin variants might be explained as independent contributions by the Old English writer himself, stemming from the characteristic expansiveness of his approach rather than from the influence of the Latin. This freedom of treatment may be taken as accounting in a convincing way for an apparent agreement between the Old English and Huber's C, the eleventh-century Monte Cassino MS 142, a manuscript which otherwise appears to be very different from any version which the Old English writer could have used.[31] The correspondence here occurs in the part of the narrative in which Malchus leads bishop Marinus and the other Ephesians back to the cave where his companions are waiting. The Old English says of the saints, 'eall heora nebwlite wæron swilce rose and lilie' (1181-82; Skeat, 780). The Latin version, including EH, has 'facies eorum tamquam rosa florens' (456-57; Huber's ed., p. 73).[32] Only one manuscript, C, has the variant, 'facies eorum tanquam rosae flores et odor eorum quasi lilium'. It is entirely possible, however, that the Old English writer could himself have added the lily image independently, from his knowledge of the convention of the comparison with roses and lilies in other saints' lives. It is notable that, in the occurrences of 'rose' in religious contexts in Old English, the word is accompanied by 'lily' more than three times as often as it occurs on its own.[33] Given this almost formulaic collocation in Old English, it is not unlikely that the reference to lilies as well as to roses in the *Legend* is the translator's own contribution.

One further plausible case of this kind of independent elaboration on the part of the Old English writer is discussed below. Other possible instances, however, are less persuasive. There is, for example, a correspondence with an uncommon L_1 reading at 954-57 of the Old English (Skeat, 631-33). Here Malchus, returning to

Ephesus after the miraculous sleep, expresses his bewilderment at having known everyone the previous evening and having been known by everyone, but knowing no one in the morning and being known by no one: '[he] þæs gewiss wære, þæt he þæs on æfen ælcne man gecneowe, and ælc gecneowe hine, and he þæs on morgen nænne ne gecneowe, ne nan hine'. The element of reciprocity – not knowing and not being known – is fully developed among Latin texts in only one manuscript, the tenth-century Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale Cod. Lat. 2768A (L). The relevant lines in EH (the NB reading is similar) are 'fuit certus quod quasi in nocte cognoscebatur ab omnibus et mane nullum cognoscebat' (381-82), whereas L reads, '. . . quod quasi usque ad noctem cognoscebat omnes et cognoscebatur ab omnibus, et mane facto nullum cognoscens nec cognoscitur ab aliquo' (Huber's ed., p. 66). Here it could again be argued that the Old English writer was quite capable of elaborating the element of reciprocity himself, expanding on a reading similar to that of EH and sensing that it needed clarification. On the other hand, L is a manuscript with which the Old English agrees in other respects as well.[34] This, taken with the evident superiority of its reading at this point – the other manuscripts of L_1 shift jarringly from the passive mood to the active – suggests strongly that the Old English writer was being guided here by the authority of a reading like that of L.

Agreements between the Old English and mutually contrasting manuscripts of the *Passio* might also be explicable as due to the Old English writer's knowledge of more than one manuscript tradition of his original. The idea of Old English writers making critical use of more than one manuscript of a Latin source is not one which Anglo-Saxon scholars have found it necessary to explore. Ælfric, however, as we have seen, may have known more than one textual tradition of the *Passio Septem Dormientium*, and Huber, in discussing the treatment in the anonymous *Legend* of the value of the coins which Malchus takes with him on his expedition to Ephesus, makes a similar suggestion concerning the writer of this work.[35] Whitelock was able to find internal reasons in the Old English for the appearance of the number sixty-two (721; Skeat, 479) as well as the normal sixty (see E, 304) in this passage,[36] and for her the unusual reading in the *Legend*, giving both numbers, would represent another independent addition by the Old English writer. Whitelock's solution is convincing, although one should note the coincidence that the Latin manuscripts in which the distinctive reading 'sixty-two' occurs are N and B. As demonstrated below, there are many other occasions when the Old English reflects uncommon Latin readings which occur in N and B. This might suggest that the Old English writer's knowledge of contrasting Latin readings at this point, one

(like that in EH)\giving him 'sixty', the other (like that in NB) giving him 'sixty-two', remains a possibility. Even in NB, however, the reading 'sixty-two' appears to be problematic, as is illustrated by the fact that in N the 'duo' in 'sexaginta duo' has been added above the line (fol. 152v, i, 21). The Old English text can be adequately explained without reference to the aberrant NB reading at this point. Indeed if the Old English writer had access to a text like that of NB in his treatment of this passage, he could have avoided altogether the major difficulties (another of which is mentioned below) into which his corrupt source leads him here.

