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IN
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by
S. O. ANDREW, M.A.

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CONTENTS

Preface *page* vii

Texts referred to, with Abbreviations viii

Chapter I. Old English word-order 1

II. Sentences introduced by *ða* 3

III. *Đær-* and *ðonne*-sentences 19

IV. Sentences introduced by *ær, forðam, nu*, etc. 31

V. Relative and demonstrative pronouns in Old English 35

VI. Some syntactical groups in Old English 48

VII. Negative words and sentences 62

VIII. Poetic idioms: (i) the asyndetic co-ordinate clause 72

IX. Poetic idioms: (ii) principal sentences with conjunctive order 80

X. Poetic idioms: (iii) dubious forms of principal sentence 83

XI. Parataxis 87

XII. The forms of the Old English relative pronoun 101

Index 111

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PREFACE

This short study is an attempt to drive a few main lines through the almost unexplored tract of Old English syntax. It began as an enquiry whether certain sentence-forms like Ða he answarode, Se wæs munuc on ðam mynstre, Hie ham on mer̓gen foron, Ne ic cuðe him helpan (to cite a few out of many), which in all our printed OE texts, both prose and verse, appear frequently as principal sentences, can be accepted as such. The evidence seemed to the author conclusive that this question must be answered in the negative: the nature of the evidence and the method of investigation are briefly described in 34. As the enquiry proceeded, however, it began to appear that its scope must be enlarged, for each problem opened up new ones and in the end almost every type of principal and subordinate sentence had to be examined; in particular, the importance of defining clearly the different kinds of OE word-order, as a foundation for the enquiry as a whole, became apparent. Speaking generally, a study of prose and verse usage leads to the conclusion that the same rules hold for verse as for prose both in syntax and word-order; there are, however, some syntactical features peculiar to verse which demand separate consideration—the reader's attention may be drawn especially to the study of asyndetic co-ordination in Chapter VIII.

Perhaps the most important result of our investigation is the light which it throws on the characteristic features of OE style. The intimate connection of syntax and style is, of course, obvious, and almost every syntactical discussion in the book is indirectly also a discussion of style; Chapter XI deals directly with the problem of style and seeks to show that the supposed 'paratactic' structure of Old English, whether in prose or verse, is an illusion.

Reference is frequently made in the following pages to the 'traditional text' of *Beowulf*. By this is meant no more than the text as it is usually *punctuated* by editors; all the editions which I have consulted (Grein, Holthausen, Wyatt-Chambers, Sedgefield, Klaeber) agree, with only slight variations, in the punctuation of the poem and therefore in its syntactical interpretation so far as that is represented by punctuation.

S. O. A.

February, 1940.

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TEXTS REFERRED TO, WITH ABBREVIATIONS

PROSE (references are usually to page and line):

ASC	*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ed. Plummer, Oxford.
Bede	*OE version of Bede's Eccl. History*, ed. Miller, EETS.
Blick.	*The Blickling Homilies*, ed. Morris, EETS.
CP	*Gregory's Cura Pastoralis*, ed. Sweet, EETS.
Gen., *Exod.*, etc.	Books of Ælfric's OE Pentateuch in *Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Prosa*.
Hom.	*Ælfric's Homilies*, ed. Thorpe, Ælfric Society.
LS	*Ælfric's Lives of the Saints*, ed. Skeat, EETS.
Mat., *Mk.*	*OE Gospels*, ed. Skeat, Cambridge.
OET	*Oldest English Texts*, ed. Sweet, EETS.
Oros.	*Alfred's OE Translation of Orosius' History*, ed. Sweet, EETS.

VERSE (references are to line):

And.	Andreas	in Grein-Wülker's *Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Poesie*.
Beo.	Beowulf	
Exod.	Exodus	
Gen.	Genesis	
Jud.	Judith	
Mald.	Maldon	
Crist	Crist	in *Exeter Book I*, EETS.
Guth.	Guthlac	
Jul.	Juliana	
Wand.	Wanderer	
Best.	Bestiary	in *Exeter Book II*, EETS.
Rid.	Riddles	
Soul's Ad.	Soul's Address	
Wid.	Widsith	
Wulf	Wulf	

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