among which dry-point glosses and their very specific difficulties feature quite prominently.

(viii) Finally, Page (2001) demonstrates that there is great need for a more varied approach to OE glossing and syntactical marking, and addresses functional and contextual issues that he considers to have been neglected so far in the study of OE glossing. Among other things, Page (2001: 219–228) also discusses the OE dry-point glosses in Cambridge, UL Kk. 3. 21 [11/K:24].

One cannot help but notice that while Page explicitly considers the list-like representations chosen by Napier and Meritt to be inadequate for the complexities offered by the glossing as we encounter it in the MSS (cf. 1979: 28–29), he himself did not succeed in presenting a real alternative to it, adhering himself to L.-OE word-lists in the majority of his editions. Page was definitely interested in experimenting (cf. 1979: 28, n. 5) with new manners of presentations and he was acutely aware of the problems surrounding more abstract ways of presenting the data: “The danger is overkill, if the presentation is so complex that it makes it hard for an individual to find the particular information he is interested in” (Page 1992: 94). His (1979) edition, which deviates most from the conventional list-like representation, however, is very difficult to unravel, and establishing basic facts about this particular edition – such as how many OE dry-point glosses are recorded in it – turns into a time-consuming venture, which he was probably very well aware of: “It is easy enough to criticize existing publications of the Anglo-Saxon glosses, but hard to suggest improvements that can be put into practice” (Page 1982: 154). Furthermore, his own editions do not live up to the standards that he proposes in Page (1992: 85). Yet, Page successfully showed many ways in which the approaches of his “more adventurous” OHG gloss scholar colleagues could be applied to the study of OE glossing.

3.6 Scott Gwara

Scott Gwara published a whole number of articles concerned with OE dry-point glossing in the 1990s. Ultimately based on his unpublished dissertation (1993) and eventually culminating in his critical edition of Aldhelm’s Prosa de virginitate (2001), Gwara’s work represents a ground-breaking approach to OE glossing in two ways. On the one hand, it investigates all glosses added to all extant copies of a particular text and, on the other hand, it does so by considering

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21 A major update over Ehwald’s (1919) critical edition of Aldhelm’s complete works with respect to Pdv.
L. and OE glossing of equal importance. The result is a dizzyingly impressive collection of gloss material taken from no less than 17 MSS. Some of the Pdv MSS feature almost 10,000 L. and OE glosses, which make for an exceedingly high ratio of glossed words, bearing in mind that the text of Aldhelm’s Pdv is only about 20,000 words long (Gwara 1994: 19). The unusually dense glossing of some of the MSS can be attributed both to the apparent popularity of Pdv and to the lexical challenges of Aldhelm’s prose, characterized by an exceptional preponderance of arcane words. This so-called “hermeneutic style” (cf. Lapidge 1975 and Gwara 1994: 18) typically involves difficulties such as “archaisms, graecisms, neologisms of obvious paternity, poeticisms, obscure compounds, terms with shifted senses and metaphorical catachresis” (Gwara 1996a: 86) that were challenging even to well-trained medieval readers, who then used glosses to facilitate their reading. While some of the glosses in the MSS in question may be original glosses, entered spontaneously by a particular reader, it can be shown for a large number of glosses that they must have been copied from existing glosses in other MSS. The ensuing stemmatic relationships between the various MSS – with regard to both the base text and the glosses – have been attracting much scholarly attention for a long time.

As a consequence, Aldhelm gloss MSS are the best-studied group of gloss MSS within the wider area of the OE occasional glosses and it may therefore not be entirely coincidental that our knowledge of dry-point glossing in Aldhelm is more complete than for any other L. author. Among the 17 MSS of Aldhelm’s Pdv included in Gwara’s critical edition, no less than 14 MSS feature OE glosses and 1 MS features OHG glosses (Gwara 2001a: 83; 189–190). Half of the 14 Pdv MSS glossed in OE feature OE dry-point glosses and Gwara published treatments of their respective editions and descriptions of the relevant MSS in several publications throughout the 1990s.

