

Chapter 1

Introduction: Myth, Rulership, Church and Charters in the Work of Nicholas Brooks

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Nicholas Brooks has, for more than 40 years, been reshaping our understanding of the Anglo-Saxons. The four principal themes of this book, myth, rulership, the Church and charters, are all central to his scholarship and all represent areas within which he has been able to open up new lines of enquiry and to establish new bases of knowledge. The aim of this introduction is to provide an overview of Nicholas' contribution to each of these four themes and to link this up with the papers which follow, showing how he has inspired and influenced his friends and pupils.

Myth, our opening theme, was not one of Nicholas' earliest interests, but had become one of his areas of study by the mid-1980s, by the time he moved from St Andrews to take up the chair of Medieval History at Birmingham.¹ For a scholar whose work has been rooted in the history of Kent and its early kingdom, the issue of the creation and development of myth was inescapable: Hengist, Horsa and Vortigern occur in many different sources and an important task for historians of early Kent is to confront them.² Nicholas' solution was to work out the development of the myth from the differences appearing in each retelling of the story, leading him to suggest that the original story could have been invented for Æthelberht of Kent to bolster the identity of his kingdom and give his ancestry a much longer and grander past than those of contemporary Anglo-Saxon dynasties.³ In providing a pair of adventurous brothers as the co-founders of the kingdom of Kent, the creator of the myth made use of a widely-found motif in Indo-European origin myths and, by naming them 'Stallion' and 'Horse', linked them up with the cult of Woden, in which horses seem to have played a role.⁴ In this collection of essays Barbara Yorke makes use of this approach to re-examine all the Anglo-Saxon origin myths to see if further light can be shed on the circumstances of their production, and she also

1 Dyer, this volume.

2 Nicholas Brooks, 'The Creation and Early Structure of the Kingdom of Kent', in *The Origins of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms*, ed. S.R. Bassett (Leicester, 1989) 55–74; repr. in Nicholas Brooks, *Anglo-Saxon Myths: State and Church 400–1066* (London and Rio Grande, 2000), 33–60, at 37–46.

3 Nicholas Brooks, 'The English Origin Myth', in Brooks, *Anglo-Saxon Myths*, 79–89, at 85.

4 *Ibid.*, 88–9.

surveys burial evidence to show how that, too, allowed those who buried the dead to make statements about their identity.⁵

Nicholas' earliest published comments about myth are to be found in his inaugural lecture at Birmingham, given in 1986: at the start of this he referred to the thesis of his predecessor at Birmingham, R.H.C. Davis, that the Normans deliberately created a myth to give themselves an identity, and proceeded to illuminate this with an insight from one of his own areas of study, the iconography of warriors in the Bayeux Tapestry. The Normans shaved the backs of their heads in a conscious attempt to look different from their neighbours.⁶ Norman identity was the subject undertaken by Nicholas' pupil Nick Webber for his doctoral thesis;⁷ his paper in this volume deals with the role of England in the Norman myth, and shows that although England occurs frequently in the narrative of Norman history from the time of Dudo of St-Quentin onwards, it was not 'incorporated into *Normannitas*' until the twelfth century.⁸

Anglo-Saxon kingship, of which origin myth was a vital component, has been one of Nicholas Brooks' main areas of research from the outset. In particular it is the range of resources available to Anglo-Saxon rulers and the ways in which they could enforce demands for these on their subjects that have aroused his interest: above all the three 'common burdens' of fortresses, bridges and army service. Already in 1964 Nicholas had begun to work on the identification of the forts of the Burghal Hidage;⁹ much more recently, for a Manchester Centre for Anglo-Saxon Studies conference on 'The Defence of Wessex' (published in 1996), he returned to the subject to explore the administrative problems faced by Alfred and his successor in setting up the system.¹⁰ These were also problems for Alfred's daughter Æthelflæd in the West Midlands in the early tenth century, the subject of Pauline Stafford's article below, on which more shortly.¹¹ More generally on the topic of Anglo-Saxon reactions to Viking attacks in the ninth century, in 1978 Nicholas delivered a powerful rebuttal of Peter Sawyer's thesis that the size of Scandinavian fleets and armies in the ninth century had been greatly exaggerated by contemporary chroniclers and subsequent generations of historians: rather, as Nicholas demonstrated, the smaller Viking fleets

5 Yorke, this volume.

6 Nicholas Brooks, *History and Myth, Forgery and Truth* (Birmingham, 1986), repr. in Brooks, *Anglo-Saxon Myths*, 1–19, at 3.

