



Ornulum

**The Johannesson edition –
principles, practice, products**

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Today's seminar

- The history and features of the *Ormulum*,
- The *Ormulum Project* and the Johannesson-Cooper edition (2022),
- The future of the *Ormulum Project*.

What is the Ormulum?

By turns:

- An unassuming old book in a **terrible** state of material distress,
- A collection of pedantic and **repetitive** sermons with **simplistic** and derivative theology,
- An invaluable and essential source of key **changes** in the English language in the 12th century,
- The **only** text in its dialect,
- The only large medieval holograph showing extensive **authorial intervention**.

“No other surviving medieval manuscript with comparable subject matter (whether in Latin or English) is written on such wretched parchment and with so little regard for its appearance.”¹

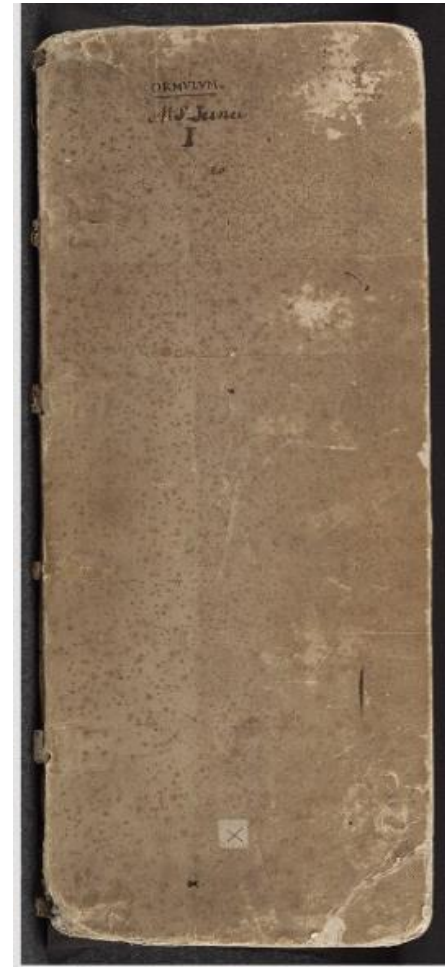


Fig 1. MS Junius 1 front cover.

1. Burchfield, R.W. (1956). The Language and Orthography of the Ormulum MS. 1. *Transactions of the Philological Society* 55 (1). 56–87: 57.

The *Ormulum* manuscript

The main source (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Junius 1) is Orm's own working notebook.

- **compiled** from an earlier set of notes between 1150 & 1180,²
- **acquired** by the Dutch philologist Jan van Vliet in 1659 from the estate of Sir Thomas Aylesbury,
- **passed** to Fransiscus Junius in 1666,
- finally to the **Bodleian** in 1677.

Orm's assistant, "Hand C" added some material,
Van Vliet and Junius made some annotations.



Fig 2. MS Junius 1 f. 10r

² Parkes, M. (1983). On the Presumed Date and Possible Origin of the Manuscript of the "Ormulum": Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Junius 1. in Stanley, E.G. and Gray, D. (eds) *Five Hundred Years of Words and Sounds: A Festschrift for Eric Dobson*.

Existing Editions

- The only previous **complete** editions of MS Junius 1 are White (1852), and a revised version by Holt (1878),³
- Many discoveries made subsequently,
- Some samples in anthologies and introductions,⁴
- N.R. Ker discovered extra material in van Vliet's notebook (London, Lambeth Palace Library MS 783).⁵

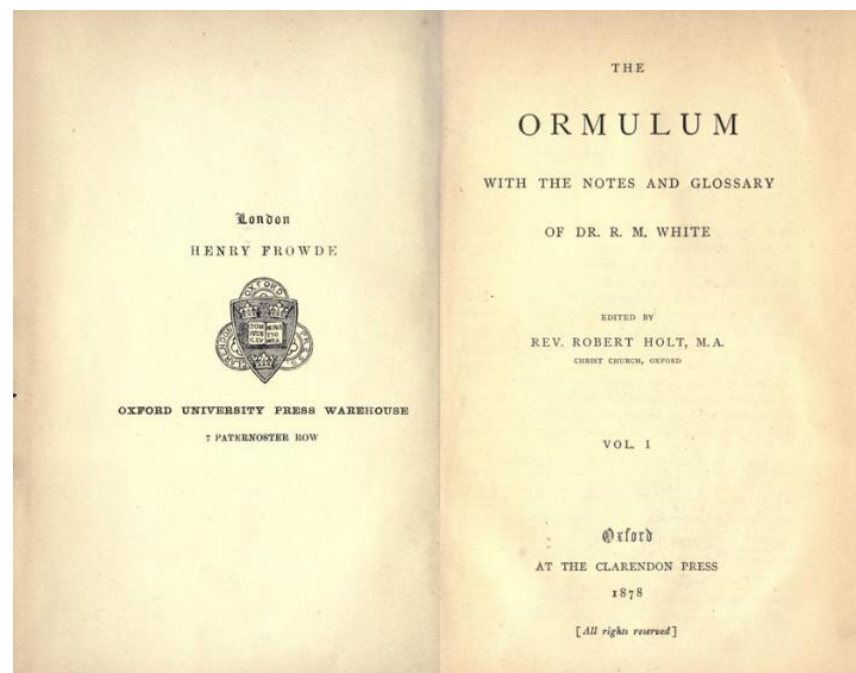


Fig 3. Title pages from Holt-White (1878).

