THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH PODCAST TRANSCRIPTS

EPISODES 91 - 95

Presented by Kevin W. Stroud

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EPISODE 91: TRADERS AND TRAITORS

Welcome to the History of English Podcast – a podcast about the history of the English language. This is Episode 91: Traders and Traitors. In this episode, we're going to continue our look at what happened when East met West in the 11th and 12th centuries. Many histories of this period tend to treat these events as a clash of civilizations – exemplified by the Crusades. But that was just one part of a larger story. While Muslims and Christians were trading blows in the Near East, they were also trading goods throughout the Mediterranean and southern Europe. That meant that products from the Near East were starting to flow into Western Europe. And the words for those products were starting to pass into French and English. So while the two sides were making war – they were also making money. And no group combined those two goals better that the order of knights known as the 'Knights Templar.' They were holy Crusaders – and they were also Medieval bankers. So this time we'll explore the interaction of faith and money – Crusaders and traders – and loyalty versus treason.

But before we begin, let me remind you that the website for the podcast is historyofenglishpodcast.com. And you can sign up to support the podcast at Patreon.com. Just go to historyofenglishpodcast.com and link from there.

Before I begin, I should note that this episode is much longer than normal. I had a lot that I wanted to discuss, and much of this story is linked together with some common themes. So rather than breaking it into two separate episodes, I am presented it as one long episode. So this is basically two episodes in one. Since it is a little longer than normal, I have included a little break in the middle. That way, if you prefer to break it into two parts, just wait for the little intermission.

So with that, let's turn to this episode, and let's look at the interaction of East and West in the Middle Ages. Last time, we looked at the rise of Arab science and medicine – and we saw how some of those ideas were starting to pass into Western Europe around the current point in our overall story of English. This time, I want to focus more closely on what happened when those two worlds collided. This is the story of trading and Crusading.

The story begins in the eastern portion of the Muslim world in the 10th century. As we know, a Muslim political elite had conquered most of the what we know today as the Middle East, as well as North Africa and much of modern-day Spain and Portugal. In the years that followed, those regions were increasingly unified by a common religion and a common language. But they became divided by politics. The Abbasid Caliphate started to fracture as various local rulers emerged in different parts of the Muslim world.

By the late 900s, a new group was entering the picture – and they were coming in from the east – specifically from the Eurasian steppe region. They were a group of Turkish tribes called the Seljuks. They were really the first in a series of nomadic people from the steppe region that swept into the Middle East and eastern Europe. They were followed a couple of centuries later by the Mongols from the same general region.

But these Turkish tribes came in first, and around the year 970, they were entering the eastern part of the Abbasid Caliphate. They had a fierce warrior culture. And they soon moved into Persia. There, they were influenced by the local culture, and they fully embraced Islam.

They soon carved out their own empire and continued to expand westward. They then swept down into modern-day Iraq and captured Baghdad in the year 1055. Then they moved northward in the Caucasus region between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. There they captured Armenia and Georgia in the year 1064. They were now sitting on the border of the Byzantine Empire – which was the Christian empire centered in Constantinople. Remember that this was the old Eastern Roman Empire that was now known as the Byzantine Empire. And the Byzantine Empire included much of modern-day Greece and Turkey. But Turkey wasn't called "Turkey" yet. It was Anatolia or Asia Minor. And the Seljuks were now sitting right on the eastern border of that region.

In the year 1068, they invaded Anatolia. And three years later, they defeated the Byzantine forces at a major battle. That gave the Seljuk Turks control of Anatolia. And that was really the beginning of modern-day Turkey.

The Seljuks actually encouraged Turkish settlement of the region to provide a stronger defense against the Byzantine Empire. Over time, this region became known as the land of the Turks – or ***Turkey***. Now, let me digress here for a moment and mention a few things about this region. A couple of centuries later, as Seljuk power declined, Anatolia broke into several independent regions. One of those regions was led by a Turkish tribal leader named Osman. And in the years that followed, Osman's successors conquered all of Anatolia and they became known as the ***Ottomans*** based on the founder's name – Osman. The Ottomans then conquered Constantinople in 1453, and that brought an end to the Byzantine Empire. The Ottomans ruled the region all the way through World War I – when the empire finally came to an end. At that point, the region became known as Turkey, but the term ***Turkey*** had actually been around for several centuries prior to that.

I mention this because a lot of products from the Ottoman Empire made their way to Europe over time. And it was common to refer to those products by reference to the region. So, for example, in the 1800s, a common type of footstool became popular in Europe and North America. And it was called an ***ottoman*** because of its origin in this region. Interestingly, the word ***sofa*** also came from Turkish, but it was originally an Arabic word – ***suffah***. And it came into English in the 1600s.

And speaking of ottomans and sofas, I should also mention that the word ***mattress*** has its origins in the Near East. It began as the Arabic word – ***al-matrah*** – which meant 'a cushion.' It was common in the Arab world for people to sleep on cushions that were placed on the floor. And it was during the Crusades that Westerners picked up this word, and it passed through French into English in the 1200s. So the words ***ottoman***, ***sofa*** and ***mattress*** all have their origin in the Near East.

As I noted, the region of Anatolia was also known as ***Turkey***. In fact, Geoffrey Chaucer used the name ***Turkey*** in an English text in the 1300s, and that is the first known use of the name ***Turkey*** in English. It became commonplace to refer to products from that region with the prefix ***Turkey***. So you could have a 'Turkey chair' or a 'Turkey cushion.' And there was a particular type of gem from there called a 'Turkey stone.' The term 'Turkey stone' was a translation of a French term. In French,

a ‘stone’ was a ***pierre***. And a ‘stone from Turkey’ was a ‘pierre turqueise.’ That name was later shortened to just ***Turquoise***. So ***Turquoise*** is based on the French word for ‘Turkish.’

