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University of Leeds
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The Place which Is Called 'at X': A New Look at Old Evidence

Janet Bately

The quasi-formulaic naming-construction, '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, 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), like King Alfred's rendering of Boethius (Bo), 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 hæt 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 hæt Fortunatus'.
[At the mountain which is named Atlas and at the island which is called Fortunatus.]
OH I.ii.11: 'mons Athlans et insulæ quas Fortunatas uocant'.
[Mount Atlas and the islands which they call Fortunate.]

Hatan is also found in a group of entries for the 890s in some versions of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (ASC). So, for example:
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ASC (MS A) 892: 'æt þæs micla[n] wuda eastende þe we Andred hatað'.
[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 nemnep. So, e.g.:

ASC (MS A) 449: 'on þam stape 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 nemnep Fepanlea'.
[In the place which is called Fethanlea.]

In this it resembles the Mercian translation of Gregory's Dialogues (GD), which also uses these two verbs, while the Old English Bede and Martyrology have not only hatan and nemnan, but also (ge)cigan and (ge)cwepan, 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 1.xii.1-2: 'In eo […] loco Interorina uallis dicitur, quae a multis uerbo rustico Interocrina nominatur'.
[In that place a valley is called Interorina, which is named by many Interocrina in rustic speech.]
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OEBede 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'.

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

OEBede 276/14: 'in þas stowe, þe is cweden Heorotford'. [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 þe is gecweden 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'. [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' preposition, which 'seems sometimes to have become an integral part of the OE name' 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. 'aet Gefrin'), 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'. 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'.

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.
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.xxii.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 Twyfyrde', *HE* IV.xxvi(xxviii).272: 'ad Tuifyrdi, [...] 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'.
[Of the monastery which is called Medeshamstede.]

See also 348/27 ('æt Coludes burg', *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'); 314/7 'in þære stowe, þe
mon hateð aet Wiramùpan' [in the place which is called at Wearmouth], \textit{HE} IV.xvi[xviii]. 241: 'iuxta ostium fluminis Uïuri' [near the mouth of the river Wear]).

Chad 166/55-56: 'in þere stowe seo is gecweden aet bearwe'.\textsuperscript{23}
[In the place which is called at the grove.]
OEMart, January 12, St. Benedict Biscop: 'on þære stowe þe is cweden aet Wiremuðan'.
[In the place which is called at Wearmouth.]
[Near the mouth of the river Wear.]
See also June 23, St. Etheldreda/Æthelthryth ('æt Elic').
Resting Places (OE) 19.6.1: 'on þám mynstre, þe is genemnod aet Riopum'.\textsuperscript{24}
[In the monastery which is named at Ripon.]
ASC (MS A) 552: 'in þære stowe þe is genemned aet Searobyrg'.\textsuperscript{25}
[In the place which is named at Salisbury.]
ASC (MS D) 926: 'on þære stowe þe genemned is aet Eamotum'.\textsuperscript{26}
[In the place which is named at Eamont Bridge.]

\textit{A.1.1.1.2 With foreign place-names}

Or 16/13-14: 'to þæm porte þe mon hæt aet Hæþum' (cf. ON Haþabu, 'town of the heaths').
[To the trading place which is called at the heaths.]
OEMart, January 17, Sts. Speusippus, Elasippus and Melasippus: 'seo cierce [...] þa man nemneð aet sanctos geminos, æt þæm halgum getwinnum'.
[The church [...] which is named at 'sanctos geminos' (holy twins), at the holy twins.]
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'\(^{27}\) – 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.'\(^{28}\)