7 Nick Webber, 'The Evolution of Norman Identity, 911–1154', Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham (2002), now published as *The Evolution of Norman Identity, 911–1154* (Woodbridge, 2005).

8 Webber, this volume.

9 'The Unidentified Forts of the Burghal Hidage', *Medieval Archaeology*, 8 (1964), 74–90, repr. in Nicholas Brooks, *Communities and Warfare 700–1400* (London and Rio Grande, 2000), 93–113.

10 'The Administrative Background to the Burghal Hidage', in *The Defence of Wessex: the Burghal Hidage and Anglo-Saxon Fortifications*, ed. David Hill and Alexander Richard Rumble (Manchester, 1996), 128–50, repr. in *Communities and Warfare 700–1400*, 114–37.

11 Stafford, this volume.

of the earlier ninth century had amalgamated to form the large fleet carrying the 'Great Army', leaving most of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms unable to cope.¹²

The second of the three common burdens, bridge-building, became one of Nicholas' interests rather more recently, when he was invited to contribute to a volume on the history of Rochester Bridge (published in 1993). Here a charitable trust founded in the late fourteenth century took over the task of building and maintaining a bridge which earlier in the middle ages had been a responsibility shared out among local landowners; a document copied into the twelfth-century *Textus Roffensis* explains how manpower was organised in the Anglo-Saxon period to work on each of the piers.¹³ From the Medway, Nicholas' bridge-inspecting remit has extended across Europe to other examples of bridges with ancient pasts and continuity of use.¹⁴ In this volume, Barbara Crawford examines the significance of the cult of St Clement to comment on the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman fear of dangerous river-crossings: at Pontefract (as its name suggests, a 'broken' and thus a failed bridge in a part of England where Anglo-Saxon royal administration was markedly less efficient than it was in the area south of the Humber) a dedication to Clement may reveal William the Conqueror's gratitude for a successful passage over the River Aire.¹⁵

The last of the three common burdens, army service, has been a particular interest of Nicholas throughout his academic career. Nicholas' interest in armour and weapons was aroused when he was a pupil at Winchester College. Together with his history teacher at Winchester, H.E. Walker, he explored the evidence of the Bayeux Tapestry for body armour and weapons, in the process comparing the portrayal of Anglo-Saxon byrnies in the Tapestry with a fragment of relief sculpture, probably dating to the reign of Cnut, from Old Minster, Winchester, and this was published in an early volume of the proceedings of the Battle Conference on Anglo-Norman Studies.¹⁶ Also in the late 1970s, through analysis of heriots recorded in wills and those stipulated in law codes, he was able to show that Æthelred greatly increased the quantity of military equipment that earls, bishops and king's thegns

12 'England in the Ninth Century: the Crucible of Defeat', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th ser. 29 (1979), 1–20, delivered 3 February 1978, repr. in *Communities and Warfare 700–1400*, 48–68; for Peter Sawyer's thesis on Viking numbers, see *The Age of the Vikings* (London, 1962), and its 2nd edn (London, 1971).

13 Nicholas Brooks, 'Rochester Bridge, AD 43–1381', in *Traffic and Politics: the Construction and Management of Rochester Bridge AD 43–1993*, ed. Nigel Yates and James M. Gibson (Woodbridge, 1994), 1–40, repr. in *Communities and Warfare 700–1400*, 219–65; idem, 'Church, Crown and Community: Public Work and Seigneurial Responsibilities at Rochester Bridge', in *Warriors and Churchmen in the High Middle Ages: Essays Presented to Karl Leyser*, ed. Timothy Reuter (London, 1992), 1–20.

14 'Medieval European Bridges: a Window onto Changing Concepts of State Power', *Journal of the Haskins Society*, 7 (1997 for 1995), 11–29, repr. in *Communities and Warfare 700–1400*, 1–31.

