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THE HISTORICAL SIDE OF THE OLD ENGLISH POEM OF 'WIDSITH'

By ALFRED ANSCOMBE, F.R.Hist.S.

Read June 17, 1915

I.—THE EDITIONS OF THE POEM

NEARLY ninety years have passed away since J. J. Conybeare prepared the first edition of the Old English poem of 'Widsith,' or 'The Traveller's Song,' for inclusion among his 'Illustrations of Anglo-Saxon Poetry,' a work published in 1826. 'Widsith' is the oldest Germanic poem we have and its imprint excited immediate attention. The student of legend was attracted to it by the close connexion it shows with Germanic saga, and the historian timidly acknowledged the appeal it made to him to honour it as a genuine source of information. The characteristics of the poem have combined to place it in the forefront of that great mass of dubious documents which are found written in sundry western languages and which purport to deal with the story of the legendary heroes of Germanic race from the time of Constantius Chlorus to the middle of the sixth century.

The attitude of scholars towards the poem has been changeful and diverse. On the part of the historian and the erudite student of our national origins there is a strongly marked and recurrent tendency to believe that this unique poem will some day be made to justify its survival. On the part of the student of Germanic saga the denial that the poem can ever be raised to the level of an historical source has been made clearly and emphatically. Students of this class have devoted themselves to the more or less

fanciful re-adjustment of the text of the poem, and to the modal elucidation of the historical, ethnological, linguistic and geographical problems which the study of it evokes or reveals. For this reason they claim to be justified in expressing the opinion quoted. But, on the one hand, the acceptance of this opinion would reserve the poem of 'Widsith' for the particular theories of the legendists, and would shatter the hopes of the historian; and on the other, self-justification is not evidence, and it behoves us to distinguish narrowly between evidence and constructive criticism. The critical student of legend is concerned with the correct view of what is really a particular form of literary effort. He moves towards his object and endeavours to attain it by means and processes which are distinct from the operations of historical judgment, and it is incumbent upon him to disregard any extraneous facts which might prove to be destructive of the form of the legend he is concerned with. Consequently, as the phase of effort which exercises his critical powers is not necessarily the truth, either in intention or in presentation, it follows that the misapplication of the method of the legendist to the elucidation of a genuine source of information can result only in confusion and error.

The recognition of these facts by historical students must render them uneasy and cause them to inquire whether the text of 'Widsith' has been edited with due regard to their fundamental requirements.

No fewer than twenty-two editions of 'Widsith' have been printed since 1825, and hundreds of quotations of selected passages have furnished texts for the countless disquisitions which Teutonic industry has given to the world since then. The latest edition of all is that prepared by Mr. R. W. Chambers, Librarian of the University of London, for his monograph 'Widsith, a Study in Old English Heroic Legend,' published in 1912. That is a monumental work. Noteworthy scholarship, widely comparative criticism and very diligent industry keep

step within it from page to page. New light has been brought to bear upon obscure details; many critical errors have been exposed, and not a few theoretical proofs have been amplified and extended. Nevertheless, Mr. Chambers has treated the matter as a student of legend—and I for one feel that this method is apt to present princes and peoples in distorted attitudes and in dislocated and discrepant environment.

Therefore even Mr. Chambers's edition of ' Widsith ' may not satisfy all the requirements of the student of historical sources who is seeking to come to a decision about the value of the document.

If it were asked what the student has a right to demand in an edition of a document such as ' Widsith ' is thought to be, the following desiderata might be enumerated.

I. A photographic facsimile of the six pages of the tenth-century Codex Exoniensis on which the poem appears. This has never yet been provided.¹

II. Further study, not only of the palæography of the Codex Exoniensis in particular, but also of ninth- and tenth-century Anglo-Saxon script in general.

III. A stichometrical examination of the text. This would be made with the object of determining the method of its construction and tradition. Stichometry has been ignored by all investigators.

¹ In the British Museum Library, among the *Additional MSS.* (No. 9067), there is a beautifully written facsimile of the Exeter Book to which Sir Frederick Madden set his signature under date ' February 24, 1832.' The line-endings at the foot of the several pages of this MS. run thus (' 1 ' indicates a half-line of verse) :—

Folio.		Lines of MS.
84	<i>verso</i> —geþeon wile 	10
85	<i>recto</i> —lengest sibbe	21
	<i>verso</i> —hringa gedales 	21
86	<i>recto</i> —hrodene cwen 1	21
	<i>verso</i> —symle onfond 1	21
87	<i>recto</i> —fæstne dom 	8

In this facsimile the foliation and line-endings of the Exeter Book are preserved; cp. Mr. Chambers's marginal notes, *Widsith*, 1912, pp. 190, 205, 212, 218, 223.

IV. Practical recognition of the fact that this poem, like so many other Old English pieces, was preserved for an undetermined period written probably in the Northumbrian dialect.¹ It was transcribed into West Saxon; but we cannot feel sure, even where common words are concerned, that the West Saxon scribes transliterated every one of the Northumbrian forms correctly, and we know that they failed to do so in a number of cases of proper names. The historical student is much more concerned with proper names than the grammarian is, and for that reason he requires three texts: 1, the actual text as it appears in the manuscript; 2 and 3, West Saxon and Northumbrian redactions severally and scrupulously made true to dialect. This has not yet been attempted.

V. Geographical data should be made to accord with grammatical requirements. Thus the localization of the kingdom of Eormanric on the east of Old Anglia instead of the west is a mistake and should not be persisted in.

VI. The most valuable of all synchronistic data in unhistorical times are genealogical data. Those masters of legendary lore who admonish us that they cannot countenance the attempts made by certain English scholars to extract chronological and historical material from the poem should be invited to remember this.² The Old Norse, Danish, Saxon and High Dutch legends from which 'Widsith' ought to attract elucidation, teem with references to family matters and with terse statements of blood relationship. But no editors have given us adequate genealogical tables from these sources.

To sum up: from the point of view of the student of

¹ The MSS. containing the poetical Old English texts belong chiefly to the tenth and eleventh centuries. They are all copies made by Southern scribes and the texts represent no dialect in a pure form. Earlier and later forms of the same dialect alternate with each other and Anglian forms have frequently been transferred from the originals; cp. *An Old English Grammar*, by Sievers-Cook, 1887, p. 245.

² Cp. *Widsith*, 1912, p. 5, and contrast *The Origin of the English Nation*, by H. M. Chadwick, 1907, p. 135.

historical documents the ideal edition of ' Widsith ' should be furnished with facsimiles of the manuscript ; with a close examination of the related facts of insular palæography ; with stichometrical examination of the text ; with greater attention to dialect in the case of proper names ; with a due appreciation of an important geographical datum, and with genealogical tables of the princes named. Until these requirements are supplied the historical student will continue to be perplexed by the doubts and obscurities through which the formation of a correct and worthy judgment of the poem is impeded.

II.—THE TEXT OF THE POEM

The text of ' Widsith ' falls into seven sections, four of which are short and three long. The longer ones are severally characterised by the frequent repetition of a set phrase—namely, (*He*) *weold*, *Ic wæs mid* and *Ic sohte*. The shorter sections are more diversified in form and include three strophes severally beginning with *swa*. First of all, we get an introductory strophe of 9 lines. Then comes a prelude of 4 lines followed by the *He-weold* section of 31 lines. Then come 5 lines about Hrothwulf and Hrothgar, followed by a *swa*-strophe of 7 lines. Next we get the *Ic-wæs-mid* section of 54 lines and after that comes the *Ic-sohte* section of 22 lines. Last of all, we find two more *swa*-strophes, of 4 and 9 lines respectively.

The two final strophes of 4 and 9 lines exactly balance the two opening ones of 9 and 4 lines. This twofold stichometrical concurrence is accompanied by another which has not been detected by commentators: viz. the first name of the *He-weold* section and the last name of the *Ic-sohte* section appear respectively on the first line of the first full page of the manuscript, and on the last line of the last full page. These concurrences are undoubtedly due to intentional arrangement. But to whom is this arrangement to be attributed ?

We may confidently assert that the balancing of initial and final strophes, and the arrangement of sectional head- and end-lines were not contrived by the scribe of the Codex Exoniensis, whom we will call Exon. Exon's work reveals no editorial characteristic. He treated words carelessly; he ran monosyllables together; he cut up lengthy words unnecessarily in the course of one and the same line, and he divided words ignorantly between two lines. For these reasons the stichometrical concurrences we have discussed should be attributed to the scribe whose work Exon copied so perfunctorily and whom we will call Δ .

It is to Δ that two displacements and three interpolations must be attributed. Throughout the *He-weold* section we get the name of a ruler coupled with that of his subjects, time after time. But when we come to l. 45 we find two great kings named without reference being made to their subjects, and the breach of continuity is obvious and noteworthy. The kings in question are Hrothwulf and Hrothgar, and in 'Beowulf' at line 463, we are told that they ruled the South-Danes. The latter are mentioned by Widsith in the second line of the *Ic-wæs-mid* section and he tells us he stayed among them. But he does not name their kings at that place. Their absence from the *Ic-wæs-mid* section is not necessarily an omission; but the failure to name the subjects in the earlier passage really would be an omission if the lines were not so clearly an incongruous addition to the *He-weold* section. The misplacing of these five lines points to a presumptuous and uncritical tampering with the traditional text. These lines are abnormal where we actually find them. They neither reflect the characteristics of the section to which they are appended, nor do they give occasion for the *swa*-strophe which follows them. For these reasons, and in compliance with the requirements of uniformity and continuity, we must restore the lines about Heorot and the kings of the South Danes to their true position after the half-line 'Ic wæs . . . mid SuþDenum.'

The *swa*-strophe of 7 lines which now comes between the first two lengthy sections of the poem—the *He-weold* and the *Ic-wæs-mid* sections—and which is quite irrelevant, is obviously misplaced and we need not hesitate to restore it to its true position between the two similar *swa*-strophes at the end of the poem.

This restoration to place destroys the artificial balance of initial and final strophes, and also the head-and-end concurrences of the text and manuscript. It also corrects the error of construction that Δ introduced from an obvious motive—namely, the wish to attain factitious symmetry in the presentation of the poem. The traditional text, we may feel quite sure, ended harmoniously with three *swa*-strophes of 4, 7 and 9 lines respectively.

We must now turn to the interpolations. These are three in number and they are all Biblical ones. *a.* The first occurs in l. 15 where we get the name of Andreas tacked on to *Alex*-. What Δ had before him was *buton Alexandre*. The manuscript he was copying was imperfect in several places at the commencement, and 'buton' was not visible, so he substituted *ond* and turned the oblique case 'Alexandre' into a spurious nominative by adding *-as*. *b.* Secondly, two lines of verse comprising 71 letters were interpolated at l. 81 (= l. 74 of the revised text). They run thus :

'Mid Israhelum ic wæs *ond* mid Exsyringum
Mid Ebreum *ond* mid Indeum *ond* mid Egyptum.'

The next line affords the reason why this particular interpolation took its stand where we find it. It is :

'Mid Moidum ic wæs *ond* mid Persum.'

