



كلية التربية بالفرقة



جامعة جنوب الوادي

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كلية التربية بالفرقة – جامعة جنوب الوادي

روية الكلية

كمية التربية بالفرقة مؤسسة رائدة محليا ودولياً في مجالات التعليم، والبحث العلمي، وخدمة المجتمع، بما يؤهلها للمنافسة على المستوى: المحلي، والإقليمي، والعالمي

رسالة الكلية

تقديم تعميم مميز في مجالات العلوم الأساسية و إنتاج بحوث علمية تطبيقية للمساهمة في التنمية المستدامة من خلال إعداد خريجين متميزين طبقاً للمعايير الأكاديمية القومية، و تطوير مهارات و قدرات الموارد البشرية، و توفير خدمات مجتمعية وبيئية تلبي طموحات مجتمع جنوب الوادي، و بناء الشراكات المجتمعية الفاعلة.

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Henry Buckle suggests that of all the great branches of human knowledge, history is that upon which most has been written, and which has always been most popular. And it seems to be the general opinion that success of historians has, on the whole, been equal to their industry; and that if on this subject much has been studied, much also is understood.

What is Civilization?

Civilization is so general in its nature that it can scarcely be seized; so complicated that it can scarcely be unraveled; so hidden as scarcely to be discernible. The difficulty of describing it, of recounting its history, is apparent and acknowledged; but its existence, its worthiness to be described and to be recounted, is not less certain and manifest.

Keith Thomas explains civilization, “To “civilize” was to effect the transition from the one condition to the other.” However Guizot sees that civilization is the grand emporium of a people, in which all its wealth – all the elements of its life – all the powers of its existence are stored up.

Wherever the progress of this principle is visible, together with the facts which have urged it forward, we are tempted to forget the price it has cost – we overlook the dearness of the purchase.

So, in the investigation of the meaning of the word *civilization* as a fact – by seeking out all the ideas it comprises, according to the common sense of mankind, we shall arrive much nearer to the knowledge of the fact itself, than by attempting to give our own scientific definition of it, though this might at first appear more clear and precise.

It seems that the first idea comprised in the word civilization is the notion of progress, of development. It calls up within us the notion of a people advancing, of a people in a course of improvement and melioration.

Now what is this progress? What is this development? In this is the great difficulty. The etymology of the word seems sufficiently obvious – it points at once to the improvement of civil life. The first notion which strikes us in pronouncing it is the progress of society; the melioration of the social state; the carrying to higher perfection the relations between man and man. It awakens within us at once the notion of an increase of national prosperity, of a greater activity and better organization of the social relations.

The word civilization has a more extensive signification than this, which seems to confine it to the mere outward, physical organization of society. Now, if this were all, the human race would be little better than the inhabitants of an

ant-hill or bee-hive; a society in which nothing was sought for beyond order and well-being – in which the highest, the sole aim, would be the production of the means of life, and their equitable distribution.

But our nature at once rejects this definition as too narrow. It tells us that man is formed for a higher destiny than this. That this is not the full development of his character – that civilization comprehends something more extensive, something more complex, something superior to the perfection of social relations, of social power and well-being.

In a word, whenever we contemplate the civilizations of the ancients, we find them all impressed with one ever-prevailing character of unity, visible in their institutions, their ideas, and manners – one sole, or at least one very preponderating influence, seems to govern and determine all things.

Britain

According to ancient traditions, the island which now bears the name of Great Britain, was originally called the country of *Green hills*, afterwards the island of *Honey*, and thirdly, the island of *Bryt*, or *Prydain*; from which last word, latinized, the name of *Britain* seems to have been formed. From the remotest antiquity, this island appeared to those who visited it, to be divided into two large unequal portions, of which the rivers Forth and Clyde formed the common boundary. The northern part was called *Alben*, signifying *region of mountains*; the other bore the name of *Kymru* in the west, and that of *Loegr* in the east and south.

The Uniformity in the Civilization of Europe

There is evidently so striking uniformity (*unité*) in the civilization of different states of Europe, as fully to warrant this appellation. Civilization has flowed to them all from sources so much alike – it is so connected in them all,

notwithstanding the great differences of time, of place, and circumstances, by the same principles, and it so tends in them all to bring about the same results, that no one will doubt the fact of there being a civilization essentially European.

At the same time it must be observed that this civilization cannot be found in – its history cannot be collected from, the history of any single state of Europe. However similar in its general appearance throughout the whole, its variety is not less remarkable, nor has it ever yet developed itself completely in any particular country. Its characteristic features are widely spread, and we shall be obliged to seek, as occasion may require, in England, in France, in Germany, in Spain, for the elements of its history.

List of Kings and Queens of England from 827- Present Day

HOUSE of WESSEX

❖ Egbert (827 – 839)

- Son of Ealhmund of Kent (House of Wessex)
- Noted for being the first king to have the submission of all Kingdoms of England.

❖ Aethewulf (839 – 858)

- Son of King Egberts
- Married to 1. Osburgh, the mother of his 6 children; 2. Judith of France

❖ Aethelbald 858 – 860

- Son of King Aethelwulf and Osburgh
- Married to Judith of France (his father's wife)

❖ **Aethelberht 860 – 865**

- Son of King Aethelwulf and Osburgh
- Did not marry

❖ **Aethelred I 865 – 871**

- Son of King Aethelwulf and Osburgh
- Married to Wulfthryth
- His sons Aethelhelm and Aethelwold were considered too young to rule when Aethelwulf died.

❖ **Alfred the Great 871 – 899**

- Son of King Aethelwulf and Osburgh
- Married to Ealhswith
- Drove the Vikings out of Wessex and began to unite England.

❖ **Edward the Elder 899 – 924**

- Son of King Alfred the Great and Ealhswith

- Married 1. Ecgwynn, 2. Aelfflaed, 3. Eadgifu
- Continued to drive out the Vikings and work towards uniting England.

❖ **Aethelstan 924 – 939**

- Son of King Edward the Elder and Ecgwynn
- Did not marry.
- United England and is recognised as the first King of all England

❖ **Edmund 939 – 946**

- Son of King Edward the Elder and Eadgifu
- Married 1. Aelfgifu of Shaftesbury,
2. Aethelflaed of Damerham

His two sons, Eadwig and Edgar did not immediately succeed as they were too young to rule.

❖ **Eadred 946 – 955**

- Son of King Edward the Elder and Eadgifu
- Did not marry

❖ **Eadwig 955 – 959**

- Eldest son of King Edmund and Aelfgifu of Shaftesbury.
- Married Aelfgifu
- He did not have any children

❖ **Edgar 959 – 975**

- Youngest son of King Edmund and Aelfgifu of Shaftesbury
- Married 1. Aethelflaed, 2. Wulfthryth, 3. Aelfthryth
- Edgar was known as ‘the Peaceful’

❖ **Edward the Martyr 975 – 978**

- Son of King Edgar and Aethelflaed
- Did not marry

- Murdered at Corfe Castle by supporters of his younger half-brother, Aethelred

❖ **Aethelred II 978 – 1013 and 1014 – 1016**

- Son of King Edgar and Aelfhryth

- Married 1. Aelfgifu of York, 2. Emma of Normandy

- He was known as the Unready, the word ‘unread’ meaning poor counsel. Faced with new Viking invasions he chose to pay them vast sums of money to leave England. He was deposed by Sweyn Forkbeard but returned after Sweyn’s death

❖ **Sweyn Forkbeard 1013 – 1014**

- Son of Harald Bluetooth and Gyrid

- Married to 1. Gunhilda, 2. Sigrid

After conquering much of the country he was declared King of England in December 1013. On his death he left

the throne to his son, Cnut but the people chose to allow Aethelred II to return as their King.

❖ **Edmund II 1016**

- Son of King Aethelred the Unready and Aelfgifu of York

Married Ealdgyth

- Known as Ironside because of his bravery fighting successive Danish invasions, succeeded his father, Aethelred the Unready. Died soon after agreeing to split the Kingdom with Canute of Denmark. His son Edward the Exile was later summoned to return to England by Edward the Confessor.

ANGLO SAXON AND DANISH

❖ **Canute (Cnut) 1016 – 1035**

- Son of the Danish King, Sweyn Forkbeard and Gunhilda
- Married 1. Aelfgifu of Northampton, 2. Emma of Normandy
- Had ruled northern England as part of peace terms since 1015 and took throne following death of Edmund II

❖ **Harold I 1035 – 1040**

- Son of King Cnut and Aelfgifu of Northampton
- Married Aelfgifu
- Known as Harefoot because of his speed on the battlefield. He took the throne of England because Cnut's nominated successor, his half-brother Harthacnut, was in Denmark.

❖ **Harthacnut 1040 – 1042**

- Son of King Cnut and Emma of Normandy

-Did not marry

- Took the throne after the death of his half-brother King Harold I.

❖ **Edward the Confessor 1042–1066**

- Son of King Aethelred the Unready and Emma of Normandy

- Married Edith of Wessex

- He was sent to Normandy to live with his mother's family after King Canute took the throne. He allegedly took a vow of celibacy and had no children. His childlessness led to the Norman Conquest as William of Normandy believed he had been promised the throne.

❖ **Harold II 1066**

- Son of Earl Godwin of Wessex and Gytha Thorkelsdottir
- Married 1. Edyth Swanneck (may not have been married)
 2. Edith of Mercia
- Harold claimed that Edward the Confessor had given him the throne on his deathbed.

HOUSE OF NORMANDY

❖ William I 1066 – 1087

- Son of Robert of Normandy and Herleva
- Married Matilda of Flanders
- Nicknamed the Conqueror after defeating King Harold II at Battle of Hastings. Commissioned the Domesday Survey.

❖ William II 1087 — 1100

- Son of King William I and Matilda of Flanders
- Did not marry
- Died while hunting in New Forest in mysterious circumstances.

❖ Henry I 1100 – 1135

- Son of King William I and Matilda of Flanders

-Married Edith of Scotland.

- Used a large chequered cloth to count income leading to finance being known as the Exchequer. His eldest son, William Aetheling drowned in the White Ship Disaster which led to a succession crisis.

❖ **Stephen 1135 – 1154**

- Son of Stephen of Blois and Adela of Normandy (William I's daughter)

-Married Matilda of Boulogne

- Appointed King over Henry I's daughter Matilda – a move that led to civil war

HOUSE OF PLANTAGENET

❖ **Henry II 1154 – 1189**

- Son of King Henry I's daughter Matilda and Geoffrey of Anjou
- Married Eleanor of Aquitaine
- His views on church reform came into conflict with Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury who was assassinated in 1170.

❖ **Richard I 1189 – 1199**

- Son of King Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine
- Married Berengaria of Navarre
- He was nicknamed Lionheart due to his involvement in the crusades.

❖ **John 1199 – 1216**

- Youngest son of King Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine
- Married 1. Isabella of Gloucester, 2. Isabella of Angouleme
- Known as Lackland because his father did not grant him any land.

❖ **Henry III 1216 – 1272**

- Son of King John and Isabella of Angouleme
- Married Eleanor of Provence
- Became King at the age of 9 years and ruled for 56 years.

❖ **Edward I 1272 – 1307**

- Son of King Henry III and Eleanor of Provence
- Married 1. Eleanor of Castile, 2. Margaret of France
- Nicknamed Longshanks because he was tall and the Hammer of the Scots because he fought in Scotland. He

conquered Wales and built many castles. When his wife, Eleanor, died, Edward erected crosses along her funeral route including at Charing Cross in London.

❖ **Edward II 1307 – 1327**

- Son of King Edward I and Eleanor of Castile

-Married Isabella of France

- He was created the first Prince of Wales and eldest sons of the reigning monarch have been created Prince of Wales ever since. He was deposed in favour of his son and imprisoned where he died.

❖ **Edward III 1327 – 1377**

- Son of King Edward II and Isabella of France

-Married Philippa of Hainault

- Edward's reign was dominated by the Hundred Years War with France. Edward's eldest son, Edward, the Black Prince, died fighting in the war. Society changed following

the drastic reduction in the population following the Black Death. Rivalry between Edward's sons led to the Wars of the Roses.

❖ **Richard II 1377 – 1399**

- Son of the Edward the Black Prince and Joan of Kent
- Married 1. Anne of Bohemia, 2. Isabella of Valois
- Became King at the age of 10 years when he succeeded his grandfather to the throne. He was deposed and imprisoned in Pontefract Castle where he died.

HOUSE OF LANCASTER

❖ Henry IV 1399 – 1413

- Son of King Edward III's son John of Gaunt and Blanche of Lancaster. Married 1. Mary de Bohun, 2. Joan of Navarre. - Henry took the throne from Richard II.

❖ Henry V 1413 – 1422

- Son of King Henry IV and Mary de Bohun
-Married Catherine of Valois

- Continued the Hundred Years War and saw victory at Agincourt. He died from a wound sustained while fighting.

❖ Henry VI 1422–1461, 1470 – 1471

- Son of King Henry V and Catherine of Valois. -Married Margaret of Anjou

- Suffered bouts of madness that led to challenges to the throne known as the Wars of the Roses

HOUSE OF YORK

❖ Edward IV 1461 – 1483

- Son of Richard Duke of York and Cecily Neville
- Married Elizabeth Woodville. - Took the throne from Henry VI. - Alienated Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick by marrying Elizabeth Woodville and raising her family.

❖ Edward V 1483

- Son of King Edward IV and Elizabeth Woodville
- Did not marry. - Aged 12 when his father died. Edward and his brother Richard mysteriously died in the Tower of London and are referred to as the Princes in the Tower.

❖ Richard III 1483 – 1485

- Son of Richard Duke of York and Cecily Neville. - Married Anne Neville. - Appointed regent for young Edward V and became King after declaring the sons of Edward IV to be illegitimate.

HOUSE OF TUDOR

❖ Henry VII 1485 – 1509

- Son of Edmund Tudor and Margaret Beaufort
- Married Elizabeth of York, daughter of Edward IV
- Defeated Richard III at Battle of Bosworth Field and claimed the throne founding the Tudor dynasty. His marriage to Elizabeth of York ended the Wars of the Roses.

❖ Henry VIII 1509 – 1547

- Son of King Henry VII and Elizabeth of York
- Married 1. Catherine of Aragon, 2. Anne Boleyn, 3. Jane Seymour, 4. Anne of Cleves, 5. Kathryn Howard, 6. Katherine Parr
- Famously married six times and beheaded two of his queens. He broke with Rome and made himself Head of the Church of England in order to obtain a divorce from Catherine of Aragon and changed religion to Anglican.

❖ **Edward VI 1547 – 1553**

- Son of King Henry VIII and Jane Seymour

- Did not marry

- Became King at the age of 10 years. Was a committed Protestant and introduced the Book of Common Prayer. He died after 6 years as King.

❖ **Lady Jane Grey 1553**

- Daughter of Henry Grey and Frances Brandon, daughter of Henry VIII's younger sister, Mary
Married Guildford Dudley

- Queen for just 9 days. She was given throne by John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland to avoid a return to Catholicism.

❖ **Mary I 1553 – 1558**

- Daughter of King Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon

- Married Philip II of Spain

- Nicknamed Bloody Mary for killing Protestants. She lost Calais, England's last possession in France.

❖ **Elizabeth I 1558 – 1603**

- Daughter of King Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn

- Did not marry

- Nicknamed the Virgin Queen because she never married.

Ruled for 45 years, saw English victory in the Spanish Armada and had the American state of Virginia named after her by Walter Raleigh.

HOUSE OF STUART

❖ James I 1603 – 1625

- Son of Henry Stuart and Mary Queen of Scots
- Married Anne of Denmark
- Grandson of Henry VIII's elder sister Margaret was also King James VI of Scotland. He was the first Stuart monarch and survived the Gunpowder Plot attempt to assassinate him and the government.

❖ Charles I 1625 – 1649

- Son of King James I and Anne of Denmark
- Married Henrietta Maria of France
- Caused conflict with the Church and Parliament due to his leanings towards Catholicism and his insistence on the Divine Right of Kings. His refusal to grant concessions led to the English Civil War -- He was executed by Parliament at the end of the war.

INTERREGNUM

❖ **Oliver Cromwell 1649 – 1658**

- Son of Robert Cromwell and Elizabeth Steward
- Married Elizabeth Bourchier
- There was no monarch following execution of Charles I. Britain was declared a Commonwealth and Cromwell was its Head. Cromwell was a strict Puritan and imposed Puritanism on the country.

❖ **Richard Cromwell 1658 – 1660**

- Son of Oliver Cromwell and Elizabeth Bourchier
- Married Dorothy Maijor
- Richard succeeded his father as head of the Commonwealth. However he was not a leader like his father and the monarchy was restored.

HOUSE OF STUART

❖ Charles II 1660 – 1685

- Son of Charles I and Henrietta Maria of France
- Married Catherine of Braganza
- Nicknamed the Merry Monarch for restoring music and dancing which had been banned by Oliver Cromwell. His reign saw the Great Plague and the Great Fire of London.

❖ James II 1685 – 1688

- Son of Charles I and Henrietta Maria of France
- Married 1. Anne Hyde, 2. Mary of Modena
- Showed openly Catholic tendencies and was replaced by his daughter and son-in-law.

❖ William III and Mary II 1688–1702

- William was the son of William of Orange and Mary, daughter of Charles I; Mary was the daughter of King James II and Anne Hyde

- William and Mary were married
Ruled as joint monarchs until 1694 when Mary died.
William then ruled alone until his death in 1702

❖ **Queen Anne 1702 – 1714**

- Daughter of King James II and Anne Hyde
- Married Prince George of Denmark
Anne had seventeen pregnancies and her only surviving son
died in 1700 so on her death the crown passed to the
Hanoverians

HOUSE OF HANOVER

❖ George I 1714 – 1727

- Son of Ernest Augustus of Hanover and Sophia of the Palatinate, granddaughter of James I
- Married Sophia Dorothea of Celle
German George inherited the throne as the closest living Protestant relative of Queen Anne (Catholics had been barred from the succession by the Act of Settlement 1701). George was the grandson of James I's daughter Elizabeth and could not speak a word of English. Catholics believed that James Stuart, son of King James II and Mary of Modena should be King and rallied behind his and later his son Bonnie Prince Charlie's cause.

❖ George II 1727 – 1760

- Son of King George I and Sophia Dorothea of Celle
- Married Caroline of Ansbach

George was the last King to personally lead troops into battle during the Seven Years War.

❖ **George III 1760 – 1820**

- Son of Frederick, Prince of Wales and Augusta of Saxe Gotha

- Married Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz

- Ruled for 60 years longer than any other monarch at the time and 3rd longest reign to date. He suffered from bouts of insanity which have been attributed to the condition porphyria. He was very reluctant to concede defeat in the American War of Independence. In his later years his son took over as regent. The period is known as the Regency.

❖ **George IV 1820 – 1830**

- Son of King George III and Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz

- Married Caroline of Brunswick

- George lived a flamboyant lifestyle and was fond of entertaining, racing and gambling. He ordered the construction of the Royal Pavilion in Brighton.

❖ **William IV 1830 – 1837**

- Son of King George III and Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz

- Married Adelaide of Saxe-Meiningen

- Nicknamed Sailor Billy after his time served in the navy.

He had no surviving legitimate children to succeed him.

❖ **Victoria 1837 – 1901**

- Daughter of Prince Edward, Duke of Kent (son of King George III) and Victoria of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld

- Married Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha

- Victoria acceded the throne 3 weeks after her 18th birthday and reigned for 64 years, longer than any monarch at the time and 2nd longest reign to date. She is known as

the Grandmother of Europe because she married her children to many European prince and princesses. She was devastated when her husband, Albert, died in 1861 and spent the rest of her life dressed in black.

HOUSE OF SAXE COBURG GOTHA

❖ Edward VII 1901 – 1910

- Son of Queen Victoria and Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha

- Married Alexandra of Denmark

- Edward was the only monarch of house Saxe Coburg Gotha. He was the longest serving Prince of Wales by the time of his accession and second longest serving Prince of Wales to date. His good relationship with the French President helped pave the way for the signing of the Entente Cordiale between Britain and France in 1904.

HOUSE OF WINDSOR

❖ George V 1910 – 1936

- Son of King Edward VII and Alexandra of Denmark
- Married Mary of Teck
- Changed the royal name to Windsor during World War One to distance the monarchy from its German heritage.

❖ Edward VIII 1936

- Son of King George V and Mary of Teck
- Married Wallis Simpson
- Abdicated the throne in 1936 to marry Wallis Simpson – a divorcee. He and his wife were exiled to France.

❖ George VI 1936 – 1952

- Son of King George V and Mary of Teck
- Married Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon

- Reluctantly became King after the abdication of his brother. He suffered from a stammer and found public speaking difficult, though he was helped by therapist Lionel Logue. Remained in London during World War Two to show solidarity with the people during the Blitz.

❖ **Elizabeth II 1952 –**

- Daughter of King George VI and Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon
- Married Prince Philip of Greece
- Succeeded her father at the age of 26 years and became the longest reigning monarch in 2015. To date she has been served by 12 different Prime Ministers of Britain.

PREHISTORIC BRITAIN

PREHISTORIC BRITAIN

(From 4000 BC To 43 AD)

In Britain's history the period 4000BC – 43AD is referred to as Prehistory. Archaeologists and historians use the term “Prehistory” to refer to a time in a people's history before they used a written language.

The first people to arrive in Britain were hunter-gatherers who arrived from mainland Europe around 8,000 BC. As the name suggests, these first Britons lived off the wealth of the land including the native elk, wild cattle and pigs, whilst presumably attempting to avoid the bears and wolves which also roamed the heavily wooded interior.

It was not until about 4000 BC that a party of ‘young farmers’ arrived from southern Europe bringing with them perhaps the first phase in man-made environmental disasters. The ancient practise of deforestation was instigated as trees, woods and forests were cleared to create

land to accommodate domesticated plants and animals. These ‘young farmers’ proved to be so effective at genetically modified breeding (crops and livestock) that the population of Britain rocketed to approximately one million by 1400 BC.

Following the ‘young farmers’ other visitors from Europe came – Belgae, Celts and Gauls arrived starting the trend for the multi-cultural Britain of today. In particular it is the arrival of the Celts in Britain that provokes thoughts of a period of time shrouded in mystery and myth. The artistic style of these Iron Age people, twisting and bending animal, plant and human forms, are common across Europe.

Historians have tended to further segregate these times based upon the materials of manufacture of the people’s favourite hunting or fighting implements, namely:

c. 4000 – 2000 BC Neolithic Age

c. 2000 – 750 BC Bronze Age

c. 750 BC – 43 AD Iron Age

Neolithic Britain

Farming began in the Middle East, China, India and South East Asia about 10,000 years ago. As farming gradually spread, settled communities dependent on agriculture supplanted the hunter-gatherer lifestyle in many, but not all areas, and introduced new lifestyles referred to as Neolithic. Archaeologists think that farming arrived in Britain as the knowledge and resources needed to farm were introduced by Neolithic people migrating from continental Europe. Farming led to a more settled way of life and forests were cleared to provide space for crops and animal herds.

The construction of the earliest earthwork sites began during the Early Neolithic (c. 4000 - 3300 BC). Evidence

of growing human control of the environment is shown by the Sweet Track, a wooden track way dated to 3800 BC.

The Middle Neolithic (c. 3300 - 2900 BC) saw the development of cursus monuments close to earlier barrows, the building of impressive chamber tombs such as the Maeshowe types and the growth and abandonment of causewayed enclosures. The earliest stone circles and individual burials also appear.

Different pottery types such as Grooved Ware appear during the Late Neolithic (c. 2900 - 2200 BC) whilst new enclosures, called henges were built, along with stone rows. The stone-built houses at Skara Brae on Orkney indicate the development of small settlements in Britain. The stone houses at Skara Brae in the Orkneys date to the Late Neolithic and are associated with users of Grooved Ware.

Bronze Age Britain

Around 2400 BC a new set of beliefs and practices, known as the Beaker 'package', arrived in Britain via cross-channel connections with mainland Europe bringing new burial rites, people, objects and technology including the skill of copper and gold metal working.

Initially items were made from copper, then from around 2200 BC bronze (which is harder than copper) was made by mixing copper with tin. Bronze gradually replaced stone as the main material for tools and by 2200 BC the period known as the Early Bronze Age had begun in the Britain. Tin was mined in south-west England and copper and gold were being sourced from Ireland and Wales. This changed after 1600 BC when metal from mainland Europe became increasingly important.

From about 1500 BC round houses were built in Britain and their use continued into the Iron Age. Most round

houses were built from local materials: wooden walls and a roof thatched with reeds or straw.

From 1800 BC, field systems developed becoming more common by 1500BC. Settlements grew to include a greater variety of building types, sometimes enclosed by a ditch or fence. There is evidence for the emergence of social elites. A greater density of finds and settlements in some parts of Britain, which may relate to increased population. The appearance of swords and other weaponry (many of them deposited in rivers and other watery places) suggests a rise in conflict and war. Some of these objects may have been worn and deposited for show by social elites.

Iron Age Britain

Around 800 BC iron working techniques reached Britain from mainland Europe. While bronze was still used for objects such as jewelry, iron was used for tools. In England and Wales, the Iron Age ended with the arrival of the Romans in AD 43. In Scotland and Ireland, Iron Age ways

of life continued after this date, and for some people in other parts of Britain aspects of Iron Age ways of living may have carried on for a long time after the Roman conquest.

Iron Age Britain was essentially rural. Most people lived in small villages and farmsteads with communities run by an individual or small group. Most people lived in thatched roundhouses with wooden or wattle and daub walls, and a central fire. Iron axes and iron tipped ploughs made farming more efficient and agricultural production increased. Wheat, barley, beans and brassicas were grown in small fields.

About 100 BC, iron bars began to be used as tokens of wealth and around 150 BC the use of coins developed within the elite of south-east Britain.

Religious belief and offerings to gods, spirits and ancestors were an important part of life. People did not build temples and few statues of Iron Age deities are preserved. Instead,

gods were seen as being everywhere and religious offerings were made in the home, around farms and in the countryside, especially in watery places. Many decorated Iron Age weapons and other objects have been found in rivers, lakes and bogs including the Witham shield found near Lincoln and the Battersea shield found in the River Thames.

By AD 1, south-east Britain was controlled by powerful rulers who had close contacts with the Roman Empire. Rulers such as Tincomarus (Tincommius), Tasciovanus and Cunobelinus are known from coins. They controlled areas of land from centres such as St Albans, Colchester, Chichester and Silchester.

The End of Prehistoric Britain

The prehistoric period came to an end when the Romans invaded Britain. In 55 BC **Julius Caesar** tried to invade Britain, but he was driven back by British warriors. The

next year he tried again and failed. Almost 100 years later, in AD 43, the Roman general **Agricola** launched a new invasion. This time the **Romans conquered Britain**.

Some ancient Britons retreated to **Cornwall, Wales and Scotland**, where they continued to follow their Celtic customs. Many others decided not to move. They stayed on in Britain and learned to live like the Romans.

ROMAN BRITAIN

ROMAN BRITAIN

(The Classical Period)

(From AD 43 – AD 411)

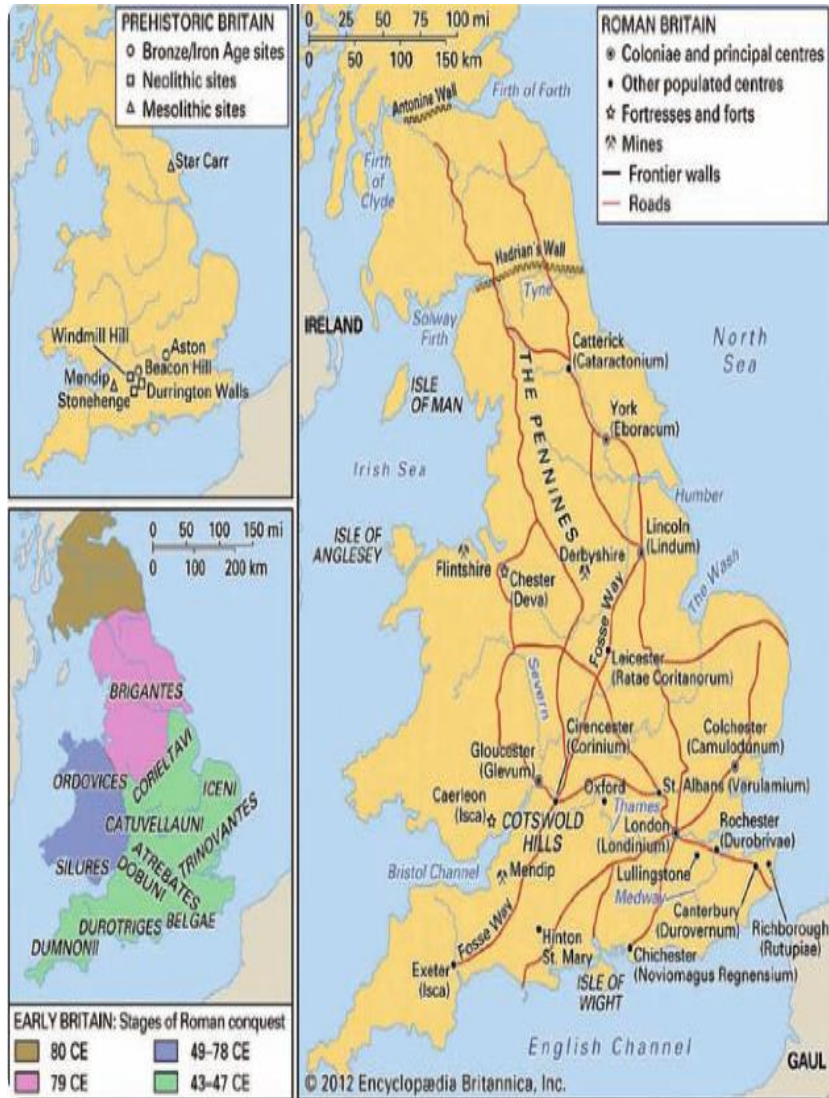
Contact with Rome took Britain from prehistory into history. Migration and trade between Britain and continental Europe was already well established by the time the Roman general Julius Caesar made two expeditions to Britain in 55 and 54 BC, as part of larger campaigns in Gaul (modern France). During these expeditions, the Romans did not conquer any territory, but instead invited the British people to pay tribute in return for peace, established client rulers and brought Britain more fully into Rome's sphere of influence. This might have included the construction of Roman style buildings, such as rectangular dwellings at Silchester in Hampshire.

It is difficult to be sure about the political divisions of Britain before the mid-first century BC. Caesar refers to the

arrival of Belgic peoples a generation before his own invasion, but it is uncertain which of the tribes he mentions were the newcomers.

In AD 43, a Roman invasion force landed in Britain and quickly took control of the south-east before heading north and west. Then in AD 61, while the Roman army was in Wales, Boudica, ruler of the Iceni people, provoked by Roman seizure of land and the brutal treatment of her family raised an army to fight the Romans. The Iceni destroyed the Roman settlements at Camulodunum (Colchester) Verulamium (St Albans) and London before the Roman army finally defeated the rebels in the Midlands.

Roman control of England and Wales was consolidated over a number of decades following this rebellion and Britain remained a province in the Roman Empire until around AD 411.



Condition of the Province

There was a marked contrast in attitude toward the Roman occupation between the lowland Britons and the inhabitants of Wales and the hill country of the north. The economy of

the former was that of settled agriculture, and they were largely of Belgic stock; they soon accepted and appreciated the Roman way of life. The economy of the hill dwellers was pastoral, and the urban civilization of Rome threatened their freedom of life. Although resistance in Wales was stamped out by the end of the 1st century CE, Roman influences were nonetheless weak except in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Army and Frontier

After the emperor Domitian had reduced the garrison in about the year 90, three legions remained, with permanent bases established at York, Chester, and Caerleon. The legions formed the foundation of Roman military power. The army of Britain was very powerful; its presence had economic as well as political results.

Hadrian's Wall was the most impressive frontier work in the Roman Empire. The northern tribes only twice

succeeded in passing it, and then at moments when the garrison was fighting elsewhere. In the late Roman period, when sea raiding became prevalent, the wall lost its preeminence as a defense for the province, but it was continuously held until the end of the 4th century.

In the 2nd century their solution was military occupation. In the 3rd, after active campaigning (208 - 211) by the emperor Septimius Severus and his sons during which permanent bases were built on the east coast of Scotland, the solution adopted by the emperor Caracalla was regulation of relationship by treaties. During the 4th century more and more reliance was placed on friendly native states, and patrols were withdrawn.

Administration

Britain was an imperial province. From AD 43 until the early third century, Britain was governed as a single province. The governor represented the emperor, exercising

supreme military as well as civil jurisdiction. From the late 1st century he was assisted on the legal side by a *legatus juridicus*. The finances were in the hands of the provincial procurator, an independent official of equestrian status whose staff supervised imperial domains and the revenues of mines in addition to normal taxation. In the early 3rd century Britain was divided into two provinces in order to reduce the power of its governor to rebel. During the third century, senators were gradually phased out from military command, to be replaced by equestrians.

In military districts control was in the hands of fort prefects responsible to legionary commanders; but the late 1st century local self-government was granted to *civitates peregrinae*, whose number tended to increase with time. These also had republican constitutions, being controlled by elected councils and annual magistrates and having responsibility for raising taxes and administering local

justice. In the 1st century there were also client kingdoms whose rulers were allied to Rome.

Roman Society

Pre-Roman Celtic tribes had been ruled by kings and aristocracies; the Roman civitates remained in the hands of the rich because of the heavy expense of office. But since trade and industry now yielded increasing profits and the old aristocracies no longer derived wealth from war but only from large estates, it is likely that new men rose to power. Roman citizenship was now an avenue of social advancement.

Soldiers and traders from other parts of the empire significantly enhanced the cosmopolitan character of the population, as did the large number of legionaries, who were already citizens and many of whom must have settled locally. The population of Roman Britain at its peak amounted perhaps to about two million.

Economy

Even before the conquest, according to the Greek geographer Strabo, Britain exported gold, silver, iron, hides, slaves, and hounds in addition to grain. A Roman gold mine is known in Wales. Iron was worked in many places but only for local needs; silver, obtained from lead, was of more significance.

But the basis of the economy was agriculture, and the conquest greatly stimulated production because of the requirements of the army. According to Tacitus, grain to feed the troops was levied as a tax; correspondingly more had to be grown before a profit could be made. The pastoralists in Wales and the north probably had to supply leather, which the Roman army needed in quantity for tents, boots, uniforms, and shields.

The Decline of Roman Rule

The reforms of Diocletian ended the chaos of the 3rd century and ushered in the late imperial period. Britain, however, for a short time became a separate empire through the rebellion (286/287) of Carausius. This man had been in command against the Saxon pirates in the Channel and by his naval power was able to maintain his independence. His main achievement was to complete the new system of Saxon Shore forts around the southeastern coasts. At first he sought recognition as co-emperor, but this was refused. In 293 the fall of Boulogne to Roman forces led to his murder and the accession of Allectus, who, however, fell in his turn when Constantius I invaded Britain in 296. Allectus had withdrawn troops from the north to oppose the landing, and Hadrian's Wall seems to have been attacked, for Constantius had to restore the frontier as well as reform the administration. He divided Britain into four provinces,

and in the same period the civil power was separated from the military.

The 4th century was a period of great prosperity in towns and countryside alike. Britain had escaped the barbarian invasions of the 3rd century and many have seemed a safe refuge for wealthy continentals. Its weakness lay in the fact that its defense was ultimately controlled by distant rather than local rulers.

When Constantine III, who was declared emperor by the army in Britain in 407, took further troops to Gaul, the forces remaining in the island were insufficient to provide protection against increasing Pictish and Saxon raids. The Britons appealed to the legitimate emperor, Honorius, who was unable to send assistance but authorized the cities to provide for their own defense (410). This marks the end of Roman Britain, for the central government never reestablished control, but for a generation there was little

other outward change; and power fell gradually into the hands of tyrants.



ANGLO-SAXON BRITAIN

Anglo-Saxon Britain

(409-779)

The medieval period began with the collapse of Roman rule in the west in the fifth century. It was a difficult time, when people lived through rapid economic decline, falling living standards, social fragmentation, and an international order rooted in violence.

Following the barbarian crossing of the Rhine in the winter of 406-407, Roman military units in Britain rebelled and proclaimed one of their generals, who happened to be named Constantine III, to be the new emperor. The Roman army never came back in any force to Britain, and those few Roman units left behind were unable to do much when barbarians began to attack Roman Britain.

By the beginning of the 5th century all the Romans had been either assimilated or banished from Britain, the Celts had been subdued and various 'kingdoms' such as those in

Kent and Wessex had been established with Germanic chiefs.

The *Chronicle* begins its account of British history with Julius Caesar's attempted conquests in 55 and 54 BC; it begins with Caesar's failures and ends with Alfred's victories. Between the two is the story of how the ancestors of the Anglo-Saxons came to Britain from the European continent in the fifth and sixth centuries, and invaded large parts of the island that the Roman Empire had relinquished.

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* reports various battles against the Danes across the following decade, some won by the English, others by the Vikings. It is called the Saxon Chronicle because it is written in the Old Saxon tongue, and forms a continuous record of the Old Saxon times. They have been written as early as the ninth century, and therefore to be contemporary with King Alfred.

* Asser's Life of Alfred is subscribed thus: TO MY VENERABLE AND MOST PIOUS LORD, RULER OF ALL THE CHRISTIANS IN THE ISLAND OF BRITAIN, TO ÆLFRED, KING OF THE ANGLO-SAXONS, ASSER, THE LAST OF ALL THE SERVANTS OF GOD A THOUSAND-FOLD PROSPERITY IN EITHER LIFE, TO THE FULFILMENT OF HIS WISHES.

In the year of our Lord's incarnation 849, was born ÆLFRED, king of the Angul-Saxons, in the royal vill which is called Wanating,* in that district which is called Berroescire, which district is so called from Berroc Wood, where the box tree grows most abundantly.

* Wantage in Berkshire.

The Saxon Chronicle does not notice the birth of Alfred, or any other event occurring in 849 and 850. The genealogy, which here follows, is given in connection with the death of Ethelwolf, in the year 855.

Ethelwerd, like the Saxon Chronicle, gives the following genealogy in a later year (857).

His genealogy is traced in the following order.

And he Æthelwulf was the son of Ecgbreht, Ecgbreht of Ealhmund, Eal-

King Ælfred was the son of king Æthelwolf, who was the son of Ecgberth, who was the son of Ealhmund, who was

The aforesaid king [ETHELWOLF], therefore, was the son of king Ecgbyrht, and his grandfather was Ealhmund,

849 Florence

Huntingdon

Simeon

849.

ALFRED, king of the Anglo-Saxons, is born in that district which is named Barrorescire, in the royal vill which is called Wanating, which district is so called from Berroc wood, where the box tree grows most abundantly.

His genealogy is traced in the following order.

King Alfred was the son of king Æthelwulf, who was the son of Egbert, who was the son of Alhmund, who was

In the year of our Lord's incarnation 849, arose light out of darkness :

ELFRED, king of the English, was born in

the royal vill, which is called Wanatinge by the English.

His genealogy is traced in the following order.

King Elfred was the son of king Ethelwlf, who was the son of Egberht, who was the son of Alhmund, who was

The Anglo-Saxons

The Roman armies withdrew from Britain early in the fifth century because they were needed back home to defend the crumbling centre of the Empire. Britain was considered a far-flung outpost of little value.

At this time, the Jutes and the Frisians from Denmark were also settling in the British Isles, but the Anglo-Saxon settlers were effectively their own masters in a new land and they did little to keep the legacy of the Romans alive. They replaced the Roman stone buildings with their own wooden ones, and spoke their own language, which gave rise to the English spoken today.

The term Anglo-Saxon is a relatively modern one. It refers to settlers from the German regions of Angels and Saxony, who made their way over to Britain after the fall of the Roman Empire around AD 410.

The Anglo-Saxons also brought their own religious beliefs, but the arrival of Saint Augustine in 597 converted most of the country to Christianity. The Anglo-Saxon period lasted for 600 years, from 410 to 1066, and in that time Britain's political landscape underwent many changes.

Most of the information we have about the Anglo-Saxons comes from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, a year-by-year account of all the major events of the time. Among other things it describes the rise and fall of the bishops and kings and the important battles of the period. It begins with the story of Hengist and Horsa in AD 449.

Anglo-Saxon rule came to an end in 1066, soon after the death of Edward the Confessor, who had no heir. He had supposedly willed the kingdom to William of Normandy, but also seemed to favour Harold Godwinson as his successor.

