



# TEXTILES, TEXT, INTERTEXT

ESSAYS IN HONOUR OF GALE R. OWEN-CROCKER  
EDITED BY MAREN CLEGG HYER AND JILL FREDERICK

## Textiles, Text, Intertext

*Dedicated to Gale, of course, with all our love.*



Gale R. Owen-Crocker and Richard Crocker. (Photograph courtesy of Brendan Rogerson: 2014)

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Essays in Honour of Gale R. Owen-Crocker

*Edited by* Maren Clegg Hyer and Jill Frederick

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## List of Abbreviations

ASE	<i>Anglo-Saxon England</i> (journal)
ASPR	The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records
BAR	British Archaeological Reports
CBA	Council for British Archaeology
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina (Turnhout: Brepols, 1953–)
EETS	Early English Text Society os = Original Series ss = Supplementary Series
MANCASS	Manchester Centre for Anglo-Saxon Studies
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica
PL	<i>Patrologia Latina</i> , ed. J. P. Migne, 221 vols (Paris: Migne, 1844–64)

# Introduction

*Maren Clegg Hyer*

As Professor Gale R. Owen-Crocker retires as Professor of Anglo-Saxon Culture at the University of Manchester and Director of the Manchester Centre for Anglo-Saxon Studies, it is a fruitful moment to look back and reflect on the breadth of her research and influence. As is readily apparent from the list of her publications (see pp. 17–24), Gale’s contributions as a scholar, editor, and administrator are impressive, and not least a testament to her work ethic. In the coming year alone, she will see a co-edited volume of a journal, three co-edited collections, and four articles go to press. When in 1979 she published her first article, “Wynflæd’s Wardrobe”, in *Anglo-Saxon England*, she little knew how long and successful a career lay ahead.

Gale Frances Owen was born on 16 January 1947, in Newcastle upon Tyne. She was a post-war baby in every sense; her father, Major James Arthur Owen, returned from the battlefields of World War II, and Gale was born to “Jim” and Frances Gale Wetherell Owen a year and a half later. Her parents were from Manchester, and although she grew up in Newcastle, she always retained the Manchester accent of her parents. There were early signs of her future interests – a school essay in honor of Bede, a summer at university spent digging at the site of his nearby monastery at Jarrow. Like Bede, Gale distinguished herself early in her studies. She first attended a small private school in Newcastle with an inspirational headmaster who believed in giving bright pupils their heads and moving them up if they were capable of it. As a result, she took her GCEs (General Certificate of Education) two years early, at 14 instead of 16, and took three years over her A levels, spending time doing extra reading. She took A level English at 16 and French and History at 17, finishing grammar school a year early. The University of Newcastle upon Tyne accepted the young 17-year-old, and she graduated with first class honors in English Language and Literature in 1968. At university, she was strongly influenced by Professor Richard Bailey, whose lectures on *Beowulf* were illustrated by archaeological evidence, and led

to Gale taking his course on Anglo-Saxon Art and Archaeology. It was at Professor Bailey's suggestion that she took up the subject of Anglo-Saxon dress for her PhD, necessitating an examination of evidence from multiple fields including art, Latin text and Old English glosses, as well as archaeology. A Major State Studentship and her PhD followed. She graduated with her PhD from Newcastle in 1971.

Gale began her teaching career during these same years, working first for her former headmaster with his A level students and tutoring others, and later for the university at Newcastle teaching undergraduates. She realized how important teaching was to her, and secured a position teaching at the University of Manchester immediately following her graduation. She has worked at Manchester ever since, teaching courses in *Beowulf*, Anglo-Saxon art and archaeology, Old English and Middle English, and History of the English Language. During her years at Manchester, she has also worked closely with a number of graduate students, among whom are a number of the authors in this volume. They remember well her generosity, intelligence, and kindness, as both teacher and mentor.

Gale lost her father during her university years, and her mother moved with her to Manchester. Here she married her husband, Richard Crocker (July 1981), and sons David (July 1983) and Peter (July 1987) followed thereafter. Richard and Gale's happy family, as well as their circle of Manchester friends, has grown to include two daughters-in-law, Emma and Laura, and friends from all around the globe.

During her early years at Manchester, she published her first article, and two years later, her first monograph, *Rites and Religions of the Anglo-Saxons* (1981). It was later reprinted in 1985 and 1997. Her ground-breaking opus, *Dress in Anglo-Saxon England*, likewise garnered significant attention after its initial publication in 1986, going to paperback in 1999; in its second iteration with Boydell Press in 2004, *Dress in Anglo-Saxon England: Revised and Enlarged Edition* again went to paperback in 2010. Her thoughtful *The Four Funerals in Beowulf: and the Structure of the Poem*, published in 2000, was excerpted in online and print sourcebooks for *Beowulf*, and was published in paperback in 2009. Among the number of successful collections she has edited, her volume *King Harold II and the Bayeux Tapestry* was published in 2005 and re-published in paperback in 2011; her co-edited collection *The Material Culture of Daily Living in the Anglo-Saxon World* was published in 2011 and re-published in paperback in 2013, with two additional volumes contracted and a fourth projected.