There are many other places where readings in EH contrast with those in NB. In such cases the Old English sometimes follows one, sometimes the other. If we accept Whitelock's solution to the problem of the curious appearance of 'sixty' *and* 'sixty-two' in the passage discussed in the preceding paragraph, the picture of the immediate source of the Old English to which we are moving is of a Latin text including elements from EH and NB (and indeed from other traditions). Rather than systematically comparing variants, the Old English writer can be seen as basically following this single Latin text. However, the text of the *Passio* with which we end up by including all the distinctive readings which appear to be reflected in the Old English is unlike that of any surviving manuscript and implies the existence of textual relationships between Latin manuscripts not otherwise apparent.

I have listed elsewhere some of the significant EH readings which point to the Old English writer's dependence on a source manuscript related to this group.[37] It is true that some of these readings are not exclusively confined to EH but also appear in C-C, but there is also a number of distinctive contrasts between EH and C-C, in which the Old English closely follows EH.[38] Most significant of all in comparing the Old English to EH is that certain Latin readings reflected in the Old English are unique to this group. The following are instances of this:

(i)   At 717-18 of the Old English (Skeat, 477) there is a passage unparalleled in any text of the *Passio*, concerning the issues of coins in the reign of Decius. As Whitelock has suggested,[39] the statement, 'Feower siðon man awende mynetisena on his dagum', is best understood as an attempt on the part of the Old English writer to make sense of the corrupt reading found only in H, 'Quatuor enim fuerunt in diebus decii' (E, in a further complication of the text, adds 'anni' at the end of the clause (306-07), presumably trying to rationalize the reading 'Quatuor', but this is ignored in the Old English). It is likely that the correct reading, *hi* instead of *quatuor*, which is found in the other manuscripts was misread by the EH group as

an abbreviation for *quatuor* ('Iu'). The Old English translator managed to make some sense of the phantom *quatuor* by having it refer to the four issues of coins.

(ii)   At 774-75 of the Old English (Skeat, 514) we read that Malchus wondered at the changes which he saw in Ephesus, 'swilce he on niht mætte'. This follows the E reading, 'tamquam in uisione noctis' (326). But all other manuscripts, including in this case H, have 'factus' instead of 'noctis' (see Huber's ed., p. 62).

(iii)   At 927 of the Old English (Skeat, 613) the reference to 'yldrena goldhord' comes from the EH reading 'thesaurum antiquorum' (373). All other manuscripts lack the word *antiquorum* at this point.

These correspondences between the Old English and EH, taken with those also shared by C-C, indicate the centrality of EH to the study of the exact source of the Old English. Many striking disagreements between EH and the Old English remain, however, and in considering the text of the Old English in these cases it becomes apparent that it corresponds most often to that of NB. N, in particular, preserves a good text of L_1, in contrast to the numerous corruptions of E, and many of its superior readings are reflected in the Old English. NB also contain a number of readings which are either unique among manuscripts of L_1 or else are found in only one other surviving manuscript, but which are taken over word for word into the Old English.

Several of these are noted by Huber in his examination of B (he does not discuss N):[40]

(i)   At 327 of the Old English (Skeat, 217-18) we are told that the seven saints selected to look after their food one of their number, 'ðæs eadigan nama wæs Malchus'. Among manuscripts of L_1 only N (fol. 151r, i, 24-25), B, and Huber's P (Munich CLM 11325, which is not otherwise one of the most significant manuscripts with regard to the Old English) and the detail 'nomine Malchum' at this point (see Huber's ed., p. 48).

(ii)   In the passage in which Decius interrogates the parents of the seven as to the whereabouts of their sons, he asks in the Old English, 'Hwær syndon þa wiðersacan eowre lyðran magas?' (444-45; Skeat, 296). Most Latin manuscripts have 'Vbi sunt seditiosi ipsi?' (185-86; Huber's ed., p. 51). But N (fol. 151v, i, 19-20), B, and

also L add 'filii uestri', the source of the Old English 'magas'.