Harold was crowned king immediately after Edward died, but he failed in his attempt to defend his crown, when William and an invading army crossed the Channel from France to claim it for himself. Harold was defeated by the Normans at the Battle of Hastings in October 1066, and thus a new era was ushered in.

The “three tribes of Germany – the *Jutes*, the *Angles*, and the *Saxons*, by whom Britain was subdued, seem originally to have constituted but one nation, speaking the same language, and ruled by Monarchs who all claimed their descent from the deified Monarch of the Teutons, Woden or Odin.

After the migration of the Saxons to Britain, the name of *Old Saxons*, was given to the present stock. The Anglo-Saxons commenced their career as pirates and robbers, and as pirates and robbers of the most desperate and dangerous description.



Saxon Military Chief

All the historians of those days that speak of them at all, describe them as universally distinguished above their neighbors for their energy and vehemence of character, their mental and physical superiority, and for the wild and daring expeditions to which their spirit of enterprise and activity were continually impelling them. They built vessels, in which they boldly put forth on the waters of the German Ocean or the Baltic Sea on excursions for conquest or plunder.

On these expeditions, they all embarked as in a common cause, and felt a common interest. The leaders shared in all the toils and exposures of the men, and the men took part in the counsels and plans of the leaders. If they fought, they conquered; if they pursued their enemies, they were sure to overtake them; if they retreated, they were sure to make their escape.

They came from three very powerful Germanic peoples, the Saxons, Angles and Jutes. The people of Kent and the inhabitants of the Isle of Wight are of Jutish origin and also those opposite the Isle of Wight, that are part of the kingdom of Wessex which is still today called the nation of the Jutes.

Evidence suggests that the Anglo-Saxons settled originally in eastern England, before moving westwards and northwards to occupy territory formally inhabited by the Britons. Wales remained a British stronghold, and Cumbria

(the name of which derives from the same root as ‘Cymru’, the Welsh name for Wales) perhaps held out against the invaders for longer than other parts of northern England.

Although the division of the Anglo-Saxons into groupings of Angles, Saxons and Jutes was perhaps less clear-marked than stated by Bede, their continental connections were preserved in the names of some kingdoms: ‘Saxon’ kingdoms appeared in southern and western England (Wessex or West Saxons, Sussex or South Saxons, Middlesex or Middle Saxons and Essex or East Saxons) and Angles in the North, East and Midlands (East Anglia, Northumbria and Mercia).

The Anglo-Saxons spoke the language we now know as Old English, an ancestor of modern-day English. A number of other languages were spoken or understood by certain individuals in Anglo-Saxon England, including Latin (the language of the Church and learning), Greek, Cornish and

Irish (the latter being the language of many early missionaries).

The Anglo-Saxons who first settled in England in the fifth and sixth centuries were pagans. The relatively little insight we have into their religious practices comes from looking at their burial customs or from records in later, Christian writings.

Late in the sixth century, the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms adopted the Christian faith over the course of the next century, under the influence of Roman missionaries and Irish monks.

VIKING BRITAIN

Viking Britain

(793-1066)

The Viking Age in Britain began in the 9th Century AD and lasted for just over 200 years. About the year 800, bands of fierce raiders began to attack our coasts. They were the Vikings (also called the **Danes** although they didn't just come from Denmark). The Vikings came from the three countries in Scandinavia (in Northern Europe) Denmark, Norway, and Sweden.

We know about them through archaeology, poetry, sagas and proverbs, treaties, and the writings of people in Europe and Asia whom they encountered. They left very little written evidence themselves. As well as warriors, they were skilled craftsmen and boat-builders, adventurous explorers and wide-ranging traders.

What we call the Viking Age, and their relationship with England, lasted from approximately 800 to 1150 AD –

though Scandinavian adventurers, merchants and mercenaries were of course active before and after this period. Their expansion during the Viking Age took the form of warfare, exploration, settlement and trade.

Anglo-Saxon writers called them Danes, Norsemen, Northmen, the Great Army, sea rovers, sea wolves, or the heathen. From around 860AD onwards, Vikings stayed, settled and prospered in Britain, becoming part of the mix of people who today make up the British nation.

A Short History of the Vikings in Britain

In 793 came the first recorded Viking raid. Gradually, the Viking raiders began to stay, then settling in land they had seized, mainly in the east and north of England.

Outside Anglo-Saxon England, to the north of Britain, the Vikings took over and settled Iceland, the Faroes and Orkney, becoming farmers and fishermen, and sometimes going on summer trading or raiding voyages. Orkney

became powerful, and from there the Earls of Orkney ruled most of Scotland. To this day, especially on the north-east coast, many Scots still bear Viking names.

To the west of Britain, the Isle of Man became a Viking kingdom. The island still has its Tynwald, or *ting-vollr* (assembly field), a reminder of Viking rule. In Ireland, the Vikings raided around the coasts and up the rivers. They founded the cities of Dublin, Cork and Limerick as Viking strongholds.

Meanwhile, back in England, the Vikings took over Northumbria, East Anglia and parts of Mercia. In 866 they captured modern York (Viking name: Jorvik) and made it their capital. They continued to press south and west. The kings of Mercia and Wessex resisted as best they could, but with little success until the time of Alfred of Wessex, the only king of England to be called 'the Great'.

King Alfred and the Danes

King Alfred ruled from 871-899. He defeated the Vikings at the Battle of Edington in 878. In 886 Alfred took London from the Vikings and fortified it. The same year he signed a treaty with Guthrum. It comprised the north-west, the north-east and east of England. Here, people would be subject to Danish laws. Alfred became king of the rest.

The Vikings were not permanently defeated – England was to have four Viking kings between 1013 and 1042. The greatest of these was King Cnut, who was king of Denmark as well as of England. A Christian, he did not force the English to obey Danish law; instead he recognised Anglo-Saxon law and customs. He worked to create a north Atlantic empire that united Scandinavia and Britain. Unfortunately, he died at the age of 39, and his sons had short, troubled reigns.

The final Viking invasion of England came in 1066, when Harald Hardrada sailed up the River Humber and marched to Stamford Bridge with his men. His battle banner was called Land-waster. The English king, Harold Godwinson, marched north with his army and defeated Hardrada in a long and bloody battle. The English had repelled the last invasion from Scandinavia.

However, immediately after the battle, King Harold heard that William of Normandy had landed in Kent with yet another invading army. With no time to rest, Harold's army marched swiftly back south to meet this new threat. The exhausted English army fought the Normans at the Battle of Hastings on 14th October, 1066. At the end of a long day's fighting the Normans had won, King Harold was dead, and William was the new king of England.

The irony is that William was of Viking descent: his great-great-great-grandfather Rollo was a Viking who in 911 had

invaded Normandy in northern France. His people had become French over time, but in one sense this final successful invasion of England was another Viking one.

King Alfred *The Great* (847/849-889)

The history of King Alfred's Life and Times is to be gathered from three different classes of written records:

ALFRED THE GREAT

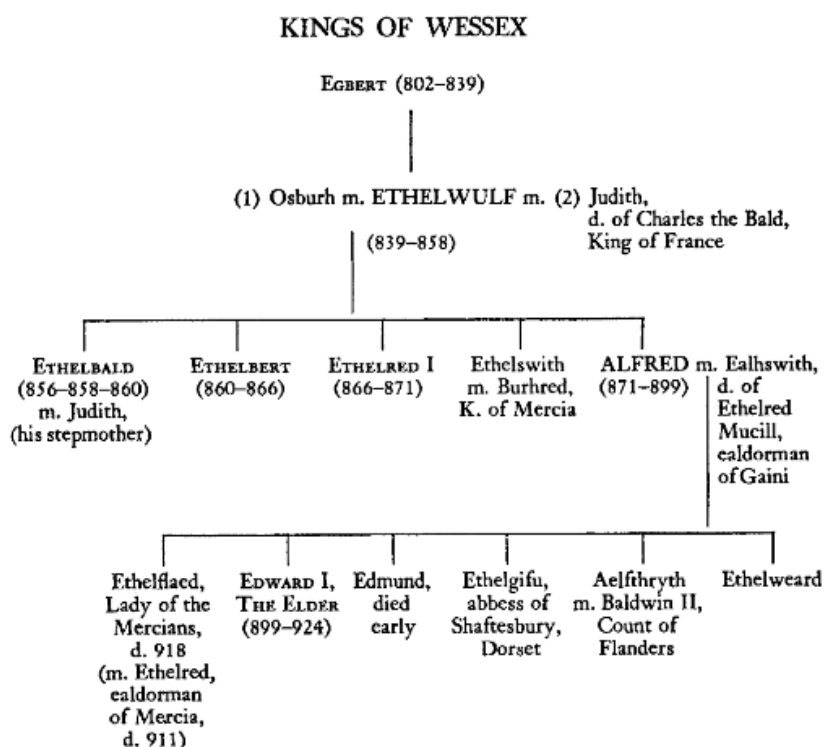


1. CHRONICLES

containing a notice of public and private events during the period in which King Alfred lived; i.e. from the year 849 to the year 901.

2. Incidental notices of those times, found in other writings, such as Homilies, Letters, Councils, Charters etc. whether contemporary or of a later date.
3. The writings of King Alfred himself.

The ninth century in all its course was the century of Alfred the Great. Its first half, from 800 to 849 A.D., saw, as it were, the preparation of the theatre, the gradual building of the background, in England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, in France, in Germany, in Scandinavia.



Alfred's father was King Ethelwulf, who ruled over the south west of England. He traced his own genealogy all the way back to Noah. Anglo-Saxon names usually have

meanings: Alfred's father name means "noble-wolf," cognate with the Germanic "Adalwolf," which has become "Adolf".

Alfred's name, unique among Ethelwulf's sons, does not begin with "noble." His contemporaries would have heard his name with meaning – "Elf-red" – "elf-counsel."

Alfred was born in A.D. 849, at Wantage in Berkshire (Oxfordshire) to Ethelwulf, king of Wessex, and Osberh, a "most religious woman, noble in character and by birth" (Asser's *Life*). The England into which Alfred was born was land under threat. Viking raiders had been attacking the kingdoms of Britain in search of wealth and plunder since the 790s, though his native Wessex had not fared as badly as others, such as Mercia in the middle of England, Wessex's northern neighbor across the Thames Valley; and East Anglia, Mercia's eastern neighbor on the coast. Northumbria in the northeast had suffered most. The earliest Viking raids would not have seemed alien within an

Anglo-Saxon culture that lauded warrior values and accepted violence among neighboring kingdoms as normal. This was in the very midst of the decades when the pagan Vikings from Scandinavia were constantly raiding the Christian British Isles in general and even Christian England itself – destroying churches and their libraries on a huge scale.

Alfred the Great was king of Wessex – the southern part of present-day England – from 871 until his death in 899, during a period often called the “Dark Ages,” though perhaps better called the early Middle Ages. He lived and died across the second half of the ninth century, in a material and cultural world very remote from ours, but one facing many of the same issues: foreign attack, international instability, the displacement of peoples, the need for social and legal reform, economic turmoil, tensions arising from religious difference. He was pierced by many nails of tribulations although firmly established in

royal power. He was disturbed by the constant attacks of foreign peoples which he continually sustained by land and sea without any quiet interval of peace.

In 868, Prince Alfred married the daughter of an *Ealdorman*. From 870 onward, Alfred still waged many battles against the Danes. He fought against Vikings who wished to overrun his country, but his response was not only to fight back on the battlefield, but to surround himself with the greatest minds that he could find, at home and abroad.

Alfred was a great soldier and statesman, who subdued the Viking threat that had engulfed the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms across Britain during the ninth century, and made peace.

The personality, career and achievements of Alfred, king of Wessex (871-899), have always been of central importance to historians of medieval England and Europe. Alfred's successful resistance to the Vikings and his initiation of a process which seems to lead inexorably to the creation out of the debris of the Viking raids of a single English

kingdom have always identified his reign as a crucial turning point in British history. Not only this, his personality has been seen by many as containing elements of greatness.

Alfred the Great figures in history as the founder, in some sense, of the British monarchy. Of that long succession of sovereigns who have held the scepter of that monarchy, and whose government has exerted so vast an influence on the condition and welfare of mankind, he was not, indeed, actually the first. There were several lines of insignificant princes before him, who governed such portions of the kingdom as they individually possessed, more like semi-savage chieftains than English kings.

Although the period of King Alfred's reign seems a very remote one as we look back toward it from the present day, it was still eight hundred years after the Christian era that he ascended his throne. Tolerable authentic history of the British realm mounts up through these eight hundred years

to the time of Julius Caesar. Beyond this the ground is covered by a series of romantic and fabulous tales, pretending to be history, which extend back eight hundred years further to the days of Solomon; so that a much longer portion of the story of that extraordinary island comes before than since the days of Alfred. In respect, however to all that pertains to the interest and importance of the narrative, the exploits and arrangements of Alfred are the beginning.

Alfred's cultural renewal inspired his contemporaries, and left a legacy in the area of law, literature, and education that underpins many of our global society's highest aspirations to this day. Alfred's Wessex was not Baghdad under Harun al- Rashid, or Italy in the Trecento; his resources were far more limited, but his vision was also great.

NORMAN BRITAIN

Norman Britain

(1066 – 1509)

The third quarter of the eleventh century was a period of rapid development throughout Western Europe and it was possible for countries which suffered no Norman Conquest to be transformed in some of the same ways as England. This period began with the Norman Conquest.

The most interesting problem about the Norman Conquest is what made it so complete. Apparently as the result of one day's fighting (14 October 1066), England received a new royal dynasty, a new aristocracy, a virtually new Church, a new art, a new architecture and a new language.

Economy & Society of England

Though much exchange probably took place through barter, England had a partially monetized economy. The only coins were silver pennies, but one recent estimate suggests

that about nine million of them circulated at the time of the conquest. Even peasants clearly used coins occasionally, to pay rents or to make major purchases such as a sheep (five silver pennies), a pig (ten silver pennies), or an ox (thirty silver pennies). Money was integral to the lifestyles of the upper classes. Landlords might depend heavily on the produce of their land and on rents paid in foodstuffs for everyday consumption, but they also had to oversee the selling of agricultural surplus so that they could buy military equipment and high- status luxury goods.

From the perspective of the English elites and the Normans who wished to replace them, one delightful aspect of the eleventh- century economy and society was the fact that they were designed to channel wealth upward.

English society was deeply hierarchical, with the king, a handful of earls, and several thousand nobles – called **thanes** – dominating the rest of society. The hierarchy was

not rigid: a prosperous, upwardly mobile peasant or a successful merchant could achieve the status of thane, and the bottom ranks of thanes rubbed shoulders with the upper ranks of peasants. Nonetheless, status mattered greatly in late Anglo-Saxon society, and much of the wealth produced by ordinary people passed into the hands of the king, the earls, and the thanes.

The peasantry, like the nobility, was stratified. At the bottom were the slaves, who formed roughly 10 percent of the population and as much as a quarter in some areas. They worked much of the land that lords set aside for themselves. They also served in the households of their masters and mistresses.

Comparatively speaking, their lives were probably not as bad as those of plantation slaves under New World slavery, and the freeing of slaves was considered a pious act. Nonetheless, Anglo-Saxon slaves had difficult lives.

The mass of the peasantry were generally better off than the slaves, though that is not saying much. They held their own plots of land from their lords, for which they paid rents in produce and sometimes money. Some would work two or three days per week on the lands of their lords, in addition to providing other services such as carting the lord's property around.

Above them were a small group of prosperous peasants, freemen and perhaps **sokemen**, who comprised between 5 and 15 percent of the total population and had lighter burdens. Even these peasants supported their superiors in various ways, not just by performing light labor services but by providing hospitality, acting as messengers, helping with hunting (the great pastime of the nobility), and sometimes serving in war. The most important of these figures filled out the circle of followers and flunkies that even the most minor aristocrats needed to provide local muscle, fulfill military obligations, and achieve status.

Lordship over land, slaves, and peasants, along with rents from urban property and miscellaneous sources of income, provided earls and thanes with riches, sometimes in breathtaking quantities. The wealthiest had extraordinarily luxurious lifestyles. In the late Anglo-Saxon period, nobles were building lavish compounds across England, with large wooden halls, private chambers, and stone churches. A number of wills survive from eleventh-century thanes and noblewomen, and among the items listed were weapons inlaid with precious metals, jewelry, gold crucifixes, tapestries, a headband weighted down with gold, and piles of gold and silver.

Another important recipient of wealth was the church, but ecclesiastical riches only provided another source of appeal to the Normans. Bishops, abbots, abbesses, and their churches collectively acted as landlords to about a quarter of England. Normandy had a clerical elite, closely intertwined with its secular elite, and the English church

could provide many opportunities for the more ambitious among them. Norman nobles and knights might also hope to seize land from the church. But the very existence of a well-established and prosperous church would have appealed to the Normans, for they tended to be as pious as they were predatory.

Naturally, the wealthiest and most powerful individual in England was the king. The earliest biographer of King Edward the Confessor, who reigned until 1066, described his richly adorned clothes, loaded with gems, pearls, and gold thread; his gold-covered throne; his precious imported carpets; his walking staff, encrusted with gold and gems; and his saddle and riding gear, covered with gold ornamentation. The king's household doubled as the central government, but the king also had local representatives. The most important of these were the **earls**, and below them came the **shire reeves**, or sheriffs. In 1066, most of England was already divided into **shires**, or counties (with

boundaries that would remain fairly stable until 1974). Shires were divided, in turn, into smaller units called **hundreds**, or **wapentakes**.

Responsibilities of the Royal Government

Royal government had various responsibilities. A major function as simply to keep the King supplied with the money and goods necessary for his luxurious lifestyle. Beyond this, the only major economic function of the royal government was to produce the standardized coinage that helped England's nascent market economy function. Happily for the king, control of the coinage also brought profit through charges on the minting of coins.

More important in medieval eyes was the religious duty of the king. The king benefited from the power and service that control of the church brought him, and also theoretically from the power of prayer. In return he was expected to run the church well, protect it, and support it

generously. More broadly, the king was supposed to maintain justice and public morality.

The most crucial duty of the king was to protect the country, ideally by crushing invaders in battle, less ideally by paying them off – a tactic that even King Alfred the Great, a military genius, had restored against the Vikings.

On a late September morning in 1066, English peasants living near the southern coast turned from their tasks in fear. The deep blast of a Viking horn rumbled through every field and village. They knew the horn meant certain death to anyone caught by the invader, William, the Duke of Normandy. Many would choose death rather than serve the tyrant from across the channel who claimed the English throne as his own.

William wasted no time moving his army east to Hastings. If he occupied that port, he could control the inland roads to London. Small parties of William's knights terrorized the

seaside. They burned villages to the ground – some were so devastated, the English never rebuilt them.

Meanwhile, news of the southern invasion reached Harold. He had secured an overwhelming victory over the king of Norway at Stamford Bridge in Yorkshire, but there was no time to celebrate. Immediately, he and his royal forces began a hard march south. He had to reach London before William!

Soon, Robert Fitz Wymare, an English landowner who claimed to be related to William, showed up at the Norman camp. He warned William to go home. Harold had just slaughtered over twenty thousand Norwegians in northern England and was marching south with a huge army. Defiant and confident, William boasted that he had sixty thousand men, but could defeat Harold with only ten thousand (which is closer to what he really had).

The Norman Conquest

Map of England





Map : Normandy and Surrounding Regions

At that time, England had no professional army. Only the housecarls, the king's household troops, were a consistent force. The king depended upon his lords to provide soldiers. While Harold marched south to London, forces in

the south gathered and waited. Harold summoned the northern earls Edwin and Morcar to join his forces in London.

By 1066, Harold could see the Normans approaching from his hilltop camp. His men formed a semicircular wall of overlapped shields nearly half a mile long, with the strongest of his troops in the middle. They covered the slope of the hill that the Normans would have to climb.

By 1090 only one of the 16 English bishoprics was held by an Englishman. By the end of the twelfth century almost every Anglo-Saxon cathedral and abbey had been pulled down and rebuilt in the Norman style. Nothing was allowed to stand which might remind the English of the glories of their past. The Normans put it out that the Anglo-Saxons had been used to wooden places and wooden churches, that they had lived by a “natural” economy, and that since they had no money they had been forced to pay their taxes in

kind. For almost two centuries the language of polite society – the aristocracy and the court – was French, and the reality of the English past was smothered with romantic stories about King Arthur and the ancient Britons.

Perhaps the most obvious reason for the success of the Norman settlement was that William had a legitimate claim to the English crown.

William the Conqueror (1028-1087)



The life of William the Conqueror is one of those rare and eventual lives which not only impress their mark on the history of their own times, but are distinctly left for

hundreds of years afterwards; perhaps for all time. William emerged from childhood a powerful, healthy, intelligent, and unspoiled young man. At his side was his father's friend, Henry I (the King of France). William showed mercy to the rebel leaders.

Henry took up arms against the count and called on William for help. The young duke responded enthusiastically, leading an army that was larger than even Henry's. Both Normandy and Anjou claimed the same duchy of Maine. The Normans claimed that Charles had given Maine to Rollo, but Maine's young duke was under the protection of Anjou.

William proved himself a worthy but brutal military leader. Near Alencon, a fort in Maine held by Anjou soldiers, William's men had to cross a bridge. Expecting William, the castle's defenders had hung hides and skins on the bridge. When they saw William approaching, they beat on

leather hangings and shouted, "Hides! Hides of the tanner!"

Taunting William was a crucial mistake.

William was no longer a child in hiding. He was a force to be reckoned with, and Europe would never be the same. He was rigorous and sometimes cruel in dealing with his opponents, but he could also be generous and forgiving. His life and reign were both long. He reigned sixty years over Normandy, and twenty years over England, and died in the fullness of his power, - a great figure in history, of whom it may be truly said that though he be dead he yet speaketh.

England After the Conquest

For many years after the Conquest there is, strictly, no English history. The French Kings rose to an immense which was the wonder and dread of neighboring nations. They conquered Ireland, and received the homage of Scotland. They became more powerful on the Continent

than the kings of France. It seemed probable that all France and all Britain might be united under the Crown of the French Kings of England. But King John was unequal to his predecessors, and the vast political ambition of the race was finally checked.

The Norman nobles and landowners gradually came to regard England as their country, and the Anglo-Saxon people as their countrymen, step by step the English nation was formed, and the Constitution slowly developed until it attained its present maturity. “Get a glance,” says M. Guizot, “upon the history of feudalism (which were the basis of the Norman system) between the tenth and thirteenth centuries; it is impossible to mistake the salutary influence exerted by it upon the sentiments, characters, and ideas of the age.

In fact, the results of the Conquest were such that England for a time claimed and held such a place in Europe as she had never held before or since.

The “act of time,” made Normans and their successors look on themselves as the hereditary owners of the estates which William had assigned to them in his newly conquered territory; and they became anxious that those possessions should descend to their posterity, not to be alienated by any future circumstance. The code of Saxon laws as formed by King Edward, at once preserved all that was due to the tenant, with the requisite powers for the Lord of the Fee: and to gain the restoration of these statutes under which they might securely hold their property, now became the endeavor of the Anglo-Normans; and William the First, William Rufus, Henry the First, and Stephen, were all earnestly entreated to grant their renewal.

The ascent of that Prince to the Throne of England, in 1199, was a proceeding so extraordinary and unprecedented, that it excited the amazement of the whole nation; it is true, his elder brother Geoffrey, had been killed at a Tournament, but his son Arthur was yet living, and should, on the death of Richard the First, have immediately been proclaimed as the next heir to the Crown of England.

In the year 1213, a war was pending between England and France, when Philip the Second was preparing, with a great naval expedition, to invade the dominions of King John. John was about to extend his conquests into France, when the Barons refused to attend him. In this year the Barons became so powerful, and John was so destitute of other aid, that he seems to have been almost driven to desperation. Thereupon, King John decided to pass new laws in England to preserve liberties of the Church and the Royal government.

The Magna Charta

The Magna Charta, "the Great Charter of the Liberties", became part of English political life and was typically renewed by each monarch in turn, although as time went by and the fledgling English Parliament passed new laws, it lost some of its practical significance. It is first drafted by the Archbishop of Canterbury to make peace between the unpopular King and a group of rebel barons, it promised the protection of church rights, protection for the barons from illegal imprisonment, access to swift justice, and limitations on feudal payments to the Crown, to be implemented through a council of 25 barons. Neither side stood behind their commitments, and the charter was annulled by Pope Innocent III, leading to the First Barons' War.

After John's death, the regency government of his young son, Henry III, reissued the document in 1216, stripped of

some of its more radical content, in an unsuccessful bid to build political support for their cause. Henry reissued the charter again in 1225 in exchange for a grant of new taxes. His son, Edward I, repeated the exercise in 1297, this time confirming it as part of England's statute law.

The Wars of Roses (1455-1487)

The Wars of the Roses was a bloody contest for the throne of England, a civil war fought out between the rival houses of York – whose symbol was the white rose – and Lancaster – whose symbol was the red rose – throughout the second half of the 15th century.

After 30 years of political manipulation, horrific carnage and brief periods of peace, the wars ended and a new royal dynasty emerged: the Tudors.

Key Figures from the Wars:

1. Henry VI

All was not well in King Henry's court. He had little interest in politics and was a weak ruler, and also suffered from mental instability that plunged the kingship into turmoil.

This incited rampant lawlessness throughout his realm and opened the door for power-hungry nobles and kingmakers to plot behind his back.

2. Margaret of Anjou

Henry VI's wife Margaret was a noble and strong-willed Frenchwoman whose ambition and political savvy overshadowed her husband's. She was determined to secure a Lancastrian throne for her son, Edward.

3. Richard, Duke of York

Richard of York—as great-grandson of King Edward III—had a strong competing claim on the English throne.

His conflicts with Margaret of Anjou and other members of Henry's court, as well as his competing claim on the throne, were a leading factor in the political upheaval.

Richard eventually attempted to take the throne, but was dissuaded, although it was agreed that he would become king on Henry's death. But within a few weeks of securing this agreement, he died in battle at Wakefield.

Although we remember it predominantly for its involvement in several conflicts during the medieval period, Edinburgh Castle's history stretches some 3,000 years, from prehistoric times right up to the present day.

4. Edmund Beaufort

Edmund Beaufort was an English nobleman and Lancastrian leader whose quarrel with Richard, Duke of York was infamous. In the he 1430s obtained control—

with William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk— of the government of the weak king Henry VI.

But he was later imprisoned when Richard, Duke of York became ‘Lord Protector’, before dying at the Battle of St Albans.

5. Edmund, Earl of Rutland

He was the fifth child and second surviving son of Richard Plantagenet, 3rd Duke of York, and Cecily Neville. By the laws of primogeniture, Edmund’s father, Richard of York had a good claim to the English throne, being descended from the second surviving son of Edward III, giving him a slightly better claim to the throne than the reigning king, Henry VI, who descended from Edward’s third son.

He was killed aged just 17 at the Battle of Wakefield, possibly murdered by the Lancastrian Lord Clifford who

sought revenge for the death of his own father at St Albans five years earlier.

6. Edward IV

He was the first Yorkist King of England. The first half of his rule was marred by the violence associated with the Wars of the Roses, but he overcame the Lancastrian challenge to the throne at Tewkesbury in 1471 to reign in peace until his sudden death.

7. Richard III

Richard III was the last king of the House of York and the last of the Plantagenet dynasty. His defeat at Bosworth Field, the last decisive battle of the Wars of the Roses, marked the end of the Middle Ages in England.

He is the Machiavellian, hunchbacked protagonist of *Richard III*, one of William Shakespeare's history plays

– famous for supposedly murdering the two Princes in the Tower.

8. George, Duke of Clarence

He was the third surviving son of Richard Plantagenet, 3rd Duke of York, and Cecily Neville, and the brother of Kings Edward IV and Richard III.

Though a member of the House of York, he switched sides to support the Lancastrians, before reverting to the Yorkists. He was later convicted of treason against his brother, Edward IV, and was executed (allegedly by being drowned in a butt of Malmsey wine).

What caused the 30 year period of internecine violence in medieval England? Dan Snow narrates this animated short documentary on the events that led to 22 May 1455 - the First Battle of Saint Albans.

9. Edward, Earl of Lancaster

Edward of Lancaster was the only son of King Henry VI of England and Margaret of Anjou. He was killed at the Battle of Tewkesbury, making him the only heir apparent to the English throne to die in battle.

10. Richard Neville

Known as Warwick the Kingmaker, Neville was an English nobleman, administrator, and military commander. The eldest son of Richard Neville, 5th Earl of Salisbury, Warwick was the wealthiest and most powerful English peer of his age, with political connections that went beyond the country's borders.

Originally on the Yorkist side but later switching to the Lancastrian side, he was instrumental in the deposition of two kings, which led to his epithet of "Kingmaker".

11. Elizabeth Woodville

Elizabeth was Queen consort of England as the spouse of King Edward IV from 1464 until his death in 1483. Her second marriage, to Edward IV, was a cause célèbre of the day, thanks to Elizabeth's great beauty and lack of great estates.

Edward was the first king of England since the Norman Conquest to marry one of his subjects, and Elizabeth was the first such consort to be crowned queen.

Her marriage greatly enriched her siblings and children, but their advancement incurred the hostility of Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, 'The Kingmaker', and his various alliances with the most senior figures in the increasingly divided royal family.

12. Isabel Neville

In 1469 Isabel's power-hungry father, Richard Neville, the Earl of Warwick, defected from King Edward IV after his

marriage to Elizabeth Woodville. Instead of ruling England through Edward, he planned a marriage for Isabel to Edward's brother George Duke of Clarence.

George also saw benefit in the union, as the Neville family was extremely wealthy. The marriage took place in secret in Calais, as part of the rebellion of George and Warwick against Edward IV.

13. Anne Neville

Anne Neville was an English queen, the daughter of Richard Neville, 16th Earl of Warwick. She became Princess of Wales as the wife of Edward of Westminster and then Queen of England as the wife of King Richard III.

14. Elizabeth of York

Elizabeth of York was the eldest daughter of the Yorkist king Edward IV, sister of the princes in the Tower, and niece of Richard III.

Her marriage to Henry VII was hugely popular – the union of the white rose of York and the red rose of Lancaster was seen as bringing peace after years of dynastic war.

15. Margaret Beaufort

Margaret Beaufort was the mother of King Henry VII and paternal grandmother of King Henry VIII of England. She was the influential matriarch of the House of Tudor.

George R. R. Martin didn't just get inspiration for Game of Thrones from the Wars of the Roses, but from all manner of historical circumstances and people, as Dan Jones explains to Dan Snow.

TUDOR BRITAIN

Tudor Britain

(1485-1603)

The Tudors remain among the most instantly recognizable of England's monarchs. The Tudors were a Welsh-English family that ruled England from 1485 to 1603. They came to power as a result of the victory of Henry VII over Yorkist king Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth in 1485. The Tudor dynasty ended when Henry's grand-daughter Elizabeth I died childless. The Throne passed to their cousins, the Scottish Stuarts, unifying England and Scotland.

The Tudors ruled for 118 years and during their reign encouraged new religious ideas, overseas exploration and colonization.

Henry VII 1485 - 1509

Henry VIII 1509 - 1547

Edward VI 1547 - 1553

Jane Grey 1553 - 1553

Mary I 1553 - 1558

Elizabeth I 1558 - 1603

Henry VII 1485 – 1509



Henry VII was the King of England and Lord of Ireland from his seizure of the crown on 22 August 1485 to his

death on 21 April 1509. He was the first monarch of the House of Tudor.

Henry attained the throne when his forces defeated King Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth Field. He was the last king of England to win his throne on the field of battle. Henry VII's reign was characterized by his success at restoring the power and stability of the English monarchy after the civil war, as well as his talent for replenishing the fortunes of an effectively bankrupt exchequer.

Here are 10 facts about this fascinating king:

A. His claim to the throne came through his mother

Henry's mother, Lady Margaret Beaufort, was an intelligent and learned woman, said to be the heir of John of Gaunt after the extinction of Henry V's line.

But this was debatable, as her descent was through Gaunt and his third wife, Katherine Swynford, who had been

Gaunt's mistress for around 25 years; when they married in 1396, they already had 4 children, including Henry's great-grandfather John Beaufort. Henry's claim was therefore quite tenuous: it was through a woman, and by illegitimate descent.

B. He spent much of his early life under protection or in exile

His father, Edmund Tudor, was captured by the Yorkists and died in prison 3 months before Henry's birth, and his mother was only 13 when he was born. She fled to Wales, and found the protection of Henry's uncle Jasper Tudor.

When Edward IV became king and Jasper Tudor went into exile, the Yorkist William Herbert assumed their guardianship. Then Herbert was executed by Warwick when he restored Henry VI in 1470, and Jasper Tudor brought Henry to court.

But when the Yorkist Edward IV regained the throne, Henry fled with other Lancastrians to Brittany. He was nearly captured and handed over to the Edward IV on one occasion, but managed to escape to the court of France – who backed his expedition to England and his bid for the throne.

C. He secured his claim by marrying Elizabeth of York, daughter of Edward IV and niece of Richard III

He did not marry Elizabeth until after his coronation, which underlined that he ruled in his own right. However he hoped the marriage would satisfy some of the less extreme Yorkists and lead to their acceptance of a Tudor king. The marriage took place on 18th January 1486 at Westminster Abbey. They would go on to have a large family, with 4 children – including the future Henry VIII – surviving to adulthood.

D. The Tudor rose was born

The emblem of a white and red rose was adopted as one of the king's badges, meant to symbolize the union of the Houses of Lancaster (red rose) and York (white rose).

E. But there were numerous rivals to the throne

Henry secured the chief male surviving Yorkist claimant to the throne, the young Edward Plantagenet, Earl of Warwick, whom he imprisoned in the Tower. But he was also threatened by pretenders: Lambert Simnel, who posed as the young Earl of Warwick, and Perkin Warbeck, who claimed to be Richard, Duke of York, the younger of the Princes in the Tower.

Eventually Warbeck was hanged and Warwick was beheaded. Simnel was kept as a servant in the kitchens at court.

F. He was a big fan of taxes

Henry VII improved tax collection by introducing ruthlessly efficient systems, such as a catch-22 method for nobles: those nobles who spent little must have saved much and so presumably could afford the increased taxes; on the other hand, the nobles who spent a lot obviously had the means to pay increased taxes.

Two of his most hated tax collectors, Sir Richard Empson and Sir Edmund Dudley, would be charged with treason and executed by King Henry VIII in 1510.

G. Sometimes wasn't quite truthful about where the money went

Henry VI was notoriously parsimonious and skilled at extracting money from his subjects for a variety of pretexts, such as war with France or war with Scotland. But the money often ended up in the king's personal coffers, rather than finding its way to its stated purpose.

H. He married his first son, Arthur, to Catherine of Aragon

And thereby ensured a good relationship with Ferdinand and Isabella of the powerful House of Trastamara. But when Arthur died, a mere 6 months after he married Catherine, Ferdinand – who had never gotten on well with Henry VI – asked for Catherine’s dowry back.

I. Arthur’s death partially led to his mother’s demise

Henry and Elizabeth were prostrate with grief at the loss of their eldest son, and aware that the survival of their dynasty rested on their one surviving boy, Henry. They decided to try for another son to secure the succession.

Elizabeth quickly became pregnant, but she was unwell throughout the pregnancy and – a mere 9 days after giving

birth to a daughter, Catherine – died of an infection on her 37th birthday. Their daughter lived for only 1 day.

J. Then Henry tried to marry Catherine of Aragon himself

After Arthur and Elizabeth died, Henry suggested he should marry the pretty, redheaded Catherine himself in order to keep hold of her substantial dowry. The proposal was met with an icy response from Catherine's mother, Isabella. Finally an agreement was reached that Catherine should marry the young Henry, the heir to the throne – the future King Henry VIII.

Henry VIII (1509-1547)



Henry VIII inherited the handsome face, the winning presence, and the love of pleasure which distinguished his mother's father, Edward IV., as well as the strong will of his own father, Henry VII. He could ride better than his grooms, and shoot better than the archers of his guard. Yet, though he had a ready smile and a ready jest for everyone, he knew how to preserve his dignity. Though he seemed to live for amusement alone, and allowed others to toil at the business of administration, he took care to keep his ministers under control. He was well aware that the great nobles were his only possible rivals, and that his main

support was to be found in the country gentry and the townsmen.

The first act of the new reign was to send Empson and Dudley to the Tower, and it was significant of Henry's policy that they were tried and executed, not on a charge of having extorted money illegally from subjects, but on a trumped up charge of conspiracy against the king. It was for the king to see that offences were not committed against the people, but the people must be taught that the most serious crimes were those committed against the king. Henry's next act was to marry Catharine. Though he was but nineteen, whilst his bride was twenty-five, the marriage was for many years a happy one.

Continental Troubles 1508 – 1511

For some time Henry lived as though his only object in life was to squander his father's treasure in festivities. Before long, however, he bethought himself of aiming at

distinction in war as well as in sport. Since Louis XII had been king of France there had been constant wars in Italy, where Louis was striving for the mastery with Ferdinand of Aragon. In 1508 the two rivals, Ferdinand and Louis, abandoning their hostility for a time, joined the Emperor Maximilian and Pope Julius II in the League of Cambrai, the object of which was to despoil the Republic of Venice. In 1511 Ferdinand allied himself with Julius II and Venice in the Holy League, the object of which was to drive the French out of Italy. After a while the new league was joined by Maximilian, and every member of it was anxious that Henry should join it too. At the beginning of 1511, Henry had a son. Unfortunately, the boy died after only 7 weeks. Catherine had four miscarriages and she only had one child who lived - a girl named Mary born in 1516. Henry was desperate to have a son and heir and Catherine could not give him one.

Henry came to believe that God was punishing him for marrying his brother's widow. Normally that would not have been allowed but the Pope granted him a special dispensation.

The Rise of Wolsey 1512

England had nothing to gain by an attack on France, but Henry was young, and the English nation was, in certain sense, also young. It was conscious of the strength brought to it by restored order, and was quite ready to use this strength in an attack on its neighbors. In the new court it was ignorantly thought that there was no reason why Henry VIII should not take up that work of conquering France which had fallen to pieces in the feeble hands of Henry VI. To carry on his new policy Henry needed a new minister. The work was assigned to Thomas Wolsey, the king's almoner, who, though not, as his enemies said, the son of a butcher, was of no exalted origin.

War & Peace with France 1512 – 1515

A force sent to attack France on the Spanish side failed, not because it was ill-equipped, but because the soldiers mutinied, and Ferdinand, who had promised to support it, abandoned it to its fate. In 1513 Henry himself landed at Calais, and, with the Emperor Maximilian serving under him, defeated the French at Guinegate (the Battle of the Spurs). In 1514 Henry discovered that to conquer France was beyond his power. In 1515 Wolsey became Henry's Chancellor. The whole of the business of the government passed through his hands. To all observers he seemed to be more a king than the king himself. Wolsey preferred the old policy of Richard II and Henry VI. He aspired to be the peace-maker of Europe, and to make England's interest in peace the law of the world.

“The Utopia” 1515 – 1516

In 1515 and 1516 Thomas More produced a book which he called *Utopia* intending it to serve as a satire on the defects of the government of England, by praising the results of a very different government in his imaginary country. The Utopians, he declared, fought against invaders of their own land or the land of their allies, or to deliver other peoples from tyranny, but they made no wars of aggression. Everyone must work six hours a day, and then he might listen to lectures for the improvement of his mind. As for religion of Utopia, no one was to be persecuted for his religious opinions, as long as he treated respectfully those who differed from him.

Another French War 1522 – 1523

Wolsey tried hard to keep the peace. Peace was for a time maintained, because both Charles and Francis were still too much occupied at home to quarrel, but it could hardly be maintained long. Henry was entirely master in England. In 1521 the Duke of Buckingham, son of the Buckingham

who had been beheaded by Richard III, was tried and executed as a traitor. In 1522 Henry invaded France. Though no Parliament had been summoned for nearly eight years, one was summoned now, of which More was the Speaker. Wolsey was now in a position of danger. His own policy was pacific, but his master's policy was warlike, and he had been obliged to make himself the unquestioning mouth-piece of his master in demanding supplies for war.

The national spirit of France was roused, and the combined attack of Henry and Charles proved as great a failure in 1523 as in 1522. The year 1524 was spent by Wolsey in diplomatic intrigue.

Closing Years of Wolsey's Greatness 1525 – 1527

All idea of continuing the war being now abandoned, Wolsey cautiously negotiated for an alliance with France, and in the autumn of 1525 peace was signed between France and England.

