

British Culture Classes



HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

A brief early time line



- The Celts
- The Romans – 1-5th Century
- Old English 1st century....
- The Angles, Danish and Jutes – mid 1st century
- The Vikings – end 1st to 11th Century
- The Christian Missionaries – arr mid 1st century
- The Normans – 11th Century
- Middle English 12-15th Century
- French the language of the court, English of the people
- English used in Parliament 14th century
- Latin – Wycliffe bible 1384

- The Great Vowel shift – 1400
- First printing press 1476

Latin Christian Missionaries' words



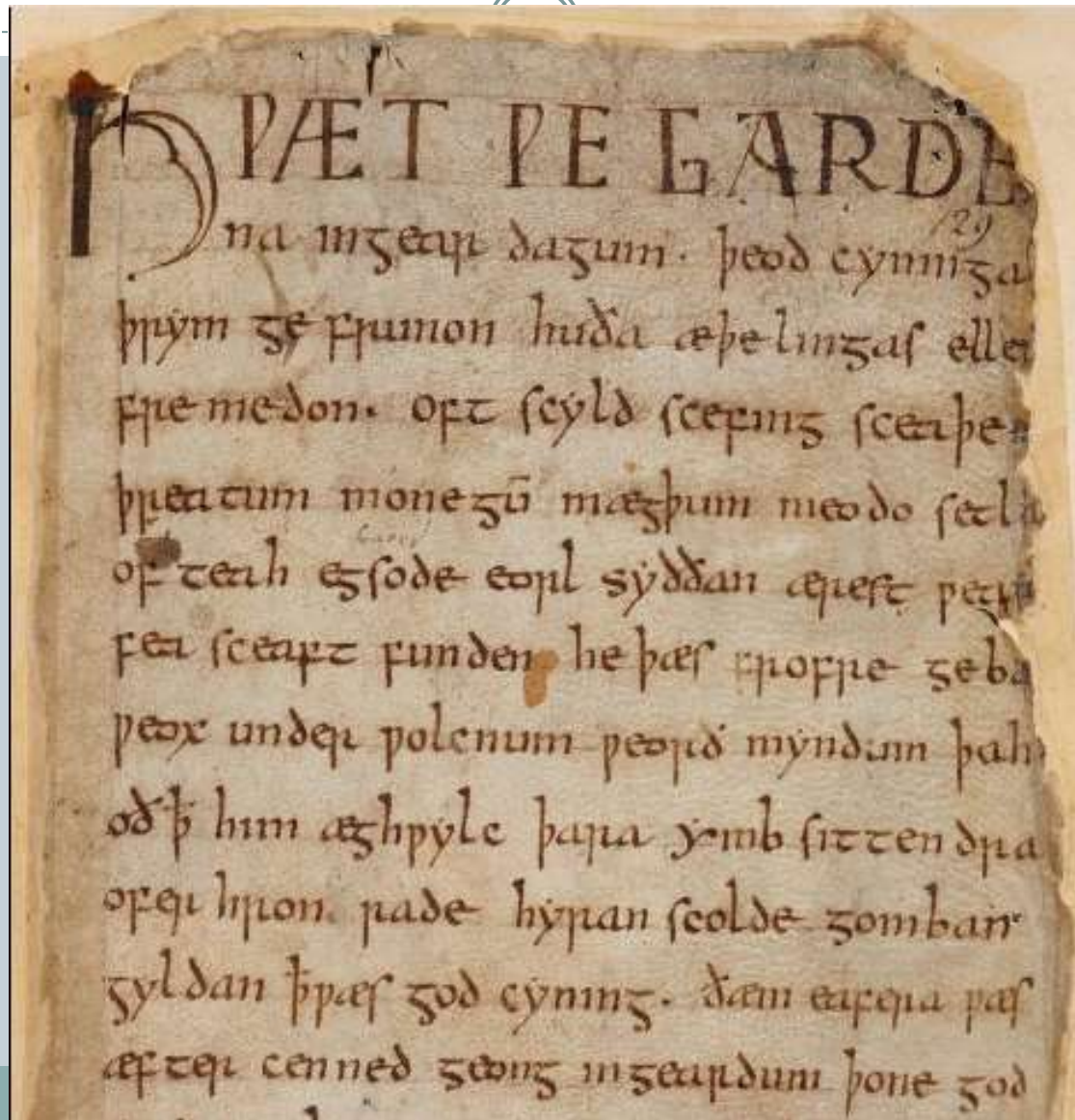
- Abbot, alms, altar, anchor, angel, ark, cancer, candle, canon, cap, cedar, cell, chalice, chest, cleric, creed, cucumber, deacon, demon, disciple, elephant, epistle, fever, font, giant, grammatical, history, hymn, idol, laurel, lentil, litany, lobster, marshmallow, martyr, mass, master, mat, noon, nun, offer, organ, oyster, paper, place plant, pope, priest, prophet, psalm, purple, radish, relic, rule, sabbath, school, scorpion, shrine, sock, temple, tiger, turtle, tunic, verse,