When Δ reached this line he could not read the first folk-name, which was really *Mornum*, and guessed that the second folk-name meant the Persians. This constrained him to read *mornum* as '*moidum*' by which he supposed the Medes were meant. Before copying this line about the Medes and Persians, as he misread it, Δ indulged his

tendency to insert scriptural names. *c.* The third interpolation consists of ten letters—namely, ‘*ȝ Idumingum.*’ This means ‘and with the Edomites.’¹ The words were suggested to Δ by the fact that at first he read the words he reproduces by ‘*ond mid Istum,*’ as *ond mid Idum*, thus confusing *st* and *d*, a not uncommon scribal mistake.² He looked again and wrote ‘*Istum*’; but his first impression remained and he then added ‘*ȝ Idumingum,*’ without regard to metre. We must throw out these five half-lines, but we must also inquire why they were interpolated.

When Δ commenced the first line of the first full page of his copy with the name of the first ruler mentioned in the first full section of the poem, and proposed to himself that the last line of the last full page should end with the last proper name in the last full section, he set himself a task which necessitated a great deal of calligraphical accuracy in making the copy and running on evenly to the end he had in view. Now his first full page, if we may assume rightly that he ended with the end of a line, and that that was ‘*heoldon lengest,*’ contained 858 letters. If his ruling, like that of the Codex Exoniensis, was 21 lines to the page, this means an average of 40·8 letters to the line. The next three pages down to the last line of the *Ic-sohte* section consequently called for 2574 letters. But the text Δ was copying only yielded 2235 letters down to ‘*Hama,*’ if my revision of it is approximately accurate. Consequently, when Δ reached ‘*heoldon lengest,*’ at the end of his first full page, we may feel quite sure that he noted the extent to which his copy was running out. That is the primary reason why he took up the second of the three final *swastrophes* and inserted it before the *Ic-wæs-mid* section.

¹ *Idum-ing-as* = Edom-ites. For the folk-ending compare ‘*Assyring-*’ MS. *exs*—[*ecss* with *ec*:*a*], ‘*Sodom-ing-*’ and ‘*Lidwic-ing-*’ for Assyrians, Sodom-ites, and Lidwiccas. Latin *ē* became *ī* in O.E. loans; cp. Wright, *O.E. Grammar*, § 125, note, p. 61.

² Cp. *Cebustus* [with *c*:*g*] for **Gebudus*, *i.e.* *Gēpidus*, in the XIth-cent. Chartres MS. of the *Historia Brittonum*, ed. Mommsen, p. 160, l. 5.

The secondary reason, the one which dictated the choice of the particular strophe of 7 lines, was the temptation to balance the two initial strophes of 9 + 4 lines by two terminal ones of 4 + 9. This dislocation gave Δ 186 letters and on his second full page, which no doubt ended with 'hringa gedales,' he wrote 840 letters or 40 to the line. He was still short of copy, so, on the next page he interpolated the two scriptural passages of 71 letters and 10 letters respectively, and wrote 824 letters in all, or 39.2 to the line. On the last of the full pages he wrote 828 letters, without making any additions at all. These average 39.4 letters to the line.

The following synopsis of the stichometrical analysis just now made may prove helpful.

Full page of MS.	No. of letters to—		
	page	line	text
85 <i>a</i>	858	40.8	858
<i>b</i>	840	40	654 + 186 displaced
86 <i>a</i>	824	39.2	753 + 71 interpolated
<i>b</i>	828	39.4	828

If we throw out the five half-lines whose spurious origin we have detected we shall find that the poem of 'Widsith' contains 140 lines of genuine text which we will now reproduce in the fairly pure state in which we have reason to believe that Δ received it.

III.—A REVISED TEXT OF 'WIDSITH.'

It is not suggested or intended that the following text be regarded as fulfilling the requirements made in paragraph IV. p. 126, above. The emendations for the most part are palæographical ones. A few corrections which are, properly speaking, dialectal, have also been made.

I.

	Widsið maðolade,	.	.	wordhord onleac,
	se þe [monna] mæst	.	.	mærþa ofer eorþan
	folca geondferde.	.	.	Oft he [on] flette geþah
	mynelicne maþpum.	.	.	He from Myrginga
5	eþele onwoc. ¹	.	.	He mid Ealhilde,
	fæltre freoþuwebban,	.	.	forman siþe
	Hræðcyninges ²	.	.	ham gesohte,
	eastan of Ongle,	.	.	Eormanrices,
	wraþes wærlogan.	.	.	Ongon þa worn sprecau.

II.

10	Fela ic monna gefrægn	.	.	mæþpum wealdan.
	Sceal þeod[n]a gehwylc	.	.	þeawum lifgan,
	eorl æfter oþrum	.	.	eðle rædan,
	se þe his þeodenstol	.	.	geþeou wile.
	þara wæs Wala	.	.	hwile selast
15	ond [buton] Alexandre ³	.	.	ealra ricost
	monna cynnes.	.	.	Ond he mæst geþah
	þara þe ic ofer foldan	.	.	gefrægen hæbbe.
	Ætla weold Hunum,	.	.	Eormanric Gotum,
	Becca Baningum,	.	.	Burgendum Gifica.
20	Casere weold Creacum	.	.	ond Cælic Finnum,
	Hagena HolmRygam ⁴	.	.	ond Heoden ⁵ Glommum.
	Witta weold Swæfum,	.	.	Wada Hælsingum,
	Meaca Myrgingum,	.	.	Mearchealf Hundingum.
	Þeodric weold Froncum,	.	.	þyle Rodingum, ⁶
25	Breoca Brondingum,	.	.	Billing Wernum.
	Oswine weold Eowum,	.	.	Ytum Gefwulf,
	ond Fin Folcwalding	.	.	Fresna cynne.
	Sigehere lengest	.	.	SæDenum weold.
	Hnæf [weold] Hocingum,	.	.	Helm Wulfingum,
30	Wald Woingum,	.	.	Wod þyringum,
	Sæferð Sycgum,	.	.	Sweom Ongenþeow, ⁷
	Sceafthere Ymbrum,	.	.	Sceafa LongBeardum,
	Hun Hætwerum	.	.	ond Holen Wrosnum.
	Hringwald ⁸ wæs haten	.	.	Herefarena cyning.
35	Offa weold Ongle,	.	.	Alewih Denum.

¹ MS *hine from myrgingum æbele onwocon*; cp. *Notes and Queries*, II. S. ix. 161. ² MS. *hrep-* (Anglian \bar{e} = W.S. \bar{a}); cp. ll. 45, 110. ³ MS. *ond alexandreas*. ⁴ MS. *holm rycum*. ⁵ MS. *henden* [with $n :: a$] for *Headen, the Anglian equation of W.S. "Heoden" ($\bar{e}o$). ⁶ MS. *rondingum = rōd-* (with the length-mark). ⁷ MS. *ongend-*. ⁸ MS. *weald*.

Se wæs þara monna¹ . . . modgast ealra.
 Nohwæpre he ofer Offan . . . eorlscipe fremede ;
 ac Offa geslog, . . . ærest monna,
 cniht wesende, . . . cynerica mæst.
 40 Nænig efeneald him . . . eorlscipe maran
 on orette, . . . ane sweorde,
 merce gemærde . . . Wið Myrginga,²
 bi Fifeldore. . . Heoldon forð siþþan
 Engle ond Swæfe . . . swa hit Offa geslog.

III.

45 Ic wæs mid Hunum . . . ond mid HræðGotum,³
 mid Sweom ond mid Geatum . . . ond mid SuþDenum.
 Hroþwulf ond Hropgar⁴ . . . heoldon lengest
 sibbe ætsomne . . . suhtorfædran,
 50 siþþan hy forwracon . . . Wicinga cynn
 ond Ingeldes . . . ord forbigdan,
 forheowan æt Heorote . . . HeaþoBeardna⁵ þrym.
 Mid Wenlum ic wæs ond mid
 Wærnnum . . . ond mid Wicingum.
 Mid Gefþum ic wæs ond mid
 Winedum . . . ond mid Gefflegum.
 Mid Englum ic wæs ond mid
 Swæfum . . . ond mid Eacenum.⁶
 55 Mid Seaxum ic wæs ond [mid]
 Sycgum . . . ond mid SweordWerum.
 Mid Hronum ic wæs ond mid
 Deacum⁷ . . . ond mid HeaþoReamum.
 Mid þyringum ic wæs . . . ond mid þreowingum⁸
 ond mid Burgendum. . . þær ic beag geþah.
 Me þær Guðhere forgeaf . . . glædlicne maþþum
 60 songs to leane. . . Næs þæt sæne cyning !
 Mid Froncum ic wæs ond mid
 Frysum . . . ond mid Fratingum.⁹
 Mid Rugum ic wæs ond mid
 Glommum . . . ond mid RumWalum.
 Swylice ic wæs on Eorule¹⁰ . . . mid Ælfwine

¹ MS. *manna*. ² MS. *wið myrgingum*, with a misread *ū*. ³ MS. *hræð*, with Anglian *z* retained. ⁴ These lines are misplaced in MS. after l. 44.

⁵ MS. *heaðo*. ⁶ MS. *ænenum* [with *ne : : ce*] indicates older Anglian *æc* for W.S. *ēac*-. ⁷ MS. *deanum*; cp. l. 54. ⁸ MS. *þrowendum* in which *-end = ing* by contamination with *burgend : im*. ⁹ MS. *frumtingum* (with a misread *ū > um*). ¹⁰ MS. *eatule* [with *t : : r*] for Anglian *Earule*, *Herulia*.

	se hæfde moncynnes, . . .	mine gefræge,
65	leohteste hond . . .	lofes to wyrcente,
	heortan unhnæweste . . .	hringa gedales,
	beorhtra beaga, . . .	bearn Eadwines.
	Mid Sercingum ic wæs ond mid Finnum ¹	ond mid Seringum.
	Mid Creacum ic wæs	ond mid Casere
70	se þe Winburge ²	geweald ahte,
	Wiolan e ond Wilna	ond Walarices.
	Mid Scottum ic wæs ond mid Peohtum	ond mid ScrideFinnum.
	Mid LidWicingum ic wæs ond mid Leonum	ond mid LongBeardum.
	Mid Hægnum ³ [ic wæs] ond mid Hælepum	ond mid Hundingum.
75	Mid Mornum ⁴ ic wæs ond mid Persum	ond mid Myrgingum.
	Mid Oftingum ⁵ ic wæs ond ongean ⁶ Myrgingum	ond mid Amopingum.
	Mid Eastþyringum ic wæs ond mid Eolun.	ond mid Iscum. ⁷
	Ond ic wæs mid Eormanrice þæt ⁸ me Gotena cyning	ealle þrage gode dohte.
80	Se me beag forgeaf,	burgwarena fruma,
	on þam siex hund wæs	smættes goldes
	gescyred sceatta	scillingrime.
	þone ic Eadgilse	on æht sealde,
	minum hleodryhtne	þa ic to ham bicwom,
85	leofum to leane,	þæs þe he me lond forgeaf,
	mines fæder epel,	frea Myrginga.
	Ond me þa Ealhild	oþerne forgeaf,
	dryhtcwen duguþe,	dohtor Eadwines.
	Hyre lof lengde	geond londa fela,
90	þonne ic bi songe	secgan sceolde,
	hwær ic under sweg[e]	selast wisse
	goldhrodene cwen	giefe bryttian.
	Ðonne wit Scilling	sciran reorde
	for uncrum sigedryhtne	song ahofan,
95	hlude bi hearpan	hleoþor swinsade,

¹ MS. misplaces *finnum* after *creacum*.² MS. *winburga* (gen. pl.).³ MS. *hæðnum* [with *ð*: : *g*]. ⁴ MS. *moidum* [with *d*: : *n*] partly suggested by *persum*.⁵ MS. *moðdingum*.⁶ MS. *ongend* [with *n*: : *a* and *d*: : *n*].⁷ MS. *istum*. *Iscum* < **iescum* < **Easci*.⁸ MS. *þær* [with *r*: : *t*].

