

## Old English at New: Early Printed Books in Anglo-Saxon Type, 1570–1705

After over four centuries of neglect and disregard, Anglo-Saxon language, lore, and literature saw a renaissance in the 16th century. This is usually associated with the Reformation, and more specifically with the dissolution of the monasteries through which a number of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts from the monastic libraries (if they escaped the flames and managed to avoid being used as toilet paper) came into the hands of interested antiquarians bent on preserving ancient knowledge and art. Though the early renaissance particularly of Anglo-Saxon religious writings stemmed not necessarily from an interest in antiquarianism or an appreciation of the Anglo-Saxons' poetic and literary skills, but in a fascination with the teachings and traditions of the early Christian church in Anglo-Saxon England, and their usefulness as arguments in the heated discussions over (and justification of) the doctrines of the newly-established Anglican church.<sup>1</sup>

The wish to revive, publicise, and utilise these texts through publication in print brought with it the desire (rather than the actual need) for a specialist Anglo-Saxon type font, modelled on the script of the Anglo-Saxon manuscripts from which the texts themselves were taken. Richard W. Clement stresses that these new types were used 'to reflect the scribal distinction between the Caroline or early Gothic Latin and the Insular Anglo-Saxon', but concedes that it is 'unlikely that the simple desire to reflect a scribal tradition on the printed page could have been sufficient reason to justify the large expense undertaken in creating the new font'.<sup>2</sup> Instead, he and Peter J. Lucas both see the motivation for this in the visual impact of the Anglo-Saxon type with its 'subliminal ability to authenticate the antiquity and authority of a text'.<sup>3</sup> In her brief entry on 'Anglo-Saxon type' in the *Oxford Companion to the Book*, Margaret M. Smith speaks of evidence of the existence of 'three sets of 16th-century Anglo-Saxon types and another four in the 17th century'.<sup>4</sup> The process of creating these types involved using a normal, Roman, font as a base, using and adapting its already existing letters where possible, but otherwise laboriously designing, cutting and casting additional special sorts to fit into the existing set of characters.<sup>5</sup> The first of the three 16th-century types mentioned by Smith, and thus the first ever Anglo-Saxon font in existence, was created under the auspices and patronage, and with the money of, Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury (1504–1575),<sup>6</sup> to a design by his Latin secretary John Joscelyn (1529–1603),<sup>7</sup> and probably cut by the French punchcutter Pierre Haultin (c. 1510–1587)<sup>8</sup> in collaboration with the English printer

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<sup>1</sup> See Richard W. Clement, 'The Beginnings of Printing in Anglo-Saxon, 1565–1630', *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 91 (2) (1997), 193–244, pp. 196–204 for a rather more detailed account of these events.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, p. 206.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*; and Peter J. Lucas, 'A Testimonie of Veye Ancient Tyme? Some Manuscript Models for the Parkerian Anglo-Saxon Type-Designs', in *Of the Making of Books: Medieval Manuscripts, Their Scribes and Readers: Essays Presented to M. B. Parkes*, ed. P. R. Robinson and Rivkah Zim (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1997), pp. 147–88, at pp. 169 and 180.

<sup>4</sup> Margaret M. Smith, 'Anglo-Saxon type,' in *The Oxford Companion to the Book*, ed. Michael F. Suarez and H. R. Woudhuysen, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), I, 466–7, at p. 477 See also Peter J. Lucas, 'Parker, Lambard and the Provision of Special Sorts for Printing Anglo-Saxon in the Sixteenth Century', *Journal of the Printing Historical Society* 28 (1999), 41–70, at pp. 48–52.

<sup>5</sup> For a detailed description of the process of designing, cutting and casting Anglo-Saxon type, see Lucas, 'Manuscript Models', pp. 158–160. A concise history of Anglo-Saxon type is given in Talbot Baines Reed, *A History of the Old English Letter Foundries, with Notes, Historical and Bibliographical, on the Rise and Progress of English Typography* (London: Elliot Stock, 1887), pp. 73–4.

<sup>6</sup> David J. Crankshaw and Alexandra Gillespie, 'Parker, Matthew (1504–1575)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (12 November 2020) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/21327>> (Accessed: 28 July 2023).

<sup>7</sup> G. H. Martin, 'Joscelyn [Joscelyn], John (1529–1603)', *ODNB* (23 September 2004) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/15130>> (Accessed: 28 July 2023).

<sup>8</sup> Reed in his *History*, p. 96, gives credit to 'Day's excellence as a founder', but Lucas argues that Day was not a punchcutter or founder himself, and makes a compelling case for Pierre Haultin as the actual craftsman: Lucas, 'Manuscript Models', pp. 164–8.

and bookseller John Day (1521/2–1584),<sup>9</sup> who then used it for a number of publications in the years to follow. In the often-quoted preface to one of his later editions of an Old English text, Asser's *Life* of King Alfred, Parker (or potentially Joscelyn),<sup>10</sup> gives credit to and stresses the pioneering nature of Day's work:

Iam verò cum Dayus Typographus primus (& omnium certè quod scian solus) has formas æri inciderit : facilè quæ Saxonice literis perscripta sunt, iisdem typis diuulgabuntur. (A4<sup>r</sup>)<sup>11</sup>

(And inasmuch as Day the printer, is the first (and indeed as far as I know the only one) who has cut these letters in metal: whatever has been written in Saxon characters will be easily published in the same type.)

Between 1566, the (disputed) date of the first ever edition of an Old English text, printed by Day, and the first years of the 18th century, nearly 100 publications containing Anglo-Saxon type were produced in England using both English-made fonts, and sets of types imported from or commissioned on the continent.<sup>12</sup> As designing, cutting, and casting these types was expensive, they were re-used heavily, loaned out extensively, and at the death or retirement of the owner passed on or sold to other printers. In themselves, particularly the special sorts are distinctive enough that they allow easy identification of a particular set and thus enable us to trace them from the possession of one printer to the next. More than that, this also means we have a pretty clear picture of the evolution of Anglo-Saxon type from its beginnings to its eventual demise in the 18th century, when convention changed and Old English texts were habitually printed entirely in Roman font with only a few special characters such as Ash (Æ/æ), Thorn (Þ/þ) and Eth (Ð/ð) remaining, a practice which of course persists to this day.<sup>13</sup>

New College Library holds a number of these early and influential publications containing Anglo-Saxon type from the 16th to the early 18th century, and its collections thus allow a rare opportunity to view the different types and uses side-by-side. Taking advantage of this opportunity

<sup>9</sup> Andrew Pettegree, 'Day [Daye], John (1521/2–1584)', *ODNB* (3 January 2008) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/7367>> (Accessed: 28 July 2023). See also Reed, pp. 93–6. Clement, 'Beginnings', p. 207, discusses in detail the process of producing this first Anglo-Saxon type, and the craftsmen potentially involved in the endeavour.

<sup>10</sup> So Clement, 'Beginnings', 206, and Benedict Scott Robinson, 'John Foxe and the Anglo-Saxons', in *John Foxe and his World*, ed. Christopher Highley and John N. King (Abingdon, Oxon: 2017), pp. 54–72, at p. 62.

<sup>11</sup> Matthew Parker, *Ælfrēdi Regis res gestæ* [London: Printed by John Day, 1574], New College Library, Oxford, BT1.4.3(2).

<sup>12</sup> For a detailed if not entirely complete list of publications using Anglo-Saxon type from the mid-16th to the end of the 17th century see Eleanor N. Adams, *Old English Scholarship in England from 1566–1800* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1917), Appendix III, pp. 173–81. On the date of the first use of Anglo-Saxon type see Erick Kelemen, 'A Reexamination of the Date of *A Testimonie of Antiquitie*, One of the First Books Printed in Anglo-Saxon Types', *ANQ: A Quarterly Journal of Short Articles, Notes and Reviews* 10 (4) (1997), 3–10.

<sup>13</sup> I have been unable to pinpoint the exact date of this change, but this is certainly the use in Bosworth's ground-breaking Anglo-Saxon dictionary: J. Bosworth, *A Dictionary of the Anglo-Saxon Language, Containing the Accentuation—the Grammatical Inflections—the Irregular Words Referred to their Themes—the Parallel Terms from the Other Gothic Languages—the Meaning of the Anglo-Saxon in English and Latin—and Copious English and Latin Indexes, Serving as a Dictionary of English and Anglo-Saxon, as well as of Latin and Anglo-Saxon. With a Preface on the Origin and Connexion of the Germanic tongues—a Map of Languages—and the Essentials of Anglo-Saxon Grammar* (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, Green, and Longman, 1838). A few years earlier Conybeare still retains the Anglo-Saxon 'g' in addition: 'Hwæt we Gar-Dena/In gear-daġum/Deod cyninġa/ Drym ġefrunon, . . .': John Josias Conybeare, *Illustrations of Anglo-Saxon Poetry* (London: Printed for Harding and Lepard, 1826), p. 82, New College Library, Oxford, RS2225. Some earlier 18th- and early-19th-century publications, however, do away with special characters altogether—see for example Robert Lowth, *A Short Introduction to English Grammar: With Critical Notes* (London: Printed by J. Hughes; for A. Millar; and R. and J. Dodsley, 1762), p. 128 note; or James Ingram, *An Inaugural Lecture on the Utility of Anglo-Saxon Literature: to which is added The Geography of Europe by King Alfred, including his Account of the Discovery of the North Cape in the Ninth Century* (Oxford: At the University Press for the Author. Sold by J. Cooke and J. Parker, Oxford; Payne and Mackinlay, Strand, and J. White, Fleet Street, London, p. 17 note, New College Library, Oxford, RS1122).

I would like to use this article as an occasion for a relatively brief discussion and overview of this rather intriguing practice in publications from 1570 to 1703–1705 as reflected in the holdings of the Library of New College, Oxford.