15 Crawford, this volume.

16 N.P. Brooks and H.E. Walker, 'The Authority and Interpretation of the Bayeux Tapestry', *ANS*, 1 (1978), 1–34 and 191–9, repr. in *Communities and Warfare 700–1400*, 175–218.

were expected to provide;¹⁷ subsequently, in the millenary volume for the Battle of Maldon, he provided an explanation for this – references to Anglo-Saxon weapons and armour in the *Battle of Maldon* suggest that the Anglo-Saxons were ill-equipped, and above all ill-protected, and it was probably as a delayed reaction to this that Æthelred insisted in the early eleventh century that the higher-ranking members of the Anglo-Saxon forces should own helmets.¹⁸ The study of heriots is only one of several areas (bridges form another) in which Nicholas has pointed to closely contemporary parallel developments across in Europe;¹⁹ similarly he has always encouraged his pupils to look at Anglo-Saxon developments within a comparative European framework.²⁰

More generally on the three common burdens it is to Nicholas that we owe a full understanding of the significance of the charter issued by Æthelbald of Mercia at the Synod of Gumley in 749, the earliest Anglo-Saxon charter to reserve a king's right to the common burdens even when granting immunity from other duties to churches: thanks to Nicholas we can see that Offa introduced the three common burdens into Kentish charters once he had finally taken power in Kent and then, in the ninth century, the system was adopted by the kings of Wessex, some time after they in their turn had brought Kent under their rule, once they recognised the necessity of building fortifications.²¹ Discussion of the theme of the three common burdens has an ancient history and James Campbell looks at the insights or, better, foresights, into this topic and into many other features of Anglo-Saxon kingship that were achieved by the nineteenth century historian Eben Robertson.²² Royal authority could exploit a range of natural resources, in particular timber and salt, but to some extent metal as well;²³ in doing this kings relied on a developing system of estate management, thanks to which manpower and money could be supplied for army service, fortification, bridges and weapons, and Nicholas has analysed the acquisition and intensifying exploitation of lands by the Church of Canterbury over the period from the eighth century to 1066 in his *Early History of the Church of*

17 'Arms, Status and Warfare in Late-Saxon England', in *Ethelred the Unready: Papers from the Millenary Conference*, ed. David Hill, British Archaeological Reports, British Series 59 (Oxford, 1978), 81–103, repr. in *Communities and Warfare 700–1400*, 138–61.

18 'Weapons and Armour', in *The Battle of Maldon, AD 991*, ed. Donald Scragg (Oxford, 1991), 208–19, repr. as 'Weapons and Armour in the *Battle of Maldon*', in *Communities and Warfare 700–1400*, 162–74.

19 'Arms, Status and Warfare', in *Communities and Warfare 700–1400*, 139–41; 'Medieval European Bridges'.

20 For example, Andrew Wareham, 'The Aristocracy of East Anglia c. 930–1154: a Study of Family, Land and Government', Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham (1992); see also Andrew Wareham, *Lords and Communities in Early Medieval East Anglia* (Woodbridge, 2005).

21 Nicholas Brooks, 'The Development of Military Obligations in Eighth- and Ninth-Century England', in *England before the Conquest: Studies in Primary Sources Presented to Dorothy Whitelock*, ed. Peter Clemoes and Kathleen Hughes (Cambridge, 1971), 69–84, repr. in *Communities and Warfare 700–1400*, 32–47.

22 Campbell, this volume.

23 Nicholas Brooks, *Church, State and Access to Resources in Early Anglo-Saxon England*, 20th Brixworth Lecture, 2002 (Brixworth, 2003).

Canterbury (a lack of surviving genuine early charters precludes detailed study of the estates in the period before the late eighth century).²⁴ Literacy was vital to the Canterbury community in keeping track of its possessions, and Nicholas has shown how a decline in Latinity and in scribal skills at Canterbury in the 870s led to a crisis when it was difficult for the church to supply a scribe capable of drafting a charter; by the start of the tenth century, however, Archbishop Plegmund had reversed this situation.²⁵ Literacy had further uses to landowners, however, as Alex Burghart and Andrew Wareham argue in their paper below:

during the tenth and eleventh centuries manuals of estate management began to be written and such writings could well have played an important role in disseminating advice, comparable (though on a much smaller scale) to that played in the eighteenth century by journals advising on improved agricultural techniques.²⁶