³ White, R.M. (1852). *The Ormulum: with notes and glossary*. (two volumes). Oxford Univ. Press.

Holt, R. (1878). *The Ormulum: with the notes and glossary of Dr R.M. White*. (two volumes). Clarendon.

⁴ e.g. Dickins, B & Wilson, R.M. (1962). *Early Middle English Texts*. Bowes & Bowes; Bennett J.A.W. & Smithers. G.V. (1966). *Early Middle English Verse and Prose*. Clarendon.

⁵ Ker, N.R. (1936). More of the Ormulum. *Times Literary Supplement*. 14 November, 1936.

— (1940). Unpublished parts of the “Ormulum” printed from MS Lambeth 783. *Medium Ævum* 9 (1). 1–22.

Nils-Lennart Johannesson (1948–2019)



Fig 4. Nils-Lennart Johannesson, Bergen, 2007.

- Began working on the *Ormulum* in 1993,
- Transcribed edition text from:
 - microfiche of MS Junius 1,
 - two sabbatical terms consulting [MS Junius 1](#) in 1997 and 2002,*
 - several weeks with [MS 783](#) in 2006,
 - hi-res [photographs](#) (incl. ultraviolet)*.
- Catalogued all erasures, changes, replacements, insertions, etc.
- Worked extensively on cataloguing Latin sources and matching paraphrased passages.*

* Supported by generous grants from *Vetenskapsrådet*

Editorial principles

Any new edition of the *Ormulum* must include:

- all extant text from MS Junius 1,
- recovered material from MS 783,
- complete glossary and apparatus.

The text must incorporate:

- an accurate transcription of text without normalisation,
- scholarly findings made since 1878,
- all systematic distinctions used by Orm.

NLJ also planned to include:

- complete information on erasures, rewrites and insertions,
- complete analysis of source material.

Features of the edition text

We anticipate 5 versions released over the next 10 years or so.

- **Critical** edition with the EETS (forthcoming 2022),
- Online **diplomatic** edition with new advanced features (currently awaiting funding),
- Corpus-searchable **.txt** version,
- Parsed, tagged, lemmatised **.xml** version,
- ? Printed diplomatic/palaeographic version.

Developing fonts – example with *Orrmx*

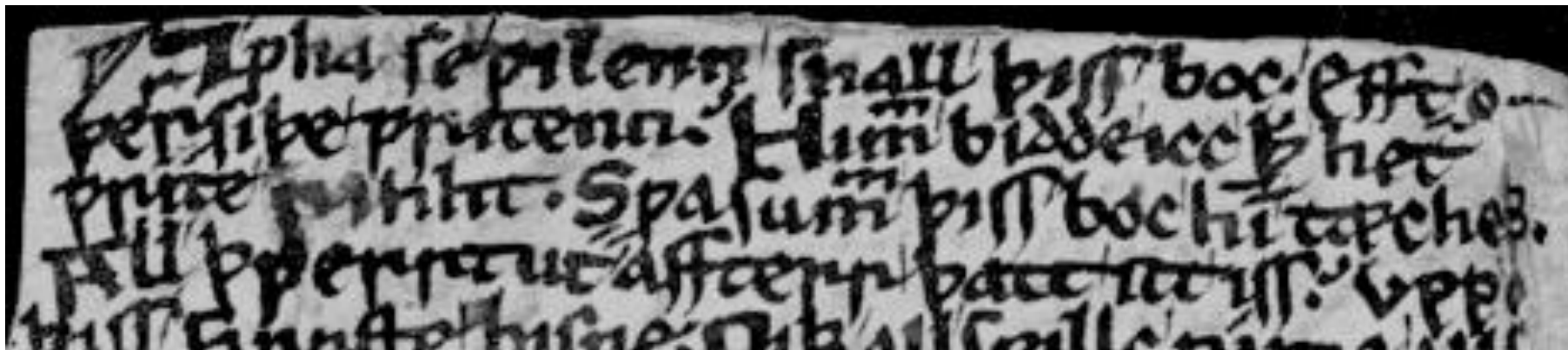


Fig. 5. Sample of MS Junius 1, f. 3^v. © Bodleian library.

ƿ 7 phafe pilenn shall þiſſ boc. Effet o-
þeſi ſiþe prutenn. Him biðde icc þ hēt
príte riht. Spa ſum þiſſ boc hī tæcheþ.
All þreſit ūt affterſi þatt itt iſſ. Vpp

Fig. 6. Transcription of Fig. 5 in *Orrmx*.

