Incipient Anglicana Script

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“Since our uninterrupted time is so very brief and it is so hard to acquire knowledge ...”
RICHARD RUFUS’ MEMORIALE IN METAPHYSICAM ARISTOTELES

Anglicana is a fascinating script that combines features of chancery and book script, making it reasonably easy to write quickly and particularly difficult to read today. This talk focuses on its early origins. It determines when fully formed Anglicana was first written and looks for clues to the dating of manuscripts written before the script first achieved its canonical form about 1275. Sadly, none of the characteristic graphs, such as the long-tailed r, offers by itself a reliable clue to the date a manuscript was written. They can be found in very early manuscripts but also can be absent in manuscripts dated about 1275. Indeed, traits shared with more standard book forms provide a more reliable indication of dating. And as might perhaps have been expected, inconsistency in the use of Anglicana characteristics such as forks and loops is a hallmark of incipient Anglicana, which has often led scholars to mistake an English for a continental scribe. At the end of the talk, attendees will be challenged to find Anglicana graphs in facsimiles.

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