Rulership also depends for its success on the projection of a suitable image and, this in turn, depends on the development of appropriate propaganda and ceremonial. We have already noted the role of origin myths in the creation of dynastic identities for rulers; the writing of history also needs to be considered in this regard. Pauline Stafford's exploration of the context of composition of the group of annals known as the Mercian Register, which she argues was designed to project the achievements of Æthelflæd, Lady of the Mercians, supplies an important tool for our understanding of historical writing in England in the early tenth century and, at second remove, of the compilation of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.²⁷ Nicholas' 1999 Jarrow lecture explored Bede's use of 'Saxon' and 'Angle' to construct a particularly Christian image for the latter, with vital consequences for future generations: 'What we can, I believe, be quite certain about is that we should not think of ourselves as "English" today had Bede not written the *Ecclesiastical History*'.²⁸ Sarah Foot's paper examines the claims made for Æthelstan as ruler of Britain in the *Brunanburh* poem.

By the end of the eighth century, religious ceremonial was coming to be the means by which rulership was legitimated, and over the course of the ninth and tenth centuries Anglo-Saxon England followed Francia in insisting that unction and coronation were needed for kings to become kings. This subject is central to the question of the relationship between Anglo-Saxon kings and the church of Canterbury from the time of Offa onwards: Nicholas has carefully analysed the fluctuations in relations between Mercia and Canterbury in his exploration of how Offa, insistent that his own son Ecgrith should be anointed in his own lifetime, fell out with the then archbishop of Canterbury, Jaenberht, and had Lichfield raised to metropolitan

24 Nicholas Brooks, *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury* (Leicester, 1984), esp. chs. 5, 7–11; on the lack of early charters, see *ibid.*, 100–103.

25 *Ibid.*, 173–4, 214. See also Brooks, 'England in the Ninth Century', in *Communities and Warfare*, 62–3.

26 Burghart and Wareham, this volume.

27 Stafford, this volume.

28 *Bede and the English*, Jarrow Lecture 1999 (Jarrow, 2000), especially 15–16; the quotation is on p. 22.

status so that an archbishop would be available to anoint Ecgfrith.²⁹ Coronation continued to play a vital role in the relations between archbishops of Canterbury and Anglo-Saxon kings: it was a rite for which an archbishop was essential, and archbishops with a serious interest in their role might well devote thought to the creation of new coronation *ordines* or orders of service to underline particular aspects of kingship, for example the use of the coronation ring or the crown itself. In his *Early History of the Church of Canterbury* Nicholas suggested, for example, that the Second English *Ordo* might well have been designed by Archbishop Athelm of Canterbury for the coronation of Æthelstan in 925, though later, in his chapter for *The History of Canterbury Cathedral*, he left the identity of the archbishop more open, between Plegmund and Athelm.³⁰ Janet Nelson, who had previously argued that the Second *Ordo* was designed by Plegmund for Edward the Elder at Pentecost 900, has now accepted the case for Athelm and in her article in this volume establishes why Athelm, and not Plegmund, must have been the author.³¹

Through coronation and the role of the archbishops of Canterbury in supporting Anglo-Saxon kings we arrive at the third theme of this volume, the church. Nicholas' work on church history grew out of his doctoral thesis on the charters of Christ Church Canterbury. This led to the definitive study of pre-Conquest Canterbury, *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury*, in 1984, a book which impressed all its reviewers, and a whole generation of readers, by its scope and not least by the range of source material that had been mastered to write it: as many of them commented, it is a truly interdisciplinary work, in which close knowledge of the topography and archaeology of Canterbury are woven together with the written sources.³² This book, the best work to date on the history of a single Anglo-Saxon church, succeeds in fixing Christ Church in its topography, in exploring the role of Rome in its foundation and in its later history, in demonstrating the continuing political importance of Canterbury throughout all the fluctuations of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms and in showing the tenacity of Christ Church as an institution by tracing the development of the cathedral estates. In Nicholas' book the ninth century emerges as a key period in the development of Canterbury cathedral, partly because of the role of its archbishops in Anglo-Saxon synods, and partly because it was in that period that Canterbury took over several Kentish minsters, absorbing their estates

29 *Early History of the Church of Canterbury*, 117–18.