Some special features

Orm indicates the beginning of short sections with a *paragraphus*

Small number of scribal abbreviations

Double letters often indicated by stacking

Accents indicate long vowels

Nasal strokes above a vowel indicate *m* or *n*

¶ 7 phafe pīlenn ſhall þiſſ boc. Effte o-
þeſi ſiþe ppiutenn. **H**i^m biððe icc þ̄ hēt
ppite pihht. Spa ſu^m þiſſ boc hī tæcheþ.
All þpep̄it ūt afftep̄i þatt itt iſſ. Vpp

Fig. 6. Transcription of Fig. 5 in *Ormx*.

Developing fonts – example with *Ormplant*

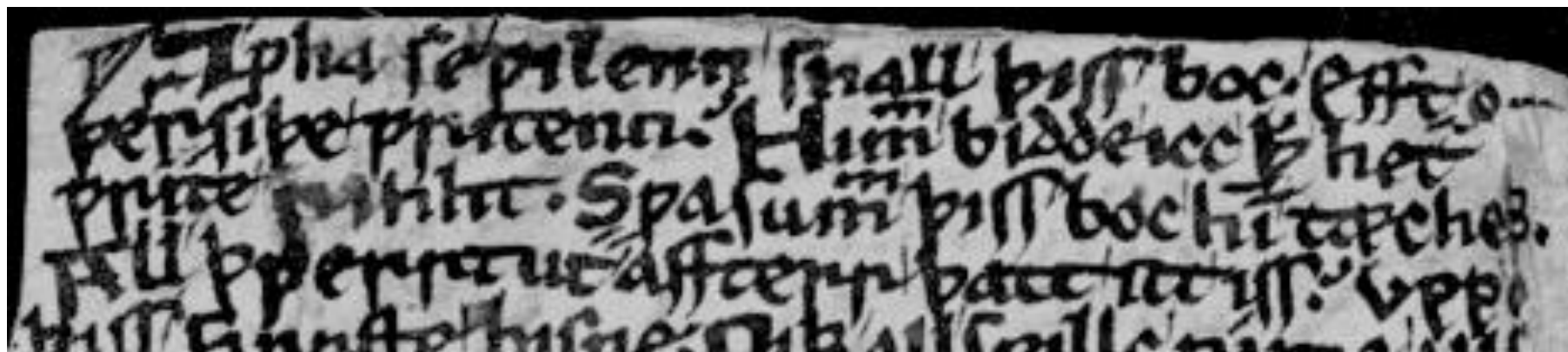


Fig. 1. Sample of MS Junius 1, f. 3^v. © Bodleian library.

The *paragraphi*
make a closed
set of 8 types

Tironian *et*
remains, other
abbreviations
silently expanded

95

¶ 7 whase wilenn shall þiss boc.
Efft oþerr siþe writenn?
Himm bidde icc þatt hēt wriþe riht.
Swa summ þiss boc himm tæcheþ.
All þwerret út affterr þatt itt iss?
Upp...

100

f. 3^v

Apparatus
includes line
and folio
numbers etc.

Fig. 7. Transcription of Fig. 5 in *Ormplant*.

Critical vs. diplomatic edition texts

95 | 7 wha^ʔ s^ʰe wilenn shall piss boc. ⁹⁵ f. 3v
Eff^t o·perr sipe writenn.^ʔ
Himm bidde icc patt h^ʰet wr^ʰite ^ʔri^ʰhht. ⁹⁷
Swa summ piss boc himm tæcheþþ.
All þwer^rt út affterr patt itt iss.^ʔ
100 Upp o piss firrste bisne.

⁹⁴ The second half of the last line of the page (after δεδε.) is filled with two horizontal lines.

⁹⁵ A good deal of discoloration in the top line may be due to changes to the text. Very little can be seen of the original text, but it looks as if ft had been erased immediately after current pha. The outline of the f part of the ligature can be seen clearly in the space between pha and fe; the f in fe is written over the erased t part of the ft ligature.

⁹⁷ wr^ʰite: First written p^ʰite, then the leftmost acute accent was erased: a double acute is not permitted in an open syllable. ^ʔri^ʰhht: Orrm first wrote þp, apparently anticipating the next verse. He then stopped, erased þp, and wrote the current text (rihht) with ri over the erasure.

Fig 8. Sample of Fig 5. from diplomatic edition draft.

The ‘diplomatic’ edition is highly annotated, describing the *manuscript* in detail including:

- Various in-line marking for different kinds of text insertion (14 types),
- Extensive apparatus describing features too complex for annotation.