#### EARLY ‘DAYS’: FOXE’S *ACTS* AND PARKER’S *ALFRED*

The first ever text printed with Day’s at that time brand-new Anglo-Saxon type is, as mentioned earlier, usually dated to 1566: it is Bishop Parker’s *Testimonie of Antiquitie*, an edition and translation of Ælfric’s *Sermo de Sacrificio in die Pasce*, as well as of two of his epistles.<sup>14</sup> It is a tiny octavo volume printed in Old English in Day’s Anglo-Saxon type on the verso of pages, with a facing modern English translation in an Italic on the recto. New College Library does not hold a copy of this particular edition, but what it does hold is a copy of a rather more famous (and rather larger) publication which re-uses almost the entirety of the text (and the type) only four years later: John Foxe’s revised 1570 edition of *The First Volume of the Ecclesiasticall history*, better known as Foxe’s *Acts and Monuments*, or simply as Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs*.<sup>15</sup>

The pages using Anglo-Saxon font to print Old English language are included in quite an anachronistic place to say the least; rather than near the beginning in the section on the early history of England, as might be expected, they appear about a quarter through the second volume, towards the end of the long section on the reign of Henry VIII (3K4<sup>v</sup>–3L2<sup>v</sup>).<sup>16</sup> Here, however, they do most certainly have the profound visual impact which Clement and Lucas claim highlights the antiquity and authority of the text. To support his argument that the doctrine of transubstantiation is not one that existed in the earliest Christian church in England, Foxe prints a ‘Sermon tra(n)slated out of Latine into the Saxon tonge by Ælfricus, against transubstantiation. an. 996. In die Sancto Pasce’, Ælfric’s *Sermo de Sacrificio in die Pasce* from the *Testimonie* (3K5<sup>v</sup>–3L1<sup>v</sup>):

Furthermore as touchyng these lxxx. Sermo(n)s afore sayd, whiche Ælfricus translated into Englishe, here is to bee vnderstanded, that in the sayd Sermons vsed then orderly to be recited to the people, there is one appointed to be read In die Santo Pasce, that is, vppon easterday. Whiche Sermon beyng translated by the sayd Ælfricus, we haue here exhibited both in Saxon speache and in Englishe, to the entent, that the Christe(n) & indifferent reader perusing þe same, may iudge therby, how þe phantasticall doctrine of tra(n)substantiation, in those dayes of Ælfricus & before his time, was not yet receaued nor knowen in the Church of England: . . . (3K5<sup>v</sup>)

As Foxe indicates, this is followed by a modern English translation (3L1<sup>v</sup>–3L2<sup>v</sup>), but also, more interestingly for the purpose here, prefaced by a typographical table with ‘The Alphabet of the Saxon tonge’.

<sup>14</sup> Matthew Parker, *A Testimonie of Antiquitie, shewing the auncient fayth in the Church of England touching the sacrament of the body and bloude of the Lord here publikely preached, and also receaued in the Saxons tyme, aboue 600. yeares agoe* (Imprinted at London: by Iohn Day, dwelling ouer Aldersgate beneath S. Martyns, [1566?]). On this see John Bromwich, ‘The First Book Printed in Anglo-Saxon Types’, *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 3 (4) (1962), 265–91. For the sermon see *The Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church: The First Part Containing the Sermones Catholici, or Homilies of Aelfric in the Original Anglo-Saxon, with an English Version*, ed. Benjamin Thorpe (England: Printed for the Ælfric Society, 1846), pp. 262–82. Thorpe, as an aside, follows Bosworth’s convention and prints the Old English in Roman type with only Ash, Thorn, and Eth remaining as special characters.

<sup>15</sup> John Foxe, *The First Volume of the Ecclesiasticall history containyng the Actes and Monumentes of thynges passed in euery kynges tyme in this Realme, especially in the Church of England principally to be noted. With a full discourse of such persecutions, horrible troubles, the sufferiing of Martyrs, and other thinges incident, touchyng aswel the sayd Church of England as also Scotland, and all other foreine nations, from the primitiue tyme till the reigne of K. Henry VIII* (At London: Printed by Iohn Daye, dwellyng ouer Aldersgate. These bookes are to be sold at hys shop vnder the gate, 1570), New College Library, Oxford, BT1.48.6–7.

<sup>16</sup> On these sections see also Robinson, ‘John Foxe and the Anglo-Saxons’.

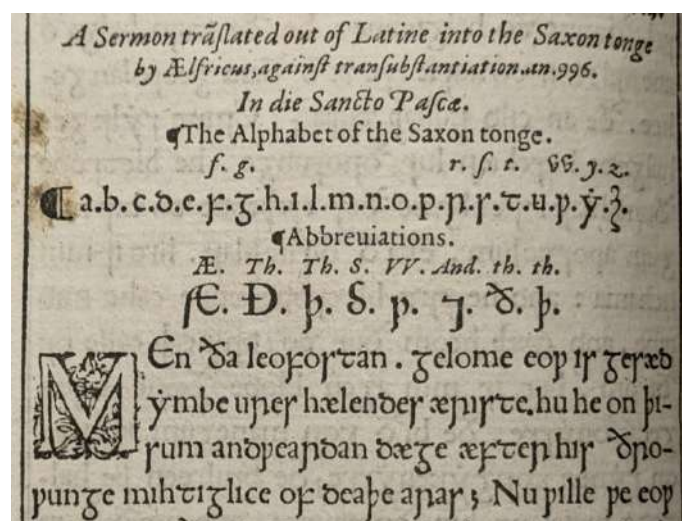


Figure 1: Typographical table and the beginning of Ælfric's *Sermo de Sacrificio in die Pasce* in Foxe's 1570 Acts  
New College Library, Oxford, BT1.48.7, 3K4<sup>v</sup>

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Day's type here contains plain Roman letters (a, b, c etc.) as well as characters created by a simple modification of a Roman letter (e.g. ı, the Roman i with the dot removed). More interestingly there are a number of entirely new special characters which appear both as single letters (Anglo-Saxon f, g, r, s, t etc. as well as the 'inexplicable'<sup>17</sup> and rather 16th-century-like z, which never appears in the text), and as 'Abbreviations' (such as Æ, Ð, þ and the Tironian *et*).<sup>18</sup> Day's type also includes special uncial versions of uppercase letters such as M and E (see Figure 5 below), but these are not included here, presumably because they are easily recognisable without recourse to a typographical table; and just like Parker's original edition Foxe's text makes use of both the Roman and the uncial forms of M and E seemingly interchangeably.

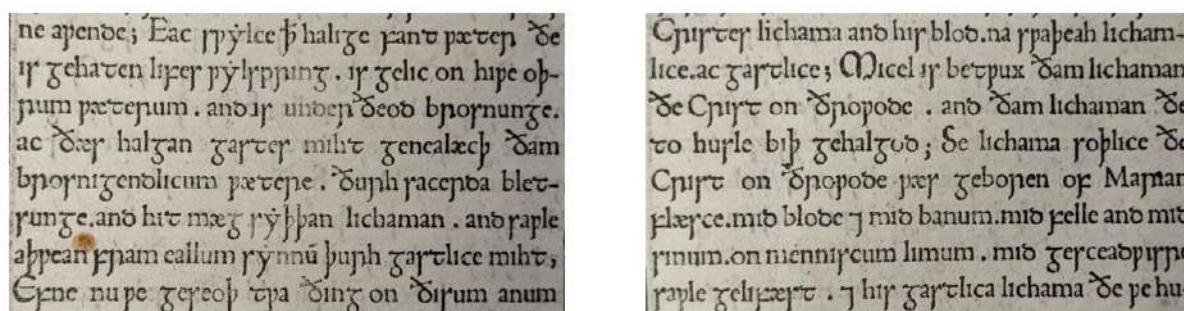


Figure 1: Roman and uncial forms of E (left, l. 1 and l. 8) and M (right, l. 2 and l. 5)  
New College Library, Oxford, BT1.48.7, 3K6<sup>v</sup>

Having paid the high costs of having the first ever set of Anglo-Saxon type designed, cut and cast, Archbishop Parker did not stop at publishing only a single edition and translation of an Anglo-Saxon text in the *Testimonie*. But his 1574 *Ælfredi Regis res gesta*, an edition of the *Vita Ælfredi regis Angul Saxonum* by Asser (d. 909),<sup>19</sup> strikes the modern reader as somewhat curious in several aspects. For one it was issued in 1574 together with two of Parker's other, non-Anglo-Saxon antiquarian editions, Thomas Walsingham's *Historia Anglicana* or *Historia Brevis* and his *Ypodigma*

<sup>17</sup> Clement, 'Beginnings', p. 210.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Clement, 'Beginnings', pp. 209–210.

<sup>19</sup> Patrick Wormald, 'Asser (d. 909)', ODNB (23 September 2004) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/810>> (Accessed: 28 July 2023).



*Neustriæ vel Normanniae*, the history of the Dukes of Normandy;<sup>20</sup> the latter also printed by John Day, and the former by Henry Bynneman (*b.* in or before 1542, *d.* 1583),<sup>21</sup> one of Parker's protégés.



Figure 2: Parker's *Ælfredi Regis res gestae*, frontispiece, New College Library, Oxford, BT1.4.3(2)

<sup>20</sup> Thomas Walsingham, *Historia brevis Thomae Walsingham, ab Edwardo primo, ad Henricum quintum* (Londini: Excusum apud Henricum Binneman typographum. [sic] sub insigno Syrenis, 1574), New College Library, Oxford, BT1.4.3(3), and Thomas Walsingham, *Ypodigma Neustriæ vel Normanniae* (Londini: In ædibus Iohannis Daij, 1574), New College Library, Oxford, BT1.4.3(4). In the New College copy these are furthermore bound together with an earlier, continental print of the works of Thomas More, *Thomæ Mori Angli, viri eruditionis pariter ac virtutis nomine clarissimi, Angliæque olim cancellarii, Omnia, quae hucusque ad manus nostras pervenerunt, Latina opera: quorum aliqua nunc primum in lucem prodeunt, reliqua verò multo quàm antea castigatiora. Horum omnium elenchum pagina duodecima commonstrabit* (Louanii: Apud Ioannem Bogardum sub Biblijs Aurei, 1566), New College Library, Oxford, BT1.4.3(1).

<sup>21</sup> Maureen Bell, 'Bynneman, Henry (*b.* in or before 1542, *d.* 1583)', ODNB (14 November 2018) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/4266>> (Accessed: 28 July 2023).

For another, there is the elaborate frontispiece of the work, which despite the lack of any other title page does not mention either place, printer, or date—though in our copy a previous owner has helpfully scribbled ‘Authore Asserio Menevensi’ and ‘Edidit archiepiscopi Parker’ into the white spaces surrounding the portrait which must be meant to represent King Alfred. The very odd depiction of King Alfred is only one strange element of a frontispiece in which ‘anachronism jostles anachronism’, as Suzanne Hagedorn puts it, from the verses by Henry of Huntingdon to the female personifications of Geometry and Astronomy and male figures including Ptolemy and Strabo: ‘We see an Anglo-Saxon king who is dressed as a Tudor king and is described in a 12th-century poem looking out over a border of classical figures’.<sup>22</sup>

But even having set aside the strangeness of this frontispiece and progressed beyond the preface to the actual text, the peculiarities do not end. Asser wrote his *Vita* in c. 893 naturally in Latin, which is how Parker prints it—but in Day’s Anglo-Saxon type. The choice of an Anglo-Saxon font previously exclusively reserved for the printing of Old English language for a Latin text strikes as rather odd. Just as with the creation of an Anglo-Saxon type in the first place, Clement again finds the motivation in the visual impact of the font, giving the appearance of authority and authenticity: ‘its use, though ahistorical, gave the book a far greater impact than it would have had otherwise [and] imbued the text with a visual authority that was impossible to obtain by use of normal roman or black-letter type’.<sup>23</sup>

What the Anglo-Saxon type does not do, however, is distinguish the Latin of Asser’s *Vita* from the three and a half pages of Old English that follow it in Parker’s edition: King Alfred’s *Preface* to his translation<sup>24</sup> of St Gregory’s *Cura Pastoralis* (‘This the Preface how S. Gregorie this booke made, which men the Pastoral doe call’, F1<sup>r</sup>). The *Preface* this is printed in the same large, Great Primer (or 18pt) version of Day’s Anglo-Saxon type, though here with an interlinear modern English translation in a tiny Italic (F1<sup>r</sup>–F2<sup>v</sup>), and followed by the Latin text in a Great Primer Roman type (F3<sup>r</sup>–F4<sup>v</sup>).

