

## PRELIMS 2: EARLY MEDIEVAL LITERATURE TIMELINE

### Historical events

from c. 400: Anglo-Saxon settlements

597: St Augustine arrives to convert the English

c. 625: Ship-burial at Sutton Hoo

642: Death & martyrdom of Oswald, king of Northumbria

687: Death of St Cuthbert

715: Death of St Guthlac

757-96: Offa king of Mercia

793: Viking raid of Lindisfarne

869: Vikings defeat & kill Edmund, king of East Anglia

871-99: Alfred the Great king of Wessex

878: Alfred defeats Vikings at the Battle of Edington; Vikings settle in East Anglia

899-924: Edward the Elder king of Wessex

924-39: Athelstan king of Wessex and first king of all England

937: Battle of Brunanburh: Athelstan defeats an alliance of Scots and Scandinavians

957-75: Edgar king of England

978-1016: Æthelred 'the Unready' king of England

990-1015: Intermittent Viking raids of increasing ferocity

1013: England submits to Swein, king of Denmark

1016: Cnut defeats Edmund Ironside

1016-35: Cnut king of England and Denmark

1036: Alfred (brother of Edward the Confessor) murdered

1042-65: Edward the Confessor king of England

1065-66: Harold II Godwinson king of England

14/10/1066: Battle of Hastings

1066-87: William the Conqueror king of England

1087-1100: William II 'Rufus' king of England

1096-99: First Crusade and conquest of Jerusalem

1100-1135: Henry I king of England

### Literary events

**L** = Latin    **F** = French    **O/ME** = Old/Middle English

c. 540: Gildas writes *De excidio Britanniae* **L** about the defeat of the British

c. 670? Cædmon's Hymn **OE**

c. 700: 'Lindisfarne Gospels' **L** decorated manuscript

731: Bede finishes *Ecclesiastical History* **L**

c. 740: Felix, *Life of Saint Guthlac* **L**

c. 750: composition of *Beowulf*? **OE**

c. 890s: Anglo-Saxon Chronicles **OE** are begun

Alfredian **OE** translations of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, Gregory's *Pastoral Care*, Orosius, Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*, Augustine's *Soliloquys*

c. 970: Exeter Book **OE** (riddles, elegies, Guthlac)

c. 975: Vercelli Book **OE** (*Rood, Andreas, Elene*)

985-7: Abbo of Fleury, *Passion of St Edmund* **L**

990s: Ælfric, *Catholic Homilies, Lives of Saints* **OE**; *The Battle of Maldon* **OE**; Æthelweard, **L** translation of the AS Chronicle

c. 1000: *Beowulf* manuscript **OE**

?1009: Wulfstan, *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* **OE**

c. 1010: Junius manuscript (**OE** Genesis, Exodus, Christ & Satan)

1020: Cnut's *Letter to the English* **OE**

c. 1020s: 'London Chronicler' writes the AS Chronicle **OE** account of Danish conquest, extant in MSS CDE; Wulfstan, *Institutes of Polity* (account of English government) **OE**

1041-42: *Encomium Emmae Reginae* **L**

1065-66: *Life of St Edward the Confessor* **L**

1086 Domesday Book **L**

c. 1080-90s: Goscelin of St-Bertin, Latin saints' lives and the *Liber Confortatorius* **L**

c. 1100: St Anselm of Canterbury, *Cur Deus Homo* **L**; *Chanson de Roland* **F** composed? MS 1125x50