Four threads of particular significance can be picked from this shortlist of very successful major works. It is no exaggeration to say, for example, that *Dress in Anglo-Saxon England* altered the trajectory of costume history, material culture research, and Anglo-Saxon studies. Most costume histories prior to *Dress* could scarcely be considered accurate or research-based in any respect in their treatment of Anglo-Saxon dress. Few were informed by archaeology, let alone medieval text or manuscript art, and perpetuated consistent and egregious inaccuracies. Earlier academic research in the material culture of the dress and textiles of the Anglo-Saxons existed before *Dress*, but most focused primarily on one discipline, or one discipline

with minimally sampled reference to another. Thus, most journal articles and monographs that discussed dress and textiles before 1986 focused on archaeology, with a select handful incorporating references to scattered textual sources, or on text, with scattered references to archaeology. As a result, dress and textiles were remote or under-explored topics in Anglo-Saxon studies, despite their culturally central role and impact across the period. *Dress*, then, altered perceptions within each discipline it touched. Its conclusions were well-documented in panoramic detail, as Gale brought to bear evidence from archaeology, a broad range of early medieval texts, and almost uniquely, manuscript and graphic art, addressing not only questions of “what people wore” where and when, but what a person’s dress might have meant. It is small wonder that *Dress in Anglo-Saxon England: Revised and Enlarged Edition* remains one of the central volumes on Anglo-Saxon (and indeed medieval) dress and textiles twenty-nine years after its first edition was published.

Gale’s work on the largest and most famous surviving Anglo-Saxon embroidered textile has been similarly well-received, from *King Harold II and the Bayeux Tapestry* to her other two edited collections and her more than twenty articles on the Tapestry. Her work has contributed much to the scholarly analysis of its stitches, front and back, as well as the iconography of its margins and their relationship to the main action and analysis of the structure of the narrative. For example, she has shown that it was designed as a square with a key scene at the center of each side, leading others to suggest this demonstrated the shape of the setting for which it was originally designed. She has also focused attention on the nature of its imagery, from meanings of facial expressions, body language, and gestures, to the role of marginal animals as “commentary” on the main narrative. Her careful and intuitive research is now “essential reading” for all those who study the Tapestry.

Her dress and textile books reflect significant themes that run throughout Gale’s academic research. In addition to her more than two dozen academic articles in the field (beyond articles on the Tapestry), her extensive work in medieval dress and textiles has included, to date, eleven edited volumes of the highly successful journal which she co-founded and which she co-edits, *Medieval Clothing and Textiles* (2005–present). The Manchester Medieval Textiles Project, for which Gale was Co-Director, with Elizabeth Coatsworth, led to an encyclopedic bibliography, *Medieval Textiles of the British Isles AD 450–1100: An Annotated Bibliography* (with Elizabeth Coatsworth, 2007), designed to document the breadth of available research sources (including many otherwise unpublished) in the field for Anglo-Saxonists and dress/textile scholars. Coatsworth and Owen-Crocker have since collaborated on two major electronic bibliographies in the series *Oxford Bibliographies Online: Medieval Studies*: ‘Textiles’ (2012) and ‘Dress’ (2014). A five-year research project which received major public funding and for which Gale was Director led to the landmark “Lexis of Cloth and Clothing in Britain c. 700–1450” (with Louise Sylvester and Cordelia Warr, 2012), a searchable database documenting dress and textile terminology from all the languages of the British Isles during the Middle Ages. The Lexis project also

contributed to the *Encyclopedia of Medieval Dress and Textiles of the British Isles c. 450–1450*, which Gale co-edited with Elizabeth Coatsworth and Maria Hayward (2012). The *Encyclopedia* brings together almost six hundred articles (over eighty of them Gale's) from across a range of disciplines which contribute to our knowledge of medieval dress and textiles; three online continuations are in progress. Gale's work has thus framed, shaped, and changed the field for researchers from any discipline interested in the role of dress and textiles in the medieval period in England. In this volume, Robin Netherton highlights the significance of these accomplishments in "A Personal Recollection", an insider's sketch of Gale's central role in medieval textile research, from the organization of the significant community of dress and textiles researchers who gather at Kalamazoo and Leeds into DISTAFF (the study group for Discussion, Interpretation, and Study of Textile Arts, Fabrics, and Fashion), to the genesis and subsequent success of the journal *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*.

As an Anglo-Saxonist and a textile scholar, Gale has seen and understood the importance of dress and textile studies to the broader field of Anglo-Saxon studies. Among her other important contributions to Anglo-Saxon studies is her work *The Four Funerals in Beowulf: and the Structure of the Poem*, re-published twice. *Four Funerals* reflects her deep love for, interest in, and great insight into Old English poetry, bringing alive, through carefully considered cultural and poetic analysis, the human factors and cultural connections within the narrative of the funerals in the epic poem. As her list of publications illustrates well, this interest in the thoughtful consideration of *Beowulf* and other Old English texts spans the entirety of her career, as does a consistent interest in the role of women, from the women of *Beowulf* to the women of the Bayeux Tapestry, and, of course, in the connection between Anglo-Saxon women and their textile work. All belong to the textual tradition she highlights and elucidates in her instructive edited collection, *Working with Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts* (2009).

An interesting aspect of Gale's work is her powerful ability to synthesize or interweave diverse matter into a whole, evident as she draws together material, textual, and art-historical research in *Dress* and, more recently, *The Material Culture of Daily Living in the Anglo-Saxon World* series (with Maren Clegg Hyer). Such synthesis or interweaving of different material and textual traditions, of which she has been a leading exponent, expands dramatically the boundaries of the known and highlights a productive means of scholarship (as it did in the work of her friend and colleague, C. R. Dodwell). But Gale is not simply an excellent interweaver of "things". As those whose work she has edited can attest (and they are many, across eleven volumes of *Medieval Clothing and Textiles* and fifteen edited collections), Gale is a gifted editor. She lends a generosity and significant intellectual acumen to her fellow authors and editors, working thoughtfully to unite diverse personalities and interweave thoughts and ideas into coherent volumes that expand the boundaries of the professional fields in which we all labor. To her generosity as a teacher, scholar, and editor, she adds service to the larger community as an advocate and exemplar

for her profession. She has given lectures by invitation to university communities in Canada, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Spain, Taiwan, and the USA; advised museums and archaeological units on medieval dress; and spoken on BBC television and radio programs about the Anglo-Saxons.