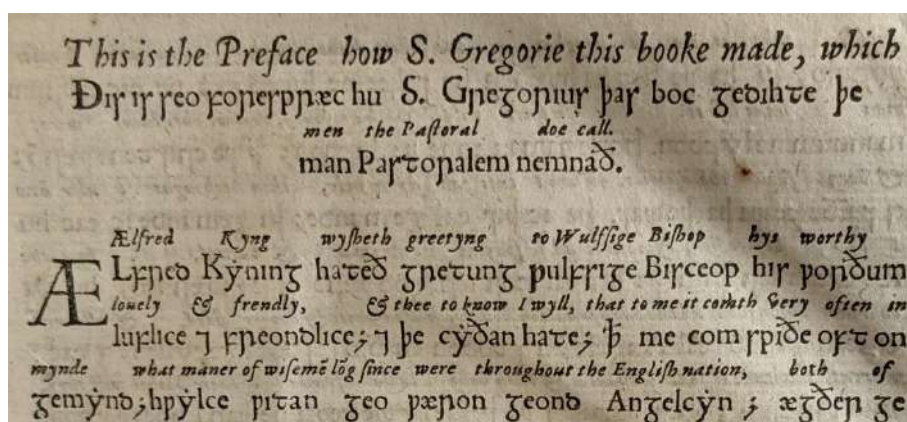


Figure 3: Parker’s Old English text and interlinear translation of Alfred’s *Preface* to St Gregory  
New College Library, Oxford, BT1.4.3(2), F1<sup>r</sup>

Like Foxe, and as he did in the *Testimonie* earlier, Parker supplies for the reader a typographical table of the Anglo-Saxon characters used, ‘so that from there the method to most easily and most rapidly read it perfectly may be at hand for whoever is eager for the language. (. . . vt facillima citissimaq(ue) inde ad eam perfectè legendam ratio cuius eius linguę cupido paresiat’, ¶2<sup>v</sup>).

<sup>22</sup> Suzanne C. Hagedorn, ‘Matthew Parker and Asser’s *Ælfredi Regis Res Gestæ*’, *The Princeton University Library Chronicle* 51 (1) (1989), 74–90, at p. 84. See pp. 81–6 for her discussion of the frontispiece, including Day’s re-use of the woodcuts in other publications.

<sup>23</sup> Clement, ‘Beginnings’, pp. 206 and 218.

<sup>24</sup> Though see M. R. Godden, ‘Did King Alfred Write Anything?’, *Medium Ævum* 76 (1) (2007), 1–23.



Saxonica	Latina	Saxonica	Latina	Diphthongi & abbreviatioes
A	a	M	m	Æ
B	b	N	n	ð
C	c	O	o	þ
D	d	P	p	et
E	e	Q	q	and
F	f	R	r	w
G	g	S	s	
H	h	T	t	
I	i	V	v	
K	k	X	x	
L	l	Y	y	
		Z	z	

Figure 4: The typographical table in Parker's *Alfred*, New College Library, Oxford, BT1.4.3(2), ¶2<sup>v</sup>

The uncial E, M and Æ, as well as the strange z, are easily recognisable from Foxe's abbreviated table and printed text (see Figures 1 and 2 above). Reed calls the typography in this volume 'superior to that of almost any other work of the period', praising not only Day's Anglo-Saxon type, but also the large Great Primer Italic and Roman types used for the *Prefatio ad Lectorem* and the Latin version of the *Preface* to St Gregory, both of which are also used in the two works of Thomas Walsingham which Parker's *Alfred* was issued with.<sup>25</sup>

Parker's death only a year after the publication, in 1575, meant the end of this productive collaboration of antiquarian Archbishop and printer, but while Day's death in 1584 naturally put an end to his printing career, it most certainly did not mean the end for his Anglo-Saxon type. We can trace this to the possession of the printer and publisher Ralph Newbery (c. 1536–1603/4)<sup>26</sup> and the printing group Eliot's Court Press, which in the following decades issued a number of further publications using Day's Anglo-Saxon letters.<sup>27</sup>

#### CAMDEN'S ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND

Possibly foremost among these publications is a highly influential topographical and linguistic publication by William Camden (1551–1623).<sup>28</sup> The first edition of his *Britannia* appeared in 1586, with six further editions between 1586 and 1607.<sup>29</sup> New College Library holds three, a copy of the 1590 edition in a contemporary vellum binding,<sup>30</sup> one of the fifth edition of 1600,<sup>31</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Reed, p. 96.

<sup>26</sup> I. Gadd, 'Newbery, Ralph (b. in or before 1536, d. 1603/4)', ODNB (3 January 2008), <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/19979>> (Accessed: 28 July 2023).

<sup>27</sup> On the Press see Clement, 'Beginnings', pp. 225–7.

<sup>28</sup> Wyman H. Herendeen, 'Camden, William (1551–1623)', ODNB (3 January 2008), <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/4431>> (Accessed: 28 July 2023).

<sup>29</sup> See Peter J. Lucas, 'William Camden, Seventeenth-Century Atlases of the British Isles and the Printing of Anglo-Saxon', *The Antiquaries Journal* 98 (2018), 219–244, at pp. 240–41 for a full list of early editions of this text.

<sup>30</sup> *Britannia sive Florentissimorum regnorum, Anglia, Scotia, Hibernia, et insularum adiacentium ex intima antiquitate chorographica descriptio. Nunc tertio recognita, & magna accessione adaucta.* (Londini: [Printed at Eliot's Court Press] impensis Georg. Bishop. Cum gratia & priuilegio Regiæ Maiestatis, 1590), New College Library, Oxford, BT1.131.1.

<sup>31</sup> *Britannia sive Florentissimorum regnorum, Anglia, Scotia, Hibernia, et insularum adiacentium ex intima antiquitate chorographica descriptio. Nunc postremo recognita, & magna accessione post Germanicam aeditionem adaucta* (Londini: [printed at Eliot's Court Press] impensis Georg. Bishop, 1600), New College Library, Oxford, BT3.193.6.

and one of the 1610 English translation by Philemon Holland (1552–1637)<sup>32</sup> in the 1695 revision by Edmund Gibson (1669–1748),<sup>33</sup> of whom more later.<sup>34</sup> In our earliest 1590 copy, a handwritten note under the edition statement on the title page points the reader to the existence of the 1600 edition and its additional maps.

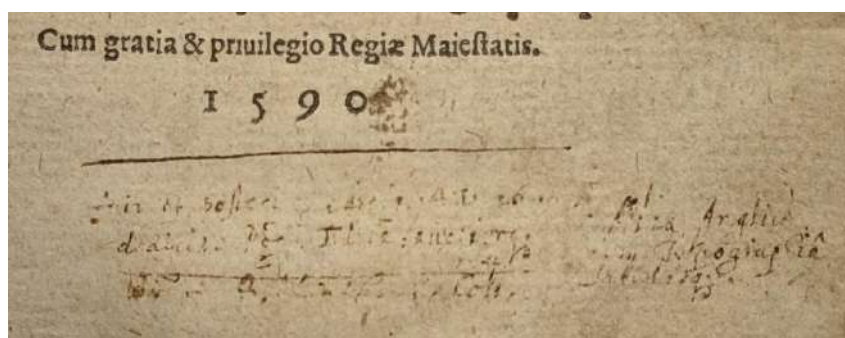


Figure 5: Title page of Camden's 1590 *Britannia*, New College Library, Oxford, BT1.131.1

Curiously, Adams's list of early Anglo-Saxon prints omits all of the many and popular editions of the *Britannia*, presumably because none of them actually contain any longer passages of text printed in Anglo-Saxon type, though its use is far from insubstantial. As Camden assures his 'benevolent readers', he diligently consulted glossaries of the British language ('... linguae Britannicæ Glossaria ... sedulo consului', A4<sup>v</sup>–A5<sup>v</sup>), and he used his newfound expertise to include the Old English versions (or at least his notion of the Old English versions) of Britain's place-names in Anglo-Saxon type throughout.

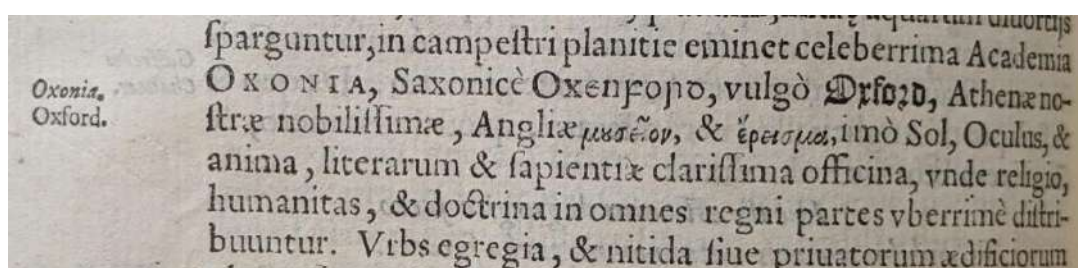


Figure 6: The entry for Oxford in Camden's 1600 *Britannia*, New College Library, Oxford, BT3.193.6, Y4<sup>v</sup>

True to the advertising in our 1590 edition, the 1600 edition does indeed include maps, one on the title page, and two fold-out maps showing Roman and Anglo-Saxon Britain inserted between quires A and B—both unsigned, but potentially the work of the same 'Will[i]ams Rogers' who signs his name on the engraved title page. The second of the two maps purports to show 'ENGLALOND ANGLIA ANGLOSAXONVM HEPTARCHIA', and prints its English place-names in Anglo-Saxon type and often incorrect, pseudo-archaic forms—the name 'Londonceaster', for example, is entirely absent from any actual Anglo-Saxon sources, which invariably attest the first element of the name (whether standing alone or in combination with 'ceaster', '-wic', or '-burh') as 'Lunden-', not 'London-'.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>32</sup> John Considine, 'Holland, Philemon (1552–1637)', ODNB (23 September 2004) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/13535>> (Accessed: 28 July 2023).

<sup>33</sup> Stephen Taylor, 'Gibson, Edmund (bap. 1669, d. 1748)', ODNB (3 January 2008), <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/10615>> (Accessed: 28 July 2023).

<sup>34</sup> Camden's *Britannia*, *Newly Translated into English: with large additions and improvements. Publish'd by Edmund Gibson, of Queens-College in Oxford* (London: Printed by F. Collins, for A. Swalle, at the Unicorn at the West-end of St. Paul's Church-yard; and A. & J. Churchil, at the Black Swan in Pater-noster-Row, 1695), New College Library, Oxford, BT1.14.9.