### 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.
A.1.2.1 'Prefixed' or 'pleonastic' æt in an OE naming-formula

S[awyer] 298: AD 847 (Æthelwulf, king of Wessex): 'to dæm beorge ðe mon hated æt dæm holne'.
[To the hill which is called at the hollow.]
S 496: AD 944 (King Edmund): 'on west wylle þemon oþre naman hæt æt Amman wylle'.
[[. . .] which by another name is called at Amma's well.]
Cf. also S 480: AD 942 (King Edmund): 'his synt þa land mæro to Ærmundes lea 7 oþre naman æt Æppeltune'.
(Reference to Appleton 'probably an addition'.)²⁹
[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.³⁰ 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.³¹ 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 Ciorningce'.
S 1268: A.D. 825x832 (Wulfred, archbishop of Canterbury): 'aliquam partem meae proprie hereditariae terræ hoc est iii aratrorum quod ab incolis terre illius nominatur æt Sceldes forda'.
S 340: A.D. 868 (Æthelred, king of Wessex): 'in loco qui appellatur æt Wordige [...] , in loco qui appellatur æt Dornwara ceastræ'.

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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 Hyssseburnan'.
S 425: A.D. 934 (King Athelstan): 'in loco quem solicolaæ æt Derantune vocitant'.
S 480: AD 942 (King Edmund): 'ibidem ubi vulgares prisco more mobilique relatione vocitant æt Ærmundes lea uillumque nomine æt Æppeltune'.
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 appellatione [sic] dicitur æt Wiþgilea'.
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 imposuerunt 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, and single instances in Bede's Historia Abbatum (§ 15.380 'ad uillum Sambuce') and Resting Places (Latin, item 9: 'ad Suðwyllum'), ad in a Latin naming-formula is recorded in a handful of charters,
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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 voculum 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

OEBede 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.xxxi.171 ('in Feppingum'); 384/8, 450/16, 456/18, 464/20 ('in/on Hrypum/Hripum'), V.i. 281, V.xix.322, V.xix.325, V.xix.330 ('in Hrypum'), 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 leustinga 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

OEBede 172/13: 'in þære stowe þe cweden is in Briige', *HE* III.viii.142: 'in loco, qui dicitur in Brige'.
[In the place which is called in Brie.]
OEBede 246/2-3: 'in þæm cynelecan tuune, þe is ceged in Conpendia'.
[In the royal town which is called in Compiégne.]
*HE* III.xxviii 194: 'in uico regio, qui uocatur in Conpendio'.
OEBede 420/23-24: 'in sumum ealonde bi Riine, þet is on hiora gereorde gecged 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*, 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'.
Bede, *Life of Cuthbert* vii: 'locum quendam [. . .] qui uocatur in Ripum'.

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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 Upbrope'.


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. 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,

S 334: A.D. 859? for 869 or 870 (Æthelred, king of the Saxons): 'in loco qui dicitur be Chiselburne'.
S 342: 'in pare istowe þe is inemned be Chiselburne'.
[In the place which is called by Chelsbourne.]
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'. 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 ealdorman towearp ða burg æt Hierusalem'.
[The chief of the cooks destroyed the burh at Jerusalem]

Regula Pastoralis III.xix: 'Prínceps coquorum destruxit muros Hierusalem'.
[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 biscal æt Lunan'.

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

Cf. GD 192/11-12: 'Uenantie, se wæs þære cæstre biscal 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. So, for instance:

Charter S 223: A.D. 884x901 (Æthelred, ealdorman and Æthelflæd): 'Æðeldred [...] 7 Æðelflæd [...] hehtan bewyrcean þa burh æt Weogernaceastre'.
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[[...]] ordered the fortification at Worcester to be contructed.
ASC (MS A) 912: 'Eadweard cyning [...] wicode ðær ða hwile ðe man ða 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 ða burga buta on ægðere 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 ða londleode ðæt fæsten aliefan æt Hierusalem. [...] Þa het Pompeius ðæt mon ðæt fæsten bræce [...] 7 mon towearp ðone weal niðer of ðone 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 been 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 gebliissod seo Godes burh on Hierusalem'.

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[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: 'pa deadan arison [...] 7 eodon geond pa 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 pa de on dare ceastre waeron on Hierusalem'.
[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 that we see in the OE Bede's rendering of *HE* 'ciuitas Doruuernensis' [the Durovernian city] as 'seo ceaster Contwara burge' [the city of Canterbury].