Critical edition text (Johannesson & Cooper, 2022)

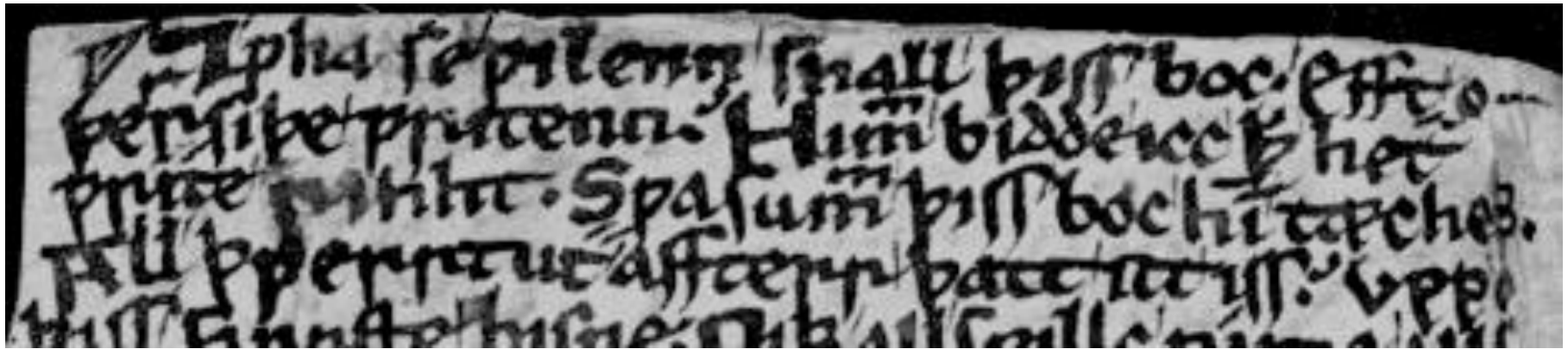


Fig. 5. Sample of MS Junius 1, f. 3^v. © Bodleian library.

Focuses on final
condition of the
text

95 **Ʒ** 7 whase wilenn shall þiss boc. f. 3^v
 Efft oþerr siþe writenn?
 Himm bidde icc þatt hēt wriþe riht.
 Swa summ þiss boc himm tæcheþ.
 All þwerrt út affterr þatt itt iss?
100 Upp...

Erasures,
corrections and
manuscript
features not
described

Only Orm's
systematic distinctions
(and mistakes) remain

Fig. 7. Transcription of Fig. 5 in *Ormplant*.

Lambeth Palace Manuscript 783

- In the mid-30's, N.R. Ker discovered that van Vliet had made a partial **copy**, acquired by Lambeth Palace library.
- Some pages can be compared with MS Junius 1, but others represent **lost** folios.
- 553 additional full or partial verses from material from MS 783 are normalised and added in context,
- Further words or groups of words extracted from the glossary are added in context without verse numbers.

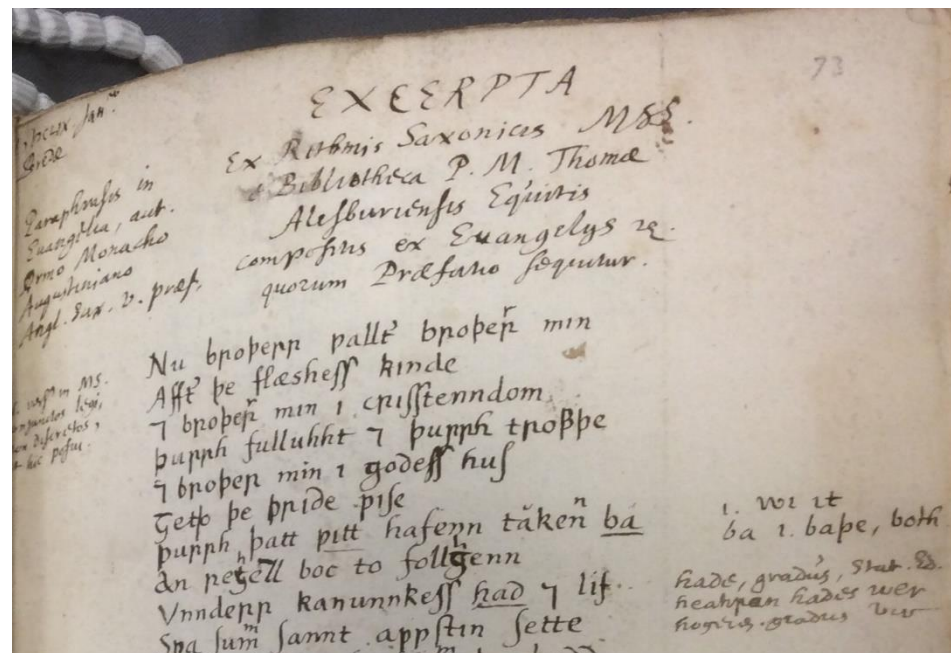


Fig 9. Sample of MS 783, f. 51r (photo by Kees Dekker).

MS Junius 1 & L783 in the edition

- It is not normally necessary to normalise Orm's spelling as he was incredibly consistent,
- VV mostly **fails** to follow Orm's rules for consonant doubling, and some other spelling conventions, so the text from L783 is **normalised** in the edition,
- VV also makes **inflectional** and **spelling** mistakes quite frequently, which we comment on in footnotes.