<sup>35</sup> Bosworth Toller's Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online, s.v. *Lunden*. Available at <[bosworthtoller.com](http://bosworthtoller.com)>.





Figure 7: Camden's map of Anglo-Saxon England showing London, New College Library, Oxford, BT3.193.6

Again the Anglo-Saxon type is used to convey a sense of antiquity, imbuing the text with a feeling of authority and authenticity—Camden uses the Anglo-Saxon type deliberately to lend credibility to the historical linguistic forms he introduces his readers to for the first time. Despite being on somewhat shaky ground when it comes to Old English etymology, Lucas stresses that his efforts are nevertheless to be recommended:

[Camden's] recognition of the importance of the historical study of linguistic forms, even if 'affective' rather than 'effective', helped to establish Anglo-Saxon as a necessary ingredient for the study of the past in England ...<sup>36</sup>

By this time several decades had passed since the publication of the first early modern edition of Old English in Anglo-Saxon type, but just like Foxe and Parker, Camden is apprehensive about his intended audience's knowledge in these matters, so that we are once again presented with a typographical table of the Anglo-Saxon characters used in the text, 'to facilitate the reading of the Anglo-Saxon names where they occur in the book' ('... ut saxonica nomina quæ passim in libro occurrent facilius legantur', A8<sup>r</sup>). Camden's first edition of 1586 and also the 1590 edition make use of the same Day type which Foxe used in the 1570 *Acts* and Parker in his 1574 *Alfred*—though in a smaller pica (12pt) size which was based directly on the Great Primer font, and cut for the 1576 edition of the *Acts*. However, Lucas identifies the types used in the later editions of the *Britannia* printed by Eliot's Court Press for George Bishop, including this 1600 printing, as a curious mixture of Day's type and an Anglo-Saxon type first commissioned and used by William Lambarde (1536–1601)<sup>37</sup> for his topographical and linguistic publication, *A Perambulation of Kent*, printed in 1576 for Ralph Newbery.<sup>38</sup> The press apparently bought the Lambarde type around that time, and also acquired Day's type at his death in 1584.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Lucas, 'Atlases', p. 222.

<sup>37</sup> J. D. Alsop, 'Lambarde, William (1536–1601)', ODNB (3 January 2008) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/15921>> (Accessed: 28 July 2023).

<sup>38</sup> This is William Lambarde, *A Perambulation of Kent: Conteyning the description, Hystorie, and Customes of that Shyre* (Imprinted at London: [by Henrie Middleton] for Ralphe Nevvberie, dwelling in Fleetestreete a litle aboue the Conduit, 1576). On the Lambarde type see Lucas, 'Parker, Lambard'; and on Eliot's Court Press, H. R. Plomer, 'The Eliot's Court Printing House, 1584–1674', *The Library* [series 4], 2 (3) (1921), 175–84.

<sup>39</sup> Clement, 'Beginnings', 225–7.

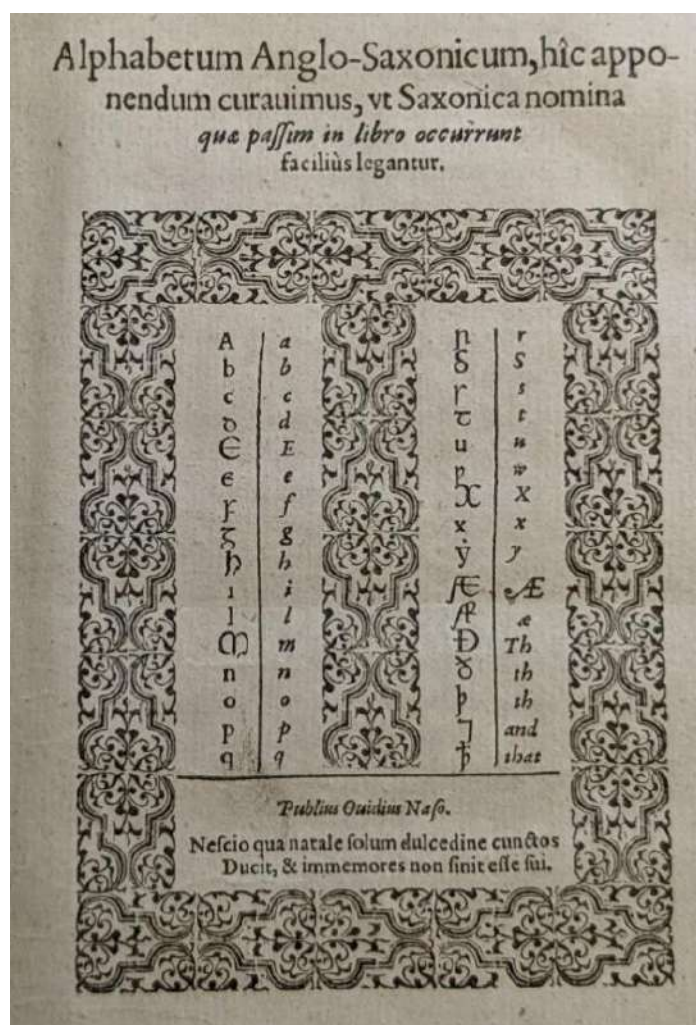


Figure 8: Camden's table of Anglo-Saxon type in the 1600 *Britannia*, New College Library, Oxford, BT3.193.6, A8<sup>r</sup>

The similarities and differences to the pure Day type are easy to see in the table: there are the same uncial E and M and the two types of Ash Æ used in Parker's *Alfred* (cf. Figure 5 above), but the type adds characters such as a capital uncial X while leaving out the strange squiggly z (cf. Figure 1 and Figure 5 above). It is also notable that this version of the lower-case Eth ð has a rather shorter upper stroke than the one used by both Foxe and Parker, which had resulted in some unaesthetic spacing of words especially where the letter occurred medial and doubled, such as for example in 'syððan'.

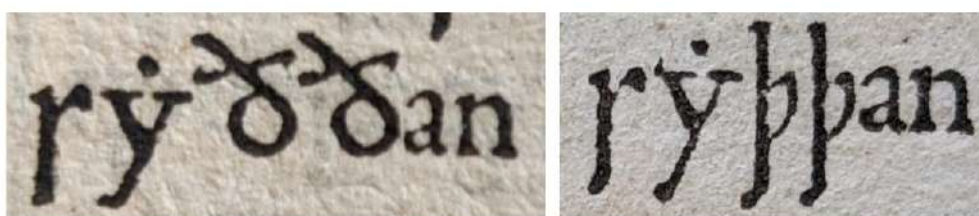


Figure 9: Two versions of 'syððan/syþþan' in Foxe's 1570 *Acts*, New College Library, Oxford, BT1.48.7, 3K5<sup>v</sup>

New College Library holds copies of two further early publications by Camden on historical and linguistic topics concerning Britain, his 1603 *Anglica, Normannica, Hibernica, Cambrica, a veteribus scripta*, in which he (re-)prints some of the primary sources used in the compilation of his



*Britannia*,<sup>40</sup> and a second, 1614 edition of his *Remaines, concerning Britaine*,<sup>41</sup> a somewhat looser collection of thematic essays. But although both make frequent reference to and print texts or at least words from the ‘Saxon tongue’ Old English, they make only very limited use of Anglo-Saxon type.

In the *Anglica*, Camden prints a collection of early chronicles and histories of Britain including *Chronicon Angliae temporibus Edwardi II et Edwardi III* by Geoffrey the Baker (falsely attributed to ‘Thomas de la More’); the same *Historia Anglicana* or *Historia Brevis* and *Ypodigma Neustriae vel Normanniae* by Thomas Walsingham which Parker’s *Ælfred* was issued with; and the *Itinerarium Cambriae* and *Descriptio Cambriae* of Gerald of Wales. As the very first item in the volume, however, Camden reprints the entirety of Parker’s *Ælfredi Regis res gesta*, both Asser’s Latin *Vita*, and Alfred’s *Preface* to St Gregory. Unlike Parker, however, who decided to print even the Latin of the *Vita* in Anglo-Saxon type, Camden here prints both the Latin of the *Vita* (untranslated) and the Old English of the *Preface* (with its interlinear translation copied verbatim, cf. Figure 4 above) entirely in Roman type.

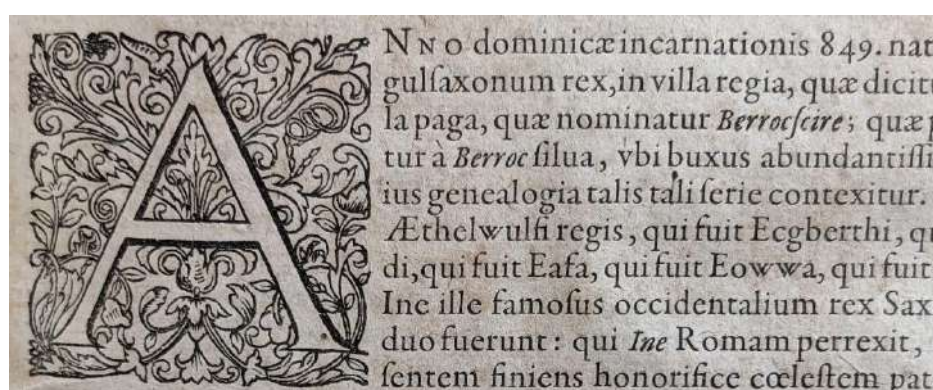


Figure 10: Asser’s *Life of Alfred* in Camden’s *Anglica*, New College Library, Oxford, BT3.188.14, A1<sup>r</sup>

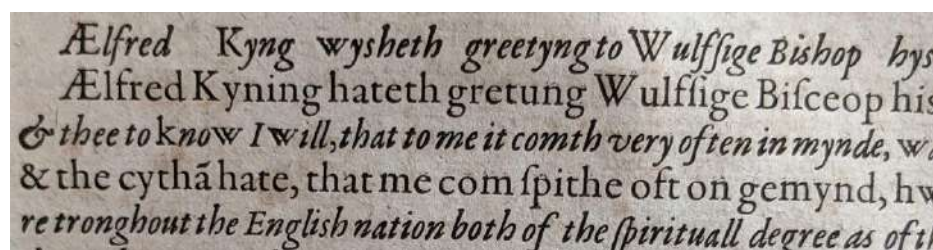


Figure 11: Ælfric’s *Preface* to St Gregory in Camden, *Anglica*, New College Library, Oxford, BT3.188.14, C1<sup>r</sup>

While a little disappointing for the purposes of this paper, Camden’s version of Asser’s *Vita* does contain one priceless historical gem—the account of Alfred’s founding (or rather restoration) of the University of Oxford and its first colleges, an apocryphal (even forged) anecdote telling of Alfred’s intervention in a scholarly dissent which threatened to tear the institution apart:<sup>42</sup>

<sup>40</sup> William Camden, *Anglica, Normannica, Hibernica, Cambrica, a veteribus scripta: Ex quibus Asser Meneuensis, Anonymus de vita Gulielmi Conquestoris, Thomas Walsingham, Thomas de la More, Gulielmus Gemeticensis, Giraldus Cambrensis* (Francofurti: Impensis Claudij Marnij, & hæredum Iohannis Aubrij, 1603), New College Library, Oxford, BT3.188.14.