These accomplishments are the overlapping and interwoven threads of Gale's academic career, and inspire both the organization and theme of this volume. It is only fitting that the first section focuses on "Textiles" in honor of her influential work in the field of dress and textiles. In the first chapter, Louise Sylvester builds on some of Gale's most monumental textile research projects, using "The Lexis of Cloth and Clothing in Britain c. 700–1450" database and the *Medieval Dress and Textiles in Britain: A Multilingual Sourcebook*, both of which she worked on with Gale, to examine what primary materials have to tell us about the process of language change through the lens of dress nomenclature, from the wills of Anglo-Saxon England to inventories of late medieval England.

In the second chapter, Gale's friend and collaborator of many years, Elizabeth Coatsworth likewise reflects on the evolution of terminology that researchers have come to accept as descriptions of medieval embroidery techniques. Tracing the history of these terms from classical and medieval usage through to foundational nineteenth- and twentieth-century dress and textile researchers such as A. G. I. Christie, Coatsworth considers where these commonly repeated terms may describe actual embroidery techniques, and where they do or may not.

Gale's ground-breaking research on one of the most famous examples of early medieval embroidery, the Bayeux Tapestry, provides the inspiration for Michael Lewis's and Carol Neuman de Vegvar's contributions. In Chapter 3 Lewis looks first at the significant roles that dress and clothing play in the design of the Tapestry, as the designer answers the challenge of constructing an entirely new, complex, and lengthy narrative, in part by interweaving imagery from multiple sources, from manuscript art to elements of contemporary dress. He argues that imagery may have communicated key aspects that moved the narrative forward through each planned and threaded detail. In Chapter 4, "Birds of a Feather", Carol Neuman de Vegvar builds on Gale's examination of birds in the Tapestry by looking at a specific bird type that appears with some regularity in the embroidered narrative, interrogating the features and locations that attend it, and tracing its relationship to the "magpie" tradition of the Middle Ages.

In Chapter 5 Christina Lee follows a shared interest with Gale in investigating the material uses to which textiles might be put in the daily lives of the Anglo-Saxons, with a fitting look at the role textiles played in medical use, from simple bandages and compresses to the surgical threads found in textual and archaeological contexts. As Gale so often does, Lee measures the role women may have played in such traditions, as both healers and textile producers.

The second section of the volume, "Text", follows the thread of Gale's interest in the textual traditions of the Anglo-Saxons. In Chapter 6, "Text, Textile, Context:

Aldhelm and Word-weaving as Metaphor in Old English”, Maren Clegg Hyer documents the tradition of weaving imagery as a metaphor for literary construction in the works of Aldhelm and his successors in the Old English and Anglo-Latin tradition, examining his sources of inspiration for the metaphor, as well as considering Aldhelm himself as a potential source of inspiration for later instances of the same metaphor. These instances range from the clever wordweaving of the Anglo-Latin riddles to the Old English wordweaving of *Cynewulf*, as well as later references in works of authors such as Goscelin of St Bertin and William of Malmesbury. Hyer, like Gale, also looks for elements of the feminine in connection with such imagery. In “The Weft of War in the Exeter Book Riddles”, Jill Frederick likewise examines the imagery of weaving and its correlations to gender in the poetic riddle tradition of the *Exeter Book*. She identifies ways in which such images not only reify the gendered perceptions of weaving and war, but also problematize it.

Marilina Cesario investigates the intersections and interweavings of a number of the different textual traditions of the Anglo-Saxons, from the historical and the prognostic to descriptions of natural events, in Chapter 8, “*Fyrenne dracan* in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*”. Such intersections may inform and explain some unusual descriptions of celestial phenomena, as well as where, when, and why such descriptions might have been penned. Gale’s longtime colleague at the University of Manchester, Don Scragg, also looks at the textual tradition of the Anglo-Saxons in Chapter 9, “Old English in the Margins”, taking Gale’s examination of the underappreciated but meaningful margins of the Bayeux Tapestry as inspiration to direct our attention to the often unnoticed but significant words found in the margins of Old English manuscripts. There, he observes, we find thousands of Old English words and names, a good number of which contain information as important, and indeed interesting, as the bodies of the texts in which they are found. These “marginal” words may include the handiwork of some of the great writers and scribes from the period.

The third section of the volume, “Intertext” takes as inspiration Gale’s work within and across disciplines, long before “inter-disciplinarity” became a predominant mode. In Chapter 10, “Weaving Words on the Ruthwell Cross”, Catherine Karkov elucidates the many interwoven threads comprising the meanings of the Ruthwell Cross, itself an interconnecting and intermingling site of the languages of the Anglo-Saxons, of words and images, of sculptuary and poetry, and of liturgical and biblical iconography. As experienced from a variety of physical viewpoints, progress around the cross would have thus brought together within a visual moment interwoven and related messages, any one full of meaning for the cross’s viewers. Similarly, in Chapter 11, “*Fates of the Apostles and Tituli*”, Paul Szarmach draws together structural and textual evidence for possible relationships between poetic and artistic “texts”, reminding us of the interwoven nature of iconography and inference within both textual and visual traditions of the apostolic narrative.