176 HOMILY I/II
*7 tait wass uss full opennlig
 þurh here namess awonedd*

V370 *Wass eggwhær all bihenngedd
 Wiþþutenn onn hiss hailghe shrud
 Wiþþ swipe litle belless^{V372}
 þau hafde himm drihhtin bedenn don*

Ure fader cristess prest

7 till uss sellfenn baþe. [[f. 18^v, col. 29]] |

900 7 godd off heffne aȝȝ wolde himm self.
 þa belless herenn ringenn.

^{V372} van Vliet wrote 'With withe litle belless.' Burchfield (1961, 94, fn. 1) emended this to 'With litle withe belles' without, however, trying to account for the meaning of 'withe.' The emendation proposed here at least has the merit of making sense: the bells had to be very little, since there would be seventy-two of them, alternating with seventy-two pomegranates, around the lower hem of the High Priest's ephod.

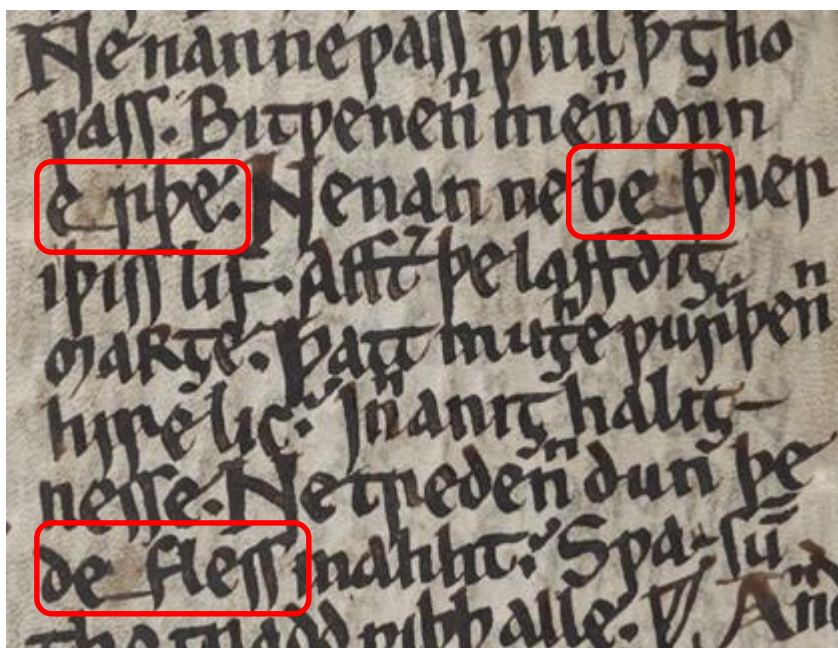
Fig 10. Selection of verses from MS 783 and MS Junius 1 in the critical edition draft.

Systematic distinctions

Previous editions have not presented the following distinctions:

- <eo> correction,
- forms of <g>,
- Punctuation and capitalisation.

eo > e correction



Ne nan ne wass whil þatt ȝho wass.

Bitwenenn menn onn erþe.

Ne nan ne beþ her i þiss lif.

Affterr þe laffdiȝ MaRȝe.

þatt mu^hȝe wurrþenn hire lic?

Inn aniȝ halignesse.

Ne tredenn dun þe deffless mahht?

v.2565–2571

Fig 11. Sample from MS Junius 1 f. 25v, with transcription.

NB. In many instances the <o> has been written, erased and then *written in again* by a later hand, possibly Van Vliet or Junius. Holt and White record these inconsistently. We mark all instances with <e>.

Orrm's alphabetic innovations

Orrm's most significant innovation is in representing various forms of <g>.⁶

- There are 5 distinct forms, based on continental and insular g's.

ḡ	eggenn <i>v.</i> 'to urge'	[g]
g	egge <i>n.</i> 'edge'	[dʒ]
ḡ	eḡe <i>n.</i> 'eye'	[y] ^a
ḡ	eḡe <i>n.</i> 'fear'	[j] ^b
ḡh	ḡho <i>pron.</i> 'she'	probably [ç] ^c
	(from OE <i>hēo</i> .)	

Fig 12. Types of <g> with examples words and pronunciations.

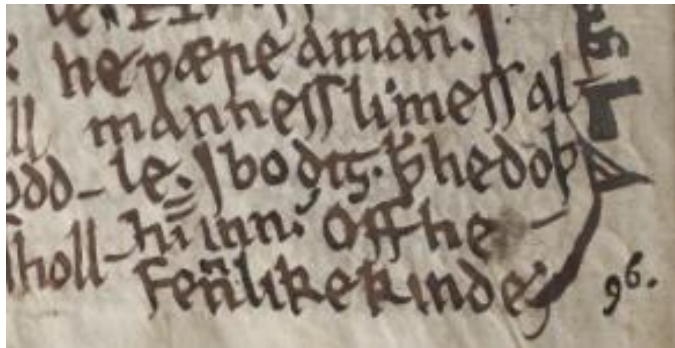
⁶ Napier, A.S. (1894). *History of the Holy Rood-tree: A Twelfth Century Version of the Cross Legend, with Notes on the Orthography of the Ormulum (with a Facsimile) and a Middle English Compassio Mariae*. EETS OS 103.