<sup>41</sup> William Camden, *Remaines, concerning Britaine: But especially England, and the Inhabitants thereof. Their languages. Names. Surnames. Allusions. Anagrammes. Armories. Monies. Empreses. Apparell. Artillarie. Wise Speeches. Proverbs. Poesies. Epitaphes* Reviewed, corrected, and increased (Printed at London: By Iohn Legatt for Simon Waterson, 1614), New College Library, Oxford, BT3.211.17(1).

<sup>42</sup> On this see T. E. Holland, ‘The Origin of the University of Oxford’, *The English Historical Review* 6 (22) (1891), 238–49. Herendeen, ‘Camden, William’, describes the inclusion of the forged account as a ‘blunder [which] caused a certain amount of embarrassment for a man whose scholarship and integrity were now legendary’.



. . . q(uod) ut sedaret, rex ille inuictissimus Ælfredus, de dissidio eo nuntio & querimonia Grymboldi certior factus, Oxoniam se contulit, vt finem modumq(ue) huic controuersiæ imponeret, qui & ipse summos labores hausit, causas & querelas vtrinq(ue) illatas audiendo: . . . (B2<sup>v</sup>).

(. . . so in order to settle this, that most invincible king Alfred, having been informed of that dissension and of Grymbold's complaint, he betook himself to Oxford, in order to put an end and a restriction to this controversy, and he himself took great pains, hearing the causes and complaints brought forward on both sides.)

Despite clearly having access to Anglo-Saxon type, and having made use of it in his *Britannia*, in the *Anglica* Camden declines to follow in Parker's footsteps and avail himself of the sense of antiquity and authority the type would provide, a decision which he defends at some length in his address from the printer to the benevolent reader (*TYPOGRAPHVS BENEVOLO Lectori S.P.*):

Historia de Ælfredo Anglosaxonum rege per Asserum descripta, typis equidem Saxonice antehac impressa fuit. Impressionis illius mentionem facit (vt vides) præfatio proxime præcedens. Ad me vero quod attiner, quandoquidem typis illis Saxonice destitutus fui, eosque ad tractatum adeo breuem fundi curare operæprecium non fore mihi perusum habui: ideo typos communes & vsitos ad illum excudendum adhiberi volui. Veruntamen, ne putares incommodum quodum ex ea re ad te redundaturum, volui, vt alphabetum Saxonice hic adiungeretur: vt, quæ differentia inter orthographiam Saxonum illorum veterum & populorum aliorum esset, cum voluptate quadam & delectatione perspicere posses. Hac de re admonendum te esse putavi. Vale. (Camden, *Anglica*, 3\*6<sup>v</sup>).

(‘The history of Alfred, king of the Anglo-Saxons, described by the Asser, had indeed been printed before in Saxon type. Mention of that printing is made (as you can see) in the preface immediately preceding it. But as for me, since I was disappointed with those Saxon types, and I considered that it would not be worth my labour to make use of them for such a short tract: therefore I wished to use common and usual types to print it. In truth, lest you should think that any inconvenience would arise from that matter to you, I wished that the Saxon alphabet should be added here: that you might perceive with a certain pleasure and delight what difference there was between the orthography of the ancient Saxons and those of other peoples. I thought you should be warned about this. Farewell.’)

This is followed by the now familiar typographic table.

Saxonica.	Latina.	Saxonica.	Latina.	Diphthongi.
A	a	M	m	Æ } Æ
B	b	N	n	ƿ } ƿ
C	c	O	o	Abbrenia- tiones.
D	d	P	p	
E	e	Q	q	
F	f	R	r	ƿ } ƿ
G	g	S	s	th } th
H	h	T	t	et and vv
I	i	V	v	
K	k	X	x	
L	l	Y	y	
		Z	z	

Figure 12: Typographical table of Anglo-Saxon type in Camden's *Anglica*  
New College Library, Oxford, BT3.188.14, 3\*6<sup>v</sup>

Unlike Foxe's *Acts*, Parker's *Alfred*, and Camden's *Britannia*, the *Anglica* was printed not in Britain, but on the continent, in Frankfurt, and the Anglo-Saxon types used in this table differ markedly, particularly in quality, from their insular counterparts. A comparison of this continental Saxon type with those used in Britain by Day and Lambarde (cf. Figures 1, 5, and 9 above) makes it easy to see why Camden would have expressed disappointment with the Saxon types available to him (*typis illis Saxonice destitutus fui*), and decide against an extensive use—the special sorts, both lower case and capitals, are much cruder, much less elegant, and noticeably bolder than the Roman letters of the set. The Anglo-Saxon t is missing the second half of its cross stroke, and the Wyn (w) has a strange pronounced hook on the descender. Particularly the capital letters are noticeably rough: the uncial E has a curiously flat back, the bowl of the H seems to be defective, and the capital Ð is even back to front.

However, for Camden the decision whether or not to make use of available Anglo-Saxon type when setting Old English text seems to have been influenced by various and varying factors not always connected to the quality of the available type. Although he himself describes it as 'onely the rude rubble and out-cast rubbishe. . . of a greater and more serious worke' (A2<sup>r</sup>), his *Remaines, concerning Britaine*, in which he assembles various materials gathered during the research for the *Britannia*, proved almost as popular as his main work: three editions were published in Camden's lifetime, in 1605, 1614, and 1623.<sup>43</sup> The *Remaines* indeed contain, as the title promises (cf. note 41 above), historical, and etymological discussions and lists of languages, first names, surnames, proverbs, and poetry (including an excerpt of Chaucer), as well as essays on cultural topics such as clothing, money, or weaponry found in Britain. Unlike the *Britannia*, however, this seems to be aimed at a somewhat less learned audience, 'a popular spin-off from its more expensive and serious historical mother lode,' as Herendeen puts it in the *ODNB*.<sup>44</sup> Despite offering plenty of occasions to use Anglo-Saxon type, the *Remaines* hardly make use of it; neither, as in the *Britannia*, in the etymologies of many of the names listed, nor even for the excerpts of Old English text quoted—the essay on the history of the English language includes as examples two Old English versions of the Lord's Prayer, both printed entirely in Roman type.

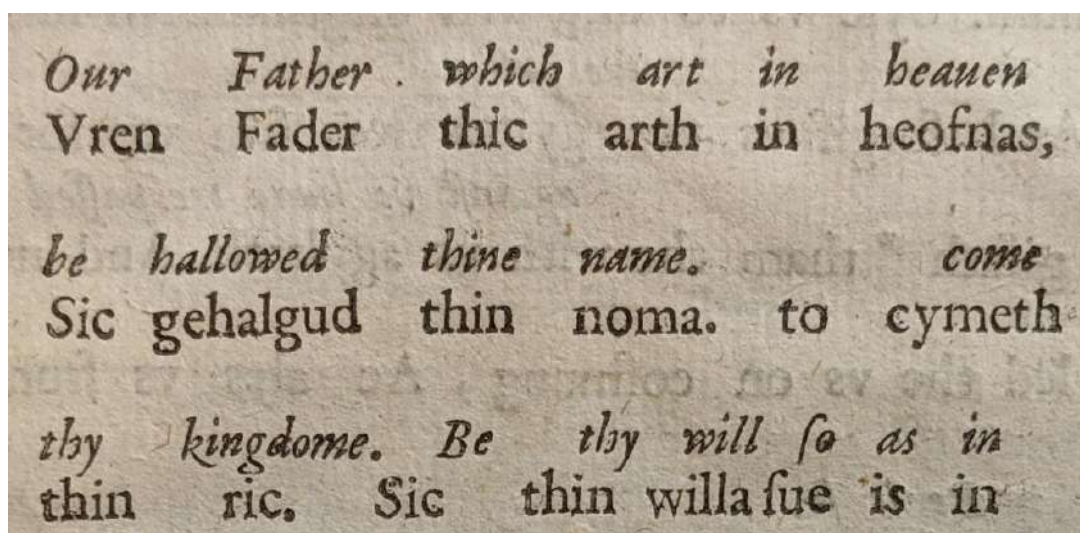


Figure 13: The Lord's Prayer in Old and Early Modern English in Camden's *Remaines*  
New College Library, Oxford, BT3.211.17(1), D4<sup>r</sup>

In fact, in the nearly 400 pages of the *Remaines* there is only a single occasion on which a very few individual characters creep in, namely three instances of an Anglo-Saxon g and a single þ: in a digression on the proposed orthographical reforms of 'Sir Thomas Smith her Maiesties

<sup>43</sup> For more details on this publication see Herendeen, 'Camden'.

<sup>44</sup> *ibid.*

secretarie not long since',<sup>45</sup> Camden lists the many extra letters this individual wished for in his *Dialogus* in order to express the sounds of the English language, explaining for example that 'for Th. hee would have the *Saxon* letter *Thorne* which was a D with a dash through the head, or þ; . . .', E3<sup>v</sup>). Clement, who must be credited for the not inconsiderable feat of spotting these spare examples in the text, suggests that rather being part of Day's Anglo-Saxon types they 'have affinities' with Lambarde's font.<sup>46</sup> In any case they present proof that Camden did, in fact, have access to some Anglo-Saxon type for the *Remaines* (though considering he takes the trouble of describing rather than simply setting a Ð, possibly a very limited set?).<sup>47</sup> His decision to keep the Anglo-Saxon characters to a minimum is therefore deliberate, and made with an aim of making the *Remaines* more accessible to a less learned readership, an aim clearly visible in his use of English rather than Latin (the *Remaines* being the only one of his works in which he does so),<sup>48</sup> and a deliberately non-scholarly or English at that:

While I run on in this course of our English tongue, rather respecting matter then words, I forget that I may be charged by the minion refiners of English, neither to write State-English, Court-English, nor Secretarie-English, and verily I acknowledge it. Sufficient it is for me, if I haue waded hither-unto in the fourth kind, which is plaine English, leauing to such as are compleate in all, to supply whatsoeuer remaineth. (F2<sup>r</sup>)

#### LAWS AND LEXICOLOGY

The care Camden takes to avoid the use of Anglo-Saxon type does clearly indicate that almost half a century after their first use he does not expect his 'plaine English'-speaking readership to be at all familiar with the characters, but even in works very much aimed at an educated, learned or even scholarly audience there seem to be some disagreement among the authors how much familiarity or unfamiliarity with Anglo-Saxon characters they can expect in their targeted audience. One indicator of the authors' assumptions one way or another is the inclusion or omission of the so far widely used typographical table with the Anglo-Saxon type samples.