The Vikings 8th – 11th Century

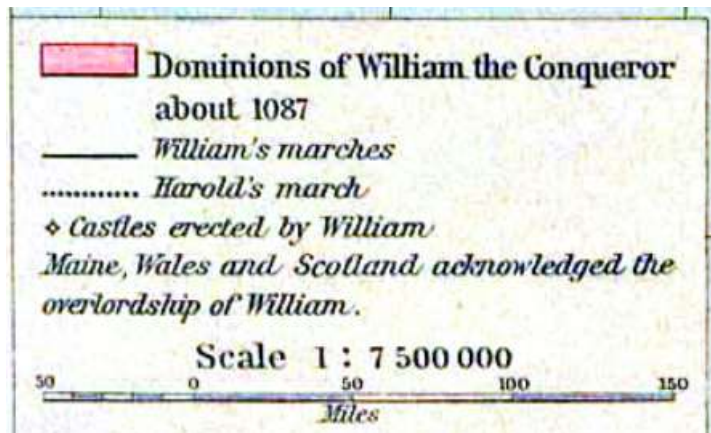
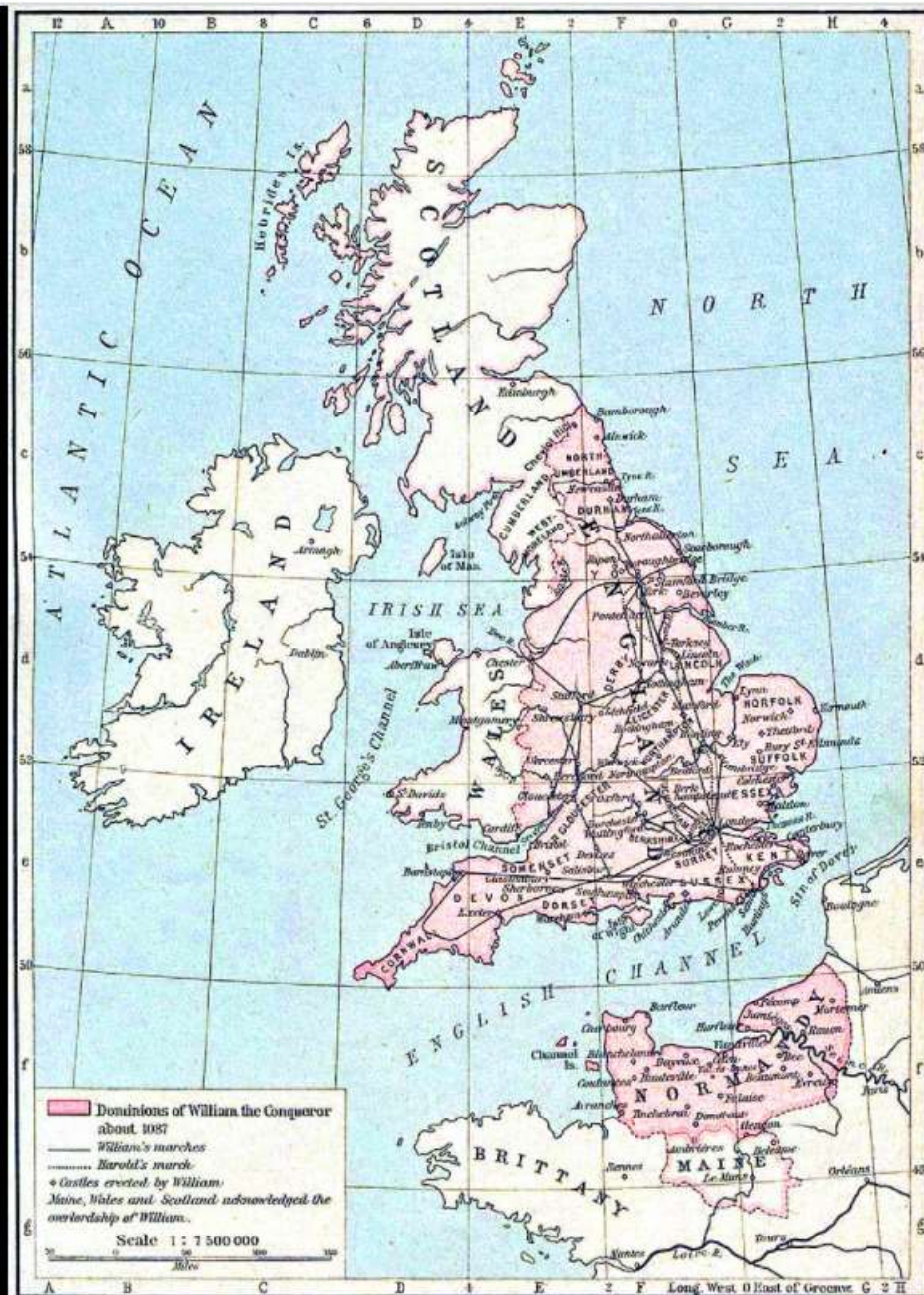