Wolsey and Henry's Demand for a Divorce 1527 – 1529

Henry wanted to divorce Catherine who had been his true and obedient wife for twenty years and had done nothing to deserve being put to open shame. No king felt the importance of popularity like Henry, and the compassion which had been freely given to Catherine by the crowd made it necessary for him to find support elsewhere.

Wolsey's active endeavors to procure the divorce counted as nothing and Henry, who cared only for the divorce, was very angry and made him his victim. Henry ordered him to be charged with treason.

The House of Commons and the Clergy 1529 – 1533

The Parliament met in 1529 contained a packed House of Commons ready to do the king's bidding. The members were either lawyers or country gentlemen, the main supports of the Tudor monarchy, and Henry strengthened his hold upon them by letting them loose on the special

abuses which had grown up in the ecclesiastical courts. Lawyers and country gentlemen were very much what they had been in the fifteenth century, without large political ideas or fine spiritual perceptions; but now that they were relieved of the oppression of the great nobles they turned upon the clergy, who claimed fees and dues which they disliked paying, and who used the powers of the ecclesiastical tribunals to exact heavy payments for moral and spiritual offences.

Towards the end of 1530 Henry charged the whole clergy of England with a breach of the Statute of Praemunire by their submission to Wolsey's legatine authority.

In the Parliament which sat in 1532 the Commons were again let loose upon the clergy, and Henry, taking their side, forced Convocation to sign a document known as the submission of the clergy. In this the clergy engaged in the first place neither to meet in Convocation nor to enact or execute new canons without the king's authority, and,

secondly, to submit all past ecclesiastical legislation to examination with a view to the removal of everything prejudicial to the royal prerogative. The second article was never carried into effect, as the first was enough for Henry. He was now secure against any attempt of the clergy in Convocation to protest against any step that he might take about the divorce, and he was none the less pleased because he had incidentally settled the question of the relations between the clerical legislature and the Crown.

The submission of the clergy cost Henry the services of the best and wisest of his statesmen. Sir Thomas More had been appointed Chancellor on Wolsey's fall in 1529 and retired from all connection with Henry's government in 1532.

Henry had reluctantly given up hope of obtaining a favorable decision from the Pope, he resolved to put an end to the Papal Jurisdiction in England. Otherwise if he obtained a sentence in an English ecclesiastical court

declaring his marriage with Catherine to be null from the beginning, his injured wife might appeal to the superior court of the Pope. He accordingly obtained from Parliament the Act of Appeals, declaring that the king held the supreme authority in England.

The Henrician Reformation

Meanwhile in 1534 the Act of Supremacy made Henry the head of the Church of England. The same year the Act of Succession was passed. It declared that Anne Boleyn's child would be heir to the throne. Although Henry broke with Rome he kept the Catholic religion essentially intact. However, in 1538 Chancellor Thomas Cromwell did make some minor reforms. In 1538 he ordered that every church should have an English translation of the Bible. He also ordered that any idolatrous images should be removed from churches. Nevertheless, in 1539 Henry passed the Act of Six Articles, which laid down the beliefs of the Church of

England. The Six Articles preserved the old religion mainly intact. However, from 1545 Latin, a language that ordinary people could not understand was replaced by English as the language of church services. Meanwhile, Henry dissolved the monasteries in England. Parliament agreed to dissolve the small ones in 1536. The large ones followed in 1539-1540. The monks were given pensions and many of them married and learned trades. Many monastery buildings became manor houses. Others were dismantled and their stones were used for other buildings. The vast estates owned by the monasteries were sold and fearing foreign invasion Henry used the wealth to build a network of new castles around the coast.

Yet the changes made by Henry caused resentment in some areas. In 1536 a rebellion began in Louth in Lincolnshire. (Although it was sparked off by religion the rebels had other grievances). The rebels marched to

Doncaster but no pitched battles were fought between them and the royal forces. Instead, Henry persuaded them to disperse by making various promises. However, in 1537 Henry hanged the leaders.

Meanwhile Henry looked for another wife. Chancellor Cromwell suggested making an alliance with the Duchy of Cleves. The Duke of Cleves had two sisters and Henry sent the painter Holbein to make portraits of them both. After seeing a portrait of Anne of Cleves Henry decided to marry her. However, when Henry met Anne for the first time he was repulsed. Nevertheless, Henry married her in January 1540 but the marriage was not consummated. Henry divorced Anne six months later but she was given a generous settlement of houses and estates. Anne of Cleves lived quietly until her death in 1557.

Cromwell was accused of treason and executed in July 1540. Next, in 1540, Henry married Catherine Howard.

However, in December 1541 Henry was given proof that Catherine was unfaithful. Catherine was beheaded on 13 February 1542. Then in 1543 Henry married Catherine Parr (1512-1548).

The Tower of London

Meanwhile in 1536 Henry had an accident jousting. Afterwards, he stopped taking exercise and became obese. Worse a painful ulcer appeared on his leg, which his doctors could not cure. Nevertheless, Henry went to war again. In 1542 he crushed the Scots at Solway Moss. In 1543 Henry went to war with the French. He captured Boulogne but was forced to return to England to deal with the threat of French invasion. The French sent a fleet to the Solent (between Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight). They also landed men on the Isle of Wight. In a naval battle the Mary Rose was lost but the French fleet were forced to withdraw.

Henry VIII died on 28 January 1547. He was 55.

EDWARD VI (1547- 1553)



Henry was succeeded by his 9-year-old son Edward. Since he was too young to rule his uncle, Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset, was made protector and ruled England in his stead. Somerset was a devout Protestant as was Archbishop Cranmer. They began to turn England into a truly Protestant country. The Act of Six Articles was repealed and in 1549 the first Book of Common Prayer, the first Anglican prayer book was issued. Meanwhile, priests were allowed to marry and pictures or statues of Mary or the saints were removed from churches.

Unfortunately England now faced an economic crisis. There was rapid inflation in the mid-16th century. Also, the population was rising. In the 15th century, there was a shortage of workers, which pushed wages up. In the 16th century, the situation was reversed and laborers wages fell. In 1549 Edward faced two rebellions. In parts of the Southwest, the changes in religion provoked the so-called Prayer Book Rebellion. In Norfolk, economic grievances led to a rebellion led by Robert Kett (the rebels took control of Norwich). However, both rebellions were crushed.

The rebellions led to the fall of Somerset. He was replaced by the ruthless John Dudley, Earl of Warwick (Later Duke of Northumberland). The unfortunate Somerset was sent to the tower and in January 1552 he was executed on a trumped-up charge of treason. In 1552 a second prayer book was issued. This one was more radical than the first.

Meanwhile England fought the Scots again. Henry VIII had suggested that his son Edward should marry the king of Scotland's daughter, Mary. However, the Scottish king rejected the idea. Somerset revived the plan and he sent an army to Scotland to force the Scots to agree. The English won a battle at Pinkie Cleugh, near Edinburgh, in 1547. However, the Scots simply sent 6-year-old Mary to France to marry the French king's son.

However Edward was sickly and it was clear he was not going to live long. The Duke of Northumberland was alarmed as the next in line for the throne, Henry's daughter Mary, was a Catholic. Northumberland married his son to Lady Jane Grey, a descendant of Henry VII's sister Mary. When Edward died in 1553 Northumberland had Lady Jane Grey crowned queen. However, the people rose in favor of Mary and Lady Jane Grey was imprisoned.

Lady Jane Grey (1553-1553)



The next ruler was boss for only nine days. Her name was Lady Jane Grey. Her story is interesting. Do you remember how Northumberland bullied Edward VI? Well, when Northumberland realized Edward VI was dying, he told Mary to come and visit. Northumberland wanted to trap Mary and kill her. Luckily for Mary, she didn't come.

Then Northumberland had another plan. He decided to get his son married to a woman named Lady Jane Grey. She

was related to the old king Henry VII--one of his great-grandchildren. Northumberland had a clever idea. He planned to make Lady Jane Grey queen when Edward VI died. And that's exactly what he did! He knew he could then control Lady Jane Grey, because she was married to his son.

The only problem was that no one accepted Lady Jane Grey as queen. And Mary got a big team together. They got ready to fight against Northumberland and Lady Jane Grey. And everyone wanted to join Mary's team. So, within a few days, Mary was queen. Lady Jane Grey was queen for only nine days. Then Mary had to deal with Lady Jane Grey and Northumberland.

MARY I (1553-1558)



Mary I, daughter of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon, becomes Queen. Mary was the first woman to be crowned monarch of England in her own right. A devout Catholic, she was determined to halt the growth of Protestantism initiated by her father, and return England to Roman Catholicism. When she became queen Mary was surprisingly lenient. The Duke of Northumberland was executed in August 1553. However, Lady Jane was, at first, spared. However, Mary married Philip of Spain in July

1554. The marriage was very unpopular and in Kent, Sir Thomas Wyatt led a rebellion. He was defeated but Mary was forced to execute Lady Jane, fearing her enemies might try and place Jane on the throne.

Mary was a devout Catholic and she detested the religious changes of Henry VIII and Edward VI. She was determined to undo them. Catholic mass was restored in December 1553. In 1554 married clergy were ordered to leave their wives or lose their posts. Then, in November 1554 the Act of Supremacy was repealed. In 1555 Mary began burning Protestants. The first was John Rogers who was burned on 4 February 1555. Over the next 3 years, nearly 300 Protestants were executed. (Most of them were from Southeast England where Protestantism had spread most widely). Many more Protestants fled abroad.

However Mary's cruelty simply gained sympathy for the Protestants and alienated ordinary people. She simply drove

people away from Roman Catholicism. Furthermore in 1577 England went to war with France. In 1558 the English lost Calais, which they had hung onto since the end of the Hundred Years War in 1453. It was a major blow to English prestige. Mary died on 17 November 1558. She was 42.

ELIZABETH I (1558-1603)



The daughter of Henry VIII and his second wife, Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth I (1533–1603) was England’s ‘Gloriana’ – a virgin queen who saw herself as wedded to her country, and who brought almost half a century of stability after the turmoil of her siblings’ short reigns. Here, historian Tracy Borman reveals seven surprising facts about her life

The Religious Settlement

Elizabeth I was crowned in January 1559. She restored Protestantism to England. The Act of Supremacy was restored in April 1559 and further Acts replaced Catholic practices. All but one of the English bishops refused to take the Oath of Supremacy (recognizing Elizabeth as head of the Church of England) and were removed from their posts. About one-third of the parish clergy were also removed. However, most of the population accepted the religious settlement. People could be fined for not attending church.

Nevertheless, some Catholics continued to practice their religion in secret.

A History of Christianity in England

In 1568 Mary Queen of Scots was forced to flee Scotland. She fled to England and Elizabeth held her prisoner for 19 years.

In November 1569 Catholics in the north of England rebelled. The Catholic rebels hoped to murder Elizabeth and replace her with Mary Queen of Scots. However, the uprising was quickly crushed and the last battle took place on 19 February 1570. Afterward many of the rebels were hanged. Meanwhile, in 1570, the pope issued a bull of excommunication and deposition. This papal document decreed that Elizabeth I was excommunicated (excluded from the church) and deposed. Her Catholic subjects no longer had to obey her.

In 1581 the fines for non-attendance at Church of England services (aimed at Catholics) were increased (although in some areas they were not imposed). In 1585 all Catholic priests were ordered to leave England within 40 days or face a charge of treason. Meanwhile, in 1583 some Catholics attempted to murder the queen. However, the Throckmorton Plot as it was called was foiled. In 1586 came another Catholic plot to kill the queen, called the Babington Plot. It was also foiled. However, most English Catholics remained loyal to the Queen when the Spanish Armada sailed in 1588.

Elizabeth's Foreign Policy

In 1562 John Hawkins started the English slave trade. He transported slaves from Guinea to the West Indies. However, in 1568 the Spaniards attacked Hawkins and his men while their ships were in a harbor in Mexico. Hawkins and his cousin Francis Drake then began an undeclared war

against Spain. They attacked Spanish ships transporting treasure across the Atlantic and stole their cargoes. In the years 1577-1580 Drake led an expedition, which sailed around the world. Drake also stole huge amounts of gold and silver from the Spanish colonies but Elizabeth turned a blind eye. Meanwhile, the Spanish king ruled the Netherlands. However the Dutch turned Protestant and in 1568 they rebelled against the Catholic king's rule. Elizabeth was reluctant to become involved but from 1578 onward the Spaniards were winning. In 1585 Elizabeth was forced to send an army to the Netherlands.

Then in 1586 there was a plot by Catholics to murder the queen called the Babington Conspiracy. Because of her involvement, Mary Queen of Scots was beheaded on 8 February 1587.

Meanwhile Philip II of Spain was planning to invade England. However, in April 1587 Drake sailed into Cadiz

harbor and destroyed part of the fleet that was preparing to invade. Drake boasted that he had 'singed the king of Spain's beard'. Even so the next year the invasion fleet was ready and it sailed in July 1588. The Spanish Armada consisted of 130 ships and about 27,000 men. It was commanded by the Duke of Medina Sidonia. At that time the Spanish king ruled a large part of Northeast Europe. The plan was to send the Armada to Calais to meet a Spanish army grouped there. The Armada would then transport them to England. The English fleet was gathered at Plymouth. When the Spanish arrived they sailed in a crescent formation. The English harassed the Spanish ships from behind. In Drake's words they 'plucked the feathers'. However, the English were unable to do serious damage to the Armada until they reached Calais.

When the armada arrived the Spanish troops in Calais were not ready to embark and there was nothing the armada could do except wait at anchor in the harbor. However, the

English prepared fire ships. They loaded ships with pitch and loaded guns which fired when the flames touched the gunpowder, and set them on fire then steered them towards the Spanish ships. In a panic, the Armada broke formation. Spanish ships scattered. Once the Spanish ships broke formation they were vulnerable and the English attacked doing considerable damage. Finally, the Armada sailed north around Scotland and west of Ireland. However, they sailed into terrible storms and many of their remaining ships were wrecked. Eventually, the Spanish lost 53 ships. The English lost none. Despite the failure of the Armada, Spain remained a very powerful enemy. The war went on until 1604. Meanwhile Elizabeth I died on 24 March 1603

STUART BRITAIN

Stuart Britain

(1603-1714)

England in the Early 17th Century

In 1603 King James VI of Scotland became King James I of England. He began a new dynasty - the Stuarts.

James I never had the same charisma as Elizabeth I and never enjoyed the same popularity. However among his achievements he ended the long war with Spain in 1604. He was also responsible for a new translation of the Bible, the King James Version, which was published in 1611.

Meanwhile in 1605 James survived an assassination attempt - The Gunpowder Plot

However King James came into conflict with parliament. The cost of government (and of fighting wars) was rising but the government's income did not keep up. Rents from royal lands could only be raised when the lease ended.

Parliament was therefore in a strong position. MPs could refuse to raise money for the king unless he bowed to their demands. So the king was forced to look for new ways to raise money.

The situation was complicated by disagreements over religion. Many MPs were puritans. They wished to 'purify' the Church of England of its remaining Catholic elements. Although he was a Protestant James disagreed with many of their views.

Furthermore James believed in the divine right of kings. In other words God had chosen him to rule. James was willing to work with parliament but he believed *ultimate* authority rested with him.

King James I died in 1625. He was 58. His son Charles followed him.

Like his, father Charles I was a firm believer in the divine right of kings. From the start he quarreled with parliament.

At the beginning of his reign Charles I married a French Roman Catholic princess, Henrietta Maria. However marrying a Catholic was very unpopular move with the Puritans.

King Charles also fought unsuccessful wars. In 1625 he sent an expedition to Cadiz, which ended in failure. Parliament strongly criticized his policies and refused to raise extra taxes to pay for the Spanish war.

Charles angrily dissolved parliament and raised money by levying forced loans. He imprisoned, without trial, anyone who refused to pay.

In 1627 an expedition was sent to La Rochelle in France. It was led by the king's favorite the Duke of Buckingham and it ended in failure.

By 1628 the cost of wars meant Charles was desperate for money and he was forced to call parliament. This time MPs drew up the Petition of Right, which forbade the levying of taxes without parliament's consent. It also forbade arbitrary imprisonment.

However king and parliament clashed over the issue of religion. In the 17th century, religion was far more important than it is today. It was a vital part of everyday life. Furthermore, there was no toleration in matters of religion. By law, everybody was supposed to belong to the Church of England (though in practice there were many Roman Catholics especially in the Northwest).

In 1629 William Laud was Bishop of London. He was strongly opposed to the Puritans and Charles supported him wholeheartedly.

Parliament criticized Laud and Charles called it impertinence. (He did not think parliament had any right to

do so). In return, parliament refused to grant the king taxes for more than one year. Charles sent a messenger to parliament to announce it was dissolved. However, members of the Commons physically held the speaker down until they had passed three resolutions about Laud and religion. Only then did they disband.

In 1633 Laud was made Archbishop of Canterbury. Laud was determined to suppress the Puritans and he sent commissioners into almost every parish to make sure the local churches came into line.

Furthermore the Puritans had their own preachers called lecturers. These men were independent of the Church of England. Laud tried to put a stop to these preachers - with some success.

Most of all Laud emphasized the ceremony and decoration in churches. These measures were strongly opposed by the

Puritans. They feared it was the 'thin edge of the wedge' and Catholicism would eventually be restored in England.

Meanwhile for 11 years Charles ruled without parliament. This period was called the eleven years tyranny. Charles had various ways of raising money without parliament's consent. In the Middle Ages men with property worth a certain amount of money a year were supposed to serve the king as knights. Under this old law, Charles fined their descendants for not doing so. Furthermore, all wasteland had once been royal land. In time some landowners had taken parts of it into cultivation. Charles fined them for doing so. Using these dubious methods by 1635 Charles was solvent.

However matters came to a head in 1637. In 1634 the king began levying ship money. This was a traditional tax raised in coastal towns to enable the king to build ships when

more were needed. However, in 1635 Charles began levying ship money in inland areas.

A Buckinghamshire squire called John Hampden refused to pay. In 1637 he was taken to court and although he lost his case he became a hero. Ship money was very unpopular with the propertied class.

Worse in 1637 King Charles and Laud enraged the Scots by proposing religious changes in Scotland. Laud and Charles tried to introduce a new prayer book in Scotland. There were riots in Edinburgh. In February 1638 Scottish nobles and ministers signed a document called the National Covenant.

Charles made two attempts to bring the Scots to heel. Both were humiliating failures. The first Bishops War of 1639 ended with the peace of Berwick but it was only breathing space for both sides.

In April 1640 Charles summoned parliament again, hoping they would agree to raise money for his Scottish campaign. Instead, parliament simply discussed its many grievances. Charles dissolved parliament on 5 May and it became known as the Short parliament because it met for such a short time.

The Second Bishops War followed in 1640. In August 1640 the Scots invaded England and they captured Newcastle. Charles was forced to make peace with the Scots. By the treaty, they occupied Durham and Northumberland. Charles was forced to pay their army's costs.

Finally in August 1641 Charles was forced to abandon all attempts to impose religious changes on Scotland. In return, the Scots withdrew from northern England.

Meanwhile, desperate for money, Charles was forced to call parliament again in November 1640. This parliament became known as the Long Parliament.

Parliament passed the Triennial Act, which stated that parliament must be called every three years. A Dissolution Act stated that parliament could not be dissolved without its consent.

Fining people who had not obtained knighthoods was declared illegal, so was fining landowners who had encroached on royal land. Ship money was also abolished

Parliament also took revenge on the king's hated adviser, Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford. They passed a special act declaring Strafford was a traitor. The people of London took to the streets demanding his execution. Charles feared for his and his families safety and he was forced to sign the act. Strafford was executed on 12 May 1641.

Unfortunately parliament then divided. Opposition to the king was led by John Pym but many began to fear he was going too far.

In November 1641 a list of grievances called the Grand Remonstrance was drawn up but it was passed by only 11 votes. Pym then demanded that the king hand over control of the militia. For many, that was a step too far. They feared that Pym might replace arbitrary royal government with something worse.

Meanwhile parliament and the country split over religion. Some wanted to return the Church of England to the state of affairs before Laud. Others wanted to abolish bishops completely. The country was becoming dangerously divided.

In January 1642 Charles made the situation worse by entering the Commons and attempting to arrest 5 MPs for treason. (They had already fled). No king had entered the

Commons before and his actions caused outrage. Once again Charles feared for his safety and he left London.

In March 1642 Parliament declared that its ordinances were valid laws and they did not require the royal assent.

In April 1642 the king then tried to seize arms in Hull but he was refused entry to the town. Meanwhile in London parliament began raising an army. (Although most of the House of Lords went over to the king). The king also began raising an army and he set up his standard at Nottingham in August.

The English Civil War

From the start parliament had several advantages. Firstly it held London and the customs dues from the port were an important source of money.

Thirdly the navy supported parliament and made it difficult for the king to receive help from abroad. The king

advanced towards London but he was stopped at Turnham Green on 13 November 1642.

Then, in September 1643, the parliamentarians persuaded the Scots to intervene on their behalf by promising to make England Presbyterian (a Presbyterian church is one organized without bishops). A Scottish army entered England in January 1644.

The parliamentarians then decided to reform their army. In December 1644 they passed the Self Denying Ordinance, which stated that all MPs (except Oliver Cromwell and his son-in-law Henry Ireton) must give up their commands. Early in 1645 parliamentary forces were reorganized and became the New Model Army.

Afterwards the parliamentarians slowly gathered strength. Finally, in May 1646 the king surrendered to the Scots.

Meanwhile following civil war radical ideas flourished. In November 1646 a man named John Lilburne, one of a group of radicals called the Levellers published a tract called *London's Liberty in Chains*. He demanded a republic and the abolition of the House of Lords. He also said that all men should be allowed to vote and there should be religious freedom.

Meanwhile in December 1647 Charles made a secret agreement with the Scots. They agreed to invade England on his behalf. However Oliver Cromwell crushed an army of Scots and English royalists at Preston.

The army now felt that parliament was being too lenient with the king. They occupied London and Colonel Thomas Pride ejected about 140 members of the Commons. This action was called 'Pride's Purge'. It left a 'rump parliament' of about 60 members.

On 17 March 1649 parliament passed an act abolishing monarchy and the House of Lords.

The Interregnum

Most of parliament wanted to make the Church of England Presbyterian. Furthermore, attendance at Church of England services would remain compulsory. The army disagreed. They wanted the freedom to worship as they pleased.

However Charles II then started another war. He made an agreement with the Scots and in 1650 he landed in Scotland. Cromwell and his army advanced into Scotland and in September 1650 they crushed the Scots at Dunbar. Cromwell then crossed the Firth of Forth, leaving the road to England open.

A new constitution was drawn up called the Instrument of Government. Cromwell was made Lord Protector. At first

he ruled with a council but in September 1654 a new parliament was called. However the Protectorate Parliament refused to accept the Instrument of Government so Cromwell dissolved it in January 1655.

Then in 1655 the country was divided into 11 districts. Each district was ruled by a Major-General. However in 1656 another parliament was called. However this time some members were excluded as 'unfit persons'.

However when parliament reconvened in January 1658 the members who were excluded in 1656 were allowed to take the seats. This time the members attacked the new arrangements (they would not accept the new nominated upper house) and Cromwell dissolved parliament again in February 1658.

Oliver Cromwell appointed his son Richard his successor. However Richard was a shy, unambitious man and he resigned in May 1659.

The Long Parliament voted to disband and hold fresh elections for a new parliament. This one became known as the Convention parliament.

The Convention Parliament declared that the government of England should be King, Lords and Commons. Finally on 25 May 1660 Charles II landed at Dover.

England in the Late 17th Century

In 1662 he married a Portuguese Princess, Catherine of Braganza. However Charles had many mistresses.

They passed a series of acts called the Clarendon code, a series of laws to persecute non-conformists (Protestants who did not belong to the Church of England). The Corporation Act of 1661 said that all officials in towns must be members of the Church of England.

Finally the Five Mile Act of 1665 forbade non-Anglican ministers to come within 5 miles of incorporated towns.

However these measures did not stop the non-conformists meeting or preaching. In 1670 Charles made a secret treaty with Louis XIV of France. It was called the Treaty of Dover. By it, Louis promised to give Charles money (so he was no longer dependent on parliament). Charles agreed to join with Louis in another war with Holland and to announce he was a Roman Catholic (Louis promised to send 6,000 men if the people rebelled when he did so). Meanwhile in 1672 Charles II issued the Royal Declaration of Indulgence suspending the laws against nonconformists. (Charles believed that as king he had the right to suspend laws).

In 1673 they passed the Test Act, which banned nonconformists and Catholics from holding public office. Meanwhile there was the question of exclusion. Charles II had no legitimate children and when he died his Catholic brother James was next in line for the throne. Some people, led by the Earl of Shaftesbury, said James should be

excluded from the succession. They were known as Whigs.
King Charles II died in 1685. He was 54.

Furthermore in 1679 parliament passed the Act of Habeas Corpus forbidding imprisonment without trial.

Following the death of Charles II in 1685 his brother James became king. However, Charles II's illegitimate son the Duke of Monmouth landed in Dorset and led a rebellion in Southwest England. He was proclaimed king in Taunton but his army was crushed at the battle of Sedgemoor. Afterwards, George Jeffreys (1648-1689), known as the hanging judge presided over a series of trials known as the Bloody Assizes. About 300 people were hanged and hundreds more were transported to the West Indies.

The Glorious Revolution

In 1687 he went further and issued a Declaration of Indulgence suspending all laws against Catholics and

Protestant non-Anglicans. In 1688 he ordered the Church of England clergy to read the declaration from the churches.

Worse in June 1688 James had a son. The people of England were willing to tolerate James as long as he did not have a Catholic heir. However his son would certainly be brought up a Catholic and would, of course, succeed his father.

Parliament declared that the throne was vacant. William and Mary were declared joint monarchs. (Although Mary died in 1694). Parliament also passed the Toleration Act in 1689. Non-conformists were allowed their own places of worship and their own teachers and preachers. However they could not hold government positions or attend university

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

The English language is spoken by 750 million people in the world as either the official language of a nation, a second language, or in a mixture with other languages (such as pidgins and creoles.) English is the official language in England, Canada, Australia and New Zealand; however, the United States has no official language.

The development of the English language to its current standard can be followed over a period of about 1000 years. The history of English is conventionally, if perhaps too neatly, divided into three periods usually called Old English (also called Anglo-Saxon), Middle English, and Modern English. The earliest period begins with the migration of certain Germanic tribes from the continent to Britain in the fifth century A. D., though no records of their language survive from before the seventh

century, and it continues until the end of the eleventh century or a bit later.

By that time Latin, Old Norse (the language of the Viking invaders), and especially the Anglo-Norman French of the dominant class after the Norman Conquest in 1066 had begun to have a substantial impact on the lexicon, and the well-developed inflectional system that typifies the grammar of Old English had begun to break down.

The following brief sample of Old English prose illustrates several of the significant ways in which change has so transformed English that we must look carefully to find points of resemblance between the language of the tenth century and our own. It is taken from Aelfric's "Homily on St. Gregory the Great" and concerns the famous story of how that pope came to send missionaries to convert the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity after seeing Anglo-Saxon boys for sale as slaves in Rome:

Eft he axode, hu ðære ðeode nama wære þe hi of comon. Him wæs geandwyrd, þæt hi Angle genemnode wæron. Þa cwæð he, "Rihtlice hi sind Angle gehatene, for ðan ðe hi engla wlite habbað, and swilcum gedafenað þæt hi on heofonum engla geferan beon."

A few of these words will be recognized as identical in spelling with their modern equivalents -- *he, of, him, for, and, on* -- and the resemblance of a few others to familiar words may be guessed -- *nama* to *name*, *comon* to *come*, *wære* to *were*, *wæs* to *was* -- but only those who have made a special study of Old English will be able to read the passage with understanding. The sense of it is as follows: "Again he [St. Gregory] asked what might be the name of the people from which they came. It was answered to him that they were named Angles. Then he said, 'Rightly are they called Angles because they have the beauty of angels, and it is fitting that such as they should be angels'

companions in heaven.' " Some of the words in the original have survived in altered form, including *axode* (*asked*), *hu* (*how*), *rihtlice* (*rightly*), *engla* (*angels*), *habbað* (*have*), *swilcum* (*such*), *heofonum* (*heaven*), and *beon* (*be*). Others, however, have vanished from our lexicon, mostly without a trace, including several that were quite common words in Old English: *eft* "again," *ðeode* "people, nation," *cwæð* "said, spoke," *gehatene* "called, named," *wlite* "appearance, beauty," and *geferan* "companions." Recognition of some words is naturally hindered by the presence of two special characters, þ, called "thorn," and ð, called "edh," which served in Old English to represent the sounds now spelled with *th*.

Other points worth noting include the fact that the pronoun system did not yet, in the late tenth century, include the third person plural forms beginning with *th-*: *hi* appears where we would use *they*. Several aspects of word order will also strike the reader as oddly unlike ours. Subject and verb are inverted after an

adverb -- *þa cwæð he* "Then said he" -- a phenomenon not unknown in Modern English but now restricted to a few adverbs such as *never* and requiring the presence of an auxiliary verb like *do* or *have*. In subordinate clauses the main verb must be last, and so an object or a preposition may precede it in a way no longer natural: *þe hi of comon* "which they from came," *for ðan ðe hi engla wlite habbað* "because they angels' beauty have."

Perhaps the most distinctive difference between Old and Modern English reflected in Aelfric's sentences is the elaborate system of inflections, of which we now have only remnants. Nouns, adjectives, and even the definite article are inflected for gender, case, and number: *ðære ðeode* "(of) the people" is feminine, genitive, and singular, *Angle* "Angles" is masculine, accusative, and plural, and *swilcum* "such" is masculine, dative, and plural.

The system of inflections for verbs was also more elaborate than ours: for example, *habbað* "have" ends with the *-að* suffix characteristic of plural present indicative verbs. In addition, there were two imperative forms, four subjunctive forms (two for the present tense and two for the preterit, or past, tense), and several others which we no longer have. Even where Modern English retains a particular category of inflection, the form has often changed. Old English present participles ended in *-ende* not *-ing*, and past participles bore a prefix *ge-* (as *geandwyrð* "answered" above).

The period of Middle English extends roughly from the twelfth century through the fifteenth. The influence of French (and Latin, often by way of French) upon the lexicon continued throughout this period, the loss of some inflections and the reduction of others (often to a final unstressed vowel spelled *-e*) accelerated, and many changes took place within the phonological and grammatical systems of the language. A typical

prose passage, especially one from the later part of the period, will not have such a foreign look to us as Aelfric's prose has; but it will not be mistaken for contemporary writing either.

The following brief passage is drawn from a work of the late fourteenth century called *Mandeville's Travels*. It is fiction in the guise of travel literature, and, though it purports to be from the pen of an English knight, it was originally written in French and later translated into Latin and English. In this extract Mandeville describes the land of Bactria, apparently not an altogether inviting place, as it is inhabited by "full yuele [evil] folk and full cruell."

In þat lond ben trees þat beren wolle, as þogh it were of scheep; whereof men maken clothes, and all þing þat may ben made of wolle. In þat contree ben many ipotaynes, þat dwellen som tyme in the water, and somtyme on the lond:

and þei ben half man and half hors, as I haue seyde before; and þei eten men, whan þei may take hem. And þere ben ryueres and watres þat ben fulle byttere, þree sithes more þan is the water of the see. In þat contré ben many griffounes, more plentee þan in ony other contree. Sum men seyn þat þei han the body vpward as an egle, and benethe as a lyoun: and treuly þei seyn soth þat þei ben of þat schapp. But o griffoun hath the body more gret, and is more strong, þanne eight lyouns, of suche lyouns as ben o this half; and more gret and strongere þan an hundred egles, suche as we han amonges vs. For o griffoun þere wil bere fleyng to his nest a gret hors, 3if he may fynde him at the poynt, or two oxen 3oked togidere, as þei gon at the plowgh.

The spelling is often peculiar by modern standards and even inconsistent within these few sentences (*contré* and *contree*, *o* [griffoun] and *a* [gret hors], *panne* and *pan*, for example). Moreover, in the original text, there is in addition to thorn another old character 3, called "yogh," to make difficulty. It can represent several sounds but here may be thought of as equivalent to *y*. Even the older spellings (including those where *u* stands for *v* or vice versa) are recognizable, however, and there are only a few words like *ipotaynes* "hippopotamuses" and *sithes* "times" that have dropped out of the language altogether. We may notice a few words and phrases that have meanings no longer common such as *byttete* "salty," *o this half* "on this side of the world," and *at the poynt* "to hand," and the effect of the centuries-long dominance of French on the vocabulary is evident in many familiar words which could not have occurred in Aelfric's writing even if his subject had allowed them, words like *contree*, *ryueres*, *plentee*, *egle*, and *lyoun*.

In general, word order is now very close to that of our time, though we notice constructions like *hath the body more gret* and *three sithes more þan is the water of the see*. We also notice that present tense verbs still receive a plural inflection as in *beren*, *dwellen*, *han*, and *ben* and that while nominative *þei* has replaced Aelfric's *hi* in the third person plural, the form for objects is still *hem*. All the same, the number of inflections for nouns, adjectives, and verbs has been greatly reduced, and in most respects Mandeville is closer to Modern than to Old English.

The period of Modern English extends from the sixteenth century to our own day. The early part of this period saw the completion of a revolution in the phonology of English that had begun in late Middle English and that effectively redistributed the occurrence of the vowel phonemes to something approximating their present pattern. (Mandeville's English would have sounded even less familiar to us than it looks.) Other

important early developments include the stabilizing effect on spelling of the printing press and the beginning of the direct influence of Latin and, to a lesser extent, Greek on the lexicon. Later, as English came into contact with other cultures around the world and distinctive dialects of English developed in the many areas which Britain had colonized, numerous other languages made small but interesting contributions to our word-stock.

The historical aspect of English really encompasses more than the three stages of development just under consideration. English has what might be called a prehistory as well. As we have seen, our language did not simply spring into existence; it was brought from the Continent by Germanic tribes who had no form of writing and hence left no records. Philologists know that they must have spoken a dialect of a language that can be called West Germanic and that other dialects of this unknown language must have included the ancestors of such languages as German, Dutch, Low German, and Frisian. They know this because of

certain systematic similarities which these languages share with each other but do not share with, say, Danish. However, they have had somehow to reconstruct what that language was like in its lexicon, phonology, grammar, and semantics as best they can through sophisticated techniques of comparison developed chiefly during the last century. Similarly, because ancient and modern languages like Old Norse and Gothic or Icelandic and Norwegian have points in common with Old English and Old High German or Dutch and English that they do not share with French or Russian, it is clear that there was an earlier unrecorded language that can be called simply Germanic and that must be reconstructed in the same way. Still earlier, Germanic was just a dialect (the ancestors of Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit were three other such dialects) of a language conventionally designated Indo-European, and thus English is just one relatively young member of an ancient family of languages whose descendants cover a fair portion of the globe.

CHAPTER 2

OLD ENGLISH (500-1100 AD)

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Introduction:

The English language did not begin in England. There was a language spoken in England long before English was heard of in Britain, and from that language came the Welsh that is now spoken by a great many people in Wales, Gaelic that is spoken in the Highlands of Scotland and Erse that has been revived as the official language of Ireland.

Since English became the language of Britain, two great waves of invasion have swept over it; but English has survived them both triumphantly. The history of the English language from the earliest times to the present day is one of continuous development, and this development is closely connected with the history of the country. It is difficult to say how far the invasion of

the Danes, and after that the Normans, was responsible for the simplification of English, with the loss of inflexions and a complicated system of genders, cases and moods.

The English that emerged was much simpler and much more expressive, not only through a vocabulary enriched beyond measure, but also through the new means of expression that it had found, the use of auxiliaries, a wider use of prepositions and a fixed word-order discoveries that gave it a clearness, a directness and a flexibility that it had never possessed before.

The Origin of English:

The languages spoken by the people of Europe and a large part of Asia have come from a common stock and from the most important family known as the Indo-European languages. English, as we know it, descends from the language spoken by the north Germanic tribes who settled in England from the 5th

century A.D. onwards. They had no writing (except runes, used as charms) until they learned the Latin alphabet from Roman missionaries. The earliest written works in Old English (as their language is now known to scholars) were probably composed orally at first, and may have been passed on from speaker to speaker before being written. We know the names of some of the later writers (Cædmon, Ælfric and King Alfred) but most writing is anonymous.

Old English literature is mostly chronicle and poetry - lyric, descriptive but chiefly narrative or epic. By the time literacy becomes widespread, Old English is effectively a foreign and dead language. And its forms do not significantly affect subsequent developments in English literature (with the scholarly exception of the 19th century poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins, who finds in Old English verse the model for his metrical system of “sprung rhythm”).

Variations in speech and differences of language are the result of the movements of the peoples. The Romans, speaking a language that sprang from a little known dialect of central Italy, made themselves masters of Southern Europe, and from their Latin tongues are descended the Romance Languages of French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian and Romanian.

The original inhabitants of the British Isles were Britons and belonged to a Celtic race. When the roving pirates of the North-West Germany and Denmark invaded the coasts of Britain, they spoke a Western Germanic language, which underwent consideration changes and eventually became English, the language of Britain, the British Commonwealth and the United States of America.

The Heritage of Rome I:

The Romans first came to Britain under Julius Caesar in 55 and 54 B.C., later and more permanently in A.D. 42 under Claudius, who, with his successors, had by the end of the century completed the conquest as far north as the forth.

In these regions, the Celtic language, not Latin, was spoken; and from it we have the Welsh, the Erse, and the Gaelic of today. Despite the long Roman occupation (400 years), the Latin words that lived on from that period are very few, and are mainly the names of places.

When the Romans came to Britain, they built a strong military road and from Dover to Chester on the River Dee. Their word for road was *strata* or *street*, and this first road was known as the Street. Later, it was called by the Saxons Walting Street-its present name. The word *stata* had many variations, such as

strat, *strad*, *stret*, and *streat*, which were, in the course of time, added to towns on or near the street, e.g. Stratford-on-Avon, Streathan.

The Roman word for a town or a fortified camp was *castra*. It still survives in various forms in Chester, Doncaster, Lancaster, and Worcester.

A few words have come into the language from the Latin of those times. Some were borrowed on the continent, when the Romans occupied France, and came into the English Language from Old French. They are concerned chiefly with war or trade works like mile (from the Latin '*mille passum*', standing for a thousand paces of a soldier on the march), pound (from the Latin '*pondus*' meaning a weight), wine from the Latin '*vinum*' and money from the Latin '*moneta*' = money.

The Celtic Heritage:

Then in the fifth century came a new invader. The fierce Anglo-Saxon (English) hosts swept in from north-east Europe. Some of the inhabitants of Roman-occupied Britain fled across the sea to America, the north-west corner of France that was later named 'Britain'. With them went their legends, the stories of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, that were cherished by the lords of Britain, and hundred of years later were brought back to Wales, and eventually to England, to become one of the great imaginative subjects of English Literature.

In the whole of the English language there is only a mere handful of Celtic words. Most of these are place names, and even these are found to be almost entirely in the Welsh areas of Wales, in Cornwall and Scotland. The many Avons (there are fourteen rivers of that name in Britain) are all derived from the Celtic word meaning 'river'. The Celts, who retreated to the North,

have left their mark in the names of several towns. The '*Aber*' in Aberdeen was the Celtic word for 'mouth' (of a river), and '*Car*' or '*Caer*', as in Carlisle and Carnarvon, means 'castle'. The Celts of Wales have given us the words '*Ilan*', meaning 'church' as in Ilandudo and Ilandeff, and '*pen*' meaning 'a mountain', which is to be found at the beginning of many Welsh names of towns, e.g. Penarth. The words '*comte*' and '*tor*' occur in the place names of Devon and Cornwall. They come from the Celtic word for a long deep valley 'a rocky hill'.

The Anglo-Saxon Borrowings:

The Germanic tribes, Jutes, Saxons and the Angles, came to England around the 5th century AD and began to live in the Jutland, Holstein and Schleswig areas. With the going of the Romans, the Anglo-Saxons and Jutes realized how helpless the Britons were and knowing how rich and fertile the countryside was, they came in greater numbers and settled with their wives

and families. First came the Jutes about the year 450, and conquered Kent. The Saxons followed them south and farther west, and gave names to their kingdoms which remain to this day in the English countries ending in ‘-sex’. ‘Sussex’ is the land of South Saxons, ‘Essex’ of East Saxons, ‘Wessex’ of the West Saxons and ‘Middlesex’ was the kingdom of the Middle Saxons. The Angles settled along the Eastern Coast. Historians believe that while the Saxons came in organized bands mainly for plunder; the Angles left their German homes and brought their wives and families to settle in Britain. They gave their names to the whole country and are never spoken of again among the German tribes. In Germanic, Angles were called the Angli, and that was transformed to Engle in Old English, and thus the land of all the three tribes was collectively called (Engle + land) England.