A contentious publication by the lawyer and historical and linguistic scholar John Selden (1584–1654)<sup>49</sup> is a case in point. Selden was a mutual acquaintance of William Camden and the notable antiquary Sir Robert Cotton (1571–1631),<sup>50</sup> to whom (or presumably to whose extensive library) both Camden's *Remaines* and Selden's controversial 1618 *Historie of tithes* are dedicated.<sup>51</sup> Tackling the much-debated question whether tithes were a divine right exercised by the Church since its earliest days, or an invention of secular laws, Selden's *Historie* includes evidence from the early Anglo-Saxon laws of, among others, Edgar and Canute, which he prints at length in the original Old English in Anglo-Saxon type (though accompanied by a Latin translation in Roman

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Sir Thomas Smith, *De recta & emendata linguae Anglicae scriptione, Dialogus* (Lutetiae: Ex officina Roberti Stephani Typographi Regij, 1568) and Ian W. Archer, 'Smith, Sir Thomas (1513–1577)', *ODNB* (3 January 2008) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/25906>> (Accessed: 28 July 2023).

<sup>46</sup> Clement, 'Beginnings', p. 229.

<sup>47</sup> Clement, 'Beginnings', p. 230, speculates that, since both Day's and Lambard's Anglo-Saxon types were in the hands of Eliot's Court Press at that point, 'for whatever reason, the Anglo-Saxon fonts were not loaned out, at least not to . . . Simon Waterson'.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. George C. Boon, 'Camden and the *Britannia*', *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 136 (1987), 1–19, at p. 7.

<sup>49</sup> Paul Christianson, 'Selden, John (1584–1654)', *ODNB* (3 January 2008) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/25052>> (Accessed: 28 July 2023).

<sup>50</sup> Stuart Handley, 'Cotton, Sir Robert Bruce, first baronet (1571–1631)', *ODNB* (14 November 2018) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/6425>> (Accessed: 28 July 2023).

<sup>51</sup> John Selden, *The Historie of Tithes: That is, The Practice of Payment of them. The Positiue Laws made for them. The Opinions touching the Right of them. A Review of it. Is also annexed, which both Confirmes it and directs in the Vse of it* (London, 1618), New College Library, Oxford, BT3.119.24(1).



type)—without, however, offering a typographical table to help his readers decipher the Anglo-Saxon characters.

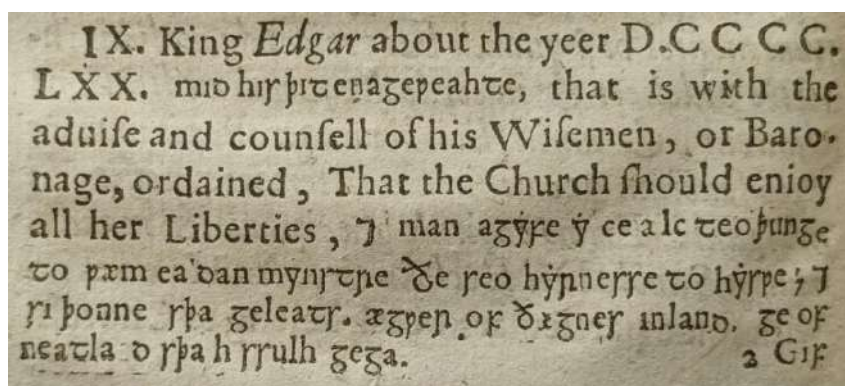


Figure 14: The Anglo-Saxon laws of King Edgar in Selden's *Historie of Tithes*  
New College Library, Oxford, BT3.119.24(1), Ee1<sup>v</sup>

The pretty red and black title page of the *Historie* offers no indication as to place of publication or printer, but Clement unhesitatingly identifies the type as Day's, and the printer as William Stansby, in whose possession Day's Anglo-Saxon type was at that point<sup>52</sup>—incidentally, the New College copy of the *Historie of Tithes* is bound together with one of Selden's later studies on Judaism, *De successionibus*,<sup>53</sup> which was definitely printed by Stansby.

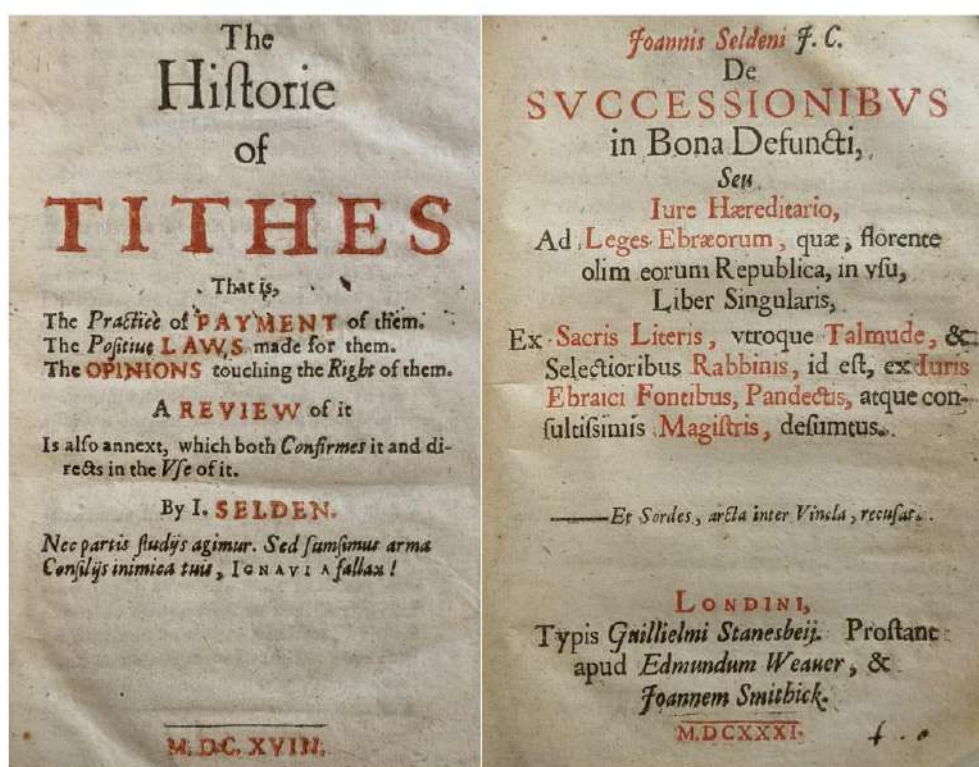


Figure 15: Title pages of Selden's *Historie* and *De Succesonibus*, New College Library, Oxford, BT3.119.24

<sup>52</sup> See Lucas, 'Parker, Lambard', 62–4, and Clement, 'Beginnings', 233.

<sup>53</sup> Joannis Seldeni J.C. *De Successionibus in Bona Defuncti, Seu Iure Hæreditario, Ad Leges Ebraeorum, quæ, florente olim eorum Republica, in usu, Liber Singularis, Ex Sacris Literis, utroque Talmude, &c. Selectionibus Rabbiniis, id est, ex Iuris Ebraici Fontibus, Pandectis, atque consultissimis Magistris, desumptus* (Londini, Typis Guilielmi Stanesbeij. Prostant apud Edmundum Weauer, & Joannem Smithick, 1631), New College Library, Oxford, BT3.119.24(2).

Only a year before Selden's publication of the *Historie*, the lexicographer John Minsheu (1559/60–1627)<sup>54</sup> made a different decision regarding the probable familiarity of his readers with Anglo-Saxon type. His 1617 etymological dictionary with the very appropriately polyglot title *Hegemōn eis tas glōssas, Id est Ductor in Linguas, The Guide into Tongues*,<sup>55</sup> was not the first etymological or general dictionary, but the first to include Old English etymologies. Indicative of the novelty of this is once again the inclusion of a table of Anglo-Saxon typography at the beginning of the work—notably Minsheu does not bother to present his readers with a like help for reading the plentiful Greek or Hebrew words included, but in his list of abbreviations (*Notas quibus utimur sic intelligito*, 'The marks which we use are thus understood') he includes 'The Saxon Letter or Character here vnder set downe, for the Readers vse, to reade the Saxon wordes, oftentimes in this *Dictionarie vsed*' (A6<sup>r</sup>).

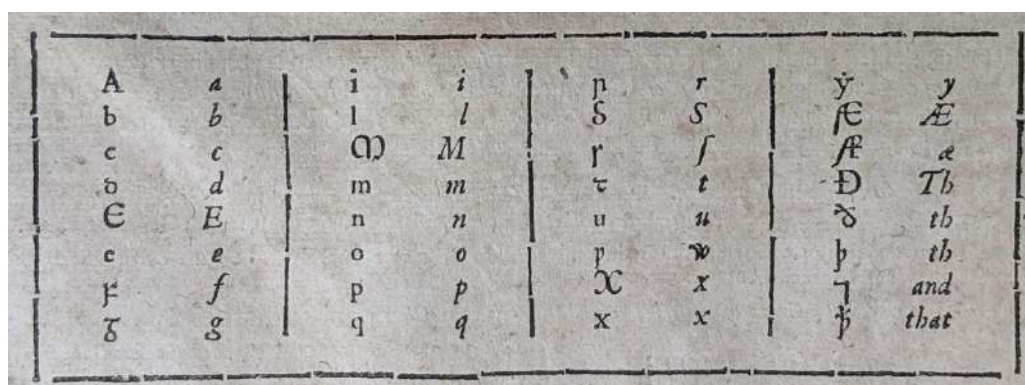


Figure 16: Typographical table with Anglo-Saxon types in Minsheu's *Hegemōn*  
New College, Oxford, BT3.102.2, A6<sup>r</sup>

This is clearly again Day's Anglo-Saxon type (in the smaller pica size) with some variants from Lambarde's type, such as the ð with the shorter upper stroke we encountered earlier in the *Britannia*.<sup>56</sup> In possession of both Parker's and Lambarde's Anglo-Saxon type, Stansby seems to rather monopolise the printing of Anglo-Saxon text in Britain, and his publications, using Day's type, continue until well into the 1640s.<sup>57</sup> Indeed no other Anglo-Saxon type apart from these two (in different sizes) is evidenced at all until after 1639, when a new Anglo-Saxon type emerges in a shift away from London and into the university towns of Cambridge and Oxford, where for the next half century and more the bulk of works including Anglo-Saxon type is published.

The new Anglo-Saxon type used in Cambridge from the 1640s on is closely connected with one Roger Daniel (1593?–1667), printer of the University 1632–1650,<sup>58</sup> as well as with the

<sup>54</sup> Vivian Salmon, 'Minsheu, John (1559/60–1627)', ODNB (23 September 2004) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/18813>> (Accessed: 28 July 2023).