þonne monige men . . . modum wlonce
 wordum sprecan . . . þa þe wel cupan,
 þæt hi næfre song . . . sellan ne hyrðon.

IV.

Donan ic ealne geondhwearf eþel Gotena.
 100 Sohte ic a [ge]siþa . . . þa selestan—
 þæt wæs innweorud . . . Eormanrices.¹
 Hæþcan² sohte ic ond Beadecan ond Herelingas.
 Emerican sohte ic ond Fridlan ond Eastgotan,
 frodne ond godne . . . fæder Unwenes.
 105 Seccan sohte ic ond Beccan, . . . Seafolan ond þeodric,
 Heaþoric ond Sifecan, . . . Hliþe ond Incgenþeow.
 Eadwine sohte ic ond Elsan, . . . Æþelmund³ ond Hungar,
 ond þa wloncan gedryht . . . WiðMyrginga.⁴
 Wulfhere sohte ic ond Wyrmhære. Ful oft þær wig ne alæg
 110 þonne Hræða⁵ here, . . . heardum sweordum,
 ymb Wistlanwudu⁶ . . . wergan sceoldon
 ealdne eþelstol . . . Ætlan leodum.
 Ræðhere sohte ic ond Rondhere, Rumstan ond Gislhere,
 Wipergield ond Freoþeric, . . . Wudgan ond Haman.
 115 Ne wæran þæt gesiþa . . . þa sæmestan,
 þeahþe ic hy anihst . . . nemnan sceolde.
 Ful oft of þam heape . . . hwinende fleag
 giellende gar . . . on grome þeode—
 wræccan þæt⁷ weoldan . . . wundnan golde,
 120 werum ond wifum, . . . Wudga ond Hama.

V.

Swā ic þæt symle onfond . . . on þære feringe,
 þæt se biþ leofast . . . londbuendum,
 se þe him God sylleð . . . gumena rice
 to gehealdenne, . . . þenden he her leofað.
 125 Swa ic geondferde . . . fela fremdra londa
 geond ginne grund. . . Godes ond yfles
 þær ic cunnade, . . . cnosle bidæled,
 freomægum feor, . . . folgade wide.
 Forþon ic mæg singan . . . ond secgan spell,

¹ MS. *earmanrices* with Anglian breaking.² MS. *hæþcan* with Anglian \bar{e} (= W.S. \bar{a}).³ MS. *Ægelmund*, with *g* to mark the breathing which took the place of þ c. 975. ⁴ MS. *wiþ*. ⁵ MS. *hræða*. ⁶ MS. *wistlāwudu*. ⁷ MS. *þær*.

130	mænan fore mengo . . .	in meoduhealle
	hu me cynegode . . .	cystum dohten.
	Swa scriþende . . .	gesceapum hweorfað
	gleomen gumena . . .	geond grunda fela,
	þearfe secgað, . . .	þoncword sprecað,
135	simle sup oþþe norð . . .	sumne gemetað
	gydda gleawne, . . .	geofum unhneawne,
	se þe fore duguþe . . .	wile dom aræran
	eorlscipe æfnan, . . .	oþ þæt eal scæceð
	leoht ond lif somod. . .	Lof se gewyrceð
140	hafað under heofonum . . .	heahfæstne dom.

IV.—GUÐHERE

The student of 'Widsith' who turns to ordinary sources for information about the first kings who ruled over the Burgundians in Germania Prima, will find all the facts in confusion and cannot fail to be misled by the egotistical contradiction of ancient authors in which modern investigators indulge. The chief storehouse of material relating to the earliest kings of Burgundy is the work of Albert Jahn, published in 1874. Even in his title,¹ wherein the scope of the work is limited to the kings of the 'first' dynasty, Jahn shows that he had not realised the true nature of the particular problem that we are confronted by. The facts that this industrious author has collected are not co-ordinated and he is sometimes hampered and misled by the multitude of unassimilated details heaped together. The position of both historians and legendists is abnormal and difficult to define, but the attempt must now be made.

There is held to be good reason to believe that the Burgundians were orthodox Christians when Gundihari crossed the Rhine: when we come to know more about them their kings were certainly Arian. The prevalent opinion is that the kings of the Burgundians were of the

¹ *Die Geschichte der Burgundionen und Burgundiens. Bis zum Ende er I. Dynastie*, by Albert Jahn, 1874.

same race as their subjects: according to Gregory of Tours they were of WisiGothic race.¹ Prosper of Aquitaine, who was contemporary with Gundihari, the first king of the Burgundians, tells us that Gundihari was cut off with all his family²: according to modern authors this is an exaggeration; according to the Code of Gundobād, the King and Lawgiver of the race, Gundihari, Gundobād's own grandfather, left two sons.³ Gundobād lets us see that the name of Gundomar's, Gislahari's and Gundihari's father was Gibica, and 'Gifica' of the Burgundians appears in 'Widsith' as one of the kings who were defunct when Widsith wrote: but in all five of the unmutilated vellum manuscripts of the Nibelungen Lied,⁴ and in twelve out of the thirteen vellum fragments of the Lied, the father of Günther, i.e. of Gundihari, is named 'Dancrât.' In the other fragment he is called Gibeche. Prosper tells us that his contemporary Gundihari was slain by the *Hunni* soon after certain events of 435 had taken place, and Hydatius Lemicanus, another contemporary chronicler,⁵ puts the number of the Burgundians who were slain in 436 at 20,000: Paulus Diaconus,⁶ however, assigns A.D. 451, and tells us

¹ 'Fuit igitur Gundeuechus rex Burgundionum ex genere Athanarici regis persecutoris'; 'Gregorii Episcopi Turonensis *Historia Francorum*,' II. 28, edd. W. Arndt et Bruno Krusch, 1884, p. 53.

² 'Eodem tempore Gundicharium Burgundionum regem intra Gallias habitantem Aëtius bello obtriuuit pacemque ei supplicanti dedit qua non diu potitus est. Siquidem illum Hunni cum populo atque stirpe sua deleuerunt'; 'Prosperi Tironis *Epitoma Chronicon* ad a. CCCCLV.,' ed. Mommsen, *Chronica Minora*, I. 1892, at annus = 435.

³ 'Si quos apud regiæ memoriæ auctores nostros, id est—Gibicam, Gundomarem, Gislaharium, Gundaharium, patrem quoque nostrum et patrum, liberos liberasse fuisse constituit, in eadem libertate permaneant'; '*Lex Burgundionum*,' ed. Ludovicus de Salis, 1892, I. ii. p. 43.

⁴ V. 'Wörterbuch zu der Nibelunge Not (Liet),' by August Lübben, 1877, p. ii. *Verzeichnis der Handschriften*.

⁵ 'Hydatii Lemici *Continuatio Chronicorum Hieronymianorum* ad a. CCCCLXVIII.' ed. Mommsen, 1894, pp. 22, 23. '[= 435] Burgundiones qui rebellauerant a Romanis duce Aëtio debellantur.' '[= 436] Burgundionum cæsa XX. millia.' Hydatius was bishop from 427 to c. 470.

⁶ 'Attila itaque primo impetu mox ut Gallias introgressus est, Gundicharium Burgundionum regem sibi occurrentem protriuuit'; 'Pauli Diaconi *Historia Miscella*,' XV. iv., ed. Franc. Eyssenhardt, 1869, p. 332.

that, as soon as Attila the king of the *Hunni* entered the Gauls, Gundihari, king of the Burgundians, went forth to meet him and was destroyed. Legendists and historians alike may be found controverting Paul; nevertheless all the Old Icelandic and High Dutch sagas would appear to support his main statement.

This, I believe, is a fair and reasonable recital of the case, and we will now make a detailed examination of these formal antitheta. But first of all we must spare time to recognise the possibility that they may be antithetic only through arrangement, and not essentially—that is to say, there may have been two tribes called *Burgundiones*, two kings named *Gundiharius*, two tribes called *Hunni*, and two kings of the *Hunni* whose names approximate to *Attila* in Latin.

The Burgundians, we may admit, were orthodox when they settled at Worms or Wormez, i.e. Borbetomagus, in A.D. 411. We must also agree that they were led by Gundihari, a king of their own race. They had certainly changed in the former characteristic by 490 and had become Arian. Consequently we need not feel constrained to reject the statement of Gregory of Tours made with respect to the other characteristic. Gregory tells us that Gundiuc, king of the Burgundians, came of the family of Athanaric. His editors, with undue self-sufficiency, assure us that Gregory blundered here. Now certain Frankish kings of the last quarter of the sixth century were descended from Clovis and Clotilda, the daughter of Chilperic, the king of Burgundy who died in 491. Consequently Gregory, Bishop of Tours, was in a position to know them. He actually gave asylum at Tours to one of them in 575, viz. Guntram, king of Burgundy, a grandson of Clotilda. Hence we ought to accept his statement and derive the descent of Chilperic, king of Burgundy and son of Gundiuc, from the family Cp. 'Attila rex Hunorum omnibus belluis crudelior habens multas barbaras nationes suo subiectas dominio, postquam Gundicarium, Burgundionum regem sibi occurrentem protriuerat ad uniuersas deprimendas Gallias suæ sæuitiæ relaxauit habenas'; *eiusdem* 'Liber de Episcopis Mettensibus,' ed. Pertz, 1829, 'SS.' II. 262.

of that Athanaric, son of Rothestes,¹ who was Judge of the WisiGothic race of the Thervingas, and who died at Constantinople on January 25, 381. This act of submission on our part helps us to explain the Arian position of Gundobād: his alleged collateral ancestor Athanaric was an Arian himself and a persecutor of orthodox Christians. It would seem therefore that Gibica really was not a Burgundian, that he was a Therving, and that it was he who introduced Arianism into Burgundy.

In support of Gregory's assertion I would enumerate five statements in Apollinaris Sidonius, Widsith, Prosper of Aquitaine, and in the seventh-century tract known as the 'De Origine Langobardorum.'