^a From an intervocalic allophone of OE and ON /g, h/.

^b From OE /j/ <ḡ>.

^c Found only in this word.

Punctuation



4005 I manness limess alle.

I bodig. þatt he dōþ himm inn?

Off hefennlike kinde;.

¶ 7 godd wiþþ enngless gife uss .á.

To brukenn heffness blisse. Amæn.

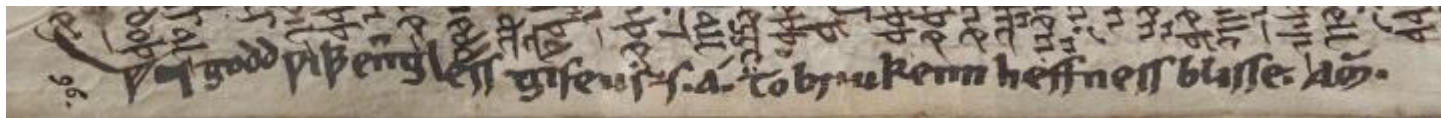
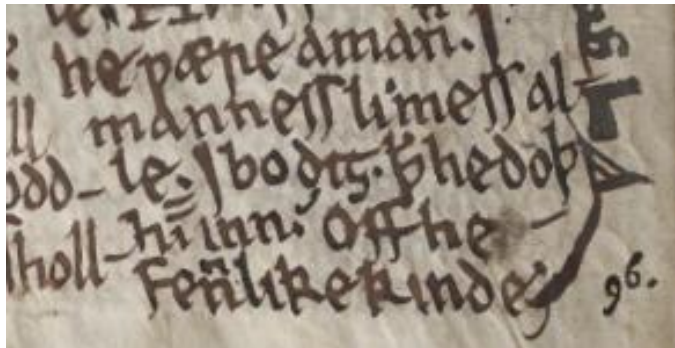


Fig 13. sections of MS Junius 1 f. 35v with transcription.

Punctuation



4005 I manness limess alle.

I bodig. þatt he doy himm inn?

Off he fennlike kinde:

7 godd wiþ enngless gife uss .á.

To brukenn heffness blisse. Amæn.

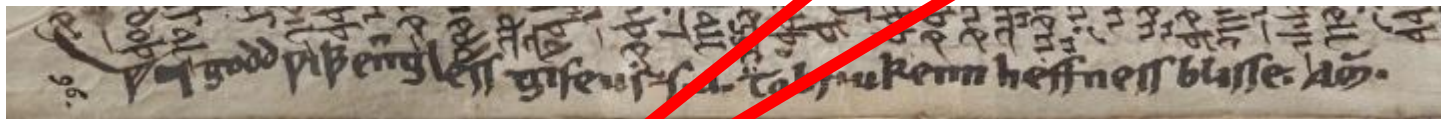
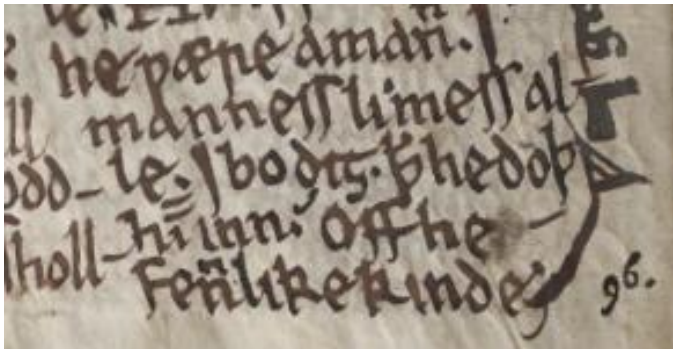


Fig 13. sections of MS Junius 1 f. 35v with transcription.

Punctuation is mainly metrical in function. *Puncta* and *puncta elevata* often alternate at the end of lines.

Punctuation



4005 I manness limess alle.

I bodig. þatt he doþ himm inn.

Off hefennlike kinde;

¶ 7 godd wiþþ erigless gife uss .á.

To brukenn heffness blisse. Amæn.

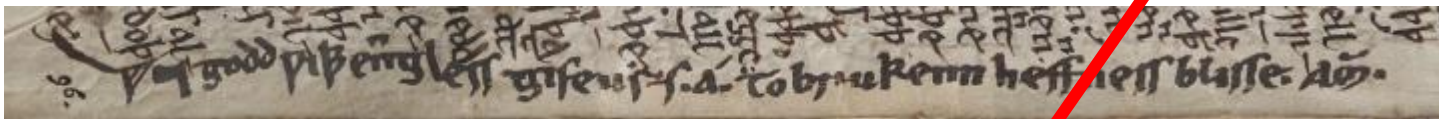
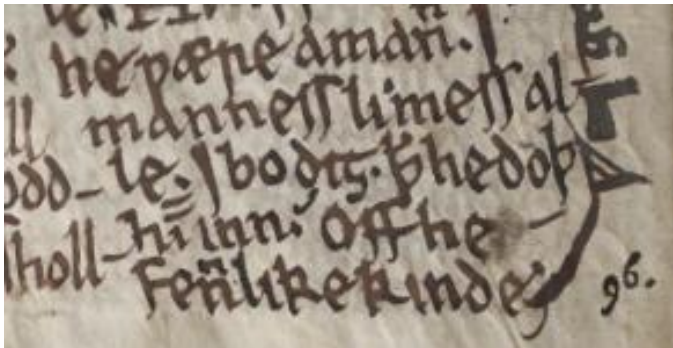


Fig 13. sections of MS Junius 1 f. 35v with transcription.