Later on two separate Anglian dialects developed. The dialect of the north of Humber river was called **Northumbrian**

and of the south was called the **Mercian**. Also the Saxons dialect was called **West Saxon** as they were settled in the west, and the dialect of Jutes was called the **Kentish** who were on the southern and eastern sides of the river Thames. Thus, there were four main dialects in England.

In the beginning, the Northumbrians held prominence in literature and culture, but after the Viking invasions (793-865) the cultural leadership went to the West Saxon group. In the later part of 9th century the Parker Chronicle (or Anglo-Saxon Chronicle) was written, and thus, West Saxon's dialect became the "Standard Old English."

The English language as we know it had its beginnings in the speech of these invaders brought to Britain. The different tribes all spoke the same language, but each had a dialect of its own. From one of these dialects came English. With the passage of time almost every word has changed its shape, the grammar

has taken a new pattern and thousands of other words have been added, so that the language of the Anglo-Saxons bears little resemblance to the English of today.

English was really a Low German dialect, but when the Angles and Saxons left the Continent, many changes took place in the language. Many words took on a new meaning, as, for instance, '*tun*'. The original meaning was merely 'a hedge enclosing an open space' but in Anglo-Saxon it came to mean a village or town. More important than changes in the meaning of words were the general changes in the construction of the sentence. At first, the connection that words had with each other in a sentence was shown by inflected endings, as in modern German. In time, these case endings were dropped, and small words, such as prepositions, became more extensively used instead. These changes were carried along by the Danish invasion, and still by the Norman Conquest, when the English language became largely a spoken one only.

The English language uses the Latin alphabet of 26 consonants and vowels. In the beginning there were very few words of general use like, words of kinship: *faeder*, *modor*, *brothor*, *sweostor*, and *dohtor*; 25 names with their inflections like *mon*, *men* (man, men) and some adjectives and verbs. There were two demonstratives: *se*, *seo*, *thaet* (that) and *thes*, *theos* (this) but there were no ('a' or 'the') articles. So 'the good man' was written as '*se* (that) *goda mon*,' and 'a good man' was written as '*an* (one) *goda mon*.' Verbs had only two tenses, present-future and past with their inflections. *Hors* (horse) and *maegden* (maiden) were neuter gender; *eorthe* (earth) was feminine but *lond* (land) was neuter; *sunne* (sun) was feminine, but *mona* (moon) was masculine. Inflections were used in abundance, so the word order in a sentence was not of much importance in those days as long as the theme was understood. But Old English is totally incomprehensible for a Modern English knower. It was more like the modern German of today.

For example: *Hie ne dorston forth bi th ere ea siglan* (They dared not sail beyond that river).

Anglo-Saxon nouns were not, as now, classified into masculine, feminine or neuter gender according to sex. Instead, they had 'grammatical' genre, as, for example, modern German has. So, in old English, '*hand*' = (hand) was feminine, but '*foet*' = (foot) was masculine, '*magden*' = (girl) was neuter and 'wifman' = (woman) was masculine.

The three cases of the noun- nominative, accusative, and dative- were marked by different endings. In time, nearly all of them were reduced to a final 'e', and then, later, disappeared, for the general tendency was always towards a greater simplification. One or two still remain, such as an ending in 'n' which used to form the plural of many nouns, It still exists in a very few modern words, e.g. *child- children, ox- oxen*.

Like the Celts and the Romans, the Angles and Saxons have left their marks in the names of places where they lived. Many of the villages in English have Anglo-Saxon names. The Anglo-Saxon '*tun*' developed into '*ton*' or '*town*' (e.g. 'Weston' is the 'west town' and 'kingston' is the place where buildings once owned by the king stood). The word '*ham*' meaning a Saxon's house or home gives us 'East Ham', 'Rotherham', 'Cheltenham'. A '*burgh*' or '*burg*' was a fortified place, e.g. 'Shrewsbury', 'Edinburgh', 'Peterborough'. The common ending '*sted*' is from an old word 'stede' meaning 'place', 'site of a building', or 'hamstede' meaning 'homestead', e.g. Hampstead.

When the Saxons landed in England, they were heathens worshipping the old Teutonic gods such as Thor, and Odin. The English days of the week are named after them: Tuesday after the war god *Tiu*; Wednesday after *Woden* or *Odin*, the father of the gods, Thursday after *Thor*, the god of thunder; and Friday after the queen of gods, *Friga*.

The Heritage of Rome II: The Beginning of Written English:

Though the Romans were in Britain for nearly 500 years, they left before the English language came to Britain. In A.D. 597 St. Augustine landed in Kent with a band of forty white-robed monks, was received by the Saxon ruler of Kent, and was allowed to build in Canterbury the first English cathedral. The arrival of Augustine and his monks marks the beginnings of a higher type of civilization in England.

A considerable number of Latin words connected with Church and ordinary life were brought into the English language. Among these relating to religious affairs are '*bishop*', '*priest*', '*church*', '*mass*', '*candle*', '*school*', and '*devil*'. Among those of a more general character are '*cook*', '*kitchen*', '*butter*', '*cheese*', '*dish*', '*pillow*', '*port*', '*silk*', '*cap*', and '*cup*'. Many of these came to Latin from Greek and were passed on to English.

Christianity reached the North of England not only from Augustine's followers, but also from Irish missionaries. One of the greatest benefits we owe the latter was the old English Alphabet. Previously, the Anglo-Saxons had used heathen 'runes', i.e. strange symbols carrying mysterious meanings. In Anglo-Saxon literature there are several references to the use of runes for sending a message. Runes were sometimes cut into stone monuments, and several of these runic monuments have been found in the North of England. It may well be imagined with what enthusiasm northern scholars exchanged these crude heathen symbols for the clear, bold handwriting of the Irish monks.

Wherever the missionaries travelled they took the Roman alphabet of twenty-two letters with them, to which were added other letters: *p* or *d* and *a*, to express peculiarly English sounds.

English poetry had its beginnings when the Angles and Saxons were living in their homes across the sea, and their earlier poetry reflects a fierce courage in warfare and a love of the sea which is typical of these fearless adventures.

Beowulf is the first great narrative poem of adventure written in English. The sentiments and the manners described are those of the Anglo-Saxons when they were heathen tribes still living in Northern Europe. The poem is heathen in spirit, but was either retold by a Christian poet or had Christian elements added to it. There is a good reason to suppose that there were three or four ancient poems dealing with the hero Beowulf, and that these were wrote together by an unknown Anglo-Saxon poet, probably during the eighth century.

The poem is remarkable for its natural descriptions, and was written by one who knew the sea in all its dreadful moods. Moreover, the poem's chief value lies in the vivid historical

pictures showing how early Englishmen spent their days. It is most remarkable of all Anglo-Saxon poems. This christianized version of *Beowulf* is one of several half-heathen poems belonging to the seventh and eighth centuries. Many of them emphasize the cruelty of nature, particularly the terrors of the sea. *The Seafarer*, for instance, is a dramatic dialogue between an old and a young sailor. No one can say who wrote these poems, many of which are only fragments. The first English poet whom we know by name is Caedmon. Before his death in 680 he wrote hymns and poems dealing with the stories of the Old Testament. But much of his work has been lost. A fragment of Caedmon's poem on *The Creation*, written about 660, is the oldest of literary English still existing.

Cynewulf, another Christian poet from the north, lived about the same time, and tells of his own life as a young lover and a wonderful singer. His vivid sea pictures have fine descriptions of storm and a moving expression of the loneliness

that a sailor endures. For the first time we find personal accounts of the writer's thoughts and feelings among the many long descriptions. Cynewulf is certainly the most important English writer before the time of King Alfred.

Harrow was the greatest scholar of his time in the whole of Europe. In his books he gathered together all that was known of science, history and theology, and although he seldom left his monastery, he was visited by scholars and men of importance from every Christian country. Besides many books on the Old and New Testament, he wrote several delightful biographies of older writers and an *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. This was all in Latin.

The Danish Contribution:

All this rich learning was not to last long. In the last twenty years of the 8th century, came the Danish Invasion, when monasteries, schools and valuable libraries were all destroyed in

another wave of fire and slaughter, which spread from the North to the South of England until it was halted there by the skill and bravery of King Alfred.

The Anglo-Saxons had been settled in England for three hundred years, and had forgotten many of their old warlike habits. Moreover, they were not a united people, and were consequently no match for the Danes. Soon the whole land, except the south and west, was overrun; everywhere men and women went in terror and the English were in despair.

Fortunately at this critical moment Alfred the Great became King of Wessex (in the south of England). In 878 the Danes were utterly defeated and Alfred made peace with their leader.

Besides being a great warrior, King Alfred had the welfare of his people at heart and did much to improve their standard of

civilization. He made new laws which were just and respected, and tried to educate his people by building new schools and monasteries where they could learn. He not only saved England from the Danes, but probably prevented Anglo-Saxon speech from being completely absorbed or uprooted. He himself translated into English a number of Latin books. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* was certainly encouraged if not begun by him, and in it were set down the events and curious happenings of the time. King Alfred was in many ways a remarkable man- as a ruler, warrior, law-giver and maker of literature.

By the year 1000 the Danes occupied more than one-half of the country, and in 1016 the Saxons were compelled to accept the Dane Canure, as their king. He was a wise and good king, who treated both peoples on equal terms. They each spoke a different from of the same parent language; and as they mixed together in church, in the marketplace and at work, they exchanged many words and the two languages become

practically one. In conversation, the simplest form is always the one to be adopted, so the Danish pronouns ‘they’, ‘them’, and ‘their’ took the place of the Anglo-Saxon word ‘*bi*’, ‘*him*’ and ‘*hiera*’. After being used in the north, these new pronouns spread throughout the whole country. (The pronoun ‘she’ may also have come from the Danes, though its exact origin is not clear). Some Danish words didn’t travel so far. The word ‘*kirk*’ is used for a church now only in Scotland, and the words ‘*beck*’ for a stream and ‘*dale*’ for a valley are both North England words. Sometimes the Anglo-Saxon word and the Danish lived on side by side for centuries. A number of these pairs of words have come down to modern English, e.g. ‘*no*’ is Anglo-Saxon and ‘*nay*’ (which is very common in Lancashire and Scotland as well as in poetry) is Danish, ‘*whole*’ is Anglo-Saxon, but ‘*hale*’, as in the phrase ‘hale and hearty’ meaning ‘fit’ (or ‘whole and well’, is Danish. So many words were the same in both languages so that the full extent of the Danish influence can never be full realized. But the names of many places in the eastern part of England tell us where

the Danes lived. Many end in ‘*-thorpe*’ (e.g. Scunthorpe, Mablethorpe), which was the Danish word for a village and more than six hundred words end in ‘*-by*’, e.g. Whitby, Derby, Grimsby. ‘*By*’ was their word for a town, so that Whitby means the town on the white cliff and Grimsby the town of Grim, a famous sea-pirate. The term ‘*by-law*’ means ‘a law for a town and is also a Danish word. Other common nouns brought by the Danes are ‘*sister*’, ‘*husband*’, ‘*skin*’, and ‘*window*’ (meaning literally ‘the eye of the wind’). Some Danish adjectives and verbs are ‘*happy*’, ‘*wrong*’, ‘*ugly*’, and ‘*get*’, ‘*take*’, and ‘*want*’.

The Danes were eventually accepted as a part of the English nation. In the new churches and schools and at the King’s Court, both Anglo-Saxon and Danish were used, so that gradually the two languages became one.

The Norman Influence:

We date the Norman-French period in English history from the invasion of William the Conqueror in 1066, but some Normans had appeared in England before them, and King Edward (1042 -1066) had ordered French to be spoken at Court.

The Norman Conquest had far-reaching consequences in many directions. New, foreign ways and manners were introduced. A new and foreign language was heard everywhere. But it would be a mistake to suppose that the Norman Conquest of England was wholly a misfortune, although it meant that the English language was not to be used in polite society or as a means of learning for hundreds of years. The conquerors kept in touch with France and Europe. They were intelligent, vigorous, with a fine sense of humour and the Englishmn found their clothes richer, their furniture more comfortable, their manners more polished. The English to them seemed an uncivilized people, living in discomfort and behaving in a barbarous fashion.

The Normans had a system of military service whereby every man had to fight for his lord, and each lord was responsible to the king, who was feared and respected. Since all military affairs were in the hands of these new lords, it is not surprising that a host of new French military terms were introduced, e.g. '*arms*' and '*armour*', '*battle*', and '*siege*', '*standard*', '*trumpet*', '*soldier*', '*sergeant*', '*officer*', and '*lieutenant*'.

Educated Normans introduced a number of noble phrases and words which we associate with knighthood and gallant conduct. To this period date the English words '*glory*', '*honour*', '*fine*', '*noble*', all of them of French origin.

Because the Normans were great builders, fortresses and castles sprang up all over the country and the solid square tower, such as may be seen in the white Tower of London build by William the Conqueror, was a feature of their defense. But it was in their lovely stone-built churches and cathedrals that the

Normans showed their greatest skill. After the conquest, small Saxon churches, with their tiny windows and unattractive exteriors, gave place to the noble Norman building, with its rounded archways, heavy pillars and massive walls. This splendid architecture needed many new French terms to explain it.

When the Norman lords replaced Englishmen in all important posts of government, the Church, the monasteries and the schools, the English language ceased to be used except by the poor people as they went about their humble everyday jobs. Not for two hundred years was any important literature produced except in French or Latin. French was the language of the upper and ruling classes and of educated Englishmen.

The government of the country affected everyone, and when it was carried on in a new language a flood of new words came into general use. Today very few old English words to do

with rank and government have survived. The titles ‘king’ and ‘queen’ were kept. So too were ‘earl’, ‘lord’ and ‘lady’, but dozens of new titles were introduced such as ‘*prince*’ and ‘*princess*’, ‘*duke*’ and ‘*duchess*’, ‘*count*’ and ‘*countess*’, ‘*chancellor*’, ‘*minister*’ and ‘*squire*’. The words ‘*government*’, ‘*parliament*’, ‘*crown*’, and ‘*council*’ are all of French origin.

In the Norman law courts, no English was spoken until Edward III gave special permission in 1362. ‘*Judge*’ and ‘*justice*’, ‘*to accuse*’ and ‘*to defend*’, ‘*hurry*’, ‘*crime*’, ‘*cause*’, ‘*taxi*’, and ‘*traitor*’ are only a few of the many French words which show the Norman influence on the law of English.

For several centuries three languages might have been heard in England. In the schools and churches Latin was used by the hundreds of French monks who were brought over by the Normans, and with them came many new books in Latin. Serious writing and religious literature were almost always in Latin, and

by the 13th century a certain amount was being turned into English. If we could count the number of words in the English Language that have come from Latin, we should easily find that they outnumber those from any other source.

The biggest proportion of Latin words were borrowed in the centuries following the Norman Invasion, at a time when the Church played a much bigger part in the lives of all men . This influence of the Church was an important one, for it came into touch with all classes, and consequently the number of religious words that crept into English speech, from both Latin and French, was considerable. From Norman-French came the words '*clergy*', (meaning literally 'the learned'), '*religion*', '*Bible*', '*friar*', '*altar*', '*miracle*', and '*preach*'.

Norman lords and ladies spoke only French, and were careful to see that their sons were taught in French or Latin. If a man knows no French, people will think little of him. But the

lower classes stick to English and their own language. The Normans took for themselves nearly every thing that was beautiful or comfortable. This naturally had its effect on the English language, for they introduced their own words to express enjoyment- '*pleasure*', '*joy*', and '*delight*', and the words '*leisure*', '*ease*', and '*comfort*' are all Norman-French words, and of course, '*sport*' and '*pastime*'. Hunting, or the 'chase', as they called it, occupied much of their time and brought such words as '*scent*', '*track*', '*couple*', and '*falcon*' into the language. Of indoor games '*cards*' and '*dice*' are both French. The English were never allowed to forget that they were servants and little more than slaves. '*Servant*' is a Norman word and so are '*obey*' and '*command*'.

Animals take the old English name when alive, but have a French name when killed and prepared for the table. Cow or ox becomes 'beef', sheep is 'mutton', and deer is 'venison'. The French have always prided themselves on their excellent cooking

and on the buildings with rounded archways, heavy pillars and massive walls. This splendid architecture needed many new French terms to explain it. '*Arch*', '*pillar*', '*tower*', '*castle*' and '*palace*' are some of them.

French tradesmen were generally more skillful than the slower-thinking English. So, we find that the names for those trades which brought the workman into close touch with his Norman master are all of French origin - '*butcher*', '*barber*', '*carpenter*', '*grocer*' '*painter*', and '*tailor*'- while the more humble jobs have kept their old English names , e.g. '*baker*', '*blacksmith*', '*fisherman*', '*shepherd*', and '*swineherd*'. French people have set the fashion in dress ever since the days of the Norman, and dressmaking terms and nearly all garments have French names, e.g. '*dress*', '*costume*', '*design*', and '*mode*'.

It was quite common for the few English writers on religious subjects in the fourth century to make use of new

French words and explain them with an English equivalent, so that we come across phrases such as '*malevolent that is evil*', '*ignorance that is un wisdom*'.

Again ever since the 8th century, English grammar was changing, always towards a greater simplicity. Many of the case endings were dropped and more use was made of prepositions. When French words were borrowed, the English nearly always treated them as if they were their own words- for instance, words which had no plural ending in French were written with an "s", e.g. '*choix*', originally '*chois*', gives us 'choice'(s); '*cas*', 'case'(s).

Pronunciation also changed and followed the English pattern, although this took time in many cases. As time went on, new words were formed, made up of a strange mixing of the French and English languages, and we find the two languages slowly, but steadily, growing into one. There was also the habit

of adding the native endings '*ship*' and '*dom*' to many French words to form abstract nouns, e.g. 'membership', 'relationship', 'dukedom'.

It was during these years that spoken English changed most considerably. In Old English, nouns ending in '*dome*' were masculine and those ending in '*-ess*' were feminine, and the ending '*en*' was generally used to signify the neuter. The question of sex did not matter. '*Magden*' (maiden), for example, was a neuter noun, and of the two words for wife '*wif*' was neuter and '*wifman*' was masculine. In the years following the Norman Conquest grammatical gender went generally out of use.

Later on the Norman-French gave place to the English language for various reasons: (a) The division between Norman and English was much less marked during the 13th century; (b) A feeling of national unity was growing among the English; (c) Englishmen and Normans joined together and

signed the Magna Carta in 1215; (d) The lower classes still kept to English and to their own language; (e) The longer the Norman lived with the English, the more surely were they drawn together, not only in spirit but in the matter of language too; and (f) After the Black Death (in the middle of the 14th century) and after the ‘Peasants’ Revolt’ of 1381, teachers made their pupils translate Latin into English instead of French.

A new and wide range of fascinating literature had been opened out to English scholars. The missionary monks who came over to English spread learning and interested English scholars in a new religious literature, most of it in Latin. Soon there was a natural desire to translate some of it into English tongue, and the first few books in the native tongue belong to the twelfth century and are on simple religious subjects. This English religious writing continues slowly until the time of Langland, who chose to write his long poem *Piers Plowman* (1362) in the verse line similar to that used by Caedmon and Cynewulf. John Wycliff

wrote in prose against the bad example set by many priests. Although an expert Latin scholar, Wycliff chose to write in English, and in 1380, with the help of a group of younger scholars, he made the first complete translation of the Bible into English. He preserved many English words that might have been lost, and helped to make English a popular language for religious thought.

The Normans also interested Englishmen in new historical stories, and in new exciting tales of love, adventure, and romance, which were peculiarly French in spirit. The story of King Arthur and his knights came to England in a French translation. It had first been written in Latin by Geoffrey Monmouth, a Welsh priest at the Court of Henry I, then translated into French and brought back into English poetry in Laymon's *Brut* (1205). Its great importance lies in the appeal it made to Englishmen. It reawakened in them a pride in their history and past heroes, and proved a common source of interest

to English and Normans, since they both found pleasure in the same half-historical, half-legendary heroes. Laymon was a priest who wrote in the unrhymed alliterative line:

Iche hatte Hengest, Hors hatte min Broder.

We beed of Alemaine, of one riche londe.

= (I am called Hengist, my brother is called Horse. We are both from Germany, the noblest of all lands).

The alphabet then contained two additional symbols which occur frequently in the poem- **p** (some times written **d**) represents the /o/ or /d/ sound, and which had various values. At the beginning of a word was sounded as **j** as the letter **j** does not occur at all. The letters **u** and **v** are consequently interchangeable. An examination of the extract will show Norman- French words, though the Norman had occupied England for years. The

alliteration is clearly marked e.g. the */h/* sound in the first two lines.

Many French romances of Alexander, and others were translated into English and spread up and down the whole country by wandering ministers or beggars. They were typically French in subject-matter and treatment, and their influence is felt in English literature for hundreds of years. They also affected the shape and form of English poetry. Old English verse had neither rhyme nor a fixed number of syllables, but depended on accent and alliteration. When modelled on the French pattern, English verse lines were much shorter and rhyme is usual.

In Old English there was no recognized spelling throughout the whole country: the language existed in several of different dialects. The Norman Invasion had then an important effect on English, for when it became once more a literary

language, writers adopted a new spelling based on changes introduced by the French.

The two most important changes, both of which became noticeable in the fourteenth century, were the addition of a final silent *e* to words to show a long vowel sound, e.g. '*can-came*', '*mad-made*', '*win-wine*', and the doubling of consonants when any ending beginning with a vowel is added to a word, e.g. '*bite-bitten*', '*dig-digging*' and '*quarrel-quarrelled*'.

In another borrowed French word, '*hotel*', it is still a matter of choice whether or not the *h* is pronounced. The Old English sound '*hw*' was respelt by the French writers '*wh*', e.g. '*what*' (Old English is '*hwat*'), '*where*' (Old English is '*hwar*').

For two centuries the English tongue had struggled against French, and during that time had absorbed a good deal of its vocabulary. As a result, it became a new and lively language,

capable of greater power and fuller expression. New literary subjects, especially the romantic tale based on chivalrous ideas, had stirred the Englishman's imagination, and he was ready to produce a great literature of his own.

The first literary result of this enthusiasm came from Geoffrey Chaucer, who lived from 1340 to 1400. He is the greatest figure in the story of England before the time of Shakespeare, and is often called 'the father of English poetry'.

Chaucer lived at the Court of King Edward III, where he entertained the Lords and Ladies with his poems and songs. He wrote many stories both in prose and verse; many of them were translations from the French. He took all was best in the English language and, by following the finest examples of French and Italian writings, he developed a flowing, easy style that is much more modern than anything we have had previously.

Chaucer's English, although nearly six hundred years old, is so clear that it can be read and enjoyed with little difficulty. His poetry is valuable both for its beautiful language and rhythm and for the very vivid pictures of men and women who lived in the 14th century. Chaucer is best known for his Canterbury Tales, which gives a lively picture of 30 men and women, including Chaucer himself, who make up a joyful company riding on horseback from London to Canterbury. After a prologue which gives up a detailed and colourful description of the travellers, each one agrees to tell a story or make the time pass more pleasantly.

In these stories Chaucer shows his love, and understanding of men and women, his vast store of mediaeval learning and a passionate love and knowledge of nature. He showed how the English language could be used for a variety of different purposes, and nearly all later poets have learned from him. He made many words familiar and popular that might otherwise

never have been kept in the language, and helped to form a standard vocabulary of English words from the three languages: Latin, French, and English. It has been well said that he united two great powers- the brilliance of the French language on one hand and the homely truth and steadfastness of English on the other.

CHAPTER 3

A SPECIMEN OF OLD ENGLISH:

THE SAGA OF BEOWULF

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The Saga of Beowulf is the first long poem in the English language, consisting of more than three thousand long lines. Some regard the poem as an allegory.

It is a story of old Scandinavian, life and pagan heroism. The scene is in Zealand and Gothland, and the Baltic Sound that separates them. In Zealand for many years had reigned King Hrothgar. Successful in battle, and rich with the spoils of war, he founded Heorot, a magnificent hall, for the entertainment of his thanes. Here he and his braves nightly feasted and slept, But the hall was built on the edge of a moor that was haunted by a huge grim monster, Grendel by name. The lights and festive sounds of Heorot, streaming out by night over the waste moorland, annoy

him, and he approaches the hall to reconnoitre. Watching his opportunity, he enters stealthily when the revellers are asleep and the lights are low, and seizing thirty men, hurries off with his victims into the darkness. At dawn there is woe in the hall of Heorot. For twelve long years the monster continues his nightly ravages, till Heorot stands almost empty, and Hrothgar is pitied far and wide. Wandering scalds carry the tidings everywhere.

At the court of Hygelac, in Gothland, young Beowulf, the king's kinsman, first heard of Grendel. Now Beowulf was the most daring Viking of his age, and the force of thirty heroes was in his hand-nip. He would go to Heorot, and offer his services to Hrothgar, and fight with the Grendel. Anyhow, Beowulf would manage to slay the monster. When the monster-mother invades the place in an attempt to avenge the death of her son, she is also killed by Beowulf.

PRELUDE

Hwæt! We Gardena in geardagum,
þeodcyninga, þrym gefrunon,
hu ða æþelingas ellen fremedon.
Oft Scyld Scefing sceapena þreatum,
monegum mægþum, meodosetla ofteah,
egsode eorlas. Syððan ærest wearð
feasceaft funden, he þæs frofre gebad,
weox under wolcnum, weorðmyndum þah,
oðþæt him æghwylc þara ymsittendra
ofer hronrade hyran scolde,
gomban gyldan. þæt wæs god cyning!
Ðæm eafera wæs æfter cenned,
geong in geardum, þone god sende
folce to frofre; fyrenðearfe ongeat
þe hie ær drugon aldorlease
lange hwile. Him þæs liffrea,
wuldres wealdend, woroldare forgeaf;
Beowulf wæs breme (blæd wide sprang),
Scyldes eafera Scedelandum in.
Swa sceal geong guma gode gewyrcean,
fromum feohgiftum on fæder bearme,

þæt hine on ylde eft gewunigen
 wilgesipas, þonne wig cume,
 leode gelæsten; lofdædum sceal
 in mægþa gehwære man geþeon.
 Him ða Scyld gewat to gescæphwile
 felahror feran on frean wære.
 Hi hyne þa ætbæron to brimes faroðe,
 swæse gesipas, swa he selfa bæd,
 þenden wordum weold wine Scyldinga;
 leof landfruma lange ahte.
 þær æt hyðe stod hringedstefna,
 isig ond utfus, æþelinges fær.
 Aledon þa leofne þeoden,
 beaga bryttan, on bearm scipes,
 mærne be mæste. þær wæs madma fela
 of feorwegum, frætwa, gelæded;
 ne hyrde ic cymlicor ceol gegyrwan
 hildewæpnum ond heaðowædum,
 billum ond byrnum; him on bearne læg
 madma mænigo, þa him mid scoldon
 on flodes æht feor gewitan.
 Nalæs hi hine læssan lacum teodan,
 þeodgestreonium, þon þa dydon

þe hine æt frumsceaftē forð onsendon
ænne ofer yðe umborwesende.
þa gyt hie him asetton segen geldenne
heah ofer heafod, leton holm beran,
geafon on garsecg; him wæs geomor sefa,
murnende mod. Men ne cunnon
secgan to soðe, selerædende,
hæleð under heofenum, hwa þæm hlæste onfeng.

LO, praise of the prowess of people-kings
of spear-armed Danes, in days long sped,
we have heard, and what honor the athelings won!
Oft Scyld the Scefing from squadroned foes,
from many a tribe, the mead-bench tore,
awing the earls. Since erst he lay
friendless, a foundling, fate repaid him:
for he waxed under welkin, in wealth he throve,
till before him the folk, both far and near,
who house by the whale-path, heard his mandate,
gave him gifts: a good king he!
To him an heir was afterward born,
a son in his halls, whom heaven sent

to favor the folk, feeling their woe
that erst they had lacked an earl for leader
so long a while; the Lord endowed him,
the Wielder of Wonder, with world's renown.
Famed was this Beowulf: far flew the boast of him,
son of Scyld, in the Scandian lands.
So becomes it a youth to quit him well
with his father's friends, by fee and gift,
that to aid him, aged, in after days,
come warriors willing, should war draw nigh,
liegemen loyal: by lauded deeds
shall an earl have honor in every clan.
Forth he fared at the fated moment,
sturdy Scyld to the shelter of God.
Then they bore him over to ocean's billow,
loving clansmen, as late he charged them,
while wielded words the winsome Scyld,
the leader beloved who long had ruled....
In the roadstead rocked a ring-dight vessel,
ice-flecked, outbound, atheling's barge:
there laid they down their darling lord
on the breast of the boat, the breaker-of-rings,

by the mast the mighty one. Many a treasure
fetched from far was freighted with him.
No ship have I known so nobly dight
with weapons of war and weeds of battle,
with breastplate and blade: on his bosom lay
a heaped hoard that hence should go
far o'er the flood with him floating away.
No less these loaded the lordly gifts,
thanes' huge treasure, than those had done
who in former time forth had sent him
sole on the seas, a suckling child.
High o'er his head they hoist the standard,
a gold-wove banner; let billows take him,
gave him to ocean. Grave were their spirits,
mournful their mood. No man is able
to say in sooth, no son of the halls,
no hero 'neath heaven, -- who harbored that freight!

Summary:

The story begins with the story of Scyld Scefing, a great king who ruled by virtue of his power being greater than all others, and none would challenge him. This kept the peace, and he was rewarded tribute of gold.

The son of Scyld, Beowulf, continued the rule gifting gold to the worthy and earning respect and loyalty. This fame spread throughout the North-lands and their prosperity grew.

And when Beow died, they adorned him and his ship with treasure and set him off to burial at sea.

Ða wæs on burgum Beowulf Scyldinga,
leof leodcýning, longe þrage
folcum gefræge (fæder ellor hwearf,
aldor of earde), oþþæt him eft onwoc
heah Healfdene; heold þenden lifde,
gamol ond guðreow, glæde Scyldingas.
ðæm feower bearn forð gerimed
in worold wocun, weoroda ræswan,
Heorogar ond Hroðgar ond Halga til;
hyrde ic þæt wæs Onelan cwen,
Heaðoscilfingas healsgebedda.
þa wæs Hroðgare heresped gyfen,
wiges weorðmynd, þæt him his winemagas
georne hyrdon, oðð þæt seo geogoð geweox,
magodriht micel. Him on mod bearn

þæt healreced hatan wolde,
 medoærn micel, men gewyrcean
 þonne ylðo bearn æfre gefrunon,
 ond þær on innan eall gedælan
 geongum ond ealdum, swylc him god sealde,
 buton folcscare ond feorum gumena.
 ða ic wide gefrægn weorc gebannan
 manigre mægþe geond þisne middangeard,
 folcstede frætwan. Him on fyrste gelomp,
 ædre mid yldum, þæt hit wearð ealgearo,
 healærna mæst; scop him Heort naman
 se þe his wordes geweald wide hæfde.
 He beot ne aleh, beagas dælde,
 sinc æt symle. Sele hlifade,
 heah ond horngeap, heaðowylma bad,
 laðan liges; ne wæs hit lenge þa gen
 þæt se ecghete aþumsweorum
 æfter wælniðe wæcnan scolde.
 ða se ellengæst earfoðlice
 þrage geþolode, se þe in þystrum bad,
 þæt he dogora gehwam dream gehyrde
 hludne in healle; þær wæs hearpan sweg,

swutol sang scopes. Sægde se þe cuþe
 frumsceaft fira feorran reccan,
 cwæð þæt se ælmihtiga eorðan worhte,
 wlitebeorhtne wang, swa wæter bebugeð,
 gesette sigehreþig sunnan ond monan
 leoman to leohte landbuendum
 ond gefræt Wade foldan sceatas
 leomum ond leafum, lif eac gesceop
 cynna gehwylcum þara ðe cwice hwyrfaþ.
 Swa ða drihtguman dreamum lifdon
 eadiglice, oððæt an ongan
 fyrene fremman feond on helle.
 Wæs se grimma gæst Grendel haten,
 mære mearcstapa, se þe moras heold,
 fen ond fæsten; fifelcynnes eard
 wonsæli wer weardode hwile,
 siþðan him scyppend forscifen hæfde
 in Caines cynne. þone cwealm gewræc
 ece drihten, þæs þe he Abel slog;
 ne gefeah he þære fæhðe, ac he hine feor forwræc,
 metod for þy mane, mancynne fram.
 þanon untydras ealle onwocon,
 eotenas ond ylfe ond orcneas,

swylce gigantas, þa wið gode wunnon
lange þrage; he him ðæs lean forgeald.

NOW Beowulf bode in the burg of the Scyldings,
leader beloved, and long he ruled
in fame with all folk, since his father had gone
away from the world, till awoke an heir,
haughty Healfdene, who held through life,
sage and sturdy, the Scyldings glad.
Then, one after one, there woke to him,
to the chieftain of clansmen, children four:
Heorogar, then Hrothgar, then Halga brave;
and I heard that -- was --'s queen,
the Heathoscyfing's helpmate dear.
To Hrothgar was given such glory of war,
such honor of combat, that all his kin
obeyed him gladly till great grew his band
of youthful comrades. It came in his mind
to bid his henchmen a hall uprear,
a master mead-house, mightier far
than ever was seen by the sons of earth,
and within it, then, to old and young
he would all allot that the Lord had sent him,

save only the land and the lives of his men.
Wide, I heard, was the work commanded,
for many a tribe this mid-earth round,
to fashion the folkstead. It fell, as he ordered,
in rapid achievement that ready it stood there,
of halls the noblest: Heorot he named it
whose message had might in many a land.
Not reckless of promise, the rings he dealt,
treasure at banquet: there towered the hall,
high, gabled wide, the hot surge waiting
of furious flame. Nor far was that day
when father and son-in-law stood in feud
for warfare and hatred that woke again.
With envy and anger an evil spirit
endured the dole in his dark abode,
that he heard each day the din of revel
high in the hall: there harps rang out,
clear song of the singer. He sang who knew
tales of the early time of man,
how the Almighty made the earth,
fairest fields enfolded by water,
set, triumphant, sun and moon
for a light to lighten the land-dwellers,

and braided bright the breast of earth
with limbs and leaves, made life for all
of mortal beings that breathe and move.
So lived the clansmen in cheer and revel
a winsome life, till one began
to fashion evils, that field of hell.
Grendel this monster grim was called,
march-riever mighty, in moorland living,
in fen and fastness; fief of the giants
the hapless wight a while had kept
since the Creator his exile doomed.
On kin of Cain was the killing avenged
by sovran God for slaughtered Abel.
Ill fared his feud, and far was he driven,
for the slaughter's sake, from sight of men.
Of Cain awoke all that woful breed,
Ettins and elves and evil-spirits,
as well as the giants that warred with God
weary while: but their wage was paid them!

Summary:

The kingdom was left to Healfdene who upheld the reputation of the Scyldings. And born to him were Heorogar, Hrothgar, and Halga.

Now Hrothgar was so renowned in battle and in generosity that a great mead-hall covered with gold, Heorot, was built in honour of the prosperity of his rule.

But a creature heard the reveling, the music, and the happiness of the hall. The creature from the moor-land was Grendel, descended from Cain--one of the giant race who had survived God's flood.

Gewat ða neosian, syþðan niht becom,
hean huses, hu hit Hringdene
æfter beorþege gebun hæfdon.
Fand þa ðær inne æþelinga gedriht
swefan æfter symble; sorge ne cuðon,
wonsceaft wera. Wiht unhælo,
grim ond grædig, gearo sona wæs,
reoc ond reþe, ond on ræste genam
þritig þegna, þanon eft gewat
huðe hremig to ham faran,
mid þære wælfylle wica neosan.
ða wæs on uhtan mid ærdæge
Grendles guðcræft gumum undyrne;

þa wæs æfter wiste wop up ahafen,
 micel morgensweg. Mære þeoden,
 æþeling ærgod, unbliðe sæt,
 þolode ðryðswyð, þegnsorge dreah,
 syðþan hie þæs laðan last sceawedon,
 wergan gastes; wæs þæt gewin to strang,
 lað ond longsum. Næs hit lengra fyrst,
 ac ymb ane niht eft gefremede
 morðbeala mare ond no mearn fore,
 fæhðe ond fyrene; wæs to fæst on þam.
 þa wæs eaðfynde þe him elles hwær
 gerumlicor ræste sohte,
 bed æfter burum, ða him gebeacnod wæs,
 gesægd soðlice sweotolan tacne
 healðegnes hete; heold hyne syðþan
 fyr ond fæstor se þæm feonde ætwand.
 Swa rixode ond wið rihte wan,
 ana wið eallum, oðþæt idel stod
 husa selest. Wæs seo hwil micel;
 XII wintra tid torn gepolode
 wine Scyldinga, weana gehwelcne,
 sidra sorga. Forðam secgum wearð,

ylda bearnum, undyrne cuð,
gyddum geomore, þætte Grendel wan
hwile wið Hroþgar, heteniðas wæg,
fyrene ond fæhðe fela missera,
singale sæce, sibbe ne wolde
wið manna hwone mægenes Deniga,
feorhbealo feorran, fea þingian,
ne þær nænig witena wenan þorfte
beorhtre bote to banan folmum,
ac se æglæca ehtende wæs,
deorc deapscua, duguþe ond geogouþe,
seomade ond syrede, sinnihte heold
mistige moras; men ne cunnon
hwyder helrunan hwyrftum scriþað.
Swa fela fyrena feond mancynnes,
atol angengea, oft gefremede,
heardra hynða. Heorot eardode,
sincfage sel sweartum nihtum;
no he þone gifstol gretan moste,
maþðum for metode, ne his myne wisse.
þæt wæs wræc micel wine Scyldinga,
modes brecða. Monig oft gesæt
rice to rune; ræd eahtedon

hwæt swiðferhðum selest wære
 wið færgryrum to gefremmanne.
 Hwilum hie geheton æt hærgratrum
 wigweorþunga, wordum bædon
 þæt him gastbona geoce gefremede
 wið þeodþreaum. Swylc wæs þeaw hyra,
 hæþenra hyht; helle gemundon
 in modsefan, metod hie ne cuþon,
 dæda demend, ne wiston hie drihten god,
 ne hie huru heofena helm herian ne cuþon,
 wuldres waldend. Wa bið þæm ðe sceal
 þurh sliðne nið sawle bescufan
 in fyres fæþm, frofre ne wenan,
 wihte gewendan; wel bið þæm þe mot
 æfter deaðdæge drihten secean
 ond to fæder fæþmum freoðo wilnian.

WENT he forth to find at fall of night
 that haughty house, and heed wherever
 the Ring-Danes, outrevelled, to rest had gone.
 Found within it the atheling band
 asleep after feasting and fearless of sorrow,
 of human hardship. Unhallowed wight,

grim and greedy, he grasped betimes,
wrathful, reckless, from resting-places,
thirty of the thanes, and thence he rushed
fain of his fell spoil, faring homeward,
laden with slaughter, his lair to seek.
Then at the dawning, as day was breaking,
the might of Grendel to men was known;
then after wassail was wail uplifted,
loud moan in the morn. The mighty chief,
atheling excellent, unblithe sat,
labored in woe for the loss of his thanes,
when once had been traced the trail of the fiend,
spirit accurst: too cruel that sorrow,
too long, too loathsome. Not late the respite;
with night returning, anew began
ruthless murder; he recked no whit,
firm in his guilt, of the feud and crime.
They were easy to find who elsewhere sought
in room remote their rest at night,
bed in the bowers, when that bale was shown,
was seen in sooth, with surest token, --
the hall-thane's hate. Such held themselves
far and fast who the fiend outran!

