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Vercelli Homily XIV and the Homiliary of Paul the Deacon

Paul E. Szarmach

When the late J. E. Cross cited the progressive activity of source study, he no doubt had in mind the advance in understanding that he established with his study of Cambridge, Pembroke College 25 as well as the grand movement of several generations of scholars. It has been some time since anyone argued that Ælfric, for example, had an extensive library that made it possible for him to pick the flowers of the Fathers as he composed his homilies and sermons. It was Paul the Deacon who in many cases made that first important pick, thanks to Charlemagne. Cyril Smetana's two classic studies put an end to speculation about libraries for good by directing scholars to the homiliaries and Ælfric's use of them, settling the large question of grand libraries for certain and opening up studies of other possibilities, such as our honoree has offered with her research into Smaragdus. Pembroke 25, of course, has a special connection to the Vercelli Homilies, which Cross has amply demonstrated. Vercelli Homily XIX draws on the Rogationtide sermons for the treatment of Jonah. Vercelli Homily XX, which Forster cited as coming ultimately from Alcuin's Liber de Virtutibus et Vitiis, derives in fact from a ninth-century redaction of Alcuin's work into three homilies, cap. 27-35 providing the substance of art. 93 in Pembroke and its equivalent in Vercelli XX. These discoveries are part of the corrective processes embedded in that 'progressive activity' Cross cited. In these two cases, at least, this author happily bows to the rod of correction, for the discoveries have corrected his early work on these two homilies. Specifically, the positive literary qualities of shaping ultimate sources or of crisp diction belong to Latin intermediaries who were followed by their Old English adaptors, not created by them. In this paper I would seek to administer even more self-correction in the name of steady progress by way of a review of the source work on Vercelli XIV which, because it will return scholarly attention to Paul the Deacon's homiliary,
might seem to be a form of retrogressive progress. A reprise of the homily in its manuscript context is a necessary beginning.

Vercelli XIV, entitled *Larspell to swylcere tide swa man wile* [=‘quando uolueris’], written in red minuscule, is the fourth and final item in the manuscript grouping B2b, as established by D. G. Scragg, and the sixteenth item in the Vercelli Book. The use of red minuscules, which are not otherwise found in the Vercelli Book, as well as certain language features, link XIV to XI-XIII, which are given serial enumeration as homilies for Rogationtide. As all scholars seem to agree, the Vercelli Scribe copied, rather mechanically, the headings of his various exemplars. The Rogation sermons in B2b are noticeably briefer than the prose pieces in the Vercelli Book. This Rogationtide trio has further, thematic unities, as Charles D. Wright has recently argued. With due caution Wright suggests 'an unprovable hypothesis' that the three sermons give voice to secular clerks who have worked out the right relation between material wealth and *timor domini* as opposed to their monk-critics who saw the clerks as worldly and licentious. Such a reading gives the three sermons remarkable status in the anti-monastic reaction that accompanied the Benedictine Reform and, with C. A. Jones' reading of Ælfric's *Letter to the Monks of Eynsham*, serves as a reminder that the Benedictine Reform did not sweep all before it. Homily XIV is a penitential homily, and as such shares on the broad level the same theme of spiritual renewal through soul-saving practices as found in XI-XIII. Where XI and XIV offer similar passages based on Caesarius of Arles' *Sermo 215 De Natale Sancti Felicis*, the evidence would suggest that there are at least two different Old English writers at work in Group B2b. Vercelli XIV is not extant in variant form, but Scragg has found two sentences from this homily in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 303, art. 40, *De Inclusis*, p. 202, which is a Rochester production of the early twelfth century. Presumably the text of Vercelli XIV was available at Rochester in some form at least at the end of the Anglo-Saxon period.

