Understanding numbers in London, British Library, Harley 3271

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ABSTRACT

London, British Library, Harley 3271 is a composite manuscript designed for use in teaching Latin, and contains Ælfric's *Grammar* beside other pedagogical works. The book also contains a large number of miscellaneous items, and fourteen scribal hands. Many of the texts point to the usual interests of the Anglo-Saxon scholar in computus and prognostics, while others suggest an interest in the tradition of numerical notes. The items written by Scribe C, the only one whose stints are spread throughout the blank space of the composite volume, point to a combined interest in education, numbers and the Jewish people.

The identification of criteria by which surviving Anglo-Saxon manuscripts might be defined as schoolbooks has proven difficult for modern scholars, a problem related to the often miscellaneous character of the collections whose contents include established curriculum texts. London, British Library, Harley 3271 is one of the few books surviving from Anglo-Saxon England generally agreed to have been created for educational use.[1] The manuscript is best known for its copy of Ælfric's *Grammar*, though since the time of William Lambarde its more miscellaneous items, in the form of notes, prognostics and computus material, have drawn some attention.[2] A range of evidence points

[1] P. Lendinara, 'Instructional Manuscripts in England: the Tenth- and Eleventh-Century Codices and the Early Norman Ones', *Form and Content of Instruction in Anglo-Saxon England in the Light of Contemporary Manuscript Evidence*, ed. P. Lendinara, L. Lazzari and M. A. D'Aronco (Turnhout, 2007), pp. 59–113, at 86–7. See N. R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford, 1957), no. 239; Helmut Gneuss, *Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: a List of Manuscripts and Manuscript Fragments Written or Owned in England up to 1100* (Tempe, AZ, 2001), no. 435. For a detailed outline of the contents of the manuscript, see L. Chardonnens, 'London, British Library, Harley 3271: the Composition and Structure of an Eleventh-Century Anglo-Saxon Miscellany', *Form and Content of Instruction*, ed. Lendinara, *et al.*, pp. 3–34. Chardonnens, 'Composition and Structure', pp. 9–11, provides numbering of the contents of the manuscript and its scribal hands more precise and detailed than Ker's; he designates scribes X–Z and A–L, and is followed here.

[2] Chardonnens, 'Composition and Structure', p. 4, n. 6, notes that Lambarde copied items 3, 4, 6 and 7 into Canterbury, Cathedral Library and Archives, E.i, ff. 17–19 (Ker, *Catalogue*, p. 309).

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inconclusively to the origin of Harley 3271 at New Minster, Winchester.[3] Neil Ker noted the presence of 'multiple' scribal hands, a number recently defined as fourteen by László Chardonnens. The nature of the main items – Ælfric's *Grammar*, the treatise *Beatus quid est*, and Abbo of St Germain's *Bella Parisiacae urbis* – provides indubitable evidence that the manuscript was designed for the needs of the Anglo-Saxon schoolroom, confirmed by a range of shorter texts included.[4] The arrangement of the quires of the main items suggests the manuscript presents a contemporary compilation of booklets which originally may not have been designed for binding together, and the Anglo-Saxon compiler may be represented by one of the slightly later hands which added notes to the blank spaces available in the composite volume. Ker dates the manuscript to the mid-eleventh century, though internal evidence provided by the final item in the manuscript, *De initio creaturae*, appears to provide 1032 as a *terminus ad quem* date for the completion of the collection.

The first quire, which appears to have lost its first two leaves, contains:[5] an imperfect list of Latin nouns and verbs (1–5v, Item 1, scribe X); a note on the first two declensions (5v–6r, Item 2, scribe Y);[6] the Tribal Hidage in Old English (6v, Item 3, scribe Z);[7] six lines in Latin characterizing certain nations (6v, Item 4, scribe Z).[8] Beginning a new quire following this, and taking up the greater part of quires 2–12, is Ælfric's *Grammar* in Old English (7–90, Item 5, scribes A and B). In the blank spaces at the end of quire 12, a number of miscellaneous items have been added: a note in Old English, *De triginta argenteos* (90r/23–7, Item 6, scribe C);[9] a note in Old English, *De arca noe* (90r–90v/17, Item 7, scribe C);[10] prognostics in Old English (90v–91v, Items 8–9, scribe

[3] See Chardonenns, 'Composition and Structure', pp. 13–18; *Wulfstan of Winchester: the Life of St Æthelwold*, ed. M. Lapidge and M. Winterbottom, (Oxford, 1991), p. lxxxvi.

[4] *Ælfrics Grammatik und Glossar: Text und Varianten*, ed. J. Zupitiza (Berlin, 1880; repr. Berlin, 1966; repr. Hildesheim, 2001); 'Liber Abbonis anglice interpretatus', *Early Scholastic Colloquies*, ed. W. H. Stevenson, Anecdota Oxoniensia, Med. and Mod. Series 15 (Oxford, 1929), 103–12; M. Bayless, '*Beatus quid est* and the Study of Grammar in Late Anglo-Saxon England', *History of Linguistic Thought in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. V. Law (Amsterdam, 1993), pp. 67–110.

[5] See Ker, *Catalogue*, no. 239; Chardonnens, 'Composition and Structure', pp. 28–34.

[6] Printed Bayless, '*Beatus quid est*', p. 110.

[7] D. N. Dumville, 'The Tribal Hidage: an Introduction to its Texts and their History', *The Origins of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms*, ed. S. Bassett (London, 1989), pp. 225–30, at 227.

[8] A variant version is found in London, British Library, Cotton Caligula A. xv, 122v; see MGH, Auctores antiq. XI, ed. T. Mommsen (Berlin, 1894), p. 389; T. Wright, *Biographia Britannica literaria*, 2 vols. (London, 1842) I, p. 43n.

[9] See A. Napier, 'Altenglische Kleinigkeiten', *Anglia* 11 (1889), 1–10, 8.

[10] See K. Dekker, 'Anglo-Saxon Encyclopaedic Notes: Tradition and Function', *Foundations of Learning: the Transfer of Encyclopaedic Knowledge in the Early Middles Ages*, ed. R. H. Bremmer and K. Dekker (Paris, 2007), pp. 279–315, at 293 n. 54.

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D);[11] some computistical notes, including various items on the number of weeks, days, hours in a year, and rules for finding Easter (91v–92v, Items 9–19, mostly scribe D, Item 19 scribe E);[12] a note *Hu micel goldes wæs Salomone broht* (92v, Item 20, scribe C).[13] Beginning with the new quire 13 and continuing to quire 15 is the Latin dialogue on the parts of speech, *Beatus quid est* (93–113v, Item 21, scribe F). A text has been added in a blank space left in the writing out of the dialogue: a prognostic on bloodletting (102v, Item 22, scribe I). In the blank spaces remaining at the end of quire 15 a number of miscellaneous items have been added: part of the Office for the Invention of St Stephen (114rv, Item 23, scribe G); Latin names of numbers (114v–115, Item 24, scribe G); an Old English prose translation of Abbo of St Germain, *Bella Parisiacae urbis*, Book III (115v–118r); the Latin text of Abbo of St Germain, *Bella Parisiacae urbis*, Book III (118r–120r); a series of short pieces, including notes on lucky and unlucky days, a *Missa pro sacerdote*, and some glossary material (120v–124r, Items 27–36, scribes I–K); an Old English homily by Ælfric on the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit (Napier homily VIII), beginning on 124r, continuing into the next quire.[14] The last quire (17), contains the remainder of Napier homily VIII (to 125r), and three more items: two excerpts from Ælfric's *Libellus de ueteri testamento et nouo*, the first on the fall of Jerusalem to the Romans under Titus (125v–126r, Item 38),[15] the second an episode from the legend of St John the Evangelist (126r–128v, Item 39, scribe C);[16] a treatise *De initio creaturæ* possibly composed by the scribe (128v–129r, Item 40, scribe C).[17]

