

# Anglo- Saxon England

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

## Anglo-Saxon England 6

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New work in this volume is as substantial and varied as in any of its forerunners. Fresh insights are offered into the Anglo-Saxons' literature, both Latin and vernacular, their study of Latin, their documents, their art and artifacts, their agricultural practices, their cognizance of their Roman predecessors, and later Icelandic knowledge of them.

The literary contributions include a major study of Aldhelm's Latin prose style, arguing against its supposed 'Irishness' and placing it firmly in the main tradition of rhetorical amplification coming through from ancient times. In the field of vernacular poetry a current, but illogical, interpretation of a thematically significant obscurity in *Beowulf* is challenged, and Cynewulf's penitential concern is emphasized. Two specimens of vernacular sermon literature come in for close analysis – the *Sermo Lupi* as a highly organized expression of several interrelated themes, and an eleventh-century homily as a work derived from various Old English sources (including a homiliary similar to the Vercelli Book) by a compiler who was an imitator of Wulfstan's style. A significant piece of textual evidence for one of the major prose works of Alfred's period is made available. The needs of investigators of vernacular literature are kept very much in mind throughout a survey of the problems and potential of liturgical studies. Some glosses are examined both for their lexicographical interest and for the glimpse they afford of the study of Latin in early-eighth-century England. It is perceived that a surviving record includes the names of the witnesses to a now lost charter of the 920s and the names of some members of Athelstan's retinue on his expedition to the north in 934. Some important evidence for the course of the artistic revival of the second half of the tenth century is thoroughly considered for the first time. The recently published volume on Sutton Hoo is

*(Continued on back flap)*

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*Her mon mæg giet gesion biora swæð*

# ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND

## 6

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*Abbreviations listed before the bibliography (pp. 267–9) are used throughout the volume without other explanation*

*Mrs Janet Godden has again given much assistance with the editing*