(iii)   Just after this, the plea of the parents to Decius, 'þæt ðu gehyran wylle ure word' (453; Skeat, 301), reflects the Latin reading, 'ut audias nos', which is found only in N (fol. 151v, i, 26) and (written above the line in a later hand) in B (see Huber's ed., p. 52).

Huber refers to the two other places where the Old English reading coincides with that which appears in B.[41] He mentions the omission of the name of the owner of the land on which the cave of the Sleepers is situated, Dalius (see Old English, 626; Skeat, 415; Latin, Huber's ed., p. 58), and he also mentions the insertion of the word for 'mother' in the phrases 'modra innoðe' (Old English, 648; Skeat, 430) and 'uulua matris' (Latin, Huber's ed., p. 58). But both of these correspondences are also paralleled in EH: 'Dalius' is also omitted in H (although not in E, nor indeed in N – see E 266; N fol. 152r, ii, 6), and 'matris' is added in EH (see E, 274). These two instances do not demonstrate dependence of the Old English on peculiar NB readings, although they are of interest in that they exemplify features distinctively shared between EH and NB.
    Further examination of NB, however, does reveal other exact correspondences with the Old English, which are unparalleled in other Latin manuscripts, including EH. The following are four instances of this:

(i)   In the passage referred to above, in which Decius questions the parents of the saints, he warns them in the Old English that they will be put to death, 'buton ge hi nu her ameldian' (448; Skeat, 298). This reference to betraying the saints appears among Latin manuscripts only in N (fol. 151v, i, 23-24) and (written in the margin) B: 'nisi eorum latebras detexeritis' (compare E, 188-89; Huber's ed., p. 51).

(ii)   At 797 of the Old English (Skeat, 529) the verb 'sworon' translates 'iurantes', which appears among Latin manuscripts only in N (fol. 152v, ii, 19) and (written superscript) B. All other manuscripts have 'dicentes' (compare E, 334, Huber's ed., p. 63).

(iii)   At 1170-71 (Skeat, 773) the Old English reads, 'wytt Theodorus and Rufinus': only in N (fol. 153v, ii, 25) and (written in a second hand in the margin) B do we find the phrase, 'nos fideles Christi famuli Theodorus et Ruben', giving the

names of the two Christians (compare E, 452; Huber's ed., p. 72). Despite the form 'Ruben' (the Old English 'Rufinus' corresponds to the form of the name which appears in EH in an earlier reference to these Christians – see E, 213; compare Old English, 500; Skeat, 331-32), the Old English is clearly following an NB reading at this point.

(iv) At 1209-10 (Skeat, 799) the Old English phrase, 'gecyðed þurh opene tacna' derives from the Latin, 'probatio certissima', which appears only in N (fol. 154r, i, 5-6) and (added in the margin) B. There is no mention of proof in any other Latin manuscript (compare E, 467; Huber's ed., p. 74).

These correspondences, along with those observed by Huber, indicate that the NB tradition, represented by these continental manuscripts of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, preserves elements from a textual tradition known in Anglo-Saxon England and used, in particular, by our anonymous Old English writer. N and B themselves, quite understandably (as they date from considerably later than the composition of the Old English version), show very many discrepancies from the hypothetical text lying behind the Old English,[42] but their general relationship to this text is evident enough. It is also apparent from our examination of the texts of the *Passio* that the EH group bears a close relationship to the textual tradition from which N and B derive, but that E and H show a number of omissions and corruptions (some of which are also shared by C-C) which do not affect NB. The evidence suggests that the Old English writer used a text from this EH strand, but one with fewer of the departures from NB than are found in E and H themselves.

With an Old English writer so imaginative in his treatment of his material and a Latin version whose manuscript traditions are so patchily attested, one is disinclined to be over-dogmatic on the question of the exact source used. Further work on the manuscripts of L_1, and indeed comparison with the texts of the Greek original,[43] will eventually reveal a fuller picture of the various textual traditions of this widely read *passio*. With regard to our Old English version, however, while we may not have any one manuscript of its source which solves all the problems of the source investigator, nonetheless by careful study of the range of manuscripts which survive – with particular attention to the valuable EH and NB traditions – we are able, to a fairer degree than is possible with many Old English saints' lives, to aim at the ideal espoused by J. E. Cross,[44] of identifying the particular sequences of words which an Old English writer must have had in front of him.