30 *Ibid.*, 215; Nicholas Brooks, 'The Anglo-Saxon Cathedral Community, 597–1070', in *A History of Canterbury Cathedral*, ed. Patrick Collinson, Nigel Ramsay and Margaret Sparks (Oxford, 1995), 1–37, repr. as 'The Cathedral Community at Canterbury, 597–1070', in Brooks, *Anglo-Saxon Myths*, 101–54, at 129.

31 Nelson, this vol.

32 Reviewers of *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury* included Martin Brett in *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 101 (1984), 389–91; David Rollason in *History*, 69 (1984), 447–8; C.H. Lawrence in *English Historical Review*, 100 (1985), 618–19; C.N.L. Brooke in *Antiquaries' Journal*, 65 (1985), 188–9; A.D. Frankforter in *Speculum*, 60 (1985), 950–2; Rosamond McKitterick in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 36 (1985), 484–6; Frank Barlow in *Southern History*, 7 (1985), 183–4; Patrizia Lendinara in *Schede medievali*, 10 (1986), 166–7; M.T. Gibson in *Journal of Theological Studies*, 38 (1987), 227–9; M.M. Gatch in *Albion*, 19 (1987), 211–13; Tim Reuter in *Deutsches Archiv*, 43 (1987), 698–9.

into its own and supervising their pastoral care, a process which greatly strengthened archiepiscopal control of the diocese.³³ This development is mirrored, as far as we can see from admittedly very fragmentary evidence, in several other Anglo-Saxon sees, and shows growing episcopal authority over lesser churches.³⁴ One of the minsters taken over by Canterbury was Reculver, on the northern Kentish coast, and the full history of pre-Conquest Reculver, traceable in a lengthy sequence of charters, is the subject of Susan Kelly's article below.³⁵ Canterbury also, unsurprisingly for a major church, acquired its own range of saints' cults (though curiously slowly, almost grudgingly)³⁶ and played a prominent role in liturgical developments within England;³⁷ Nicholas' overview of the hagiographical sources associated with Christ Church and his study of its manuscript collection has helped to illuminate both these aspects.³⁸ Alicia Corrêa in her paper in this volume shows how receptive Canterbury was to the cult of a saint associated with another major church, Saint Birinus of Winchester.³⁹

Subsequently Nicholas has looked further at the relations between Canterbury and Rome⁴⁰ and has tackled the pre-Conquest history of Kent's other medieval cathedral,

33 Brooks, *Early History of the Church of Canterbury*, 129–206; on the takeover of minsters, see 175–206.

34 Cf. I.N. Wood, 'Anglo-Saxon Otley: an Archiepiscopal Estate and its Crosses in a Northumbrian Context', *Northern History*, 23 (1987), 20–38, at 36–7; Patrick Sims-Williams, *Religion and Literature in Western England, 600–800* (Cambridge, 1990), 169–76; Julia Barrow, 'Survival and Mutation: Ecclesiastical Institutions in the Danelaw in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries', in *Cultures in Contact: Scandinavian Settlement in England in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, Dawn Hadley and Julian Richards (eds) (Turnhout, 2000), 155–76, at 157; Francesca Tinti, 'The Costs of Pastoral Care: Church Dues in Late Anglo-Saxon England', in *Pastoral Care in Late Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Francesca Tinti (Woodbridge, 2005), 27–51, at 42–3.

35 Kelly, this volume.

36 On Canterbury's relative slowness to develop saints' cults in the tenth century see Alan Thacker, 'Cults at Canterbury: Relics and Reform under Dunstan and his Successors', in *St Dunstan: His Life, Times and Cult*, ed. Nigel Ramsay, Margaret Sparks and Tim Tatton-Brown (Woodbridge, 1992), 221–45. It was much more go-ahead after the Conquest: cf. Richard Pfaff, 'Lanfranc's supposed Purge of the Anglo-Saxon Calendar', in *Warriors and Churchmen in the High Middle Ages: Essays Presented to Karl Leyser*, ed. Timothy Reuter (London, 1992), 95–108; Richard Sharpe, 'Eadmer's Letter to the Monks of Canterbury Concerning St Dunstan's Disputed Remains', in *The Archaeology and History of Glastonbury Abbey: Essays in Honour of the Ninetieth Birthday of C.A. Raleigh Radford*, Lesley Abrams and J.P. Carley (eds) (Woodbridge, 1991), 205–15; Jay Rubenstein, 'The Life and Writings of Osbern of Canterbury', in *Canterbury and the Norman Conquest: Churches, Saints and Scholars, 1066–1109*, ed. Richard Eales and Richard Sharpe (London, 1995), 27–40.