<sup>55</sup> John Minsheu, [*Hegemōn eis tas glōssas*] 'HEM'ON ET'AS T'AS ΓΛΩΣΣΑΣ. *id est, Ductor in Linguas, The Guide Into Tongues. Cum illarum harmonia, & Etymologijs, Originationibus, Rationibus, & Derivationibus in omnibus his vndecim Linguis, viz: 1. Anglica. 2. Cambro-Britannica. 3. Belgica. 4. Germanica. 5. Gallica. 6. Italica. 7. Hispanica. 8. Lusitanica seu Portugallica. 9. Latina. 10. Græca. 11. Hebrea, &c. Quæ etiam ita ordine, & sono consentientes, collocatæ sunt, vt facilimè & nullo labore, vnusquisq[ue] non solum, Quatuor, Quinque, vel plures illarum, quàm optimè memoria tenere, verum etiam (per earum Etymologias) sub Nomine, Naturam, Proprietatem, Conditionem, Effectum, Materiam, Formam, vel finem rerum, rectè nosse queat* [London: printed by William Stansby and Eliot's Court Press] vendibiles extant Londini, apud Ioannem Browne Bibliopolam in vico vocato Little Brittain, 1617), New College Library, Oxford, BT3.102.2.

<sup>56</sup> On this see also Clement, 'Beginnings', 233.

<sup>57</sup> See Adams, *Old English Scholarship*, Appendix III, pp. 173–7.

<sup>58</sup> See Henry R. Plomer, *A Dictionary of the Booksellers and Printers who were at work in England, Scotland and Ireland from 1641 to 1667* (London: Printed for the Bibliographical Society, by Blades, East & Blades, 1907), s.v. 'Daniel (Roger)'; and P. J. Lucas, 'Abraham Wheelock and the Presentation of Anglo-Saxon: From Manuscript to Print,' in *Beatus Vir: Studies in Early English and Norse Manuscripts in Memory of Phillip Pulsiano*, ed. A. N. Doane and Kirsten Wolf (Tempe, Ariz.: ACMRS, 2006), pp. 383–439.



name of the University Librarian and Anglo-Saxonist Abraham Wheelock (1593–1653).<sup>59</sup> Wheelock's Anglo-Saxon type was created for his edition and re-publication, in 1644, of Lambarde's *Archaionomia*. This collection of Anglo-Saxon laws with Latin translation had originally been published John Day in 1568, at which point it was, after Parker's *Testimonie of Antiquitie* of 1566, the only second ever publication making use of Anglo-Saxon type.<sup>60</sup>

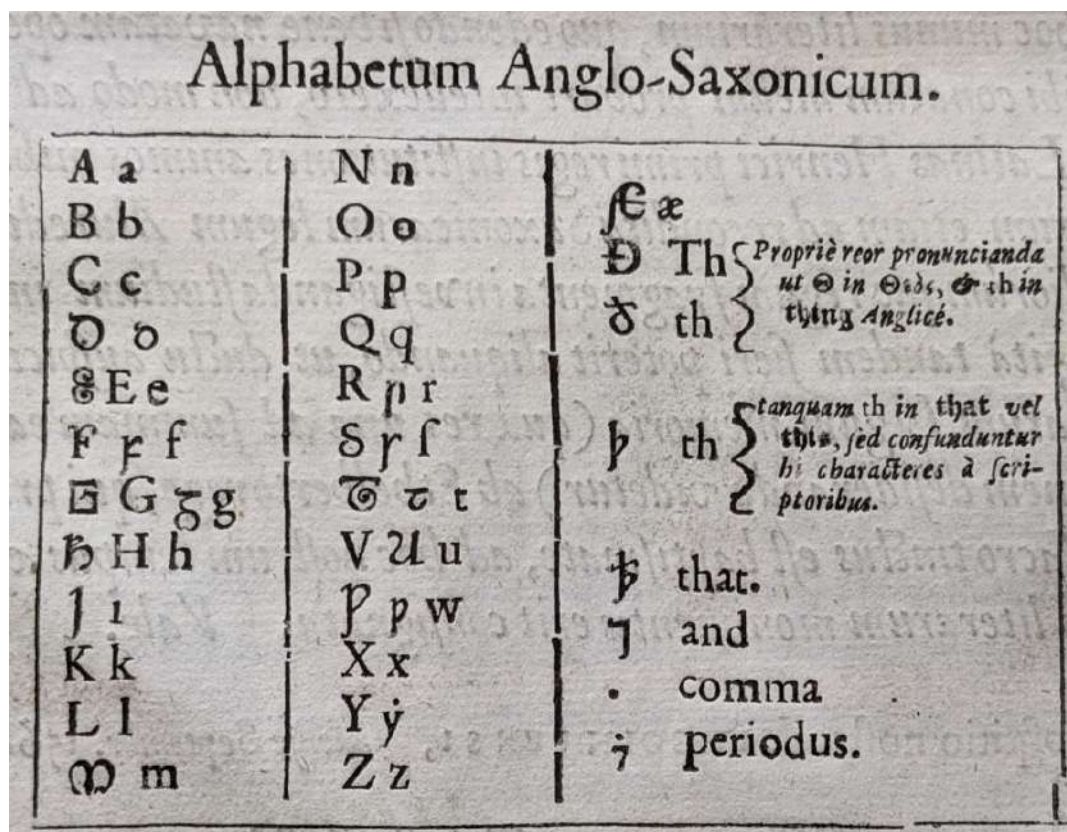


Figure 17: Typographical table in Wheelock's 1644 edition of the *Archaionomia*  
New College Library, Oxford, BT3.16.4, ¶16<sup>v</sup>

The typographical table provided by Wheelock very clearly shows the differences between this new University Anglo-Saxon type and Day's or Lambarde's type used by the London printers up to now. It is again a larger-sized Great Primer font, with an especially noticeable change in the use of capital letters—Wheelock discards one of the two variants of the capital Ash Æ which has been a standard feature in all the typographical tables so far. He also adds two capitals with elaborate curlicues, one replacing the uncial E, and one a new T, and also alters the uncial H to include a small loop on the ascender; particularly when used repeatedly in close proximity, these new capitals lend a rather stylish and graceful air to the typographical picture.

<sup>59</sup> On Wheelock and his Anglo-Saxon type see Lucas, 'Abraham Wheelock'.

<sup>60</sup> Abraham Wheelock, ed., William Lambarde, [*Archaionomia*], *Sive De priscis Anglorum Legibus libri, Sermone Anglico, vetustate Antiquissimo, aliquot ab hinc seculis conscripti, Nunc demum, magno Jurisperitorum, & amantium Antiquitatis omnium commodo, è tenebris in lucem vocati. Gulielmo Lambardo Interprete. Sexcentis in locis à libro ipsius castigata, quo pro exemplari utimur; cum multis aliis additionibus. Accessere in hac nostra ultima Editione Leges Henrici primi nunc primum edita, ex manuscripto in Fisco Regis habito: Unà cum Glossario earum antiquo ex Manuscripto Codice olim S. Augustini Doroborniensis. Regum qui has Leges scripserunt nomenclationem, & quid præterea tum primum ab illo, & nunc denuo à nobis accesserit, subsequens monstrabit pagina* (Cantabrigiæ: Ex officina Rogeri Daniel, celeberrimæ Academiæ Typographi, 1644), New College Library, Oxford, BT3.16.4. The original publication is *Ἀρχαιονομία, sive de priscis anglorum legibus libri, sermone Anglico, vetustate antiquissimo, aliquot abhinc seculis conscripti, atq[ue]; nunc demum, magno iurisperitorum, & amantium antiquitatis omnium commodo, è tenebris in lucem vocati* Cum gratia et priuilegio Regiæ Maiestatis per Decennium (Londini, ex officina Joannis Daij, 1569).



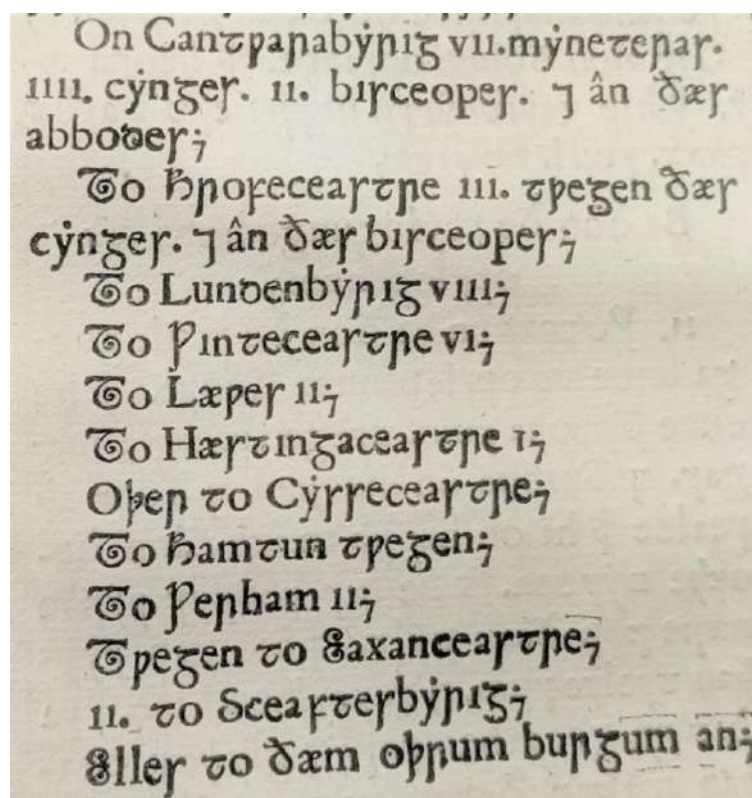


Figure 18: Wheelock's curlicued capitals in close proximity, New College Library, Oxford, BT3.16.4; G1<sup>v</sup>

#### OXFORD AND JUNIUS

Just as with Wheelock's type in Cambridge, another entirely new Anglo-Saxon type was created some time later for publications in Oxford at the Sheldonian Theatre, the forerunner of today's Oxford University Press. The press had been in the possession of Anglo-Saxon type since at least the late 1650s, when the London type-founder Nicholas Nicholls is recorded as having been paid £23 for a set of Anglo-Saxon type.<sup>61</sup> These were first used in 1659 in a new Anglo-Saxon to Latin dictionary compiled by William Somner.<sup>62</sup> Rather than include a full typographical table, among the things he judges the reader should be warned at the outset ('. . . quæ Lectorem hic in limine monendum esse judicavi') Somner only presents a short list of the instances in which Anglo-Saxon characters differ from Latin ('Elementa Saxonica quæ à Latinis differunt'), such as the Anglo-Saxon d, f, g, r, s, t, w, Ð, ð, þ and the abbreviation for *paet* and the Tironian *et* (b2<sup>v</sup>).

Among the other output of the Sheldonian Press are two of the true giants of the Anglo-Saxon renaissance of the 17th century: the edition of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* by Edmund Gibson published as the *Chronicon Saxonicum* in 1692;<sup>63</sup> and the great 2-volume folio *Thesaurus* of 1703–05 by the renowned antiquary George Hickes (1642–1715).<sup>64</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Jason Peacey, 'Printers to the University 1584–1658', in *The History of Oxford University Press: Volume I: Beginnings to 1780*, ed. Ian Gadd (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013–2017), pp. 50–77, at p. 74.