- Are, awkward, band, bank, birth, both, brink, bull, call, slip, crawl, die, direct, drag, dregs, egg, fellow, fault, freckle, gap, gasp, get, give, glitter, guess, harbour, hit, ill, keel, keg, kid, knife, leg, lift, loan, low, meek, muck, odd, race, raise, ransack, reindeer, root, rotten, rugged, scab, scare, score, scowl, scrap, seat, sister, sky, slaughter, sly, stack, steak, take, their, they, thrust, trust, want, weak, window.

Old English – Beowulf c 1,000



Dǽt se gearde
na in gearum. þeod cýningas
þrym se framon huda æþelingas elles
fre medon. oft scýld sceþing sceþe
þreatum monegū mægþum meodo secla
of teah esode eorl syddan afeft þe
fea sceapz funden he þæs eþofre seba
þeox under polenum þeod myndum þah
od þ him æghpyle þara ymb sitten dpa
ofeþ hron. þade hyran scolde zomban
zyl dan þæs zod cýning. ðam æfeþa þas
æfteþ cenned zowng in gearum þone zod



Middle English - 12th to mid 15th century.

Impact of the French



- Administration: Bailiff, liberty, majesty, mayor, tax,
- Religion: abbey, clergy, convent, immortality, solemn, vicar, virgin
- Law: accuse, arson, bail, crime, evidence, goal, heir, punishment, sue,
- Military: ambush, army, captain, defend, enemy, lance, navy, peace, spy
- Fashion: brooch, button, cloak dress, emerald, gown, pearl, robe
- Food and drink: appetite, beef, dinner, gravy, mustard, mutton, oyster, pork, saucer, spice, toast
- Learning and art: art, beauty, grammar, image, music, noun pen, poet, sculpture
- General: action, blue, bucket, ceiling, city, dance, flower, foreign, leisure, ocean, people, please, scarlet, special, stomach, usual, wait.



- Latin borrowings in Middle English
- Abject, adjacent, contempt, distract, genius, history, include, infinite, legal, magnify, necessary, ornate, picture, pulpit, reject, solar, temperature, ulcer.....



Old English

French

Latin

Kingly

royal

regal

Ask

question

interrogate

Fast

firm

secure

Rise

mount

ascend

Holy

sacred

consecrated

Time

age

epoch

Canterbury Tales



Introduction to Canterbury Tales

Whan that Aprill, with his [shoures soote](#)
The [droghte](#) of March hath perced to the roote
And bathed every [veyne](#) in [swich](#) licour,
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
Whan [Zephirus eek](#) with his sweete breeth
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
The tendre [croppes](#), and the yonge [sonne](#)
Hath in the Ram his halfe cours yronne,
And [smale foweles](#) maken melodye,
That slepen al the nyght with open eye-
(So [priketh hem](#) Nature in hir [corages](#));
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages
And [palmeres](#) for to seken [straunge strondes](#)
To [ferne halwes](#), [kowthe](#) in [sondry londes](#);
And specially from every shires ende
Of Engelond, to Caunterbury they wende,
The [hooly blisful](#) martir for to [seke](#)
That [hem](#) hath holpen, whan that they were [seeke](#).