There was also a particular type of bird that was imported into Europe from the region. The bird was called a ***Turkey cock*** or a ***Turkey hen***. These types of birds actually came from Madagascar off the southeastern coast of Africa, but Europeans got them from Turkish traders. Over time, the birds were imported via a western route around the other side of the Mediterranean. They came in via north Africa – into Spain – and then up into Western Europe. So instead of coming into Europe through Turkey, they were now coming in through Spain. But then the Spaniards settled in North America and discovered a similar bird there. And those North American birds were brought back to Spain – and from there, they were sold throughout Western Europe. So these North American birds were being traded side-by-side with those birds called ***Turkey cocks*** or ***Turkey hens***. And apparently, most Europeans thought the two birds were related because North American birds also started to be called ***Turkey cocks*** or ***Turkey hens***. And over time, the name of those birds was shortened to just ***turkey***. So the word ***turkey*** for a type of North American bird or fowl is actually derived from the name of the region of Turkey – which is named for the Turks who arrived there in the year 1068.

So let’s return to our story. At the same time that the Seljuk Turks were conquering Anatolia, they were also spreading south into Syria and Palestine. And they soon captured Jerusalem as well. Now obviously, Jerusalem was an important city because it was the home to holy sites for Christians, Jews and Muslims. And many European Christians made pilgrimages there. But when the Seljuk Turks took the city, they effectively closed it to Christians, and they actually persecuted Christians in the region. And that really set in motion the events that led to the Crusades.

But the Crusades didn’t happen immediately. In fact, it took about 20 years for the Crusades to get underway. In the meantime, the Seljuks had to deal with another threat. And that threat was an internal threat. Now you may know that there are two distinct sects or denominations of Islam – Sunni and Shia. And that division goes back to the some of the earliest days of Islam, and it involved a dispute concerning Mohammad’s proper successor. The details of that dispute are not really important to our story, but it is important to know that there was this basic division. And the Seljuks were Sunni Muslim.

But a rival Shia faction opposed the Seljuks, and they set up their base in the Persian mountains. They didn’t have enough soldiers to take on the Seljuks in a head-to-head confrontation, so they used a different tactic. Their members would secretly blend into Seljuk society, and without warning, they would attack and kill prominent Seljuk leaders. They targeted both political and religious leaders. The murders almost always took place in public, and it was usually a suicide mission because the killer was almost always struck down on the spot in retaliation.

Many people were fascinated by these killers because they carried out their mission with a calmness and serenity even though they were basically committing suicide in the process. It was a common belief that they smoked hashish to get high before carrying out the murders. Hashish is related to marijuana, and the word ***hashish*** is an Arabic word meaning ‘grass.’ So it is basically the same way that marijuana is known as ***grass*** or ***weed*** in English.

Since it was believed that these killers ate hashish, they were called ***hashishiyyin*** in Arabic which meant 'hashish-eaters' or 'hashish-takers.' A few years later, when the Crusades began, Western Europeans also encountered the ***hashishiyyin***, and they were sometimes targeted by the ***hashishiyyin***. And that name passed into French, but you might remember that French didn't tend to pronounce the 'h' sound. Well, when those 'h's were removed from the word ***hashishiyyin***, it became ***assassin***. And the word ***assassin*** passed into English meaning someone who kills a prominent or well-known person. So ***assassin*** is ultimately an Arabic word, and it's actually cognate with the word ***hashish***.

So the Seljuk Turks had to deal with assassins, but about 20 years after taking control of Jerusalem, they had to deal with another threat – the Crusaders.

The Byzantine Emperor was so concerned with the Seljuk threat that he contacted the Pope, and he asked the Pope to make an appeal to Christians to come to the Holy Land and re-take Jerusalem. The Pope at the time was Pope Urban II, and he held a council at Clermont in southern France to try to gather support. The Pope pleaded with the leaders of Western Europe to send forces to Jerusalem to recover the city. And the First Crusade was launched the following year.

At Urban's suggestion, the Crusaders wore a red cross on the front of their tunics. And that cross gave the movement its name. It was common for Christians to make the sign of the cross on their chest with their hand just as many still do today. And to make the sign of the cross was ***croiser*** in French. And since these soldiers wore a cross on their chest, the word ***croiser*** came to mean a war fought for a holy cause. And that produced the word ***crusade***.

Of course, the word ***crusade*** has taken on a broader meaning over time. Today, it means any righteous cause. So a politician might lead a crusade against gambling, or a online activist might lead a crusade against cyber-bullying. But the origin of the word lies in this series of religious wars in the Middle Ages.

I should also mention that the related word ***crucifix*** also entered English around this time. It is attested in the early 1200s.

To the Crusaders, the Muslims who had taken control of the Holy Land were infidels – or non-believers. Old French actually had a word that literally meant 'non-believer.' It was ***mescreant***. And that word passed into English as **miscreant**. And again, we still have that word today. It means a villain or depraved person. But its original use dates back to the Crusades, and it originally was a term for a Muslim or other non-Christian.

A short time after the Pope's call to action, many nobles and knights from various parts of Europe led their forces to the Holy Land. The ultimate goal of the Crusaders was to capture and control the city of Jerusalem.

Given that goal, the First Crusade was considered a great success in the West because the Western forces were able re-take the city. They defeated the Seljuks and they took control of Jerusalem. The Crusaders then set up four separate Christian kingdoms in Palestine. The four states were the

Kingdom of Jerusalem, the County of Edessa, the County of Tripoli, and the Principality of Antioch. These are sometimes called the Crusader states. And the idea was that these would be permanent political entities governed by Western Christian leaders.