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*:

*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 swïjust 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 Gyrum' (OEBede 480/23-24: 'þæs minstres þara eadigra apostola Petrus & Paulus, þæt is æt Wiramubuntu 7 on Gyrum' [of the monastery}
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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 gcceged Streoneshealh'. For Dorothy Whitelock the references to monasteries at Brie, at Chelles and at Andelys fall into the first category,\(^5\) 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 *aet*, 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 *aet* (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 *aet* is implied in the very common survival of the dative forms in p.ns [...] and sporadic nouns like Attercliffe',\(^52\) arguments for a pleonastic or prefixed *aet* based on the forms taken by modern place-names such as Barrow, Cottam or Sale are easily dismissed.\(^53\) As David Mills points out, 'place names would often naturally occur in adverbial or prepositional contexts requiring the dative case in Old English',\(^54\) 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.\(^55\) 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.\(^\text{56}\)

As for the length of time that the formula enjoyed currency, Henry Sweet,\(^\text{57}\) noting that the 'pleonastic' *aet* in annal 552 of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* MS A\(^\text{58}\) 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'.\(^\text{59}\) 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',\(^\text{60}\) in Susan Kelly's words a 'recycling of earlier formulae'.\(^\text{61}\) 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.\(^\text{62}\) However, thanks to Angelika Lutz's painstaking reconstruction of the badly-burnt MS G,\(^\text{63}\) we now know that the reading *aet* in MS A was still unerased in the early eleventh century, when it was copied by the scribe of MS G.\(^\text{64}\) As for the continued use of the naming-formula with *aet* 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 *aet*, or Latin *ad*. The majority of exceptions are instances of an OE naming-formula with OE *aet* 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

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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, *aet* is not the only preposition used in naming-constructions. *In/on* and *bi/be* also occur. And, like *aet*, their use is, with very few exceptions, restricted either to Latin naming-constructions or to Old English texts with Latin sources.
NOTES

1 Here referred to for convenience as the 'naming-formula'.
3 The Old English Orosius, ed. by Janet Bately, EETS, s.s. 6 (London: Oxford University Press, 1980).
9 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).
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16 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.

17 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'.


19 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.

20 MS T (Bodleian Library, Tanner MSS, Tanner 10) only.
21 MSS T and Ca (Cambridge University Library, MS Kk. 3. 18) only.
22 Chapter omitted from OEEdi.
25 For the erasure of *æt* here see below.
27 *Vitae Sancti Bonifatii archiepiscopi Moguntini*, ed. by Wilhelm Levison, MGH, Scriptores rerum Germanicarum separatim editi, 57 (Hanover and Leipzig: Hahn, 1905), ch. 8.
28 Herzfeld, *OE Martyrology*, p. 133.
31 For details see [www.Anglo-Saxons.net](http://www.Anglo-Saxons.net).
32 See also above, A.1.1.2.1.
33 See above.
34 MS var. 'æt Hripum'.
35 See also *HE.*III.xxv.183 'in Hrypum', no equivalent in OE.
36 See above, A.2.1.1 and A.2.1.2.
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39 The Life of Bishop Wilfrid by Eddius Stephanus, ed. by Bertram Colgrave (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1927). Colgrave's readings are Ingaedyne and Incaelaevum. (cf. note 16 above).

40 See the instance of Latin iuxta in A.2.2 above.


42 Mitchell, OE Syntax, 1, 619.

43 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).


45 DOE burh A.1.


49 HE II, 7.94; OEBede 118/2-3.

50 See Plummer, HE, II, 481-82. For in Brige in a naming-formula see above, 1.2.1.1.


53 Cameron, English Place-Names, pp. 30-31.


55 See e.g., Smith, English Place-Name Elements, p. 6, Mills, Dictionary: Noke.

56 See the instances cited in A.1.2.


58 Noted above.
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60 Cameron, *English Place-Names*, p. 30.


62 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.


64 *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.