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## The Place which Is Called 'at X': A New Look at Old Evidence

Janet Bately

The quasi-formulaic naming-construction,<sup>1</sup> 'the place (monastery, town, etc.) which is called X', is found in a wide range of Old English literary texts, alongside a similar construction with names of people,<sup>2</sup> sometimes following the example of a Latin source, sometimes independently. And the verb used varies both between and within texts. In early West-Saxon, for instance, the OE Orosius (Or),<sup>3</sup> like King Alfred's rendering of Boethius (Bo),<sup>4</sup> favours constructions using *hatan*, though it has three instances of *nemnan*, one of them in conjunction with, and seemingly as a stylistic variation of, the *hatan* formula:

Bo 99/9-11: 'on ðæm felda ðe Nensar hatte, 7 on ðære þiode ðe Deira hatte, swiðe neah þære byrig þe mon nu hætt Babilonia'.

[On the plain which is called Nensar, and in the district which is called Deira, very near the town which is now called Babylon.]

Or 9/16-17: 'æt þæm beorge þe mon Athlans nemneð 7 æt þæm iglande þe mon hætt Fortunatus'.

[At the mountain which is named Atlas and at the island which is called Fortunatus.]

OH I.ii.11: 'mons Athlans et insulae quas Fortunatas uocant'.<sup>5</sup>

[Mount Atlas and the islands which they call Fortunate.]

*Hatan* is also found in a group of entries for the 890s in some versions<sup>6</sup> of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (ASC). So, for example:

ASC (MS A) 892: 'æt þæs micla[n] wuda eastende þe we Andred hatað'.<sup>7</sup>

[At the east end of the great wood which we call Andred.]

ASC (MS A) 893: 'on anre westre ceastre on Wirhealum seo is Legaceaster gehaten'.

[In a certain deserted city in Wirral which is called Chester.]

In the earliest annals of the Chronicle, on the other hand, *hatan* is never found, the naming-formula with place-names being confined to the section covering the years 449 to 584, where past-participial constructions with *genemned* and *gecueden* are the norm, alongside a couple of instances of *mon nemneþ*. So, e.g.:

ASC (MS A) 449: 'on þam staþe þe is genemned Ypwinesfleot'.

[On the staithe (river-bank, etc.) which is named Ebbsfleet.]

ASC (MS A) 455: 'in þære stowe þe is gecueden Agelesþrep'.

[In the place which is called Agaelesþrep.]

ASC (MS A) 584: 'in þam stede þe mon nemneþ Feþanleag'.

[In the place which is called Fethanlea.]

In this it resembles the Mercian translation of Gregory's *Dialogues* (GD),<sup>8</sup> which also uses these two verbs, while the Old English Bede<sup>9</sup> and *Martyrology*<sup>10</sup> have not only *hatan* and *nemnan*, but also (*ge*)*cigan* and (*ge*)*cweþan*, as does, in a later period, Ælfric – again often by way of variation within a passage, not infrequently following a change of verb in a Latin source. So, for instance:

GD 87/29-33: 'on þære stowe, þe is haten Interorina seo denu, seo fram manegum mannum mid ceorliscum wordum is genemned Interocrina'.

[In that place, which is called the valley Interorina, which is named by many people Interocrina in rustic speech.]

*Dialogi* I.xii.1-2: 'In eo [...] loco Interorina uallis dicitur, quae a multis uerbo rustico Interocrina nominatur'.<sup>11</sup>

[In that place a valley is called Interorina, which is named by many Interocrina in rustic speech.]

*The Place Which Is Called 'at X'*

OE Bede 282/13-14: 'in stowe, seo is geceged Ceortes eig'.

[In a place which is called Ceort's island (i.e. Chertsey).]

Bede. *HE* IV.vi.218-19: 'in loco, qui uocatur Cerotaesei, id est Ceroti insula'.<sup>12</sup>

[In a place which is called Ceorotaesei, that is Cerot's island.]

OE Bede 276/14: 'in þas stowe, þe is cweden Heortford'.

[In this place which is called Hertford.]

*HE* IV.v.215: 'in loco, qui dicitur Herutford'.

[In the place which is called Hertford.]

Ælfric *CH* II.34. 2-3: 'on ðam earde þe is gehaten Pannonia. on þære byrig ðe is geweden Sabaria'.

[In the land which is called Pannonia. In the town which is called Sabaria.]

Cf. Sulpicius, *Vita Sancti Martini* ii: 'Martinus Sabaria Pannoniarum oppido oriundus fuit'.<sup>13</sup>

[Martinus originated from Sabaria town of the Pannonias.]

However, what I wish to concentrate on in this paper in honour of Joyce Hill is yet another variation of the 'place called X' formula, involving not the choice of verb, but close association with the place-name of what has been described variously as a pleonastic, prefixed, or 'seemingly redundant'<sup>14</sup> preposition, which 'seems sometimes to have become an integral part of the OE name'<sup>15</sup> and in particular, the preposition 'at'.