The notes in Harley 3271 represent a later example of an Anglo-Saxon tradition of miscellaneous numerical elaboration extending back at least to the beginning of the eighth century. Simon Keynes has discussed a group of Latin notes found in London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian B. vi (*c.* 810), on subjects such as the Six Ages of the World, the dimensions of Solomon's Temple and the dimensions of Noah's ark.[18] These provide more than simply

[11] See L. S. Chardonenns, *Anglo-Saxon Prognostics: Study and Texts* (Leiden, 2007), who edits the prognostics listed below, pp. 284–6, 344, 376–9, 442, 473–5.

[12] See H. Henel, *Studien zum altenglischen Computus* (Leipzig, 1934), pp. 40–1, 48–9, 59, 67, 71-3; H. Henel, 'Altenglischer Mönchsaberglaube', *Englische Studien* 69 (1934–5), 329–49, at 347–9.

[13] See Napier, 'Altenglische Kleinigkeiten', p. 8.

[14] *Wulfstan: Sammlung der ihm zugeschriebenen Homilien und Heiligenleben*, ed. A. Napier (Berlin, 1883), pp. 56–60; see P. A. M. Clemoes, 'The Chronology of Ælfric's Works', *The Anglo-Saxons: Studies in Some Aspects of their History and Culture Presented to Bruce Dickins*, ed. P. Clemoes (London, 1959), pp. 212–47, at 233.

[15] *The Old English Heptateuch and Ælfric's Libellus de ueteri testamento et nouo*, ed. R. Marsden, EETS os 330 (Oxford, 2008), 229–30, lines 889–923.

[16] *Ælfric's Libellus*, ed. Marsden, pp. 223–7, lines 675–814.

[17] Napier, 'Altenglische Kleinigkeiten', pp. 9–10.

[18] S. Keynes, 'Between Bede and the Chronicle: London, BL, Cotton Vespasian B. vi, fols.

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'useful knowledge', and occur beside a list of popes, Anglo-Saxon episcopal lists and royal genealogies. Keynes comments on the relationship between the historical and numerical material: 'there is no mistaking its essential purpose: to provide a background or context for what was to follow, and thereby lend dignity of some kind to the new order.'[19] In a detailed discussion of the history of this miscellany of Latin notes, Kees Dekker has suggested that 'in Vespasian B. vi, the subsequent texts of a calendrical and/or chronological nature make up the framework of this new, Christian world order'.[20] Furthermore, he suggests that the numerical order created in the notes is closely related to the cultural belief among the Anglo-Saxons that they were God's new elect; their genealogies and historical lists present 'a typology which also reinforced the notion of the Anglo-Saxons mirroring themselves in the history of the Old Testament Jews'.[21] Dekker edits this note miscellany which travelled as a group, and is found in four Anglo-Saxon manuscripts: Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 183 (*c.* 934–40); Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 320 (s. x^2); London, British Library, Royal 2. B. v (s. $x^{med.}$); Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 2825 (s. ix–x). All the notes have a numerical character, some with an interest in chronology, some in dimensions, others in enumeration. Excerpts from these notes also occur in a number of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, some in Latin, some in Old English translation. As Dekker points out, an interest in the numerical character of the human body (in its bones, veins and teeth) and the Six Ages of the World, is linked to the belief that such numbering represented an aspect of divine order, as God had ordered creation by 'measure, number and weight' (Wisdom XI.20: 'omnia mensura et numero et pondere disposuisti'). This belief is found through the biblical commentaries of Bede, who delights in developing number symbolism, a tradition codified in later Anglo-Saxon England by Byrhtferth in his *Enchiridion*.[22] The notes in Harley 3271 suggest a complex relation to this tradition.

The shorter texts in Harley 3271 are arranged around the longer in a manner providing evidence for the genesis of the composite manuscript. Ælfric's *Grammar* (Item 5) is by far the longest piece in the manuscript; it begins quire 2, continues to quire 12, and was written by scribes A and B. The Latin dialogue

104-9', in *Latin Learning and English Lore: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Literature for Michael Lapidge*, ed. K. O'Brien O'Keeffe and A. Orchard, 2 vols. (Toronto, 2005) I, 47–67.

[19] Keynes, 'Between Bede and the Chronicle', p. 55; Dekker, 'Anglo-Saxon Encyclopaedic Notes', p. 280.

[20] Dekker, 'Encyclopaedic Notes', edits the Notes (1–14), pp. 281-4, trans. pp. 313–15.

[21] *Ibid.* p. 310.

[22] See, for example, Bede's discussion of the dimensions of Solomon's Temple in *De templo*, *Bedae venerabilis opera: Pars II Opera exegetica*, ed. D. Hurst, CCSL 119A (Turnhout, 1969), p. 160, lines 530-64; see *Byrhtferth's Enchiridion*, ed. P. S. Baker and M. Lapidge, EETS ss 15 (Oxford, 1995), 200–27, which discusses in detail the symbolism of certain numbers.

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Beatus quid est (Item 21) begins in a new hand on the first line of quire 13, and continues to quire 15; these quires are ruled for thirty lines of text, as opposed to 26 elsewhere throughout.[23] Shorter texts have been added to the blank space at the end of quires 12 and 15, an arrangement suggesting that these two didactic texts were brought together by a compiler. The pattern of additions, especially those of scribe C, whose first two stints (Items 6–7, 20) frame other scribes' interventions, shows that the creation of this *Sammelband* took place not long after the copying of the *Grammar* and the Latin dialogue. The copying of Book III of Abbo of St Germain's *Bella Parisiacae urbis* provides evidence that the *Grammar* and the Latin dialogue were already together before this text was added; otherwise beginning the copying of the *Bella* in the blank spaces of quire 15, rather than quire 12, would be difficult to explain. The necessary addition of quire 16 for the *Bella*'s completion shows that its inclusion was considered an important part of the grammatical collection. The decision to begin copying Item 36, Napier homily VIII, at the end of quire 16 is more puzzling, as this text also required the addition of a new quire (17); this Old English homily on the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit is not obviously a school text. The addition of Items 38–40 in quire 17 by scribe C therefore appears less opportunistic, and more designed, especially as the last leaf of this quire appears to have been excised once C's final stint was completed.

The nature of many of the additions shows that they were intended to augment the educational character of the manuscript. This is most apparent in the addition of Book III of Abbo's *Bella Parisiacae urbis*, found here in a literal Old English translation followed by the Latin text.[24] The multiple hands were almost certainly working in the same centre, which it is safe to assume had an active school whose needs this book served. The presence of fourteen different contemporary hands, two of which may represent autograph compositions in Latin (Item 21) and Old English (Item 40), also suggests the manuscript was the product of a major centre. I would like to discuss one of these scribes in particular – scribe C – and the texts he added. The pattern of C's interventions reveal him as one of the latest scribes in the manuscript, and it is possible to suggest he had a hand in organizing and compiling Harley

[23] It is probable that the first quire originally followed a similar pattern of copying to that found later in Harley 3271. The Latin vocabulary list begins imperfectly, but the first two leaves of the quire have been lost, and these originally may have contained the beginning of the list; Items 2–4 would then have been added to the blank space on 5v–6v; see Chardonnens, 'Composition and Structure', pp. 8–9, 18.