Gwara (1996b: 111–121) presents OE dry-point discoveries from London, BL Royal 5. E. xi [19/K:252], and in Gwara (1997a: 211–236) OE dry-point finds from Cambridge, CCC 326 [7/K:61] are edited. Interestingly, both editions are substantially enlarged over the compilations presented in Gwara (1993: 870–905). That means Gwara was able to see more dry-point glosses after he had finished his PhD thesis and had undertaken further research on the MSS themselves. For

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22 Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek Cod. Guelf. 365 Helmstadiensis is explicitly (Gwara 2001a: 75) not included, because it is a copy of Würzburg, Universitätsbibliothek M. p. th. F. 21. Also, Roma, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana Pal.lat. 235, ff. 30’–36’ (BStK: 1600–1601 [no. 836k]) and Würzburg, Universitätsbibliothek M. p. th. f. 67 (BStK: 1877–1878 [no. 992]) are not included; perhaps Gwara was not aware of them (they are not even mentioned in the index codicum).

23 Cf. Napier (1900) and Ehwald (1919) for early examples; cf. Richter (1996), apparently not entirely aware of Gwara’s work (cf. Gwara 1999: 821), for a comparatively recent example.
the OE dry-point glosses in both MSS he notices a large number of correspondences to ink and dry-point glosses in other Pdv MSS. Gwara concludes that at least some of the OE dry-point glosses in the Royal MS must have been copied from Brussels, Bibliothèque royale de Belgique 1650 [K:8], and about one third of the dry-point glosses in CCCC 326 [7/K:61] “coincide precisely with glosses in other Pdv MSS, mainly Brussels 1650 [K:8] and Digby 146 [27/K:320]” (Gwara 1997a: 207). As Gwara follows the time-honoured (albeit often disadvantageous) tradition in the study of OE glossography not to include previously edited glosses in an edition, he has to list the correspondences for the previously edited dry-point glosses of that MS separately (Gwara 1996b: 107–109 and 1997a: 208–210).

The practice of printing only new discoveries in OE gloss editions and referring to previously edited material merely by general reference saves space and hence printing costs, but it entails severe disadvantages over integral editions, especially when it comes to dry-point glosses. In order to get an overall picture of the glossing in London, BL Royal 5. E. xi. [19/K:252] we have to collate no fewer than 5 editions (Napier 1900, Meritt 1945, Robinson 1965, Toon 1985 and Gwara 1996b). The readings of ink glosses are usually quite certain and it is only rarely that an editor will disagree with his predecessors in a later edition. From the strictly lexicographical point of view, re-printing such glosses, after they have already been conclusively dealt with, would merely constitute an unnecessary redundancy. From the point of view of glossography, however, the additional information gained from the position, colour, size, hand etc. of the various glosses is fragmented to a degree where it becomes very difficult to reassemble. This is especially problematic with dry-point glosses, as they are especially prone to misidentification and non-identification of individual letter forms. It is necessary for dry-point gloss scholars to confirm or disconfirm previous readings; otherwise, our knowledge of the dry-point glosses remains dangerously static, because the readings do not become consolidated in the process. Such confirmations do take place (cf. Gwara 1997a: 205, n. 24), but if the glosses of a certain MS are not re-edited comprehensively, they have to be combined in careful and time-consuming manner with the existing editions to form a coherent picture. For instance, there is Gwara’s (2001b) integral edition of Aldhelm’s Pdv glosses, which also includes the OE glosses of London, BL Royal 5. E. xi [19/K:252] in its apparatus; but the comments of the various gloss scholars that contributed to our understanding of these glosses have to be traced back carefully without the guidance of explicit references. The already slow build-up of our knowledge about the glossing in a particular MS is thus unnecessarily slowed down even further. Notwithstanding these petty complaints, Gwara’s work on Aldhelm, Pdv shows great philological skill, and it is definitely highly commendable that Gwara carefully prints glossed lemmata