

**The Old English (or Anglo-Saxon)
& Middle English Period**

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

OLD ENGLISH PERIOD 410 - 1066 A.D.

- 410 Romans leave Britain
- after that the Celts ask the Angles, the Saxons and the Jutes for protection against the Picts



- the Angles, Saxons and Jutes decide to settle in England and the Celts are driven to the borders of the British Isles
- nowadays there are still people who speak the Gaelic language, these people stem from the original Celts



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

OLD ENGLISH PERIOD 410 - 1066 A.D.

- 793 First Viking invasions
- 878 King Alfred defeats the Danes
- 886 Danelaw established



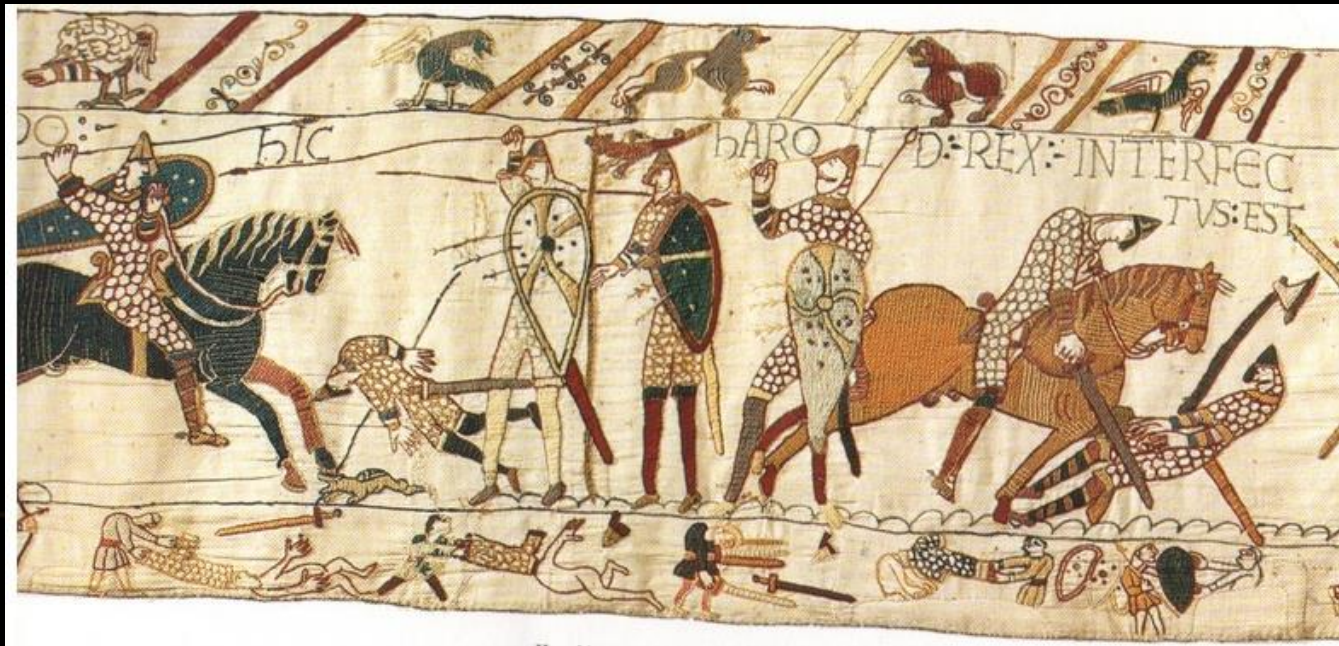


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HISTORICAL CONTEXT

OLD ENGLISH PERIOD 410 - 1066 A.D.

- 991 new Viking invasions, Danish king takes the throne
- 1066 Last Anglo-British king: Harold II
- 1066 Battle of Hastings: Norman Conquest.



THE SAXON REPORT

BBC

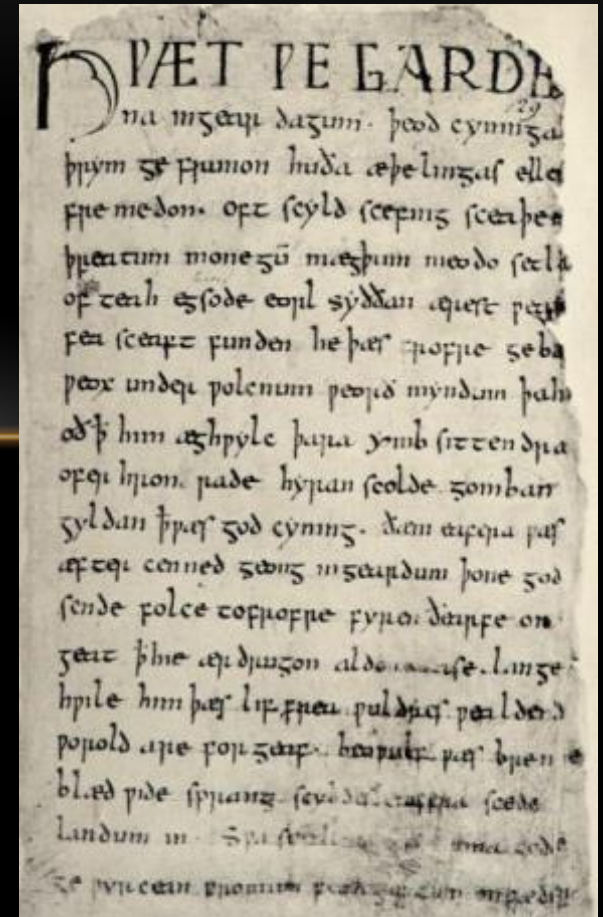


OLD ENGLISH LITERATURE

- Heroic Germanic Style
- Christian
- Or a combination of the two

Characteristics

- Alliteration
- Ceasura



BEOWULF

- 3182 lines of alliterative verse
- Epic hero



BEOWULF FIGHTS THREE BIG FIGHTS



With Grendel



With Grendel's mother



With a dragon

THE FOLLOWING **PREVIEW** HAS BEEN APPROVED FOR
ALL AUDIENCES
BY THE MOTION PICTURE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

BEOWULF IS AN EPIC HERO!