[24] See P. Lendinara, 'The Third Book of the *Bella Parisiacae urbis* by Abbo of Saint-Germain-des-Prés and its Old English Gloss', *ASE* 15 (1986), 73-89; and her, 'A Difficult School Text in Anglo-Saxon England: the Third Book of Abbo's *Bella Parisiacae urbis*', *Leeds Stud. in Eng.* 37 (2006), 321–42.

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3271 as it survives. Scribe C is the first to make additions in the blank space of quire 12 at the end of Ælfric's Grammar (6–7), and also writes the last item (20) in this quire before the inclusion of the new quires containing the Latin dialogue. He returns to write the last three items (38–40) in the supplementary quire 17.[25]

While it is clear that both the major and a number of minor texts in Harley 3271 can be grouped together as belonging to the schoolroom, others in the manuscript have a more miscellaneous character. Some of these less scholarly texts point to other interests of the Anglo-Saxon academic, with a taste for prognostics overlapping with an interest in computus. The notes on lucky and unlucky days, on the number of days and hours in a year, instructions for finding Septuagesima, Lent and Easter, and the list of Latin names of numbers (also useful for the student of Latin) all point in this direction. These items are found in different hands (scribes D, E, G, I, K) in the spare leaves at the end of Ælfric's *Grammar* (90v–92v), in empty space on 102v, and on 120v–124r, following Abbo's *Bella Parisiacae urbis*. Another group of texts, which has two in it only, can be defined as liturgical texts: part of the office of vespers for the *Inventio corporis sancti Stephani* (scribe G, Item 23, 114rv); and the *Missa pro sacerdote* (scribe I, Item 29, 121r). The liturgical texts are perhaps the most anomalous in a book which clearly has no ritual function, beside texts without even a tangential relationship to the liturgy. However, it is possible that the copying of the mass prayers was an accidental inclusion by scribe I when copying the prognostics which surround it, evidenced by the more careful copying of the same prognostics by scribe K (Items 32–4), without the mass text.[26] If this is so, then the excerpt from the vespers for the *Inventio corporis Sancti Stephani* would be the only liturgical text deliberately included in the manuscript, and could hardly constitute a 'group' in its own right, making its inclusion more anomalous still. A number of other texts also appear to resist categorization or grouping: the Tribal Hidage (Item 3); the lines characterizing the nations (Item 4); and Napier homily VIII, by Ælfric, on the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit (Item 37). The emphasis in the homily on the gift of wisdom as a remedy to the folly which comes from the devil, perhaps ties it to the educational purpose of the book. More significant, however, is the homily's interest in the number seven, the mystical symbolism of which became almost a commonplace in Christian commentary.[27] Numbers also feature in the Tribal Hidage, with its division of England according to the number of hides of land of thirty-four

[25] The last (blank) leaf of quire 17 seems to have been cut out at this time, as indicated by scribbles and pen trials on fol. 129v; see Chardonenns, 'Composition and Structure', p. 7.

[26] *Ibid.* p. 20.

[27] One far from commonplace treatment of the number opens Aldhelm's *Epistola ad Arcicium*, *Aldhelmi opera*, ed. R. Ehwald, MGH Auct. antiq. 15, Part I (Berlin, 1913), pp. 61–75, cc. i–iv.

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Anglo-Saxon kingdoms and tribes (6v: *Myrcena landes is þritig þusend hyda . . .*). Another group may be added, containing texts sharing only one feature, the fact they were all written by scribe C: *De triginta argenteos* (Item 6); *De arce Noe* (90r–90v/17; Item 7); *Hu micel goldes wæs Salomone broht* (Item 20); two excerpts from Ælfric's *Libellus* (Items 38, 39); *De initio creaturæ* (Item 40). The content of these items suggests that their inclusion is neither accidental nor random, and that from the point of view of scribe C at least, some of the other apparently haphazard inclusions in Harley 3271 are tied to the interests of a scribe who had influence over the character of the collection.

The first of scribe C's contributions, *De triginta argenteos* (90r, lines 21–7, Item 6), is the first item added after Ælfric's *Grammar*. Like all of C's contributions, the text is in Old English: 'De triginta argenteos. Þæs seolfres þe geseald wæs iudan for criste, þæt bið ðreo Obolos. Ælc obol hæfð XII peningas, þæt is ealles XXX and VI peningas. Do hi ealle togædere þæt þritig seolfor sticca, þonne bið ealles ðæs feos twa hund scillinga, and XVI scillingas.'[28] The interest in division and multiplication suggests an association with the computistical notes also found in the space at the end of quire 12. The second piece added by scribe C is the note *De arce Noe* (90r–90v/17; Item 7), an excerpt from Ælfric's Old English version of Alcuin's *Interrogationes Sigeuulfi in Genesin*.[29] This is crafted from two questions asking how Noah's was ark structured, and where the waters retreated after the Flood. Neither question is present here, and the answers have been altered slightly to create a freestanding piece:

Noes arc wæs fyðerscyte, and þreo hund fæðma lang neoðan, and fyftyg fæðma wid, and þrittyg fæþma heah, and wæs fram neoðeweardan oþ ufeweardan swa togædere getogen, and swa genyrwerd þæt he wæs mid anre fæðme ufeweard belocen, swa swa he strengst beon mihte ongean ða stiþlican scuras. He wæs fifflere and hæfde þreo wununga. On þære nyþemestan fleringe wæs heora gangpytt and heora mixen. On þære oþre fleringe wæs hæra nytena foda gelogod. On þære þriddan fleringe wæs seo forme wunung and þær wunedon þa wilddeor and þa reðan wyrmas. On þære feorðan fleringe wæs ðæra tamra nytena steal. On ðære fiftan fleringe wæs ðæra manna wunung mid wurðmynte gelogod, and hi ðær on wunedon for nean twelf monðas ær ðam þe þæt flod mihte beon adrugod. And þa ða þæt flod wanigende wæs, wen is þæt þæt wæter gewende to þære widgyllan neowelnysse þurh þa diglan æddran þyssere eorðan.

[28] 'The thirty pieces of silver. Concerning the silver that Judas was given for Christ. That is three obols. Each obol is made up of 12 pennies: that gives 36 pennies. Add them all together: the thirty silver pieces is then, the sum of all the money, 216 shillings.' There is an apparent error in transmission or calculation: 216s. is the equivalent of 2592d.; the product of 30 (pieces) and 36 (pennies) would be 1080d., or 90s.

[29] G. E. MacLean, 'Ælfric's Version of *Alcuini Interrogationes Sigeuulfi in Genesin*', *Anglia* 7 (1884), 1–59, at 34, lines 322–36, 340–4.