Thus ruled unrighteous and raged his fill
one against all; until empty stood
that lordly building, and long it bode so.
Twelve years' tide the trouble he bore,
sovrán of Scyldings, sorrows in plenty,
boundless cares. There came unhidden
tidings true to the tribes of men,
in sorrowful songs, how ceaselessly Grendel
harassed Hrothgar, what hate he bore him,
what murder and massacre, many a year,
feud unfading, -- refused consent
to deal with any of Daneland's earls,
make pact of peace, or compound for gold:
still less did the wise men ween to get
great fee for the feud from his fiendish hands.
But the evil one ambushed old and young
death-shadow dark, and dogged them still,
lured, or lurked in the livelong night
of misty moorlands: men may say not
where the haunts of these Hell-Runes be.
Such heaping of horrors the hater of men,
lonely roamer, wrought unceasing,
harassings heavy. O'er Heorot he lorded,

gold-bright hall, in gloomy nights;
and ne'er could the prince approach his throne,
-- 'twas judgment of God, -- or have joy in his hall.
Sore was the sorrow to Scyldings'-friend,
heart-rending misery. Many nobles
sat assembled, and searched out counsel
how it were best for bold-hearted men
against harassing terror to try their hand.
Whiles they vowed in their heathen fanes
altar-offerings, asked with words
that the slayer-of-souls would succor give them
for the pain of their people. Their practice this,
their heathen hope; 'twas Hell they thought of
in mood of their mind. Almighty they knew not,
Doomsman of Deeds and dreadful Lord,
nor Heaven's-Helmet heeded they ever,
Wielder-of-Wonder. -- Woe for that man
who in harm and hatred hales his soul
to fiery embraces; -- nor favor nor change
awaits he ever. But well for him
that after death-day may draw to his Lord,
and friendship find in the Father's arms!

Summary:

When night fell, he went to Heorot, took thirty thanes who were sleeping off the reveling and brought them to his lair.

When morning came, the thanes then knew the might of Grendel. Hrothgar was saddened for this foe was not like any other feud or crime. The thanes soon made their beds elsewhere for fear of Grendel's wrath. For twelve years he harassed Hrothgar; refusing tribute or any agreement for peace. Hiding among the moors, he ambushed old and young relentlessly.

The evil one ruled over Heorot such that Hrothgar could no longer rule upon his throne for none would approach the hall for fear of the creature.

Living in misery, they may have thought to worship at heathen temples; without faith in God, men such as the Scyldings would suffer without hope.

Swa ða mælceare maga Healfdenes
singala seað, ne mihte snotor hæleð
wean onwendan; wæs þæt gewin to swyð,
laþ ond longsum, þe on ða leode becom,

nydwracu niþgrim, nihtbealwa mæst.
þæt fram ham gefrægn Higelaces þegn,
god mid Geatum, Grendles dæda;
se wæs moncynnes mægenes strengest
on þæm dæge þysses lifes,
æpele ond eacen. Het him yðlidan
godne gegyrwan, cwæð, he guðcýning
ofer swanrade secean wolde,
mærne þeoden, þa him wæs manna þearf.
ðone siðfæt him snotere ceorlas
lythwon logon, þeah he him leof wære;
hwetton higerofne, hæl sceawedon.
Hæfde se goda Geata leoda
cempan gecorone þara þe he cenoste
findan mihte; XVna sum
sundwudu sohte; secg wisade,
lagucræftig mon, landgemyrcu.
Fyrst forð gewat. Flota wæs on yðum,
bat under beorge. Beornas gearwe
on stefn stigon; streamas wundon,
sund wið sande; secgas bæron
on bearm nacan beorhte frætwe,

guðsearo geatolic; guman ut scufon,
 weras on wilsid, wudu bundenne.
 Gewat þa ofer wægholm, winde gefysed,
 flota famiheals fugle gelicost,
 oðþæt ymb antid oþres dogores
 wundenstefna gewaden hæfde
 þæt ða liðende land gesawon,
 brimclifu blican, beorgas steape,
 side sænæssas; þa wæs sund liden,
 eoletes æt ende. þanon up hraðe
 Wedera leode on wang stigon,
 sæwudu sældon (syrca hrysedon,
 guðgewædo), gode þancedon
 þæs þe him yplade eaðe wurdon.
 þa of wealle geseah weard Scildinga,
 se þe holmclifu healdan scolde,
 beran ofer bolcan beorhte randas,
 fyrdsearu fuslicu; hine fyrwyt bræc
 modgehygdum, hwæt þa men wæron.
 Gewat him þa to waroðe wicge ridan
 þegn Hroðgares, þrymmum cwehte
 mægenwudu mundum, meþelwordum frægn:
 "Hwæt syndon ge searohæbbendra,

byrnum werede, þe þus brontne ceol
 ofer lagustræte lædan cwomon,
 hider ofer holmas? ...le wæs
 endesæta, ægwearde heold,
 þe on land Dena laðra nænig
 mid scipherge sceðþan ne meahte.
 No her cuðlicor cuman ongunnon
 lindhæbbende; ne ge leafnesword
 guðfremmendra gearwe ne wisson,
 maga gemedu. Næfre ic maran geseah
 eorla ofer eorþan ðonne is eower sum,
 secg on searwum; nis þæt seldguma,
 wæpnum geweorðad, næfne him his wlite leoge,
 ænlic ansyn. Nu ic eower sceal
 frumcyn witan, ær ge fyr heonan,
 leassceaweras, on land Dena
 furþur feran. Nu ge feorbuend,
 mereliðende, minne gehyrað
 anfealdne geþoht: Ofost is selest
 to gecyðanne hwanan eowre cyme syndon."

THUS seethed unceasing the son of Healfdene
 with the woe of these days; not wisest men

assuaged his sorrow; too sore the anguish,
loathly and long, that lay on his folk,
most baneful of burdens and bales of the night.
This heard in his home Hygelac's thane,
great among Geats, of Grendel's doings.
He was the mightiest man of valor
in that same day of this our life,
stalwart and stately. A stout wave-walker
he bade make ready. Yon battle-king, said he,
far o'er the swan-road he fain would seek,
the noble monarch who needed men!
The prince's journey by prudent folk
was little blamed, though they loved him dear;
they whetted the hero, and hailed good omens.
And now the bold one from bands of Geats
comrades chose, the keenest of warriors
e'er he could find; with fourteen men
the sea-wood he sought, and, sailor proved,
led them on to the land's confines.
Time had now flown; afloat was the ship,
boat under bluff. On board they climbed,
warriors ready; waves were churning

sea with sand; the sailors bore
on the breast of the bark their bright array,
their mail and weapons: the men pushed off,
on its willing way, the well-braced craft.
Then moved o'er the waters by might of the wind
that bark like a bird with breast of foam,
till in season due, on the second day,
the curved prow such course had run
that sailors now could see the land,
sea-cliffs shining, steep high hills,
headlands broad. Their haven was found,
their journey ended. Up then quickly
the Weders' clansmen climbed ashore,
anchored their sea-wood, with armor clashing
and gear of battle: God they thanked
for passing in peace o'er the paths of the sea.
Now saw from the cliff a Scylding clansman,
a warden that watched the water-side,
how they bore o'er the gangway glittering shields,
war-gear in readiness; wonder seized him
to know what manner of men they were.
Straight to the strand his steed he rode,
Hrothgar's henchman; with hand of might

he shook his spear, and spake in parley.
"Who are ye, then, ye armed men,
mailed folk, that yon mighty vessel
have urged thus over the ocean ways,
here o'er the waters? A warden I,
sentinel set o'er the sea-march here,
lest any foe to the folk of Danes
with harrying fleet should harm the land.
No aliens ever at ease thus bore them,
linden-wielders: yet word-of-leave
clearly ye lack from clansmen here,
my folk's agreement. -- A greater ne'er saw I
of warriors in world than is one of you, --
yon hero in harness! No henchman he
worthied by weapons, if witness his features,
his peerless presence! I pray you, though, tell
your folk and home, lest hence ye fare
suspect to wander your way as spies
in Danish land. Now, dwellers afar,
ocean-travellers, take from me
simple advice: the sooner the better
I hear of the country whence ye came."

Summary:

So the son of Healfdene suffered in his days. Hygelac of the Geats heard of the wrath of Grendel, and his mightiest warrior set sail for Heorot with fourteen brave warriors to the land of the Danes.

By the second day at sea, the seafarers approached the cliffs of the headlands. They landed and thanked God for their safe journey. A Scylding watchman stopped them where they landed and demanded of the armed seafarers where they had come from and why they were there.

Strangers in Anglo Saxon Times:

Strangers were a potential for danger in Anglo-Saxon times. They may have affiliations with other clans: harboring a criminal pursued by a powerful clan may place you under their wrath as well. As a result, a full accounting of origins and intentions was very important or else the stranger is a potential threat to peace.

Hrothgar remembers Beowulf and his father Ecgtheow, and because there is recognition, or proof of identity, that Beowulf and his party are welcome in Heorot.

Him se yldesta ondswarode,
 werodes wisa, wordhord onleac:
 "We synt gumcynnes Geata leode
 ond Higelaces heorðgeneatas.
 Wæs min fæder folcum gecyþed,
 æpele ordfruma, Ecgþeow haten.
 Gebad wintra worn, ær he on weg hwurfe,
 gamol of geardum; hine gearwe geman
 witenas welhwylc wide geond eorþan.
 We þurh holdne hige hlaford þinne,
 sunu Healfdenes, secean cwomon,
 leodgebyrgean; wes þu us larena god.
 Habbað we to þæm mæran micel ærende,
 Deniga frean, ne sceal þær dyrne sum
 wesan, þæs ic wene. þu wast (gif hit is
 swa we soþlice secgan hyrdon)
 þæt mid Scyldingum sceaðona ic nat hwylc,
 deogol dædhata, deorcum nihtum
 eaweð þurh egsan uncuðne nið,
 hynðu ond hrafyl. Ic þæs Hroðgar mæg
 þurh rumne sefan ræd gelæran,
 hu he frod ond god feond oferswyðeþ,

gyf him edwendan æfre scolde
bealuwa bisigu, bot eft cuman,
ond þa cearwylmas colran wurðap;
oððe a syþðan earfoðþrage,
þreanyd þolað, þenden þær wunað
on heahstede husa selest."

Weard maþelode, ðær on wicge sæt,
ombeht unforht: "æghwæþres sceal
scearp scyldwiga gescad witan,
worda ond worca, se þe wel þenceð.

Ic þæt gehyre, þæt þis is hold weorod
freat Scyldinga. Gewitaþ forð beran
wæpen ond gewædu; ic eow wisige.

Swylce ic maguþegnas mine hate
wið feonda gehwone flotan eowerne,

niwtyrwydne nacan on sande
arum healdan, oþðæt eft byreð

ofer lagustreamas leofne mannan
wudu wundenhals to Wedermearce,
godfremmendra swylcum gifeþe bið
þæt þone hilderæs hal gedigeð."

Gewiton him þa feran. Flota stille bad,
seomode on sale sidfæþmed scip,

on ancre fæst. Eoforlic scionon
 ofer hleorberan gehroden golde,
 fah ond fyrheard; ferhwearde heold
 guþmod grimmon. Guman onetton,
 sigon ætsomne, oþþæt hy sæl timbred,
 geatolic ond goldfah, ongyton mihton;
 þæt wæs foremærost foldbuendum
 receda under roderum, on þæm se rica bad;
 lixte se leoma ofer landa fela.
 Him þa hildedeor hof modigra
 torht getæhte, þæt hie him to mihton
 gegnum gangan; guðbeorna sum
 wicg gewende, word æfter cwæð:
 "Mæl is me to feran; fæder alwalda
 mid arstafum eowic gehealde
 siða gesunde. Ic to sæ wille
 wið wrað werod wearde healdan."

TO him the stateliest spake in answer;
 the warriors' leader his word-hoard unlocked:--
 "We are by kin of the clan of Geats,
 and Hygelac's own hearth-fellows we.
 To folk afar was my father known,

noble atheling, Ecgtheow named.
Full of winters, he fared away
aged from earth; he is honored still
through width of the world by wise men all.
To thy lord and liege in loyal mood
we hasten hither, to Healfdene's son,
people-protector: be pleased to advise us!
To that mighty-one come we on mickle errand,
to the lord of the Danes; nor deem I right
that aught be hidden. We hear -- thou knowest
if sooth it is -- the saying of men,
that amid the Scyldings a scathing monster,
dark ill-doer, in dusky nights
shows terrific his rage unmatched,
hatred and murder. To Hrothgar I
in greatness of soul would succor bring,
so the Wise-and-Brave may worst his foes, --
if ever the end of ills is fated,
of cruel contest, if cure shall follow,
and the boiling care-waves cooler grow;
else ever afterward anguish-days
he shall suffer in sorrow while stands in place
high on its hill that house unpeered!"

Astride his steed, the strand-ward answered,
clansman unquailing: "The keen-souled thane
must be skilled to sever and sunder duly
words and works, if he well intends.

I gather, this band is graciously bent
to the Scyldings' master. March, then, bearing
weapons and weeds the way I show you.

I will bid my men your boat meanwhile
to guard for fear lest foemen come, --
your new-tarred ship by shore of ocean
faithfully watching till once again
it waft o'er the waters those well-loved thanes,
-- winding-neck'd wood, -- to Weders' bounds,
heroes such as the hest of fate
shall succor and save from the shock of war."

They bent them to march, -- the boat lay still,
fettered by cable and fast at anchor,
broad-bosomed ship. -- Then shone the boars
over the cheek-guard; chased with gold,
keen and gleaming, guard it kept
o'er the man of war, as marched along
heroes in haste, till the hall they saw,

broad of gable and bright with gold:
that was the fairest, 'mid folk of earth,
of houses 'neath heaven, where Hrothgar lived,
and the gleam of it lightened o'er lands afar.
The sturdy shieldsman showed that bright
burg-of-the-boldest; bade them go
straightway thither; his steed then turned,
hardy hero, and hailed them thus:--
"Tis time that I fare from you. Father Almighty
in grace and mercy guard you well,
safe in your seekings. Seaward I go,
'gainst hostile warriors hold my watch."

Summary:

The leader of the Geat seafarers answers that he is the son of Ecgtheow. He has heard of the creature that haunts the Danes and has come to do battle with it.

Hearing this plan, the watchman has the boat guarded from enemies, and escorts the visitors to Heorot. The palace gleams where it has been decorated with gold. With their destination in view, the watchman returns to his post.

Stræt wæs stanfah, stig wisode
 gumum ætgædere. Guðbyrne scan
 heard hondlocen, hringiren scir
 song in searwum, þa hie to sele furðum
 in hyra gryregeatwum gangan cwomon.
 Setton særepe side scyldas,
 rondas regnhearde, wið þæs recedes weal,
 bugon þa to bence. Byrnan hringdon,
 guðsearo gumena; garas stodon,
 sæmanna searo, samod ætgædere,
 æscholt ufan græg; wæs se irenþreat
 wæpnum gewurþad. þa ðær wlonc hæleð
 oretmecgas æfter æþelum frægn:
 "Hwanon ferigeað ge fætte scyldas,
 græge syrca ond grimhelmas,
 heresceafta heap? Ic eom Hroðgares
 ar ond ombiht. Ne seah ic elpeodige
 þus manige men modiglicran.
 Wen ic þæt ge for wlenco, nalles for wræcsiðum,
 ac for higeþrymmum Hroðgar sohton."
 Him þa ellenrof andswarode,
 wlanc Wedera leod, word æfter spræc,

heard under helme: "We synt Higelaces
beodgeneatas; Beowulf is min nama.
Wille ic asecan sunu Healfdenes,
mærum þeodne, min ærende,
aldre þinum, gif he us geunnan wile
þæt we hine swa godne gretan moton."
Wulfgar mædelode (þæt wæs Wendla leod;
wæs his modsefa manegum gecyðed,
wig ond wisdom): "Ic þæs wine Deniga,
frecn Scildinga, frinan wille,
beaga bryttan, swa þu bena eart,
þeoden mærne, ymb þinne sið,
ond þe þa ondsware ædre gecyðan
ðe me se goda agifan þenceð."
Hwearf þa hrædlice þær Hroðgar sæt
eald ond anhar mid his eorla gedriht;
eode ellenrof, þæt he for eaxlum gestod
Deniga frecn; cuþe he duguðe þeaw.
Wulfgar mædelode to his winedrihtne:
"Her syndon geferede, feorran cumene
ofer geofenes begang Geata leode;
þone yldestan oretmecgas

Beowulf nemnað. Hy benan synt
þæt hie, þeoden min, wið þe moton
wordum wrixlan. No ðu him wearne geteoh
ðinra gegncwida, glædman Hroðgar.
Hy on wiggetawum wyrðe þinceað
eorla geæhtlan; huru se aldor deah,
se þæm heaðorincum hider wisade."

STONE-BRIGHT the street: it showed the way
to the crowd of clansmen. Corselets glistened
hand-forged, hard; on their harness bright
the steel ring sang, as they strode along
in mail of battle, and marched to the hall.
There, weary of ocean, the wall along
they set their bucklers, their broad shields, down,
and bowed them to bench: the breastplates clanged,
war-gear of men; their weapons stacked,
spears of the seafarers stood together,
gray-tipped ash: that iron band
was worthily weaponed! -- A warrior proud
asked of the heroes their home and kin.
"Whence, now, bear ye burnished shields,

harness gray and helmets grim,
spears in multitude? Messenger, I,
Hrothgar's herald! Heroes so many
ne'er met I as strangers of mood so strong.
'Tis plain that for prowess, not plunged into exile,
for high-hearted valor, Hrothgar ye seek!"
Him the sturdy-in-war bespake with words,
proud earl of the Weders answer made,
hardy 'neath helmet:--"Hygelac's, we,
fellows at board; I am Beowulf named.
I am seeking to say to the son of Healfdene
this mission of mine, to thy master-lord,
the doughty prince, if he deign at all
grace that we greet him, the good one, now."
Wulfgar spake, the Wendles' chieftain,
whose might of mind to many was known,
his courage and counsel: "The king of Danes,
the Scyldings' friend, I fain will tell,
the Breaker-of-Rings, as the boon thou askest,
the famed prince, of thy faring hither,
and, swiftly after, such answer bring
as the doughty monarch may deign to give."

Hied then in haste to where Hrothgar sat
white-haired and old, his earls about him,
till the stout thane stood at the shoulder there
of the Danish king: good courtier he!
Wulfgar spake to his winsome lord:--
"Hither have fared to thee far-come men
o'er the paths of ocean, people of Geatland;
and the stateliest there by his sturdy band
is Beowulf named. This boon they seek,
that they, my master, may with thee
have speech at will: nor spurn their prayer
to give them hearing, gracious Hrothgar!
In weeds of the warrior worthy they,
methinks, of our liking; their leader most surely,
a hero that hither his henchmen has led."

Summary:

Arriving in Heorot, the travelers observe the decorated streets. Wulfgar stops them to ask their business. The leader of the Geat seafarers is named Beowulf and he seeks an audience with Hrothgar.

Hrothgar is upon his throne as Wulfgar asks him to speak with these armed men led by Beowulf of the Geats. Their leader appears to him a very strong warrior.

CHAPTER 4

MIDDLE ENGLISH

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Middle English:

Middle English is the name given to the English language roughly from the 11th to the 15th centuries: after the Norman invasion by William the Conqueror in 1066 and before the introduction of the printing press.

When English became once more the most important language in Britain, it existed in three or four main dialects: the North, the South, and the West and the East Midlands. The South of England, especially the district round London, was the most thickly populated and the most cultured- partly because it was nearest to Europe. The East Midland dialect, as spoken in London, was then the speech of the court and the government and the speech of Chaucer. With the rise of Oxford and

Cambridge Universities, it became the speech of most scholars. Consequently, it had more influence than the other dialects, and gradually spread until it became the standard speech of the country. If we examine a sample of it as written by Chaucer towards the end of the fourteenth century, we shall see that it contains a good sprinkling of French words, a number of Latin words and very few inflexions. Here, for example, is a passage from the prologue in the *Canterbury Tales*:

Bifel that in that seson on a day

In Sputhwerk at the Taberk as I lay

Redy to wenden on my pilgrymage

To Canterbury with ful devout corage

At nyght were come into that hosterye

Wel nyne and twenty in a campaignye

Of Sondag folk by aventure y-falle

In felawshipe, and pilgrimes were they

Alle That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde.

Some of the obvious French words which have the old French pronunciation and spelling are '*pillgrimage*', '*corage*' (courage, but here it mean 'disposition' or 'state of mind'), '*campaigne*' (company) and '*aventure*'. This word is from the Latin '*adventura*', the '*d*' of which begins to reappear in the English form of the word towards the end of the fifteenth century. '*Hostelrye*' (hostalry) is an old French word still used occasionally in English for an inn. For '*bifel*' we should say 'it befell', i.e. it happened. There are a few words which have been replaced by other words of like meaning, e.g. the Old English infinitive '*wenden*' for 'to go'. Note the use of the prefix '*y-*' to show the past participle. Other differences are merely matters of spelling, e.g. '*seson*' (season); '*Southwerk*' (Southwark); '*redy*' (ready); '*Caunterbury*' (Canterbury); '*nyght*' (night); '*wel*' (well)= quite; '*nyne*' (nine); '*Sondry*' (sundry)= (various); '*felowship*' (fellowship); '*alle*' (all); '*wolden*' (would); '*ryde*' (ride).

The sentence structure and the word order are not very different from modern prose. The changes were so important and the language so different from Old English that it is usual to refer to the language of this period as Middle English, dating roughly between the years 1150 and 1500. The English language was growing into something very near its permanent form.

When the invention of printing had helped to fix the spelling and grammar, when a flood of new Greek and Latin words had given it gracefulness and brilliance of which it was capable; then we reach the modern period, extending from about 1500 to present day.

For one hundred and fifty years after the death of Chaucer in 1400, there was little or no great literature produced in England. Before and during these years, however, England was collecting valuable knowledge from all and in particular adding to the richness of the language. The thirteenth century and the

next two hundred years is the time referred to as the Renaissance or the revival of learning. There was a longing for more knowledge by scholars throughout Europe.

This spread of learning was helped by the crusading movement. The word '*crusade*' is from the Latin '*crux*' meaning 'a cross', and was a name given to a war between the Christians and the Moslems between 1096 and 1212.

The Crusades provided an outlet for adventurous spirits and appealed to every knight's love of chivalry. Travel to new and strange lands broadened men's aspirations and opened their eyes to the luxury of Eastern civilization.

The urge to travel encouraged English scholars to visit such rich centers of learning as the Universities of Palermo. English scholars were fascinated by stories of the East which the returning crusaders brought back, and English literature was

enriched during the years before Chaucer by a group of mediaeval romances. The Crusaders found lands in the East which possessed new learning, comforts, luxuries and refinements. When they returned, they brought rare gifts, rich clothes and precious jewels with them, and all these new possessions had their special names. Some of them were to be among the commonest in the language. From the Persians we took '*orange*', '*chess*', '*sash*', '*lemon*', '*jar*', '*shawl*', and '*caravan*'. Some Arab words English people have adopted for use in everyday life are '*cotton*', '*coffee*', '*magazine*', '*sofa*' and '*sugar*'.

As trade developed between East and West, a steady flow of strange and wonderful learning spread to England. English merchants met other merchants from Persia, India and far-off China. Theirs was an entirely different civilization, and Englishmen learnt of new sciences, especially astronomy, medicine and mathematics. The Arabs were skilled in all three as

well as philosophy, and these subjects occupied the attention of many English scholars from this time. Chaucer was particularly interested in astronomy and borrowed the word '*zenith*'. Some other strange new words that find themselves in English about this time are '*alcohol*' and '*algebra*'. '*Al*' was the Arabic word for 'the' so that 'the alcohol' really means '*the kohl*' (a powder for staining eye-lids). From the Arabs the English took the simple method of counting in the Arabic figures - 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, etc. Previously men had been obliged to do difficult sums in addition or multiplication in Roman numerals (I, II, III, IV, V, VI ... X ... etc.)

During this time, English adopted new Latin words, often indirectly through French, many of them of Greek origin. The new study of philosophy gave us '*influence*', '*difference*', '*existence*', '*quantity*', '*private*', '*property*', '*subject*', and '*method*'. Such words helped to give gracefulness and finish to the language, and were to be used for a variety of new subjects.

We have seen that many Latin words had been adopted already, largely through the influence of the Church. Although most of them were ecclesiastical, such as '*hymn*', '*candle*', '*cross*', others were used by the monks in their domestic duties or at table, e.g. '*trout*' and '*parsley*'.

The old French words borrowed between 1066 and 1350 are closely related to Latin, because they formed when the natives of France mixed with the Romans who occupied their territory. Sometimes the borrowed word had already come into English, in a slightly different form, from the French. That is to say, the same word was borrowed twice, and there came into existence many pairs of words, somewhat different in form and, at one time, of similar meaning. Examples are: '*masculine*' and '*male*', '*regal*' and '*royal*', '*hospital*' and '*hotel*', '*dignity*' and '*dainty*'. The first of each of these is derived from the Latin language and the second through French.

With the wonderful richness and variety of new ideas from the East came fascinating Latin and Greek words in abundance to describe the stars, medicine and healing, mathematics, ancient history and travel. The word '*geography*' is a good example of a Greek word that was first used about this time, and since then there are a dozen or so of scientific words having the Greek prefix '*geo*', suggesting something to do with the earth. '*Zodiac*' and '*horizon*' are two more strange Greek words that Chaucer used.

From about 1500 the Greek language was sufficiently well known for English writers to borrow from the language directly. Some examples are '*idea*', '*common*', '*apology*', '*emphasis*', '*crisis*', '*drama*', '*paragraph*', '*parallel*', and '*physical*'. Greek words were found to be particularly well fitted, because they were so clear and precise. Also in modern times Greek forms have been used for hundreds of scientific and abstract terms.

New discoveries encourage new thoughts, and scholars often found negative speech inadequate to explain them. Some hundreds of the new Latin words were brought in to help. Many of them, such as '*capable*', '*distinguish*', '*estimate*' and '*experiment*', English people could not easily do without. There was a danger that the native homely vocabulary would be neglected for the long, graceful Greek and Latin words. But, in fact, few of these new Latin words, however, became part of the spoken language which contains more English words than Latin words.

The Richness and Variety of English:

The history of English people shows that the language changed considerably each time the country was invaded. New words and grammatical forms were introduced, but the most important part of the language is still that which came with the Angles and the Saxons in the fifth century.

Old English supplied most of the everyday vocabulary as well as all the structural words which hold the language together—the pronouns, conjunctions and prepositions. The foreign borrowed words add colour and variety and help to improve the rhythm of the sentence. When the Englishman is excited and does not stop to choose words, he will very largely use terms of purely native origin.

The English language as spoken and written at the end of the fifteenth century is described as *Modern*, and its shape is little different from the English of today. That is not to say it has not developed considerably in the last three hundred years. There have been different fashions in writing. The puritans of the 17th century favoured an excessively religious vocabulary and phrase, while the 18th century writers aimed at neatness and correctness of style with a preference for a latinized vocabulary. This, in turn, inevitably gave way to what is known as the Romantic Revival, to a fondness for variety, for boldness and more vivid effects.

Throughout the whole period the language has been gaining in richness and variety, for contact with other people must lead to borrowing.

Various historical events brought a stream of new words and a steady development in English civilization. When England became a great seafaring nation, hundreds of nautical terms were necessary. The Reformation brought new religious words; the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries required many new literary words, and the growth of parliamentary government called for new political terms.

During the 19th century the Industrial Revolution and the invention of strange engines and intricate machinery required scopes of engineering and scientific words. Every aspect of social life needed new words to keep pace with new developments, and in living memory, two worlds have introduced Englishmen to thousands of new and curious words.

Words have been borrowed from every part of the world and it is interesting to find out something of the history of these borrowings.

After the Renaissance, Latin continued to be the language for much of the written work of scholars for more than two hundred years. It was used until the dawn of the 20th century, and so long as literary men were familiar with classical Latin, they continued to borrow from it directly. Consequently, English has many terms which have been taken from Latin with little or no alteration in spelling or pronunciation. Some common examples are '*maximum*', '*post-mortem*', '*index*', '*posts*', and '*item*'. Latin words continued to fill out the literary language until the end of the 18th century, although many of them never became part of the English language. The prose of Burton and Browne is read like a strange mixture of Latin and English.

England was indebted to Greek for new words during the middle English period, and many of these words came into the language under various disguises- some through French, many through mediaeval Latin and others from contact with the Arabs. Of course, many of them had changed their appearance during travels, and they suffered other changes when they arrived in the language.

Just as with Latin, many Greek words were borrowed directly when the English began to study and use the ancient Greek tongue. Any so it happened that a few were borrowed twice over. In modern times a physician would say that his patient was ‘afflicted with paralysis’. ‘*Palsy*’ and ‘*paralysis*’ are from the same Greek word. Scientists, engineers, and thinkers make great use of Greek words, and sometimes treat them in an unusual manner. Often they take two Greek words and join them together to form a modern English word, e.g. ‘*tele*’ = far and ‘*phone*’= sound.

So many new and abstract scientific terms have been invented in the last hundred years so that this source of supply had provided more new words than any other for the English language. Very few of them are in general use, and many are unknown except to specialists working on a particular branch of learning. When the discovery or invention of the specialist becomes popular, the newly coined word slips into general speech, and we have such familiar words as '*thermometer*', '*automatic*', '*telescope*', '*photograph*', '*cinematography*' and '*thermometer*', and '*telegraph*'. About a dozen common English words begin with the Greek prefix '*tele*', but there are several hundred other less known scientific terms which use it.

From the Latin word '*duco*'= (I lead or bring forth) we have '*produce*', '*conduct*', '*education*', '*introduce*', '*conductor*', '*viaduct*', '*duke*', and many others; '*facio*'= (I do or I make) gives us a long list which includes '*fast*', '*perfect*', '*difficult*', '*effect*', '*fashion*', '*manufacture*', and '*sufficient*'.

There is a great family of thirty or forty words using the Greek word '*graph*', e.g. '*telegraph*', '*telegraph*', '*paragraph*', and '*autograph*'.

Although Greek and Latin words far outnumber the native English words in the language, any passage of well-written prose or verse will show more than three-quarters of the total words to be from Old English. The common essential words, those which occur again and again, are nearly all from words which English people used before the Norman-French Invasion. They include names for parts of the body, such as '*eye*', '*nose*', '*mouth*', '*foot*', '*hand*', '*heart*'; the names for members of the family, such as, '*father*', '*mother*', '*husband*', '*wife*', and '*son*'; everyday necessary words of familiar things, such as '*sun*', '*moon*', '*night*', '*month*', '*gold*', '*silver*', '*house*', and '*town*'; and most of the simple verbs and nearly all the little joining words such as prepositions and conjunctions. But Old English possessed comparatively few adjectives, with the result that we

often find simple English words from Greek or Latin adjectives for example ‘*eye-ocular*’, ‘*nose-nasal*’; ‘*mother-maternal*’.

Although prepositions are rarely borrowed, the Latin preposition ‘*per*’ is an exception, and is found not only in phrases such as ‘*per cent*’, and ‘*per annum*’, but often nowadays with an English word as ‘*fifty miles per hour*’. In recent years manufacturers have used Greek and Latin words to make artificial words for naming their product: Bovril (a name of a meat extract) is formed from the Latin word ‘*bos*’- ‘*bovis*’= an ox. *Ovulation* (a mixture with eggs among its ingredients) is from the Latin word ‘*even*’= an egg.

Other Contributions to Modern English:

During the last one hundred and fifty years French has given to English more words than any other language. There is obviously no need to prefer a French word when English has an excellent equivalent, and the following are among many which

should be avoided- '*debut*', '*habitué*', '*mal do mar*', '*amour*' and '*propre*'. They are quite easily expressed in English as '*a first appearance*', '*a constant visitor*', '*sea-sickness*' and '*self-respect*'. French words such as '*grace*', '*cafe*', '*restaurant*' and '*coupon*' cannot be translated and are used by everyone, although there is sometimes a difficulty about keeping its native pronunciation, but gradually it becomes anglicized.

The description of the English language as 'French badly pronounced' may have had some little truth at the time of Chaucer and for a hundred years afterwards, but once a word has been taken into the language its sounds change, so that words introduced from French before the time of Shakespeare have quite lost their French character.

In many bases it is quite easy to distinguish the old borrowing from more recent French words which English has taken. Jespersen says, "where a 'ch' in an original French word is

pronounced (tΣ) as in ‘change’, ‘change’, ‘charge’ the loan is an old one; where it is sounded (Σ) as in ‘champagne’, we have a recent loan’. Similarly, ‘g’ (dZ) as in ‘siege’, ‘judge’, ‘age’ dates the older words; whereas ‘g’ (Z) as in ‘rouge’ indicates a modern adoption.

At the Restoration, when Charles II came to the English throne in 1660 after spending many years in French, a few crop of French words and idioms came into the language. They include ‘*risk*’, ‘embarrass’ and ‘*ridicule*’. Many of them have never been fully adsorbed into the English vocabulary, but still retain French pronunciation, e.g. caprice ‘repartee’, ‘and connoisseur’.

The word ‘*garage*’ is an example of a word which is in process of being anglicized. Though some people say (garaaZ),

more pronounce it (garidZ); two pronunciations are still used for '*envelope*', though the English (en-) is more common than (on).

The 1914-1918 made many French words popular to English people, and most of them, because they are new, have kept their French pronunciation. Some examples are '*sabotage*', '*camouflage*' and '*barage*'.

Because the English were fond of the sea, they had to find many new words to do with ships, and they took many of these nautical terms from their rivals, the Dutch. Between the 14th and the 17th centuries many Dutch words came into English. The sailors' name for a sea captain is the Dutch word '*skipper*', and for a light sailing boat we use the word '*yacht*' (jot). Other words that came early into the language are '*buoy*', '*freight*', '*deck*' and '*smuggle*'.

As a result of the struggle between the Catholic and the Protestant in the low countries (Holland), many Englishmen joined in the fight against the Spaniards. These soldiers brought back with them Dutch army terms such as '*drill*' and '*furlough*' from the Dutch '*verlof*'= (for leave or permission).

In the middle Ages many of the weavers of Flanders crossed to the English shores to settle in the eastern countries of English. They brought with them various words connected with weaving as well as others in common use, such as '*cough*' and '*tub*'. Admiration for the great school of Dutch painters is probably responsible for the English adoption of '*easel*' and '*landscape*'.

Italy is another European country from which English has borrowed freely. During the Middle Ages Italy was the center of learning, and ever since Chaucer, English writers have visited the country to study art and literature. Italian words

begin to appear in English soon after 1500. Many were soon forgotten, but others, such as '*umbrella*' and '*influence*', are on common English words. But the influence of Italian learning is most clearly seen in the world of music, architecture, and painting. Nearly all poetical terms had their origin in Italy, because the verse forms were first developed there, e.g. '*stanza*', '*canto*', '*sonnet*'. The names of many musical instruments are Italian and numerous, e.g. '*piano*', '*piccolo*', '*soprano*' and '*solo*'. Some common English words connected with trade and commerce also owe their origin directly or indirectly to Italy, which in the Middle Ages was the center of Mediterranean trade. Some examples are '*bank*', '*balance*' and '*traffic*'. Architectural terms include '*balcony*', '*corridor*', '*parapet*', and '*stucco*'. Other Italian words that have come to English directly through French are '*bandit*', '*profile*', '*motto*', '*duel*', '*macaroni*', '*muslin*', and '*pedal*'.

Spanish conquerors and explorers travelled to most parts of the world, including America. Many new words were picked up by Spanish seamen and passed on to Englishmen, who fitted them into their own language. '*Chocolate*' and '*coca*' are both Mexican words, but came to England through the Spanish conquest of Mexico. '*Cannibal*' is said to have been brought to Europe by Christopher Columbus and, like '*hammock*', '*hurricane*' and '*maize*', is a Caribbean word.

Other examples of Spanish words are '*cork*', '*cigar*' and '*cigarette*', while English also uses a number of Spanish bull-fighting terms. '*Canoe*', '*potato*' and '*tobacco*' came through from South America. A few Portuguese words have been borrowed; some of them are the names of things produced in Portugal as, for example, '*port*' from the town of Oporto. '*Marmalade*' is a Portuguese word, and so are '*caste*', '*banana*' and '*negro*' which came into English from Portuguese explorers in Asia.

Many old Handustani or Indian words have been recently introduced. The word '*Pyjamas*' is an example which looks very strange at first sight; '*khaki*', '*jungle*' and '*bungalow*' are others. '*Tea*' is, of course, from the Chinese, and there is a surprisingly large number of Malay words in English; among the best known are '*bambo*', '*bantam*' and '*gong*'.

By the 16th century, the Englishmen's love of sport began to make itself in the language. From the older sports, such as hawking, we have taken '*allure*' and '*haggard*', 'and from hunting many terms such as '*couple*', '*worry*', '*scent*'. '*Cheese*', '*check*' and '*cheque*' are Persians words which the Arabs passed on; India has given '*polo*'.

A group of parliamentary words belongs to the 16th and 17th centuries. '*Parliament*' itself, '*politics*' and '*politicians*' are among the earliest, and '*cabinet*', in the phrase 'Cabinet Council', is first heard of in the reign of Charles I.

English merchants and a wealth of trading in the 17th century gave rise to such commercial terms as '*insurance*', '*investment*', '*commerce*', and '*discount*'. Financial terms are first mentioned in the 18th century such as '*capital*', '*finance*' and '*bankruptcy*'.

How New Words are Made: Affixes

Englishmen have increased their native vocabulary, not only by adopting words from foreign lands, but also by making new words. This they have done in a variety of different ways, but one of the commonest is to alter the meaning by adding to the beginning or end of a new word. The addition which comes in front is known as a prefix and that at the end is a suffix. Some of these additions, or affixes, are so valuable that they have become indispensable to the language. There are no definite rules for the correct use of these affixes, which have been derived from various sources from the native Anglo-Saxon, from French and

from Latin and Greek languages. Frequently, the addition is from a foreign language, and is used with an Anglo-Saxon word as well as with a Latin and Greek root. The new word so formed is known as a ‘hybrid’ (that is; a word made up from different languages, e.g., ‘*Bicycle*’ (*bi*–two, *kuklos*–wheel) as Latin and Greek. Often a Greek or Latin prefix is placed in front of an English noun, as the Latin ‘*ex*’ meaning ‘from or out of’ to make ‘ex-king’, ‘ex-leader’. ‘*Anti*’, a Greek prefix meaning against, gives us such words as ‘anti-aircraft’, ‘anti-slavery’; ‘*pro*’ is another frequently used Latin prefix meaning ‘for’ or ‘on behalf of’, but nowadays it is often used in the sense of ‘favouring’ or ‘siding with’, as in ‘pro-British’ or ‘pro-educational’. We shall consider a few of the commonest prefixes and suffixes in English.

The suffix ‘*-ment*’ was originally French, yet it has been added to many native words, e.g. ‘acknowledgment’ and ‘wonderment’. Another suffix originally found only in words of

French origin was '*-able*', e.g. 'reasonable' and 'pardonable'; it is now used with hundreds of words not derived from French, e.g. 'forgivable', 'workable' and 'readable'.

The Latin '*ad-*' means 'to' so that 'adhere' is 'to stick to' and 'advance' is 'to promote to' ; '*com-*' means 'together' or 'with', and a 'companion' is 'one who goes with another'. '*De-*' means 'down', so that 'to describe' is 'to write down', and a 'deposit' is 'something (money) put down , '*ex-*' means 'out of ' e.g. 'extract' = to draw something out of. '*Re-*' means 'back' or 'against', so that 'to recognize' is 'to know again'.

A few Greek prefixes are '*anti-*' meaning ' against', e.g. 'antipathy'= a feeling against; 'antiseptics' = against sepsis, i.e. decay, infection; '*auto-*' meaning 'self ' or 'one's' e.g. 'autograph'. (autobiography); '*cata-*' meaning 'down', e.g. 'cataract'= 'a waterfall'; 'catastrophe' is a sudden overwhelming event; '*di-*' meaning through or across as in 'dialogue'; '*pan-*' or

'panto-' meaning all, e.g. 'pantomime' (no words but all miming or action). The Latin suffix *'-or'* in 'actor' and *'-er'* in 'teacher', like the Greek suffix *'-ist'* in 'dentist' and 'florist' ('seller of flowers'), show an agent or doer.

During the last century the Greek suffixes *'-ism'*, *'-ist'* and *'-istic'* have been increasingly used for new movements of thought and their leaders, e.g. 'socialism', 'capitalism', 'realistic', 'realism', etc.