## Introduction

Joyce Hill documents an intermingling of traditions in Chapter 12, in this case, complex textual traditions, as she traces the incorporation of source material within the great collections of Old English homiletic texts. She argues that in a good many instances our notion of straightforward borrowing from one text or textual tradition to another is overly simplistic and perhaps inaccurate. Rather, careful analysis highlights layers of textual traditions richly interwoven in thoughtful and productive ways, as, for example, in Supplementary Homilies 6 and 12 of Ælfric. In Chapter 13, Elaine Treharne examines a similar case of divergent traditions and the intelligent interweaving of their threads in the form of the Southwick Codex. The Southwick Codex is often neglected, but forms an important context for its more famous companion, the Nowell Codex, as they are bound in one Cotton manuscript. Visited on its own merits and assessed carefully, the Southwick demonstrates deliberate intermingling of a respected past (with documents in minuscule reflective of the Benedictine Reform) and concerns of a present, mid-twelfth-century environment. Such intertextual blending of traditions is an interesting counterpoint for its famous partner, the Nowell Codex, or *Beowulf* manuscript.

Reflecting Gale's research into the fate of the fallen king of the Bayeux Tapestry, as well as intertextual analysis, in Chapter 14, "Redacting Harold Godwinson: The *Vita Haroldi* and William of Malmesbury", Martin Foys examines the historiographical traditions of the fate of Harold Godwinson, King Harold II, a fate recounted neither unproblematically nor consistently in extant historical texts. Foys argues that Harold's end is constructed and selected from divergent historical and textual traditions according to the political and thematic agenda of individual historians, who eventually leave some threads of the mythical as well as historical narrative out of the final "received version". Two of these threads whose details conflict, the *Vita Haroldi* and William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Regum*, provide clear examples of works that represent competing, as well as thematically interwoven, possibilities for England's last Anglo-Saxon king.

What is, one hopes, most evident from all of the interwoven sections and chapters of this volume is what inspires them: both the depth and breadth of Gale R. Owen-Crocker's contributions to so many disciplines – art history, archaeology, dress and textile history, and literary study – and her generosity as an editor and teacher. The chapters within this volume come from people touched by her kindness, her research, her teaching, and her friendship: colleagues, fellow editors and researchers, former students, and friends. In the end, the theme of this volume is thus well-fitted to her work – an interwoven tapestry of discovery, scholarly insight, respect, and friendship.



## A Personal Recollection

*Robin Netherton*

When I first came to the International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo, Michigan, in 1984, I looked for presentations relating to my particular interest: costume representations in medieval art and literature. I didn't find much. Dress, it seemed, was barely acknowledged as an area for current research; when I mentioned that I was exploring medieval fashion, one person asked, "Hasn't that all been done? What's left to find out?" The topic's only presence at the Congress was a long-running session on "Adornment and Ornament", then being organized by musicologist Ingrid Brainard, who had taken over that role as a favor to a retiring colleague.

Thanks to a connection through one of my past professors, another session organizer learned of my sideline, and in 1987, my research partner Verna Rutz and I gave our first Kalamazoo session on medieval dress, wearing reproduction clothing of the periods we were discussing. That session led to more, and within a few years, Ingrid (with some relief) passed us the torch for representing costume at Kalamazoo, which Verna and I continued to do – sometimes by ourselves, sometimes by showcasing others.

In retrospect, that was a pivotal time for the emergence of medieval clothing and textiles as a distinct and legitimate field of study. There were, in fact, quite a few scholars examining dress-related topics, but most were scattered among many disciplines – literature, language, art history, archaeology, history, economics – and typically remained isolated within their own academic enclaves. Some, politely termed "independent scholars", worked outside the academic mainstream. Our annual costume session at the Congress provided a rare opportunity for these people to gather, and we developed a sizable audience of regular attendees whose broad collective knowledge led to lively, collegial interchanges during our question-and-answer periods, and who typically lingered after our sessions to exchange resources, examine reproduction pieces, and settle into knots of intense conversation.

It was during this post-session buzz in 1994, after a pair of lecture-demonstrations on the medieval sideless surcoat and Renaissance Venetian dress, that Verna called to me from across the room. She pointed to the petite blonde woman she'd been chatting with: "Robin, this is Gale Owen-Crocker!"

Of course I knew the name. Gale's *Dress in Anglo-Saxon England*, even in its original 1986 edition, stood not only as the comprehensive reference on its topic, but also as a demonstration piece of costume scholarship done right. At a time when most readily available books on medieval dress were superficial overviews or anecdotal compilations of myths and assumptions, Gale's book proved it was possible to treat the study of dress from this era in a way that was both readable and scholarly. That her extensive analysis centered on the Anglo-Saxon period was especially impressive: even in books focusing on medieval costume, it was not unusual to find only a few pages – or paragraphs – devoted to the "dark ages" between the fall of Rome and the Norman Conquest.

Most important, however, by bringing together evidence from literature, historical documents, archaeology, and art, Gale's book (which she had developed from her doctoral research) broke through the traditional barriers that were largely responsible for the one-dimensional analysis that marked so many other academic efforts to address costume. It was not unusual to find people exploring dress-related questions who had read every word on the topic published within their own discipline, yet had no knowledge of relevant work being done in other fields. I remember, for instance, an archaeologist who had noticed the placement of pins around the skulls in Anglo-Saxon female burials and who hesitatingly theorized, in a mid-1980s Kalamazoo presentation, that perhaps these women had worn veils. Evidently he had not consulted with anyone working in Anglo-Saxon literature, language, or art, where evidence for fabric headcoverings is plentiful. Had he been working but a year or two later, that scholar might have found his answers in Gale's book.