Punctuation is mainly metrical in function. *Puncta* and *puncta elevata* often alternate at the end of lines.

The *positura* is infrequent, often used to end important sections.

Punctuation



4005 I manness limess alle.

I bodig. þatt he doþ himm inn?

Off he ennlike kinde;

¶ 7 godd riþþ enngless gife uss .ā.

To bruke an heffness blisse. Amæn.

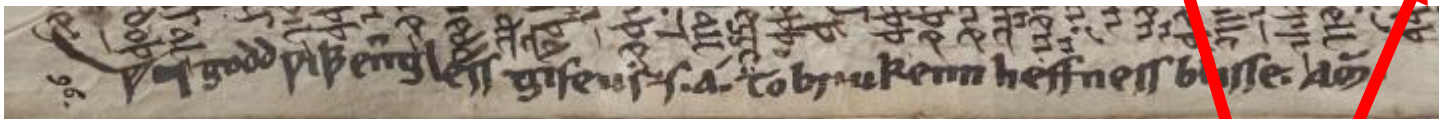


Fig 13. sections of MS Junius 1 f. 35v with transcription.

Punctuation is mainly metrical in function. *Puncta* and *puncta elevata* often alternate at the end of lines.

The *positura* is infrequent, often used to end important sections.

Puncta are also sometimes used to identify syntactic or rhythmic breaks.

Capitalisation

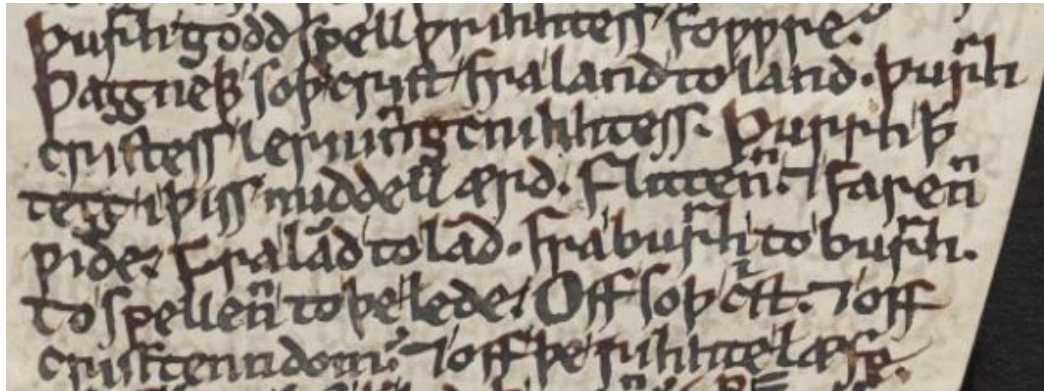


Fig 14. Sample of MS Junius 1 f. 9r.

195 þurh þatt teġ i þiss middellærd.

Flittenn. 7 farenn wide.

Fra land to land. fra burh to burh.

To spellenn to þe lede.

Off soþ crist. 7 off cristenndom.