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Be þam þe Salomon cwæð þæt ealle ean eft gewændað þanan þe hi ær comon, þæt he eft flowan magon.[30]

A much briefer note on the dimensions of the ark circulated in Anglo-Saxon England in the Latin note collection found in CCCC 183, CCCC 320, Royal 2. B. v, and Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 2825; however, while the character of many of the notes in Harley 3271 suggests a cultural affinity with this tradition, the textual relationship is not close.[31] If scribe C knew the shorter Latin note, he chose not to include it, and may even have been responsible for the creation of this longer Old English note from Ælfric's *Interrogationes Sigeulfi*. Neither the treatment of the source material nor its careful correction suggests the random copying of extraneous material.[32] Again a numerical interest is apparent, though it is difficult to imagine how scribe C thought the notes *De triginta argenteos* and *Noes arc* might meaningfully accompany Ælfric's *Grammar* and the dialogue *Beatus quid est*. Furthermore, it is difficult to see – beyond the inclusion of numbers – what the two notes have to do with each other.

Odd in a different way is the interruption of scribe C's additions to the blank leaves of quire 12 by the notes of scribes D and E (90v–92v), only for C to return at the foot of 92v, where his last line runs beyond the ruled writing space (lines 24–31). Here he writes a note in question and answer form, a format deliberately edited out of *Noes arc*. This note, on Solomon's gold, recalls the interest in money and its divisions found in Item 6, *De triginta argenteos*, while the reference to Solomon flows on from the oblique reference to the wise king at the end of Item 7:

Hu micel goldes wæs Salomone broht æghwylce dæge. Þæt wæs feower ðusenda and syx and syxtig talentana. On ælcre talentan wæs LXXX punda. Swa micel wæs gebroht

[30] 'Noah's ark was rectangular, and three hundred fathoms long at the bottom, and fifty fathoms wide, and thirty fathoms high, and from the bottom to the top was so drawn together, that it narrowed and was closed at the top with one fathom, so that it might be most resistant to the ferocious showers. It was five-storeyed and had three apartments. On the lowest storey was their lavatory and their waste. On the second storey the feed for their animals was stored. On the third storey was the first dwelling, and there dwelled wild animals and fierce serpents. On the fourth storey was the stall of tame animals. On the fifth storey was the humans' apartment, appointed with dignity, and they dwelled there for nearly twelve months, before the Flood could be withdrawn. And then when the Flood was waning, the opinion is that the water returned to the gaping abyss through the hidden fonts of this earth. Concerning which Solomon said that all rivers later return whence they earlier came, so that they might flow again.' Cf. Gen. VI; the likely source for Solomon's utterance is Eccles. I.7; see Dekker, 'Encyclopaedic Notes', p. 293 n. 54.

[31] Dekker, 'Encyclopaedic Notes', Note 10, p. 284, lines 57–8, see also pp. 292–3.

[32] Scribe C has taken the trouble to correct the copying of the passage, striking out a repeated *feorðan* (90v, lines 8–9).

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on ðam temple, butan þam þe him fram cypemannum com, and fram cyningum, and fram ealre worulde ealdormannum broht wæs. On salomones tide wæs gold swa genihtsum, and seolfor on hierusalem swa stanas ofer eorðan. Hu nyt bið þæt ðeah þu ðe ealne middaneard and ealle eorðan wille gestrynan, gif þu þinre sawle unfreme and forlorenesse gewyrcst.[33]

The origin of the piece lies in the biblical account of Solomon's legendary wealth and the tribute brought to him (cf. I (III) Kings III.13; XI.14–15). The moralizing question paraphrases Mark VIII.36: *quid enim proderit homini si lucretur mundum totum et detrimentum faciat animae suae* (cf. also Matt. VI.29). An interest in numbers is found across all three notes written by scribe C at the end of quire 12. However, the moral of this third piece manifestly moves beyond numerical interest, and other links would have been apparent to the educated medieval reader. The story of the Flood was principally understood as apocalyptic, prefiguring the final destruction of the world, while Noah's ark and Solomon's Temple were often associated as types of the church.[34] The inclusion of the question on the receding waters in the first note also introduces a tangential link to Solomon which is continued in the note on his gold. The moralization attached to this third note more poignantly serves as a comment on Judas, who indeed chose lucre over salvation.

Scribe C's return to the manuscript after the intervention of scribes D and E distinguishes him from others who had a hand in Harley 3271, none of whom returns to the book once his stint is completed.[35] More striking still is the return of scribe C at the end of the manuscript for the writing of Items 38–40, the last three texts of Harley 3271. Items 38 and 39 are both excerpts from Ælfric's *Libellus*, while the final item (40) is (for the modern reader) confusingly headed *De initio creaturæ*. Item 39 (excerpted from earlier in the *Libellus* than item 38) is a text which suggests strongly that this scribe was one actively interested in the educational purpose of Harley 3271, and may even point to an anticipation of its direct use by schoolboys. Ælfric's *Libellus* is for the great part a treatise summarizing the Old and New Testaments, though this passage has nothing to do with scripture, and is taken from the later section outlining

[33] 'How much gold was Solomon brought? On each day that was 4,066 talents. In each talent was 80 pounds. So much was brought into the Temple, not including that which came to him from merchants and from kings, and was brought by all the world's noblemen. In Solomon's time gold and silver was as abundant in Jerusalem as stones over the earth. How useful is that, if you gain all the world and all the earth's goods, if you damage and lose your soul?'

[34] See, for example, Bede, *In Genesin*, ed. C. W. Jones, CCSL 118A (Turnhout, 1967) II, lines 1285–313, where Bede associates the ark, the Temple and Christ's resurrected body.

[35] A possible exception is Scribe I, who copied Items 27–31, fol. 120v–121v, and also copied Item 22 (102v) in a blank space left within Item 21, the dialogue *Beatus quid est*.

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the later careers of the apostles. The short story, which the excerpt becomes, details an episode involving John the Evangelist.

The account of the acts of John, derived from Jerome, is the stuff of romance. After telling the story of John's miraculous survival of an attempt to boil him in oil, the story returns the apostle to Ephesus from Patmos on the death of the Emperor Domitian. John continues his work preaching and establishing the church. In a town near Ephesus, the Apostle notices a young man (126v–127r):[36]

Ða geseah Iohannes sumne cniht on þam folce iunglicere ylde and ænlices hiwes, stranglic on wæstme and wenlic on nebbe, swiþe glæd on mode and on anginne caf, and begann to lufienne on his liþum þeawum þone iungan cniht þæt he hine Criste gestrynde. Ða beseah Iohannes swa up to þam bisceope, þe þa niwan wæs gehadod, and him þus cwæð to: 'Wite þu nu la bisceop, þæt ic wille þæt þu hæbbe þisne iungan man mid þe on þinre lare æt ham, and ic hine þe befæste mid gehealicere gecneordnisse on Cristes gewitnesse and þyssere gelaðunge.' Hwæt, þa se bisceop bliþelice underfeng þone foresædan cniht, and sæde þæt he wolde his gymene habban mid geornfulnesse, swa swa he him bead, on his wununge mid him. Iohannes þa eft geedlæhte his word and gelome bebead þam bisceope mid hæsum, þæt he þone iungan cniht gewissian sceolde to þam halgan geleafan, and he ham þa gewende eft to Effesan byrig to his bisceopstole. Se bisceop þa underfeng, swa swa him beboden wæs, þone iungan cniht, and him Cristes lare dæghwamlice tæhte and hine dyrweorðlice heold, oþ þæt he hine gefullode mid fullan truwan þæt he geleafful wære, and he wunode swa mid him on arwurðnesse, oþ þæt se bisceop hine let faran be his wille, wende þæt he sceolde on Godes gyfe þurhwunian on gastlicum þeawum.[37]

[36] Compare *Ælfric's Libellus*, ed. Marsden, pp. 223–7, lines 675–814; I have reproduced the spellings and textual variants found in Harley 3271; Marsden does not include this manuscript in his discussion of the *Libellus*, pp. xxx–xxxi, though Harley 3271 predates both witnesses used in his edition, Oxford: Bodleian Library, Laud Misc. 509 (s. xi^2) and Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 343 (s. xii^2).