For the next 50 years, these Crusader states actually thrived. Pilgrims started to return to the region in great numbers. And with a foothold in Near East, Westerners had direct access to Arab goods.

By this point, Christian forces had also reclaimed the northern third of Spain. So there was a lot of contact between Arab traders and European traders on both sides of the Mediterranean. The trading networks that ran through the Mediterranean also extended up into northern Europe – into the British Isles and Scandinavia. To the east, the networks extended to India and then on to China and the Far East. The networks even extended down into central Africa. As traders brought goods across Africa to the trading ports of the Mediterranean, they traveled in large groups for added protection and security. This type of merchant group was called a ***caravan*** from a Persian word meaning 'desert travelers.' The word was picked up by Crusaders and pilgrims in the Mediterranean used the term to refer to any group of people who traveled together. The word is found in the Romance languages from this point on, but it doesn't appear in an English document until the late 1500s. I should also note that the modern word ***van*** – as in a 'mini-van' – is just a shortened version of the word ***caravan***.

As always, the Middle East was the crossroads of the world, and most of those trading networks converged there. Those networks also allowed goods to move freely around the Mediterranean. And since much of Spain was still under Muslim control, a lot of products from the Near East were also sold and traded in Spain.

So Western Europeans were coming across those products at various places. The products were passing into markets in Spain and Italy and other parts of southern Europe. But more importantly, Europeans were encountering those products first-hand in the Near East thanks to the extensive pilgrimage that resumed after the First Crusade.

I should note that this general period saw the introduction of words like ***pilgrim***, ***pilgrimage*** and ***journey*** to the English language. They're recorded in some of the earliest Middle English texts. They're all French words, and they replaced native Old English words. In Old English, an extended trip was an ***siþ-fær*** – literally 'a far trip.' But now, it became a ***journey***. By the way, an Arabic word for a journey was ***safar***. And that word later entered English in the 1800s as ***safari***. And during the Anglo-Saxon period, it was common for Anglo-Saxons to travel down to Rome to visit holy sites there. That was called a ***suþ-for*** – literally a 'southern journey.' Now, that type of trip became known as a ***pilgrimage***, and the travelers were called ***pilgrims***.

As I noted, many of these pilgrims made the extended trip to Jerusalem, and there, they found holy sites. And they also found lots of local markets selling a variety of goods that catered to pilgrims. Some of those goods were produced locally and some were imported from the Far East and central Africa. Those markets were called ***bazaars*** from a Persian word meaning 'a market.' I should note that the word ***bazaar*** didn't actually appear in an English document until the 1500s. But those bazaars provided various essentials to travelers like food and clothing.

They also provided exotic and unusual items that were difficult or impossible to find in the West. That included porcelain and special types of pottery, as well as soaps and perfumes. The markets also sold piece-goods, clothes, carpets, tapestries and cushions. And they offered lots of unusual foods and spices. Through this process, and through those extensive trading networks, many of those items were introduced to Western Europe.

Europeans were especially intrigued by the unique foods and spices that came from the East. Up to this point, the diet of Medieval Europe had been limited and somewhat monotonous. Europeans ate what was available locally, and they dried or preserved what they could for winter. But the pilgrims and Crusaders discovered lots of new foods in the markets of the Mediterranean. And they also discovered lots of spices that added flavor to otherwise bland and boring foods. That led to the development of a very lucrative spice trade.

Lots of words for herbs and spices entered early Middle English in the 1200s and 1300s. As English documents started to be produced again, many of them contained references to new herbs and spices. Most of those words came into English through French. In fact, the words ***herb*** and ***spice*** are both French words – and they both came into English in the 1200s. Being a French word, the word ***herb*** came in with a silent 'H' at the front. And it retained that silent 'H' until the 1800s. But around that time, speakers in Britain started to pronounce a lot of those 'H's. And it became /herb/ in Britain. But American English retained the original silent 'H' – and thus, the word is still pronounced a /erb/ in American English.

Believe it or not, the word ***spice*** is actually derived from the Latin word ***species***. The word ***species*** meant a kind or sort or type of something. It's also related to the word ***spectate***. So it referred to the process by which someone would look at or observe a group of things – and would sort them out based on appearance. Each particular group was a ***species***. Well, when traders and dealers sorted through various plants and herbs, they separated them into separate groups or species. And eventually, this produced the distinct word ***spices*** to refer to the various flavoring agents sold in those markets.

Now as traders sorted through herbs and spices, they also had to remove dirt and debris from the products. There was an Arabic word to describe this process of inspecting, sorting and sifting. It was ***gharbala***. Some scholars think the Arabic word may have been based on an older Latin word. But either way, the word was picked up by European traders, and it produced the word ***garble***. It originally referred to the process of sorting through a group of things and selecting certain individual pieces. In later English, it came to refer to the process of selectively picking out certain parts of a story to create a false impression. And that produced the modern sense of the word ***garble*** meaning 'to mix up or distort.' But ultimately ***garble*** comes from Arabic, and it originally had to do with the spice trade.

Now herbs and spices added flavor to foods, but they also had a sweet odor and smell. The Greek word ***aroma*** originally referred to spices that had a fragrant smell. And the word passed into English in the early 1200s, but it still meant a spice at that time. And in fact, the word ***aroma*** didn't acquire its modern meaning as a smell or odor until the 1800s.

The word ***balm*** has a similar history. It is actually a Semitic word for a spice. The word was later applied to resins and oils that had a sweet and fragrant smell. And that was how the word ***balm*** passed into English in the early 1200s.

So words like ***garble***, ***aroma*** and ***balm*** all originated with the Mediterranean spice trade.