Caesarius of Arles duly noted, the main source for Vercelli XIV is Gregory the Great's *Dialogues*, beginning with a small passage in IV.59 and following through to the end of the *Dialogues* in IV.62, which in the Scragg edition occupies ll. 45-139 approximately out of 179 lines. While developing a theory of composition for some Old English homilies, I suggested that one had to consider whether this core of Vercelli XIV derived from a pre-existent translation or came directly from the Latin to this composition. The less than confirming proof can now yield to the discovery that section IV.62 of the *Dialogues* exists as a contribution to the Homiliary of Paul the Deacon, *pars aestivalis*, item 94b, as
reconstructed by Grégoire in 1980 and also 1966. Oddly enough, Grégoire indicates that *Dialogues* IV.60-62 is the extract, when the incipit he cites, 'Sed inter haec scirendum est quia [...] is the incipit for IV.62. In this attribution there is a double misdirection in operation. First, the use of the title 'homiliary' may lead to a certain casualness in the understanding of Paul the Deacon's homiliary. In fact, Paul the Deacon adopted several non-homiletic works. They include, among other works, Augustine's *Quaestiones Evangeliorum* (I.7), his *De Civitate Dei* (I.29), his *Enchiridion* (III.131), Isidore of Seville's *De Ortu et Obitu Patrum* (I.31), Eusebius' *Historia Ecclesiastica* (I.32), Jerome's *Epistles* (II.1), and 'sermons' based on commentaries of Jerome and Bede. Secondly, the scribe or compiler of a given version might mislead the unwary source hunter by, as noted below, calling an extract a 'sermo', and thus giving a false lead for a fruitless search among sermons and homilies when the given work is neither of these.

The absence of a definitive edition of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary is a further difficulty. The version in PL 95, 1059-1566 is manifestly, if not hopelessly, an interpolated version. In 1966 Grégoire summarized the state of the question while highlighting the importance of Vat. Lat. 8562 and 8563, 'two good witnesses'; in 1980 he downplayed the Vat. Lat. manuscripts, returning to a consideration of four Reichenu manuscripts, two Benediktbeuern manuscripts, and one Troyes manuscript to create his inventory. Over time varying liturgical contexts and religious developments certainly created a special kind of *mouvance* in the dissemination of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary, as the anthology developed away from Paul's first intention. For Anglo-Saxon literary culture there are only comparatively later Latin manuscripts with no notice thus far of any ninth- or tenth-century witnesses except St.-Omer 202 (see below). Within this context Vercelli XIV would then appear to be among the earliest witnesses to the use of Paul the Deacon in the vernacular, at least more or less contemporaneous with Ælfric's two homily cycles and, with due acknowledgment of the hazards of dating, perhaps even earlier.

Exactly what constitutes the field of study for Anglo-Saxon homiliaries remains fuzzy and unclear. With their respective handlist of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts and catalogue of eleventh-century Anglo-Saxon manuscripts Helmut Gneuss and Richard Gameson have advanced the subject, as has Mary Richards with her special study of Rochester homiliaries. The problem for Anglo-Saxon Studies generally is the *terminus ad quem*, and it is no different for the study of Anglo-Saxon literary culture, or to put it another way: how far into the twelfth century should investigation proceed, especially for the study of late tenth- or
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early eleventh-century texts? Gneuss and Gameson nevertheless give something of a baseline for study, though their fields are not quite congruent. Gneuss lists some sixteen manuscripts or fragments of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary. Gameson does not include the fragmentary Canterbury, Cathedral Library and Archives, Add. 127/1 or St.-Omer, Bibliothèque Municipale 202, but adds BL Harley 1918. The scope of Richards' work allows her to go forward into the twelfth century with, for example, Edinburgh, N.L. MS. Adv. 18.2.4, which is in the distinctive Rochester style of the first quarter of the twelfth century.

In the face of these traps and pitfalls about the temporal closure to the study of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary and the prospect of infinite textual progression, it is the happy fact that Cambridge, Pembroke College 23, art. 68, fols. 289r-89v represents an intermediary text between Gregory's Dialogues and Vercelli Homily XIV. Pembroke 23, art. 68 is the equivalent of Dialogues IV.62, which is a major part of Vercelli XIV, but not of course the entire Gregorian section. Thus, as with Pembroke College 25 and Vercelli Homilies XIX and XX, a later Latin text indicates the proximate source of an earlier vernacular version. Rebecca Rushforth describes Pembroke 23 and Pembroke 24 as a 'two-volume set of homilies written in France, probably at Saint-Germain-des-Prés, Paris, in the first half of the eleventh century'. She associates the two volumes with Abbot Baldwin (1065-1097/98), who had been a monk at Saint-Denis and who is likely to have been instrumental in the importation of the volumes from St. Denis to Bury. The punctuation in the text, notably the ';' mark, suggests that it was a reading text, but the punctuation generally corresponds to sense units as well. In addition to the main hand there may be at least three other hands: 1) a late, likely Renaissance, hand that seeks to indicate that the Gospel reading is from Matthew; 2) a hand in darker ink that corrects erring 'indul' to 'indulti' (l. 20) and places an apparent accent mark on the root syllable of 'relaxat' (l. 2); 3) perhaps a third hand that inserts hyphens at the end of ll. to indicate word division and light separation marks between words. The later annotator who writes faintly 'Notä' in the margin opposite manuscript ll. 15-16 could be yet another hand.