When in April the sweet showers fall
That pierce March's drought to the root and all
And bathed every vein in liquor that has power
To generate therein and sire the flower;
When Zephyr also has with his sweet breath,
Filled again, in every holt and heath,
The tender shoots and leaves, and the young sun
His half-course in the sign of the Ram 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 folk do long to go on pilgrimage,
And palmers to go seeking out strange strands,
To distant shrines well known in distant lands.
And specially from every shire's end
Of England they to Canterbury went,
The holy blessed martyr there to seek
Who helped them when they lay so ill and weak

William Caxton 1476



of hys fader
we corrected my book /
myghty god that folowe / and accompe
nce and grace to achyve / and your dedes of merce
our and glorie / and that alle ye that shal n
be the folwe of the sayd Sefferey chaunter first auctor / and
ker of hys book / And also that alle we that shal see and rede
therin / may so take and understode the good and vertuous say
les / that it may so prouffite / into the helthe of our folwes / that
after hys sort and transforpe by we may come to everlasting
by in heven / Amen

By William Caxton

The Renaissance 15th to 17th century



- French words....

Alloy, anatomy, battery, bayonet, bigot, bizarre, chocolate, colonel, comrade, detail, docility, duel, entrance, explore, grotesque, invite, moustache, muscle, passport, probability, shock, ticket, case, vogue, volunteer

- Spanish

Alligator, anchovy, apricot, armada, potato, port, tobacco etc...

With thanks to Shakespeare 1564 –1616



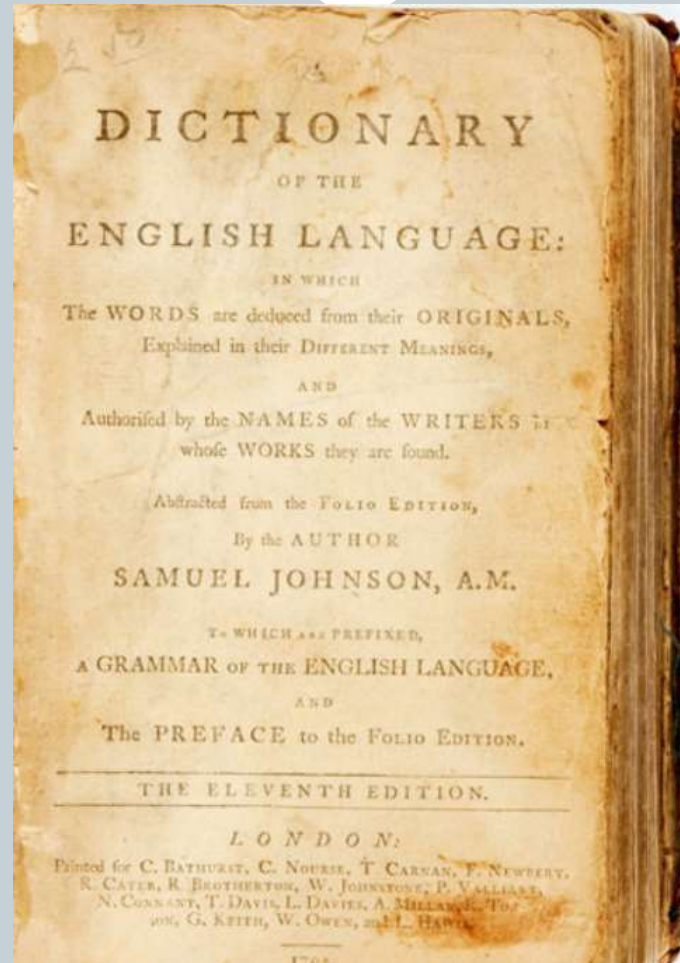
- A foregone conclusion (Othello)
- More in sorrow than in anger (Hamlet)
- A tower of strength (Richard III)
- To the manner born (Hamlet)
- I must be cruel only to be kind (Hamlet)

And the King James Bible 1611



- My brother's keeper
- The apple of his eye
- The root of the matter
- The salt of the earth
- The straight and narrow

Samuel Johnson's Dictionary 1755



His home in Gough Square



Enla

The next 300 years!



- new words in the 1960s and 70s

Aerobics, afro, biofeedback, blue movie, childproof, command module, computer graphics, gay, hovercraft, skateboard, skyjacking, software, VAT, zip code

- More new words:

Brexit, tech, to google, input, social media etc etc..