In the notes to his edition of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* (*HE*), Charles Plummer, commenting on the name *Adgefrin* (i.e. 'ad Gefrin'), compares the OE Bede's *Ætgefrin* (i.e. 'æt Gefrin'),<sup>16</sup> and claims that this 'practice of prefixing a local preposition ['at' or 'in'] so that it becomes part of the place-name' is 'very common in Anglo-Saxon, and occurs constantly in the charters'.<sup>17</sup> However, the generally assumed frequency of a 'prefixed' preposition in 'Anglo-Saxon', that is to say, Old English, has recently been challenged by Bruce Mitchell, who, commenting on OE *æt* in 'naming constructions', describes it as found only 'occasionally'. And he identifies two sets of contexts – 'either without a verb of naming [. . .] or with one'.<sup>18</sup>

The first question to be addressed, then, is whether the practice of 'prefixing' a preposition to place-names is common or just occasional, the second relates to the range of prepositions employed, and the third to the contexts in which they occur.<sup>19</sup>

**A. 'Prefixed' or 'pleonastic' prepositions in a naming-formula**

**A.1 The preposition 'at'**

**A.1.1 'Prefixed' or 'pleonastic' OE *æt* in an Old English naming-formula**

**A.1.1.1 In Old English literary prose**

I have found only twenty-five instances of the naming-formula with *æt*, mainly in texts from the ninth or early tenth century, thirteen of them in the late-ninth-century Old English version of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* and the majority corresponding to a similar construction with *ad* in its source.

**A.1.1.1.1 With Anglo-Saxon place-names**

OE Bede 262/8-9: 'in þære stowe þe is nemned *æt* Bearwe'.

[In the place which is named at the grove.]

HE IV.iii.207: 'in loco, qui dicitur ad Baruae, id est ad nemus'.

[In the place which is called at *Baruae*, that is at the grove.]

(Similarly 280/27, beside HE IV.vi.218: 'ad Baruae'.)

See also 140/10 ('*æt* Gefrin', HE II.xiv.115: 'ad Gefrin'); 222/5 and 226/1-2 ('*æt* Walle', HE III.xxi. 170 and HE III.xxii. 172 'ad Murum'); 222/13 ('*æt* Rægeheafde' [at the head of the roe], HE III.xxi.170: 'ad Caprae Caput' [at the head of the goat (Gateshead)]); 308/11 ('*æt* Stane' [at Stone], HE IV.xiv(xvi).237: 'ad Lapidem' [at Stone]); 368/3 ('*æt* Twyfyrd', HE IV.xxvi(xxviii).272: 'ad Tuifyrði, [...] ad duplex uadum' [at the double ford]).

OE Bede 280/26: 'þæs mynstres, *æt* Medeshamstede is cweden'.

[Of the monastery (which) is called at *Medeshamstede*.]

HE IV.vi.218: 'monasterii, quod dicitur Medeshamstedi'.<sup>20</sup>

[Of the monastery which is called *Medeshamstede*.]

See also 348/27 ('*æt* Coludes burg',<sup>21</sup> HE IV. xvii [xix].243: 'Coludi urbem'); 478/27 ('*æt* Hwitan *Ærne*' [at Whithorn], HE V.xxiii.351: 'Candida Casa' [white house], beside HE III.iv.133: 'ad Candidam Casam'<sup>22</sup>); 314/7 'in þære stowe, þe

mon hateð æt Wiramuþan' [in the place which is called at Wearmouth], *HE* IV.xvi[xviii]. 241: 'iuxta ostium fluminis Uiuri' [near the mouth of the river Wear].

Chad 166/55-56: 'in þere stowe seo is gecweden æt bearwe'.<sup>23</sup>

[In the place which is called at the grove.]

Cf. Bede, *HE* IV.iii.207, cited above.

OEMart, January 12, St. Benedict Biscop: 'on þære stowe þe is cweden æt Wiremuðan'.

[In the place which is called at Wearmouth.]

Cf. Bede, *HistAbb*.§1.364: 'iuxta ostium fluminis Uiuri'.

[Near the mouth of the river Wear.]

See also June 23, St. Etheldreda/ Æthelthryth ('æt Elie').

Resting Places (OE) 19.6.1: 'on þam mynstre, þe is genemnod æt Riopum'.<sup>24</sup>

[In the monastery which is named at Ripon.]

ASC (MS A) 552: 'in þære stowe þe is genemned æt Searobyrg'.<sup>25</sup>

[In the place which is named at Salisbury.]

ASC (MS D) 926: 'on þære stowe þe genemned is æt Eamotum'.<sup>26</sup>

[In the place which is named at Eamont Bridge.]

#### *A.1.1.1.2 With foreign place-names*

Or 16/13-14: 'to þæm porte þe mon hætt æt Hæpum' (cf. ON *Haiþabu*, 'town of the heaths').

[To the trading place which is called at the heaths.]

OEMart, January 17, Sts. Speusippus, Elasippus and Melasippus: 'seo cierece [...] þa man nemneð æt *sanctos geminos*, æt þæm halgum getwinnum'.

[The church [. . .] which is named at 'sanctos geminos' (holy twins), at the holy twins.]

See also September 25, St.Ceolfrið: 'in þære cirican þe hi nemnað *sanctos geminos* – æt þam halgum getwinnum' [in the church which they name 'sanctos geminos' (holy twins) – at the holy twins], cf. Bede, *HistAbb* §21.385: 'in ecclesia beatorum geminorum martyrum'.

OEMart, July 29, St. Lupus: 'on Trecassina þære byrig, þæt is on ure geþeode æt Triticum'.

[In the town Trecassina, that is in our language at Triticum.]

OEBede 422/6-8: 'sio alde worde þere þiode is nemned Wiltaburg; Galleas nemnað Traiectum; we cueðað æt Treocum'.

[Which in the old speech of that district is named Wiltaburg; the Gauls name it Traiectum, we say at Treocum.]