1. In Sidonius's panegyric to the Emperor Majorian, composed in A.D. 458, Sidonius gives a list of barbaric tribes, and in line 476 we get:

'Bellogothus,² Rugus, Burgundio, Vesus, Alites.'

The 'Vesus' is the WisiGoth.

2. In the 'Origo Langobardorum' the names of four of the countries passed through by the Longobards on their way to Italy are given as *Mauringa*, *Anthaib*, *Bainaib* and *Burgundaib*.³

3. In 'Widsith' we are told in one and the same line that Becca ruled the Bāningas and Gifica the Burgundians. The Old English 'Bān' equates Old Germanic 'Báin' and the Bāningas were a WisiGothic people. Wallia, the brother

¹ This name yielded the patronymic Rōding-. Medial þ was often written *d* in the oldest period of Old English, and the form *Rōdingum* of *Widsith*, l. 24, may equal Rōd- (with the length mark). þyle = *þuli. Mr. Chambers objects to it; p. 115. But cp. 'Tholi,' the name of the Sheriff of Norfolk; *Domesday Book*, fo. 264. Rōd-, Rōþing- = 'Roothing' (Essex).

² The MSS. have *bellonothus* [with *n::g*]; v. 'Apollinaris Sidonii *Epistulae et Carmina*,' ed. Chr. Lvetjohann, 1887, 'M.G.H.,' 'Auct. Antt.' tom. viii. p. 199, l. 472.

³ V. 'Origo Gentis Langobardorum' (*scr. post med. sæcul. VII.*), ed. G. Waitz, in 'SS. *Rer. Langobardicarum et Italicarum*,' 1878, 'M.G.H.' p. 2.

of King Becca and the son of King Ban, who is the Wāla of 'Widsith,' was their greatest hero.

4. Again, at line 57, just before Widsith tells us that he visited Guðhere, i.e. Gundihari, king of the Burgundians, we may read that the poet stayed among the 'Throwendas.' This is an inexplicable tribe-name: the word actually means the 'Suffering Ones.' It misrepresents *Thirving-*, by metathesis of *r*, and through contamination with *Burgendum*, in the next line. In Old English *i, e*, before *w* became *eow*,¹ hence, metathesis of *r* being granted, *Therving-* became *Throwing-* and the *Throwingas*, who are named next to the Burgundians, were *WisiGoths*.

5. Prosper's and Hydatius's statements that the royal family of the first dynasty was cut off in A.D. 436, and 20,000 Burgundians slain, provide a reason for the choice of a prince who came of another, though closely-related race. For Pliny, in his 'Historia Naturalis,' classifies the *Varini*, *Carini*, *Gutones* and *Burgundiones* together, as members of the *Vindilic* family of Germans (IV. xxix.). The 'Gutones' were the *Gupones*, or *Goths*. We may therefore date the accession of Gibica to the Burgundian throne in 436, or soon after, and assign his preferment to the *Patricius Aëtius* who was *Magister Militum* of the Gauls at the time, and very powerful. Gibica reigned at Worms, and I would date his death in or about 443. In that year the remnant of the Burgundians who had survived the massacre of 436 was transplanted to Savoy,² and a systematic division of the lands of that province between the Roman provincials and the Burgundians was made, no doubt by direction of *Aëtius*.

Thus far the position is clear and all writers previous

¹ V. Dr. Joseph Wright's *Old English Grammar*, 1908, §§ 52, 89, 90.

² 'Theodosii XX. Sapaudia Burgundionum reliquiis datur cum indigenis diuidenda'; 'Chronica Gallica ad an. CCCCLII,' ed. Mommsen, *Chronica Minora*, I. p. 661. Cp. *Marius Auenticensis* who places the division under *Joannes et Varanes Coss.* (= A.D. 456). He says 'Eo anno Burgundiones partem Gallix occupauerunt terrasque cum Gallis senatoribus diuiserunt.' This is an anachronism of 13 years.

to the eighth century are in harmony. The contingency that there might be two tribes of Burgundians has not really arisen. But we have drawn very near to it, inasmuch as we have seen that two distinct areas in the Gauls were occupied successively by them. 1. By the Burgundians under Gundihari son of Dancrät. 2. By their descendants under a later Gundihari son of Gibica. The other contingency—namely, that there were two Burgundian kings named Gundihari has actually been evolved. Jahn has argued and drawn conclusions on this particular point without real insight into the problem of Gibica and the two Gundiharis; cp. p. 305 and *Stammtafel*, p. 555. Jahn, however, did refuse to discredit the testimony of the Burgundian Code.

In the body of the Code of Burgundian Laws promulgated by King Gundobād in A.D. 502, reference is made by that lawgiver to six of his progenitors (*auctores* is the word used) of royal memory. The names of four of these are given in latinised Burgundian forms. Two others are referred to by Gundobād as his father and his uncle; but he does not give their names. In spite of the demurrer of the editors of Gregory of Tours the names are known to have been Gundiuc and Hilperic. These kings came after Gundihari and his brothers, the sons of Gibica, and before Gundobād; consequently, as he says that he was preceded by his father and his uncle, it is difficult to distrust the evidence of the Code when the name of his father is in question. Gundobād succeeded his uncle Hilperic in 491, and according to Gregory of Tours he reigned conjointly with his three brothers Godigisilus, Chilpericus and Godomarus. Gundobād died in 516. His father Gundiuc died in 476, and he had served under the Patricius Aëtius at the battle of Châlons, when Attila and the Mongolian Huns were defeated. This occurred on September 20, 451.

I have said 'Mongolian Huns' advisedly. The third contingency which our antithetic statement involved was the possibility of two different tribes being called *Hunni*

by Latin writers. That actually was the case. In the Venerable Bede's 'Historia Ecclesiastica' two peoples called *Hunni* are mentioned.¹ In Bk. I. xiii. we find a reference to the Mongolian Huns which everybody is acquainted with. In Bk. V. ix. Bede tells us about Egbert's wish to evangelise Germany, and says that Egbert knew 'in Germania plurimas esse nationes a quibus Angli uel Saxones, qui nunc Britanniam incolunt, genus et originem duxisse noscuntur. . . . Sunt autem Fresones,² Rugini, Danai, Hunni, Antiqui Saxones, Boructuari'; (ed. C. Plummer, p. 296.)

¹ In Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, V. xv., we read that Guanius, King of the Huns, and Melga, King of the Picts, wrought great destruction in the Germanias and on the sea-coast of the Gauls. They then invaded Britannia and were defeated by Gratian Municeps. This usurper reigned in Britain during four months in A.D. 407. *Guanius* [with *n::ll*] is Guallius, i.e. Vallia, and these *Hunni* were Hūnas of Mornaland (i.e. Mauringā) and Picardy. The Piccardach in Britain were the Picts. The scribal error is curious, but we find 'millium' represented in one edition of Gildas by the incongruous phrase *ad unum* [*ad::m*]; cp. 'Gildæ Sapientis de Excidio Britanniae,' ed. Mommsen, *Chronica Minora*, III. p. 25, l. 12, 1894.

² Procopius, *De Bello Gothico*, IV. xx., stated that *Φρόσσοες* as well as Angli migrated to Britain. Mr. Chambers attributes the statement to confusion and says that it lacks confirmation; *Widsith*, p. 67, note 4. Similarly Bede's reference to *Hunni* dwelling in the north of Germany in the seventh century is discredited. But when Bede asserts that some of these *Hunni* came to Britannia along with Old Saxons, Frisians, Danes, &c., the rejection of his testimony assumes a different aspect. It is no longer a case of *gratis asseritur: gratis negatur*, and the too-facile rejection overlooks the fact that 'Hūnu-', 'Hūni-', are Old Germanic prothemes of regular and frequent occurrence. Moreover we must remember that Jordanes, Bishop of Ravenna, c. 550, had something to say about a related ethnological fact which seemed equally inexplicable to him. In the *Getica*, he tells us about a Gothic tribe called the Hūnugāri 'quorum mansionem primam esse in Scythiæ solo iuxta paludem Mæotidem; secundo in Mœsia Thraciaque et Dacia; tertio supra mare Ponticum rursus in Scythia legimus habitasse.' 'Nec eorum,' he continues, 'fabulas alicubi reperimus scriptas qui eos dicunt in Britannia vel in una qualibet insularum in servitutum redactos et unius caballi pretio quondam redemptos.' Jordanes could not accept this statement, but students of the *Notitia Dignitatum* of c. 390 will recall to mind that among the auxiliary troops stationed in the Britannias 'per lineam valli' was an 'Ala Saviniana,' whose headquarters were at *Hunnum*. An *ala*, generally speaking, was a wing of an army and comprised both cavalry and light-armed auxiliaries. A particular *ala* could only be a troop of horse. The stem

This passage has escaped the notice of all historians who have dealt with the Burgundian difficulty. It is noteworthy that Bede names *Hunni* and *Antiqui Saxones* together, and in that order: similarly Widsith in one and the same line tells us that ' Ætla weold Hūnum, Eormanric Gōtum,' and the Gōtas were the *Antiqui Saxones* of Westphalia. In future we must either speak of Mongolian Huns and Teutonic Huns, or, leaving the name Hun as we find it, call our ancestors the *Hunni* of Bede ' Hūnas.' I propose to adopt the latter course.

We now come to our fourth contingency—namely, the twofold possibility that both the Huns and the Hūnas in the second quarter of the fifth century were governed by kings whose names were set down as ' Attila ' in Latin. We do not know how Attila the Hun pronounced and wrote his name, and the Latin form of it is only an approximation. In Greek we find it written Ἀττήλα, with long *e*. Consequently the *i* in *Attila* may be long and the true word be *Attīla. I do not propose to discuss this point and it is mentioned in order that legendists and historians who equate the ' Ætla ' of ' Widsith ' with ' Attila,' name with name, may have their attention drawn to another item which they have neglected. The phonologist has always experienced difficulty in comparing Old English ' Ætla ' and Old Icelandic ' Atli ' (which are rule-right equations) with Middle High German ' Etzele,' which is the rule-right ultimate form of the Latin loan-word ' Attīla,' through Old High German ' Ezzelo.' Now if it can be shown that O.E. ' Ætla ' (or ' Attle ' as it is now pronounced at Attleborough in Norfolk) is Germanic, it should follow that there would

of *Saviniana* is the stem of the river-name Sav-us, and that was the northern boundary of *Moesia* in which province the Emperor Valens allowed the WisiGoths to settle in 376 under Athanaric. The facts about the Hunugari recorded by Jordanes, *c.* 550; the inclusion of *Hunni* among the Germanic invaders of 450 by Bede in 730; the report about the *Hunni* made by Geoffrey of Monmouth in *c.* 1130, and the hitherto undetected connexion of *Moesia* with Hunnum near the Picts' Wall, through the *Ala Saviniana*, are items worthy of credence and application.

be no need to explain the impossible, that is, the presence of Attila and his Huns in Germania Prima in A.D. 436, inasmuch as it was Ætla and the Hūnas who overthrew Gundihari in that year, put him and his family to the sword, and slew many thousands of his people. 'Ætla' is found in Old English, in the tenth century, compounded with the deuterotheme *-brand*, in 'Ætlebrand'¹; it occurs also in the 'Liber Vitæ Dunelmensis' of the eighth century; and we find it in the Venerable Bede among the names of the famous men who were educated at Whitby under the Abbess Hilda in the seventh century, viz. Ætla, bishop of Dorchester in Oxfordshire in about A.D. 680; v. 'H.E.' IV. xxiii. p. 254. A still earlier occurrence of the name appears in Sextus Aurelius Victor and his Epitomiser. They tell us that the Emperor Gallienus was enamoured of Pipa, daughter of Attalus, king of the Marcomanni in c. A.D. 260.² This, I believe, has been overlooked by all investigators and its date removes the stem *Attal-* from the possibility of connexion with the Huns of Pannonia, for *Attal-* would yield O.E. *Ætl-* and O.Icel. *Atl-*, but not O.H.G. *Ezzel-*.

