Digital Resources for Anglo-Saxon Charters

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Digital Humanities

THE ELECTRONIC SAWYER
Online catalogue of Anglo-Saxon charters

A searchable, browsable catalogue of Anglo-Saxon Charters, updated from Peter Sawyer's Annotated List of 1968

Objectives:
- To provide a fully searchable catalogue of all Anglo-Saxon charters with full, updated bibliographies
- To provide texts and (where available) translations, with both free-text and structured searches.

Methods:
- A database was developed and used by the Humanities researchers to revise and update the information.
- This database was converted into intermediate XML formats which could then be converted into TEI P5.
- Documents were indexed using Apache Solr for searching.
- A large number of different browse formats were developed in consultation with researchers.
- The resulting system was built into a website using xMod and delivered through Apache Cocoon.

Project Outcomes:
The resource is now fully functional and freely available online, and is heavily used by Anglo-Saxonists.

<http://esawyer.org.uk/>

ASChart Anglo-Saxon Charters

A small pilot project to model, encode and investigate the diplomatic structure of Anglo-Saxon charters written before AD 900

Objectives:
- To develop and implement a schema for encoding the diplomatic structure of Anglo-Saxon charters.
- To apply this to texts of charters written before AD 900, enabling browsing by diplomatic form (curse, etc.)

Methods:
- An initial list of diplomatic components of interest was drawn up, and a TEI-compliant schema developed.
- Not all charters have modern editions, so a pre-existing set of scanned texts from nineteenth-century editions was marked up using this schema.
- Indexes were generated from the resulting XML and the texts and indexes delivered via xMod and Cocoon.
- Personal names in the witness-lists were also encoded with IDs from PASE to enable cross-linking.

Project Outcomes:
The website has been available for several years now, and was recently upgraded to TEI P5 and xMod 2.0.

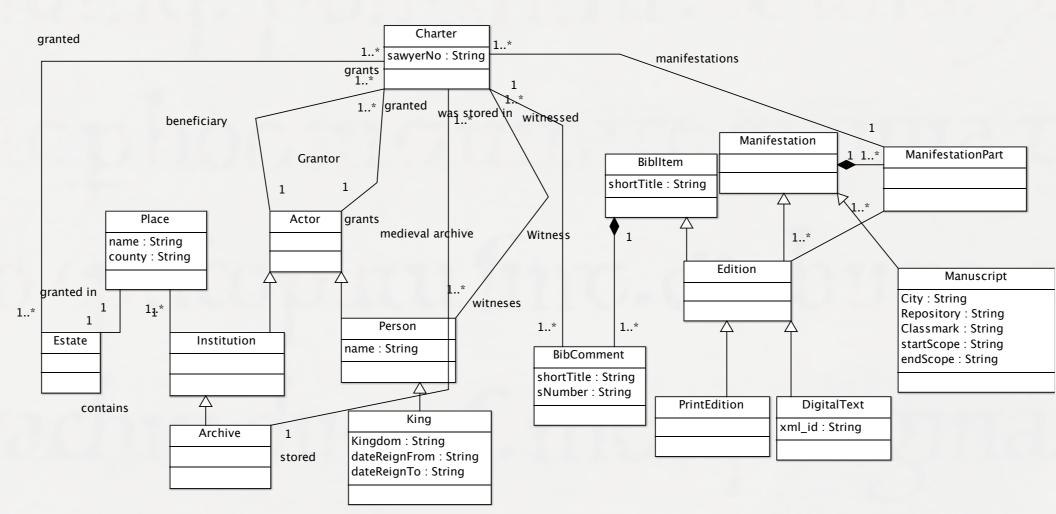### <http://www.aschart.kcl.ac.uk/>

ANGLO-SAXON CLUSTER

Integrating eSawyer, ASChart, LangScape and PASE into a single resource to allow searching across all of them simultaneously.

Objectives:
- To develop a web-based resource with the Anglo-Saxon charters as core material.
- To dynamically link the data and metadata from the constituent projects.
- To model the relationships and associations which **implicitly** exist between the data in each constituent project but which are masked by the distinct repositories and interfaces.

Methods:
- A single conceptual model was created for the constituent projects using UML.
- A draft TEI P5 schema was created for eSawyer, ASChart and LangScape.
- A working prototype was developed using Web Services to allow cross-project searches.

A Conceptual Model for Anglo-Saxon Charters

Project Outcomes:
The search system works but is fairly limited, as deep integration of fundamentally different models is almost impossible, even when the models refer to the same original document.

<http://ascluster.org/>

LANGSCAPE
THE LANGUAGE OF LANDSCAPE: READING THE ANGLO-SAXON COUNTRYSIDE

An online searchable database of estate boundaries from Anglo-Saxon charters with extensive linguistic and geographical annotation.

Objectives:
- To provide semi-diplomatic editions of all surviving copies of Anglo-Saxon boundary clauses.
- To model, encode and allow searching of linguistic and geographical content, including full lemmatisation and word-by-word translation of the texts.
- To produce new visualisations of texts and geographical distributions of forms.

Methods:
- A full schema was developed using TEI P5 and integrated with a RDB for further metadata.
- All texts were transcribed from original documents and encoded in TEI.
- A novel system of semi-automated lemmatisation was applied to the resulting texts.
- The geographical distributions were implemented using Google Maps.

Translation	First[1]	from	weevil's/beetle's	watercourse	thence	so	up	along	(the) streamlet	until
Headword	ærest	fram	wifel	lacu	þæt	swa	up	andlang	riþig	þæt
Text	ærest	from	pifeles	lace	þ	spa	up	andlang	riðiges	þ

Translation	it	comes	to	coloured	floor	and	then	so	along	(the) slade (valley)	by
Headword	hit	cuman	to	fag	flor	and	þonne	swa	andlang	slæd	be
Text	hit	cymð	to	fagan	floran	]	þonne	spa	andlang	slædes	be

A boundary clause displayed with headwords and word-by-word translation

Project Outcomes:
A 'beta' version is available now, and the full resource will be available very soon.

<http://langscape.org.uk/>

PASE Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England

Provides structured information relating to all recorded inhabitants of England from the late sixth to the late eleventh century

Objectives:
- To serve as a research tool for a wide range of users with interest in the Anglo-Saxon period.
- To model and record aspects of the inhabitants of England from all available sources, including charters, narrative sources, coins, Domesday Book, and others.
- To enable exploration of the names and their relationships, roles, offices and other factors, all tied closely to the original source material.

Methods:
- A sophisticated new prosopographical model was developed, drawing particularly on the novel concept of the **factoid**, namely 'an assertion that a source says something about one or more people'.
- Researchers worked systematically through primary sources, recording and analysing factoids in a 'data collection' relational database.
- Content from the data collection databases was then uploaded into a Master Database for web delivery.

Project Outcomes:
The model has proven extremely successful and has undergone several funded iterations. PASE I included data to 1042; PASE II extended this to 1066 and also incorporated coins and Domesday Book. The Domesday content is now being analysed in a third project, Profile of a Doomed Elite.

<http://pase.ac.uk/>