*HE* V.xi.303: 'antiquo gentium illarum uerbo Uiltaburg, [...] lingua autem Gallica Traiectum uocatur'.

[In the old language of those people Wiltaburg [. . .] in the Gallic language however it is called Traiectum (Utrecht).]

It is hard to explain either *Triticum* (resembling in form the Latin word 'wheat') or *Treocum* as 'English' forms of the place-name *Trecae* (modern Troyes) and what in Willibrord's *Life of Boniface* 'uocatur Trecht'<sup>27</sup> – though the possibility cannot be ruled out that the *æt* of 'æt Treocum' (*MS* var. 'æt troicum') is a misrepresentation of an ancestor of the first syllable of the name Utrecht, while, as Herzfeld's translation demonstrates, the *æt* of the Martyrology, St. Lupus, is capable of interpretation as an 'ordinary' preposition. This bishop's body, he writes, rests 'in the town of Tricassae, that is, in our language, at *Troyes*'.<sup>28</sup>

#### A.1.1.2 In charters and other documents

In charters and other documents with text in the vernacular, I have found only three instances of the naming-formula with *æt*, the first of these in a manuscript of the mid-ninth century, the other two in thirteenth-century copies.

## *The Place Which Is Called 'at X'*

### *A.1.1.2.1 'Prefixed' or 'pleonastic' æt in an OE naming-formula*

S[awyer] 298: AD 847 (Æthelwulf, king of Wessex): 'to ðæm beorge ðe mon hateð æt ðæm holne'.

[To the hill which is called at the hollow.]

S 496: AD 944 (King Edmund): 'on west wylle þenon oþre naman hæst æt Amman wylle'.

[[. . .] which by another name is called at Amma's well.]

Cf. also S 480: AD 942 (King Edmund): 'Þis synt þa land mæro to Ærmundes lea 7 oþre naman æt Æppeltune'. (Reference to Appleton 'probably an addition'.)<sup>29</sup>

[by another name at Appleton.]

### *A.1.2 'Prefixed' or 'pleonastic' æt in a Latin naming-formula*

In Latin contexts this construction occurs in some considerable numbers, from the eighth century right through to the eleventh, mainly in charters and often in the context of a reference to common people, locals or ancient tradition.<sup>30</sup> Some periods are more poorly represented than others; however, this may be because only a relatively small number of 'authentic' or 'possibly authentic' charters and other documents have survived from those times and even fewer original ones.<sup>31</sup> Representative examples are:

Resting-Places (Latin), item 20: 'in loco qui dicitur æt Leomenstre'.

S 65b: A.D. c. 693x706 (Swæfred, king of Essex): 'decem manentes terre iuris mei que appellatur Et-tunende obre'.

S 155: A.D. 799 (Coenwulf, king of Mercia): 'ubi ita nominatur æt Ciornincge'.

S 1268: A.D. 825x832 (Wulfred, archbishop of Canterbury): 'aliquam partem meae propriæ hereditariæ terræ hoc est iiii aratorum quod ab incolis terre illius nominatur æt Sceldes forda'.

S 340: A.D. 868 (Æthelred, king of Wessex): 'in loco qui appellatur æt Worðige [...], in loco qui appellatur æt Dornwara ceastræ'.



- S 354: A.D. 878x899 (King Alfred): 'in alio loco ubi dicitur æt niðeran Hissanburnan'.
- S 359: A.D. 900 (King Edward): 'in illo loco qui dicitur æt Stoce be Hysseburnan'.
- S 425: A.D. 934 (King Athelstan): 'in loco quem solicolæ æt Derantune vocitant'.
- S 480: AD 942 (King Edmund): 'ibidem ubi uulgares prisco more mobilique relatione uocitant æt Ærmundes lea uillamque nomine æt Æppeltune'.<sup>32</sup>
- S 552: A.D. 949 (King Eadred): 'in illo loco ubi iamdudum solicole illius regionis nomen imposuerunt æt Weligforda'.
- S 636: A.D. 956 (King Eadwig): 'illic ubi vulgariter dicitur æt Melebroce'.
- S 697: A.D. 961 (King Edgar): 'ubi Anglica apellatione [*sic*] dicitur æt Wipiglea'.
- S 878: A.D. 996 (King Æthelred): 'in loco quem accole uicini æt Bromleage cognominant'.
- S 977: A.D. 1021x1023 (King Cnut): 'in loco quem solicole noto nuncupant nomine æt Niwanham'.
- S 1004: A.D. 1044 (King Edward): 'illo in loco ubi iamdudum solicole regionis illius nomen inposuerunt æt Wudetune'.

And with the second element of the place-name translated into Latin:

- S 464: A.D. 940 (King Edmund): 'illic ubi vulgus prisco relatione vocitat æt Oswalding villam'.

### *A.1.3 'Prefixed' or 'pleonastic' Latin ad in a Latin naming-formula*

Here not only is the context Latin but the preposition itself and sometimes also the place-name are rendered in that language. In addition to eleven instances in Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*,<sup>33</sup> and single instances in Bede's *Historia Abbatum* (§ 15.380 'ad uillam Sambuce') and *Resting Places* (Latin, item 9: 'ad Suðwyllum'), *ad* in a Latin naming-formula is recorded in a handful of charters,

the majority of which are designated by experts as 'unreliable', 'corrupt', 'spurious' or 'forgeries'. The following are deemed 'authentic':

S 29: A.D. 763 or 764 (Eadberht II, king of Kent): 'in loco cuius uocabulum est ad Serrae'.

