

Transition to Middle English

Language Contact
Lexical Diversity
Cultural Change

Political Changes in Anglo-Saxon England

- Scandinavian invasions begin in the 780s
 - Parker Chronicle records in 787: p. 65 of Crystal
 - In this year King Beorhtric took to wife Eadburgh, daughter of Offa. And in his days came for the first time three ships: and then the reeve rode thither and tried to compel them to go to the royal manor, for he did not know what they were, and they slew him. These were the first ships of the Danes to come to England.
 - compare to Wulfgar in *Beowulf*
 - Monasteries sacked in the 790s: Lindisfarne (793), Jarrow (794), Iona (795)
 - Overwintering begins in 851
 - Danish army conquers Northumbria by 876
 - Treaty of Wedmore settles the Danelaw boundary in 886

Scandinavian Influence

- West Saxons retake all of England by 954
- Skirmishes continue (recorded in *Battle of Maldon*) until King Cnut (also spelled Canute, Knut) takes over in 1016 (until 1035); his son Hardecanute rules from 1040-1042 (with an intermediate reign by Harold, Cnut's son by his first wife)
 - Cnut continues Anglo-Saxon legal system, religious system, and system of earls
- By 1020, royal families of Norway/Denmark, England, and Normandy were closely linked
 - Emma of Normandy was married to both King Æðelræd and King Cnut
 - King Cnut's first (and scariest) wife was Ælfgifu
- First prince of Normandy was Ganger Hrolf (Hrolf, the Walker), also known as Rollo, the Fat

Influence of French: Norman French and Parisian French

- the "last Anglo-Saxon king" --Edward the Confessor--spent his adolescence in the Norman court in exile during Cnut's and Hardecnut's reigns
- Edward's quest for the throne was supported by Norman noblemen and churchmen
- Norman aristocrats begin to win English earldoms in 1049
- Bayeux Tapestry presents the Norman position (images: 1, 5, 8, 12, 14, 15*, 31, <http://hastings1066.com/baythumb.shtml>)
- Anglo-Norman rule lasts until 1153 until "second invasion" of Henry II of Aquitaine
- Plantagenets rule until 1399
- by late 1100s, freemen of Norman and English descent were indistinguishable