He is of royal descent

He is loyal; he travels to Hrothgar's kingdom to help him

He is extremely brave and strong

He becomes a wise ruler



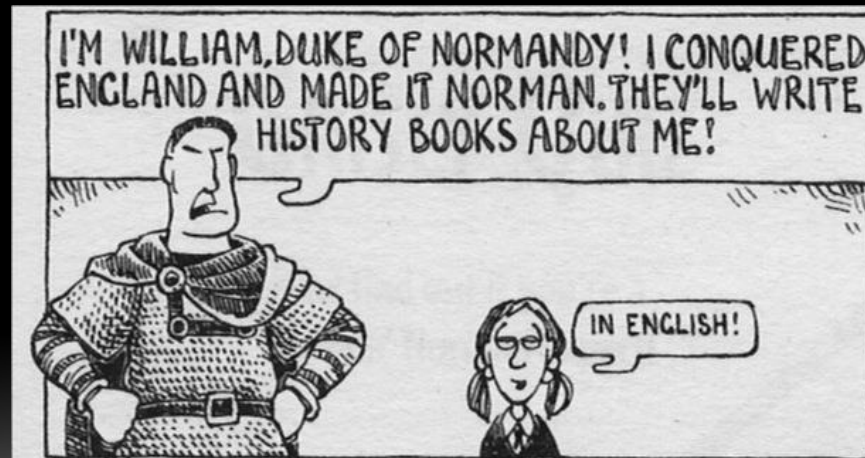
OLD ENGLISH



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

MIDDLE ENGLISH PERIOD 1066-1500 A.D.

- 1066 Battle of Hastings: Norman Conquest.
- 1086 Domesday book written
- 1215 Magna Carta



THE DOOMSDAY BOOK

"While spending the Christmas time of 1085 in Gloucester, William had deep speech with his counsellors and sent men all over England to each shire to find out what or how much each landholder had in land and livestock and what it was worth".

In the following clip two French representatives of William visit an English peasant who doesn't even know yet that his country is now ruled by a French king. They want to know everything about his possessions.



MIDDLE ENGLISH LITERATURE

- Many French influences
- About courtly love and chivalrous knights

Characteristics

- French end-rhyme
- Regular syllable patterns



THE CANTERBURY TALES

- The Canterbury Tales (Middle English: Tales of Caunterbury) is a collection of over 20 stories written in Middle English by Geoffrey Chaucer at the end of the 14th century, during the time of the Hundred Years' War. The tales (mostly written in verse, although some are in prose) are presented as part of a story-telling contest by a group of pilgrims as they travel together on a journey from Southwark to the shrine of Saint Thomas Becket at Canterbury Cathedral. The prize for this contest is a free meal at the Tabard Inn at Southwark on their return.

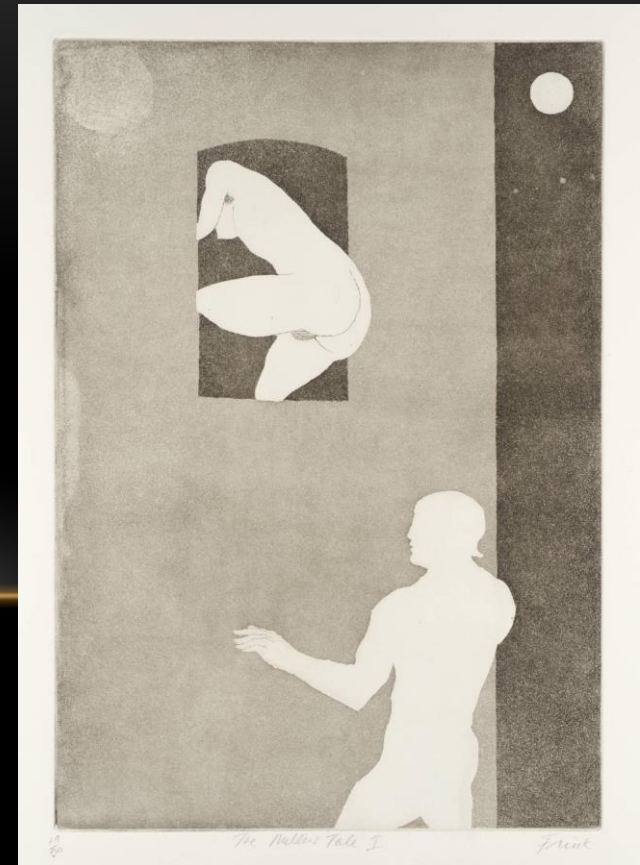
from Wikipedia

FROM THE GENERAL PROLOGUE OF THE CANTERBURY TALES

**Wan that
Aprille with
his sure-es
so-tuh
The drewgt
of march
hath pear-
said to the
row-tuh**

THE MILLER'S TALE

- From Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* (late 14th century)
- Link-in-frame story



THE MILLER'S TALE