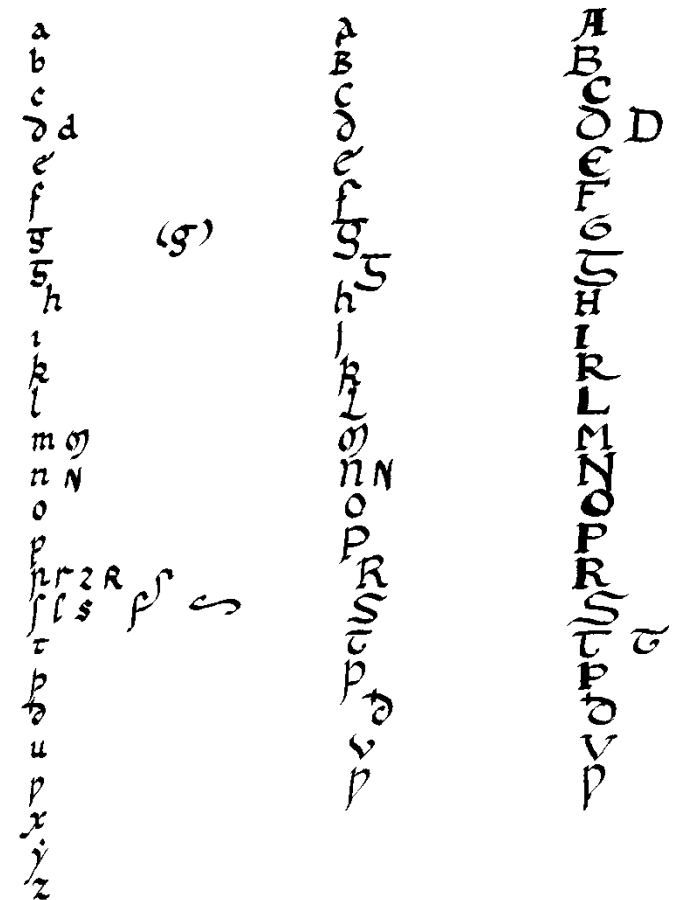


Fig 15. Ormm's letter forms: lowercase, non-bold capitals and bold capitals.

Capitalisation

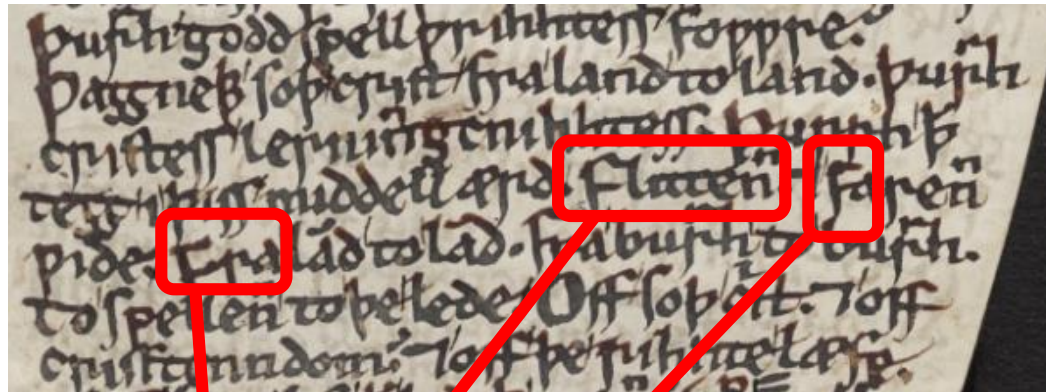


Fig 14. Sample of MS Junius 1 f. 9r.

195 burrh patt tegg i miss middellærd.

Flittenn. 7 farenn wide.

Fra land to land. fra burrh to burrh.

To spellenn to þe lede.

Off soþ crist. 7 off cristenndom.

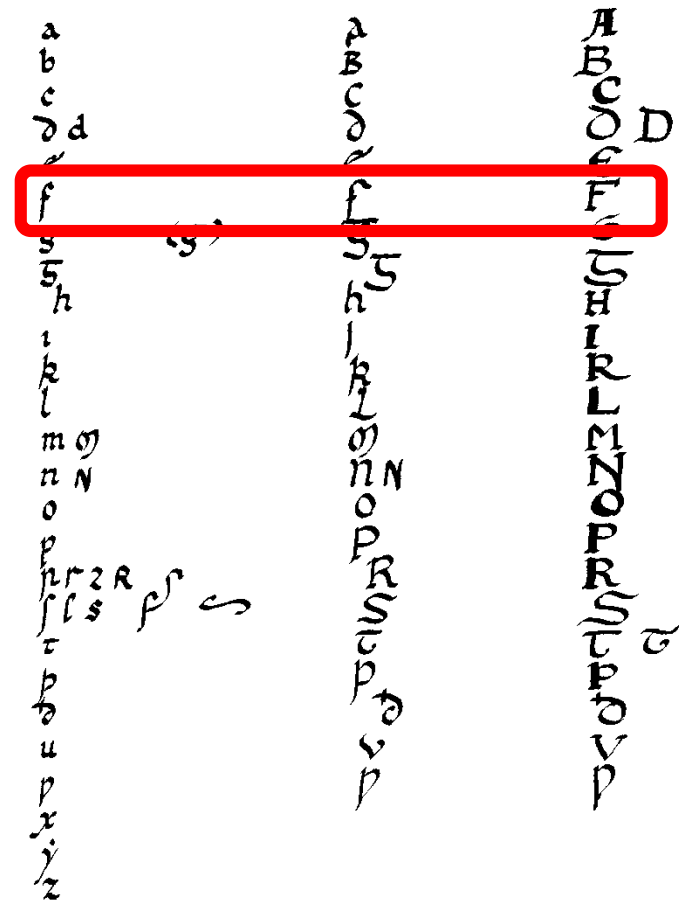


Fig 15. Orm's letter forms: lowercase, non-bold capitals and bold capitals.

Summary

Features new to this edition:

- Text from MS 783,
- <eo> to <e> correction,
- Distinct forms of <g>,
- Accurate punctuation and capitalisation,
- No silent normalisation.

Next steps:

- The *Online Ormulum*.
- Progress will be continue to be reported at the [Ormulum Project](#) website.