



Dictionary of Old English: 2025 Progress Report

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A Look Back at Some Entries Drafted in 2025

As Janus smiles upon us in the beginning of 2026, it seems right to recall that in the past year the Dictionary of Old English was confronted with *feigning*, *deceit*, and *hypocrisy*,¹ beset with *tricks* and *stratagems*,² and greeted with *lying words*.³

*Time and again*⁴ we sought the meaning of *life*⁵ but without success; the gate of knowledge was *shut*⁶ fast, firmly *locked*,⁶ until by the *mercy*⁷ of God the *flame*⁸ of understanding *enlightened*⁹ the mind. That which *had lain hid*¹⁰ in obscurity now *shone*¹¹ and *gleamed radiantly*.¹²

*A song of praise and jubilation*¹³ is raised; the *sailor*¹⁴ beholds the sea *still*¹⁵ that storms ere had vexed, *clear*¹⁵ skies ahead.

¹ *licettung*, ² *lotwrencas*, ³ *lygespell*, *lygeword*, etc.

⁴ *oft and gelōme*, ⁵ *līf*, ⁶ *gelocen*, ⁷ *liss*, ⁸ *līg*, ⁹ *gelīhte*,

¹⁰ *lutode*, ¹¹ *līxte*, ¹² *līymde*, ¹³ *lofsang*, ¹⁴ *lida*, ¹⁵ *līpe*

Entry-writing, Dissemination, and Outreach

2025 was a productive year for the DOE, as the editors continued to make progress on the remaining entries for *Li–Ly*. We hope to finish drafting this fascicle, which will contain about 575 entries, in late 2026 and publish it in 2027. In the meantime, we have begun making our first forays into the 750 undrafted entries in *Ma–Me*, with Dr. Deanna Brooks, our postdoctoral researcher, tackling many of the botanical terms that will appear in that fascicle, including *mageþe* ‘chamomile,’ *merece* ‘march, wild celery,’ and *merscmealwe* ‘marshmallow’ (not, alas, the kind suitable for s’mores).

On May 30 and 31, the DOE hosted the online Épinal-Erfurt Glossary Colloquium, organized by Prof. Michael Herren (emeritus, UofT / York) and DOE Copy Editor Dr. Cameron Laird. The conference explored various aspects of this important work – one of the earliest recorded substantial records of the English language – and featured an international panel of speakers, including Profs. Michael Lapidge,

Patrizia Lendinara, and David Ganz. Also among the speakers were Laird and former DOE research assistant Dylan Wilkerson, as well as Toronto alumnus Prof. Gernot Wieland (emeritus, UBC). The event attracted nearly 150 participants from around the world and will serve as the basis of a proceedings volume now in preparation. Laird has also joined Herren, Wieland, and Prof. David W. Porter (emeritus, Southern University) as co-editor of the Épinal-Erfurt Editing Project, which aims to produce the first complete text, translation, and commentary of this important early English glossary.

The DOE took part in the Twenty-Second Meeting of the International Society for the Study of Early Medieval England (ISSEME), held in July at Heinrich-Heine-Universität, Düsseldorf. Co-editor Stephen Pelle gave a project report on the DOE in Düsseldorf and then participated in the workshop ‘Stand und Perspektiven der Lexikographie des Altenglischen, Altsächsischen und Althochdeutschen und der Verlinkung ihrer Wortschätze,’ held at Goethe-Universität in Frankfurt. Prof. Renée Trilling, the Angus Cameron Professor of Old English at the University of Toronto, also presented at the ISSEME conference, as did former DOE research assistant Dr. Samuel Cardwell (Nottingham).

Publications by members of the DOE team in the last year include Dr. Deanna Brooks’s review of Jennifer Neville’s *Truth is Trickiest: The Case for Ambiguity in the Exeter Book Riddles* in *The Medieval Review* and two articles by co-editor Stephen Pelle, “The Infernal Punishment of Livestock Thieves in an Anonymous Old English Homily and Redaction VI of the Visio Pauli” in *Notes and Queries*, and “Revisiting Some ‘Stock Descriptions of Heaven and Hell’ in the Old English Anonymous Homilies” in the Brepols volume *Sermons, Saints, and Sources: Studies in the Homiletic and Hagiographic Literature of Early Medieval England*.

Also slated for publication in the coming year or soon thereafter is the second volume of *The Antwerp-London Glossaries* by Prof. David W. Porter, which, like volume one, will appear in the

Publications of the Dictionary of Old English (PDOE) book series, published through the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies (PIMS). Volume two will contain introductory chapters and detailed commentary on the glossaries edited by Porter in the first volume. DOE co-editors Getz and Pelle have served as series editors for PDOE since 2019; beginning in 2026, they will be joined by Dr. Tristan Major (PIMS) and Cameron Professor Renée Trilling. With this expanded editorial board, we plan to broaden the scope of PDOE to include publications on a wide array of topics relating to Old English and Anglo-Latin literature, while also continuing to welcome proposals for volumes that focus more narrowly on lexicography and glossography.

Grants and Gifts

The Dictionary of Old English enjoys the support of various granting agencies, scholarly societies, and individual donors, all of whom are critical to the success of the project. In 2025 we continued to receive funding from a major grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), which has allowed us to employ Dr. Deanna Brooks, our postdoctoral fellow. We have also received contributions from the Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation, the British Academy, the Salamander Foundation, and the International Society for the Study of Early Medieval England (ISSEME).

Major gifts from individual donors in 2025 include generous bequests from the estates of Prof. Walter Goffart (Yale) and Jennifer Rigg. The latter will contribute to the endowment of the George and Jennifer Rigg Editorship, established after another major gift from the Riggs in 2022 and currently held by Prof. Robert Getz. The Adopt-a-Word campaign also continues to inspire the generosity of individual donors to the DOE. For information on how to adopt a word for yourself or a loved one, or on other ways to support the project, please visit the DOE website.

Prof. Sarah Larratt Keefer (Trent University), who was a doctoral student of DOE founder Angus Cameron and a longtime friend of the project, passed away in early 2025. Prof. Keefer's friends and colleagues have established a fund in her memory to continue her legacy of support for the DOE. For more information or to make a donation, please visit <https://engage.utoronto.ca/site/SPageServer?pagename=donate#/fund/2372>.

Staff

After the retirement of Catherine Monahan as Managing Editor last year, Dr. Cameron Laird, who

had previously worked for the DOE as both a graduate student and postdoctoral fellow, ably took over her responsibilities of copy-editing and supervising our graduate research assistants. Beginning in January 2025, Ms. Xi Wang joined our staff as a part-time administrative assistant, aiding the editors with various administrative tasks previously handled by Monahan. These include subscription processing, day-to-day financial management, and supervision of work-study students. Three such students have worked for the project in the past year and have been instrumental in our recent efforts to reorganize and catalogue the DOE's computer equipment, administrative files, and print collections.

Dr. Deanna Brooks, now in the second year of her SSHRC-funded postdoctoral fellowship, continues both to progress in her own research and to move the DOE forward. Brooks has provided crucial support to the editorial team by writing many smaller entries for the *Li-Ly* fascicle – and, in recent months, also for *Ma-Me* – as well as by assisting the editors with some of the more time-consuming tasks involved with the drafting of large entries.

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