

Introduction and Bibliography for
an Edition of the
Medulla Grammaticae
Stonyhurst MS. (A. 1. 10)

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Introduction

Background

This work is an attempt at revealing a current of thinking; indeed, a first in the direction of understanding a sub-literary movement which took place within England from beginning to end of the fifteenth century. This Stonyhurst edition represents of the earliest Latin-English glossaries in the tradition entitled the *Medulla Grammaticae* or *Marrow of Grammar* (Philology), ante 1425 A. D.

The *Medulla Grammaticae* comprises nineteen known manuscripts and four fragments. To the early 1400s belong Lincoln ms. 88, Shrewsbury XVI, Stonyhurst ms. XV (A.1.10). The remainder are dated mid-to-late within the century. They are Additional mss. 24640, 33534 (circa 1460), and 37789; Bristol University, ms. DM 14; Canterbury D.2, Downside Abbey 26540; Harley 1000, 1738, 2181, 2257, 2270; Holkham misc. 39, Lincoln ms. 111, Pepys 2002; Rawlinson C 101. Only one manuscript is internally dated, St. John's (Cambridge) 72 C 22: 16 December 1468. Concerning the fragments, MS Brasenose College, Oxford UB S.2.87-8 is

preserved on four leaves containing very little of P, Q, and R. It is dated mid-century. The Bristol University ms. DM 1, possessing 459 entries of C and six entries of D, on three leaves, is dated ante 1425.¹ Also early are ms. Rawlinson D. 913 in the Bodleian library, composed of one leaf of the letter I, and the Gloucester ms. GDR/Z1/31, in the Gloucester Records Office, containing two double-columned leaves of the letter S.²

The Bristol DM 1 and the Gloucester GDR/Z1/31 mss. are the only published material in the form of full critical editions within the tradition of the *Medulla Grammaticae* as well as the only published mss. within the many traditions of Latin and Middle English glossography.

Stonyhurst ms. entries are in Latin with glosses or interpretations in Middle English. Not infrequently transliterated Greek appears with Latin and/or Middle English as glosses. Sometimes Hebrew (and even more expected but rarer French) makes its appearance. The interchange of the languages in this work reflects the culmination of a linguistic tradition that dates from the early centuries A.D., i.e. Jerome, the Old and New Testaments, Isidore, and Festus, through the Latin, Greek, and Old English glossaries of the 7th, 8th, and 9th centuries and on into the 12th and 13th century wordlists and glossaries of Johannes de Janua and Hugutio of Pisa, as well as bears witness to the remarkable dialectal phenomenon which mirrored the changes in the Middle English language throughout the area at the time.

The principal features in glossography of this period are the lack of content and abundant disorder. A. S. Way, the nineteenth century editor of the *Promptorium Parvulorum*, one of the three major glossaries produced in England during the 15th century, remarked in his introduction: “The MSS. of the *Medulla* are more numerous than those of the *Promptorium*. They vary in their contents in a remarkable degree; it might indeed seem that each transcriber made such modifications of the text as pleased him, or that he engrafted upon it the additional words and explanatory glosses which he found inserted by any previous hand.”³

Michael Lapidge supports this perception when he says: “Of all texts, glossaries are the most prone to scribal interference; to selective copying, interpolation,

¹ V. P. McCarren, “Bristol University MS DM 1. A Fragment of the *Medulla Grammaticae*: An Edition,” *Traditio* 48, 1993, pp. 173-235.

² Id., “Gloucester MS of the *Medulla Grammaticae*: GDR/Z1/31: An Edition,” *The Journal of Medieval Latin*, 10, 2000, Brepols, pp. 338-401.

³ A. S. Way, *Promptorium Parvulorum sive Clericorum*, London, 1865, pp. xxi-xxii.

omission, and so on.”⁴ A. S. Way further comments: “It has been found impossible to preserve the perfect regularity of alphabetical arrangement, in consequence of the disorder that had been introduced by the scribe, who, writing more by ear than careful observation of orthography, has in his transcript continually vitiated the spelling of the original.”⁵ To emphasize a different approach to Medieval alphabetization confer the impressive work of Brian Merrilees on the subject of metalinguistics.⁶ The Tradition represents a collection of words and phrases reflecting virtually every aspect of theoretical and practical life, since its substance is derived from supralineal and marginal inserts made in copies of every conceivable type of literary transmission.