[37] 'John saw a certain youth among the people, of young age and excellent countenance, strong in form, and handsome in face, very cheerful in spirit, and quick on the uptake, and he began in his gentle disposition to cherish the young lad, so that he might beget him for Christ. Then John looked towards the newly consecrated bishop, and said this to him: "Know this O bishop, I want you to have this young man with you for teaching in your household, and I commend him to you for the greatest of care, before Christ and this assembly." Indeed, the bishop took the aforementioned youth, and said he would eagerly have care of him, as he commanded him, and have him in his household with him. John then repeated his words afterwards and frequently enjoined the bishop with commands, that he should instruct the young man in the holy faith, and then he went home to his diocese at the city of Ephesus. The bishop then received the young lad as had been requested of him, and daily instructed him in Christ's teaching, and kept him as something precious, until he baptised him in full confidence that he was full of faith, and so he dwelled with him honourably, until the bishop allowed him to roam according to his own desire, hoping that he would persevere by God's grace in divine virtue.'

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The story is not simply one of conversion: not all converts become members of the bishop's household and receive his personal instruction in the faith, and certainly not all become priests, as this young man later does, after some misadventure. The relationship which has been established – and the one that would be understood by the Anglo-Saxon reader of the story when it was included in a schoolbook – is one between a teacher and pupil.

The bishop's failure to control the young man represents a misunderstanding of the role of grace, and it comes as no surprise that the one who is not ruled, soon rules himself. The story traces the decline from laxity to misrule (127r):

He geseah þa sona þæt he his sylfes geweold on ungeripodum freodome and unstæðdigum þeawum, and began þa to lufienne leahtras to swiþe and fela unþeawas mid his efenealdum cnihtum, þe unrædlice ferdon on heora idelum lustum on gewemmednessum and wolicum gebærum. He and his geferan þa begunnon to lufienne þa micclan druncennesse on nihtlicum gedwyldum, and hi þa hine on gebrohton þæt he began to stelenne on heora gewunan, and he gewenede swa hine sylfne symle to heora synlicum þeawum and to marum morðdædum mid þam manfullum flocce.[38]

The reference to the 'evil flock' provides an echo of the parable of the lost sheep (Luke XV.3–7), emphasizing the lapse into sin. However, the excerpter would have found in Ælfric's text an emphasis not simply on moral failure, but language stressing the disruption of the correct order of education, as the story becomes an inverted parody of the educational process, with the young man submitting to the perverse 'teaching' of brigands (127r):[39]

He genam þa heardlice þurh heora *lare* on his *orðance* þa egeslican dæda, and swa swa modig hors þe ungemidlod byð and nele gehyrsumian þam þe him on uppan sitt, swa ferde se cniht on his fracodum dædum, and on morðdædum miclum gestrangod on

[38] 'He then immediately saw that he had the rule of himself in immature freedom and frivolous habits, and began to love sin completely and many vices too much, with other lads of his age, who went ill-advised according to their idle desires in defilement and perverse conduct. He and his companions then began to love great drunkenness in nightly wandering, and they then led him astray so that he began to steal, as was their practice. And so he turned himself always to their sinful customs and to great deadly crimes with that sinful flock.'

[39] 'Through their *instruction*, he then undertook resolutely by his own *cleverness* those awful deeds, and just as a spirited horse which is unbroken and refuses to obey the one sitting on him, so went this lad in his wicked deeds, and in deadly crimes greatly confirmed in despair of his own salvation, so that he disbelieved in the mercy of his Lord, and did not care for the baptism he had received. He considered it a weakness that he should involve himself in the lesser crimes, but he *studied* ever more and more in his wickedness and he would not allow anyone to be his equal in evil. He would not suffer to be subjugated to his evil companions, who had earlier *mistaught* him, but wished to be the most senior among that evil flock and formed his companions in banditry in the open countryside with all bloody cruelty.' Emphasis added.

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orwennesse his agenre hæle, swa þæt he ortrywode on his drihtnes mildheortnesse, and his fulluhtes ne rohte, þe he underfangen hæfde. Him þuhte þa to waclic þæt he wolde gefremman þa læssan leahtras, ac he *leornode* æfre maran and maran on his manfulnesse and ne læt nænne his gelican on yfele. He ne geþafode þa, þæt he underþeod wære yfelum gegadum, þe hine ær *forlærdon*, ac wolde beon yldest on þam yfelan flocce, and geworhte his geferan to wealdgengum ealle on widgillum dunum on ealre wælhreownysse.

Not only will the young man not submit to proper education, he embraces teaching in wrong, and presents a further mockery of correct process by becoming a teacher of perversity himself. Ælfric's language draws out the parodic inversion of schooling that the young man has embraced, as the young man accepts the bandits *lare* (teaching) in his *orðance* (intelligence) but the more he learns (*leornode*), the more he is mistaught (*forlærdon*). There would be no point in including the story in a schoolbook unless this process of decline were reversed; this comes with the return of John the Apostle to the town. John asks after the youth, only to find that the bishop has been neglectful. The bishop explains what has happened, lamenting that the young man is dead to God. John does not share the bishop's despair, and in true romance style rides into the countryside haunted by the bandits, and allows himself to be captured, setting up an encounter with their leader. John expresses a paternal concern, and affectionately encourages the wayward lad to repent and obey (128r):[40]

Ne ondræd þe la earming; git þu hæfst lifes hiht. Ic wille agildan gescead for þinre sawle Criste and ic lustlice wille min lif for þe syllan, swa swa se Hælend sealde hine sylfne for us, and mine agene sawle ic sylle for þinre. Ætstand huru nu, and gehyr þas word, and gelyf þæt se Hælend me asende to þe.

The wretch falls at the apostle's feet weeping for his crimes, and returns with him to the bishop. John instructs him further in God's mercy, before ordaining him. The story in the context of Ælfric's *Libellus* is an account of divine mercy, with some reference to education. In Harley 3271 it becomes a moral tale for schoolboys who will not submit to their masters. The inclusion of this item by scribe C is significant, as it reveals him to be one actively interested in the process of education, the major purpose of the manuscript into which he has written otherwise apparently disconnected notes. Furthermore, it is perhaps more likely that the moral of the tale would be directed towards the student than the teacher (though lax bishops and indifferent discipline are also

[40] 'Don't be afraid you little wretch – you still have hope in life. I will give an account of your soul to Christ, just as the Saviour gave himself for us, and gladly give my soul for yours. At least stop now and listen to these words, and believe that the Saviour sent me to you.'

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criticized), and its inclusion in Old English may point to use of this book by students.