As those herbs and spices made their way north through France and then to England, the names of those plants also made their way into French and English. Some of those spices were known by names that can be traced back to Arabic, Persian or Sanskrit. That included ***saffron*** and ***sumac*** which both appeared in English around the time of the Crusades. Both of those words are Arabic words. ***Cinnamon*** also came in around that time. It was another popular spice, and the word ***cinnamon*** can be traced back to a Phoenician word. So it also originated within the Semitic languages.

Now there were a few words for spices that are actually attested in Old English, so even though they were part of this lucrative spice trade, they had actually been around for a while in England. So for example, the word ***cumin*** is another Arabic word, and it was another very popular spice, but it had been around since Old English. In fact, it is one of the few Arabic words attested in Old English.

Old English also had the words ***pepper*** and ***ginger***. ***Pepper*** had been introduced by Roman traders during the Proto-Germanic period. So it was part of the Anglo-Saxon language from the very beginning. The word came from Latin, but most scholars trace it back to Sanskrit.

Ginger has a similar history. The Anglo-Saxons had borrowed the word from Latin, but it also goes back to Sanskrit. But note that the modern form of the word is ***ginger*** – pronounced with soft 'G's – which is a French pronunciation. The Latin pronunciation would have used hard G's. So that indicates that the word ***ginger*** was re-borrowed from French in early Middle English. And that was probably because ginger was a very popular spice in that new spice trade that followed the Crusades. And the French influence was so strong during that period that the French form of the word replaced the older form.

So ***cumin***, ***pepper*** and ***ginger*** are very old words going back to Old English, but they ultimately came from either Sanskrit or Arabic.

Now all of those herbs and spices added flavor to foods, but the Europeans also discovered something else that added flavor. It specifically added a sweet flavor – and that was sugar. And ***sugar*** is another word that English borrowed from the East. It was originally a Sanskrit word – and it then passed into Persian – and was then borrowed into Arabic. The Arabic word was ***sukkar***. And that Arabic word produced the modern word ***sugar*** in English. It also produced the word sugar in most other European languages as well.

Prior to the introduction of sugar, the only sweetener Europeans had was honey. So sugar was a very popular commodity.

There are a few reports of sugar in Europe prior to this point – in the early Middle Ages. But the sources suggest that it was quite rare, and it was mainly used as a medicine. It was often added to medical concoctions to make them sweeter and easier to drink. And in fact, Arabic gave us a specific word for a sugary drink – the word ***syrup***. ***Syrup*** comes from the Arabic word ***sharab*** meaning 'beverage or wine.' That Arabic word also produced the word ***sherbet*** which originally meant a sweet drink made with sugar and fruit juice. And it produced the French word ***sorbet*** – which has also been borrowed into English. ***Sherbet*** and ***sorbet*** are more recent loanwords – both from around the year 1600. And the meaning of those words has shifted to more of a frozen desert. But as I noted, both of those words come from the same Arabic root word as ***syrup*** which entered English in the 1300s.

Another Arabic word for a sugary drink was ***julab***, and that word entered English around the year 1400 as the word ***julep***. Again, it initially referred to sweetened medicines, but it later acquired a more general sense as a sweet sugary drink. And we still have it in the name of certain cocktails like a mint julep.

Sugar was often sold in small cubes or lumps. In Sanskrit, the word ***khanda*** meant a piece or fragment of something. So those lumps of sugar were called ***khanda sakara*** which literally meant 'fragment of sugar' or 'piece of sugar.' That term passed through Persian into Arabic where the order of the two words was reversed, and it was rendered as ***sukkar quandi***. By the late 1300s, that phrase has passed through French into English as ***sugar candy***. So ***sugar candy*** meant a lump of sugar. Over time, the ***sugar*** part was dropped, and those lumps of sugar candy just became known as ***candy***. But again, ***candy*** originally was a Sanskrit word that meant a fragment or piece of something.

By the way, some people think that the word ***candy*** is related to the word ***cane*** in sugar cane, but the two words are actually unrelated.

Now Western visitors to the Near East also discovered sugared almonds. Almonds were grown in the Near East, and when they were covered with sugar, they were a popular treat. Interestingly, the 'A-L' in ***almond*** appears to be based on a mistaken assumption that the word was an Arabic word.

It was originally a Greek word – ***amygdalos***. Well, in early Spanish, the word appears as ***almendra*** with an initial 'A-L' at the front instead of an 'A-M.' The most common theory for the change in pronunciation at the front is that early Spanish speakers thought the word was Arabic since almonds were often sold by Arab traders. As we saw last time, the word ***al*** is the Arabic word for ***the***, so it was very common at the front of Arabic nouns. So over time, some people pronounced the name of this nut with an initial 'A-L' as well. And that pronunciation passed into English as ***almond***. I should note that the Modern French version of the word is ***amande*** without the 'L.' But in older French, both pronunciations existed.

Before I move on, I should mention something else about almonds. Their sweet-smelling oil was used as a perfume and a body moisturizer. Burnt almonds were also made into a powder that was used for make-up. It was a dark powder that was used to color the eyelids. The Arabic word for this type of powder was ***koh'l***. The powder was formed by burning the almonds with other substances,

thereby converting them into a vapor. The vapor was then cooled which produced a fine powder. This process is called sublimation today. And during the 1600s, scientists used that Arabic term ***koh'l*** to refer to any substance obtained through that type of process. They sometimes added that Arabic word ***al*** to the front, and that produced the word ***al-koh'l*** – or ***alcohol*** as we know it today. It usually referred to a type of powder. So powdered sulfur was called 'alcohol of sulfur.' The term was later extended to mean any kind of refined substance including liquids. By the 1700s, people spoke of 'alcohol of wine' to mean wine that had been distilled. And it then acquired its modern sense as a specific type of liquid that has been distilled. So the word ***alcohol*** is an Arabic word, and it is based on a word that originally meant eye makeup. It also refers to a substance that was originally made from burnt almonds.