NOTES

[1] In the present article, line references to the text of the Old English version are to my own edition, *The Anonymous Old English Legend of the Seven Sleepers*, Durham Medieval Texts, 7 (Durham, 1991). Line references, in brackets, are also given to the edition in *Ælfric's Lives of Saints*, edited by Walter W. Skeat, EETS, os 76, 82, 94, and 114 (London, 1881-1900; rpt. as two vols, 1966), I, 488-541.

[2] See P. Michael Huber, *Die Wanderlegende von den Siebenschläfern: eine literargeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Leipzig, 1910), pp. 156-64.

[3] *Die Wanderlegende*, pp. 59-72.

[4] J. Heinrich Ott, *Über die Quellen der Heiligenleben in Ælfrics Lives of Saints I* (Halle, 1892), pp. 56-58. Ott did not examine a text of L_1, that of C (discussed below), which had appeared in print some years before: see *Bibliotheca Casinensis, III: Florilegium*, edited by the Benedictines (Monte Cassino, 1877), 252-59.

[5] This version begins, 'Eodem tempore regnans Decius crudelissimus imperator descendit in civitatem Constanti, et rursus pervenit in Carthaginem et Ephesum' (p. 386). It is not discussed by Huber.

[6] This edition is printed on pp. 39-78 of P. Michael Huber, 'Beitrag zur Visionsliteratur und Siebenschläferlegende des Mittelalters, I Teil: Text', *Beilage zum Jahresbericht des humanistischen Gymnasiums Metten* (1902-3).

[7] On Munich CLM 14540 see *Catalogus Codicum Manu Scriptorum Bibliothecae Regiae Monachensis*, IV, ii, edited by Carolus Halm *et al.* (Munich, 1876), 189-90. On Vienna Cod. Lat. 420 see G. Vielhaber, 'De Codice Hagiographico C. R. Bibliothecae Palatinae Vindobonensis Lat. 420', *Analecta Bollandiana*, 26 (1907), 33-65.

[8] Dorothy Whitelock, 'The Numismatic Interest of an Old English Version of the Legend of the Seven Sleepers', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins: Studies Presented to F. M. Stenton*, edited by R. H. M. Dolley (London, 1961), 188-94; and my own article, 'On the Sources of the non-Ælfrician Lives in the Old English *Lives of Saints*', *Notes and Queries*, n.s. 32 (1985), 292-99.

[9] See Patrick H. Zettel, 'Saints' Lives in Old English: Latin Manuscripts and Vernacular Accounts: Ælfric', *Peritia*, 1 (1982), 17-37; this article of Zettel's is based on his longer study, 'Ælfric's Hagiographic Sources and the Latin Legendary Preserved in BL MS Cotton Nero E i and CCCC MS 9 and Other Manuscripts' (unpublished D.Phil. thesis, Oxford University, 1979).

[10] An edition of this is printed on pp. 22-54 of P. Michael Huber, 'Beitrag zur Siebenschläferlegende des Mittelalters, II Teil: Griechische Texte', *Beilage zum Jahresbericht des humanistischen Gymnasiums Metten* (1904-05). See 'Passio Septem Dormientium apud Ephesum', edited by B. Krusch, in *Passiones Vitaeque Sanctorum Aevi Merovingici*, edited by B.

Krusch and W. Levison, MGH, Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum, VII, ii (Hannover and Leipzig, 1919-20), Appendix, 757-69 (p. 760).

[11] For edition see note 10. Gregory also composed a short summary of the legend in chapter 94 of his 'Liber in Gloria Martyrum', edited by B. Krusch, in *Gregorii Turonensis Opera*, MGH, Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum, I (Hannover, 1885), 484-561 (pp. 550-52).

[12] See Krusch, 'Passio Septem Dormientium apud Ephesum', pp. 760-61.

[13] See Krusch, 'Passio Septem Dormientium apud Ephesum', pp. 760-61; also Albert Siegmund, *Die Überlieferung der griechischen christlichen Literatur in der lateinischen Kirche bis zum zwölften Jahrhundert*, Abhandlungen der Bayerischen Benedikter-Akademie, 5 (Munich-Pasing, 1949), p. 218.

