By carefully indexing and cross-referencing the MSS and gloss issues that are treated in the items, an indispensable and lastingly helpful tool could be created that would ensure fast access to the relevant secondary literature. It would also provide the interested scholar with a certain security that no important resources in connection with a particular MS are missed.

The digital integration of both such a bibliography and an updated, digital Catalogue of Anglo-Saxon MSS (as briefly outlined above) would constitute a powerful research tool. Complex relationships could be managed and updated, growing both in completeness and in usability over time. Editions, secondary literature, handbook articles etc. could be indexed so that users are able to gain a quick overview of the work done on a particular MS.

7.4 Concluding Remarks

The present study identified and described 34 medieval MSS – both from Anglo-Saxon England and from early medieval Continental Europe – that are now known to contain OE dry-point glosses. This is the first time that such a list has been compiled and it is the first time that the extent of the phenomenon of dry-point glossing in OE has been put into comparative juxtaposition to the well-known practice of ink glossing in OE. Due to the widely differing manners of editions, it is difficult to quote a precise number of dry-point glosses, but we can say that the current tally stands at ca. 3,850 edited OE dry-point glosses. By carefully tracing the history of the study of OE dry-point glosses, we have been able to corroborate what many dry-point gloss scholars had already suspected, namely “how unlikely it is that our corpus of them is anything like complete” (Page 1979: 30). The Catalogue of Manuscripts Known to Contain Dry-Point Glosses given here, therefore, really only may serve as a preliminary appraisal of the phenomenon. It is dearly to be hoped that the Catalogue will soon have become out-dated, as our near complete ignorance of the phenomenon of dry-point glossing in OE will continuously be diminished in the years to come.

To my own surprise, I identified London, British Library Royal 15. B. xix [22/K:268] as a dry-point gloss MS, while compiling the Catalogue. This discovery, which for lack of an edition will have to be corroborated by future research, may serve as a reminder that dry-point glosses are still to be detected in well-known MSS that are not too far off the Anglo-Saxonists’ well-trodden paths.26 It

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26 After getting some odd remarks at ISAS in Dublin 2013, I think it is important to stress that I do not “claim” the dry-point glosses in this MS (or in any other MS for that matter), which would be a ludicrous notion by any means and detrimental to the advancement of our knowledge of dry-point glossing. I shall share my notes gladly with every re-
may also serve as a reminder, though, that the technological advances of the late 20th c. and early 21st c. have not yet reached the reading rooms of MS libraries. The dry-point gloss researchers’ tools are essentially still the same as they were a hundred years ago, namely a magnifying glass, a handheld torch and copious amounts of patience. It is seriously to be hoped that some headway will be made in this direction in the near future.

The compilation and subsequent analysis of the Catalogue has allowed us to see some patterns in the known corpus of OE dry-point gloss MSS. I could show, for instance, that our understanding of early dry-point glossing in OE is dominated by Continental finds, which can be associated with the Anglo-Saxon missionary activities of the 8th c. Early dry-point gloss finds from Anglo-Saxon England, however, are virtually inexistent so far, and it remains to be seen whether the lack of research in that area has skewed our data or whether the practice of dry-point glossing in OE simply was not widespread before the 9th c. in Anglo-Saxon England. I was also able to show that Canterbury, Christ Church Priory and Canterbury, St Augustine’s Abbey may have been monastic centres where dry-point glossing was practised in the late 10th and the 11th c. Again, future research will have to clarify whether this finding can be upheld once our picture of dry-point glossing in OE becomes denser. In fact, one of the most important patterns that seem to be recurring is the impression that OE dry-point glosses have predominantly been found where scholars have looked for them. This, at least, is a promising prospect for the future study of OE dry-point glossing.

The present Catalogue may serve as a point of comparison against which new OE dry-points finds can be assessed. The Catalogue with its detailed listing of OE dry-point gloss editions will hopefully help to prevent duplication of reports and aid researchers in identifying parallels in previous readings with their own readings. I think I have been able to show that the decipherment of dry-point glosses is a cumulative effort. The study of dry-point glossing requires repeated reappraisal and it is therefore of the greatest importance that researchers always juxtapose their own readings with those of their predecessors. Differences should not be glossed over (if you will pardon the pun), rather, they ought to be discussed openly and in detail, because in the long run, this is the only way to deal with this visually difficult material. Many lessons can be learned from OHG gloss scholarship in this respect, whose dynamism may perhaps one day spark new approaches in OE dry-point gloss studies, too.

searcher who has the means to study the glosses in London, British Library Royal 15. B. xix [22/K:268].
I think the compilation of a *Catalogue of Old English Gloss Manuscripts* in imitation of *BStK*, for instance, might be a worthwhile endeavour. How Ker could compile his *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon* (Ker 1957) all on his own, by way of a one-man-effort, is beyond my mental faculties, however. The compilation of the comparatively short *Catalogue of Manuscripts Known to Contain OE Dry-Point Glosses* presented above took me what feels like an eternity; and this despite the fact that I could rely on the great and wonderfully insightful work done by the likes of Ker, Napier, Meritt, Bischoff, Page, Gwara and many others. The glossographic desiderata that I outlined roughly would have to be tackled as a joint effort by a team of international codicologists, palaeographers, historians, historical linguists and gloss scholars both across geographical and disciplinary borders. Moreover, intensified collaboration with optical engineers may perhaps one day result in improved digital means of deciphering dry-point material on parchment and thus reduce some of the difficulties that the study of this perceptively difficult material poses at the moment.

I have tried to argue that the collaborative compilation of an open-access *Catalogue of Old English Gloss Manuscripts*, of an open-access *Bibliography of Old English Gloss Studies* and perhaps ultimately of an open-access *Corpus of Old English Glosses* would greatly improve the cohesion of the scholarly field of OE gloss studies and allow for a comprehensive view of the subject, which is rendered practically impossible by the fragmented documentation of OE glossography today. Of course, there is no way of knowing whether any of these desiderata will ever be tackled, however, I trust one day they will have to be, because, after all, as Dumville (1992: 12) foresightfully remarks with respect to OE glossing: “There is work here for several generations.”