S 429: A.D. 935 (King Athelstan): 'in loco qui uulgari diccione et appellatiua relacione nuncupatur ad Terentam'.

## *A.2 The preposition 'in'*

### *A.2.1 'Prefixed' or 'pleonastic' OE in/on in an Old English naming-formula*

This usage is found sixteen times in the OE Bede (all corresponding to a similar construction with Latin (or OE?) *in* in the *Historia Ecclesiastica*). There are also single instances in the *OE Martyrology* and *Life of Chad*. Once again the majority of places named are located in England.

#### *A.2.1.1 With Anglo-Saxon place-names*

OE Bede 194/26: 'in þære stowe, þe is cweden in Getlingum',

HE III.xiv.155: 'in loco, qui dicitur in Getlingum'.

[In the place which is called in Getlingum.]

Similarly 238/20 ('in Gætlingum'), HE III.xxiv.179. See also 222/32-3, HE III.xxi.171 ('in Feppingum'); 384/8,<sup>34</sup> 450/16, 456/18, 464/20 ('in/on Hrypum/Hripum'), V.i. 281, V.xix.322, V.xix.325, V.xix.330 ('in Hrypum'),<sup>35</sup> 282/15 ('in Bercingum'), HE IV.vi. 219 ('in Berecingum'); 388/1 and 404/11 ('in Dera/Deora wuda'), HE V.ii.283 ('in Derauuda, id est in silua Derorum') and HE V.vi.292 ('in silua Derorum') [in the wood of the men of Deira]; 422/25 ('in Cununingum'), HE V.xii.304 ('in Cuneningum'); 450/14 ('in Undalum'), HE V.xix.322 ('in Undalum'); 468.15 ('on Gyrwum'), HE V.xxi.332 ('in Gyruum').

OEMart October 11, St Ethelburga, OE Æthelburh: 'þæt fæmnena mynster on Brytene þæt is nemned on Bercingum'.

[the monastery of women in Britain which is named in Barking.]

Chad 164/41-42: 'in his mynstre. þet wes gehaten in lestinga ége'.

[In his monastery, which was called in Lastingham.]

Cf. Bede, *HE* IV.iii.206 (with *in* not in a naming-formula): 'in monasterio suo, quod est in Læstinga e'.

[In his monastery which is in Lastingham.]

#### A.2.1.2 *With a foreign place-name*

OE*Bede* 172/13: 'in þære stowe þe cweden is in Briiige', *HE* III.viii.142: 'in loco, qui dicitur in Brige'.

[In the place which is called in Brie.]

OE*Bede* 246/2-3: 'in þæm cynelecan tuune, þe is ceged in Conpendia'.

[In the royal town which is called in Compiegne.]

*HE* III.xxviii 194: 'in uico regio, qui uocatur in Conpendio'.

OE*Bede* 420/23-24: 'in sumum ealonde bi Riine, þet is on hiora gereorde geceged 7 nemned in Litore'.

[On a certain island by the Rhine, which is called and named in their language 'on the shore'.]

*HE* V.xi 302: 'in insula quadam Hreni, quae lingua eorum uocatur in litore'.

[On a certain island in the Rhine which in their language is called 'on the shore' (Kaiserswerth).]

#### A.2.2 'Prefixed' or 'pleonastic' *in/on* in a Latin naming-formula

Apart from eighteen instances of *in* in Bede, *HE*,<sup>36</sup> I have also noted instances of 'prefixed' *in* (Latin or OE) and *on* (OE) with English place-names in a handful of other Latin texts and charters. So, for instance:

*HAA* §2.388: 'in loco, qui dicitur in Gætlingum'.<sup>37</sup>

Bede, *Life of Cuthbert* vii: 'locum quendam [. . .] qui uocatur in Ripum'.<sup>38</sup>

Resting Places (Latin version) item 46: 'in loco qui dicitur on Oxnaforda'.

Charter S 10: A.D. 689 (Swæfheard king of Kent): 'terram que dicitur in Sudaneie'.

S 252: A.D. 688 x 690. (Ine, king of Wessex): 'que terra appellatur in Bradanfelda'.

S 279: A.D. 836 (Egbert, king of Wessex): 'in illo loco qui nominatur on Scirdun'.

S 214: A.D. 869 (Burgred, king of Mercia, and Æthelswith, queen): 'id est . v . manentium ubi appellatur on Upprope'.

Cf. also Eddius Stephanus, *Life of Wilfrid* xvii: 'haec sunt nomina regionum: iuxta Rippel et [i]n [G]aedyne et in regione Dunatinga et [i]n [C]aetlaevum'.<sup>39</sup>

### *A.3 The preposition 'by', OE bi/be*

In addition to *æt* and *in/on*, I have found 'prefixed' or 'pleonastic' OE *bi/be* in a Latin naming-formula in a handful of charters.<sup>40</sup> So, for example:

S 26: A.D. 727 (Eadberht I, king of Kent): 'regione qui dicitur bi Northanuude'.

S 326: A.D. 860 (Æthelbald, king of Wessex): 'in loco qui appellatur be Tefunte'.

S 469: A.D. 940 (King Edmund): 'in loco qui vulgari dictione et appellativo relatione nuncupatur be Wilig'.

and, along with a translation into English,<sup>41</sup>

S 334: A.D. 859? for 869 or 870 (Æthelred, king of the Saxons): 'in loco qui dicitur be Chiselburne'.

