

A New "Havelok" MS.

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## A NEW 'HAVELOK' MS.

AMONG the treasures of the Cambridge University Library have been preserved four small and insignificant-looking scraps of paper containing writing which appears to belong to the end of the fourteenth century. They are contained in an envelope marked 4407 (19).

One of the scraps was perceived to contain a small portion of the 'Proverbs of Hending.' The meaning of the rest was less obvious, and I was asked to endeavour to discover it. I soon saw that some of the lines certainly belonged to *Havelok the Dane*, but varied a good deal in places from the only known complete copy, viz. that in MS. Laud Misc. 108 in the Bodleian Library, edited by me for the Clarendon Press in 1902, and (previously) for the Early English Text Society.

I have recommended that the eight fragments (recto and verso of four scraps) should be marked *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*, *e*, *f*, *g*, *h*. I now proceed at once to give the fragments of 'Havelok,' reserving a discussion of the other fragments for another occasion. Fragment *d* contains Havelok, ll. 174—183 (partly illegible); *e* contains ll. 341—364; and *f* contains ll. 537—544, ten lines not in the other copy, and ll. 545—6, another new line, and ll. 547—9. I now give the whole of this text. The new lines are marked with asterisks.

(*d*) Til sche be womman of elde,  
pat sche it may here selwe welde.  
[h]<sup>e</sup><sup>1</sup> answerde and seyð anon,  
be Iesu crist and sen Ion,  
pat erl godric of cornwalie (*sic*)  
[was]<sup>2</sup> trêwe man, wytouten faile<sup>3</sup>,  
wis man of red, and of dede,  
...man me haued michel dred;  
and he may here best ȝeme,

Space left for a large H.

<sup>2</sup> *Illegible.*

<sup>3</sup> *Written fale, with i above, between f and a.*

- ...of (?)...ymket<sup>1</sup> [quene].
- (e) A riche king, strong and starc.  
 His name, it was birkebein,  
 He hauede mani knigth and swen;  
 He was fayr man and wyth,  
 And [of]<sup>2</sup> is body þe beste knigth  
 þat euere mith neuene<sup>3</sup> to we[rre],  
 Riden on stede, or handlen<sup>4</sup> spere.  
 þre childre he hauede b[y his w]if,  
 þat he louede as is [lif]  
 He hadde...[lost]  
 Swiþe fayre, and [fel it] so.  
 þan he was....  
 Iuel him toke....  
 þat he was so wyth euel bunde,  
 þat he ne<sup>5</sup> mith liuen non stunde.  
 þan he mith no longere liuen  
 For siluir þat he mithe giuen.  
 þan he þat wiste, he dede senden  
 After prestis fer and henden,  
 After chanones<sup>6</sup>, munkes boþen,  
 Hym to wissen and to ropen,  
 Hym to husselen and to shriue  
 Quiles þat he were oliue.  
 Quan he was husseled & wel schriuen<sup>7</sup>,  
 (f) Grim toke þe cheld, and bond wel faste,  
 [þe] whiles þe bondes mith laste,  
 þat was a foul strong line;  
 þanne was haeloc in mekel pine.  
 Wiste he neuere er of wo;  
 But Iesu crist, þat made to go  
 þe alte, & þe dumme for to speke,  
 Haeloc þout of godard wreke,  
 \*And þat he do him al quic flo<sup>8</sup>  
 \*Wyt schame and pine and mekel wo.

<sup>1</sup> Sic; error for ym[a]ket; quene is not legible.

<sup>2</sup> of is omitted.

<sup>3</sup> Obscure; written neuēe.

<sup>4</sup> Only en quite plain; but it is really handlen.

<sup>5</sup> ne above the line.

<sup>6</sup> Written channs, with o above the former n, and e above the latter.

<sup>7</sup> Partly cut away, but schriuen exactly fits.

<sup>8</sup> Compare l. 2476.

\*For he<sup>1</sup> it seruede<sup>2</sup> on fele manere,  
 \*As ye schuln forwar here<sup>3</sup>.  
 \*He was tratur in mani akas<sup>4</sup>,  
 \*And he it aboute<sup>5</sup> þat he swilc was.  
 \*He broute þe child in mechel sorwen,  
 \*Yet wurth is soule neuere borwen.  
 \*He bad grim don is comaundeme[n]t,  
 \*And þerfore was ate þe laste schent.  
 For þanne grim hadde him faste bounde,  
 And sithen in an old cloþe wnden,  
 \*He þriste in his muth wel faste  
 A corner of an old cloþe, ful hun-wraste,  
 þat he ne mith speken ne greden,  
 Quider so he wolde hym leden.

Next follow traces of a line, nearly all cut away; but I think it represents:—For godard hadde comaund him so. The words ‘him so’ are plain, and the top of ‘hadde comaund’ can be seen.

A few remarks may be permitted. The copy is a late and corrupt one, but has some points of contact with an earlier text than is preserved in the Bodleian copy. Thus, in l. 177, ‘Iesu’ is retained, and in l. 548 ‘ne’ is rightly repeated. In l. 364, the line is complete. In l. 540, ‘mekel’ is better than the repetition of ‘ful strong’ (which should be ‘ful strong-e’) from l. 539. Note the variations in ll. 352—357. The aspiration expressed in l. 544 of the Oxford MS. seems to have been adopted to hide a loss of ten lines that should have been preserved. But the chief gain is in ll. 547–8, where the Bodleian text has clearly gone wrong, having lost a line that is required for the sense. Read as follows:

*He thriste in his muth wel faste*  
 A keuel of clutes, ful un-wraste,  
 That he ne mouhte speke ne grede.

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<sup>1</sup> he written above the line.

<sup>3</sup> Compare l. 731.

<sup>5</sup> For aboughte.

<sup>2</sup> Compare l. 1914.

<sup>4</sup> For a kas'(a case).