



# Early English Metre (Toronto Old English Studies)

*Thomas A. Bredehoft*

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Thomas A. Bredehoft's *Early English Metre* is a reassessment of the metrical rules for English poetry from *Beowulf* to Layamon. Bredehoft offers a new account of many of the most puzzling features of Old English poetry – anacrusis, alliteration patterns, rhyme, and hypermetric verses – and further offers a clear account of late Old English verse as it descended from the classical verse as observed in *Beowulf*. He makes the surprising and controversial discovery that Ælfric's alliterative works are formally indistinguishable from late verse.

Discussing the early Middle English verse-forms of Layamon's *Brut*, Bredehoft not only demonstrates that they can be understood as developing from late Old English, but that Layamon seems to have known, and quoted from, the poems of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. *Early English Metre* presents a new perspective on early English verse and a new perspective on much of early English literary history. It is an essential addition to the literature on Old and Middle English and will be widely discussed amongst scholars in the field.

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