S 342: 'in þare istowe þe is inemned be Chiselburne'.  
[In the place which is called by Cheselbourne.]

**B. 'Prefixed' or 'pleonastic' prepositions before a place-name, without a verb of naming or its equivalent**

**B.1 OE æt**

In his discussion of naming-constructions, Bruce Mitchell cites an entry in the *Pastoral Care* as an instance of a place-name after *æt* 'without a verb of naming'.<sup>42</sup> I have succeeded in identifying only two further possible candidates for inclusion in this category, both from the final book of the Mercian translation of Gregory's *Dialogues*. Unlike the constructions with preposition in a naming-formula, these are not distinguished by syntax from other prepositional phrases. Moreover all three involve foreign place-names.

CP 311/6-7: 'Koka ealdormon towearp ða burg æt Hierusalem'.<sup>43</sup>

[The chief of the cooks destroyed the *burh* at Jerusalem]

*Regula Pastoralis* III.xix: 'Princeps coquorum destruxit muros Hierusalem'.<sup>44</sup>

[The chief of the cooks destroyed the walls of Jerusalem.]

GD 301/15-16: 'be Theophania þam ealdormen þære burge æt Certumcellens (MS var. Centum-).'

[About Theophanius the ruler of the *burh* at Certumcellens.]

*Dialogi* IV.xxviii.1: 'De Theophanio Centumcellensis urbis comite'.

GD 341/14-15: 'Uenantius þære cæstre biscop æt Lunan'.

*Dialogi* IV.lv.1: 'Venantius, Lunensis episcopus'.

Cf. GD 192/11-12: 'Uenantie, se wæs þære cæstre biscop Lunan', *Dialogi* III.viii.1: 'Venantio, Lunensis episcopi'.

In the case of the instance from the *Pastoral Care*, it could be argued that the reference here is not to 'the city of Jerusalem' ('Hierusalem seo burg', 'seo ceaster Hierusalem', etc.) but to 'the *burh* at Jerusalem', with *burh* in the sense of 'stronghold, fortress or citadel', as in an 'authentic' ninth-century charter and in Chronicle entries for the early 900s.<sup>45</sup> So, for instance:

Charter S 223: A.D. 884x901 (Æthelred, *ealdorman* and Æthelflæd): 'Æðeldred [...] 7 Æðelflæd [...] hehtan bewyrcean þa burh æt Weogernaceastre'.

[[. . .] ordered the fortification at Worcester to be constructed.]  
ASC (MS A) 912: 'Eadweard cyning [...] wicode þær þa hwile þe man þa burg worhte 7 getimbrede æt Witham'.

[King Edward encamped there while the fortification at Witham was being constructed and built.]

ASC (MS A) 914: 'ða for Eadweard cyning to Buccingahamme [...] 7 geworhte þa burga buta on ægþere healfe eas'.

[Then King Edward went to Buckingham [. . .] and constructed both the fortifications on either side of the river.]

And for the destruction of the defensive walls of Jerusalem we may compare OE Orosius 125/23-29:

'þa noldan him þa londleode þæt fæsten aliefan æt Hierusalem. [...] Þa het Pompeius þæt mon þæt fæsten bræce [...] 7 mon towearp þone weal niþer oþ þone grund'.

[Then the inhabitants of the land would not yield to him the fortification at Jerusalem [. . .]. Then Pompey ordered the fortification to be destroyed [. . .] and the wall was cast down to the ground.]

OH VI.vi 2-4: 'ipse [. . .] a patribus urbe susceptus sed a plebe muro templi repulsus expugnationem eius intendit. [...] Pompeius muros ciuitatis euerti aequarique solo imperauit'.

[Having been received in the town by the fathers but been repulsed from the wall of the temple by the plebs, he decided to capture it. [. . .] Pompey ordered the walls of the city to be dismantled and levelled to the ground.]

However, the *Pastoral Care's* use of *æt* here has to be seen in the context of the three instances of *on*, cited below, all with reference to Jerusalem.

## B.2 OE on

Ps (prose) 45.4.(5): 'þa wæs geblissod seo Godes burh on Hierusalem'.<sup>46</sup>

[Then God's *burh* in Jerusalem was gladdened.]

Cf. Psalm 45.4 'fluminis divisiones laetificant ciuitatem Dei'.

[The streams of the river delight the city of God.]

OEMart March 25, Crucifixion: 'þa deadan arison [...] 7 eodon geond þa halgan burh on Hierusalem'.

[The dead arose [. . .] and went through the holy *burh* in Jerusalem.]

Cf. Matthew 27. 45-53 'in sanctam ciuitatem'.

InventCross 402: 'alle þa ðe on ðare ceastre wæron on Hierusalem'.<sup>47</sup>

[All those who were in the city in Jerusalem.]

What we appear to have in all six cases is a periphrastic equivalent of the appositive or identifying genitive<sup>48</sup> that we see in the OE Bede's rendering of *HE* 'ciuitas Doruuernensis' [the Durovernan city] as 'seo ceaster Contwara burge' [the city of Canterbury].<sup>49</sup>

### B.3 Latin and OE in

In his *Index Nominorum* Plummer treats as 'prefixed' the preposition *in* that precedes three further foreign place-names, Brige, Cale and Andilegum, all in the same passage in Bede, *HE*:<sup>50</sup>

*HE* III.viii.142: 'multi [...] filias suas eisdem [...] mittebant; maxime in Brige, et in Cale, et in Andilegum monasterio'.