Some of the Anglo-Saxon suffixes are among the most interesting because at one time they were separate words. The word *'hood'* meant 'quality' or 'rank', and it has been added to a number of words to form nouns such as 'brotherhood', and 'falsehood'. Other Anglo-Saxon suffixes making abstract nouns are *'-ness'*, (goodness), (sweetness), *'-ship'* (friendship, hardship); *'-dom'* (wisdom, Christendom'). The suffix 'y' in (Anglo-Saxon it was *'iy'*) was widely used in the fourteenth

century to form useful adjectives, e.g. ‘angry’, ‘hearty’. Sometimes a suffix is used to show smallness, as ‘-ing’ in ‘farthing’, ‘*kin*’ in ‘lambkin’.

Ever since the Anglo-Saxon period, the method of forming compound words has continued. The value of the word ‘week-end’ is so obvious that several languages have adopted it. Like ‘motor-car’ and many others, these nouns are first used with a hyphen separating the two words, but in time this is forgotten and the two words are written as one, e.g. ‘steamship’. A great number of compound words were invented in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; e.g. the word ‘storm’ was made into ‘hailstorm’ in the 16th century and some time later into ‘snowstorm’. ‘Christmas’ was once written ‘Christ’s Mass’. Chaucer spoke of the common daisy as ‘the day’s eye’. ‘Window’ is literally ‘wind’s eye’. Nouns are frequently joined with adjectives and verbs to make compound words. Some

modern examples are ‘blackbird’, ‘footwear’, ‘downfall’, ‘headstrong and ‘skyscraper’.

Many new verbs were made in the 19th century by adding a preposition or adverb to a single verb. It is now easy to write down a long list of them- ‘to act on’, ‘to agree on’, ‘to bear up’ , ‘to break out’, ‘to bring up’, and many others. Some of these verbs are first used as slang expressions in everyday speech., but they quickly became part of the language.

Another process that is changing the shape of English is the use of a verb as a noun, e.g. “I will have a wash’, ‘I will get a little sleep’. In the same way, many nouns are being used as verbs, e.g. ‘He eyed me with disgust’, ‘I will content you at the station’. With words of more than one syllable the change from noun to verb, from noun to adjective, etc., is often marked by a change in the position of the accent. The nouns ‘*conduct*’,

'insult', *'pounce'*, *'protest'* all become verbs when the second syllable is accented.

Hurried speech in a world where everything seems to be moving faster has caused a long word, or a compound word, to be shortened by one or more of its syllables, e.g. *'fridge'* for *'refrigerator'*. Sometimes both the shorter and the longer terms are kept. The longer word is used for more serious occasions in speech and writings. Modern examples are *'flu'*= influenza, *'phone'*= *telephone*, *'plane'*= *aeroplane*. In the last century the word *'omnibus'* from the Latin word meaning 'a carriage for all' was shortened to *'bus'*. The French word *'carbiolet'* became *'cab'*, and the *'taximeter-cab'* became shortened *'taxi cab'* and later to *'taxi'*. In cases the shortening is deliberate in order to save time. *'Mathematics'* is a long word for the student so that he turns it to *'maths'*, just as he turns *'laboratory'* into *'lab'*, *'examination'* into *'exam'* and *'professor'* into *'prof'*. Shortening words may be applied by omitting the beginning,

middle or the end of the word, e.g. ‘*cycle*’ or ‘*bike*’ from ‘*bicycle*’, ‘*photo*’ from ‘*photograph*’ and ‘*pub*’ from ‘*public-house*’.

During the last three centuries an enormous number of English words have lost one or more syllables and an increasing number have become monosyllabic. The habit of shortening by cutting off an unaccented syllable was practically common in the Middle Ages. ‘*Sample*’ was from ‘*ensample*’; ‘*size*’ from ‘*assize*’; ‘*spite*’ from ‘*despite*’. The titles ‘*Miss*’ and ‘*Mrs*’ are both shortened from ‘*mistress*’. ‘*Good-bye*’ is a short form for ‘*God be with ye = you*’.

The effect of careless speech is very noticeable in the pronunciation of proper names. ‘England’ became ‘Englan’; the correct pronunciation of ‘Salisbury’ (so:lzbri) now pays no attention to the /i/ sound. ‘Worcester’ (wo:kst) and ‘Gloucester (glost) are pronounced as if the ‘-es’ was not there. Londoners

never pronounce the 'l' in 'Holborn', and always speak of 'Leicester Square' as if it is 'Lester Square'.

When an adjective is frequently found with the same noun, after a long period of time, it tends to disappear and the adjective is itself used as a noun. 'Green vegetables' are now commonly called 'greens'; the underground railway system of the London Passenger Transport Board' is referred to simply as the 'Underground' or 'The Tube'.

The adjective is frequently used instead of an adverb because it is a syllable shorter. A bus conductor calls out (holds tight) to his passengers instead of 'holds tightly'.

Sometimes a new word comes to the language through a slip of the tongue- wrong pronunciation by thinking of two words or ideas at the same time. We 'twist' round quickly several times and our head is in a 'whirl' (and so we arrive at the verb 'to

whirl'). 'Flush' is thought to be a combination of 'flash' and 'blush'; 'slender' of 'slight' and 'tender'. In English these combined words are generally known as 'portmanteau' words. A recent humorous combination of the words 'breakfast' and 'lunch' has given us the term 'brunch' for a meal taken in the middle of the morning.

How New Words are Made II: Modern Scientific Inventions

Hundreds of English words have been formed from the nouns of men or places. 'Sandwich' - Lord Sandwich; 'quixotic' - for 'quixote' = a person who is highly, even absurdly, generous and charitable. The names of many new inventions and discoveries are the name of the man who first thought of them, e.g. 'Zeppelin', 'Waterman', 'Hoover', 'Gillette', 'Ford', the 'Bunsen Burner' (Professor Bunsen), the 'Davy Lamp' (Sir Humphry Davy).

Terms to do with electricity such as '*ampere*', '*volt*', '*watt*' are all taken from the names of men who did valuable scientific work in that subject. The month of '*August*' is called after the Roman Emperor Augustus, while Julius Caesar gave us the name for '*July*'.

Names of places have given us the words for a varied collection of articles, foods and drinks e.g. '*guinea*' (gold brought from the New Guinea coast of Africa); '*Florida*' (land of flowers), '*Gypsies*' (Egyptian), although they originally came from as far as India); '*florin*' (an English silver coin originally made in Florence).

A great many English words are derived from Greek and Roman legends. A '*herculean*' or tremendous task (*Hercules*); a book of maps is known as an '*atlas*' (the god Atlas carrying the world on his shoulders; the word '*volcano*' is derived from '*Vulcan*' the god of fire; *Geresm*, the goddess of corn and

crops, lends us her name to '*cereal*'; '*material*' (*Mars*, the god of war); '*jovial*'= (merry or hearty) is from the god *Jupiter* or *Jove*; '*mercurial* temperament' is one that changes as quickly as the swift-moving god Mercury.

The making of a new word out of an old one is very common in English. The English word '*story*' came from the Latin one '*historia*', and for hundreds of years the two words '*history*' and '*story*' meant the same thing. Gradually the first syllable of '*history*' was forgotten. About the year 1500, the word '*story*' had the special meaning of a tale, of fiction, and '*history*' was used for a true or exact account.

So long as language is alive, words are constantly adopting new meanings. They take on new shapes, and sometimes the connection between the various developments is not apparent, for as words take on new uses, we tend to lose sight of the old usage. The English word '*deal*' is from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning

‘to divide into parts’, but we now use the word in various phrases, such as ‘to deal cards’, ‘a business deal’, ‘great deal’.

One Latin or Greek word will frequently supply half a dozen English words of related but different meaning. For example, the Latin word for ‘to break’ (*frangere, fractum*) gives us ‘*fracture*’ = the place where anything is broken; ‘*fraction*’ = apart of a whole that has been breaking up; ‘*fragment*’ = a piece that is broken off. The Latin word for *cross* is “*crux*” (*crucis*), and that, too, has given to English several words that are more or less related. The first appears in Northern place names such as ‘Crosby’ and ‘Cross Fell’. The ‘*crux*’ of the matter or the ‘crucial moment’, the ‘Crusades’ are other words. In combination with other words ‘cross’ makes up dozens of expressions, e.g. ‘cross-bones’, ‘crosswise’ (i.e. the form of a cross), ‘cross-country’, ‘to cross-question’ (to question closely).

Sometimes we judge the richness of a word mainly by its sounds, and the simplest type of words are those which are naturally formed because they have in their sound something, which suggests itself. The best example of these is '*cuckoo*', where the cry names the bird- not only in English but in several European languages. This simple way of forming new words is known as '*onomatopoeia*' (from a Greek word meaning 'name making'). Such words owe their origin to the direct imitation of natural sounds, and are valuable because they add force and vividness to a language. Examples are the 'tick-tack' of a clock, the 'bang' of a gun and the 'clank' of metal, 'squeal', 'clap', 'crash', 'buzz', 'whist' = (a request to be silent).

Slang:

The Oxford Dictionary says slang is a language considered as below the level of educated speech and consists either of newly made words or words in general use which are employed

with some especial meaning. For instance, '*to hike*', meaning 'to walk a long distance for pleasure' and '*hitch-hike*' meaning 'to make a journey by getting lifts from passing motorists' are new words which came from America. While '*pretty*' is an old English word but, used as an adverb, has long been a slang word meaning 'fairly' or 'rather' as in the phrase 'pretty good'.

Although the best of English writings use slang to some extent and every newspaper and magazine contains numerous examples, it is used much more by young people, especially when they sit together for a particular purpose.

Slang is made by lively, imaginative people who are not afraid of being different from others or of breaking the accepted rules of grammar and speech. It has been called 'the plain man's poetry', and is valuable because it gives new life to old ideas. Naturally it occurs most in everyday conversation, but slang words and phrases should not be used in serious writing. A time

of war suggests thousands of new slang words- most of which are forgotten after a few years, but some live on and gradually make their way into the accepted vocabulary of a language. Shakespeare took many of the vivid words and phrases of his fellowmen and used them in his plays. Hundreds of his words had never appeared in print before but must have been well known to his audience. Such words began as slang words, and have helped to enrich the language by becoming part of it.

It is not always easy to determine whether a word is slang or not. Very much, then, depends on when the word is used and who uses it, for the slang of one generation is often the literary language of the next. In 1912 the word '*broadcast*' to express the activity of the radio was looked on with suspicion and used with quotation marks, but twenty years later it became an indispensable literary word. '*Wench*' is a term now applied only to servants, yet Shakespeare used it to describe any young girl, especially a lover. The word '*draft*' meaning 'foolish' or 'mad',

comes from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning ‘quiet’, ‘gentle’. The word ‘*nice*’, meaning today ‘good’ or ‘kind’ had the original meaning ‘stupid’ or ‘ignorant’.

Language varies according to the social position of a person and often according to his trade or profession. Consequently, we find that children, soldiers, doctors, actors and indeed workmen in any particular job cultivate a slang of their own which is closely related to their work and daily life. In Elizabethan days rogues used such terms deliberately so as to disguise their intentions. ‘*Cheat*’ meant originally ‘something stolen’.

In 1725, a dictionary of slang was published and it contained words like ‘bet’, ‘a wager’; ‘*kid*’= ‘child’, ‘*swap*’= ‘to barter or exchange’, ‘*trip*’= ‘a short voyage’. These expressions are all part of English speech today, but whereas ‘bet’ and ‘trip’

have been taken into the literary language, 'kid', and 'swap' are still slang terms.

Sometimes three or four slang words may exist for the same thing, e.g. 'cinematography', 'cinema', 'the pictures' or 'the movies' or 'talkie'.

Many slang expressions make use of a vivid picture to light up an ordinary phrase, e.g. '*to turn the tap on*' = to weep; '*to get the sack*' = to be dismissed from a job; '*a tin hat*' = soldier's name for his steel helmet; '*to keep it under your hat*' = to keep secret; '*to face up*', or '*square up*' when things are difficult and cannot be avoided. When the unpleasant results of some action have to be met, you '*face the music*' or '*to the line*'.

Many slang expressions have come into English from America, where they are fond of forceful and vivid speech, e.g. '*scram*' = get away from here as quickly as possible.

American

British

a trolley car

a tram car

the subway

the underground or the tube

a track

a railway line

a depot

a station

the fall

autumn

truck

lorry

O.K., all right

right, fine

American compound words have formed a number of slang terms which are now so common in England that they will be found in any dictionary, e.g. '*cocktail*'= appetizer, short drink of spirits ; '*road-house*'= some distance from a town ; '*skyscraper*'.

Many slang terms appeal because of their humorous exaggeration. A '*blow-out*' describes a big meal; a '*wind-bag*' is

the name of a foolish talker; a '*close-shave*' is a narrow escape, and '*to push up daisies*' is to be dead and buried.

Slang words take the place of names and titles, e.g. *John Bull*, is accepted universally for an Englishman, just as an American is known as a '*yankee*' or more recently, a '*yank*'.

Slang nearly always begins in speech, and of thousands of expressions used few last longer than a year or two, because only the best and most useful ever reach the written language.

Examples of a few recent slang words which seem likely to stay are '*to seroung*'= get possession of things by any methods; '*to carry on*'= to go on with what one is doing; '*to wangle*'= to get a result by doubtful or unfair means; '*to have the wind up*' = to be afraid.

CHAPTER 5

A SPECIMEN OF MIDDLE ENGLISH

CHAUCER'S *THE CANTERBURY*

TALES

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CHAUCER'S *THE CANTERBURY TALES*

About Geoffrey Chaucer:

Before William Shakespeare, Geoffrey Chaucer was the preeminent English poet, and still retains the position as the most significant poet to write in Middle English. Chaucer was born in the early 1340s to a middle-class family. His father, John Chaucer, was a vintner and deputy to the king's butler. His family's financial success came from work in the wine and leather businesses.

Little information exists about Chaucer's education, but his writings demonstrate a close familiarity with a number of important books of his contemporaries and of earlier times. Chaucer was likely fluent in several languages, including French, Italian and Latin.

Chaucer first appears in public records in 1357 as a member of the house of Elizabeth, Countess of Ulster. This was a conventional arrangement in which sons of middle-class households were placed in royal service so that they may obtain a courtly education. Two years later Chaucer served in the army under Edward II and was captured during an unsuccessful offensive at Reims, although he was later ransomed. Chaucer served under a number of diplomatic missions.

By 1366 Chaucer had married Philippa Pan, who had been in service with the Countess of Ulster. Chaucer married well for his position, for Philippa Chaucer received an annuity from the queen consort of Edward II. Chaucer himself secured an annuity as yeoman of the king and was listed as one of the king's esquires.

Chaucer's first published work was *The Book of the Duchess*, a poem of over 1,300 lines that is an elegy for the

Duchess of Lancaster. For this first of his important poems, which was published in 1370, Chaucer used the dream-vision form, a genre made popular by the highly influential 13th-century French poem of courtly love, the *Roman de la Rose*, which Chaucer translated into English.

Throughout the following decade, Chaucer continued with his diplomatic career, traveling to Italy for negotiations to open a Genoa port to Britain as well as military negotiations with Milan. During his missions to Italy, Chaucer encountered the work of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, which were later to have profound influence upon his own writing.

In 1374 Chaucer was appointed comptroller of the customs and subsidy of wool, skins, and tanned hides for the Port of London, his first position away from the British court. Chaucer's only major work during this period was *Hous of Fame*, a poem of

around 2,000 lines in dream-vision form, but this was not completed.

In a deed of May 1, 1380, Cecily Chaumpaigne charged Chaucer with rape. Rape (raptus) could at the time mean either sexual assault or abduction; scholars have not been able to establish which meaning applies here, but, in either case, the release suggests that Chaucer was not guilty as charged. This charge had little effect on Chaucer's political career. In October 1385, he was appointed a justice of the peace for Kent, and in August 1386 he became knight of the shire for Kent. Around the time of his wife's death in 1387, Chaucer moved to Greenwich and later to Kent. Changing political circumstances eventually led to Chaucer falling out of favor with the royal court and leaving Parliament, but when Richard II became King of England, Chaucer regained royal favor. During this period Chaucer used writing primarily as an escape from public life. His works included *Parlement of Foules*, a poem of 699 lines. This

work is a dream-vision for St. Valentine's Day that makes use of the myth that each year on that day the birds gathered before the goddess Nature to choose their mates. This work was heavily influenced by Boccaccio and Dante.

Chaucer's next work was *Troilus and Criseyde*, which was influenced by *The Consolation of Philosophy*, written by the Roman philosopher Boethius in the early sixth century and translated into English by Chaucer. Chaucer took the plot of *Troilus* from Boccaccio's *Filostrato*. This eight thousand line poem recounts the love story of Troilus, son of the Trojan king Priam, and Criseyde, widowed daughter of the deserter priest Calkas, against the background of the Trojan War.

The *Canterbury Tales* secured Chaucer's literary reputation. It is his great literary accomplishment, a compendium of stories by pilgrims traveling to the shrine of Thomas a Becket in Canterbury. Chaucer introduces each of these pilgrims in vivid

brief sketches in the General Prologue and intersperses the twenty-four tales with short dramatic scenes with lively exchanges.

Chaucer did not complete the full plan for the tales, and surviving manuscripts leave some doubt as to the exact order of the tales that remain. However, the work is sufficiently complete to be considered a unified book rather than a collection of unfinished fragments. The Canterbury Tales is a lively mix of a variety of genres told by travelers from all aspects of society. Among the genres included are courtly romance, fabliau, saint's biography, allegorical tale, beast fable and medieval sermon.

Information concerning Chaucer's descendants is not fully clear. It is likely that he and Philippa had two sons and two daughters. Thomas Chaucer died in 1434; he was a large landowner and political officeholder, and his daughter, Alice, became duchess of Suffolk. Little is known about Lewis

Chaucer, Geoffrey Chaucer's youngest son. Of Chaucer's two daughters, Elizabeth became a nun, while Agnes was a lady-in-waiting for the coronation of Henry IV in 1399. Public records indicate that Chaucer had no descendants living after the fifteenth century.

Background on *The Canterbury Tales*:

The Canterbury Tales is one of the landmarks of English literature, perhaps the greatest work produced in Middle English and certainly among the most ambitious. It is one of the few works of the English Middle Ages that has had a continuous history of publication. It was the last of Geoffrey Chaucer's works, written after Troilus and Creseyde during the final years of Chaucer's life. Chaucer did not complete the entire Canterbury Tales as he designed it. He structured the tales so that each pilgrim would tell four tales, leading to a total of over one hundred tales. However, Chaucer only completed twenty-four tales, not even completing one tale for each pilgrim.

The Canterbury Tales includes a number of tales that Chaucer had written before creating the grand work itself. The Second Nun's Tale and the Knight's Tale were included as part of Chaucer's biography in the prologue to The Legend of Good Women, a poem by Chaucer that predated The Canterbury Tales, but since those stories survive only as part of The Canterbury Tales and not as independent works, it is impossible to determine whether Chaucer transferred them entirely to The Canterbury Tales or adapted them from a previous form.

The versions of The Canterbury Tales that remain in the present day come from two different Middle English manuscripts known as the Ellesmere and the Hengwrt manuscripts. The Ellesmere is the more famous of the two, containing miniature pictures of each of the pilgrims at the head of each of their respective tales, but compared to the Hengwrt manuscript the Ellesmere is heavily edited for grammatical content. The Hengwrt is thus valued as the best and most accurate manuscript

of The Canterbury Tales. There are discrepancies between the two versions concerning the order and inclusion of the tales. The Hengwrt manuscript lacks the Canon's Yeoman's Prologue and tale, part of the Parson's Tale, and several of the tales' prologues.

The structure of The Canterbury Tales is indebted to Boccaccio's Decameron, a work by Chaucer's contemporary in which ten nobles from Florence, to escape the plague, stay in a country villa and amuse each other by each telling tales. Boccaccio had a significant influence on Chaucer. The Knight's Tale was an English version of a tale by Boccaccio, while six of Chaucer's tales have possible sources in the Decameron: the Miller's Tale, the Reeve's, the Clerk's, the Merchant's, the Franklin's, and the Shipman's. However, Chaucer's pilgrims to Canterbury form a wider range of society compared to Boccaccio's elite storytellers, allowing for greater differences in tone and substance.

No single literary genre dominates *The Canterbury Tales*. The tales include romantic adventures, fabliaux, saint's biographies, animal fables, religious allegories and even a sermon, and range in tone from pious, moralistic tales to lewd and vulgar sexual farces. The form that Chaucer most often employs for his tale is the fabliau. These tales generally concern lower class characters; the standard form has an older husband whose younger wife has an affair with a man of flexible social status. This can be seen most accurately in the *Miller's Tale*, which strictly adheres to fabliau conventions.

Throughout the tales, two major themes emerge: the first is the idea of the unfaithful wife that is employed not only in fabliau but other literary genres. The other is the idea of the patient and suffering woman, who is exalted for her steadfast behavior. Chaucer exploits this division between the female saint and the whore throughout *The Canterbury Tales*, with few tales

whose plots do not center at least marginally around this distinction.

Short Summary of the Tales:

The Canterbury Tales begins with the introduction of each of the pilgrims making their journey to Canterbury to the shrine of Thomas à Becket. These pilgrims include a Knight, his son the Squire, the Knight's Yeoman, a Prioress, a Second Nun, a Monk, a Friar, a Merchant, a Clerk, a Man of Law, a Franklin, a Weaver, a Dyer, a Carpenter, a Tapestry-Maker, a Haberdasher, a Cook, a Shipman, a Physician, a Parson, a Miller, a Manciple, a Reeve, a Summoner, a Pardoner, the Wife of Bath, and Chaucer himself. These travelers, who stop at the Tabard Inn, decide to tell stories to pass their time on the way to Canterbury. The Host of the Tabard Inn sets the rules for the tales. Each of the pilgrims will tell two stories on the way to Canterbury, and two stories on the return trip. The Host will decide the best of the tales. They

decide to draw lots to see who will tell the first tale, and the Knight receives the honor.

The Knight's Tale is a tale about two knights, Arcite and Palamon, who are captured in battle and imprisoned in Athens under the order of King Theseus. While imprisoned in a tower, both see Emelye, the sister of Queen Hippolyta, and fall instantly in love with her. Both knights eventually leave prison separately: a friend of Arcite begs Theseus to release him, while Palamon later escapes. Arcite returns to the Athenian court disguised as a servant, and when Palamon escapes he suddenly finds Arcite. They fight over Emelye, but their fight is stopped when Theseus finds them. Theseus sets the rules for a duel between the two knights for Emelye's affection, and each raise an army for a battle a year from that date. Before the battle, Arcite prays to Mars for victory in battle, Emelye prays to Diana that she may marry happily, and Palamon prays to Venus to have Emelye as his wife. All three gods hear their prayers and argue over whose should get

precedence, but Saturn decides to mediate. During their battle, Arcite indeed is victorious, but as soon as he is crowned victor, an earthquake occurs that kills him. Before he dies, he reconciles with Palamon and tells him that he deserves to marry Emelye. Palamon and Emelye marry.

When the Knight finishes his tale, everybody is pleased with its honorable qualities, but the drunken Miller insists that he shall tell the next tale. The Miller's Tale is a comic tale in which Nicholas, a student who lives with John the carpenter and his much younger wife, Alison, begins an affair with Alison. Another man, the courtly romantic Absolon, also falls in love with Alison. Nicholas contrives to spend a day with Alison by telling John that a flood equal to Noah's flood will come soon, and the only way that he, Nicholas and Alison will survive is by staying in separate kneading tubs placed on the roof of houses, out of sight of all. While John remained in this kneading tub, Nicholas and Alison left to have sex, but were interrupted by

Absolon, who demanded a kiss from Alison. She told him to close his eyes and he would receive a kiss. He did so, and she pulled down her pants so that he could kiss her nether region. The humiliated Absolon got a hot iron from a blacksmith and returned to Alison. This time, Nicholas tried the same trick, and Absolon burned him on the ass. Nicholas shouted for water, awakening John, who was asleep on the roof. He fell off the roof, hurting himself, and all were humiliated.

The pilgrims laughed heartily at this tale, but Oswald the Reeve took offense, thinking that the Miller meant to disparage older men. In response, The Reeve's Tale told the story of a dishonest Miller, Symkyn, who repeatedly cheated his clients, which included the college at Cambridge. Two Cambridge students, Aleyn and John, went to the miller to buy meal and corn, but while they were occupied Symkyn let their horses run free and stole their corn. They were forced to stay with Symkyn for the night. That night, Aleyn seduced the miller's daughter,

Molly, while John seduced the miller's wife. When Aleyn told John of his exploits, Symkyn overheard and fought with him. The miller's wife hit Symkyn over the head with a staff, knocking him unconscious, and the two students escaped with the corn that Symkyn had stolen.

The Cook's Tale was intended to follow the Reeve's Tale, but this tale only exists as an incomplete fragment of no more than fifty lines. Following this tale is the Man of Law's Tale. The Man of Law's Tale tells the story of Constance, the daughter of a Roman emperor who becomes engaged to the Sultan of Syria on the condition that he converts to Christianity. Angered by his order to convert his country from Islam, the mother of the Sultan assassinates her son and Constance barely escapes. She is sent on a ship that lands in Britain, where she is taken in by the warden of a nearby castle and his wife, Dame Hermengild. Both of them soon convert to Christianity upon meeting her. A young knight fell in love with Constance, but when she refused him, he

murdered Dame Hermengild and attempted to frame Constance. However, when King Alla made the knight swear on the Bible that Constance murdered Hermengild, his eyes burst. Constance marries King Alla and they have a son, Mauritius, who is born when Alla is at war in Scotland. Lady Donegild contrives to have Constance banished by intercepting the letters between Alla and Constance and replacing them with false ones. Constance is thus sent away again, and on her voyage her ship comes across a Roman ship. A senator returns her to Rome, where nobody realizes that she is the daughter of the emperor. Eventually, King Alla makes a pilgrimage to Rome, where he meets Constance once more, and the Roman emperor realizes that Mauritius is his grandson and names him heir to the throne.

The Wife of Bath begins her tale with a long dissertation on marriage in which she recounts each of her five husbands. Her first several husbands were old men whom she would hector into providing for her, using guilt and refusal of sexual favors.

However, the final two husbands were younger men, more difficult to handle. The final husband, Jankin, was a twenty-year-old, half the Wife of Bath's age. He was more difficult to handle, for he refused to let the Wife of Bath dominate him and read literature that proposed that women be submissive. When she tore a page out of one of his books, Jankin struck her, causing her to be deaf in one ear. However, he felt so guilty at his actions that from that point in the marriage, he was totally submissive to her and the two remained happy. The Wife of Bath's Tale is itself a story of marriage dynamic. It tells the tale of a knight who, as punishment for raping a young woman, is sentenced to death. However, he is spared by the queen, who will grant him freedom if he can answer the question "what do women want?" The knight cannot find a satisfactory answer until he meets an old crone, who promises to tell him the answer if he marries her. He agrees, and receives his freedom when he tells the queen that women want sovereignty over their husbands. However, the knight is dissatisfied that he must marry the old, low-born hag.

She therefore tells him that he can have her as a wife either old and ugly yet submissive, or young and beautiful yet dominant. He chooses to have her as a young woman, and although she had authority in marriage the two were completely happy from that point.

The Friar asks to tell the next tale, and asks for pardon from the Summoner, for he will tell a tale that exposes the fraud of that profession. The Friar's Tale tells about a wicked summoner who, while delivering summons for the church court, comes across a traveling yeoman who eventually reveals himself to be the devil himself. The two share trade secrets, and the devil tells him that they will meet again in hell if the summoner continues to pursue his trade. The summoner visits an old woman and issues her a summons, then offers to accept a bribe as a payment to prevent her excommunication. The old woman believes that she is without sin and curses the summoner. The devil then appears and casts the summoner into hell.

The Summoner was enraged by the Friar's Tale. Before he begins his tale, he tells a short anecdote: a friar visited hell and was surprised to see that there were no other friars. The angel who was with him then lifted up Satan's tail and thousands of friars swarmed out from his ass. The Summoner's Tale is an equally vitriolic attack on friars. It tells of a friar who stays with an innkeeper and his wife and bothers them about not contributing enough to the church and not attending recently. When the innkeeper tells him that he was not recently in church because he has been ill and his infant daughter recently died, the friar attempted to placate him and then asked for donations once more. Thomas the innkeeper promised to give the friar a 'gift,' and gives him a loud fart.

The Clerk, an Oxford student who has remained quiet throughout the journey, tells the next tale on the orders of the Host. The Clerk's Tale tells about Walter, an Italian marquis who finally decides to take a wife after the people of his province

object to his longtime status as a bachelor. Walter marries Griselde, a low-born but amazingly virtuous woman whom everybody loves. However, Walter decides to test her devotion. When their first child, a daughter, is born, Walter tells her that his people are unhappy and wish for the child's death. He takes away the child, presumably to be murdered, but instead sends it to his sister to be raised. He does the same with their next child, a son. Finally, Walter tells Griselde that the pope demands that he divorce her. He sends her away from his home completely naked, for she had no belongings when she entered his house. Each of these tragedies Griselde accepts with great patience. Walter soon decides to make amends, and sends for his two children. He tells Griselde that he will marry again, and introduces her to the presumed bride, whom he then reveals is their daughter. The family is reunited once more. The Clerk ends with the advice that women should strive to be as steadfast as Griselde, even if facing such adversity is unlikely and perhaps impossible.

The Merchant praises Griselde for her steadfast character, but claims that his wife is far different from the virtuous woman of the Clerk's story. He instead tells a tale of an unfaithful wife. The Merchant's Tale tells a story of January, an elderly blind knight who decides to marry a young woman, despite the objections of his brother, Placebo. January marries the young and beautiful May, who soon becomes dissatisfied with his constant sexual attention to her and decides to have an affair with his squire, Damian. When January and May are in their garden, May sneaks away to have sex with Damian. The gods Pluto and Proserpina come upon Damian and May and restore January's sight so that he may see what his wife is doing. When January sees what is occurring, May tells him not to believe his eyes, and he believes her.

The Squire tells the next tale, which is incomplete. The Squire's Tale begins with a mysterious knight arriving at the court of Tartary. This knight gives King Cambyuskan a

mechanical horse that can transport him anywhere around the globe and return him within a day and gives Canacee, the daughter of Cambyuskan, a mirror that can discern honesty and a ring that allows the wearer to know the language of animals and the healing properties of all herbs. Canacee uses this ring to aid a bird who has been rejected in love, but the abruptly ends.

The Franklin's Tale that follows tells of the marriage between the knight Arviragus and his wife, Dorigen. When Arviragus travels on a military expedition, Dorigen laments his absence and fears that, when he returns, his ship will be wrecked upon the rocks off the shore. A young man, Aurelius, falls in love with her, but she refuses to return his favors. She agrees to have an affair with Aurelius only on the condition that he find a way to remove the rocks from the shore, a task she believes impossible. Aurelius pays a scholar who creates the illusion that the rocks have disappeared, while Arviragus returns. Dorigen admits to her husband the promise that she has made, and Arviragus tells her

that she must fulfill that promise. He sends her to have an affair with Aurelius, but he realizes the pain that it would cause Dorigen and does not make her fulfill the promise. The student in turn absolves Aurelius of his debt. The tale ends with the question: which of these men behaved most honorably?

The Physician's Tale that follows tells of Virginius, a respected Roman knight whose daughter, Virginia, was an incomparable beauty. Appius, the judge who governed his town, lusted after Virginia and collaborated with Claudius, who claimed in court that Virginia was his slave and Virginius had stolen her. Appius orders that Virginia be handed over to him. Virginius, knowing that Appius and Claudius did this in order to rape his daughter, instead gave her a choice between death or dishonor. She chooses death, and Virginius chops off his daughter's head, which he brings to Appius and Claudius. The people were so shocked by this that they realized that Appius and

Claudius were frauds. Appius was jailed and committed suicide, while Claudius was banished.

The Pardoner prefaces his tale with an elaborate confession about the nature of his profession. He tells the secrets of his trade, including the sale of useless items as saints' relics, and admits that his job is not to turn people away from sin, but rather to frighten them to such a degree that they pay for pardons. The Pardoner's Tale concerns three rioters who search for Death to vanquish him. They find an old man who tells them that they may find Death under a nearby tree, but under this tree they only find a large fortune. Two of the rioters send the third into town to purchase food and drink for the night, for they intend to escape with their fortune, and while he is gone they plan to murder him. The third rioter poisons the drink, intending to take all of the money for himself. When he returns, the two rioters stab him, then drink the poisoned wine and die themselves. The three rioters thus find Death in the form of avarice. The Pardoner ends

his tale with a diatribe against sin, imploring the travelers to pay him for pardons, but the Host confronts him.

The next story, *The Shipman's Tale*, is the story of a thrifty merchant who demands that his wife repay a one hundred franc debt that she owed him. The dissatisfied wife complained about this to Dan John, a monk who stayed with him, and he agrees to pay her the sum if she has an affair with him. She consents to this, and Dan John procures the one hundred francs by borrowing it from the merchant himself. However, the merchant realizes that he has been paid with money that he had lent to the monk. The wife therefore tells him that she can repay the debt to her husband in bed.

The Prioress' Tale tells the story of a young Christian child who lived in a town in Asia that was dominated by a vicious Jewish population. When the child learned *Alma redemptoris*, a song praising the Virgin Mary, he traveled home from school

singing this. The Jews, angry at his behavior, took the child and slit his throat, leaving him in a cesspool to die. The boy's mother searched frantically for her son. When she found him, he was not yet dead, for the Virgin Mary had placed a grain on his tongue that would allow him to speak until it was removed. When this was removed, the boy passed on to heaven. The story ends with a lament for the young boy and a curse for the Jews who perpetrated the heinous crime.

Chaucer himself tells the next tale, *The Tale of Sir Thopas*, a florid and fantastical poem in rhyming couplets that serves only to annoy the other pilgrims. The Host interrupts Chaucer shortly into this tale, and tells him to tell another. Chaucer then tells *The Tale of Melibee*, one of the few tales that is in prose format. This tale tells about Melibee, a powerful ruler whose enemies rape his wife, Prudence, and nearly murder his daughter, Sophie. When deciding whether to declare war on his enemies, Prudence advises him to remain merciful, and they

engage in a long debate over the appropriate course of action. Melibee finally gives his enemies the option: they can receive a sentence either from him or from his wife. They submit to Melibee's judgment, and he intends to disinherit and banish the perpetrators. However, he submits to his wife's plea for mercy.

The Monk's Tale is not a narrative tale at all, but instead an account of various historical and literary figures who experience a fall from grace. These include Adam, Samson, Hercules, King Pedro of Spain, Bernabo Visconti, Nero, Julius Caesar, and Croesus. The Knights interrupts the Monk's Tale, finding his listing of historical tragedies monotonous and depressing.

The Nun's Priest's Tale tells the story of the rooster Chanticleer and the hen Pertelote. Chanticleer was ill one night and had a disturbing dream that he was chased by a fox. He feared this dream was prophetic, but Pertelote assured him that his dream merely stemmed from his illness and that he should

find herbs to cure himself. Chanticleer insists that dreams are signifiers, but finally agrees with his wife. When he searches for herbs, Chanticleer is indeed chased by a fox, but is saved when Pertelote squawks, alerting the woman who owns the farm where the two fowl live and causing her to chase the fox away.

Chaucer follows this with The Second Nun's Tale. This tale is a biography of Saint Cecilia, who converts her husband and brother to Christianity during the time of the Roman empire, when Christian beliefs were illegal. Her brother and husband are executed for their beliefs, and she herself is cut three times with a sword during her execution, but does not immediately die. Rather, she lingers on for several more days, during which time she orders that her property be distributed to the poor. Upon her death Pope Urban declared her a saint.

After the Second Nun finishes her tale, a Canon (alchemist) and his Yeoman join the band of travelers. The

Canon had heard how they were telling tales, and wished to join them. The Yeoman speaks incessantly about the Canon, telling fantastical stories about his work, but this annoys the Canon, who suddenly departs. The Yeoman therefore decides to tell a tale himself. The Canon's Yeoman's Tale is a story of the work of a canon and the means by which they defraud people by making them think that they can duplicate money.

The Host tells the Cook to tell the next tale, but he is too drunk to coherently tell one. The Manciple therefore tells his story. The Manciple's Tale is the story of how Phoebus, when he assumed mortal form, was a jealous husband. He monitored his wife closely, fearing that she would be unfaithful. Phoebus had a white crow that could speak the language of humans and could sing beautiful. When the white crow learns that Phoebus' wife was unfaithful, Phoebus plucks him and curses the crow. According to the Manciple, this explains why crows are black and can only sing in an unpleasant tone.

The Parson tells the final tale. The Parson's Tale is not a narrative tale at all, however, but rather an extended sermon on the nature of sin and the three parts necessary for forgiveness: contrition, confession, and satisfaction. The tale gives examples of the seven deadly sins and explains them, and also details what is necessary for redemption. Chaucer ends the tales with a retraction, asking those who were offended by the tales to blame his rough manner and lack of education, for his intentions were not immoral, while asking those who found something redeemable in the tales to give credit to Christ.

In the following pages you are presented with the full text of the general prologue to the Tales in Middle English accompanied by its Modern English translation.

THE CANTERBURY TALES:

GENERAL PROLOGUE

Here bygynneth the Book of the tales of Caunterbury

- 1: Whan that aprill with his shoures soote
- 2: The droghte of march hath perced to the roote,
- 3: And bathed every veyne in swich licour
- 4: Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
- 5: Whan zephirus eek with his sweete breeth
- 6: Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
- 7: Tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
- 8: Hath in the ram his halve cours yronne,
- 9: And smale foweles maken melodye,
- 10: That slepen al the nyght with open ye
- 11: (so priketh hem nature in hir corages);
- 12: Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages,
- 13: And palmeres for to seken straunge strondes,
- 14: To ferne halwes, kowthe in sondry londes;
- 15: And specially from every shires ende
- 16: Of engelond to caunterbury they wende,
- 17: The hooly blisful martir for to seke,

18: That hem hath holpen whan that they were seeke.
19: Bifil that in that seson on a day,
20: In southwerk at the tabard as I lay
21: Redy to wenden on my pilgrymage
22: To caunterbury with ful devout corage,
23: At nyght was come into that hostelrye
24: Wel nyne and twenty in a compaignye,
25: Of sondry folk, by aventure yfalle
26: In felawshipe, and pilgrimes were they alle,
27: That toward caunterbury wolden ryde.
28: The chambres and the stables weren wyde,
29: And wel we weren esed atte beste.
30: And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,
31: So hadde I spoken with hem everichon
32: That I was of hir felawshipe anon,
33: And made forward erly for to ryse,
34: To take oure wey ther as I yow devyse.
35: But nathelees, whil I have tyme and space,
36: Er that I ferther in this tale pace,
37: Me thynketh it acordaunt to resoun
38: To telle yow al the condicioun
39: Of ech of hem, so as it semed me,
40: And whiche they weren, and of what degree,

41: And eek in what array that they were inne;
42: And at a knyght than wol I first bigynne.

**Here begins the Book
of the Tales of Canterbury**

When April with his showers sweet with fruit
The drought of March has pierced unto the root
And bathed each vein with liquor that has power
To generate therein and sire the flower;
When Zephyr also has, with his sweet breath,
Quickened again, in every holt and heath,
The tender shoots and buds, and the young sun
Into the Ram one half his course has run,
And many little birds make melody
That sleep through all the night with open eye
(So Nature pricks them on to ramp and rage)-
Then do folk long to go on pilgrimage,
And palmers to go seeking out strange strands,
To distant shrines well known in sundry lands.
And specially from every shire's end
Of England they to Canterbury wend,
The holy blessed martyr there to seek

Who helped them when they lay so ill and weal
Befell that, in that season, on a day
In Southwark, at the Tabard, as I lay
Ready to start upon my pilgrimage
To Canterbury, full of devout homage,
There came at nightfall to that hostelry
Some nine and twenty in a company
Of sundry persons who had chanced to fall
In fellowship, and pilgrims were they all
That toward Canterbury town would ride.
The rooms and stables spacious were and wide,
And well we there were eased, and of the best.
And briefly, when the sun had gone to rest,
So had I spoken with them, every one,
That I was of their fellowship anon,
And made agreement that we'd early rise
To take the road, as you I will apprise.
But none the less, whilst I have time and space,
Before yet farther in this tale I pace,
It seems to me accordant with reason
To inform you of the state of every one
Of all of these, as it appeared to me,
And who they were, and what was their degree,

And even how arrayed there at the inn;
And with a knight thus will I first begin.