37 On Canterbury and liturgy cf. *The Leofric Missal*, ed. Nicholas Orchard, HBS, 113–14 (London, 2002), I, 20, commented on by Nelson, this volume.

38 Brooks, *Early History of the Church of Canterbury*, 227–31, 251–2, 261–78.

39 Corrêa, this volume.

40 Nicholas Brooks, 'Canterbury, Rome and the Construction of English Identity', in *Early Medieval Rome and the Christian West: Essays in Honour of Donald A. Bullough*, ed. Julia M.H. Smith (Leiden, 2000), 221–47; Nicholas Brooks, 'Rome and Canterbury: the limits

Rochester.⁴¹ He has also undertaken biographical studies of several archbishops of Canterbury, notably Archbishop Dunstan of Canterbury, whose early career he has skilfully re-evaluated.⁴² In this volume, Catherine Cubitt looks at Dunstan's role as a prophet, and in particular his use of liturgical curses to try to achieve the political results he desired.⁴³ Nicholas organised the millenary conference for Oswald, archbishop of York and bishop of Worcester, at Worcester in 1992⁴⁴ and novocentenary study days in honour of Saint Wulfstan of Worcester at Worcester in 1995.⁴⁵ With Wulfstan, we arrive at the period of the Norman Conquest and the difficult period of adjustment undergone by the English church in the decades that followed, the subject of Julia Barrow's chapter.⁴⁶

Charters, the final theme in this volume, have been one of Nicholas Brooks' main areas of study since he began work on his thesis on the charters of Christ Church Canterbury.⁴⁷ The charters of Christ Church and particularly the light they shed on the estates and community of the church of Canterbury provided the backbone for Nicholas' book on Canterbury. The long-awaited edition of Christ Church charters for the British Academy Anglo-Saxon Charters series, jointly being prepared by Susan Kelly and Nicholas Brooks, is now near completion.⁴⁸ Appropriately enough, therefore, charters figure prominently in this volume. The charters concerning Reculver, which were preserved in the archive of Christ Church, provide the main source material for Susan Kelly's chapter.⁴⁹ In his work on charters Nicholas consistently stresses their use as a source for the landscape and its exploitation by people living and working on it;⁵⁰ for example, his paper on the Micheldever forgery,

and myth of Romanitas', in *Roma fra Oriente e Occidente*, Settimane di Studio, 49 (Spoleto, 2002), 797–830.

41 Nicholas Brooks, 'Rochester, A.D. 400–1066', in *Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology at Rochester*, ed. Tim Ayers and Tim Tatton-Brown, British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions, 28 (Leeds, 2006), 6–21.

42 Nicholas Brooks, 'The Career of St Dunstan', in *St Dunstan: his Life, Times and Cult*, ed. Nigel Ramsay, Margaret Sparks and Tim Tatton-Brown (Woodbridge, 1992), 1–23; repr. Brooks, *Anglo-Saxon Myths*, 155–80. See also Nicholas Brooks, 'Honorius [St Honorius], (d. 653), Archbishop of Canterbury', 'Justus [St Justus] (d. 627x31), Archbishop of Canterbury', 'Laurence [St Laurence] (d. 619), Archbishop of Canterbury', 'Mellitus' and 'Wulfred' *ODNB*, respectively XXVII, 910; XXX, 845–6; XXXII, 691; XXXVII, 751–2; LX, 552–4.

43 Cubitt, this volume.

44 Published as *St Oswald of Worcester: Life and Influence*, ed. N.P. Brooks and Catherine Cubitt (London, 1996); cf. also Nicholas Brooks, 'Oswald [St Oswald] (d. 992), Archbishop of York', *ODNB*, XLII, 79–84.

45 Published as *St Wulfstan and his World*, ed. Julia Barrow and Nicholas Brooks (Aldershot, 2005).

46 Barrow, this volume.

47 N.P. Brooks, 'The Pre-Conquest Charters of Christ Church Canterbury', unpublished D. Phil. thesis, University of Oxford, 1968.

48 *Charters of Christ Church Canterbury*, ed. N.P. Brooks and S.E. Kelly, British Academy Anglo-Saxon Charters Series, in preparation.