The Stonyhurst XV (A.1.10) MS is found in the Stonyhurst College Library, Preston, Lancashire, and is regarded among the earliest of the known manuscripts of the *Medulla Grammaticae*, ante 1425. It is doubled-columned and, lacking an incipit, it begins at folio 1r with *A* and ends with *Zodico* at 71r. Following the final lemma comes an inscription, in a different hand, of four lines referring to a parish name, Stanton, and the specific fest Day of the Purification of the Virgin in 1473. The manuscript is in generally good condition.

Alan Piper of Durham University, in the final volume of Ker’s *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries*, explains the mistaken notion of a second Stonyhurst manuscript of the *Medulla* by pointing out that Stonyhurst MSS 14, 15, and 17 were bound together. Segment 3 of MS 17, folios 165-178v, is no more than a guide or outline to the *Medulla Grammaticae* extending from [*A*]bauus to *Zenotrophica*. MS 15 (A.1.10) is the only Stonyhurst manuscript of the *Medulla Grammaticae*.

A letter of 6 March 1990 from Mr. Piper provides a full description of the manuscript:

Dear Mr. McCarren:

Further to your letter of 27 February I enclose herewith copies of the descriptions of Stonyhurst College MSS 14, 15, and 17 prepared for *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries*, vol. 4. As you will see, these at one time were bound together (see

⁴ M. Lapidge, “The School of Theodore and Hadrian,” *Anglo-Saxon England*, 15, 1986, p. 54.

⁵ A. S. Way, *Promptorium Parvulorum sive Clericorum*, London, 1985 [Advertisement, p. vii].

⁶ B. Merrilees, “Metalexigraphie médiévale: la fontion de la metalangue dans un dictionnaire bilingue du Moyen Age,” *ALMA*, 50, 1991, pp. 33-70.

page 10, lines 1-3) and from this fact it would seem that the mistaken impression has arisen that between them they contained two copies of the *Medulla Grammaticae*. In fact, as you will see, there is only one copy of this text, now forming MS 15, with a guide to it as MS 17, art. 3 ...

Yours sincerely,
A. J. Piper

Enclosures

...15 (HMC 18). Latin-English vocabulary s.xv.in A anglice fro. Ab idem. Abactus.ta.tum.id est fugatus dispersus...Zodico.as to gyrde up.

A copy of the English-Latin [sic] or, very often [sic], Latin-English dictionary, *Medulla Grammaticae*, cf. Vol. 4, MMBL ii. 213,277. Here without the preface, *Hec est regula*. ... A space of a few lines left between each letter.

In blank space f.71: Staunton [a parish name?] In primis Anno Domini mo cccco lxxiiio in Festo Pur' beate Marie virg' in Cera ii lb'prec'le lb' viid Summa xiiijd. Idem die dominica prox' post Festum Pur' in oblac' id ob.

f.f. iii+72 (foliated 1-33, 33*, 34-71) + iii. 300x197mm.

Written space 232xc. 150mm. 2 cols. 40 lines. Collation: 1-98. Quires signed in the usual late medieval fashion, a-j.

Anglicana formata. Initials: (i) f. 1,3-line, blue with red ornament; (ii) to each new letter and subdivisions of letters 2-line, as (1), except to subdivisions of the letter L, 1-line blue.

Capital letters in the ink of the text marked with pale yellow.

Binding of calf over pasteboard, s.xix. Secundo folio hes.

Acrementum.

written in England. MSS. 14, 15 and 17 were together in that order in s.xix, when the quires were numbered 1, 3-6 (MS 14), 7-15 (MS 15) and 16-18, 26, 19-25, 27, 29, 28 (MS 17).