So we've seen that Westerners were discovering herbs and spices and sweeteners and new types of nuts. They were also discovering lots of other foods in the Near East. During the period of the Crusades, the word ***olive*** entered the English language. The word ***oil*** also entered English during that period. In its original sense, the word ***oil*** literally meant the oil derived from olives, so it meant 'olive oil.' In fact, the words ***olive*** and ***oil*** are actually derived from the same Greek root word.

The words ***fig***, ***date***, ***raisin*** and ***grape*** all appear in English for the first time during this period. ***Fig*** and ***date*** may have Semitic origins, but the precise origin is unclear beyond Greek. ***Raisin*** comes from Latin, but again, its history is unclear beyond that. Of course, raisins are dried grapes, and ***grape*** also came in around this time from French. ***Grape*** may have Germanic origins, but again, the etymology is uncertain beyond French.

Now you may be surprised that ***grape*** was a relatively new word in English given that England had wine – and the word ***wine*** – for many centuries before that. But the Anglo-Saxons tended to speak very literally, and they called a grape a ***winberige*** – literally a 'wine berry.' But now, the word ***grape*** came in.

A new type of fruit came in from Persia as well. In Greek, the fruit was called a ***Persikon malon*** – literally a 'Persian melon' or 'Persian apple.' That term passed through Latin, and by the time of Medieval Latin, the ***malon*** part had been dropped, and it was simply ***pesca***. It then passed through French into English as ***peach*** in the 1300s. So the word ***peach*** is derived from the word ***Persian***. And again, it originally meant a Persian melon or Persian apple.

Europeans also discovered citrus fruits in the Mediterranean. Oranges, lemons and limes made their way to Western Europe. The word ***orange*** comes from Sanskrit, and it first appears in English in the 1300s. ***Lemon*** appears around the same time. ***Lime*** comes in a couple of centuries later. Now lemons and limes are similar fruits, and they have similar-sounding names, so it is probably no surprise that they both come from the same Persian root word – which was ***limun***.

I should also note that English started to get new words for various types of onions. The Old English words for an onion were based on very early borrowings from Latin. That included the Old English word ***cipe***. A more colloquial term for an onion in Latin was a ***unio*** which was really a variation of the word ***union*** – meaning a vegetable with many separate layers that were united into one. That term was borrowed by the Anglo-Saxon as a ***ynne-leac*** – literally a 'union leek.' But now, English

borrowed that Latin word again, this time via French. And the word ***unio*** came in this second time as ***onion***. So ***onion*** is really just a variation of the word ***union***.

In the 1300s, English also borrowed the word ***scallion***. The word scallion is actually based on the name of a seaport near Jerusalem where the vegetable was once produced or sold. The name of the seaport is Ashkelon, and it lies just west of Jerusalem. The 'A' was dropped from the front of the name, and that produced the word ***scallion***. By the way, the word ***shallot*** is also derived from the same name, and it was borrowed during the 1600s.

So we've looked at herbs and spices, and sugar and fruits and vegetables. I should also note that rice and cotton also made their way to southern Europe around this time as well. The Arabs had adopted those crops from India, and rice has its ultimate origins in eastern Asia. Those crops were then transported to Spain after the Muslim conquest there. And from Spain, rice and cotton were transported north into France and England. So Western Europeans started to become familiar with rice as a food and cotton as a fabric. The word ***rice*** is a Sanskrit word and it first appears in English in the early 1200s.

The word ***cotton*** comes from an Arabic word – ***qutn***. And that word passed into the English around the year 1400. The Arabs had developed a sophisticated cotton industry because cotton fabric was light and comfortable, and it was used for clothing, as well as things like sheets, tablecloths, towels and rugs. As Europeans discovered the benefits of cotton, it soon became a popular alternative to wool.

So from all of those words that were entering English in the 1200s and 1300s, we can see how those trading networks were changing the diet and lifestyle of Western Europe. And again, the Crusaders and pilgrims and Western traders were an important link in that chain. The Christina conquest of Jerusalem gave Europeans a foothold in the eastern Mediterranean. And the Muslim conquest of Spain gave Muslims a foothold in southwestern Europe. And places like Sicily in the Mediterranean were home to a variety of peoples from all over meeting and mixing and trading with each other. So the entire Mediterranean region was exploding with activity.

Europeans came to the Mediterranean from all over Western Europe speaking a variety of European languages. But Arabs referred to all those European as simply the ***Franks*** regardless of background. And I mention that because many scholars consider that generic use of the word ***Franks*** to be the origin of the term ***lingua franca*** to mean a common shared language. As the various European and Muslim traders encountered each other, they communicated in a shared trading language that blended elements of southern French and Italian and Arabic. It was really a trading vernacular that was used around the Mediterranean. Since it was commonly used by Western Europeans – or 'Franks' – that common vernacular became known as the ***lingua franca***. Of course, today it refers to any common language or vernacular.

So following the First Crusade, when several Christian Crusader states were established in the Holy Land, a lot of travelers and traders made their way to the region. As they traveled, they needed security and protection. I noted earlier, that Arab trader often traveled in groups called ***caravans***. And they did that for security and protection. Well, Christian pilgrims and traders needed similar

protection. So during the period, several Christian military orders were formally established to help provide that protection. Last time, I talked about the Hospitallers which had been around for a while, but they were formally recognized as a Christian miliary order shortly after the First Crusade.