*Dress in Anglo-Saxon England* was one of several landmark works to change the face of medieval and early modern costume study in the 1980s. Just a few years earlier, Stella Mary Newton had taken a similar in-depth approach to fourteenth-century dress with *Fashion in the Age of the Black Prince*, and a few years later, Janet Arnold's *Queen Elizabeth's Wardrobe Unlock'd* did so for Elizabethan England. These and a handful of similar books defined a new level of scholarship for those of us working in costume history.

Thus my astonishment at discovering that one of these esteemed authors had stepped off my bookshelf and walked into our session. It took but a few minutes to dispel my dumbfoundedness. This giant of scholarship was not only pleasant and approachable, she was bubbling over with delight at finding a room full of kindred spirits. It seems that at this same conference, Gale was making a discovery of her own. In England, her *Dress* book had received relatively little notice from her colleagues, compared with her contributions in the more established fields of Old English

literature and language. It was not until she came to Kalamazoo that she found that this one publication had earned her a monumental reputation as a costume scholar among Americans. Gale, who had not expected anyone to recognize her name outside the Anglo-Saxon sessions, was quite unprepared to find such awareness – and admiration – of her costume work. Even better, she found others eager to talk about “old clothes” and the people who wore them.

Within days of our meeting, Gale suggested organizing a costume session of her own in tandem with ours. Her idea was both timely and perceptive. Verna and I, ourselves unaffiliated, were connected primarily with independent researchers approaching medieval dress through experimental reconstruction; we could go only so far without an academic position within a recognized discipline. Gale was in the opposite position: as a well-established and respected academic, she knew scholars who were doing more traditional studies on dress and textile topics, but who lacked a venue for sharing that work outside of their primary disciplines. Moreover, she was also one of the then-rare academics who did not simply tolerate (or dismiss outright) committed amateurs and professional costumers without formal academic credentials, but rather valued their outside perspective and assessed their work on its merits.

Our paired sessions, which became an annual event, brought both of these communities together, broadening and balancing the costume presence at the Congress. Each session spurred attendance for its counterpart, and our audience grew accordingly. By 1997, Gale and I were mulling the idea of forming an organization to connect this emerging assemblage of individuals, many of whom were taking time out from more orthodox pursuits to hear and present new research in a specialty that had essentially no recognized status of its own. By email – which had only recently replaced postal mail as our means of communication – we exchanged ideas for a suitably official-sounding name. The phrase “material culture” had not yet achieved its current cachet, and many scholars still associated “costume” with play-acting. We wanted to encompass not just clothing, but the full range of textile production, trade, and use, as well as non-textile facets of dress. Working backward from acronyms, we ended up with Discussion, Interpretation, and Study of Textile Arts, Fabrics, and Fashion, or (less cumbersome and more memorable) DISTAFF. When, later that year, the head of the Medieval Institute, which organizes the Kalamazoo conference, coincidentally asked that we formally unite our “Dress and Textiles” sessions under a single sponsoring organization, we were ready. DISTAFF premiered at the 1998 Congress.

We did not know it then, but we were standing at the nexus of a number of intersecting influences – time, place, people, trends, technology – instrumental to the development of medieval dress and textiles as a recognized academic field. One crucial element was the Medieval Institute’s encouragement of DISTAFF, and of interdisciplinary collaboration in general; no other venue could have regularly brought together this critical mass of costume scholars from both inside and outside

academia. At the same time, interest was growing in medieval material culture, daily life, household economics, and women's studies, topics that all intersect with clothing and textile study. The increasing demands on educational institutions to demonstrate the relevance of their work to the broader public also added to a growing acceptance of clothing study, if only for its visual appeal and intuitive accessibility to outside audiences. Not least, email and expanding online resources enabled isolated individuals to find others doing similar work and to take their networking beyond conference gatherings.

As DISTAFF organizers, Gale and I dived into planning and publicizing sessions. (Verna, whose work took her in other directions, remained as a participant and an occasional president.) Gale's networks and mine conveniently complemented each other on other measures besides affiliation: she was most closely connected with scholars working on earlier periods, while my contacts focused mostly on later ones; she knew European people, collections, and resources, and I, American and Canadian ones. That sort of counterpoint was to become a theme of our partnership.

We set the bar for DISTAFF membership as low as possible: no dues, and no requirements other than attendance at a session or another expression of interest. We created a mailing list and sent periodic emails with session announcements and calls for papers. In 2001, Gale declared that it was time for the group to become "bicontinental" and organized two DISTAFF sessions at the 2002 International Medieval Congress at Leeds; this, too, became an annual presence. Meanwhile, the Kalamazoo track expanded, to three sessions and then four, plus an annual reception or – starting in 2009 – an exhibition of members' work.

Throughout these years, Gale and I talked frequently about the need for a publication venue for the exciting new research we were hearing in our sessions. Too often, speakers' findings never went beyond the presentation stage. When they did find print, the papers were scattered among journals in literature, history, art, or other fields, or tucked into single-volume collections with papers unrelated to dress. Moreover, some exceptional work was being done by people outside academia, who typically had jobs that did not support the effort needed to produce publications and who were unfamiliar with the arcane rituals of the academic publishing process.