We are now justified in attempting to date the visit of Widsith to the Court of Gundihari, the son of Gibica who ruled the Burgundians in the fifth decade of the fifth century. Attila laid siege to Orleans in May 451, and Aëtius raised the siege on June 14. Now Gundihari, or Guðhere, went forth to meet Attila, and was slain, almost as soon as the latter had crossed the Rhine. We may therefore date Guðhere's death in May 451. If the assumption that Guðhere's reign over the Burgundians in Sapaudia began in A.D. 443 be accepted, we may assign Widsith's visit to King Guðhere's Court to about A.D. 447. This date can hardly be more than four years wrong, either way. As

¹ Cp. *Onomasticon Anglo-Saxonicum*, by W. G. Searle, 1897, pp. 62, 76.

² V. 'Sexti Aurelii Victoris *Liber de Cæsaribus*,' ed. Fr. Pichlmayr, 1911, p. 109: 'filia Attali Germanorum regis Pipæ nomine.' And 'Incerti auctoris *Epitome de Cæsaribus*,' p. 160, u.s.: 'a patre Marcomanorum rege matrimonii specie susceperat Pipam.'

Widsith speaks of Guðhere in the past tense we must date the composition of the ' Traveller's Song ' later than 450.

The Hūnas of ' Widsith ' are also to be identified with those *Hunni* who were allied with Aëtius and served under his general Litorius in the war with the WisiGoths in A.D. 439.¹ In 435 the Burgundians under Gundihari, the Günther of the High Dutch sagas, rebelled against Aëtius, were severely castigated by him, and compelled to sue for peace. Apollinaris Sidonius² informs us that the form their rebellion took was an attack upon ' Belga,' by which I understand Belgic Gaul to be meant. Belgica Prima contained the seat of Aëtius's government—namely Trēveri. Aëtius was in Norica at the time and he was engaged in repressing a revolt of the Juthungi. The Hūnas of ' Widsith ' dwelt in Mornaland, and that country, no doubt, was the land of the Morini in Belgica Secunda. Widsith refers to its people as the Mornas and places them next the Persas, or Parisii.³ Aëtius had to deal adversely with the WisiGoths in 436, and as the Burgundians were believed to have had at least as many as 20,000 fighting men it may have been considered good policy to allow Ætla and the Hūnas of Mornaland to destroy them.

V.—CASERE AND THE CREACAS

On July 25, A.D. 306, Constantine the son of the dead Emperor Constantius Chlorus was proclaimed Augustus at York. Foremost among his supporters was a king of the

¹ Cp. Prosper Tiro, *u.s.*; ' Fl. Theodosius Aug. xvii. et Festus. Litorius qui secunda ab Aëtio patricio potestate Hunnis auxiliaribus præerat. . . ' It is noteworthy that Litorius was called *Comes*. Hydatius Anno xv. Theod. [= 439] calls him ' Romanus Dux.'

² V. line 233, Carmen vii.—

' Nam post Iuthungos et Norica bello subacto.
Victor Vindelico Belgam Burgundio quem trux
Presserat, absoluit iunctus tibi.'

³ Cp. The Parker MS. of *The Saxon Chronicle*: ' 660. . . . Ægelbryht onfeng Persa biscopðomes on Galwalum bi Signe ': In A.D. 660 Ægelbryht received the bishopric of the Persé, in Gaul, on the Seine. *Pārisii* > *Pārisi > ' Perse,' according to rule.

Almains called Crōcus¹ by Latin authors. Crocus had been in alliance with Constantius Chlorus and we may infer that he was the leader of auxiliary Alemannic troops serving with the Roman army in the Britannias. The alliance with Crocus and the introduction of the Almains into the Britannias, no doubt took place soon after A.D. 300, in which year Constantius defeated them with great slaughter in the country of the Lingones, into which they had penetrated. About eighty years after this Ammianus Marcellinus tells us that the Almains in the Britannias were flourishing in numbers and power, and that the Emperor Valentinian had put them under the rule of Fraomarius, the king of another Alemannic tribe called the Bucinobantes.² This took place in A.D. 372. Widsith, writing another eighty years later, does not mention the Almains by that name at all. That is a remarkable omission, for the Alemannic races remained formidable until the battle of Tulbiacum, or Zülpich, in which they were defeated by Clovis in A.D. 496. In the seventh century the anonymous writer who is known as the Cosmographer of Ravenna tells us that there was a district in Britain near the Wall of Severus called 'Croucingo.'³ This word is Alemannic and may belong

¹ V. 'Libellus de Vita et Moribus Imperatorum breuiatus ex libris S. Aurelii Victoris,' ed. Fr. Pichlmayr, *u.s.*, 1911, p. 166: 'Quo mortuo cunctis, qui aderant, annitentibus, sed præcipue Croco Alamannorum rege auxilii gratia Constantium comitato, imperium (Constantinus) capit.' The oldest MS., *Gudianus* 84, *Biblioth. Guelferbytan.*, was written at the end of the ninth century.

The Latin word *crōcus* means 'saffron.' We do not know the quantity of *o* in 'Crocus.' Contrast *fōcus* 'a hearth,' *fōcāle* 'a bandage for the neck'; *vōco*, 'I call,' *vōcula* 'a weak voice,' &c. That the quantity is long will be proved in the sequel.

² 'In Macriani locum Bucinobantibus, quæ contra Mogontiacum gens est Alamanna, regem Fraomarium ordinavit (Valentinianus); quem paulo postea, quoniam recens excursus eundem penitus uastauerat pagum, in Brittannos translatum potestate tribuni Alamannorum præfecerat numero, multitudine uiribusque ea tempestate florenti'; 'Ammiani Marcellini *Rerum Gestarum Libri qui supersunt*,' ed. V. Gardthausen, 1874, XXIX. 4, 7, p. 182.

³ V. 'Ravennatis Anonymi *Cosmographia*,' edd. M. Pinder and G. Parthey, 1860, p. 432. The oldest MS. is *Vaticanus Urbinas* 961, of the thirteenth century. Cp. Fr. Kluge's *Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, sub 'Gau,' where 'Pathergō' is cited.

to the latter part of the sixth century, to which period it is believed that the collection of much of the material preserved by Ravennas should be ascribed.

The prototheme 'Croucin-' presents the Alemannic and Suevic termination *-in* of the possessive case of nouns ending in *o*, and the whole word means the *Gou*, or tribal region, of some chief named Crouco. We need not hesitate to identify this eponymous chief with the Crōcus of Sextus Aurelius Victor. Moreover, the statement made by Ravennas indicates that some, at least, of the descendants of Crōcus had remained in Britain after his death, and sufficiently long after to hand down the name of their ancestor into the sixth century. It also affords presumptive evidence that the sib of Crocus and its allies formed the body of those Almans whose prosperity in 372 was recorded by Ammianus less than ten years later.

The principal city of these Almans of Croucingo was Craucestre. This place was mentioned by Leland,¹ under this name, and is situated at about forty miles to the north of the Pict's Wall. It is the Craster of to-day.

We also find Craster mentioned in the Welsh Triads of the Hengwrt Collection.² No. 27 records the death of certain princes of the Cumbrian Britons who flourished in the sixth century, at 'Cair Greu.' *Cair Greu* means the City or *Castra* of Creu. 'Creu' is Middle Welsh, and it postulates Modern Welsh '*Crau' and Old Welsh '*Crou.' These represent an older stem '*Crōg.'³ The name of this city also appears in the List of the Cities of Britain in the 'Historia Brittonum,' a collection of historical pieces made

¹ See his *Collectanea de Rebus Britannicis*, ed. Hearne, 1770, I. p. 200, and cp. *Notes and Queries*, 8th series, X. 216, 325.

² V. 'Trioed Arthur ae Wyr' (from *Peniarth MS.* No. 45, *olim Hengwrt MS.* No. 536, written at the end of the thirteenth century), ed. W. F. Skene, *Four Ancient Books of Wales*, 1868, p. 463. Cp. also Mr. J. Gweno-gvryn Evans's *Reports on MSS. in the Welsh Language (Hist. MSS. Com.)*, I. pt. 2, 1899, p. 379.

³ Cp. 'Zur Keltische Lautgeschichte' by W. Foy in *Ztschr. f. c. Philologie*, III. 1901, p. 272 (*pāgus*). Also cp. Prof. Wright's remarks on *au, ou, ō*, *Historical German Grammar*, 1907, I. 25, 36. Old Welsh *ou* rimes with 'coy'; Old High Dutch *ou* with 'cow.'

in A.D. 837. In this List we find 'Cair Grauc.'¹ Yet another trace of Crocus the Almain may be found in 'Crocogalana,' the name of a station at Brough, near Newark-on-Trent, about 12 m.p. to the S.W. of Lincoln.

The Old High Dutch form in Ravennas, namely 'Crouc-,' represented an Old Germanic '*Crauc-' and this postulates an Old English stem *Crēac-*. That form we actually do find in Widsith, who tells us that 'Cāsere weold Crēacum': Casere ruled the *Crēacé*, i.e. the Creacas. The Middle High Dutch plural of 'Crouc-' would be '*Croici' or '*Chroici'; and it may well be the knowledge of this form that suggested the use of the Latin word 'Græci' to the early collectors of historical and legendary notices about the noble city of Treves.² The true plural for 'Greeks' in High Dutch in the ninth century was 'Kriachi.' I am mentioning this because two celebrated English scholars who were separated from each other by a thousand years—namely, King Alfred the Great and the late Henry Sweet—made the mistake of regarding the Old English 'Crēace' as the equivalent of the Old High Dutch 'Kriachi.'³

The so-called 'Greeks' of the Rhine, who were dwelling in the Black Forest region, invaded the neighbourhood of the Trēviri in the reign of the Emperor Constans, in about 350, and sorely oppressed the provincials, plundering and slaughtering them and burning their homes. As they

¹ The XIth-century Vatican MS. has 'Cair graut.' The error of *t* for *c* is frequent. The scribe of the Durham MS. of the *Historia Brittonum*, who was writing c. A.D. 1150, could even write 'Cair Taratauc' for *Caratauc*.