1135: Stephen crowned king of England	c. 1137: Geoffrey of Monmouth, <i>Historia regum Britanniae</i> <b>L</b> First 'history' of King Arthur
1137-53: Civil war between Stephen and Matilda, Henry I's daughter. Ended by Stephen's adoption of Matilda's son Henry of Anjou as his heir	c. 1137: Geffrei Gaimar, <i>Estoire des Engleis</i> <b>F</b> (trans. of Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for a noblewoman patron)
1154-89: Henry II king of England; married to Eleanor of Aquitaine	c. 1150: <i>Life of Christina of Markyate</i> <b>L</b>
	1154: Last entry in Anglo-Saxon (Peterborough) Chronicle <b>OE/ME</b> (language in transition)
	c. 1155: Wace, <i>Brut</i> <b>F</b> (trans. of Geoffrey of Monmouth); <i>Roman d'Eneas</i> <b>F</b> ; <i>Roman de Thèbes</i> <b>F</b>
1169: first invasion of Ireland	c. 1160: Benoît de Sainte-Maure, <i>Roman de Troie</i> <b>F</b> ; <i>Jeu d'Adam</i> , liturgical drama <b>F</b>
1170: Murder of Archbishop Thomas Becket	c. 1170: Thomas of Britain, <i>Tristan</i> <b>F</b> ; Thomas, <i>Romance of Horn</i> <b>F</b> ; Orrm, <i>Orrmulum</i> , <b>ME</b> gospel paraphrase
1172: Henry II claims overlordship of Ireland	1170s: <i>Lives</i> of Thomas Becket <b>L, F</b> ; Chrétien de Troyes, <i>Erec &amp; Enide</i> , <i>Yvain</i> , <i>Lancelot</i> , <i>Cligès</i> <b>F</b>
1173-4: Civil war of Henry II with his sons	1180s: Marie de France, <i>Lais</i> <b>F</b> ; Bérout, <i>Tristan</i> <b>F</b>
	1190s: <i>Poema Morale</i> <b>ME</b> ; various <b>ME</b> and updated <b>OE</b> sermons and homilies
1189-99: Richard I 'Lionheart' king of England	c. 1200: <i>Lai of Haveloc</i> <b>F</b> ; <i>Amis &amp; Amilun</i> <b>F</b>
1199-1216: John king of England	c. 1210: <i>Gui of Warewic</i> <b>F</b>
	c. 1220: Lazamon, <i>Brut</i> <b>ME</b> (trans. of Wace); the <i>Katherine Group</i> of devotional texts <b>ME</b>
1215: first issue of Magna Carta	c. 1225: <i>Ancrene Wisse</i> <b>ME</b> ; <i>Boeve de Haumtone</i> <b>F</b>
1215: Fourth Lateran Council makes annual confession compulsory	c. 1226: <i>History of William Marshal</i> <b>F</b>
1216-1272: Henry III king of England	1225x40: continental prose <b>F</b> Vulgate Arthurian Cycle
1225: Magna Carta reissued in Henry III's name	c. 1250x70: <i>King Horn</i> <b>ME</b>
	c. 1275: <i>The Owl and the Nightingale</i> <b>ME</b>
1260s: Barons' Wars led by Simon de Montfort against Henry III	c. 1270x1300: five major poetic manuscripts of early <b>ME</b> , also containing <b>F</b> and <b>L</b> texts (religious and devotional lyrics, <i>Brut</i> , <i>O&amp;N</i> , etc)
1272-1307: Edward I king of England	c. 1290: <i>Havelok</i> <b>ME</b> ; <i>Amis &amp; Amiloun</i> <b>ME</b> ; <i>Sir Tristrem</i> <b>ME</b> ; Peter Langtoft, <i>F</i> verse <i>Chronicle</i>
1277-83 Conquest of Wales	c. 1300: <i>The South English Legendary</i> <b>ME</b> ; the <i>Cursor Mundi</i> <b>ME</b>
1296 War with Scotland begins after Edward claims overlordship (using King Arthur as precedent)	1300x25: Robert Mannyng, <i>ME Chronicle</i> and <i>Handlyng Synne</i> ; Robert of Gloucester, <i>ME Chronicle</i> ; anonymous <b>ME</b> romances: <i>Richard Coeur de Lion</i> ; <i>Horn Childe</i> ; <i>King Alisaunder</i> ; <i>Bevis of Hampton</i> ; <i>Guy of Warwick</i> ; <i>Yvain and Gawain</i> ; <i>Sir Launfal</i> ; <i>Sir Orfeo</i> ; <i>King of Tars</i>
1307-27: Edward II king of England	c. 1330: Auchinleck manuscript of <b>ME</b> romances made in London
1314: Robert the Bruce of Scotland defeats Edward II at Bannockburn	1300x50: Harley manuscript of <b>ME</b> and <b>F</b> verse (love lyrics, religious lyrics, fabliaux, etc)
1327: Edward II resigns the throne and is murdered	1340s: Richard Rolle, mystical writings <b>ME, L</b>
1327-77: Edward III king of England	
1337: Hundred Years' War with France begins	
1346: English defeat the French at Crécy	
1347-8: Black Death kills millions across Europe	