OEBede 172/15-19: 'monige [...] sendon heora dohtor þider [...] 7 swiþust in þissum mynstrum in Briige 7 in Caale 7 in Andelegum'.

Cf. Miller's translation, '[...] above all at these monasteries, Brie, Chelles and Andely'.

In texts of the Anglo-Saxon period, monasteries may either be referred to as 'at' or 'in' a certain location, or described directly by the name of that place, as *HE* V.xxiv.357: 'monasterii beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli, quod est ad Uiuraemuda, et in Gyruum' (OEBede 480/23-24: 'þæs minstres þara eadigra apostola Petrus & Paulus, þæt is æt Wiramuþon 7 on Gyruum' [of the monastery

of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, that is at Wearmouth and in Jarrow]), and Charter S 1161: 'Peteres mynster on Euerwic' [Peter's monastery in York], beside *HE* IV.xxiv.[xxvi].267: 'in monasterio Aebbercurnig' and 'monasterio, quod uocatur Streanæshalch', OEBede 358/20: 'þæm mynstre Æbbercurni' and 358/24-25: 'mynstre, þæt is geceged Streoneshealh'. For Dorothy Whitelock the references to monasteries at Brie, at Chelles and at Andelys fall into the first category,<sup>51</sup> and one might well have expected a contemporary reader to agree. However, given the fact that Old English *in* is interchangeable with *on*, and in the light of the evidence considered in B.1 and B.2 above, the interpretation adopted by Plummer and Miller cannot be totally disregarded.

*What then is the status of the expression 'the place which is called at X'? and how long was it current?*

As we have seen, there is no evidence to support the theory that this formula was 'very common in Anglo-Saxon', though it occurs with some frequency in Latin material in charters. There are several possible explanations for this discrepancy in distribution. First of all, the place-names involved are almost all located in England. And while the charters deal almost exclusively with locations with Anglo-Saxon names, other Latin and vernacular texts with more than an occasional reference to English towns or cities are few in number. Secondly, use or non-use of the naming-formula, whether with or without *æt*, is a matter of individual choice and of register. So, for instance, in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* covering the period 900 to 1066, MS D has only two instances of the formula without *æt* (in annals for 917 and 1016), and just the one instance with it, in the annal for 926, quoted above, while MS A has no instances at all of either construction. Moreover, in spite of claims that while 'there are no survivals of the written formulaic use in p.ns [...] the colloquial use of *æt* is implied in the very common survival of the dative forms in p.ns [...] and sporadic nouns like Attercliffe',<sup>52</sup> arguments for a pleonastic or prefixed *æt* based on the forms taken by modern place-names such as Barrow, Cottam or Sale are easily dismissed.<sup>53</sup> As David Mills points out, 'place names would often naturally occur in adverbial or prepositional contexts requiring the dative case in Old English',<sup>54</sup> while place-names such as *Noke* are seen to have a basis in the late Old English and Middle English practice of using an identifying *at* plus place-name with personal names.<sup>55</sup> Indeed far from being a colloquial usage, the naming formula 'the place



which is called X', with or without the preposition, belongs to a literary, not a colloquial, register. The currency in the Old English Bede and *Life of Chad* has to be seen in the context of the presence of a similar idiom in their Latin source, while in charters written in Latin the language of the formula is often highly artificial.<sup>56</sup>

As for the length of time that the formula enjoyed currency, Henry Sweet,<sup>57</sup> noting that the 'pleonastic' *æt* in annal 552 of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* MS A<sup>58</sup> had at some time been erased, commented that this was evidence that the idiom, found in 'the older writings', had become obsolete. In Dorothy Whitelock's revision of his Reader, however, Sweet's comment is modified. The erasure, she writes, 'indicates obsolescence of the use', which, however, 'is common with place names.'<sup>59</sup> We may compare the observation by Cameron and others, that it is 'difficult to decide when this formation became obsolete, but in the later part of the Old English period it is believed to have been used in documents simply as a written formula',<sup>60</sup> in Susan Kelly's words a 'recycling of earlier formulae'.<sup>61</sup> Presumably the term 'later part' is to be taken to refer to the second half of the tenth century onward. However, the erasure in *Chronicle* MS A, annal 552, has to be seen in the context not only of the appearance of the formula in ASC MS D, annal 942, but also of the usage in the other manuscripts that contain the 552 entry. Certainly none of the other surviving manuscripts of the *Chronicle* has the preposition, and the oldest of these is datable to the late tenth century, while their (hypothetical) common ancestor would seem to have diverged from the (hypothetical) ancestor of MS A somewhat earlier.<sup>62</sup> However, thanks to Angelika Lutz's painstaking reconstruction of the badly-burnt MS G,<sup>63</sup> we now know that the reading *æt* in MS A was still unerased in the early eleventh century, when it was copied by the scribe of MS G.<sup>64</sup> As for the continued use of the naming-formula with *æt* in the Latin charters, references to *antiquo usu* such as that in Sawyer, Charter 535, have to be seen in the context of formulae without that preposition, as, for instance, S 449: A.D. 939 (King Athelstan): 'in illo loco ubi ruricoli antiquo usu nomen indiderunt Uferan tun'.