In Harley 3271 the story of the wayward student follows another excerpt from Ælfric's *Libellus*, reversing the order of their appearance in the original text. Item 38 presents Ælfric's account of the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, the last event in the sweeping historical narrative of a treatise designed to outline the story of the Old and New Testaments (124v–125r):

Ic wolde secgan be þam ungesæligum folce, be þam Iudeiscum, þe urne Drihten ahengon, ac ic wolde ærest secgan þæt þæt ic gesæd hæbbe. Manega ðær gelyfdon of þam mancynne on Crist, ac se mæsta dæl þæs mancynnes nolde on hine gelyfan and losodon for ði. Him becomon fela yrmða æfter Cristes ðrowunge on eallum ungelimpum, and ofslagene wurdon fela þæs folces mid færlicum onræsum. And hi acwealdon Cristes apostolas ðone gingran Iacob and þone rihtwisan Iacob, and Stephanum oftorfodon mid heardum stanum, and heora yfel geeacnodon him sylfum to unðearfe and noldon besargian þæs Hælendes slege ne mid nanre dædbote his miltse biddan. Ða sende he him to syllice tacna and siþþan hergunge þurh þa Romaniscan. Vespassianus wæs casere on þam timan; se asende him to his sunu Titum mid micelre fyrde þæs Romaniscan folces and besæt hiora burh, oþ þæt hi swulton hungre and mann awearp þa lic for ðan laðlican stence ut ofer ðone weall, and ne mihton nateshwon for heora mægenleaste þa mænigu bewyrian. Hi cuwon heora gyrdlas and gærs æton georne, and ælc læhte of oþrum, gif he hwæt lytles hæfde, and þone mete of þam muþe swiþe unmæðlice, and reaferas urnon geond ealle þa burh and smealice sohton mid swiþlicum þreate þone behyddan mete on heora hordcleofan, and beoton ælcne man þe ænig þincg hæfde, gif he heora wodnisse wolde wiþcweðan. Nys us na to secgenne þone scamlican morð þe ðær gedon wæs, ac hy wurdon adydde mid þam hatan hungre, fela hund manna þæs ærman mennisces[41], ma þonne we secgan willað, and þa reaferas syþþan ofsloh ælc oþerne, and seo burh wearð gewyld and toworpen grundlunga, swa se Hælend sæde ær his þrowunge. Of þam geongum cnapum, þe comon of þam hungre, on eallum þam lande hi alæddon aweg to wyrcenne godeweb, swa swa hi wæron getogene, and of þam cnapum ys þæt cyn gyt gehwær, and þis wæs þæt edlean heora yfelan dæda and eac hellewite, þæt þæt him hefegore is.[42]

[41] corrected by the scribe from *menisces*, *n* added above line.

[42] 'I have wanted to speak about that unhappy nation, the Jewish people, who crucified our Lord, but first I wanted to say the things which I have said. Many of that race believed in Christ, but the greater part of the race would not believe in him, and thereby perished. Many miseries of all sorts came to them after the passion of Christ, and many of that nation were killed in sudden attacks. And they themselves also killed Christ's apostles – James the Younger, and James the Just, and they also battered Stephen with hard stones. And their evil increased to their own ruin, and they would not regret the Saviour's killing, nor with any penitence pray for his mercy. Then he sent them wondrous signs, and afterwards a ravaging attack by means of the Romans. Vespasian was the Caesar at that time; he sent against them his son Titus, with a great army of the Roman people, and he besieged their city, until they died of hunger, and because of the stench the bodies were thrown over the wall, and because of their weakness they could not defend the multitude at all. They chewed their belts and eagerly ate

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Divorced from the conspectus of sacred history in the *Libellus*, the passage emerges as a remarkable piece of anti-Semitism, with none of the theological nuancing found earlier in the treatise, which understood Christians replacing Jews as God's chosen people.[43] After this short account Ælfric concludes his discussion of the Bible, with a comment included in Harley 3271 by scribe C (fol. 125r):

Nu miht þu wel witan, þæt weorc sprecað swiþor þonne þa nacodan word, ðe nabbað nane fremminge. Is swa þeah god weorc on þam godum wordum, þonne man oþerne *lærð* and to geleafan getrymð mid ðære soþan *lare*, and þonne man *wisdom* spre[c]ð manegum to ðearfe and to rihtinge, þæt God sy geherod, se þe a rixað. Amen.[44]

The conclusion may help to link the passage to the theme of wisdom in Napier VII, which precedes it, and to the importance of right teaching in the tale of the wayward schoolboy, which follows, though these emphasises are secondary here. Ælfric's comment that scripture speaks in more than the literal sense expresses the Patristic distinction between the spiritual interpretation of the sacred text characterized as Christian, opposed to Jewish literalism. The ending gives the piece a homiletic flavour, but has nothing to do with the story of Titus's destruction of Jerusalem. The excerpted piece begins with the blood-guilt of the Jews, moves through observations on failures of fraternal charity, to cannibalism and murder, and ends with a stereotypical nation of tailors in Ælfric's own time. The interest in the fate of exiled Jewish boys provides a faint anticipation of the despair of John's protégé; but the passage is dominated by an interest in the fate of the Jewish people, whom Ælfric enigmatically

grass, and each stole from the other, of what little he had, and stole the meat from the mouth in a very unkinsmanlike way. And the reeves ran all through the city and with violent threats carefully sought hidden food in storehouses, and beat any man who had anything, if he dared contradict their madness. It is not for us to speak about the shameful murder that was done there, but many hundreds of that miserable race perished of that intense famine, more than we will say. And the reeves afterwards slew each other. And the city was taken and levelled to the ground, as the Saviour had said before his passion. The young children who survived the famine were led away throughout that land to manufacture fine cloth, as they were compelled, and from these young ones descends the nation that is still everywhere. And this was the final reward for their evil deeds, and the punishments of hell too, which is even heavier for them.'

[43] The fullest discussion of the complex attitudes to Jews in the literature of the Anglo-Saxons is A. P. Scheil, *The Footsteps of Israel: Understanding the Jews in Anglo-Saxon England* (Ann Arbor, MI, 2004).

[44] 'Now you may well know that the work speaks more than the naked word, which has no purpose. There is nevertheless good work in the good words, when one man *teaches* another and edifies with true *teaching*, and when a man speaks *wisdom* to the profit and direction of many, so that God be praised, he who rules forever. Amen.' Emphasis added. The scribe fails to correct *spreð* to *sprecð*.

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describes being 'everywhere'. No clear evidence exists for the presence of Jews in England before the Conquest.[45]

Two other items in Harley 3271, neither in the hand of scribe C, also offer reflections on the characteristics of the Jewish people. The first, Item 4 (6v, lines 23–28, scribe Z) does so in passing, in the context of a Latin list of national attributes, few of which are flattering: 'Victoria aegyptorum. Invidia iudeorum. Sapientia grecorum. Crudelitas pictorum. Calliditas uel fortitudo romanorum. Largitas longabardorum. Gula gallorum. Superbia uel ferocitas francorum. Ira bryttanorum. Stultitia saxonum uel anglorum. Libido iberniorum.'[46] This short item could be read easily by the beginner in Latin, and would provide good practice in genitive plural endings. The reference to Saxons beside Picts, Irish, Britons and other neighbours provides local interest, beside reference to some well-known biblical nations. A second piece, Item 23 (by scribe G), excerpted from the office of vespers for the *Inventio sancti Stephani*, reveals a more specific interest in the Jewish people. This is a separate feast from the martyrdom of Stephen (an event referred to in Item 38), and commemorates on 3 August the miraculous discovery of the saint's remains. According to the legend abridged in Item 23 (Saint) Gamaliel, the Jewish teacher of St Paul, appeared in 417 to the priest Lucian, revealing the location of the body of St Stephen. The liturgical piece interweaves an account of the vision with a series of short responses; the text ends abruptly and incompletely. Neither this liturgical excerpt nor Ælfric's account of the siege of Jerusalem would appear to be concerned with education (Gamaliel's role as Paul's teacher notwithstanding); however, the thematic overlap between the two pieces is striking, as both reveal a strong interest in the Jewish people and their historical response to Christ.