The Stonyhurst MS was chosen for editing due to its unique combination of virtues, i.e., being of the earliest of the manuscripts (a1425) within the tradition of the *Medulla Grammaticae*, and being complete, having just shy of 16,000 entries within seventy-one folios. Among the others, Harleian 2257 contains 195 folios,

and the St. John's (Cambridge) has 119 outlet-columned folios. Also the Additional 33534, Lincoln 111, and Harleian 2270 are quite extensive, each ranging from between 125 and 175 folios, double-columned, approximately containing 35,000 to 50,000 entries. In all, the tradition encompasses between one-third and one-half million entries. In relation to the material which constitutes the nineteen manuscripts and four fragments of the *Medulla Grammaticae*, not to mention the enormous glossographical reserves world-wide, this edition of the Stonyhurst manuscript finds itself a proud but measured contribution. Being a classicist by training and the sole culprit of this work's revelations, I could not have hoped for a fuller plate.⁷ The Stonyhurst manuscript is exemplary of the many challenges facing the editor of medieval glossaries and the edition presented here represents the fruits of exhaustive labour upon such diverse problems. It is hope that this edition might provide a sense of the scope and significance of this glossographical tradition.

Acknowledgements

I wish to extend a note of personal gratitude to Professor Anne-Marie Turcan Verkerk of the Sorbonne and editor of *Archivum Latinitatis Medii Aevi (ALMA)* who, with such grace and understanding saw to the publishing of letters A, B, and the first half of C of this Stonyhurst edition. My inability to continue with this superb journal was due to severe spinal problems which have somewhat responded to surgery and ongoing physical therapy. Under most generous circumstances with direction from Jim Ottaviani, transference from *ALMA* to the University of Michigan Library digital research repository Deep Blue was realized, all to the advantage of this publication which was under special attention of Sigrid Cordell, senior associate librarian.

As one might imagine, there have been quite a number of colleagues and friends who have supported me over the years in this exhaustive endeavor. At the inception of the project (1983), David Jost, a colleague at University of Michigan's *Middle English Dictionary (MED)* project, alone nodded his most effective enthusiasm. He and I have consulted all of these years in a friendship only a few are lucky enough to have. His insights and critical analyses have been proven invaluable. He has been a true and consistent benefit to me at every stage.

⁷ For a detailed description of the manuscripts of the *Medulla Grammaticae* see Appendix II of V. P. McCarren's critical edition of the Bristol MS. DM1 in *Traditio*, 48, 1993, pp. 220-24.

Dick McKelvey, a senior editor at the *Dictionary*, offered me a place in the Library Room, which enabled me to develop on all lexicographical levels. Based upon his knowledge of Middle English, he urged me to tread carefully and maintain a toehold in reality. At several segments it proved to be very good advice.

Doug Moffat, my co-editor of *A Guide to Editing Middle English*, more a literary critic than a subliterate one, grew quite fond of these “wee equations” and was a stalwart of mine in offering his library in process towards the completion of this edition, not to mention our lengthy discussions upon paleographical matters.

Both Mona Logarbo and Paul Schaffner, editors at the *MED* and now at the *On-Line MED*, filled my bookshelves with extra copies of earlier editions of glossarial work and a complete set of the *MED* to serve as a fundament of linguistic reference.

Brian Merrilees and Bill Edwards from the University of Toronto have produced two brilliant volumes of glossaries in the French tradition (see bibl.), which kept me steadily on course, along with the helpful text of Anne Grondeux (see bibl.) It was left to the touch of a physicist friend, an Irishman as am I, Dominic Holland, to help me sort out some of the knotty problems surrounding moon, stars, and other atmospherics, relaxed very occasionally by a dram of Teeling’s.

Finally, a very special thanks to Lidie Howes, who, as managing editor of the *MED*, maintained the tempo necessary to complete the *MED*. Special gratitude is owed to Jim Ottaviani of Deep Blue and the University of Michigan Library for his invaluable assistance. The support of the Department of Statistics at the University of Michigan is greatly appreciated and has been key to completing the digital publication of this work. I am grateful for the support of the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Michigan and of Professor James Hilton, Director of University Libraries.

I wish to dedicate this work to my wife who had encouraged my earliest commitment to the project. Her support never wavered. Nothing I have done could have been done without my wonderful Helene.

Vincent P. McCarren

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 cf. V. P. McCarren, ed., Bristol Univ. MS.DMI. "A Fragment of the *Medulla Grammaticae*," pp. 220-24.

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