² 'Igitur omnipotens Deus tres plagas maxime gladium venire permisit super regnum christianorum et super civitatem Trevirorum tribus vicibus: prima autem plaga Grecorum sub imperatore Constante filio Constantini [† 350]; secunda Wandali et Alemanni [A.D. 406]; tertia Hunorum [A.D. 451].' Vide 'Codices S. Mathiæ et S. Gisleni' in Hillar's *Vindictio Historiæ Treverorum*, pp. 57, 159. Also cp. 'Post quem [sc. post S. Paulinum Treverensem episcopum († 358)] Bonosius; deinde Brittonius . . . Horum temporibus Greci cum magna manu Treberim invasere et cædibus et rapinis et incendiis graviter attrivere'; *Gesta Treverorum* ed. G. Waitz, 'M.G.H.,' 'SS.' tom. VIII. 1848, p. 154.

³ Cp. King Alfred's 'Orosius,' and 'Dialects and Prehistoric Forms of Old English' (1876) in *Collected Papers of Henry Sweet*, 1913, p. 196.

are called 'Græci' (Γραικοί) = *Chroici, it would appear that a part of the sib of Crōcus the Almain had returned from Britain to the old home of the race, opposite Rauracum and Argentoratum, on the east of the Rhine. There was an earlier Crōcus king of the Almain in c. 260, who invaded Gaul, and whose doings are recorded by Gregory of Tours and other hagiographical writers. Gregory relates the destruction of ancient buildings and the cruel treatment accorded to defenceless people, and characterises Crocus as a man of great arrogance. He was eventually captured and put to death.

The curious linguistic accident whereby one of the most savage tribes of Germany came to be known as 'Greci' recalls the claim made by Jordanes, Bishop of Ravenna, who wrote his 'De Getarum Origine' in about A.D. 550, on behalf of the Goths. This claim was repeated by William of Jumièges in the thirteenth century. He says :

'Pene omnibus barbaris Gothi semper exstiterunt sapientiores Græcisque ferme consimiles. Nam Martem Deum apud se autumant fuisse exortum, quem humani placabant effusione sanguinis.'

During the reigns of the Emperors Constantius II., Julian, and Valentinian, the Alemannic confederation was very active in invasion. In one of their inroads into Gaul, Julian intercepted them on the west of the Rhine near Strasburg, and defeated them very severely in the month of August 357. Valentinian also had great trouble with the Almain. The treachery and turbulence of their kings were so exasperating that the Emperor, who was a man of violent and outrageous temper, threw some of them to the wild beasts and, according to Ammianus, burnt at least one of them alive. In the fourth century the Almain were regularly enlisted into the Roman imperial service, and their kings and princes were advanced from time to time to responsible and important positions. One of their kings, Wādomāri by name, was made Duke of Phoenicia, and it may have been to him that the incorporation in the Roman

army of the *Cohors V. Pacata Alamannorum* and of the *Ala I. Alamannorum*, both stationed in Phoenicia, was due. In Egypt also there was another body called *Cohors IX. Alamannorum*. This was stationed at Burgo Severi, in the Thebaïd. I have already mentioned the preferment of another Alemannic king, Fraomarius to wit.

These facts should lead us to turn to 'Widsith' with increased interest where the Alemannic race of the Creacas is concerned. The poet tells us that he 'was among the Creacas' and that he 'visited Casere—him who possessed the government of Winburg, of Willa's *Insula* and the Willas, and of Gaul.' Critics of 'Widsith' believe that 'Casere' means 'the Emperor,' and that 'Walarice' means the Eastern Empire.¹ The Creacas, too, are equated with the Greeks. All this is fanciful and quite uncritical. Henry Sweet and Eduard Sievers¹ pointed out, forty and thirty years ago respectively, that there were more irregularities than one in this alleged equation. But the legendists did not allow the doubts expressed by these linguistic authorities to restrain them; and as they only knew of one nation of Greeks, and were quite unaware of the existence of the 'Greeks' of the Rhine, they turned the sentence as we know.

The word 'Crēacum,' it is suggested, is an 'odd' form. But King Alfred uses it in pursuance of the error I pointed out just now. We also find it in the Abingdon Saxon Chronicle, which was not brought down lower than A.D. 977, and was written about the year 1000. In that MS. the name of Crayford, in Kent, appears as 'Creacanford,' in annal 456. This also has escaped the notice of critics of 'Widsith,' but, word for word, the forms are the same.

'Walarice' signifies *Extraneorum Regnum*, i.e. the Foreigners' Realm. This was Gaul. Other names are '* Wāl-land' (Anglian) and 'Wēalland' (West Saxon). Edward the Confessor came 'of Wēallande,' i.e. from Gaul.

¹ Sweet's doubts are expressed as above in the preceding footnote, Sievers's may be found in Sievers-Cook's *Grammar of Old English*, 1887, p. 32.

The Old High Dutch was *Uualholant*.¹ Therefore, when we are told by Widsith, a contemporary poet, that the Almain or Creac Casere possessed the rule over Gaul, it is clear that we have an historical statement which is worthy of critical consideration. In Old English *Cæsar* became 'Casær'² and a coin bearing Cæsar's image was called a *Casering*. Hence the Old English form 'Cāsere' postulates the Latin *Cæsāri-us*. Now in the Frankish chronicler Fredegarius Scholasticus, who flourished in the middle of the seventh century and the earliest extant copy of whose work was written not more than fifty years later, we find it recorded, at the imperial year equivalent to A.D. 447-448, that the Count Cæsarius was slain at Seville by a Gothic nobleman named Agyulf.³ We thus have an Old English 'Cāsere' possessing the rule of Gaul, *ante* 450, and a Latin 'Cæsārius,' bearing the rare title of Count, assassinated in 448. I say 'rare' because the Register of the Dignitaries⁴ enumerates only six Comites Rei Militaris in the whole proconsulate of Africa. That included Britain, Gaul, Spain, Italy and Africa. In addition to these there were eight Comites Limitum. In so far as the Gauls were concerned there was only one Comes Rei Militaris and only one Comes Limitis. Their common province was the Tractus Argentoratensis. But neither of these Counts could have been regarded as possessing the rule of Gaul.

The event that Fredegari chronicles is also referred to at the same year by Hydatius Lemicanus, the contemporary

¹ V. 'Althochdeutsche Glossen,' ed. Steinmeyer, iii. p. 610. The West Saxon of 892 is 'Galwala,' *lond* or *rice* being understood; cp. annals 60 B.C. and 650 A.D. The Middle Welsh is 'Gwalltir,' in which 'tir' = *terra*.

² V. 'Liber Vitæ Dunelmensis' (IXth cent.), ed. Henry Sweet, 1885, *The Oldest English Texts*, p. 154, line 6.

³ '[Per] Agyulfum nobilem Gothum in Spalæ Cæsarius comes iugulatur. An. xxiv. regni Theodosiæ' (*sic*); 'Chronica quæ dicuntur Fredegarii Scholastici,' ed. Bruno Krusch, 1888, *SS. Rerum Merovingicarum*, ii. p. 73, *apud* 'M.G.H.'

⁴ V. 'Notitia Dignitatum utriusque Imperii,' ed. Otto Seeck, 1876, pp. 104, 121, 137.

bishop of Chaves in Galicia.¹ But he calls the Count 'Censorius.' He gives the name of the assassin and the town where the murder took place, just as Fredegari does, and there is no room for doubt that both chroniclers are referring to the same persons and the same event. The contradiction in name is apparent only, as I shall presently show. The variation is really a strong confirmation of the conclusion already arrived at, viz. that Casere was the Count Cæsarius.

We cannot impugn Hydatius's presentation of the name of the Count: in the first place he and Censorius were contemporary; in the second Hydatius knew the Count well and they travelled together in A.D. 433 from Treves to Galicia. The occasion of this was as follows:

In 417 the WisiGothic king Wáila, the Vallia of Latin historians and the Wála of 'Widsith,' drove the Suevi into the mountains of Galicia. This people of Upper Germany was so closely related to the Almans that Gregory of Tours did not trouble to distinguish between them, and, having introduced the 'Suebi,' speaks of them in the sequel as *Alemanni*.² They became bandits in Galicia and their depredations were so serious and persistent that in A.D. 432 Hydatius undertook to intercede for the suffering provincials with Aëtius. Hydatius calls Aëtius 'Dux,' but he was really *Comes et Magister Militum*, having held that office since 429. While Hydatius was away from his see a WisiGoth named Wêto surreptitiously visited Galicia, but had to return to his own people without effecting his object. What that was Hydatius does not explain. In the same year Aëtius's breach with the central

¹ An. xxiii. Theodosii [= A.D. 448]. 'Per Agiulfum Hispali Censorius iugulatur'; vide 'Hydatii Lemici *Continuatio Chronicorum Hieronymianorum*,' u.s., p. 22. Variant manuscript renderings of the Count's name are *Censurius*, *Consurius* (-arius?). The Old High Dutch *âri* is equivalent in meaning to Latin *-âri-us*; v. Wright, *Historical German Grammar*, 1907, I. § 302. Mommsen's text was taken from *Cod. Phillipps* (*Berol.*) No. 1829, scr. IX. sæcl.

² V. 'Gregorii Episcopi Turonensis *Historia Francorum*,' II. ii. p. 60.

government took place. He was defeated in the subsequent civil war, and was compelled to withdraw for some time to Pannonia. When he had made his peace he returned to power in the Gauls and was saluted as 'Patricius.' Now did he then find his former office filled or not? and did he resume it? Or did he find that it had been filled during his absence and acquiesce? I am unable to answer these questions and the effect of the elevation of Aëtius upon the standing of the Magister has not been investigated. It is noteworthy that an address *De Episcoporum Ordinatione* of A.D. 445 gives the style of the Patrician of the West. It begins: 'Aëtio viro industri comiti et magistro utriusque militiae et patricio'; cp. Clinton 'Fasti Romani,' p. 630. This, however, does not settle the question. It might be supposed to do so, but not only was Aëtius not permanently in residence in the Gauls, but Hydatius gives the names of three several *Magistri* in this very quinquennium. E.g. at Annus XIX (= A.D. 443) he tells us that Merobaudes, a son-in-law of Asturius, the *Magister utriusque militiae*, was sent by Asturius as successor to himself into Spain. At Annus XXII (= A.D. 446) Hydatius records that Vitus was made *Magister utriusque militiae* and sent into Spain. At Annus XXIV (= A.D. 448) we learn that Censorius had been sent into Spain and assassinated at Seville. In this annal Hydatius does not style Censorius 'Comes' or 'Magister.' But he had previously called him in other years *comes*, *comes et legatus Aëtii* and *legatus Aëtii*, and he mentions him five times in all in sixteen years—that is to say, more frequently than any other prominent man of the time, Aëtius excepted.