The principle purpose in the design of Harley 3271 is the teaching of Latin; a number of notes included in the book point to a strong secondary interest in computus, prognostication and calculation. In the case of Items 6 (*De triginta argenteos*) and 7 (*Hu micel goldes*), an interest in the Jewish people overlaps with an interest in calculation. This same overlapping interest is developed closely in the final item in the book, again in the hand of scribe C, which may be an autograph composition in this manuscript. The rubric *De initio creaturae* is misleading in the context of the Ælfrician texts, and this piece has nothing to do with Ælfric's First Series homily given the same name. The piece presents a reckoning of the time elapsed from the creation to the author's present:

[45] See S. Keynes, 'Jews', in *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. M. Lapidge, J. Blair, S. Keynes and D. Scragg (Oxford, 1999), p. 262; see J. Campbell, 'The Late Anglo-Saxon State: a Maximum View', *PBA* 87 (1995), 39–65, at 61–2.

[46] 'Victory of the Egyptians; envy of the Jews; wisdom of the Greeks; cruelty of the Picts; cunning or courage of the Romans; generosity of the Lombards; greed of the Gauls; pride or ferocity of the Franks; anger of the Britons; folly of the Saxons or Angles; lust of the Irish.'

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Her mæg findan, se ðe secan wile, hu micel þæs geargeteles is aurnen fram Adame and fram Euan his wife and fram frymðe middaneardes to ðam flode, þæt wæs ðonne geargerimes twa ðusenda wintra and twahund wintra and twa and feowertyg wintra. Þonne wæs fram þam flode þa forð to Abrahames acennednesse nigan hund wintra and feowertyg wintra. Þonne wæs fram Abrahames acennednesse forð oð Moyses gebyrdtidu and þara Israhela bearna gefære of Egyptum, þæt wæs ðonne fif hund wintra and fif and hundteontig wintra. Þonne wæs fram Moyses gebyrdtide þa forð to Salomones gebyrde and his mæran frumgeweorces ðæs temples on Hierusalem, þæt is ðonne feower hund wintra and eahta and hundseofantyg wintra. Þonne wæs ealles aurnen geargerimes fram frymðe middaneardes oþ Cristes acennednesse fif ðusend wintra and eahta and twentig wintra. Þa wæs fram frymðe ealles aurnen oþ þæs temples geweorc, þæt sindon feower þusenda wintra and an hund wintra and seofan and syxtig wintra. Nu we magon secan and eaðe findan hwæt þara wyrhtena wæs þe þone stan bæron to ðam weorce: ða man þæt mære Salomones tempell worhte, þæt is hund seofantyg ðusenda; and ðus fela wæs ðara ðe þone stan snidan and fegdon, þæt wæs hund eahtatig þusenda; and þara[47] gerefena wæs þreo ðusenda and eac ðreo hund þe þa men bewiston æt þam temple; and þæt tempel wæs on seofan gearan geworht on þam monþe þe we October nemnað; and þæs temples længe wæs syxtig fæðma and seo widnes wæs twentig fæþma and his heahnys wæs þritig fæþma. Na hyrde we to soðe siþþan seccgan þæt on ðære ealdan æ ænig wurde hus aræred swylic þæt mære wæs. And þonne wæs fram þæs temples geweorce to Cristes ðrowunge twa þusdenda wintra and seofon and ðrytig wintra. Þonne wæs fram frymþe, oð Romana burh wearð getimbrad, ealles aurnen feower ðusenda wintra and feower hund wintra and feower and hundeahtatyg wintra. Fram ðære burge geweorce oð Cristes gebyrdtide wæs ða agan seofan hund wintra. Ðonne is nu fram frymþe ealles aurnen syxþusenda wintra and an hund wintra and twa and þrytyg wintra. To ðæm eastrun þe bið IIII Nones Aprilis, and bið se bissextus þy ilcan geare and þa indictiones XV.[48]

[47] Corrected from *þa*, *ra* written above the line.

[48] 'Here he may find, he who wishes to seek, how great is the count of years continuously from Adam and from Eve his wife and from the beginning of middle earth to the Flood: that was the number of years 2,242 years. Then from the Flood then forward to Abraham's birth was the count 940 years. Then from Abraham's birth forward to Moses's birth-time and the exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt was then 605 years. Then from Moses's birth-time then to Solomon's birth and his great foundational building of the Temple in Jerusalem was 478 years. Then was completely and continuously run the year-count from the beginning of middle earth until Christ's birth 5028 years. Then from the beginning was completely run until the building of the Temple, this is 4167 years. Now we may seek and easily find something about the number of workers who carried the stone to the building, the men who built the Temple of Solomon the Great: that is 70,000; and in this many [pieces] was the stone cut and joined: that was 80,000. And the number of the reeves was 3,000. And also 300 who instructed men at the Temple. And the Temple was built in 7 years, [completed] in the month we call October. And the Temple was 60 fathoms long, and 20 fathoms wide, and 30 fathoms high. Never have we heard truly said afterwards that under the old Law was any building raised up that was like it in greatness. And then from the building of the Temple to Christ's passion 2037 years. Then was from the creation until the building of the city of Rome

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On the basis of the date of the Easter it appears the note was composed in 1032. Some elements of this passage point to a debt to the long-standing Anglo-Saxon tradition of numerical notes, while others (including this composition itself) point to innovation. The general character of the passage echoes the Latin note on the Six Ages of the World transmitted among the collection found in Corpus 183, Corpus 320, Royal 2. B. v, and Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 2825. In the note in Harley 3271, however, the author does not refer directly to the Ages, and implies a variant set of turning points between them.[49] However, the counting of the years around the foundation of Rome reveals a clear (if corrupt) debt to the older collection's note:[50] 'Ab orbe condito usque ad urbem conditam sunt anni .iiiimilia.lxxxiiii. ab urbe condita usque natiuitatem christi. anni .dccxv. collegitur ergo ab origine mundi usque in aduentum domini anni .v. milia.cxcviii.' Another note common to the Latin tradition described the dimensions of Solomon's Temple:[51] 'Longitudo templi .lx. cubitos in longitudine et .xxx. cubitos in latitudine. et .xxx. cubitos in altitudine.' The source is ultimately scriptural (I (III) Kings VI.2), but the Latin note tradition deviates from the scriptural text, which counts sixty by twenty by thirty cubits; Harley 3271, however, presents the correct biblical number. The inclusion of the number of workmen, derived from I (III) Kings V.15–16, is paralleled in notes in British Library, Cotton Tiberius A. iii and Julius A. ii, but not found in the Latin note collection.[52]

One biblical event is clearly given much greater prominence than all others in *De initio creaturæ* – the building of Solomon's Temple. Interest in the Temple is not unique to this passage, and is found in other notes included by scribe C in Harley 3271: the silver paid to Judas by the Temple priests (cf. Matt. XXVI.14–16; XXVII.3–10); the gold (which could not save a man's soul)

completely and continuously run 4,484 years. From the building of the city until the time of Christ's birth was then done 700 years. Then is to the present from the creation continuously and completely run 6,132 years, to the Easter which is the fourth nones of April (2 April) and the bisextus (intercalary day) is in the same year, and the fifteenth of the indiction.' The sums do not add up; the year 1032 is given by the date of Easter; see Ker, *Catalogue*, p. 312. Compare the calculations in Item 6.