A short time later, in the year 1119, another military order was established. A French knight named Hugues de Payens approached the man who had been appointed as the King of Jerusalem, and he proposed the creation of a new military order to help protect pilgrims. The king agreed and granted the order a headquarters in a wing of the royal palace on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. The Temple Mount was located above what was believed to be the ruins of the Temple of Solomon. So the Crusaders referred to the building as the Temple of Solomon. And this new military order became known as the Military Order of the Knights of the Temple of Solomon, but that long name was soon shortened to simply 'the Templars.'

That meant that the Templars and the Hospitallers were really the closest thing the Crusaders had to a standing army in the Crusader states. But those two military orders had other missions as well. As I noted last time, the Hospitallers also provided comfort and care to pilgrims at their hospice. And the Templars also developed an alternate mission over time. Their alternate mission had to do with money and finance. In fact, the Templars created the first major banking institution in Western Europe.

The Templars were founded in poverty, but that changed very quickly. They were tremendous fund raisers, and they appealed to everyone in Europe to make donations to support their cause in the Holy Land. And the money started to roll in.

In an earlier episode of the podcast, when we were going through the Peterborough Chronicle, I mentioned a passage where Hugh de Payens – the Templars founder – traveled to England to solicit donations. It was such a big event at the time that the Chronicle made mention of it. Here is an extended part of that passage from the year 1128:

This same year came from Jerusalem Hugh of the Temple to the king in Normandy; and the king received him with much honor, and gave him rich presents in gold and in silver.

Ðes ilces geares com fram Ierusalem Hugo of þe temple to ðone kyng on Normandig. 7 se kyng him underfeng mid micel wurðscipe. 7 micele gersumes him geaf on gold 7 on silure.

And afterwards he sent him into England; and there he was received by all good men, who all gave him presents, and in Scotland also, and by him they sent to Jerusalem much wealth in gold and in silver.

7 siððon he sende him to Englalande. 7 þær he wæs underfangen of ealle gode men. 7 ealle him geauen gersume on Scotlande ealswa. 7 be him senden to Ierusalem micel eahte mid ealle on gold 7 on silure.

Now I wanted to make note of that passage again because it points to a very important development – the tremendous acquisition of wealth by the Templars. Donations rolled in – as did a steam of new recruits. The Templars not only acquired a lot of money, they also were given castles and land in the Crusader states.

Having acquired so much wealth, they then started to make loans. Initially, the loans were intended to help finance the travel of pilgrims and Crusaders. The first record of a Templar loan occurred in the year 1135. The loan was made to a couple to help them pay for their pilgrimage to the Holy Land. In exchange, the Templars received the couple's property and held it until the loan was repaid. In the meantime, the Templars received the income and revenue generated by the property. The Church rules at the time prevented lenders from charging interest, but the Templars discovered this convenient loophole. It wasn't interest – it was rent.

The Templars were soon making large loans to various kings and governments. They were also exempt from taxes and tithes. So they were receiving regular donations, and they were receiving the income from their properties – including the ones they were holding as collateral for loans. And they didn't have to pay taxes to the government or tithes to the Church. That's a good deal if you can find it. It made the Templars one of the richest organizations in Europe – probably the richest. And they soon had branches throughout Europe.

Over time, their financial transactions became more sophisticated. Traveling with large sums of money over long distances was risky. So a knight in England could go to a Templar house in London and deposit money or take out a loan there. He then received a letter in return that stated the amount on deposit. The knight could take that letter with him and redeem it at any other Templar house. So when he arrived in Jerusalem, he could receive the money in the form of gold coins whenever he needed it. Of course, the Templars took a fee for the transaction. But in that sense, they were operating very much like a modern bank. And that letter was the Medieval equivalent of the modern checkbook.

And speaking of checks, I should note that the word ***check*** entered English around this time, and it also has its origins in the Near East. I've actually covered this etymology before, so I won't go through it all again. But I wanted to mention it here as a reminder.

Back in Episode 73, I talked about ***chess*** and ***checks*** and ***checkers*** and the English office of the ***Exchequer***. And you might remember that all of those words came from the game of chess, and specifically, the term ***checkmate*** – which derived from the Persian phrase "Shah Mat" meaning "the king is helpless." The sense of the word ***check*** as a bank check is a relatively modern development, but again, it ultimately goes back to this same root. And I wanted to make that point because that means that the word ***check*** is ultimately based on a Persian word – the word ***Shah***. And it also a good reminder that the game of chess, which originated in India, was also spreading into Western Europe during the Crusades. So it wasn't just herbs and spices and fruits that were being carried north and west. It was also cultural items like games.

I mentioned in that earlier episode that the word ***check*** was also used for the name of a game that was similar to chess called ***checkers***. That's the common name in the US. It's also known as

draughts in the UK. Well, I should mention here that checkers or draughts was once a completely different game called ***alquerque*** (AL-ker-kee). That's an Arabic word, and the game itself was very popular in the Arab world. It used a different type of game board, but it basically had all the same rules of checkers. Each player started with a certain number pieces and moved them in diagonal lines – jumping over the other player's pieces and capturing them. The first player to capture all of the opponent's pieces won. Well, European Crusaders and pilgrims discovered this game in the Near East. And around the time of the First Crusade, an innovative Frenchman thought of playing the game on a chess board. And that was really the innovation that led to checkers or drafts.