The Latin text in Pembroke College 23 strays only slightly from the text as established by Umberto Moricca and Adalbert de Vogüé, respectively. One may dismiss from consideration at the outset errors in Pembroke 23 as, for example qui (in standard abbreviation) for correct quia (l. 3), ei instead of correct eique (l. 7), cum seruo instead of correct consero (l. 11). The hand that corrects indul to indulti (l. 18), rather than indulgentiae, follows the mainline tradition in both the
Italian and French traditions. Invariably variants such as *in eo* for *in ipso* (l. 2), *aduersus* for *aduersum* (l. 4), *illud rursus a nobis exigitur* for *illud rursus exigimur* (l. 18) are variants witnessed in the whole tradition. Pembroke 23 offers minor points of variation: *delicti sui* for *sui delicti* (l. 1), *offeres* for *offers* (l. 3), *scilicet ut* for *et scilicet* or *ut scilicet* (l. 8). The free adaptation of a broad Latin tradition makes it difficult to seek to establish clinching points of correspondence. One example may suffice. Ll. 20-22 of Pembroke 23 read:

> Igitur dum per indul[ti] temporis spatium licet, dum iudex sustinet, dum conversionem nostram is qui culpas examinat, expectat, conflemus in lacrimis duritiam mentis [...] [Therefore, while it is permitted through a space of time of grace, while the judge holds back, while the one who will examine our sins awaits our conversion, let us melt down the hardness of our mind in tears [...]]

which become in the Old English:

> Uton þonne, men þa leofestan, geþencan þane fyrst þisse forgifenan tide, nu us læreð 7 myndgæð, 7 ure gehwyrfednesse bideð, se ilca se ðe is ure dema. Hreowsian we mid tearum þa heardnesse ures modes 7 ura synna [...] [Let us then, dearly beloved, consider this time of forgiveness, now that the same one that is our judge teaches us, reminds us, and awaits our conversion. Let us repent the hardness of our mind in tears [...]]

The key words *indul[ti]* and *conuersionem* make it through the re-arranged syntactic flow, as presumably variant *indulgentiae* and *conversationem* would have too, with the trailing elegance of the complex Old English subject. The relation is there, and it is noteworthy that de Vogue's collation with the eighth-century St. Gall 213 and Autun 20 supports the connection. A more specific link to a particular manuscript seems not possible.

There is still some distance to go in ascertaining a closer relationship between Homily XIV and Gregory's *Dialogues*. It may very well be that some version of Paul the Deacon contains an extract that does in fact pick up in IV.59 and goes through to IV.62, as Scragg demonstrates in his notes and I have
discussed in *English Studies*. The existence of a partial correspondence must now point the direction of research towards homiliaries of the Paul the Deacon type. By way of postscript: as de Vogüé notes, Matthew 5. 23-24 is something of a favorite text for Gregory, who cites it in the *Pastoralis* at III.22, *Homiliae in Hiezechihelem Prophetam*, I.viii.9, and *Registrum Epistularum*, Epistola 7.4. Alfred the Great does translate III.22 closely, but there is no particular correlation between the passages in Vercelli XIV and the *Pastoralis* beyond the citation of Matthew 5:23-24. In private communications (June, 2006) Thomas N. Hall suggested to me the possibility Vercelli XIV is really in a line of abbreviated versions of Paul the Deacon, the specific evidence for which has not yet come to light, though there are examples of such abbreviation in other cases.

In the edition of Pembroke 23, art. 68, which follows below, I have modernized punctuation and have expanded abbreviations without notice. Tailed 'e' is a manuscript feature, but I have not distinguished it. Nor have I pursued spelling variants, as Moricca and de Vogüé have. The notes to the Latin text combine light textual commentary with variants. Pembroke College 23 art. 68 is collated with the mainline tradition of the text of the *Dialogues* as a whole, as presented in de Vogüé primarily, which is, as I have suggested, essentially a composite.