The Count Cæsarius, then, if he was the Casere of Widsith, was an Almain of the sib of Crōcus. That is the reason why he was made the legate of Aëtius, either alone, or in company with Frëtimundus, on three occasions when Aëtius communicated with the Suevians in Gallicia. Both Almans and Suevians were High Dutch, as we have seen. Their dialect was identical and it is to dialect that the

difference between 'Cæsarius' and 'Censorius' is due. The variations in the name of the Vandal conqueror who was ruling at that time in Africa—namely, Genseric, are illuminating. We get 'Genseric,' 'Geseric,' 'Giseric,' and 'Gaiseric.'¹ These variations are real ones. They are not to be attributed to scribal errors, and they arise from dialectal peculiarities connected with the preservation or rejection of the medial contact of *n* and *s*. The Almain, Suevian, Gothic and Vandal preserved *n* in *ns*; the Old Saxon, Old Franconian, Old English and Old Norse dialects rejected it.² Now as Gens- yields the dialectal variations 'Gēs-', 'Gīs-', and 'Gais-', similarly Cens- may be expected to yield 'Cēs-', 'Cīs-', and 'Cais-.' These severally do occur, and not only do we get 'Censōrius,' the Latin metaphony of an Alemannic and Suevic proper name, which we may judge to have been *Censāri, but also 'Cēsārius,' the Latin metaphony of the Old Franconian form of that name, from which *n* had dropped and the vowel in which had received compensatory lengthening according to rule. The Old English *ā* is postulated by *ái*, *ē*, and *ei* in Continental Germanic words that are common to both groups of dialects. For these reasons the Casere of the Angle Widsith, the Count Cæsarius of the Franconian Fredegari, and the Count Censorius of the Spaniard Hydatius are one and the same Alemannic prince. He, like Wadomari and Fraomari, had attained the high office of Comes in the service of the Emperor. Moreover, in view of what we know about the rapid succession of *Magistri utriusque Militiæ* under Aëtius, and of what Widsith tells us, we may assume that Casere was appointed to the post of Magister in 447, or 448, and he was slain in the latter year. It would also appear to be probable that he was filling the office in 433, when Aëtius recovered place and power, because, as we have seen, Hydatius calls him Count in that very year.

¹ Cp. also 'Gensimundus,' 'Gesimundus,' in *Cassiodori Variarum Liber VIII. ix.*, ed. Mommsen, 1894, 'M.G.H.,' XII. p. 239.

² Cp. Wright, *O.E. Grammar*, 1908, § 286, also §§ 61 and 147.

Widsith does not give the Almainns their tribal name, as I have said ; but cites them by their royal sib-name of Crēacé, just as one branch of the Goths, namely, the Ostro-Goths, was referred to by its royal family-names of the Amalungas and Gruthungas, and the other, the WisiGoths, by the royal family-names of the Balthungas and the Thervingas.

Craucestre and the Croucingo of Ravennas have been located in Northumberland and we must look in the same direction for Winburg, the city over which Cāsere ruled as prince of the Almainns. Winburg is the Vinovium of the Itineraries, the 'Oυιννοβίον' of Ptolemy, and the modern Binchester. It was called Castellum Guinuion by the Welsh, and one of King Arthur's earlier victories was gained there.

'Wiolanē' is *Wiolaneu, the *insula*¹ of Willa, i.e. the region in which the sib of the Willas had their seat. The numerous variants in the Chronicles, and on Anglo-Saxon coins, of the ancient name of Cricklade in Wiltshire, indicate Crēacagelād, i.e. the Way of the Creacas. 'Wiltshire' is modern, and the Old English name of the district was 'Wiltunscir' in the eleventh century, and 'Wilsætān' in the ninth. The connexion of Casere and the Creacas, and the Willas of Wiolaneu, with Crēacagelād and the Wilsætān is clear.

APPENDIX A

DIALECTAL VARIATION

The characteristics of the four dialects of Old English were first detected and investigated by Henry Sweet, *v. supra*, note 4 ; Eduard Sievers added to and applied the principles deduced by Sweet, *v. supra*, note 2 ; and Professor Joseph Wright has since extended their researches and embodied the aggregate results in his Old English Grammar (1908), with copious examples

¹ An 'insula' and an 'eu' are not necessarily islands ; cp. 'Isle de France' and 'Beardan-eu,' 'Herut-eu,' and 'Peartan-eu' in Bede ; also 'Lindisfarana-ēē,' in Chronicle, MS. F, Annals 779, 780, for another form of 'eu.'

and singular clearness of method. Only a few of the dialectal peculiarities in the text of 'Widsith' need be commented upon.

1. The late West Saxon development whereby \bar{i} represents $\bar{i}e$, the \bar{u} mlaut of $\bar{e}a$, appears in 'ānīhst' (l. 115) and 'Hliþe' (l. 106). The sequences are $nīhst < nīehst < *nēahist$; and $Hliþe < *Hliēþi < *Hlēaþi$. $*Hlēaþi = \text{Germanic } *Hlauþi > \text{Old Icelandic } 'Hloþ.'$

2. West Saxon \bar{a} is sometimes postulated by Anglian \bar{e} ; cp. Wright, *O.E. Grammar*, §§ 187, 188. But as Anglian \bar{e} equates W.S. $\bar{e}a$ and $\bar{e}o$ before c , g , and h , there is only a generalisation to guide one. Hence such an Anglian Latin form as 'Hēcana' in Florence of Worcester postulates W.S. $Hēacana$, $\bar{E}acana$, and not 'Æcen-' as in l. 54 where we get $\bar{A}enen-$ [with $n :: c$]. The scribe Δ applied this supposed rule in another case: viz. 'æþele' (l. 5) for $eþele$. In 'Hēþcan' (l. 102) and in 'Hrēþ' (lines 2, 10) he reproduced the Anglian form.

3. The Anglian $\bar{e}a = \text{W.S. } \bar{e}o$ is unconsciously reproduced in 'Henden' for Hēaden [with $end :: ead$] the W.S. Hēoden; cp. 'Hēodeninga' in the 'Lament of Deor.'

4. The breaking of e before $r + \text{consonant}$ is $ear-$ in Anglian and $eor-$ in W.S.; hence the form 'Earmanrices' in line 26.

5. The Angle u -umlaut of e is eo , and that is also the o -umlaut of e in the same dialect. But the latter rule is not adhered to: cp. Wright, § 93. A Germanic form $Erul-$ ought to yield $Eorul-$ in both Northumbrian and West Saxon; but the MS. gives $eatul-$ for $earul-$: cp. Sievers-Cook, § 249, note 2, 'teoru,' gen. 'tearos.' Sweet, also, remarks upon the 'confusion between ea and eo in non-Saxon dialects'; cp. 'Dialects of O.E.' *u.s.*, p. 204.

DR. CHAMBERS'S REPLY

I have to thank Mr. Anscombe for his courtesy in sending me a proof of his paper,¹ and for his kindly references to

¹ The Council of the Royal Historical Society wish to observe that Mr. Anscombe's Paper (which, owing to the difficulty of following the Old English text, was printed and circulated at the Meeting) has at their suggestion been revised by the Author, before publication, for the purpose of deleting any expression that might savour of discourtesy towards the distinguished scholar from whose views on certain academic questions Mr. Anscombe has ventured frankly to differ.

my work. His suggestion of the deficiencies of the twenty-two editors of 'Widsith' is an indictment of the whole school of Anglo-Saxon philology during the past eighty years. As this indictment has been made at a meeting of the Royal Historical Society it should have some answer.

When in 1910 Professor Sedgefield printed the text of 'Widsith,' Mr. Anscombe charged him with transcribing the MS. inaccurately. This charge was somewhat invalidated by the fact that Mr. Anscombe made no claim to have himself seen the MS.—the famous 'Exeter Book.' Mr. Anscombe depended entirely upon a transcript of this MS., made for the British Museum in 1832. He argued that all the editors of 'Widsith' had copied from this transcript and from each other, and had kept on 'interpolating here and emending there, until the printed text has ceased to be authoritative.'

Now, as a point of fact, 'Widsith' was transcribed from 'the original at Exeter' by Thorpe, before 1833. This transcription was collated with the original by Schipper (1870-1), and re-collated by Wülcker (1882), whose text has been accepted as the received text ever since. I have myself twice compared Wülcker's text with the 'Exeter Book' (first in March 1910, and again in April 1911), and can testify that it is absolutely accurate.

Now to discuss the development of the textual criticism of 'Widsith' in ignorance of the fact that it was transcribed *from the original* by Thorpe, and that this transcription was collated *with the original* by Schipper, and again collated *with the original* by Wülcker, is to discuss the matter in ignorance of the three fundamental facts upon which discussion must be based.

Accordingly, Professor Sedgefield replied to Mr. Anscombe, drawing attention to these defects in his argument, but refusing to enter into further controversy, as his antagonist had still to learn that 'the British Museum transcript of the MS. is not of equal value with the MS. itself.'

After this, I think the editors of 'Widsith' might have been granted a 'close time' until Mr. Anscombe had leisure to consult the MS., and see whether his accusations were true. Even the Queen of Hearts in 'Alice in Wonderland,' who insisted on 'Verdict before Evidence,' *did* allow Evidence to come second.

I was therefore surprised to learn that in the presence of the Fellows of the Royal Historical Society, a further attack had been made upon us. (I may use the word 'us,' since my own edition of 'Widsith' has appeared in the meantime.) Mr. Anscombe still makes no claim to have consulted the original. Since he quotes as his authority the Museum transcript, it must be taken that he still has not gone beyond it. (However, since he admittedly made up his mind before he saw the original, it does not make much difference whether or not he now consults the 'Exeter Book.')

But since he can no longer deny that other editors have seen the 'Exeter Book,' he now asserts that these editors were incompetent to read what they saw. 'Their printed texts,' he says, 'proclaim the "incompetency of the twenty-two editors" in the matter of Anglo-Saxon palæography in general, and that of the "Exeter Book" in particular.'

The issue is simple. Thorpe, Schipper, Wülcker, and myself, having seen the *Exeter Book*, agree that the reading is so-and-so. Mr. Anscombe, not having seen the 'Exeter Book,' asserts that our reading is wrong, and that it proves our incompetence in the matter of palæography. The position is that of the Irishman who thought four witnesses who had seen him commit a murder could be refuted by one witness who had not seen him commit the murder.

Besides ignorance of palæography, Mr. Anscombe brings five other charges against the twenty-two editors, chiefly for not having provided sufficient illustrative material of different kinds. But it must be remembered that the only editors in the last thirty years who have *attempted* comment and explanation, are Professor Holthausen, myself, and now Mr. Anscombe.

Mr. Anscombe's charges are :

I. Editors have failed to supply a photographic facsimile of the MS.

But Mr. Anscombe himself cannot consider such facsimile really essential, since he has neither facsimiled the MS. himself, nor, it would seem, has even looked at it.

II. [Palæography. Dealt with above.]

III. 'Editors,' Mr. Anscombe says, 'have ignored stichometry.'

If by stichometry Mr. Anscombe means such researches as he gives in his Section II, the reader must judge whether or not editors have done well in not producing similar matter.

If by stichometry he means that the printed text should indicate where each line of the MS. ends, I do not understand why Mr. Anscombe's own text does not carry out his own desideratum.