[14] 'Saints' Lives in Old English', p. 18.

[15] The text in the thirteenth-century St Omer Cod. 716, IV, belongs to the 'Flemish legendary' described by Wilhelm Levison in 'Conspectus Codicum Hagiographicorum', in *Passiones Vitaeque Sanctorum Aevi Merovingici*, MGH, Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum, VII, ii, 542-43, 674. The text of the Seven Sleepers in this MS closely follows that in two other MSS not discussed by Huber, the late twelfth-centuty Douai Cod. 837, and the thirteenth-century Ghent Cod. 488 (neither of which has a significant bearing on the immediate source of the Old English). *BHL* 2316 also appears in three twelfth- and thirteenth-century copies of the 'Austrian legendary': see 'De Magno Legendario Austriaco', *Analecta Bollandiana*, 17 (1898), 24-99 (p. 67). On monastic legendaries see further Levison, pp. 530ff.

[16] See *Catalogue of Additions to the MSS in the British Museum in the Years 1894-99* (London, 1903), pp. 546-47.

[17] The *Vita Willibaldi Episcopi Eichstetensis*, written on the Continent in the eighth century by the Anglo-Saxon nun Huneberc, mentions in its account of the travels of Willibald and his brother that they visited the place near Ephesus where the Seven Sleepers lay buried: see the edition by O. Holder-Egger, MGH, Scriptores, XV, i (Hannover, 1887), 86-106 (p. 93). There is, however, no evidence that this work was known in England.

[18] The reference to the legend in the *Vita Ædwardi Regis* may be a later addition to the text: see below, p. 46.

[19] As suggested by P. A. M. Clemoes, it is likely that the *Passio* itself was first introduced to England in the second half of the tenth century: see Clemoes's essay, 'Late Old English Literature', in *Tenth-Century Studies: Essays in Commemoration of the Millennium of the Council of Winchester and Regularis Concordia*, edited by David Parsons (London and Chichester, 1975), pp. 103-114 (p. 109).

[20] *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The Second Series: Text*, edited by Malcolm Godden, EETS, ss 5 (London, 1979), Homily XXVII, lines 182-231, 'Sanctorum Septem Dormientium', pp. 247-48.

21 'Ælfric's Hagiographic Sources', p. 194.

22 *The Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church. The First Part, Containing the Sermones Catholici, or Homilies of Ælfric*, edited by Benjamin Thorpe, 2 vols (London, 1844 and 1846), I, 230-39: the addition comes between lines 22 and 23 on p. 236.

23 Milton McC. Gatch, *Preaching and Theology in Anglo-Saxon England: Ælfric and Wulfstan* (Toronto and Buffalo, 1977), pp. 86-88.

24 This reference is discussed further in my forthcoming article, 'Ælfric and the Legend of the Seven Sleepers', to be included in a collection of essays edited by Paul E. Szarmach.

25 Compare Godden's edition of *Catholic Homilies II*, p. 248, lines 204-05.

26 *Vita Ædwardi Regis qui apud Westmonasterium requiescit*, edited by Frank Barlow (London, 1962), pp. 66-71.

27 Barlow, p. 68.

28 Barlow, pp. xxxix-xli.

29 Huber, *Die Wanderlegende*, pp. 161-64.

30 See *Catalogue général des manuscrits des bibliothèques de Belgique, I: Catalogue des manuscrits conservés a Namur* (Gembloux, 1934), p. 132. I would like to thank Miss P. R. Robinson for her kind advice concerning the dating of this and other manuscripts discussed in this article. References to material in N throughout this article are by folio number, column (small roman numeral) and line (arabic numeral).

31 For reference to printed edition of this text see note 4 above.

32 Line references to the Latin text are to that of E, as given in my edition of the Old English (see note 1). For Huber's edition see note 6 above.

33 On roses and lilies see further Eric John, 'The World of Abbot Ælfric', in *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society: Studies Presented to J. M. Wallace-Hadrill*, edited by Patrick Wormald, with Donald Bullough and Roger Collins (Oxford, 1983), pp. 300-16 (p. 312). See also Ruth Waterhouse, '"A Rose by Any Other Name": Two Versions of the Legend of St Cecilia', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 79 (1978), 126-36 (pp. 132-36).