49 Kelly, this volume.

50 cf. Nicholas Brooks, 'Romney Marsh in the Early Middle Ages', in *Romney Marsh: Evolution, Occupation, and Reclamation*, ed. Jill Eddison and Christopher Green, Oxford

a charter in the archives of Winchester College, traces an Anglo-Saxon boundary clause that can still be walked today.⁵¹ In his work on topography, Nicholas has often benefited from discussion of place-names with the place-name expert Margaret Gelling,⁵² and her chapter in this volume takes a new look at the charter of Æthelbald of Mercia for Cyneberht concerning Stour in Ismere, issued in 736, and in particular at the identification of the places mentioned in the text.⁵³

In 1973, on the eve of the inauguration of the British Academy Anglo-Saxon Charters series, Nicholas surveyed the work that had been done in the field of Anglo-Saxon charter studies over the previous 20 years,⁵⁴ and a quarter of a century later he supplied a sequel to cover the years down to 1998.⁵⁵ By then he had been a member of the Anglo-Saxon Charters committee for 15 years, and its chairman for seven (since 1991), and could comment with satisfaction on the progress being made by the series. Three of the chapters in this volume deal with groups of charters from more than one archive and, thus, provide overviews of particular aspects. Simon Keynes, the secretary of the British Academy Anglo-Saxon charters committee, explains how and where searches might be undertaken for lost pre-Conquest charters.⁵⁶ Alex Burghart and Andrew Wareham look at the development of the lease from the ninth century onwards and link this to the development of estate management in Anglo-Saxon England,⁵⁷ while Julia Barrow compiles a list of charters issued by bishops and by abbots in the three and a half decades between the Norman Conquest and the coronation of Henry I, and uses this as the basis for a commentary on the impact of the Conquest on the production of charters by ecclesiastics and on the merger of Anglo-Saxon and French charter features in the late eleventh century.⁵⁸

At this point in the proceedings the author of this introduction can emerge from the purdah of the third person singular and reveal a first person face. My own acquaintance with Nicholas began when I was a student at St Andrews; it is thanks to him and his colleagues that I developed an interest in the earlier middle ages and, thanks to Nicholas in particular, that I was enthralled by the Anglo-Saxons. However unfashionable it is to admit this, I shall always be grateful that the St

University Committee for Archaeology, Monograph 23 (Oxford, 1988), 128–59, repr. in *Anglo-Saxon Myths*, 275–300.

51 Nicholas Brooks, ‘The Oldest Document in the College Archives: the Micheldever Forgery’, in *Winchester College: Sixth-Centenary Essays*, ed. Roger Custance (Oxford, 1982), 189–228, repr. as ‘The Micheldever Forgery’ in *Anglo-Saxon Myths*, 239–74.

52 Nicholas Brooks, with Margaret Gelling and David Johnson, ‘A New Charter of King Edgar’, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 13 (1984), 137–55, repr. in *Anglo-Saxon Myths*, 218–37; Margaret Gelling supplied the analysis of the place-names.

53 Gelling, this volume.

54 Nicholas Brooks, ‘Anglo-Saxon Charters: the Work of the Last Twenty Years’, *ASE*, 3 (1974), 211–33, written in 1973; for details of the reprinted version, see the following note.

55 Nicholas Brooks, ‘Anglo-Saxon Charters: Recent Work’, in Brooks, *Anglo-Saxon Myths*, 181–215, a reprint of the 1974 article with a postscript on work published 1973–98 on pp. 202–15.

56 Simon Keynes, this volume.

57 Burghart and Wareham, this volume.

58 Barrow, this volume.

Andrews medievalists in the 1970s made their fourth-year students study English constitutional documents, but I am even more grateful that it was possible to choose to study those for the earlier middle ages: under Nicholas' tutelage this meant a course in Anglo-Saxon and post-Conquest English law, with the continuities over the whole period from Edward the Elder to Magna Carta made clear. It took a long time for me as a scholar to look back from the twelfth century to the tenth century and earlier, but not the least of Nicholas' gifts as a teacher is the ability to inculcate ideas that take time to develop in the minds of his pupils. This quality is one that is recognised and valued by all the contributors to this volume and also by the wider community of Anglo-Saxonists.