Another game that Western knights supposedly discovered or invented while on Crusade was a dice game called ***hazard***. It was basically the original form of the game we know today as ***craps***. The origin of the name ***hazard*** is not entirely clear, but many scholars trace it back to Arabic. One theory says that it is based on an old Arabic word for a die called ***az-zahr***, but that word is not very well attested in Arabic. Last time, I introduced you to Elias Belhadden of the History of Islam Podcast, and he also expressed some scepticism about that etymology. Here are his thoughts:

An alternate etymology that links the word ***hazard*** with the Crusades comes from a contemporary writer named William of Tyre who wrote in the 1100s that the word ***hazard*** was derived from the name of a castle in Palestine called ***Asart***, and that the dice game was played by Crusaders during a protracted siege of the castle. And after that siege, the Crusaders started to refer to the game as ***hazard*** based on the name of that castle.

Whatever the ultimate source, it seems clear that the game was known as ***hazard*** during the Crusades. Of course, hazard was a game of chance – with an opportunity to either win or lose. That risk of loss ultimately influenced the development of the word in English. And today, the word ***hazard*** means a specific risk or peril. But it originally referred to a game of dice.

Now that more general sense of the word ***hazard*** as a 'risk or peril' is important to our story because trips to the Holy Land were always hazardous – filled with lots or risk and peril. Bandits and robbers lurked around every corner. And sickness and disease were common threats. These were the risks that the Templars and Hospitallers tried to manage while defending the Crusader states at the same time. And for several decades, they managed those risks very well.

But in the 1140s, their hold on the region started to slip. Remember that four separate Christian Crusader states has been established after the first Crusade. The northernmost Crusader state was the County of Edessa located around the modern border between Syria and Turkey. In the year 1144, the region was recaptured by the Turks. It was the first significant loss for the Crusaders.

The loss of Edessa led to the Second Crusade in the mid-1100s.That was the Crusade where Eleanor of Aquitaine accompanied her first husband – the French king Louis VII. They traveled together and argued the whole time. The Western forces were able to capture some territory in Spain and northern Egypt, but they suffered a massive defeat in the Holy Land. Edessa was permanently lost, so the Second Crusade was considered a major failure. However, the Christian forces held on to the other three Crusader states including the main prize – Jerusalem.

So for the next 30 or 40 years, Western pilgrims and traders continued to travel to the Holy Land – and they continued to enjoy the protection provided by the Templars and the Hospitallers. And the Templars continued to acquire wealth and make loans.

Then in the 1170s, a new force started to take shape in the East. That force was a man named Saladin. Saladin was a warlord from Mesopotamia who became the ruler of Syria and gradually expanded his realm throughout much of the Middle East. He united the Muslims throughout the region and he posed the greatest threat to the Christian Crusader states. He was a Sunni Muslim, so he was an enemy of the Shi'a Assassins who I mentioned earlier. Around the year 1175, he actually survived two murder attempts by the Assassins. One attacker got so close that he slashed Saladin's cheek and pierced his leather chest armor. But he was not deterred. He eventually conquered Irag and Egypt, and that gave him control of all the regions surrounding the Crusader states. He then moved against Jerusalem. In the year 1187, he captured the city, and Jerusalem slipped from the grasp of the Christians, and it returned to Muslim control for the first time in nearly a century.

As we know, Jerusalem was always the main prize. And the loss of Jerusalem was a devastating blow to Christians in Europe. So in response to that loss, European forces started to make plans for a Third Crusade to try to recover the city from Saladin's forces.

And that brings us back up to the current point in our overall story of English with the reign of Richard the Lionheart. Richard became king of England and ruler of the Angevin Empire two years after the fall of Jerusalem. When Richard became king, preparations were already underway for the Third Crusade. So let's take a quick break here to catch our breath. When we come back, I'll explore the events of the Third Crusade and the early reign of Richard the Lionheart.

[BREAK]

When Jerusalem fell to Saladin's forces in 1187, it was considered a major defeat throughout Western Europe. For the first time in nearly a century, the all-important city had slipped from Christian control. The loss of the city meant that a new Crusade would have to be launched to drive out Saladin's forces and reclaim the city.

This Third Crusade was unique in that all three of the major rulers of Western Europe decided to combine their forces for the mission. Richard – the new king of England – controlled much of the British Isles and western France. He joined with Philip II, the French king who controlled the rest of France. And they were joined by the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick Barbarossa, who controlled much of central Europe.

The Third Crusade was going to be VERY expensive, so a great deal of time was spent raising money for the venture. After arriving in England to be crowned as the new king, Richard set about selling as much as he could to fund his portion of the Crusade. He sold titles and castles and lands throughout England. He basically sold the office of sheriff in the various counties to the highest bidder. When some of his advisors objected, Richard supposedly replied that he would sell the city of London itself if he could find a buyer.

Richard's desire for money also led to a renewed independence for Scotland. A few years earlier, Richard's father, Henry II, had defeated the Scots in that rebellion of 1173. Afterwards, Henry essentially controlled Scotland. But now, his son Richard needed money for the Crusade. So in exchange for 10,000 marks, Richard returned the Scottish castles that had ben seized earlier, and he recognized Scotland's independence.

Richard knew that the Crusade would take many months – maybe years. And he also knew that his younger brother John might cause problems while he was away. So he awarded young John with several earldoms in the West Country. And John was allowed to keep the revenues from those counties. John was also given numerous castles in the Midlands. So John was left with a lot of land, but no official power.

I should also note that Richard and John's mother, Eleanor of Aquitaine, was freed from house arrest after Richard became king. You might recall, that Henry had her locked up when she joined in that earlier rebellion against him. But when Henry died, she was quickly freed and she became a major player behind the scenes going forward.

Given that Richard was going to be away from England for a long time, he needed someone to run the country in his absence. So he turned to a close friend named William Longchamp. Longchamp was a Norman, and he was brought over from Normandy and designated a bishop, as well as the Chief justice official and the Chancellor of England. So Longchamp was designated as a church official and the leading government official in Richard's absense. But Longchamp was not popular in England, and that created lots of problems after Richard left for the Crusades. But more on that later.