The Knight's Portrait

43: A knyght ther was, and that a worthy man,
44: That fro the tyme that he first bigan
45: To riden out, he loved chivalrie,
46: Trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisie.
47: Ful worthy was he in his lordes werre,
48: And therto hadde he riden, no man ferre,
49: As wel in cristendom as in hethenesse,
50: And evere honoured for his worthynesse.
51: At alisaundre he was whan it was wonne.
52: Ful ofte tyme he hadde the bord bigonne
53: Aboven alle nacions in pruce;
54: In lettow hadde he reysed and in ruce,
55: No cristen man so ofte of his degree.
56: In gernade at the seege eek hadde he be
57: Of algezir, and riden in belmarye.
58: At lyeys was he and at satalye,
59: Whan they were wonne; and in the grete see
60: At many a noble armee hadde he be.
61: At mortal batailles hadde he been fiftene,

62: And foughten for oure feith at tramyssene
63: In lystes thries, and ay slayn his foo.
64: This ilke worthy knyght hadde been also
65: Somtyme with the lord of palatye
66: Agayn another hethen in turkye.
67: And everemoore he hadde a sovereyn prys;
68: And though that he were worthy, he was wys,
69: And of his port as meeke as is a mayde.
70: He nevere yet no vileynye ne sayde
71: In al his lyf unto no maner wight.
72: He was a verray, parfit gentil knyght.
73: But, for to tellen yow of his array,
74: His hors were goode, but he was nat gay.
75: Of fustian he wered a gypon
76: Al bismotered with his habergeon,
77: For he was late ycome from his viage,
78: And wente for to doon his pilgrymage.

THE KNIGHT

A knight there was, and he a worthy man,
Who, from the moment that he first began
To ride about the world, loved chivalry,
Truth, honour, freedom and all courtesy.

Full worthy was he in his liege-lord's war,
And therein had he ridden (none more far)
As well in Christendom as heathenesse,
And honoured everywhere for worthiness.
At Alexandria, he, when it was won;
Full oft the table's roster he'd begun
Above all nations' knights in Prussia.
In Latvia raided he, and Russia,
No christened man so oft of his degree.
In far Granada at the siege was he
Of Algeciras, and in Belmarie.
At Ayas was he and at Satalye
When they were won; and on the Middle Sea
At many a noble meeting chanced to be.
Of mortal battles he had fought fifteen,
And he'd fought for our faith at Tramissene
Three times in lists, and each time slain his foe.
This self-same worthy knight had been also
At one time with the lord of Palatye
Against another heathen in Turkey:
And always won he sovereign fame for prize.
Though so illustrious, he was very wise
And bore himself as meekly as a maid.

He never yet had any vileness said,
In all his life, to whatsoever wight.
He was a truly perfect, gentle knight.
But now, to tell you all of his array,
His steeds were good, but yet he was not gay.
Of simple fustian wore he a jupon
Sadly discoloured by his habergeon;
For he had lately come from his voyage
And now was going on this pilgrimage.

The Squire's Portrait

79: With hym ther was his sone, a yong squier,
80: A lovyere and a lusty bachelor,
81: With lokkes crulle as they were leyd in presse.
82: Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.
83: Of his stature he was of evene lengthe,
84: And wonderly delyvere, and of greet strengthe.
85: And he hadde been somtyme in chyvachie
86: In flaundres, in artoys, and pycardie,
87: And born hym weel, as of so litel space,
88: In hope to stonden in his lady grace.
89: Embrouded was he, as it were a meede
90: Al ful of fresshe floures, whyte and reede.

91: Syngynge he was, or floytynge, al the day;
92: He was as fressh as is the month of may.
93: Short was his gowne, with sleves longe and wyde.
94: Wel koude he sitte on hors and faire ryde.
95: He koude songes make and wel endite,
96: Juste and eek daunce, and weel purtreye and write.
97: So hote he lovede that by nyghtertale.
98: He sleep namoore than dooth a nyghtyngale.
99: Curteis he was, lowely, and servysable,
100: And carf biforn his fader at the table.

THE SQUIRE

With him there was his son, a youthful squire,
A lover and a lusty bachelor,
With locks well curled, as if they'd laid in press.
Some twenty years of age he was, I guess.
In stature he was of an average length,
Wondrously active, aye, and great of strength.
He'd ridden sometime with the cavalry
In Flanders, in Artois, and Picardy,
And borne him well within that little space
In hope to win thereby his lady's grace.

Prinked out he was, as if he were a mead,
All full of fresh-cut flowers white and red.
Singing he was, or fluting, all the day;
He was as fresh as is the month of May.
Short was his gown, with sleeves both long and wide.
Well could he sit on horse, and fairly ride.
He could make songs and words thereto indite,
Joust, and dance too, as well as sketch and write.
So hot he loved that, while night told her tale,
He slept no more than does a nightingale.
Courteous he, and humble, willing and able,
And carved before his father at the table.

The Yeoman's Portrait

101: A yeman hadde he and servantz namo
102: At that tyme, for hym liste ride so,
103: And he was clad in cote and hood of grene.
104: A sheef of pecok arwes, bright and kene,
105: Under his belt he bar ful thriftily,
106: (wel koude he dresse his takel yemanly:
107: His arwes drouped noght with fetheres lowe)
108: And in his hand he baar a myghty bowe.
109: A not heed hadde he, with a broun visage.

110: Of wodecraft wel koude he al the usage.
111: Upon his arm he baar a gay bracer,
112: And by his syde a swerd and a bokeler,
113: And on that oother syde a gay daggere
114: Harneised wel and sharp as point of spere;
115: A cristopher on his brest of silver sheene.
116: An horn he bar, the bawdryk was of grene;
117: A forster was he, soothly, as I gesse.

THE YEOMAN

A yeoman had he, nor more servants, no,
At that time, for he chose to travel so;
And he was clad in coat and hood of green.
A sheaf of peacock arrows bright and keen
Under his belt he bore right carefully
(Well could he keep his tackle yeomanly:
His arrows had no draggled feathers low),
And in his hand he bore a mighty bow.
A cropped head had he and a sun-brownd face.
Of woodcraft knew he all the useful ways.
Upon his arm he bore a bracer gay,
And at one side a sword and buckler, yea,
And at the other side a dagger bright,

Well sheathed and sharp as spear point in the light;
On breast a Christopher of silver sheen.
He bore a horn in baldric all of green;
A forester he truly was, I guess.

The Prioress' Portrait

118: Ther was also a nonne, a prioresse,
119: That of hir smylyng was ful symple and coy;
120: Hire gretteste ooth was but by seinte loy;
121: And she was cleped madame eglentyne.
122: Ful weel she soong the service dyvyne,
123: Entuned in hir nose ful semely,
124: And frenssh she spak ful faire and fetisly,
125: After the scole of stratford atte bowe,
126: For frenssh of parys was to hire unknowe.
127: At mete wel ytaught was she with alle:
128: She leet no morsel from hir lippes falle,
129: Ne wette hir fyngres in hir sauce depe;
130: Wel koude she carie a morsel and wel kepe
131: That no drope ne fille upon hire brest.
132: In curteisie was set ful muchel hir lest.
133: Hir over-lippe wyped she so clene
134: That in hir coppe ther was no ferthyng sene

135: Of grece, whan she dronken hadde hir draughte.
136: Ful semely after hir mete she raughte.
137: And sikerly she was of greet desport,
138: And ful plesaunt, and amyable of port,
139: And peyned hire to countrefete cheere
140: Of court, and to been estatlich of manere,
141: And to ben holden digne of reverence.
142: But, for to speken of hire conscience,
143: She was so charitable and so pitous
144: She wolde wepe, if that she saugh a mous
145: Kaught in a trappe, if it were deed or bledde.
146: Of smale houndes hadde she that she fedde
147: With rosted flessch, or milk and wastel-breed.
148: But soore wepte she if oon of hem were deed,
149: Or if men smoot it with a yerde smerte;
150: And al was conscience and tendre herte.
151: Ful semyly hir wympul pynched was,
152: Hir nose tretys, hir eyen greye as glas,
153: Hir mouth ful smal, and therto softe and reed;
154: But sikerly she hadde a fair forheed;
155: It was almoost a spanne brood, I trowe;
156: For, hardily, she was nat undergrowe.
157: Ful fetys was hir cloke, as I was war.

158: Of smal coral aboute hire arm she bar
159: A peire of bedes, gauded al with grene,
160: And theron heng a brooch of gold ful sheene,
161: On which ther was first write a crowned a,
162: And after amor vincit omnia.

THE PRIORESS

There was also a nun, a prioress,
Who, in her smiling, modest was and coy;
Her greatest oath was but "By Saint Eloy!"
And she was known as Madam Eglantine.
Full well she sang the services divine,
Intoning through her nose, becomingly;
And fair she spoke her French, and fluently,
After the school of Stratford-at-the-Bow,
For French of Paris was not hers to know.
At table she had been well taught withal,
And never from her lips let morsels fall,
Nor dipped her fingers deep in sauce, but ate
With so much care the food upon her plate
That never driblet fell upon her breast.
In courtesy she had delight and zest.
Her upper lip was always wiped so clean

That in her cup was no iota seen
Of grease, when she had drunk her draught of wine.
Becomingly she reached for meat to dine.
And certainly delighting in good sport,
She was right pleasant, amiable- in short.
She was at pains to counterfeit the look
Of courtliness, and stately manners took,
And would be held worthy of reverence.
But, to say something of her moral sense,
She was so charitable and piteous
That she would weep if she but saw a mouse
Caught in a trap, though it were dead or bled.
She had some little dogs, too, that she fed
On roasted flesh, or milk and fine white bread.
But sore she'd weep if one of them were dead,
Or if men smote it with a rod to smart:
For pity ruled her, and her tender heart.
Right decorous her pleated wimple was;
Her nose was fine; her eyes were blue as glass;
Her mouth was small and therewith soft and red;
But certainly she had a fair forehead;
It was almost a full span broad, I own,
For, truth to tell, she was not undergrown.

Neat was her cloak, as I was well aware.
Of coral small about her arm she'd bear
A string of beads and gauded all with green;
And therefrom hung a brooch of golden sheen
Whereon there was first written a crowned "A,"
And under, Amor vincit omnia.

The Second Nun's Portrait

163: Another nonne with hire hadde she,

THE NUN

Another little nun with her had she,

THE THREE PRIESTS

164: That was hir chapeleyne, and preestes thre.

THE THREE PRIESTS

Who was her chaplain; and of priests she'd three.

The Monk's Portrait

165: A monk ther was, a fair for the maistrie,

166: An outridere, that lovede venerie,

167: A manly man, to been an abbot able.
168: Ful many a deyntee hors hadde he in stable,
169: And whan he rood, men myghte his brydel heere
170: Gynglen in a whistlynge wynd als cleere
171: And eek as loude as dooth the chapel belle.
172: Ther as this lord was kepere of the celle,
173: The reule of seint maure or of seint beneit,
174: By cause that it was old and somdel streit
175: This ilke monk leet olde thynges pace,
176: And heeld after the newe world the space.
177: He yaf nat of that text a pulled hen,
178: That seith that hunters ben nat hooly men,
179: Ne that a monk, whan he is recchelees,
180: Is likned til a fissh that is waterlees, --
181: This is to seyn, a monk out of his cloystre.
182: But thilke text heeld he nat worth an oystre;
183: And I seyde his opinion was good.
184: What sholde he studie and make hymselfen wood,
185: Upon a book in cloystre alwey to poure,
186: Or swynken with his handes, and laboure,
187: As austyn bit? how shal the world be served?
188: Lat austyn have his swynk to hym reserved!
189: Therefore he was a prikasour aright:

190: Grehoundes he hadde as swift as fowel in flight;
191: Of prikyng and of huntynge for the hare
192: Was al his lust, for no cost wolde he spare.
193: I seigh his sleves purfiled at the hond
194: With grys, and that the fyneste of a lond;
195: And, for to festne his hood under his chyn,
196: He hadde of gold ywroght a ful curious pyn;
197: A love-knotte in the gretter ende ther was.
198: His heed was balled, that shoon as any glas,
199: And eek his face, as he hadde been enoynt.
200: He was a lord ful fat and in good poynt;
201: His eyen stepe, and rollynge in his heed,
202: That stemed as a forneys of a leed;
203: His bootes souple, his hors in greet estaat.
204: Now certainly he was a fair prelaat;
205: He was nat pale as a forpyned goost.
206: A fat swan loved he best of any roost.
207: His palfrey was as broun as is a berye.

THE MONK

A monk there was, one made for mastery,
An outrider, who loved his venery;
A manly man, to be an abbot able.

Full many a blooded horse had he in stable:
And when he rode men might his bridle hear
A-jingling in the whistling wind as clear,
Aye, and as loud as does the chapel bell
Where this brave monk was of the cell.
The rule of Maurus or Saint Benedict,
By reason it was old and somewhat strict,
This said monk let such old things slowly pace
And followed new-world manners in their place.
He cared not for that text a clean-plucked hen
Which holds that hunters are not holy men;
Nor that a monk, when he is cloisterless,
Is like unto a fish that's waterless;
That is to say, a monk out of his cloister.
But this same text he held not worth an oyster;
And I said his opinion was right good.
What? Should he study as a madman would
Upon a book in cloister cell? Or yet
Go labour with his hands and swink and sweat,
As Austin bids? How shall the world be served?
Let Austin have his toil to him reserved.
Therefore he was a rider day and night;
Greyhounds he had, as swift as bird in flight.

Since riding and the hunting of the hare
Were all his love, for no cost would he spare.
I saw his sleeves were purfled at the hand
With fur of grey, the finest in the land;
Also, to fasten hood beneath his chin,
He had of good wrought gold a curious pin:
A love-knot in the larger end there was.
His head was bald and shone like any glass,
And smooth as one anointed was his face.
Fat was this lord, he stood in goodly case.
His bulging eyes he rolled about, and hot
They gleamed and red, like fire beneath a pot;
His boots were soft; his horse of great estate.
Now certainly he was a fine prelate:
He was not pale as some poor wasted ghost.
A fat swan loved he best of any roast.
His palfrey was as brown as is a berry.

The Friar's Portrait

208: A frere ther was, a wantowne and a merye,
209: A lymytour, a ful solempne man.
210: In alle the ordres foure is noon that kan
211: So muchel of daliaunce and fair langage.

212: He hadde maad ful many a mariage
213: Of yonge wommen at his owene cost.
214: Unto his ordre he was a noble post.
215: Ful wel biloved and famulier was he
216: With frankeleyns over al in his contree,
217: And eek with worthy wommen of the toun;
218: For he hadde power of confessioun,
219: As seyde hymself, moore than a curat,
220: For of his ordre he was licenciat.
221: Ful swetely herde he confessioun,
222: And plesaunt was his absolucioun:
223: He was an esy man to yeve penaunce,
224: Ther as he wiste to have a good pitaunce.
225: For unto a povre ordre for to yive
226: Is signe that a man is wel yshryve;
227: For if he yaf, he dorste make avaunt,
228: He wiste that a man was repentaunt;
229: For many a man so hard is of his herte,
230: He may nat wepe, although hym soore smerte.
231: Therefore in stede of wepyng and preyeres
232: Men moote yeve silver to the povre freres.
233: His tytet was ay farsed ful of knyves
234: And pynnes, for to yeven faire wyves.

235: And certainly he hadde a murye note:
236: Wel koude he synge and pleyen on a rote;
237: Of yeddynges he baar outrely the pris.
238: His nekke whit was as the flour-de-lys;
239: Therto he strong was as a champioun.
240: He knew the tavernes wel in every toun
241: And everich hostiler and tappestere
242: Bet than a lazar or a beggestere;
243: For unto swich a worthy man as he
244: Acorded nat, as by his facultee,
245: To have with sike lazars aqueyntaunce.
246: It is nat honest, it may nat avaunce,
247: For to deelen with no swich poraille,
248: But al with riche and selleres of vitaille.
249: And over al, ther as profit sholde arise,
250: Curteis he was and lowely of servyse.
251: Ther nas no man nowher so vertuous.
252: He was the beste beggere in his hous;
252.1: (and yaf a certeyne ferme for the graunt;
252.2: Noon of his bretheren cam ther in his haunt;)
253: For thogh a wydwe hadde nought a sho,
254: So plesaunt was his in principio,
255: Yet wolde he have a ferthyng, er he wente.

256: His purchas was wel better than his rente.
257: And rage he koude, as it were right a whelp.
258: In love-dayes ther koude he muchel help,
259: For ther he was nat lyk a cloysterer
260: With a thredbare cope, as is a povre scoler,
261: But he was lyk a maister or a pope.
262: Of double worstede was his semycupe,
263: That rounded as a belle out of the presse.
264: Somwhat he lipped, for his wantownesse,
265: To make his englissh sweete upon his tonge;
266: And in his harpyng, whan that he hadde songe,
267: His eyen twynkled in his heed aryght,
268: As doon the sterres in the frosty nyght.
269: This worthy lymytour was cleped huberd.

THE FRIAR

A friar there was, a wanton and a merry,
A limiter, a very festive man.
In all the Orders Four is none that can
Equal his gossip and his fair language.
He had arranged full many a marriage
Of women young, and this at his own cost.
Unto his order he was a noble post.

Well liked by all and intimate was he
With franklins everywhere in his country,
And with the worthy women of the town:
For at confessing he'd more power in gown
(As he himself said) than it good curate,
For of his order he was licentiate.
He heard confession gently, it was said,
Gently absolved too, leaving naught of dread.
He was an easy man to give penance
When knowing he should gain a good pittance;
For to a begging friar, money given
Is sign that any man has been well shriven.
For if one gave (he dared to boast of this),
He took the man's repentance not amiss.
For many a man there is so hard of heart
He cannot weep however pains may smart.
Therefore, instead of weeping and of prayer,
Men should give silver to poor friars all bare.
His tippet was stuck always full of knives
And pins, to give to young and pleasing wives.
And certainly he kept a merry note:
Well could he sing and play upon the rote.
At balladry he bore the prize away.

His throat was white as lily of the May;
Yet strong he was as ever champion.
In towns he knew the taverns, every one,
And every good host and each barmaid too-
Better than begging lepers, these he knew.
For unto no such solid man as he
Accorded it, as far as he could see,
To have sick lepers for acquaintances.
There is no honest advantageousness
In dealing with such poverty-stricken curs;
It's with the rich and with big victuallers.
And so, wherever profit might arise,
Courteous he was and humble in men's eyes.
There was no other man so virtuous.
He was the finest beggar of his house;
A certain district being farmed to him,
None of his brethren dared approach its rim;
For though a widow had no shoes to show,
So pleasant was his In principio,
He always got a farthing ere he went.
He lived by pickings, it is evident.
And he could romp as well as any whelp.
On love days could he be of mickle help.

For there he was not like a cloisterer,
With threadbare cope as is the poor scholar,
But he was like a lord or like a pope.
Of double worsted was his semi-cope,
That rounded like a bell, as you may guess.
He lisped a little, out of wantonness,
To make his English soft upon his tongue;
And in his harping, after he had sung,
His two eyes twinkled in his head as bright
As do the stars within the frosty night.
This worthy limiter was named Hubert.

The Merchant's Portrait

270: A marchant was ther with a forked berd,
271: In mottelee, and hye on horse he sat;
272: Upon his heed a flaundryssh bever hat,
273: His bootes clasped faire and fetisly.
274: His resons he spak ful solempnely,
275: Sownyng alwey th' encrees of his wynnyng.
276: He wolde the see were kept for any thyng
277: Bitwixe middelburgh and orewelle.
278: Wel koude he in eschaunge sheeldes selle.

279: This worthy man ful wel his wit bisette:
280: Ther wiste no wight that he was in dette,
281: So estatly was he of his governaunce
282: With his bargaynes and with his chevysaunce.
283: For sothe he was a worthy man with alle,
284: But, sooth to seyn, I noot how men hym calle.

THE MERCHANT

There was a merchant with forked beard, and girt
In motley gown, and high on horse he sat,
Upon his head a Flemish beaver hat;
His boots were fastened rather elegantly.
His spoke his notions out right pompously,
Stressing the times when he had won, not lost.
He would the sea were held at any cost
Across from Middleburgh to Orwell town.
At money-changing he could make a crown.
This worthy man kept all his wits well set;
There was no one could say he was in debt,
So well he governed all his trade affairs
With bargains and with borrowings and with shares.
Indeed, he was a worthy man withal,
But, sooth to say, his name I can't recall.

The Clerk's Portrait

285: A clerk ther was of oxenford also,
286: That unto logyk hadde longe ygo.
287: As leene was his hors as is a rake,
288: And he nas nat right fat, I undertake,
289: But looked holwe, and therto sobrelly.
290: Ful thredbare was his overeste courtepy;
291: For he hadde geten hym yet no benefice,
292: Ne was so worldly for to have office.
293: For hym was levere have at his beddes heed
294: Twenty bookes, clad in blak or reed,
295: Of aristotle and his philosophie,
296: Than robes riche, or fithele, or gay sautrie.
297: But al be that he was a philosophre,
298: Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre;
299: But al that he myghte of his freendes hente,
300: On bookes and on lernynge he it spente,
301: And bisily gan for the soules preye
302: Of hem that yaf hym wherwith to scoleye.
303: Of studie took he moost cure and moost heede,
304: Noght o word spak he moore than was neede,
305: And that was seyde in forme and reverence,
306: And short and quyke and ful of hy sentence;

307: Sownynge in moral vertu was his speche,
308: And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche.

THE CLERK

A clerk from Oxford was with us also,
Who'd turned to getting knowledge, long ago.
As meagre was his horse as is a rake,
Nor he himself too fat, I'll undertake,
But he looked hollow and went soberly.
Right threadbare was his overcoat; for he
Had got him yet no churchly benefice,
Nor was so worldly as to gain office.
For he would rather have at his bed's head
Some twenty books, all bound in black and red,
Of Aristotle and his philosophy
Than rich robes, fiddle, or gay psaltery.
Yet, and for all he was philosopher,
He had but little gold within his coffer;
But all that he might borrow from a friend
On books and learning he would swiftly spend,
And then he'd pray right busily for the souls
Of those who gave him wherewithal for schools.
Of study took he utmost care and heed.

Not one word spoke he more than was his need;
And that was said in fullest reverence
And short and quick and full of high good sense.
Pregnant of moral virtue was his speech;
And gladly would he learn and gladly teach.

The The Man of Law's Portrait

309: A sergeant of the lawe, war and wys,
310: That often hadde been at the parvys,
311: Ther was also, ful riche of excellence.
312: Discreet he was and of greet reverence --
313: He semed swich, his wordes weren so wise.
314: Justice he was ful often in assise,
315: By patente and by pleyn commissioun.
316: For his science and for his heigh renoun,
317: Of fees and robes hadde he many oon.
318: So greet a purchasour was nowher noon:
319: Al was fee symple to hym in effect;
320: His purchasyng myghte nat been infect.
321: Nowher so bisy a man as he ther nas,
322: And yet he semed bisier than he was.
323: In termes hadde he caas and doomes alle
324: That from the tyme of kyng william were falle.

325: Therto he koude endite, and make a thyng,
326: Ther koude no wight pynche at his writyng;
327: And every statut koude he pleyn by rote.
328: He rood but hoomly in a medlee cote.
329: Girt with a ceint of silk, with barres smale;
330: Of his array telle I no lenger tale.

THE LAWYER

A sergeant of the law, wary and wise,
Who'd often gone to Paul's walk to advise,
There was also, compact of excellence.
Discreet he was, and of great reverence;
At least he seemed so, his words were so wise.
Often he sat as justice in assize,
By patent or commission from the crown;
Because of learning and his high renown,
He took large fees and many robes could own.
So great a purchaser was never known.
All was fee simple to him, in effect,
Wherefore his claims could never be suspect.
Nowhere a man so busy of his class,
And yet he seemed much busier than he was.
All cases and all judgments could he cite

That from King William's time were apposite.
And he could draw a contract so explicit
Not any man could fault therefrom elicit;
And every statute he'd verbatim quote.
He rode but badly in a medley coat,
Belted in a silken sash, with little bars,
But of his dress no more particulars.

The Franklin's Portrait

331: A frankeleyn was in his compaignye.
332: Whit was his berd as is the dayesy;e;
333: Of his complexioun he was sangwyn.
334: Wel loved he by the morwe a sop in wyn;
335: To lyven in delit was evere his wone,
336: For he was epicurus owene sone,
337: That heeld opinioun that pleyn delit
338: Was verray felicitee parfit.
339: An housholdere, and that a greet, was he;
340: Seint julian he was in his contree.
341: His breed, his ale, was always after oon;
342: A bettre envyned man was nowher noon.
343: Withoute bake mete was nevere his hous
344: Of fissh and flessch, and that so plentevous,

345: It snewed in his hous of mete and drynke,
346: Of alle deyntees that men koude thynke.
347: After the sondry sesons of the yeer,
348: So chaunged he his mete and his soper.
349: Ful many a fat partrich hadde he in muwe,
350: And many a breem and many a luce in stuwe.
351: Wo was his cook but if his sauce were
352: Poynaunt and sharp, and redy al his geere.
353: His table dormant in his halle alway
354: Stood redy covered al the longe day.
355: At sessiouns ther was he lord and sire;
356: Ful ofte tyme he was knyght of the shire.
357: An anlaas and a gipser al of silk
358: Heeng at his girdel, whit as morne milk.
359: A shirreve hadde he been, and a contour.
360: Was nowher swich a worthy vavasour.

THE FRANKLIN

There was a franklin in his company;
White was his beard as is the white daisy.
Of sanguine temperament by every sign,
He loved right well his morning sop in wine.
Delightful living was the goal he'd won,

For he was Epicurus' very son,
That held opinion that a full delight
Was true felicity, perfect and right.
A householder, and that a great, was he;
Saint Julian he was in his own country.
His bread and ale were always right well done;
A man with better cellars there was none.
Baked meat was never wanting in his house,
Of fish and flesh, and that so plenteous
It seemed to snow therein both food and drink
Of every dainty that a man could think.
According to the season of the year
He changed his diet and his means of cheer.
Full many a fattened partridge did he mew,
And many a bream and pike in fish-pond too.
Woe to his cook, except the sauces were
Poignant and sharp, and ready all his gear.
His table, waiting in his hall alway,
Stood ready covered through the livelong day.
At county sessions was he lord and sire,
And often acted as a knight of shire.
A dagger and a trinket-bag of silk
Hung from his girdle, white as morning milk.

He had been sheriff and been auditor;
And nowhere was a worthier vavasor.

The Guildsmen's Portrait

361: An haberdasshere and a carpenter,
362: A webbe, a dyere, and a tapycer, --
363: And they were clothed alle in o lyveree
364: Of a solempne and a greet fraternitee.
365: Ful fressh and newe hir geere apiked was;
366: Hir knyves were chaped noght with bras
367: But al with silver; wroght ful clene and weel
368: Hire girdles and hir pouches everydeel.
369: Wel semed ech of hem a fair burgeys
370: To sitten in a yeldehalle on a deys.
371: Everich, for the wisdom that he kan,
372: Was shaply for to been an alderman.
373: For catel hadde they ynogh and rente,
374: And eek hir wyves wolde it wel assente;
375: And elles certeyn were they to blame.
376: It is ful fair to been ycleped madame,
377: And goon to vigilies al bifore,
378: And have a mantel roialliche ybore.

**THE HABERDASHER AND THE CARPENTER
THE WEAVER, THE DYER, AND THE ARRAS-MAKER**

A haberdasher and a carpenter,
An arras-maker, dyer, and weaver
Were with us, clothed in similar livery,
All of one sober, great fraternity.
Their gear was new and well adorned it was;
Their weapons were not cheaply trimmed with brass,
But all with silver; chastely made and well
Their girdles and their pouches too, I tell.
Each man of them appeared a proper burges
To sit in guildhall on a high dais.
And each of them, for wisdom he could span,
Was fitted to have been an alderman;
For chattels they'd enough, and, too, of rent;
To which their goodwives gave a free assent,
Or else for certain they had been to blame.
It's good to hear "Madam" before one's name,
And go to church when all the world may see,
Having one's mantle borne right royally.

The Cook's Portrait

379: A cook they hadde with hem for the nones
380: To boille the chiknes with the marybones,
381: And poudre-marchant tart and galyngale.
382: Wel koude he knowe a draughte of londoun ale.
383: He koude rooste, and sethe, and broille, and frye,
384: Maken mortreux, and wel bake a pye.
385: But greet harm was it, as it thoughte me,
386: That on his shyne a mormal hadde he.
387: For blankmanger, that made he with the beste

THE COOK

A cook they had with them, just for the nonce,
To boil the chickens with the marrow-bones,
And flavour tartly and with galingale.
Well could he tell a draught of London ale.
And he could roast and seethe and broil and fry,
And make a good thick soup, and bake a pie.
But very ill it was, it seemed to me,
That on his shin a deadly sore had he;
For sweet blanc-mange, he made it with the best.

The Shipman's Portrait

- 388: A shipman was ther, wonynge fer by weste;
389: For aught I woot, he was of dertemouthe.
390: He rood upon a rounce, as he kouthe,
391: In a gowne of faldyng to the knee.
392: A daggere hangynge on a laas hadde he
393: Aboute his nekke, under his arm adoun.
394: The hoot somer hadde maad his hewe al broun;
395: And certainly he was a good felawe.
396: Ful many a draughte of wyn had he ydrawe
397: Fro burdeux-ward, whil that the chapmen sleep.
398: Of nyce conscience took he no keep.
399: If that he faught, and hadde the hyer hond,
400: By water he sente hem hoom to every lond.
401: But of his craft to rekene wel his tydes,
402: His stremes, and his daungers hym bisides,
403: His herberwe, and his moone, his lodemenage,
404: Ther nas noon swich from hulle to cartage.
405: Hardy he was and wys to undertake;
406: With many a tempest hadde his berd been shake.
407: He knew alle the havenes, as they were,
408: Fro gootlond to the cape of fynystere,

409: And every cryke in britaigne and in spayne.

410: His barge ycleped was the maudelayne.

THE SAILOR

There was a sailor, living far out west;
For aught I know, he was of Dartmouth town.
He sadly rode a hackney, in a gown,
Of thick rough cloth falling to the knee.
A dagger hanging on a cord had he
About his neck, and under arm, and down.
The summer's heat had burned his visage brown;
And certainly he was a good fellow.
Full many a draught of wine he'd drawn, I trow,
Of Bordeaux vintage, while the trader slept.
Nice conscience was a thing he never kept.
If that he fought and got the upper hand,
By water he sent them home to every land.
But as for craft, to reckon well his tides,
His currents and the dangerous watersides,
His harbours, and his moon, his pilotage,
There was none such from Hull to far Carthage.
Hardy. and wise in all things undertaken,
By many a tempest had his beard been shaken.

He knew well all the havens, as they were,
From Gottland to the Cape of Finisterre,
And every creek in Brittany and Spain;
His vessel had been christened Madeleine.

The Physician's Portrait

411: With us ther was a doctour of phisik;
412: In al this world ne was the noon hym lik,
413: To speke of phisik and of surgerye
414: For he was grounded in astronomye.
415: He kepte his pacient a ful greet deel
416: In houres by his magyk natureel.
417: Wel koude he fortunen the ascendent
418: Of his ymages for his pacient.
419: He knew the cause of everich maladye,
420: Were it of hoot, or coold, or moyste, or drye,
421: And where they engendred, and of what humour.
422: He was a verray, parfit praktisour:
423: The cause yknowe, and of his harm the roote,
424: Anon he yaf the sike man his boote.
425: Ful redy hadde he his apothecaries
426: To sende hym drogges and his letuaries,
427: For ech of hem made oother for to wyne --

428: Hir frendshipe nas nat newe to bigynne.
429: Wel knew he the olde esculapius,
430: And deyscorides, and eek rufus,
431: Olde ypocras, haly, and galyen,
432: Serapion, razis, and avycen,
433: Averrois, damascien, and constantyn,
434: Bernard, and gatesden, and gilbertyn.
435: Of his diete mesurable was he,
436: For it was of no superfluitee,
437: But of greet norissyng and digestible.
438: His studie was but litel on the bible.
439: In sangwyn and in pers he clad was al,
440: Lyned with taffata and with sendal;
441: And yet he was but esy of dispence;
442: He kepte that he wan in pestilence.
443: For gold in phisik is a cordial,
444: Therefore he lovede gold in special.

THE PHYSICIAN

With us there was a doctor of physic;
In all this world was none like him to pick
For talk of medicine and surgery;
For he was grounded in astronomy.

He often kept a patient from the pall
By horoscopes and magic natural.
Well could he tell the fortune ascendent
Within the houses for his sick patient.
He knew the cause of every malady,
Were it of hot or cold, of moist or dry,
And where engendered, and of what humour;
He was a very good practitioner.
The cause being known, down to the deepest root,
Anon he gave to the sick man his boot.
Ready he was, with his apothecaries,
To send him drugs and all electuaries;
By mutual aid much gold they'd always won-
Their friendship was a thing not new begun.
Well read was he in Esculapius,
And Deiscorides, and in Rufus,
Hippocrates, and Hali, and Galen,
Serapion, Rhazes, and Avicen,
Averrhoes, Gilbert, and Constantine,
Bernard and Gatisden, and John Damascene.
In diet he was measured as could be,
Including naught of superfluity,
But nourishing and easy. It's no libel

To say he read but little in the Bible.
In blue and scarlet he went clad, withal,
Lined with a taffeta and with sendal;
And yet he was right chary of expense;
He kept the gold he gained from pestilence.
For gold in physic is a fine cordial,
And therefore loved he gold exceeding all.

The Wife of Bath's Portrait

445: A good wif was ther of biside bathe,
446: But she was somdel deaf, and that was scathe.
447: Of clooth-makyng she hadde swich an haunt,
448: She passed hem of ypres and of gaunt.
449: In al the parisshe wif ne was ther noon
450: That to the offrynge bifore hire sholde goon;
451: And if ther dide, certeyn so wrooth was she,
452: That she was out of alle charitee.
453: Hir coverchiefs ful fyne weren of ground;
454: I dorste swere they weyeden ten pound
455: That on a sonday weren upon hir heed.
456: Hir hosen weren of fyn scarlet reed,
457: Ful streite yteyd, and shoes ful moyste and newe.
458: Boold was hir face, and fair, and reed of hewe.

459: She was a worthy womman al hir lyve:
460: Housbondes at chirche dore she hadde fyve,
461: Withouten oother compaignye in youthe, --
462: But therof nedeth nat to speke as nowthe.
463: And thries hadde she been at jerusalem;
464: She hadde passed many a straunge strem;
465: At rome she hadde been, and at boloigne,
466: In galice at seint-jame, and at coloigne.
467: She koude muchel of wandrynge by the weye.
468: Gat-tothed was she, soothly for to seye.
469: Upon an amblere esily she sat,
470: Ywympled wel, and on hir heed an hat
471: As brood as is a bokeler or a targe;
472: A foot-mantel aboute hir hipes large,
473: And on hir feet a paire of spores sharpe.
474: In felaweshipe wel koude she laughe and carpe.
475: Of remedies of love she knew per chaunce,
476: For she koude of that art the olde daunce.

THE WIFE OF BATH

There was a housewife come from Bath, or near,
Who- sad to say- was deaf in either ear.
At making cloth she had so great a bent

She bettered those of Ypres and even of Ghent.
In all the parish there was no goodwife
Should offering make before her, on my life;
And if one did, indeed, so wroth was she
It put her out of all her charity.
Her kerchiefs were of finest weave and ground;
I dare swear that they weighed a full ten pound
Which, of a Sunday, she wore on her head.
Her hose were of the choicest scarlet red,
Close gartered, and her shoes were soft and new.
Bold was her face, and fair, and red of hue.
She'd been respectable throughout her life,
With five church'd husbands bringing joy and strife,
Not counting other company in youth;
But thereof there's no need to speak, in truth.
Three times she'd journeyed to Jerusalem;
And many a foreign stream she'd had to stem;
At Rome she'd been, and she'd been in Boulogne,
In Spain at Santiago, and at Cologne.
She could tell much of wandering by the way:
Gap-toothed was she, it is no lie to say.
Upon an ambler easily she sat,
Well wimpled, aye, and over all a hat

As broad as is a buckler or a targe;
A rug was tucked around her buttocks large,
And on her feet a pair of sharpened spurs.
In company well could she laugh her slurs.
The remedies of love she knew, perchance,
For of that art she'd learned the old, old dance.

The Parson's Portrait

477: A good man was ther of religioun,
478: And was a povre persoun of a toun,
479: But riche he was of hooly thoght and werk.
480: He was also a lerned man, a clerk,
481: That cristes gospel trewely wolde preche;
482: His parisspens devoutly wolde he teche.
483: Benygne he was, and wonder diligent,
484: And in adversitee ful pacient,
485: And swich he was ypreved ofte sithes.
486: Ful looth were hym to cursen for his tithes,
487: But rather wolde he yeven, out of doute,
488: Unto his povre parisspens aboute
489: Of his offryng and eek of his substaunce.
490: He koude in litel thyng have suffisaunce.
491: Wyd was his parisshe, and houses fer asonder,

492: But he ne lefte nat, for reyn ne thonder,
493: In siknesse nor in meschief to visite
494: The ferreste in his parisshe, muche and lite,
495: Upon his feet, and in his hand a staf.
496: This noble ensample to his sheep he yaf,
497: That first he wroghte, and afterward he taughte.
498: Out of the gospel he tho wordes caughte,
499: And this figure he added eek therto,
500: That if gold ruste, what shal iren do?
501: For if a preest be foul, on whom we truste,
502: No wonder is a lewed man to ruste;
503: And shame it is, if a prest take keep,
504: A shiten shepherde and a clene sheep.
505: Wel oghte a preest ensample for to yive,
506: By his clenness, how that his sheep sholde lyve.
507: He sette nat his benefice to hyre
508: And leet his sheep encombred in the myre
509: And ran to londoun unto seinte poules
510: To seken hym a chaunterie for soules,
511: Or with a bretherhed to been withholde;
512: But dwelte at hoom, and kepte wel his folde,
513: So that the wolf ne made it nat myscarie;
514: He was a shepherde and noght a mercenarie.

515: And though he hooly were and vertuous,
516: He was to synful men nat despitous,
517: Ne of his speche daungerous ne digne,
518: But in his techyng discret and benygne.
519: To drawen folk to hevene by fairnesse,
520: By good ensample, this was his bisynesse.
521: But it were any persone obstinat,
522: What so he were, of heigh or lough estat,
523: Hym wolde he snybben sharply for the nonys.
524: A better preest I trowe that nowher noon ys.
525: He waited after no pompe and reverence,
526: Ne maked him a spiced conscience,
527: But cristes loore and his apostles twelve
528: He taughte, but first he folwed it hymselfe.

THE PARSON

There was a good man of religion, too,
A country parson, poor, I warrant you;
But rich he was in holy thought and work.
He was a learned man also, a clerk,
Who Christ's own gospel truly sought to preach;
Devoutly his parishioners would he teach.
Benign he was and wondrous diligent,

Patient in adverse times and well content,
As he was oftentimes proven; always blithe,
He was right loath to curse to get a tithe,
But rather would he give, in case of doubt,
Unto those poor parishioners about,
Part of his income, even of his goods.
Enough with little, coloured all his moods.
Wide was his parish, houses far asunder,
But never did he fail, for rain or thunder,
In sickness, or in sin, or any state,
To visit to the farthest, small and great,
Going afoot, and in his hand, a stave.
This fine example to his flock he gave,
That first he wrought and afterwards he taught;
Out of the gospel then that text he caught,
And this figure he added thereunto-
That, if gold rust, what shall poor iron do?
For if the priest be foul, in whom we trust,
What wonder if a layman yield to lust?
And shame it is, if priest take thought for keep,
A shitty shepherd, shepherding clean sheep.
Well ought a priest example good to give,
By his own cleanness, how his flock should live.

He never let his benefice for hire,
Leaving his flock to flounder in the mire,
And ran to London, up to old Saint Paul's
To get himself a chantry there for souls,
Nor in some brotherhood did he withhold;
But dwelt at home and kept so well the fold
That never wolf could make his plans miscarry;
He was a shepherd and not mercenary.
And holy though he was, and virtuous,
To sinners he was not impiteous,
Nor haughty in his speech, nor too divine,
But in all teaching prudent and benign.
To lead folk into Heaven but by stress
Of good example was his busyness.
But if some sinful one proved obstinate,
Be who it might, of high or low estate,
Him he reproved, and sharply, as I know.
There is nowhere a better priest, I trow.
He had no thirst for pomp or reverence,
Nor made himself a special, spiced conscience,
But Christ's own lore, and His apostles' twelve
He taught, but first he followed it himself.

