

**Old English
dialects and literary
records**

OLD ENGLISH - is the earliest historical form of the English language, spoken in England and southern and eastern Scotland in the early Middle Ages.

Old English Dialects

A historical painting depicting a group of Anglo-Saxon warriors in battle. The warriors are wearing helmets, some with crests, and carrying shields and spears. The scene is set in a field with a blue sky and a large, ornate shield in the foreground. The painting is signed 'L. W. Fryde' in the bottom left corner.

The Germanic tribes who settled in Britain in the 5th and 6th c. spoke closely related tribal dialects belonging to the West Germanic subgroup.

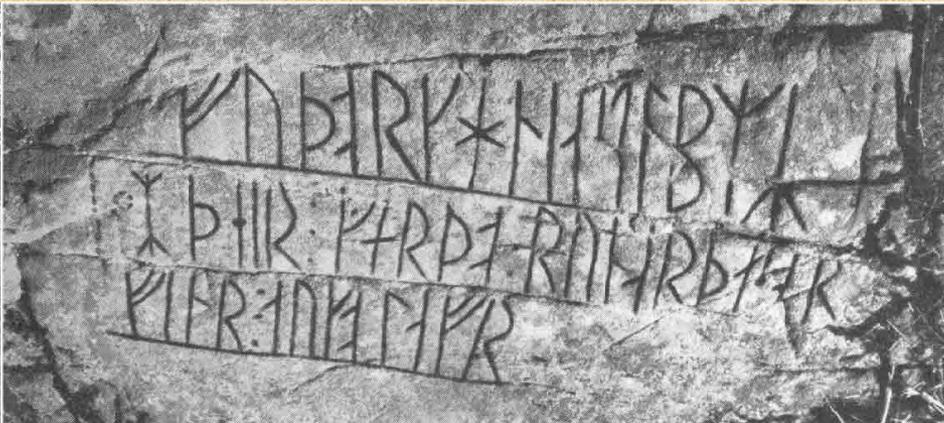
FOUR OLD ENGLISH DIALECTS

Kentish	A dialect spoken in the area known now as Kent and Surrey and in the Isle of Wight. It had developed from the tongue of the Jutes and Frisians.
West Saxon	The main dialect of the Saxon group, spoken in the rest of England south of the Thames and the Bristol Channel, except Wales and Cornwall, where Celtic tongues were preserved. Other Saxon dialects in England have not survived in written form and are not known to modern scholars.
Mercian	A dialect derived from the speech of southern Angles and spoken chiefly in the kingdom of Mercia, that is, in the central region, from the Thames to the Humber.
Northumbrian	Anglian dialect, spoken from the Humber north to the river Forth (hence the name – North-Humbrian).

Old English Written Records

Runic Inscriptions

The earliest written records of English are inscriptions on hard material made in a special alphabet known as the runes.



The two best known runic inscriptions in England are the earliest extant OE written records:



Franks Casket



Ruthwell Cross

Old English Literary Records

The greatest poem of the time was BEOWULF, an epic of the 7th or 8th c. The oldest known English epic poem, the foundation-stone of all British poetry.

The earliest samples of continuous prose are the first pages of the ANGLO-SAXON CHRONICLES



of 9u luyon. nade

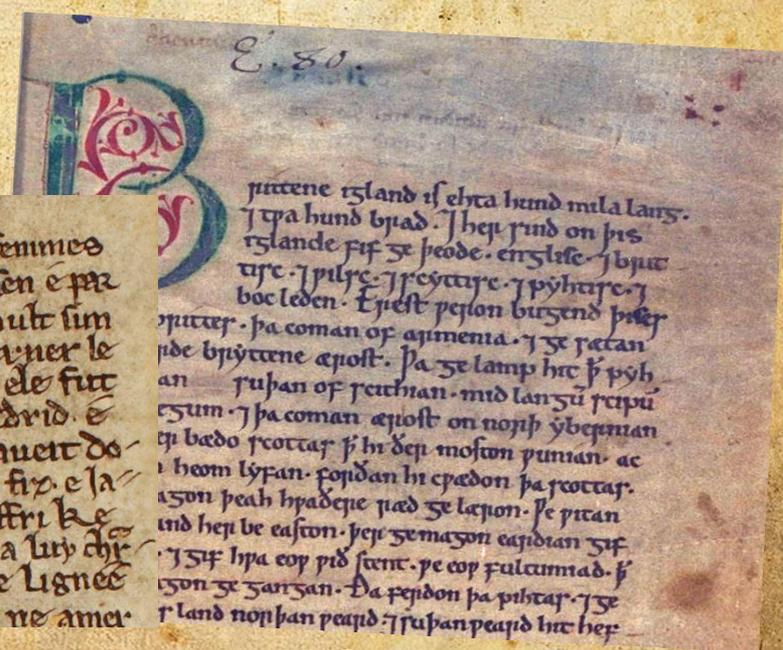
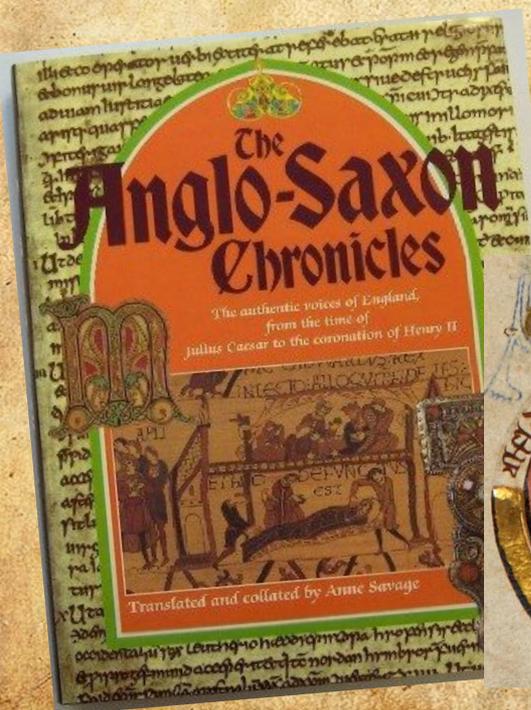
BEOWULF

The theme of the poem is the story of a great leader who saves or tries to save people in danger.

Beowulf who is a strong and fearless advocate of freedom and justice, expresses the Anglo- Saxon ideals of personal conduct.



The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is a collection of annals in Old English chronicling the history of the Anglo-Saxons. The original manuscript of the Chronicle was created late in the 9th century, probably in Wessex, during the reign of Alfred the Great.



Thanks for your attention!

Presented by Alexandra Amelina
RSSU, Moscow 2015