When Gale sees a need, she takes action, and it is impossible for those around her not to get swept up in doing what simply must be done. In a 1996 email, she wrote, "I would like to collect together dress and textiles papers from recent Kalamazoo conferences and offer a volume. Would you like to be included? You'd better say yes." I did. In addition to contributing a paper, I provided details on past presenters on costume topics, and Gale started contacting those whose material might translate well to print. Over the next few years, she assembled a collection of fourteen papers and began soliciting contributions for a second volume, even as she began exploring publication possibilities for the first.

Meanwhile, she had developed a more ambitious goal. "I am thinking of starting up a journal on medieval dress," she wrote me in 2000. "There is certainly a gap in

the market, and I could get a steady flow of conference papers to fill it.” Over time, we discussed questions of audience, content, and scope. We agreed that a successful publication would reach out to non-academic professionals and amateurs as well as academic researchers, and that it should include findings from substantive experimental reconstruction as well as papers taking more traditional approaches to evidence of art, text, and artifacts. Peer review, of course, was essential for credibility, and we realized that, between us, we knew enough experts in various specialties to make that feasible. It was evident, though, that such a project would need to wait until we’d tested the waters with the book collections already under way.

Gale was still seeking a publisher when Caroline Palmer of Boydell and Brewer contacted both of us, on her own initiative, asking if we had ever considered publishing papers from the DISTAFF sessions. Boydell already had a sizable number of material culture offerings in its catalog, and clearly understood the potential for our topic to attract readers beyond the usual academic audience. After months of strategizing, we sat down with Caroline at the 2003 Congress with the much-traveled, much-updated collection in hand. To our surprise, Caroline told us that she would consider publishing an essay collection if we really insisted on it, but that Boydell would much rather see us as co-editors of an annual journal, with the DISTAFF sessions as our primary hunting ground for paper candidates. Our astonishment must have been apparent.

Gale and I set to work on a formal proposal for an ongoing series. Drawing on her wide range of contacts, Gale assembled a prestigious editorial board, while I gathered information on potential markets both inside and outside academia. Within a few weeks, Boydell accepted our proposal for an annual collection of new research. *Medieval Clothing and Textiles* (hereafter *MC&T*) ultimately took a double identity: published in hardbound book format, but with an editorial board, peer review, and series classification, to serve as the journal our “new” discipline so clearly needed. The cover presentation, as Gale likes to note, recognizes the publication’s hybrid role as both journal and book series: the typographic “livery” remains the same, with journal name and number, but the central inset photo changes annually to reflect one of the papers inside, like a window into the volume’s contents.

In the subsequent months, we tidied up the collection yet again, solicited additional articles, worked out procedures for review and editing, and created editorial guidelines. Gale and I developed what was to become a comfortable routine of bouncing ideas and queries back and forth across the pond. Our increasingly telegraphic emails combined session organization and journal preparation, with updates on speakers, authors, and other projects mixed in with anecdotes about our husbands and children, travel plans, and tidbits from our daily lives. The difference in time zones proved advantageous; as a night owl, I grew accustomed to waiting up for the “morning mail from England” – Gale’s first email to me of the day, which typically arrived as I was wrapping up my night’s work, sometime after midnight.

As co-editors, Gale and I found that once more, our skills dovetailed precisely: Gale was a veteran of the academic publication process, and I had decades of experience as a professional editor. We easily split the duties along our lines of expertise. At the same time, we discovered that we agree precisely on editorial philosophy and priorities, and we're both sticklers on issues of grammar, clarity, and accuracy.

The first volume of *MC&T* appeared in 2005, generating a response that far surpassed even optimistic expectations. Pre-orders came in a rush on the heels of the first announcement, not just from the expected library and institutional purchasers, but also from individuals who passed the news of the new series around their own communities. When the published book premiered at the Congress, the handful of copies at the publisher's bookstall vanished within a day. *MC&T* soon became Boydell's best-selling series.

Now, as we begin work on our twelfth volume, I continue to be astonished by Gale's energy and productivity. She drills through piles of manuscripts and produces cogent, targeted comments faster than I can wrap my head around just one. Deadlines make her even swifter and sharper. "I completed an online questionnaire on stress last week," she wrote me once. "The instructions said it would take about nine minutes. One question was, 'Do you always have to work at speed?' I completed it in about three minutes!"

At the same time, she manages to deal patiently, and often at great length, with the journal's contributors, despite the number of other projects she always has on her plate. As an editor, she pays particular attention to first-time authors, guiding them through multiple revisions and improvements and pointing them to useful sources. As she explained, "I consider the editor of a scholar's first article to be one of the most important teachers in their life. The late Professor Peter Clemoes did it for me at Cambridge when I was totally inexperienced. I consciously try to repay that debt with every new author."

In the time that I have been active in the study of medieval dress, the field has grown from being an odd specialty, with few outlets for scholars to share their findings, to a recognized research area with a wealth of active scholarship, collaboration, and publication. Gale R. Owen-Crocker is one of a handful of individuals central to this shift. Conversely, in the two decades since she furtively slipped away to see a Kalamazoo session on costume, dress scholarship has moved from a curious sideline to a central position in her academic life, the focus of research projects, reference works, and other achievements enumerated at length in the list of her publications in this volume. As that list and this collection attest, Gale's work and influence extend much further than the field of dress. Nevertheless, she has noted the role of clothing and textile study as a key component of many of her recent professional achievements. When she wrote me in 2005 that she had been promoted to Reader – a position, she explained, "given solely on research" – she added, "I think this is a triumph for dress and textiles research and for DISTAFF. It is being recognised as

academically legitimate.” The following year, she was named to a chair and chose the suitably interdisciplinary title Professor of Anglo-Saxon Culture. Shortly afterward came a huge grant for the five-year Lexis project on clothing terminology (discussed elsewhere in this volume); she wrote then, “This is the biggest grant my subject area has ever got. It will pay for some trips to Kalamazoo.”