The Plowman's Portrait

529: With hym ther was a plowman, was his brother,

530: That hadde ylad of dong ful many a fother;

531: A trewe swynkere and a good was he,

532: Lyvyng in pees and parfit charitee.

533: God loved he best with al his hoole herte

534: At alle tymes, thogh him gamed or smerte,

535: And thanne his neighebor right as hymselfe.

536: He wolde thresshe, and therto dyke and delve,

537: For cristes sake, for every povre wight,

538: Withouten hire, if it lay in his myght.

539: His tithes payde he ful faire and wel,

540: Bothe of his propre swynk and his catel.

541: In a tabard he rood upon a mere.

542: Ther was also a reve, and a millere,

543: A somnour, and a pardoner also,

544: A maunciple, and myself -- ther were namo.

THE PLOWMAN

With him there was a plowman, was his brother,

That many a load of dung, and many another

Had scattered, for a good true toiler, he,

Living in peace and perfect charity.

He loved God most, and that with his whole heart
At all times, though he played or plied his art,
And next, his neighbour, even as himself.
He'd thresh and dig, with never thought of pelf,
For Christ's own sake, for every poor wight,
All without pay, if it lay in his might.
He paid his taxes, fully, fairly, well,
Both by his own toil and by stuff he'd sell.
In a tabard he rode upon a mare.
There were also a reeve and miller there;
A summoner, manciple and pardoner,
And these, beside myself, made all there were.

The Miller's Portrait

545: The millere was a stout carl for the nones;
546: Ful byg he was of brawn, and eek of bones.
547: That proved wel, for over al ther he cam,
548: At wrastlynge he wolde have alwey the ram.
549: He was short-sholdred, brood, a thikke knarre;
550: Ther was no dore that he nolde heve of harre,
551: Or breke it at a rennyng with his heed.
552: His berd as any sowe or fox was reed,
553: And therto brood, as though it were a spade.

554: Upon the cop right of his nose he hade
555: A werte, and theron stood a toft of herys,
556: Reed as the brustles of a sowes erys;
557: His nosethirles blake were and wyde.
558: A swerd and bokeler bar he by his syde.
559: His mouth as greet was as a greet forneys.
560: He was a janglere and a goliardeys,
561: And that was moost of synne and harlotries.
562: Wel koude he stelen corn and tollen thries;
563: And yet he hadde a thombe of gold, pardee.
564: A whit cote and a blew hood wered he.
565: A baggepipe wel koude he blowe and sowne,
566: And therwithal he broghte us out of towne.

THE MILLER

The miller was a stout churl, be it known,
Hardy and big of brawn and big of bone;
Which was well proved, for when he went on lam
At wrestling, never failed he of the ram.
He was a chunky fellow, broad of build;
He'd heave a door from hinges if he willed,
Or break it through, by running, with his head.
His beard, as any sow or fox, was red,

And broad it was as if it were a spade.
Upon the coping of his nose he had
A wart, and thereon stood a tuft of hairs,
Red as the bristles in an old sow's ears;
His nostrils they were black and very wide.
A sword and buckler bore he by his side.
His mouth was like a furnace door for size.
He was a jester and could poetize,
But mostly all of sin and ribaldries.
He could steal corn and full thrice charge his fees;
And yet he had a thumb of gold, begad.
A white coat and blue hood he wore, this lad.
A bagpipe he could blow well, be it known,
And with that same he brought us out of town.

The Manciple's Portrait

567: A gentil maunciple was ther of a temple,
568: Of which achatours myghte take exemple
569: For to be wise in byynge of vitaille;
570: For wheither that he payde or took by taille,
571: Algate he wayted so in his achaat
572: That he was ay biforn and in good staat.
573: Now is nat that of God a ful fair grace

574: That swich a lewed mannes wit shal pace
575: The wisdom of an heep of lerned men?
576: Of maistres hadde he mo than thries ten,
577: That weren of lawe expert and curious,
578: Of which ther were a duszeyne in that hous
579: Worthy to been stywardes of rente and lond
580: Of any lord that is in engelond,
581: To make hym lyve by his propre good
582: In honour dettelees (but if he were wood),
583: Or lyve as scarsly as hym list desire;
584: And able for to helpen al a shire
585: In any caas that myghte falle or happe;
586: And yet this manciple sette hir aller cappe.

THE MANCIPLE

There was a manciple from an inn of court,
To whom all buyers might quite well resort
To learn the art of buying food and drink;
For whether he paid cash or not, I think
That he so knew the markets, when to buy,
He never found himself left high and dry.
Now is it not of God a full fair grace
That such a vulgar man has wit to pace

The wisdom of a crowd of learned men?
Of masters had he more than three times ten,
Who were in law expert and curious;
Whereof there were a dozen in that house
Fit to be stewards of both rent and land
Of any lord in England who would stand
Upon his own and live in manner good,
In honour, debtless (save his head were wood),
Or live as frugally as he might desire;
These men were able to have helped a shire
In any case that ever might befall;
And yet this manciple outguessed them all.

The Reeve's Portrait

587: The reve was a sclendre colerik man.
588: His berd was shave as ny as ever he kan;
589: His heer was by his erys ful round yshorn;
590: His top was dokked lyk a preest biforn
591: Ful longe were his legges and ful lene,
592: Ylyk a staf, ther was no calf ysene.
593: Wel koude he kepe a gerner and a bynne;
594: Ther was noon auditour koude on him wynne.
595: Wel wiste he by the droghte and by the reyn

596: The yeldyng of his seed and of his greyn.
597: His lordes sheep, his neet, his dayerye,
598: His swyn, his hors, his stoor, and his pultrye
599: Was hoolly in this reves governynge,
600: And by his covenant yaf the rekenynge,
601: Syn that his lord was twenty yeer of age.
602: Ther koude no man brynge hym in arrerage.
603: Ther nas baillif, ne hierde, nor oother hyne,
604: That he ne knew his sleighte and his covyne;
605: They were adrad of hym as of the deeth.
606: His wonyng was ful faire upon an heeth;
607: With grene trees yshadwed was his place.
608: He koude better than his lord purchase.
609: Ful riche he was astored pryvely:
610: His lord wel koude he plesen subtilly,
611: To yeve and lene hym of his owene good,
612: And have a thank, and yet a cote and hood.
613: In youthe he hadde lerned a good myster;
614: He was a wel good wrighte, a carpenter.
615: This reve sat upon a ful good stot,
616: That was al pomely grey and highte scot.
617: A long surcote of pers upon he hade,
618: And by his syde he baar a rusty blade.

619: Of northfolk was this reve of which I telle,
620: Biside a toun men clepen baldeswelle.
621: Tukked he was as is a frere aboute,
622: And evere he rood the hyndreste of oure route.

THE REEVE

The reeve he was a slender, choleric man
Who shaved his beard as close as razor can.
His hair was cut round even with his ears;
His top was tonsured like a pulpiteer's.
Long were his legs, and they were very lean,
And like a staff, with no calf to be seen.
Well could he manage granary and bin;
No auditor could ever on him win.
He could foretell, by drought and by the rain,
The yielding of his seed and of his grain.
His lord's sheep and his oxen and his dairy,
His swine and horses, all his stores, his poultry,
Were wholly in this steward's managing;
And, by agreement, he'd made reckoning
Since his young lord of age was twenty years;
Yet no man ever found him in arrears.
There was no agent, hind, or herd who'd cheat

But he knew well his cunning and deceit;
They were afraid of him as of the death.
His cottage was a good one, on a heath;
By green trees shaded with this dwelling-place.
Much better than his lord could he purchase.
Right rich he was in his own private right,
Seeing he'd pleased his lord, by day or night,
By giving him, or lending, of his goods,
And so got thanked- but yet got coats and hoods.
In youth he'd learned a good trade, and had been
A carpenter, as fine as could be seen.
This steward sat a horse that well could trot,
And was all dapple-grey, and was named Scot.
A long surcoat of blue did he parade,
And at his side he bore a rusty blade.
Of Norfolk was this reeve of whom I tell,
From near a town that men call Badeswell.
Bundled he was like friar from chin to croup,
And ever he rode hindmost of our troop.

The Summoner's Portrait

623: A somonour was ther with us in that place,

624: That hadde a fyr-reed cherubynnes face,

625: For saucefleem he was, with eyen narwe.
626: As hoot he was and lecherous as a sparwe,
627: With scalled browes blake and piled berd.
628: Of his visage children were aferd.
629: Ther nas quyk-silver, lytarge, ne brymstoon,
630: Boras, ceruce, ne oille of tartre noon;
631: Ne oynement that wolde clense and byte,
632: That hym myghte helpen of his whelkes white,
633: Nor of the knobbes sittynge on his chekes.
634: Wel loved he garleek, oynons, and eek lekes,
635: And for to drynken strong wyn, reed as blood;
636: Thanne wolde he speke and crie as he were wood.
637: And whan that he wel dronken hadde the wyn,
638: Thanne wolde he speke no word but latyn.
639: A fewe termes hadde he, two or thre,
640: That he had lerned out of som decree --
641: No wonder is, he herde it al the day;
642: And eek ye knowen wel how that a jay
643: Kan clepen watte as wel as kan the pope.
644: But whoso koude in oother thyng hym grope,
645: Thanne hadde he spent al his philosophie;
646: Ay questio quid iuris wolde he crie.
647: He was a gentil harlot and a kynde;

648: A better felawe sholde men nocht fynde.
649: He wolde suffre for a quart of wyn
650: A good felawe to have his concubyn
651: A twelf month, and excuse hym atte fulle;
652: Ful prively a fynch eek koude he pulle.
653: And if he foond owher a good felawe,
654: He wolde techen him to have noon awe
655: In swich caas of the ercedekenes curs,
656: But if a mannes soule were in his purs;
657: For in his purs he sholde ypunysshed be.
658: Purs is the ercedekenes helle, seyde he.
659: But wel I woot he lyed right in dede;
660: Of cursyng oghte ech gilty man him drede,
661: For curs wol slee right as assoillyng savith,
662: And also war hym of a significavit.
663: In daunger hadde he at his owene gise
664: The yonge girles of the diocise,
665: And knew hir conseil, and was al hir reed.
666: A gerland hadde he set upon his heed
667: As greet as it were for an ale-stake.
668: A bokeleer hadde he maad hym of a cake.

THE SUMMONER

A summoner was with us in that place,
Who had a fiery-red, cherubic face,
For eczema he had; his eyes were narrow
As hot he was, and lecherous, as a sparrow;
With black and scabby brows and scanty beard;
He had a face that little children feared.
There was no mercury, sulphur, or litharge,
No borax, ceruse, tartar, could discharge,
Nor ointment that could cleanse enough, or bite,
To free him of his boils and pimples white,
Nor of the bosses resting on his cheeks.
Well loved he garlic, onions, aye and leeks,
And drinking of strong wine as red as blood.
Then would he talk and shout as madman would.
And when a deal of wine he'd poured within,
Then would. he utter no word save Latin.
Some phrases had he learned, say two or three,
Which he had garnered out of some decree;
No wonder, for he'd heard it all the day;
And all you know right well that even a jay
Can call out "Wat" as well as can the pope.

But when, for aught else, into him you'd grope,
'Twas found he'd spent his whole philosophy;
Just "Questio quid juris" would he cry.
He was a noble rascal, and a kind;
A better comrade 'twould be hard to find.
Why, he would suffer, for a quart of wine,
Some good fellow to have his concubine
A twelve-month, and excuse him to the full
(Between ourselves, though, he could pluck a gull).
And if he chanced upon a good fellow,
He would instruct him never to have awe,
In such a case, of the archdeacon's curse,
Except a man's soul lie within his purse;
For in his purse the man should punished be.
"The purse is the archdeacon's Hell," said he.
But well I know he lied in what he said;
A curse ought every guilty man to dread
(For curse can kill, as absolution save),
And 'ware significavit to the grave.
In his own power had he, and at ease,
The boys and girls of all the diocese,
And knew their secrets, and by counsel led.
A garland had he set upon his head,

Large as a tavern's wine-bush on a stake;
A buckler had he made of bread they bake.

The Pardoner's Portrait

669: With hym ther rood a gentil pardoner
670: Of rouncivale, his freend and his compeer,
671: That streight was comen fro the court of rome.
672: Ful loude he soong com hider, love, to me!
673: This somonour bar to hym a stif burdoun;
674: Was nevere trompe of half so greet a soun.
675: This pardoner hadde heer as yellow as wex,
676: But smothe it heeng as dooth a strike of flex;
677: By ounces henge his lokkes that he hadde,
678: And therwith he his shuldres overspradde;
679: But thynne it lay, by colpons oon and oon.
680: But hood, for jolitee, wered he noon,
681: For it was trussed up in his walet.
682: Hym thoughte he rood al of the newe jet;
683: Dischevelee, save his cappe, he rood al bare.
684: Swiche glarynge eyen hadde he as an hare.
685: A vernycle hadde he sowed upon his cappe.
686: His walet lay biforn hym in his lappe,
687: Bretful of pardoun, comen from rome al hoot.

688: A voys he hadde as smal as hath a goot.
689: No berd hadde he, ne nevere sholde have;
690: As smothe it was as it were late shave.
691: I trowe he were a geldyng or a mare.
692: But of his craft, fro berwyk into ware,
693: Ne was ther swich another pardonere
694: For in his male he hadde a pilwe-beer,
695: Which that he seyde was oure lady veyl:
696: He seyde he hadde a gobet of the seyl
697: That seint peter hadde, whan that he wente
698: Upon the see, til jhesu crist hym hente.
699: He hadde a croys of latoun ful of stones,
700: And in a glas he hadde pigges bones.
701: But with thise reliques, whan that he fond
702: A povre person dwellynge upon lond,
703: Upon a day he gat hym moore moneye
704: Than that the person gat in monthes tweye;
705: And thus, with feyned flaterye and japes,
706: He made the person and the peple his apes.
707: But trewely to tellen atte laste,
708: He was in chirche a noble ecclesiaste.
709: Wel koude he rede a lessoun or a storie,
710: But alderbest he song an offertorie;

711: For wel he wiste, whan that song was songe,
712: He moste preche and wel affile his tonge
713: To wynne silver, as he ful wel koude;
714: Therefore he song the murierly and loude.

THE PARDONER

With him there rode a gentle pardoner
Of Rouncival, his friend and his compeer;
Straight from the court of Rome had journeyed he.
Loudly he sang "Come hither, love, to me,"
The summoner joining with a burden round;
Was never horn of half so great a sound.
This pardoner had hair as yellow as wax,
But lank it hung as does a strike of flax;
In wisps hung down such locks as he'd on head,
And with them he his shoulders overspread;
But thin they dropped, and stringy, one by one.
But as to hood, for sport of it, he'd none,
Though it was packed in wallet all the while.
It seemed to him he went in latest style,
Dishevelled, save for cap, his head all bare.
As shiny eyes he had as has a hare.
He had a fine veronica sewed to cap.

His wallet lay before him in his lap,
Stuffed full of pardons brought from Rome all hot.
A voice he had that bleated like a goat.
No beard had he, nor ever should he have,
For smooth his face as he'd just had a shave;
I think he was a gelding or a mare.
But in his craft, from Berwick unto Ware,
Was no such pardoner in any place.
For in his bag he had a pillowcase
The which, he said, was Our True Lady's veil:
He said he had a piece of the very sail
That good Saint Peter had, what time he went
Upon the sea, till Jesus changed his bent.
He had a latten cross set full of stones,
And in a bottle had he some pig's bones.
But with these relics, when he came upon
Some simple parson, then this paragon
In that one day more money stood to gain
Than the poor dupe in two months could attain.
And thus, with flattery and suchlike japes,
He made the parson and the rest his apes.
But yet, to tell the whole truth at the last,
He was, in church, a fine ecclesiast.

Well could he read a lesson or a story,
But best of all he sang an offertory;
For well he knew that when that song was sung,
Then might he preach, and all with polished tongue.
To win some silver, as he right well could;
Therefore he sang so merrily and so loud.

715: Now have I toold you soothly, in a clause,
716: Th' estaat, th' array, the nombre, and eek the cause
717: Why that assembled was this compaignye
718: In southwerk at this gentil hostelrye
719: That highte the tabard, faste by the belle.
720: But now is tyme to yow for to telle
721: How that we baren us that ilke nyght,
722: Whan we were in that hostelrie alyght;
723: And after wol I telle of our viage
724: And al the remenaunt of oure pilgrimage.
725: But first I pray yow, of youre curteisye,
726: That ye n' arette it nat my vileynye,
727: Thogh that I pleyedly speke in this mateere,
728: To telle yow hir wordes and hir cheere,
729: Ne thogh I speke hir wordes proprely.

730: For this ye knowen al so wel as I,
731: Whoso shal telle a tale after a man,
732: He moot reherce as ny as evere he kan
733: Everich a word, if it be in his charge,
734: Al speke he never so rudeliche and large,
735: Or ellis he moot telle his tale untrewe,
736: Or feyne thyng, or fynde wordes newe.
737: He may nat spare, althogh he were his brother;
738: He moot as wel seye o word as another.
739: Crist spak hymself ful brode in hooly writ,
740: And wel ye woot no vileynye is it.
741: Eek plato seith, whoso that kan hym rede,
742: The wordes moote be cosyn to the dede.
743: Also I prey yow to foryeve it me,
744: Al have I nat set folk in hir degree
745: Heere in this tale, as that they sholde stonde.
746: My wit is short, ye may wel understonde.
747: Greet chiere made oure hoost us everichon,
748: And to the soper sette he us anon.
749: He served us with vitaille at the beste;
750: Strong was the wyn, and wel to drynke us leste.
751: A semely man oure hooste was withalle
752: For to han been a marchal in an halle.

753: A large man he was with eyen stepe --
754: A fairer burgeys is ther noon in chepe --
755: Boold of his speche, and wys, and wel ytaught,
756: And of manhod hym lakkede right naught.
757: Eek therto he was right a myrie man,
758: And after soper pleyen he bigan,
759: And spak of myrthe amonges othere thynges,
760: Whan that we hadde maad oure rekenynges,
761: And seyde thus: now, lordynges, trewely,
762: Ye been to me right welcome, hertely;
763: For by my trouthe, if that I shal nat lye,
764: I saugh nat this yeer so myrie a compaignye
765: Atones in this herberwe as is now.
766: Fayn wolde I doon yow myrthe, wiste I how.
767: And of a myrthe I am right now bythoght,
768: To doon yow ese, and it shal coste noght.
769: Ye goon to caunterbury -- God yow speede,
770: The blisful martir quite yow youre meede!
771: And wel I woot, as ye goon by the weye,
772: Ye shapen yow to talen and to pleye;
773: For trewely, confort ne myrthe is noon
774: To ride by the weye doumb as a stoon;
775: And therefore wol I maken yow disport,

776: As I seyde erst, and doon yow som confort.
777: And if yow liketh alle by oon assent
778: For to stonden at my juggement,
779: And for to werken as I shal yow seye,
780: To-morwe, whan ye riden by the weye,
781: Now, by my fader soule that is deed,
782: But ye be myrie, I wol yeve yow myn heed!
783: Hoold up youre hondes, withouten moore speche.
784: Oure conseil was nat longe for to seche.
785: Us thoughte it was nought worth to make it wys,
786: And graunted hym withouten moore avys,
787: And bad him seye his voidit as hym leste.
788: Lordynges, quod he, now herkneth for the beste;
789: But taak it nought, I prey yow, in desdeyn.
790: This is the poynt, to speken short and pleyn,
791: That ech of yow, to shorte with oure weye,
792: In this viage shal telle tales tweye
793: To caunterbury-ward, I mene it so,
794: And homward he shal tellen othere two,
795: Of adventures that whilom han bifalle.
796: And which of yow that bereth hym best of alle,
797: That is to seyn, that telleth in this caas
798: Tales of best sentence and moost solaas,

799: Shal have a soper at oure aller cost
800: Heere in this place, sittynge by this post,
801: Whan that we come agayn fro caunterbury.
802: And for to make yow the moore mury,
803: I wol myselven goodly with yow ryde,
804: Right at myn owene cost, and be youre gyde,
805: And whoso wole my juggement withseye
806: Shal paye al that we spenden by the weye.
807: And if ye vouche sauf that it be so,
808: Tel me anon, withouten wordes mo,
809: And I wol erly shape me therfore.
810: This thyng was graunted, and oure othes swore
811: With ful glad herte, and preyden hym also
812: That he wolde vouche sauf for to do so,
813: And that he wolde been oure governour,
814: And oure tales juge and reportour,
815: And sette a soper at a certeyn pris,
816: And we wol reuled been at his devys
817: In heigh and lough; and thus by oon assent
818: We been acorded to his juggement.
819: And therupon the wyn was fet anon;
820: We dronken, and to reste wente echon,
821: Withouten any lenger taryyng.

822: Amorwe, whan that day bigan to sprynge,
823: Up roos oure hoost, and was oure aller cok,
824: And gradrede us togidre alle in a flok,
825: And forth we riden a litel moore than paas
826: Unto the wateryng of seint thomas;
827: And there oure hoost bigan his hors areste
828: And seyde, lordynges, herkneth, if yow leste.
829: Ye woot youre foreward, and I it yow recorde.
830: If even-song and morwe-song accorde,
831: Lat se now who shal telle the firste tale.
832: As evere mote I drynke wyn or ale,
833: Whoso be rebel to my juggement
834: Shal paye for al that by the wey is spent.
835: Now draweth cut, er that we ferrer twynne;
836: He which that hath the shorteste shal bigynne.
837: Sire knyght, quod he, my mayster and my lord,
838: Now draweth cut, for that is myn accord.
839: Cometh neer, quod he, my lady prioresse.
840: And ye, sire clerk, lat be youre shamefastnesse,
841: Ne studieth noght; ley hond to, every man!
842: Anon to drawen every wight bigan,
843: And shortly for to tellen as it was,
844: Were it by aventure, or sort, or cas,

845: The sothe is this, the cut fil to the knyght,
846: Of which ful blithe and glad was every wyght,
847: And telle he moste his tale, as was resoun,
848: By foreward and by composicioun,
849: As ye han herd; what nedeth wordes mo?
850: And whan this goode man saugh that it was so,
851: As he that wys was and obedient
852: To kepe his foreward by his free assent,
853: He seyde, syn I shal bigynne the game,
854: What, welcome be the cut, a goddes name!
855: Now lat us ryde, and herkneth what I seye.
856: And with that word we ryden forth oure weye,
857: And he bigan with right a myrie cheere
858: His tale anon, and seyde as ye may heere.

PROLOGUE

Now have I told you briefly, in a clause,
The state, the array, the number, and the cause
Of the assembling of this company
In Southwark, at this noble hostelry
Known as the Tabard Inn, hard by the Bell.
But now the time is come wherein to tell

How all we bore ourselves that very night
When at the hostelry we did alight.
And afterward the story I engage
To tell you of our common pilgrimage.
But first, I pray you, of your courtesy,
You'll not ascribe it to vulgarity
Though I speak plainly of this matter here,
Retailing you their words and means of cheer;
Nor though I use their very terms, nor lie.
For this thing do you know as well as I:
When one repeats a tale told by a man,
He must report, as nearly as he can,
Every least word, if he remember it,
However rude it be, or how unfit;
Or else he may be telling what's untrue,
Embellishing and fictionizing too.
He may not spare, although it were his brother;
He must as well say one word as another.
Christ spoke right broadly out, in holy writ,
And, you know well, there's nothing low in it.
And Plato says, to those able to read:
"The word should be the cousin to the deed."
Also, I pray that you'll forgive it me

If I have not set folk, in their degree
Here in this tale, by rank as they should stand.
My wits are not the best, you'll understand.
Great cheer our host gave to us, every one,
And to the supper set us all anon;
And served us then with victuals of the best.
Strong was the wine and pleasant to each guest.
A seemly man our good host was, withal,
Fit to have been a marshal in some hall;
He was a large man, with protruding eyes,
As fine a burgher as in Cheapside lies;
Bold in his speech, and wise, and right well taught,
And as to manhood, lacking there in naught.
Also, he was a very merry man,
And after meat, at playing he began,
Speaking of mirth among some other things,
When all of us had paid our reckonings;
And saying thus: "Now masters, verily
You are all welcome here, and heartily:
For by my truth, and telling you no lie,
I have not seen, this year, a company
Here in this inn, fitter for sport than now.
Fain would I make you happy, knew I how.

And of a game have I this moment thought
To give you joy, and it shall cost you naught.
"You go to Canterbury; may God speed
And the blest martyr soon requite your meed.
And well I know, as you go on your way,
You'll tell good tales and shape yourselves to play;
For truly there's no mirth nor comfort, none,
Riding the roads as dumb as is a stone;
And therefore will I furnish you a sport,
As I just said, to give you some comfort.
And if you like it, all, by one assent,
And will be ruled by me, of my judgment,
And will so do as I'll proceed to say,
Tomorrow, when you ride upon your way,
Then, by my father's spirit, who is dead,
If you're not gay, I'll give you up my head.
Hold up your hands, nor more about it speak."
Our full assenting was not far to seek;
We thought there was no reason to think twice,
And granted him his way without advice,
And bade him tell his verdict just and wise,
"Masters," quoth he, "here now is my advice;
But take it not, I pray you, in disdain;

This is the point, to put it short and plain,
That each of you, beguiling the long day,
Shall tell two stories as you wend your way
To Canterbury town; and each of you
On coming home, shall tell another two,
All of adventures he has known befall.
And he who plays his part the best of all,
That is to say, who tells upon the road
Tales of best sense, in most amusing mode,
Shall have a supper at the others' cost
Here in this room and sitting by this post,
When we come back again from Canterbury.
And now, the more to warrant you'll be merry,
I will myself, and gladly, with you ride
At my own cost, and I will be your guide.
But whosoever shall my rule gainsay
Shall pay for all that's bought along the way.
And if you are agreed that it be so,
Tell me at once, or if not, tell me no,
And I will act accordingly. No more."
This thing was granted, and our oaths we swore,
With right glad hearts, and prayed of him, also,
That he would take the office, nor forgo

The place of governor of all of us,
Judging our tales; and by his wisdom thus
Arrange that supper at a certain price,
We to be ruled, each one, by his advice
In things both great and small; by one assent,
We stood committed to his government.
And thereupon, the wine was fetched anon;
We drank, and then to rest went every one,
And that without a longer tarrying.
Next morning, when the day began to spring,
Up rose our host, and acting as our cock,
He gathered us together in a flock,
And forth we rode, a jog-trot being the pace,
Until we reached Saint Thomas' watering-place.
And there our host pulled horse up to a walk,
And said: "Now, masters, listen while I talk.
You know what you agreed at set of sun.
If even-song and morning-song are one,
Let's here decide who first shall tell a tale.
And as I hope to drink more wine and ale,
Whoso proves rebel to my government
Shall pay for all that by the way is spent.
Come now, draw cuts, before we farther win,

And he that draws the shortest shall begin.
Sir knight," said he, "my master and my lord,
You shall draw first as you have pledged your word.
Come near," quoth he, "my lady prioress:
And you, sir clerk, put by your bashfulness,
Nor ponder more; out hands, flow, every man!"
At once to draw a cut each one began,
And, to make short the matter, as it was,
Whether by chance or whatsoever cause,
The truth is, that the cut fell to the knight,
At which right happy then was every wight.
Thus that his story first of all he'd tell,
According to the compact, it befell,
As you have heard. Why argue to and fro?
And when this good man saw that it was so,
Being a wise man and obedient
To plighted word, given by free assent,
He slid: "Since I must then begin the game,
Why, welcome be the cut, and in God's name!
Now let us ride, and hearken what I say."
And at that word we rode forth on our way;
And he began to speak, with right good cheer,
His tale anon, as it is written here.

Commentary:

The most popular part of the *Canterbury Tales* is the *General Prologue*, which has long been admired for the lively, individualized portraits it offers. More recent criticism has reacted against this approach, claiming that the portraits are indicative of social types, part of a tradition of social satire, "estates satire", and insisting that they should not be read as individualized character portraits like those in a novel. Yet it is sure that Chaucer's capacity of human sympathy, like Shakespeare's, enabled him to go beyond the conventions of his time and create images of individualized human subjects that have been found not merely credible but endearing in every period from his own until now.

It is the *General Prologue* that serves to establish firmly the framework for the entire story-collection: the pilgrimage that risks being turned into a tale-telling competition. The title

"General Prologue" is a modern invention, although a few manuscripts call it prologus. There are very few major textual differences between the various manuscripts. The structure of the General Prologue is a simple one. After an elaborate introduction in lines 1 - 34, the narrator begins the series of portraits (lines 35 - 719). These are followed by a report of the Host's suggestion of a tale-telling contest and its acceptance (lines 720 - 821). On the following morning the pilgrims assemble and it is decided that the Knight shall tell the first tale (lines 822 - 858).

Nothing indicates when Chaucer began to compose the General Prologue and there are no variations between manuscripts that might suggest that he revised it after making an initial version. It is sometimes felt that the last two portraits, of Pardoner and Summoner, may have been added later but there is no evidence to support this. The portraits do not follow any particular order after the first few pilgrims have been introduced;

the Knight who comes first is socially the highest person present (the Host calls him 'my mayster and my lord' in line 837).

The **Knight** is the picture of a professional soldier, who comes straight from foreign wars with clothes all stained from his armour. His travels are remarkably vast; he has fought in Prussia, Lithuania, Russia, Spain, North Africa, and Turkey against pagans, Moors, and Saracens, killing many. The variety of lords for whom he has fought suggests that he is some kind of mercenary, but it seems that Chaucer may have known people at the English court with similar records. The narrator insists: "He was a verray, parfit, gentil knight," but some modern readers, ill at ease with idealized warriors, and doubtful about the value of the narrator's enthusiasms, have questioned this evaluation.

His son, the **Squire**, is by contrast an elegant young man about court, with fashionable clothes and romantic skills of singing and dancing.

Their **Yeoman** is a skilled servant in charge of the knight's land; his dress is described in detail, but not his character.

The **Prioress** is one of the most fully described pilgrims, and it is with her that we first notice the narrator's refusal to judge the value of what he sees. Her portrait is more concerned with how she eats than how she prays. She is rather too kind to animals, while there is no mention of her kindness to people. Finally, she has a costly set of beads around her arm, which should be used for prayer, but end in a brooch inscribed ambiguously *Amor vincit omnia* (Virgil's "Love conquers all"). She has a Nun with her and "three" priests. This is a problem in counting the total number of pilgrims as twenty-nine: the word 'three' must have been added later on account of the rhyme, while only one Nun's Priest is in fact given a Tale and he is not the subject of a portrait here.

The **Monk** continues the series of incongruous church-people; in this description the narratorial voice often seems to be echoing the monk's comments in indirect quotation. He has many horses at home; he does not respect his monastic rule, but goes hunting instead of praying. The narrator expresses surprisingly strong support for the Monk's chosen style of living.

The **Friar** follows, and by now it seems clear that Chaucer has a special interest in church-people who so confidently live in contradiction with what is expected of them; the narrator, though, gives no sign of feeling any problem, as when he reports that the "worthy" Friar avoided the company of lepers and beggars. By this point the alert reader is alert to the narrator's too-ready use of 'worthy' but critics are still unsure of what Chaucer's intended strategy was here.

The **Merchant** is briefly described, and is followed by the **Clerk of Oxenford** (Oxford) who is as sincere a student as could be wished: poor, skinny like his horse, and book-loving.

The **Sergeant at Law** is an expert lawyer, and with him is the **Franklin**, a gentleman from the country whose main interest is food: "It snowed in his house of meat and drink." Then Chaucer adds a brief list of five tradesmen belonging to the same fraternity, dressed in its uniform: a **Haberdasher**, a **Carpenter**, a **Weaver**, a **Dyer** and a **Tapestry-maker**. None of these is described here or given a Tale to tell later. They have brought their **Cook** with them, he is an expert, his skills are listed, as well as some unexpected personal details. The **Shipman** who is described next is expert at sailing and at stealing the wine his passengers bring with them; he is also a dangerous character, perhaps a pirate.

The **Doctor of Physic** is praised by the narrator, "He was a verray parfit praktisour," and there follows a list of the fifteen main masters of medieval medicine; the fact that he, like most doctors in satire, "loved gold in special" is added at the end.

The **Wife of Bath** is the only woman, beside the Prioress and her companion Nun, on this pilgrimage. Again the narrator is positive: "She was a worthy womman al hir live" and he glides quickly over the five husbands that later figure in such detail in her Prologue, where also we may read how she became deaf. She is a business woman of strong self-importance, and her elaborate dress is a sign of her character as well as her wealth.

From her, we pass to the most clearly idealized portrait in the Prologue, the **Parson**. While the previous churchmen were all interested in things of this world more than in true Christianity, the Parson represents the opposite pole.

He is accompanied by his equally idealized brother, the **Plowman**, "a true swinker" (hard-working man) "Living in peace and perfect charity." If the Parson is the model churchman, the Plowman is the model lay Christian, as in *Piers Plowman*, one who is always ready to help the poor. It is sometimes suggested that the choice of a Plowman shows that Chaucer had read a version of *Piers Plowman*.

The series then ends with a mixed group of people of whom most are quite terrible: the *Miller* is a kind of ugly thug without charm. The *Manciple* is praised as a skillful steward in a household of lawyers; they are clever men but he is cleverest, since he cheats them all, the narrator cheerfully tells us. The *Reeve* is the manager of a farm, and he too is lining his own pocket.

Last we learn of the *Summoner* and the *Pardoner*, two grotesque figures on the edge of the church, living by it without

being priests; one administers the church courts, the other sells pardons (indulgences). Children are afraid of the Summoner's face, he is suffering from some kind of skin disease; he is corrupt, as the narrator tells us after naively saying "A better fellow should men not find." But it is the Pardoner who is really odd, and modern critics have enjoyed discussing just what Chaucer meant by saying: "I trowe he were a gelding or a mare". With his collection of pigs' bones in a glass, that he uses as relics of saints to delude simple poor people, he is a monster in every way, and he concludes the list of pilgrims.

The narrator of this Prologue is Chaucer, but this pilgrim Chaucer is not to be too simply identified with the author Chaucer. He explains that in what follows, he is only acting as the faithful reporter of what others have said, without adding or omitting anything; he must not then be blamed for what he reports. Neither must he be blamed if he does not put people in the order of their social rank, "My wit is short, ye may well

understand." This persona continues to profess the utter naivety that we have already noted in his uncritical descriptions of the pilgrims.

It is in this way, too, that we should approach the conclusion of the Prologue. Here the **Host** of the Tabard Inn (Harry Bailey, a historical figure) decides to go with them and ironically it is he, not Chaucer, who proposes the story-telling contest that gives the framework of the Tales. He will also be the ultimate judge of which is the best: "of best sentence and most solas." He is, after all, well prepared by his job to know about the tales people tell! One model for the literary competition would seem to be the meetings of people interested in poetry, known in French as *puys*, with which Chaucer would have been familiar.

REVISION

REVISION

I. Choose the correct answer:

1. The development of the English language to its current standard can be followed over a period of about years.
(a) 1000 (b) 2000 (c) 3000

2. The first people of the British Isles were Britons and belonged to a race.
(a) Germanic (b) Ind-European (c) Celtic

3. English is the name given to the English language spoken roughly from the 5th to the 11th centuries.
(a) Old (b) Middle (c) Modern

4. Another term for Old English is
(a) Norman (b) German (c) Anglo-Saxon

5. The ***Aber*** in *Aberdeen* was the word for “mouth” (of a river).
(a) Anglo-Saxon (b) Celtic (c) Latin

6. Which of the following is NOT an Old English work?
- (a) Beowulf
 - (b) The Canterbury Tales
 - (c) The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle
7. is the name given to the English language roughly from the 11th to the 15th centuries.
- (a) Old
 - (b) Middle
 - (c) Modern
8. is the first great narrative poem of adventure written in English.
- (a) Beowulf
 - (b) The Canterbury Tales
 - (c) The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle
9. The pronouns 'they', 'them' and 'their' are of origin.
- (a) Latin
 - (b) French
 - (c) Danish
- 10..... supplied most of the everyday vocabulary as well as all the structural words which hold the language together- the pronouns, conjunctions and prepositions.
- (a) Greek
 - (b) Latin
 - (c) Old English

11. The Roman word for a town or a fortified camp was

.....

- (a) burgh (b) strata (c) castra

12. Titles such as *prince* and *princess*, *duke* and *duchess*, *count* and *countess* were brought into the English language by the

.....

- (a) Romans (b) Normans (c) Danes

13. The languages spoken by the people of Europe and a large part of Asia have come from a common stock and from the most important family known as the languages.

- (a) Germanic (b) Latin (c) Indo-European

14. The English days of the week were named after the

.....

- (a) Roman emperors
(b) old Teutonic gods that the Saxons worshipped
(c) The Anglo-Saxon kings

15..... is taking a word from one language and incorporating it into another.

- (a) Coinage (b) Borrowing (c) Derivation

16. *The Canterbury Tales* was written in English.
(a) Old (b) Middle (c) Modern
17. is a language considered as below the level of educated speech and consists either of newly made words or words in general use which are employed with some especial meaning.
(a) Argot (b) Jargon (c) Slang
18. is a process in which two different words are joined together to denote one thing.
(a) Blending (b) Compounding (c) Backformation
- 19..... is shortening or reducing long words.
(a) Clipping (b) Blending (c) Compounding
- 20..... is naming things by imitating the sounds that are associated with them.
(a) Onomatopoeia (b) Conversion (c) Backformation

II. Indicate whether the following statements are TRUE or FALSE and correct the false ones:

1. The earliest period in the history of the English language begins with the migration of certain Germanic tribes from the Continent to Britain in the fifth century A. D.
2. The period of Old English extends roughly from the twelfth century through the fifteenth.
3. The English language did not begin in England.
4. The word *Car* or *Caer*, as in Carlisle and Carnarvon, meaning castle is of Danish origin.
5. *The Canterbury Tales* is the first great narrative poem of adventure written in English.
6. Names for parts of the body, such as *eye*, *nose*, *mouth*, *foot*, *hand*, *heart* came from Latin.
7. The preposition *per* as in *per cent* and *per annum* is of Greek origin.
8. The words *clergy*, *religion*, *bible*, *friar*, *altar*, *miracle*, and *preach* came from Norman French.
9. Animals take a French name when alive, but have an old English name when killed and prepared for the table.
10. The English took the simple method of counting in the Arabic figures - 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, etc – from the Persians.

11. An acronym is a word formed from the initial letters of a few words in a phrase or a name.
12. Conversion is a change in the function of a verb without changing its form.

III. Write short notes on the following.

1. The heritage of Rome I.
2. The Danish contribution to the English language.
3. The Celtic heritage.
4. The Anglo-Saxon borrowings.
5. The heritage of Rome II and the beginning of written English.
6. The contribution of Latin and Greek to the development of Middle English.
7. The contribution of the Arabs and Persians to the development of Middle English.
8. The role of slang in enriching the vocabulary of the English language.

IV. Answer the following questions:

1. The arrival of Augustine and his monks in England in A.D. 597 marks the beginning of written English and of a higher

type of civilization in England. Discuss this statement highlighting the Roman influence on the English language.

2. The Norman Conquest had far-reaching effects on the English language in many directions. Discuss this statement.
3. What role did modern scientific inventions play in introducing new words into the English language?
4. Mention some of the ways in which the English people have increased their native vocabulary. Give examples to substantiate your answer.
5. What influence did Christianity have on Old English?

V. Give the origin and meaning of each of the following words.

Illustrate your answer with examples.

strata

moneta

kirk

dale

castra

Aber

tun (ton)

burgh

thorpe

vinum

Car (Caer)

ham

VI. Fill out the following table:

Affix	Origin	Meaning	Example
tele-	-----	-----	-----
re-	-----	-----	-----
-ness	-----	-----	-----
anti-	-----	-----	-----
-er/-or	-----	-----	-----
auto-	-----	-----	-----
-hood	-----	-----	-----
com-	-----	-----	-----
pro-	-----	-----	-----
-ism	-----	-----	-----
ad-	-----	-----	-----
de-	-----	-----	-----
-able	-----	-----	-----
bi-	-----	-----	-----
-ment	-----	-----	-----
cata-	-----	-----	-----
-ship	-----	-----	-----
-hood	-----	-----	-----

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