[49] See M. Förster, 'Die Weltzeitalter bei den Angelsachsen', *Neusprachliche Studien, Festgabe Karl Luick zu seinem sechzigsten Geburtstag* (Marburg, 1933), pp. 183–203, at 197, n. 4.

[50] Dekker, 'Encyclopaedic Notes', Note 3, pp. 281–2, at lines 37–9; trans., p. 314, 'From the foundation of the world to the foundation of the city [of Rome] there are 4084 years. From the foundation of the city [of Rome] to the birth of Christ there are counted 715 years. Thus from the beginning of the world to the coming of the Lord there are counted 5199 years.' The ultimate source is Bede, *De temporum ratione*, ed. C. W. Jones, CCSL 123B (Turnhout, 1977), p. 607.4; see Dekker, 'Encyclopaedic Notes', p. 288.

[51] Dekker, 'Encyclopaedic Notes', Note 7, p. 283, lines 51–2; 'The length of the Temple is sixty cubits in length and thirty cubits in width and thirty cubits in height.'

[52] *Ibid.* p. 291

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brought to Solomon in his Temple; and the account of the Temple's final destruction by the army of Rome. While the date of the founding of Rome could provide a useful reckoning tool for historians, the more likely association between Rome and the Temple at Jerusalem implied in *De initio creaturæ* is suggested by the accompanying account of Jerusalem's destruction in Item 38. In a commonplace of medieval Christian historical understanding, the Jewish rejection of Christ led to their displacement as the chosen people, supplanted by Rome, which became the centre of the Catholic Christian world.[53] This election was extended to the Anglo-Saxons with their conversion to Christianity. From this perspective, the inclusion of the Tribal Hidage on fol. 6v surely represents more than an 'antiquarian interest', as John Blair has suggested.[54] The careful enumeration of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms and tribes (with echoes of the division of the promised land amongst the tribes of Israel in Josh. XV–XXII), in a manuscript so interested in the mathematics of divine election, is the probable motivation for the inclusion of this national 'census' in Harley 3271.

The positioning of scribe C's contributions to Harley 3271 implies that he had a hand in compiling the book as we have it. Codicological evidence suggests that Ælfric's *Grammar* and the dialogue *Beatus quid est* had been copied earlier, and were bound together to create this volume. These two texts point directly to the needs of a teacher of Latin. Along with other copyists, scribe C filled up empty spaces throughout the book created by the binding together of these two booklets, to which were also added three quires filled with other items related to learning Latin; many of these additions reveal an interest in prognostics and computus. The inclusion of the episode from the legend of John the Evangelist concerning the errant student in C's hand points to this scribe's interest in education, and his taste for (rather than skill in) calculation presents an interest in other items included in Harley 3271. Apart from the story of the wayward student, the items in scribe C's hand reveal varying degrees of interest in Solomon and the Temple in Jerusalem. The note *Noes arc* mentions Solomon in passing, but probably more significant is the commonplace typological association between the ark and the Temple. The Temple is not specifically mentioned in the Ælfric's account of Jerusalem's destruction, but undoubtedly this scholar understood that Titus destroyed the second Temple. It is possible that the thematic coincidences between these notes are simply that, and that any relationship between C's notes is only conjectural. However, such a conclusion would also have to dismiss the inclusion of various computus and prognostic items in different

[53] See N. Howe, 'Rome: Capital of Anglo-Saxon England', *Jnl of Med. and Early Mod. Stud.* 34 (2004), 147–72, 156.

[54] J. Blair, 'The Tribal Hidage', *Encyclopaedia of Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Lapidge, *et al.*, pp. 455-6, at 455. The prominence of Mercia in the Hidage may point to its origins in the same period which saw the first compilations of numerical notes.

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hands as similarly coincidental. It is more likely that the items reflect the personal interests of a compiler, who probably was associated with the teaching of Latin in the schoolroom of a major centre; other evidence suggests this may have been Winchester. It is noteworthy that two of the surviving manuscripts with the Latin note collection also appear to have an early Winchester provenance.[55]

Scribe C and some of his colleagues are also clearly interested in the Jewish people, and both their place and displacement within history. The year signalled by the date of Easter in *De initio creaturæ* suggests that if C is the author, he was writing in 1032; the fact that 1033 would mark the millennium of Christ's crucifixion in Jerusalem may suggest an apocalyptic interest in numbers, as the ages of the world wind down to its end. The manuscript's interest in Jewish responses to Christ might also indicate this. Ælfric, whose works were clearly well known and available to the scribes and compiler, notes in his First Series homily *Dominica II in aduentum Domini* Christ's assurance that the Jewish people would not pass away before the end of the world.[56] The earliest witness to the numerical Latin note collection, Cotton Vespasian B. vi, suggests that the Christian numbers they describe are thematically associated with a new Christian order promised in the symbolic numbers of the Old Testament, and fulfilled in the New. The inclusion of the Tribal Hidage in Harley 3271 provides a strong indication that this meaning was well understood at Winchester in the first half of the eleventh century, and was considered appropriate material for teaching in the Anglo-Saxon schoolroom. Schoolboys had to know their numbers in Latin, but they also had to know what numbers mean. The date 1032 may be coincidental. However, the interest in Jewish responses to Christ attested in a range of items in Harley 3271 points to an active reflection on the deeper meaning of the tradition of numerical notes. The belief that Christians had replaced Jews as God's chosen people was one that understood displacement as an anticipation of apocalyptic fulfilment, when the Jewish people would finally accept Christ. Whether the acute interest in the Jewish people, numbers and history in Harley 3271 was the product of direct familiarity with Jewish converts to Christianity, or their presence in late Anglo-Saxon England, is impossible to say.[57]

[55] See Gneuss, *Handlist*, no. 56 (Corpus 183: Wessex? Winchester? Glastonbury?), no. 451 (Royal 2. B. v: Winchester Nunnaminster?); note also no. 380, Cotton Titus D. xxvi and xxvii, 'Ælfwine's Prayerbook', copied at Winchester New Minster 1023 × 1031, which contains a number of numerical notes; see *Ælfwine's Prayerbook (London, British Library, Cotton Titus D. xxvi + xxvii)*, ed. B. Günzel, HBS 108 (London, 1993), 70–8.

[56] *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies. The First Series. Text*, ed. P. Clemoes, EETS ss 17 (Oxford, 1997), 528, no. 40, lines 127-31. Ælfric's interpretation is not taken from his source; see M. Godden, *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies. Introduction, Commentary and Gloss*, EETS ss 18 (Oxford, 2000), 340.

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