Perhaps the most telling demonstration I’ve seen of the changes in the status of medieval costume study, as well as in Gale’s own professional focus, was an ironic one. A few years ago, Gale asked me to provide a summary of her influence in the area of dress and textiles for an “impact statement” that her university was compiling for a national requirement. Of course I immediately cited her contributions in establishing a recognized research field, as attested by DISTAFF, *MC&T*, conference sessions, and reference publications. No good, Gale explained; apparently the university was trying to document its faculty’s *non-academic* impact, which ruled out traditional academic work. What mattered now was her broader reach – her generosity in responding to queries about dress from novelists, documentary producers, and schoolchildren; her guest appearances on radio and television shows to talk about Anglo-Saxon dress or the Bayeux Tapestry; her popular lectures for re-enactors and costumers. “It is absolutely daft, we all agree,” she added. “For years dress and textiles were considered unacademic. Now the department is looking for anything that we do that affects the wider public, and it seems I am one of the few who can help!”



## Publications of Gale R. Owen-Crocker (as Gale R. Owen before 1986)

### Forthcoming

“Anglo-Saxon Monsters: Frightening, Fantastic, Formulaic”. In *Il fantastico nel Medioevo di area germanica*, edited by Fulvio Ferrari, Lucia Sinisi, and Alessandro Zironi.

“Furnishing Heorot”. In *Crossing Boundaries: Interdisciplinary Approaches to the Art, Material Culture, Language and Literature of the Early Medieval World*, edited by Eric Cambridge and Jane Hawkes. Oxford: Oxbow.

“Textiles”. With Elizabeth Coatsworth. In *A Cultural History of Dress and Fashion*, vol. 2: The Medieval Age, edited by Sara-Grace Heller.

### 2015

“Fools in the Bayeux Tapestry”. *Text* 42 (2015): 4–11.

*The Material Culture of the Built Environment in the Anglo-Saxon World*, Daily Living in Anglo-Saxon England 2. Edited with Maren Clegg Hyer. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

*Medieval Clothing and Textiles* 11. Edited with Robin Netherton.

### 2014

*The Anglo-Saxons: The World through Their Eyes*. Edited with Brian W. Schneider. BAR British Series 595. Oxford: Archaeopress.

“Brides, Donors, Traders: Imports into Anglo-Saxon England”. In *Textiles and the Medieval Economy: Production, Trade, and Consumption of Textiles, 8th–16th Centuries*, edited by Angela Huang and Carsten Jahnke. Ancient Textiles Series 16. Oxford and Philadelphia: Oxbow. 64–77.

“Dress”. With Elizabeth Coatsworth. In *Oxford Bibliographies Online: Medieval Studies*, edited by Paul E. Szarmach. New York: Oxford University Press. <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo>

*Medieval Clothing and Textiles* 10. Edited with Robin Netherton and with the assistance of Monica L. Wright.

“Medieval Clothing and Textiles 10”. Interview in *The Medieval Herald*, quarterly newsletter of Boydell and Brewer 18. [http://www.boydellandbrewer.com/content/docs/Medieval\\_Herald\\_XVIII\\_Spring\\_2014.pdf](http://www.boydellandbrewer.com/content/docs/Medieval_Herald_XVIII_Spring_2014.pdf)

*Medieval Dress and Textiles in Britain: A Multilingual Sourcebook*. Edited with Louise Sylvester and Mark Chambers. Woodbridge: Boydell, 2014.

*Towns and Topography: Papers in Memory of David Hill*. Edited with Susan D. Thompson. Oxford: Oxbow.

“Velis vento plenis ... Sea crossings in the Bayeux Tapestry”. In *The Maritime World of the Anglo-Saxons*, edited by William Schipper, Stacy S. Klein, and Shannon Lewis-Simpson.

## Publications

Essays in Anglo-Saxon Studies 4. Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies 30. Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies. 131–56.

### 2013

*Kingship, Legislation and Power in Anglo-Saxon England*. Edited with Brian W. Schneider. Publications of the Manchester Centre for Anglo-Saxon Studies 13. Woodbridge: Boydell.

*The Material Culture of Daily Living in Anglo-Saxon England*. Edited with Maren Clegg Hyer. Paperback edition. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press. First published 2011.

*Medieval Clothing and Textiles* 9. Edited with Robin Netherton.

*Royal Authority in Anglo-Saxon England*. Edited with Brian W. Schneider. BAR British Series 584. Oxford: Archaeopress.

### 2012

“Anglo-Saxon Woman: Fame, Anonymity, Identity and Clothing”. In *Dress and Identity in the Past*, edited by Mary Harlow. Oxford: Archaeopress. 85–96.

*The Bayeux Tapestry: Collected Papers*. Edited. Variorum Collected Studies Series 1016. Farnham: Ashgate.

*Encyclopedia of Medieval Dress and Textiles of the British Isles c. 450–1450*. Edited with Elizabeth Coatsworth and Maria Hayward. Leiden and Boston: Brill. Hardback and electronic versions.