*Cambridge, Pembroke College 23 fols. 289r1-89v2*

**SERMO BEATI GREGORII PAPE DE EVANGELICA LECTIONE**

Sed inter hec sciendum est quia ille recte delicti sui ueniam postulat, qui prius hoc quod in eo delinquitur relaxat. Munus enim non accipitur, nisi ante discordia ab animo pellatur, dicente ueritate, 'Si offeres munus tuum ad altare et recordatus fueris qui[a] habet aliquid aduer-[col. 2]sus te frater tuus, relinque ibi munus tuum ante altare, et uade prius reconciliari fratri tuo. Et tunc ueniens offer[s] munus tuum.' Qua in re pensandum est, cum omnis culpa munere soluatur, quam grauis est culpa discordiae, pro qua nec munus accipitur. Debemus itaque ad proximum, quamuis longe postum longeque disiunctum, mente ire; ei[que] animum subdere, humilitate illum ac beniuolentia placare, scilicet ut conditor noster, dum tale placitum nostrae mentis aspexerit, a peccato nos soluit, [289v1] quia munus pro culpa sumit.
Veritatis autem uoce adtestante didicimus, quia seruus qui decem milia talenta debeat, cum penitentiam ageret, absolutionem debiti a domino accepit, sed quia [con]seruo suo centum sibi denarios debenti debitum non dimisit, et hoc est iussus exigi quod ei fuerat iam dimissum. Ex quibus uidelicet dictis constat quia, si hoc quod in nos delinquitur ex corde non dimittimus, et illud rursus a nobis exigitur, quod nobis iam per penitentiam dimissum fuisse gaudebamus.

Igitur dum per [col. 2] indul[ti] temporis spatium licet, dum iudex sustinet, dum conversionem nostram is qui culpas examinat expectat, conflemus in lacrimis duritiam mentis, formemus in proximis gratiam benignitatis, et fidenter dico quia salutari hostia post mortem non indigebimus, si ante mortem Deo hostia ipsi fuerimus.

TEXTUAL NOTES

Title. In red rustic capitals [= 22nd Sunday after Pentecost: reading according to Matthew 18. 2-14, 'Simile est regnum coelorum homini regi [. . .]']. Beneath the title a later hand (Renaissance?) writes mathei followed by s.d. [?].
1. Sed. Initial S, zoomorphic in five ms. lines, and the first line are highlighted as per the layout practice of the book in translucent light brown ink. delicti sui: sui delicti.
2. eo: ipso.
3. offeres: P, offers.
4. qui[a]: originally qui in abbreviated form. aduersus: adversum.
6. reconciliari: reconciliare. offer[s]: P, offer.
7. in re: de re.
10. ei[que]: P, ei.
11. scilicet ut: ut scilicet / et scilicet.
14. erasure after –bebat.
15. [con]seruo: P, cum seruo.
17. quibus [. . . ] quod: a later hand writes 'nota' in the margin opposite these manuscript lines. quia si hoc: written as one word with a thin vertical line separating the units.
18. illud rursus a nobis exigitur: illud rursus exigimur.
20. indul[ti]: ti written in darker ink above the line.
23. hostia: erasure before and after hostia.
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Vercelli Homily XIV and the Homiliary of Paul the Deacon

Cambridge, Pembroke College MS23 fol. 289v

qui mentem procul pa
sunt. Vercelli, lurum
nunc adeptum dicit
inquit, quia serviunt qui
decem milia talenta de
habite cumpentem
amptere. Absum
nem est debita adominii
copi. Sed quia cuncta
ito suo centum sibi den
ris ebenda debita
nondimissi, hoc est
insum exquis quod est su
rit tempus. Ex
quibus indicat dicens
certo: quaslibet qe
nus dequitur ex
coele nonchamatam.
ptidum rursus, inobis
tique quod nostr
omine justificem et
missum suffice. Quod be
missus. Inquire dumi

includere a spatium
fermat, humana
claria non seminat
quisque cunctat
expe, terribiliter
iterum claram
ris formosus impromis
stium semperat.
E fidenter dico, quia
hautem post
denem non indigens.
sunt maxime dario
ipse suerint.

Cantus

Lectio suprema
silent. Scimus quid
ille tempore. A bein
ces pluribus consilium
interim. Incipit princi
ebus intermongere
sella sedes vobis.

Dea saltem

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NOTES

1 I would like to thank Thomas N. Hall for his comments and suggestions.


3 Réginald Grégoire prints Charlemagne's authorizing letter to Paul the Deacon, directing him to read 'flosculos' and to assemble them, and also Paul's dedicatory verse to the 'pietatis amator', more or less in reply, in Homéliaires liturgiques médiévaux (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 1980), pp. 423-24. Grégoire's earlier work, Les Homéliaires du Moyen Âge, Rerum Ecclesiasticorum Documenta, Series Maior, Fontes 6 (Rome: Casa Editrice Herder, 1966), gives only the dedicatory poem at p. 75.