34 Note, for example, the addition, 'filii uestri', discussed on pp. 50-51 of this article.

35 *Die Wanderlegende*, p. 162.

36 'The Numismatic Interest', pp. 192-93.

37 'On the Sources of the non-Ælfrician Lives', p. 293.

38 See 'On the Sources of the non-Ælfrician Lives', pp. 293-94.

39 'The Numismatic Interest', pp. 191-92.

40 *Die Wanderlegende*, p. 161.

41 *Die Wanderlegende*, p. 161.

42 The following readings peculiar to NB would not have been present in the text used by the

C

Old English writer (the references given here are to N; for B see textual notes in Huber's edition):

(i)   material omitted in NB but translated in the Old English: 'imperator iussit auferri de ceruicibus eorum ferrum' (E, 113) appears in the Old English as 'he het hi eft ealle unbindan and unbundene aweg forlætan' (286-87; Skeat, 190-91), but is omitted in N (see fol. 150v, ii, 40) and B; 'timens' (E, 143) gives the Old English 'mid ege and mid ogan' (350-51; Skeat, 233), but is omitted in N (see fol. 151r, ii, 1) and B; the word 'imperatoris' in the phrase 'fideles imperatoris' (E, 213-14), giving the Old English 'ðæs caseres dyrlingas' (357; Skeat, 497), is missing in N (see fol. 151v, ii, 18) and B, which instead have the sense that the 'fideles' were faithful Christians; the phrase 'cum reliquiis sanctorum' (E, 215), the source of the Old English 'mid þam halgum' (504; Skeat, 334), does not appear in N (see fol. 151v, ii, 21) or B; the word 'impiissimus' in the phrase 'Decius impiissimus' (E, 222), which is reflected in the Old English 'Decius se yfela casere' (525; Skeat, 348), is omitted in N (see fol. 151v, ii, 30) and B; these MSS (see N fol. 152r, ii, 6) also omit the phrase 'patrum suorum' (E, 264-65), the source of the Old English 'swa his yldran beforan him manega wæron' (621-22; Skeat, 412); and they leave out the sentence 'Haec . . . eorum' (E, 347-49), the source of 'Eall he . . . geswutelod' (838-44; Skeat, 556-60).

(ii)   material which appears in NB but is not translated in the Old English: at the point corresponding to E, 147, N (fol. 151r, ii, 7) and B uniquely add 'martyres' after 'sancti', but the Old English has only 'ða halgan' (354-55; Skeat, 236); the Old English also ignores clauses added in NB at the points corresponding to E, 247 (see N fol. 152r, i, 21-24; Huber's ed., p. 56, note 27) and E, 261 (see N fol. 152r, ii, 1-3; Huber's ed., p. 57, note 23): compare the Old English 571 (Skeat, 378) and 616 (Skeat, 409).

(iii)   mutually exclusive readings in EH and NB, in which the Old English follows the former: the Old English 'martyrcynn' (127; Skeat, 85) follows 'generatio' (E, 43) rather than the NB 'colluctatio' (see N fol. 150r, ii, 24); the reference at 692 of the Old English (Skeat, 460) to 'uran ærran life' follows the Latin reading 'uitam' (E, 295) rather than 'fidem', which appears uniquely in N (see fol. 152v, i, 9) and B; instead of 'Marinus uero episcopus misit ad theodosium imperatorem scribens . . . ' (E, 462-63), which is closely followed by the Old English, 'And se bisceop Marinus . . .' (1198-99; Skeat, 791-92), N (fol. 153v, ii, 40-41) and B have 'proconsul autem cum marino episcopo transmisit ad theodosium imperatorem et scripsit . . .' (in B 'cum marino episcopo' is added in another hand above the line); the Old English 'mire yldrena' (1228; Skeat, 811) follows 'patrum meorum' (E, 473) rather than the N (fol. 154r, i, 17-18) and B 'patris mei'.

43 See note 10 above.

44 See James E. Cross, 'Identification: Towards Criticism', in *Modes of Interpretation in Old English Literature: Essays in Honour of Stanley B. Greenfield*, edited by Phyllis Rugg Brown, Georgia Ronan Crampton, and Fred C. Robinson (Toronto, Buffalo, and London, 1986), pp. 229-46 (pp. 230-31).