Entries in *Encyclopedia of Dress and Textiles in the British Isles c. 450–1450*, edited by Gale R. Owen-Crocker *et al.* Leiden and Boston: Brill. Preface; Introduction (3–5); “Alb” with Elizabeth Coatsworth (31); “Aldhelm” (31–34); “Amber” (36); “Animal Fibre” (37); “Appliqué” with Elizabeth Coatsworth (37–38); “Bayeux Tapestry” (57–61); “Bezant” (71); “Blanket” with Mark Chambers, Elizabeth Coatsworth, and Mark Zumbuhl (73–74); “Body Garments: ante-1100” (75–78); “Brandea” (94); “Brocading” (97–98); “Buckle” (99–101); “Camaca” with Mark Chambers and Elizabeth Coatsworth (108–109); “Chasuble” with Elizabeth Coatsworth (117); “Cloak: ante-1100” (127–29); “Comb” with Maria Hayward (141–42); “Cope” (148–49); “Coral” (149); “Crannog” (156); “Cross Dressing” with Hannah Priest (156–58); “Dagging” (167); “Dalmatic” (167–68); “Dress and Ethnicity” with Robin Netherton (171–72); “Dress and Gender” with Robin Netherton (172–74); “Dublin” (174–75); “Emballage” (189–90); “Funerals: ante-1100” (217–18); “Garter: ante: 1100” (225–26); “Gerefa” (229–30); “Girdle: ante-1100” (230–32); “Glosses and Glossaries” (233–35); “Helmet” with Maria Hayward (264–65); “Hemming (2)” (266); “Hemp” (266–67); “Heroic Literature” with Mark Zumbuhl (271–72); “Kermes” with John Munro and Hazel Uzzell (301–302); “Liripipe” (329); “Llan-Gors Decorated Garment” (338–40); “London: archaeology” (340–41); “London: Victoria and Albert Museum” (342–44); “Looms” (344–47); “Luttrell Psalter” (349); “Maniple” (361); “Maternity and Nursing Garments” (364–65); “Mystery and ‘Mystery Plays’” with Mark Chambers (369–70); “Nålebinding” (372–73); “Naming of Cloths” (373–77); “Naming of Garments in Old English” (377–80); “Opus” (391–92); “Orkney Hood” (398–400); “Orphrey” (400); “Painted and Stamped Cloth” (401–402); “Pendant: ante-1000” (413–14); “Pendant: post-1100” with Geoff Egan+ and Maria

## Publications

Hayward (414–15); “Portraits” with Maria Hayward (427–28); “Powdering” (434–35); “Purple” with John Munro (436–38); “Rath” (441); “Recycling” (443–44); “Rifeling” (457–58); “Rogart Shirt” (458–59); “Royal Regalia: ante-1100” (465–66); “Sacks” (470–71); “Seal Bag” (489–90); “Seals (for cloth) and Merchants’ Marks” with Geoff Egan† (490–92); “Secular Dress: Anglo-Saxon” (492–94); “Secular Dress: Insular Viking” (497–98); “Selvedge” (499–500); “Sensuality and Sexuality” (500–503); “Ship Burial” (509); “Shoes” (511); “Sleeve” with Robin Netherton (523); “Slipper” (523–24); “Stained Glass Windows” (546); “Stole” (565); “Tablet Weave” with Nancy Spies (571–74); “Thong” (585); “Tools: Archaeological Evidence ante-1100: England and Scotland” (588–90); “Torque” (593–94); “Veil” with Desirée Koslin (611–13); “Velvet” with Elizabeth Coatsworth (613); “Woodcarving: Roof Bosses” (637); “Woolcomb” (651–52); “Woollens” (652–53); “Woolsack” (653); “Worsted” with John Munro (653–54). “Fur, Feathers, Skin, Fibre, Wood: Representational Techniques in the Bayeux Tapestry”. In *The Bayeux Tapestry: Collected Papers*, edited by Gale R. Owen-Crocker. Farnham: Ashgate.

“Hunger for England: Ambition and Appetite in the Bayeux Tapestry”. In *Holy and Unholy Appetites in Anglo-Saxon England: A Collection of Studies in Honour of Hugh Magennis*, edited by Marilina Cesario and Kathrin Prietzel. Special edition of *English Studies* 93.5: 540–49.

“Image Making: Portraits of Anglo-Saxon Church Leaders”. In *Leaders of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, edited by Alexander R. Rumble. Publications of the Manchester Centre for Anglo-Saxon Studies 12. Woodbridge: Boydell. 109–27.

“The Lexis of Cloth and Clothing in Britain c. 700–1450”. With Louise Sylvester and Cordelia Warr. Searchable Database. <http://lexisproject.arts.manchester.ac.uk/> *Medieval Clothing and Textiles* 8. Edited with Robin Netherton.

“Textiles”. With Elizabeth Coatsworth. In *Oxford Bibliographies Online: Medieval Studies*, edited by Paul E. Szarmach. New York: Oxford University Press. <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo>

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“The Bayeux Tapestry: Faces and Places”. In *The Bayeux Tapestry: New Approaches*, edited with Michael Lewis and Dan Terkla. Oxford: Oxbow. 96–104.

*The Bayeux Tapestry: New Approaches*. Edited with Michael J. Lewis and Dan Terkla. Oxford: Oxbow.

“Dress and Identity”. In *A Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology*, edited by Helena Hamerow, Sally Crawford, and David Hinton. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press. 91–118.

*King Harold II and the Bayeux Tapestry*. Edited. Paperback edition. Woodbridge: Boydell. First published 2005.

*The Material Culture of Daily Living in Anglo-Saxon England*. Edited with Maren Clegg Hyer. Exeter: University of Exeter Press.

*Medieval Clothing and Textiles* 7. Edited with Robin Netherton.