What conclusions then can be drawn from the limited and clearly distorted evidence that has come down to us? With very few exceptions, the use of pleonastic or prefixed 'at' is restricted to English place-names in a combination of a Latin naming-construction with either OE *æt*, or Latin *ad*. The majority of exceptions are instances of an OE naming-formula with OE *æt* in works that have Latin texts with an *ad*-construction as their source, notably the Old English Bede. There is no evidence that requires us to suppose that this usage became

obsolescent or obsolete before the end of the Anglo-Saxon period, though it is not a feature of Middle English texts. However, at the same time the contexts in which it has been preserved are formal not colloquial. Finally, *æt* is not the only preposition used in naming-constructions. *In/on* and *bi/be* also occur. And, like *æt*, their use is, with very few exceptions, restricted either to Latin naming-constructions or to Old English texts with Latin sources.

NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Here referred to for convenience as the 'naming-formula'.
- <sup>2</sup> For naming-constructions, see further Bruce Mitchell, *Old English Syntax*, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), I, 616-19.
- <sup>3</sup> *The Old English Orosius*, ed. by Janet Bately, EETS, s.s. 6 (London: Oxford University Press, 1980).
- <sup>4</sup> *King Alfred's Old English Version of Boethius 'De Consolatione Philosophiae'*, ed. by Walter John Sedgefield (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1899).
- <sup>5</sup> *Pauli Orosii 'Historiarum adversum Paganos Libri VII'*, ed. by Carolus Zangemeister (Leipzig: Teubner, 1889).
- <sup>6</sup> See, e.g., *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel: With Supplementary Extracts from the Others*, ed. by Charles Plummer, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1892-99), II, pp. xxiii-xxxvii.
- <sup>7</sup> See *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition*, 3: *MS A*, ed. by Janet M. Bately (Cambridge: Brewer, 1986).
- <sup>8</sup> *Bischof Wærferths von Worcester Übersetzung der 'Dialogue' Gregors des Grossen*, ed. by Hans Hecht, Bibliothek der ags Prosa, 5 (Leipzig: Wigand, 1900; Hamburg: Grand, 1907; repr. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1965).
- <sup>9</sup> *The Old English Version of Bede's 'Ecclesiastical History of the English People'*, ed. by Thomas Miller, EETS, o.s. 95, 96, 110, 111 (London: Oxford University Press, 1890-98).
- <sup>10</sup> *An Old English Martyrology*, ed. by George Herzfeld, EETS, o.s. 116 (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1900); *Die Altenglische Martyrologium*, ed. by Gunther Kotzor, Abhandlungen, Bayerische Akademie der Philosophisch Historische Klasse, 88, 2 vols (Munich: Verlag der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1981).
- <sup>11</sup> *Grégoire le Grand: 'Dialogues'*, ed. by Adalbert de Vogüé and trans. by Paul Antin, 2 vols (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1979).
- <sup>12</sup> *Venerabilis Baedae: 'Historiam Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum', 'Historiam Abbatum', 'Epistolam ad Ecgberctum'*, ed. by Carolus Plummer (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896).
- <sup>13</sup> *Ælfric's 'Catholic Homilies': The Second Series: Text*, ed. by Malcolm Godden, EETS, s.s. 5 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), with commentary in EETS, s.s. 18 (2000); *Sulpicii Severi Libri qui supersunt*, ed. by Carolus Halm, CSEL, 1 (Vienna: Geroldi filius, 1866), pp. 109-37.
- <sup>14</sup> Eilert Ekwall, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936), p. xix.

<sup>15</sup> David N. Parsons and Tania Styles, with Carole Hough, *The Vocabulary of English Place-Names (A-Box)*, (Nottingham: Centre for English Name Studies, 1997), pp. 34-35, following Kenneth Cameron, *English Place-Names* (London: Batsford, 1961), p. 30.

<sup>16</sup> Plummer and Miller's idiosyncratic use of capitalisation and spacings in constructions of this type is unsupported by their own chosen base-manuscripts and not followed by me in the rest of this paper.

<sup>17</sup> Plummer, *HE*, II, 103-04, 'Place-names compounded with prepositions'. He observes that in this text *in* is used with what 'seems to be either a district [...] or a tribal name'.

<sup>18</sup> Mitchell, *OE Syntax*, I, 619.

<sup>19</sup> A number of place-name studies claim that 'early examples [with *æt*] seem to be limited to names involving topographical rather than habitative elements'. So, e.g., Parsons and Styles, pp. 34-35. I have not attempted to test this claim. For *in* see above, note 17.

<sup>20</sup> MS T (Bodleian Library, Tanner MSS, Tanner 10) only.

<sup>21</sup> MSS T and Ca (Cambridge University Library, MS Kk. 3. 18) only.

<sup>22</sup> Chapter omitted from OEBede.

<sup>23</sup> *'The Life of St.Chad': An Old English Homily*, ed. by R. Vleeskruyer (Amsterdam: North Holland Publishing, 1953).

<sup>24</sup> *Die Heiligen Englands: Lateinische und angelsächsische*, ed. by F. Liebermann (Hanover: Hahn, 1889), pp. 9-19.

<sup>25</sup> For the erasure of *æt* here see below.

<sup>26</sup> *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition, 6: MS D*, ed. by G. P. Cubbin (Cambridge: Brewer, 1996).

<sup>27</sup> *Vitae Sancti Bonifatii archiepiscopi Moguntini*, ed. by Wilhelm Levison, MGH, *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum separatim editi*, 57 (Hanover and Leipzig: Hahn, 1905), ch. 8.