<sup>62</sup> William Somner, *Dictionarium Saxonico-Latino-Anglicum voces, phrasisque præcipuas Anglo-Saxonicas, e libris, sive manuscriptis, sive typis excusis, aliisque monumentis tum publicis tum privatis, magna diligentia collectas; cum Latina et Anglica vocum interpretatione complectens. Adjectis interdum Exemplis, vocum etymologiis, & cum cognatis linguis collationibus, plurimisque in gratiam linguæ Anglosaxonice Studiosorum Observationibus* (Oxonii, Excudebat Guliel. Hall, pro Authore. Prostant Londini, apud Danielem White, ad insigne septem stellarum, ex Aquilone Templi S. Pauli, 1659).

<sup>63</sup> *Chronicon Saxonicum. Ex MSS Codicibus Nunc Primum integrum Edidit, ac Latinum fecit Edmundus Gibson. A.B. è Collegio Regina* (Oxonii, E Theatro Sheldoniano, 1692), New College Library, Oxford, BT3.214.5.

<sup>64</sup> George Hickes, *Linguarum Vett. Septentrionalium Thesaurus Grammatico-Criticus et Archæologicus* (Oxonæ: E Theatro Sheldoniano, 1703–1705), New College Library, Oxford, NB.187.17–19. See Theodor Harmsen, 'Hickes, George (1642–1715)', ODNB (3 January 2008) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/13203>> (Accessed: 28 July 2023).

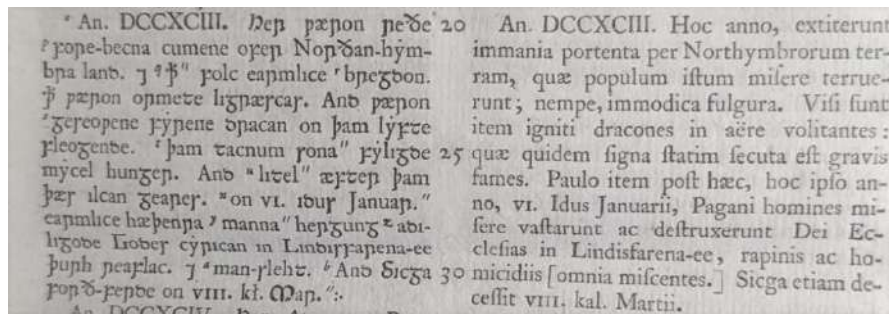


Figure 19: The entry for the year AD 793, reporting the Viking raid of the monastery at Lindisfarne, in Gibson's *Chronicon* New College, Oxford, BT3.214.5, p. 65



Figure 20: Title page of Gibson's *Chronicon* with the iconic image of the Sheldonian Theatre New College Library, Oxford, BT3.214.5



The name connected with this Anglo-Saxon type is somewhat better known than that of Abraham Wheelock of Cambridge: it is that of the great Germanic philologist Franciscus Junius (1591–1677),<sup>65</sup> the former owner of the codex of Old English biblical poetry which still resides at the Bodleian Library as MS Junius 11. Junius's involvement in the creation of a new set of Anglo-Saxon type is documented in an often-quoted letter to John Selden, the author of the *Historie of Tithes*, written by Junius from Amsterdam on 8 May 1654, and printed in the preface to Hickes's *Thesaurus*:

In the meane while have I here Anglo-Saxonick types (I know not whether you call them Punchons) a cutting, and hope they will be matriculated, and cast within the space of seven or eight weeks at the furthest. As soon as they come to my hands, I wil send you some little specimen of them, to the end I might know how they will be liked in England . . . (Hickes, *Thesaurus*, p. xliii)



Figure 21: Typographic tables of Anglo-Saxon and runic type used in Hickes's *Thesaurus*  
New College Library, Oxford, NB.187.17, p. 1 and p. 136.

Junius presented the type and matrices to Oxford University Press in 1677 together with a number of other types including Gothic, Runic, Danish and Icelandic, some of which the Press apparently retained for several centuries.<sup>66</sup> Both Gibson and Hickes include typographical specimens and tables in their work, both of course with the identical Junius type. Junius adds a capital square C to the square G also found in Wheelock, but keeps the font otherwise plain,

<sup>65</sup> Sophie van Romburgh, 'Junius [Du Jon], Franciscus [Francis] (1591–1677)', *ODNB* (22 September 2011) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/15167>> (Accessed: 28 July 2023).

<sup>66</sup> Cf. Reed, *History*, pp. 73–4 and pp. 150–156. On p. 150, note 3, he reports their presence there towards the end of the 19th century: 'The Gothic and Runic punches, and the punches and matrices of the Saxon, formed part of the interesting exhibit of the Oxford University Press at the Caxton Exhibition in 1877.' I have so far been unable to ascertain whether these are still in the possession of Oxford University Press or one of the University's museums or archives, and, if so, accessible to the public, but am determined to find out.



without the aesthetically pleasing but not necessarily very authentic (i.e. found in Anglo-Saxon MSS) embellishments added in the Cambridge type. The ascender of the lower case Eth ð, however, seems to have grown again past the shortness of the Lambarde type and to a length last seen in Day's type; and just as it did over a century ago in Foxe's 1570 *Acts* (cf. Figure 10 above), the combination of ascender's angle and the length of both ascender and cross stroke cause a noticeable gap before the letter every time it is used in a medial or final position. Curiously, however, both the Eth used underneath the Thorn in the Runic table, and the Eth used in the above the runes which spells out their names in Anglo-Saxon type are different in shape, with a slightly larger bowl and a higher cross stroke which sits above the median, so that in this Runic table the words containing ð are actually rather more closed up, and aesthetically more pleasing, than in the samples of Old English poetry printed further on.

The history of the Anglo-Saxon font also seems to come full circle here (or rather hark back to its beginnings) in another curious editorial decision. With Junius' gift of the various sets of type and matrices, Hickes should have had access to Junius's Norse/Icelandic type as well as his Anglo-Saxon one. The Anglo-Saxon types are duly used in Hickes' samples of Old English poetry, among them the famous *Finnsburgh Fragment*, the text of which, due to a loss of the original manuscript, is only preserved here. On the very next page, however, Hickes prints a poem from the Old Norse/Icelandic *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks*, the *Hervararkviða*, also known under its English title 'The Waking of Angantyr'. Here, however, he uses neither an Old Norse/Icelandic nor a Roman type, but a rather archaic Gothic one.

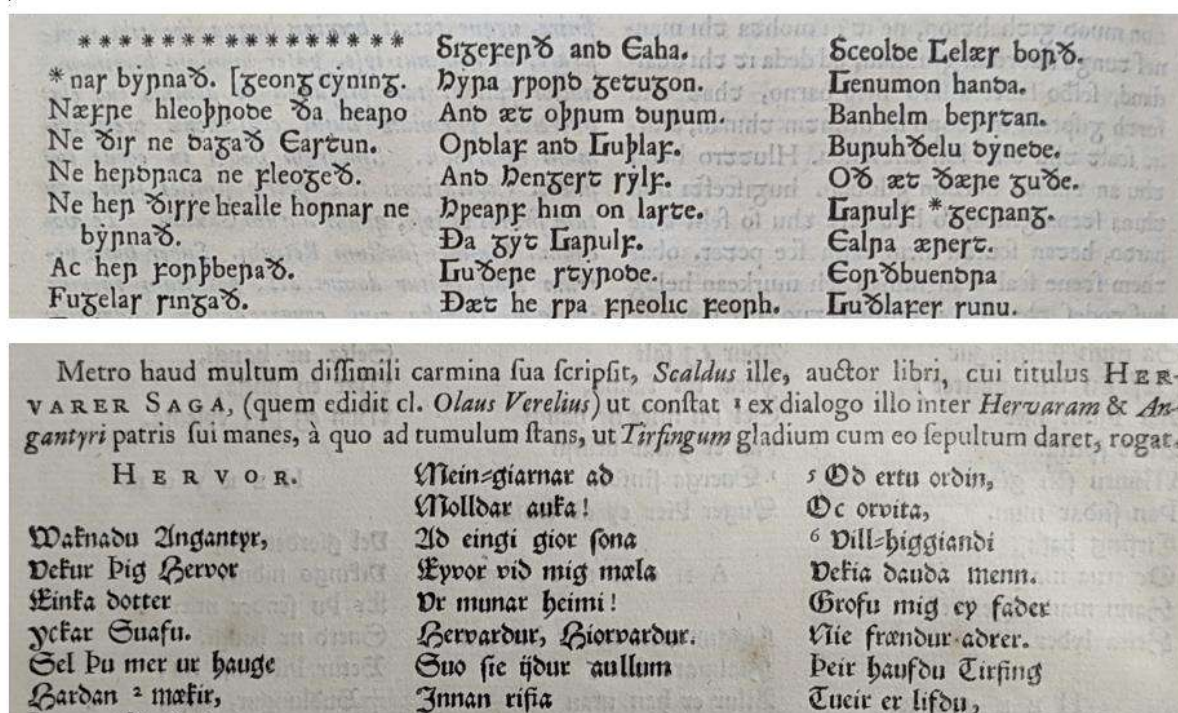


Figure 22: The beginnings of the *Finnsburgh Fragment* and 'The Waking of Angantyr' in Hickes's *Thesaurus* New College Library, Oxford, NB.187.17, p. 192 and p. 193.

The typography of both the *Finnsburgh Fragment* and *Hervararkviða* certainly set them apart from the surrounding Latin introductions, footnotes and explanations in their Roman font, and once again clearly demonstrate that the right type does indeed possess the 'subliminal ability to authenticate the antiquity and authority of a text'.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Clement, 'Beginnings', p. 206.

## THE LASTING LEGACY OF THE PRINTING PIONEERS IN TODAY'S TYPOGRAPHY

The early, pioneer antiquarians, linguists, editors, lexicographers and especially printers who first ventured out into the previously unexplored expanse of publishing Anglo-Saxon text and type left a legacy still visible today in every scholarly edition and university textbook containing Old English. The Anglo-Saxonists of the 19th century who cemented the convention of continuing to use the special sorts representing the Ash, Thorn and Eth in printed Old English text are directly indebted to the efforts and experiments of Parker, Day, Lambarde, Camden, Selden, Minsheu, Wheelock, Junius, Gibson, and Hickes, who laboured to find a way to faithfully represent the ancient language they found in some of England's oldest written sources. And yet, despite being so drastically reduced to only a few letters, the Anglo-Saxon type has not entirely lost its ability to lend an air of antiquity and authority to a text, as any reader will readily attest who is faced, for the very first time, with an Old English text studded with Æ, æ, Þ, þ, Ð, and ð.

As I mentioned at the beginning, it was in the first place the opportunity to examine in close proximity the various examples of early Anglo-Saxon type that can be found in the holdings of New College Library from the 16th, 17th, and very early 18th century which prompted the composition of this short treatise on this topic. The history of the beginnings of Anglo-Saxon type in Britain which these books have here helped me tell is thus necessarily incomplete, concise, and condensed, and also located towards the outskirts of my own area of expertise, so that I would like to refer you to the rather more detailed, comprehensive, and expert writings of the scholars I have made use throughout in my attempts to navigate this fascinating topic.

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