

**THE ANGLO-SAXON
VERSION OF THE LIFE
OF ST. GUTHLAC,
HERMIT OF CROWLAND**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649470464

The Anglo-Saxon Version of the Life of St. Guthlac, Hermit of Crowland by Felix Guthlac & Charles Wycliffe Goodwin

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

FELIX GUTHLAC & CHARLES WYCLIFFE GOODWIN

**THE ANGLO-SAXON
VERSION OF THE LIFE
OF ST. GUTHLAC,
HERMIT OF CROWLAND**

THE
ANGLO-SAXON VERSION
OF THE
LIFE OF ST. GUTHLAC,
Hermit of Crowland.

ORIGINALLY WRITTEN IN LATIN, BY
FELIX (COMMONLY CALLED) OF CROWLAND.

Now first printed from a MS. in the Cottonian Library.

WITH A TRANSLATION AND NOTES,
BY
CHARLES WYCLIFFE GOODWIN, M.A.
FELLOW OF CATHARINE HALL, CAMBRIDGE.

LONDON:
JOHN RUSSELL SMITH,
4, OLD COMPTON STREET, SOHO SQUARE.
MDCCLXVIII.

PREFACE.

THE Life of St. Guthlac, Hermit of Crowland, was originally written in Latin by one Felix, of whom nothing is with certainty known, further than what appears upon the face of his work.* From its being dedicated to Alfwold, king of the East-Angles, it may be conjectured that the author was an inmate of some monastery within the realm of East-Anglia; and he cannot have written later than A. D. 749,—the year of Alfwold's death. Though not personally acquainted with Guthlac, Felix drew his materials from persons who had known and conversed with the saint, and notwithstanding the

* The Latin Life is printed both in the Bollandine and Benedictine *Acta Sanctorum*, under the 11th of April. Felix is usually called a monk of Crowland. In one MS. he is termed in the prologue, *Catholicæ Congregationis Sancti Bedæ vernaculus*, from which the Benedictine editor infers that he was a monk of Jarrow. But this reading is unsupported by other MSS., and no dependence can be placed upon it.

marvellous colouring given to the incidents related, the memoir may be regarded as, upon the whole, authentic, and as a curious picture of the belief and habits of the age.

Upon the work of Felix is founded the poetical Legend of St. Guthlac, contained in that singular collection of Anglo-Saxon poetry the Codex Exoniensis. Less important, but not without its value to the student of our ancient literature, is the prose version in the same language, now for the first time given to the public. When and by whom this translation was made is unknown; the style is not that of Ælfric, to whom it has been groundlessly ascribed. The florid rhetoric of Felix is much pruned and cropped, but without the omission of any material incidents; the writer often paraphrases rather than translates, and in truth sometimes quite mistakes the sense of the original.

Only one MS. of this version is known to exist, preserved in the Cottonian collection, in the volume marked *Vespasian D. xxi.* But amongst the contents of the MS. known as the *Codex Vercellensis* is an extract comprising two chapters of the Life of Guthlac. For a transcript of this most interesting

fragment I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. Benjamin Thorpe. It is curious, as presenting a text very different from the Cottonian copy; indeed it has almost the appearance of being part of an independent translation, though I believe this is not really the case. I have given all the variations of importance in the notes at the end of the volume.

The Cottonian MS. is written in a very fair, neat hand, and, according to Wanley, is the work of the scribe who wrote the Bodleian Heptateuch, which latter he assigns to a date shortly after the Conquest. I have followed carefully the variable spelling and capricious use of the accent, which are as characteristic of writings of the Anglo-Saxon period as punctilious uniformity in orthography is of our own.

I have made here and there such alterations as the received rules of accidence or syntax seemed to require, and the reading of the MS. will always be found in the margin, so that the reader may judge for himself. The original Latin has suggested an emendation occasionally where the text was evidently corrupt, and the Vercelli Fragment supplies a few valuable readings.

In accordance with the prevailing fashion of

editing Anglo-Saxon books, a translation is supplied, in which literalness is chiefly aimed at. It may serve, however, to make the contents of the book accessible to others besides students of Anglo-Saxon; and at the present day, when there seems a growing disposition to read history at first hand, some persons may be curious to study the portraiture of a Saxon hermit drawn by a cotemporary.

C. W. G.

LONDON: Nov. 1st, 1847.

CORRIGENDA.

- P. 13, l. 8. *For* *reward* *read* *crown*.
P. 48, *title to chap. ix.* *For* *begæn* *read* *begiten*.
P. 96, l. 13. *The MS. has* *mægða*, *but correct* *mægðe*.

THE LIFE
OF
ST. GUTHLAC.

INCIPIIT PROLOGUS

DE

VITA SCI. GUTHLACI.

URUM Wealdende riht-gelyfendum a worulda woruld, minum þam leofestan hlaforde ofer ealle oðre men corðlice kyningas:—Alfwoald East-Engla kyning, mid rihte and mid gerisenum rice healdend:—Felix þone rihtan gelcafan gesette eallum geleafullum Godes folcum and ecere gesundfulnysse hælo and gretinegc gesende.¹ Þinum wordum and bebodum ic hyrsumode; ða boc ic gesette þe þu ahtest, he life þære² arwurðan gemyndc Guðhlaccs hluttrum wordum and tacnum. Ic forþan halsige and bidde þone gelæredan and þone geleaffullan, gif he her hwylc hleahterlic word onfinde, þæt he þæt us ne wite; ac gemune and geþence ælc þara tælendra and hleahterfulra, þæt³ on [wordum] Godes rice ne wunað ac on ánwylnysse þæs halgan geleafan; and þa hælo middaneardes gemune⁴ and geþence na fram idelum þancum geþoht, ac fram fiscerum gebodod and gesæd. Ac gif hwylc

¹ MS. gesend.

² MS. þæs.

³ MS. þa on Godes rice ne wunað.

⁴ MS. ac gemune.