<sup>28</sup> Herzfeld, *OE Martyrology*, p. 133.

<sup>29</sup> See *Charters of Abingdon Abbey*, ed. by S. E. Kelly, *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, 7 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), no. 34.

<sup>30</sup> Cited by Sawyer number. See *The Electronic Sawyer: An on-line version of the revised edition of Sawyer's 'Anglo-Saxon Charters'*, prepared by S. E. Kelly and adapted for the *www* by S. M. Miller. [www.trin.cam.ac.uk/chartwww/eSawyer.99/eSawyer2.html](http://www.trin.cam.ac.uk/chartwww/eSawyer.99/eSawyer2.html).

<sup>31</sup> For details see [www.Anglo-Saxons.net](http://www.Anglo-Saxons.net).

<sup>32</sup> See also above, A.1.1.2.1.

<sup>33</sup> See above.

<sup>34</sup> MS var. 'æt Hripum'.

<sup>35</sup> See also *HE*.III.xxv.183 'in Hrypum', no equivalent in OE.

<sup>36</sup> See above, A.2.1.1 and A.2.1.2.

<sup>37</sup> *Historia Abbatum Auctore Anonymo*, in *HE*: Plummer, *HE*, I, 388-404.

<sup>38</sup> *Two Lives of St. Cuthbert*, ed. by Bertram Colgrave (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940), p. 174.

<sup>39</sup> *The Life of Bishop Wilfrid by Eddius Stephanus*, ed. by Bertram Colgrave (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1927). Colgrave's readings are *Ingaedyne* and *Incaetlaevum*. (cf. note 16 above).

<sup>40</sup> See the instance of Latin *iuxta* in A.2.2 above.

<sup>41</sup> See *Charters of Shaftesbury Abbey*, ed. by S. E. Kelly, Anglo-Saxon Charters, 5 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 22-28.

<sup>42</sup> Mitchell, *OE Syntax*, I, 619.

<sup>43</sup> *King Alfred's West-Saxon Version of Gregory's 'Pastoral Care'*, ed. by Henry Sweet, EETS, o.s. 45 and 50, 2 vols (London: Oxford University Press, 1871).

<sup>44</sup> *Grégoire le Grand: Règle Pastorale*, ed. by Bruno Judic, Floribert Rommel and Charles Morel, Sources Chrétiennes, 381, 382, 2 vols (Paris: Éditions du Cerf).

<sup>45</sup> *DOE burh* A.1.

<sup>46</sup> *King Alfred's Old English Prose Translation of the First Fifty Psalms*, ed. by Patrick P. O'Neill, Medieval Academy Books, 104 (Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 2001).

<sup>47</sup> Arthur S. Napier, *History of the Holy Rood-Tree*, EETS, 103 (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1894), pp. 2-34.

<sup>48</sup> I do not include here OE *æt* and *on* for expected Latin *ad*, *in*, in the *Life of Wilfrid*, viii, 'terram decem tributariorum [a]et [S]tanforda' and xv, 'donatum sibi [o]n [L]jicitfelda'. See Mitchell, *Old English Syntax*, I, 542-43.

<sup>49</sup> *HE* II, 7.94; *OE Bede* 118/2-3.

<sup>50</sup> See Plummer, *HE*, II, 481-82. For *in Brige* in a naming-formula see above, 1.2.1.1.

<sup>51</sup> *English Historical Documents 1: c.500-1042*, ed. by Dorothy Whitelock, 2nd edn (London: Eyre Methuen, 1972), p. 684.

<sup>52</sup> A. H. Smith, *English Place-Name Elements*, EPNS, 25, 26, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), p. 6. For Attercliff, however, see now Margaret Gelling and Ann Cole, *The Landscape of Place-Names* (Stamford: Tyas, 2000; repr. with corrections, 2003), p. 156.

<sup>53</sup> Cameron, *English Place-Names*, pp. 30-31.

<sup>54</sup> A. D. Mills, *A Dictionary of English Place-Names*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. xxii. Cf. Parsons and Styles, *Vocabulary of English Place-Names*, pp. 34-35.

<sup>55</sup> See e.g., Smith, *English Place-Name Elements*, p. 6, Mills, *Dictionary: Noke*.

<sup>56</sup> See the instances cited in A.1.2.

<sup>57</sup> Henry Sweet, *An Anglo-Saxon Reader in Prose and Verse* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1876), p. 192.

<sup>58</sup> Noted above.

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<sup>59</sup> Dorothy Whitelock, *Sweet's Anglo-Saxon Reader in Prose and Verse*, 15th edn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), p. 230.

<sup>60</sup> Cameron, *English Place-Names*, p. 30.

<sup>61</sup> Kelly, *Abingdon Charters*, p. 152.

<sup>62</sup> Janet Bately, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Texts and Textual Relationships*, Reading Medieval Studies Monograph, 3 (Reading: University of Reading, 1991), p.62. Incidentally we do not know when the material in the annal was first recorded or in what language.

<sup>63</sup> *Die Version G der Angelsächsischen Chronik*, ed. by Angelika Lutz (Munich: Fink, 1981).

<sup>64</sup> *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition, 7: MS E*, ed. by Susan Irvine (Cambridge: Brewer, 2004), pp. xxxvi-xxxix. The person who made the erasure was quite probably the compiler of MS F, who was responsible for more than thirty interventions in MS A up to the annal for 616 and was working around 1100.