If he desires an indication where each page of the MS. ends, his assertion is not accurate, for such indication is found in many editions—in Wülcker's, in Holthausen's, and in mine. In fact Mr. Anscombe appeals to these indications in *my* edition (together with those in the British Museum transcript) as the data for his 'stichometrical examination.' Why, then, does he complain?

IV. 'Editors,' Mr. Anscombe says, 'failed to recognize that the poem, though now extant in a West Saxon transcription, was originally composed in some other "probably Northumbrian" dialect.'

Yet everyone admits that the poem was originally written in a non-West Saxon dialect. On page 166 of my edition, Mr. Anscombe will find a list of the non-West Saxon words still remaining in the poem; and Holthausen's note to l. 20 should be compared. Whether the dialect was originally Northumbrian or Mercian it is, however, impossible to say. Mr. Anscombe asserts that the editors ought to have put the poem back into the original dialect. But our knowledge of Old English dialects is limited. We

know the Old Northumbrian, as spoken about the year 950 ; but this is removed by several centuries from the date of 'Widsith.' A poem can only be transcribed into some other dialect when that dialect is *known*. It cannot be transcribed into a 'probably Northumbrian' dialect of a period from which we have no extant pattern, even of certain Northumbrian, to guide us. And Mr. Anscombe must know this, since he makes no attempt to 'fulfil the requirements made in paragraph IV.—i.e to put the poem into Northumbrian, probable or otherwise.

V. Mr. Anscombe gives as an instance, where 'the historical student' has a right to demand better treatment from the 'two-and-twenty editors,' that the error of placing the kingdom of Eormenric east of Old Anglia is still persisted in.

But this error *is* exposed in Holthausen's edition (note to l. 8) and in mine (p. 189). We claim no originality, as the error had already been pointed out by Sievers. It is true that the error is still sometimes repeated. But why should Mr. Anscombe blame the editors of 'Widsith' because, in spite of their exposing an error, *other persons* still sometimes repeat it ?

VI. Mr. Anscombe complains that editors have not supplied genealogical trees.

My reason for not giving such trees was that, of the seventy odd persons recorded in 'Widsith' very few are known to be related in any way to each other. So far as relationship is known, it is from the more detailed information given in 'Beowulf' as to certain families. Trees summarizing this information will be found in Holthausen's edition of 'Beowulf' (vol. ii, pp. xxx-xxxii), and in the edition by Mr. Wyatt and myself (p. 163). Otherwise there is not sufficient evidence of connexion to make a tree ; which must be why Mr. Anscombe himself has not made one.

It will be seen, then, that Mr. Anscombe, in producing a text of 'Widsith' specially intended for historical students,

avowedly makes no attempt to fulfil the six conditions which he says 'the historical student believes he has a right to demand.'

The philological student 'believes he has a right to demand' that a critic, before charging others with incompetency in transcribing a MS., should himself look at the original, or at least obtain accurate information about it. This condition also Mr. Anscombe avowedly made no attempt to fulfil.

I quite recognize Mr. Anscombe's whole-hearted enthusiasm. But I do feel some surprise that in the pages of the 'Royal Historical Society's Transactions,' and in the year 1915, it should be necessary for me to follow Professor Sedgefield and again emphasize that, from the standpoint of textual criticism, the transcript of a MS. is not of equal authority with the MS. itself.

POSTSCRIPT.—Owing to absence in France with the Red Cross, I have not been able to see a copy of Mr. Anscombe's Paper, as revised for publication. The above reply relates therefore to the Paper in the form in which it was read by Mr. Anscombe at the meeting of the Royal Historical Society, and as then circulated in proof. Mr. Anscombe will, I am sure, forgive me if, under the circumstances, I am doing any injustice to his revised article.

On the main question of 'Widsith,' as historical evidence, I do not believe that Mr. Anscombe and I differ as fundamentally as he thinks. I am convinced as to the identification of the most important persons mentioned in the poem with historic characters who flourished in the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries: and here Mr. Anscombe would agree. Mr. Anscombe thinks that 'Widsith' was originally written in the Northumbrian dialect—and this I am not prepared to dispute.

Northumbria, however, was not colonized by the English till centuries after some of the persons mentioned in 'Widsith' flourished. The references to such persons in 'Widsith'

are therefore not *contemporary* history, but history as preserved through a period of tradition. To discuss whether 'Widsith' reflects history or legend, as if the one view excluded the other, appears to me wrong. It surely reflects both.

For example, the most important and elaborate allusion in the poem is to Offa I, who reigned over the Angles whilst they still dwelt in the Continental Anglia, in Schleswig. The pedigree of the King of Mercia (upon which I place great reliance, as also I gather does Mr. Anscombe) shows that this Offa I must have flourished twelve generations before Offa II, the historic King of Mercia—probably therefore in the fourth century, and certainly many generations before 'Widsith' can have been composed, if, as Mr. Anscombe believes, the poem was originally written in the Northumbrian dialect.

But, *with this reservation*, the passage about Offa in 'Widsith' is of the utmost historical importance. It narrates the earliest event in English history known to us: how Offa defended his kingdom against an attack made by his German neighbours on the south.

How many people know that English history begins with a struggle carried on by a young English prince against a Germanic war-lord?

R. W. C.

ROUEN,
August 1915.

I appreciate the conciliatory tone of Dr. Chambers's Postscript. His appeal for a 'close time' for editors of 'Widsith' also has its attractive side for the unworthy editor of the twenty-third edition. Dr. Chambers points out that we are the only English editors of 'Widsith' who have *attempted* comment and explanation in thirty years. We are hopelessly at variance, however. I advocate belief in the veracity of Widsith; consequently I trust that the appeal for a 'close time' will be disregarded, and that a thorough re-examination of the whole subject will be

instituted by English palæographers, by Old English philologists, and by English historians who are investigating the affairs of the fifth century.

When Dr. Chambers suggests in his Postscript that I accept long-current identifications of certain princes in 'Widsith' with fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-century historical rulers, I must dissent. My opinions are as follows: The only historical persons in 'Widsith,' who are not mere names, are Wāla, Cāsere, and Guðhere. The poet wrote soon after the death of the unhistorical Theodric, king of the Franks. I date that obit in 457. Widsith was then about fifty years old. None of the princes he names ruled in the fourth century, and not one of them survived into the sixth. With respect to the language of the poem I have never said that it was 'originally composed in the Northumbrian dialect' (thus Dr. Chambers, pp. 159, 161, above). I say, on p. 126, that it 'was preserved for an undetermined period written probably in the Northumbrian dialect.' In a note on Wāla, in *Notes and Queries*, July 6, 1912, I said that a later poet than Widsith had 'accommodated (the dialect) to the idiom of his own day and time.'

The only alterations made in my Paper are formal ones. No revision that has been made has diminished the consistency of Dr. Chambers's rejoinder. He gives cogent reasons for not printing genealogical trees in his volume of 264 pages. But there was no need to assign imaginary reasons why, in a Paper of thirty-four pages, I have not included six pages of the Exeter Book, eight pages of textual apparatus and many genealogical tables. Dr. Chambers's remarks, too, about my application of stichometry, are unnecessarily contemptuous.

Dr. Chambers's recollection of my article in 'Anglia' is inexact. I did not 'charge Prof. Sedgefield with transcribing the MS. inaccurately.' I said that the text was 'reproduced erroneously.' Thorpe's text in his 'Codex Exoniensis' is sophisticated, and I said that its origin 'needed to be proved.' I would remind Dr. Chambers

that not only did Wülcker condemn Thorpe for misrepresenting the MS. in one important passage, but that in 1912 he remarked himself of a certain interpolation in line 62 that Thorpe was 'not aware that *mid* was not in the MS.'

When Dr. Chambers says that I have never gone beyond the Museum transcript, and have failed to obtain accurate information, he forgets, on one hand, that certain statements were made by me in 'Anglia' upon the authority of Canon Edmonds, the Exeter Librarian, as I reported; and on the other that his own edition has appeared in the interval.

Notwithstanding this he reverts to 1910 in order to concur with Prof. Sedgefield in a motion that I be not heard because I am ignorant of the Codex Exoniensis. It must be made evident that there is a flaw in this plea: the two scholars have overlooked the fact that Exon. is not represented either *in propria persona* or by photography. What the court has cognizance of is a series of reports which differ from each other in important particulars, notwithstanding the fact that they are signed by scholars like Madden, Thorpe, Wülcker, Sedgefield, and Chambers. Of these reports the first is official, and Dr. Chambers says it is 'very accurate'; 'W.', p. 187. In 1910 I preferred the British Museum report to Prof. Sedgefield's, or to any other report or collation; and in one fundamental particular I prefer it to Dr. Chambers's, and rely upon it.

In this facsimile report the *a* of *Wistlawudu* has a pen-stroke written above it. Dr. Chambers neither prints this in his text nor explains it in his note to his line 121. Wülcker, also, ignored it and rendered 'Wistla' by *Weichsel*. The *Weichsel* is the Vistula. But the Angles called that river 'Wisle'; *Weichselmünde* they knew as 'Wislemúða,' and Poland as 'Wisleland.' It is uncritical to render *Wistlawudu* by 'Vistula-wood,' and it is not right that a diacritical mark should be withheld by editors who copy one another and wish it to be believed that the Vistula is referred to.

Dr. Chambers assures me that Wülcker's text is 'absolutely correct.' Now Wülcker omitted all the diacritical marks preserved in the MS., and Dr. Chambers corrected him in that, and 'in one or two other details,' as he tells us himself; 'W.', pp. 187, 188. Schipper's 'fundamental' collation of Thorpe's 'Widsith' fills one little paragraph of six lines, and he failed to correct the text where it needed it most.

I have nowhere asserted that the editors of 'Widsith' 'were incompetent to read what they saw.' Scribal errors which I have particularised elsewhere¹ are scrupulously reproduced and adhered to by Dr. Chambers and other editors, and great and unnecessary confusion is caused thereby. For instance, no student ought to fumble with the scribal compendium 'ū' as all the editors of 'Widsith' have done. An *a* shaped like a *u*, with the top barred, is found in O.E. MSS. of the tenth century, and misreadings of this *a* as *ū* (= *um*) occur in the eighth. In O.E. texts such errors destroy syntax by transforming genitives plural in *-a* into datives plural in *-um*. Again, there is frequent scribal confusion of *t* with *r*, and *r* with *t*. Editors of 'Widsith' are faced in half-a-dozen places by these three palæographical difficulties, the real nature of which must be recognised before the genuine text of the poem can be recovered and accepted.

Lastly, with respect to my localisation of the 'ēþel Gōtena' to the westward of Ongle: Dr. Chambers confuses the issue when he assures me that he knows the rule about rendering 'eastan of.' I could not doubt it. What I am concerned with is his failure to apply the rule in his geographical dissertation. This failure is exemplified generally in his references to the kingdom of Eormanric as if that had lain to the east of Ongle; and particularly by his locating the Gōtan of Westphalia on the Vistula, *sc.* in his map, p. 258, and in his translation, p. 221.

A. A.

¹ I have contributed fourteen little articles on 'Widsith' to *Notes and Queries* since July 6, 1912.