5 Cross, pp. 96-122.


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Scragg, p. 237. See, forthcoming, Joyce Hill's 'Towards a Characterisation of Ælfric's Manuscript of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary', in Precedence, Practice and Appropriation: The Old English Homily, ed. by Aaron J. Kleist (Brepols).


Szarmach, p. 97 for the question and p. 109 for the final, essentially inconclusive, answer.


As presented by Grégoire (1966), passim.


Grégoire (1966), pp. 72-74; Grégoire (1980), p. 425. Grégoire used: 1) for the winter part: Karlsruhe, Bad. Landesbibliothek, Augiensis 29 (Reichenau, IX¹); Munich, Bayer. Staatsbibl. Clm 4533 (Benediktbeuern, XI¹); Karlsruhe, Bad. Landesbibliothek, Augiensis 14 (Reichenau, IX); 2) for the summer part: Karlsruhe, Bad. Landesbibliothek. Augiensis 15 (Reichenau, IX); Karlsruhe, Bad. Landesbibliothek, Augiensis (Reichenau, IX¹); Munich, Bayer. Staatsbibl., Clm. 4534 (Benediktbeuern, XI¹); Paris, Bibl. Nationale, n. acq. lat. 2322 (Troyes, IX).

For the date of the Catholic Homilies see the discussion by Malcolm Godden in Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: Introduction, Commentary, and Glossary, EETS, s.s. 18 (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the EETS, 2000), pp. xxix-xxxvi, who argues for a date 990x994 for the First Series, and '[... ] A year or so later [... ]' (p. xxxv) for the Second. The Vercelli Book as a whole is dated towards the end of the tenth century by most authorities, c. 975 perhaps, but there is evidence that individual pieces might have existed rather earlier; see Scragg, pp. xxxviii-xlii.

Medieval Homiliary at Rochester', pp. 85-120, with its tables of correspondences among manuscripts.


21 With comments on dating and provenance from Gneuss, the manuscripts are, by his numbering:

16: Cambridge University Library li.2.19, (Easter vigil to fourth Sunday after Epiphany), xi/xii, by way of Norwich;
24: Cambridge University Library Kk.4.13 (Septuagesima to Easter vigil, Sanctorale), xi/xii, by way of Norwich;
129: Pembroke College 23 (Easter to Advent), xi2, from Bury St. Edmunds;
130: Pembroke College 24 (Sanctorale, *commune sanctorum*). xi2, from Bury St. Edmunds;
209f: Canterbury, Cathedral Library and Archives, Add. 127/1, xi1;
222 Durham, Cathedral Library A.III.29 (Easter to 25th Sunday after Pentecost; Sanctorale, May to December), xi. ex. (before 1096), Durham;
226: Durham, Cathedral Library B.II.2, Christmas to Good Friday, xi ex. (before 1066);
249.3f: Durham, Cathedral Library C.IV.12 (Binding strips);
273: Lincoln Cathedral Library 158 (beginning of Lent to Easter vigil, Sanctorale 25 January to 30 November), xi ex., Normandy or England;
424: London, British Library, Harley 652, xi/xii, St. Augustine's Canterbury;
452: London, British Library, Royal 2.C.iii (Septuagesima to Sabbatum Sanctum; Sanctorale, common of the saints), xi/xii, Rochester;
753: Salisbury, Cathedral Library 179 (Easter to All Saints and common of the saints), xi, Salisbury;
763: Worcester Cathedral Library F.92 (Advent to Easter); xi/xii or xii in., from Worcester;
763.1: Worcester Cathedral Library F.93 (Easter to Advent); xi/xii or xii in., from Worcester;
763.2: Worcester Cathedral Library F.94 (Sanctorale, 3 May - November 30 and Commune, sanctorum); xi/xii or xii in., from Worcester [?];
930.5e: St.-Omer, Bibliotheque Municipale 202 (39 items, though Holy Saturday), ix2, originally from northeast France (prov. St. Bertin), by way of Exeter xi med.?


23 Richards, p. 103 and continuing discussion to p. 110.

**Rushforth, p. 104.**


**Szarmach, 'Another Old English Translation', p. 102, and Scragg, p. 238, the latter noting the downside of the presumed upside by observing that the modification of Latin sources makes the resolution of Old English cruces difficult.**

**Scragg, p. 245.**

**De Vogüé, iii, 205, note to LXII.1 (*Pastoralis* incorrectly cited to III.23).**

**For Alfred's translation see Henry Sweet, ed., *King Alfred's West-Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care*, EETS, o.s. 50 (London: Trubner, 1871; repr. Oxford University Press, 1930; and Oxford University Press for the EETS, 1958), pp. 348-49.**