Four months after arriving in England, Richard headed to France on his way to the Near East. There he met with King Philip of France. Philip and Richard had fought together and defeated Richard father, Henry II. But it was an uneasy friendship. Philip's friendship with Richard was once of convenience. They both had a common enemy in Henry. Richard wanted to control his inheritance and Philip wanted to break-up the Angevin Empire. But now that Henry was dead, and Richard had stepped into his father's shoes, the friendship was strained. Richard wanted to maintain the Angevin Empire, but Philip still wanted to break it apart. In France, the two kings agreed that their forces would not attack each other's lands while they were away, and they further agreed to evenly split any wealth or property that they captured during the Crusade. They then headed to the French coast to sail to the Holy Land.

Meanwhile the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick Barbarossa, headed out separately over land through southeastern Europe. But soon after crossing through the Byzantine Empire, Barbarossa drowned while crossing a river. With his death, his German forces split into three separate divisions, and most of them ended up returning home. So the Third Crusade got off to a bad start.

That left Richard and Philip as the leaders of the Third Crusade. And Richard soon made it clear that he considered himself first among equals. When Richard's troops landed on the island of Sicily, they got into a dispute with local traders and shopkeepers in the town of Messina. The needs of the soldiers exceeded the available supplies, and some of the local traders decided to jack up prices.

Richard's soldiers thought they were being gouged, and clashes soon broke out between the Crusaders and the traders. The clashes spilled into the streets when locals got involved. And the dispute eventually turned into a full-scale battle. The local people were no match for Richard's forces, so Richard soon found himself in control of Sicily.

Philip had refused to support Richard's forces, and when Richard's forces completed their conquest, they refused to fly the French flag over the towers and walls of Messina. Philip considered that a slight against him since he and Richard had agreed to divide everything equally.

The conflict between the two kings was made even worse when Richard announced that he was backing out of a prior agreement to marry Philip's sister. Richard had been betrothed to her since they were children. It was a political marriage, as was common for the period. But Richard had secretly acquired a new finance, and now he told Philip that he was backing out of the planned marriage. Richard's announcement created a small diplomatic crisis because Philip considered it an insult. Philip soon left Richard behind and proceeded on to the Holy Land without him.

Richard's forces followed a few days later, but they ended up on the island of Cyprus in the eastern Mediterranean when a couple Richard's ships were wrecked off the coast. Once again, Richard's forces got into a fight with the locals, and the dispute turned into a full-scale conquest of the island. Richard ending up selling the island to the Templars, but he didn't split the money with Philip. Richard also married his new fiancé while in Cyprus. The new Queen of England was from Navarre in northern Spain. She was crowned as queen in Cyrpus by a Norman bishop to an English king who only spent 6 months of his reign in England. So there wasn't really anything English about the new English queen.

Richard then proceeded on to the Holy Land, and he landed in the port city of Acre north of Jerusalem in June of 1191. Acre was the most important port city in the region, and most Westerners who made the trek to Jerusalem passed though that busy port. The ultimate success of this Crusade really depended on the recapture of Acre because the Crusaders needed that foothold in order to launch an attack on Jerusalem to the south. Acre had been under siege for nearly two years when Richard finally arrived.

About a month after Richard arrived, the Crusaders finally breached the city's defenses. It was a great victory for the Crusaders – one of the greatest victories in the Holy Land since the First Crusade almost a century earlier. And the victory helped to secure Richard's reputation as great warrior. But the victory came at a great cost.

First, there was a diplomatic incident involving Duke Leopold of Austria – an ally of Richard and Philip. Leopold had been involved in the siege of the city for several months before Richard and Philip got there. And after the victory, Leopold's forces tried to fly his banner from the local citadel. But Richard's men were offended by the banner, and they tore it down because Leopold wasn't a king. He was expected to know his place, and that place was under Richard. Leopold was infuriated, and he and his forces soon left for home. That reduced the number of available Crusaders. Leopold also plotted revenge again Richard, and as we'll see next time, he got his revenge a few months later.

The other problem with the victory at Acre had to do with those trading networks. The Count of Flanders had been killed in the siege. And to understand why that was a problem, you have to know that Flanders was the leading center of wool and cloth production in Europe. All of those trading networks carried wool and fabrics from Flanders to the far corners of the known world. That meant that Flanders had become very wealthy, and the French king Philip had been trying to add it to his royal demesne for some time. With the Count's death, Philip saw his opportunity. Philip also had enough of Richard. So three weeks after the victory at Acre, Philip headed back to France. That left Richard as the clear leader of the Crusade. It also meant that Richard wasn't available to defend his territory in western France. So after Philip returned home to France, he started to stir up trouble. He encouraged Richard's nobles to rebel, and he encouraged Richard's brother John to lay claim to the English throne.

Meanwhile, Richard was back in Acre planning the next stage of the Crusade. His forces soon headed south to Jerusalem accompanied by the Templars and Hospitallers. It was a slow trek – made even slower due to muddy weather and extreme caution. As Richard approached the city a couple of months later, he was having a problem maintaining his supply lines back to Acre. And his men were also exhausted. He gradually realized that even if he took the city, he wouldn't be able to hold it. Many of his men would return home, and Saladin's forces would just come back in and re-take it. Richard simply didn't have enough men to hold the city. So he turned back in mid-January.

It was around this time that Richard got news about what was happening back home. Philip was menacing Normandy, and John was trying to seize control of England.

So far, I've spent a lot of time talking about traders – with a 'D.' Now I want to talk about traitors – with a 'T.'

I mentioned earlier that Richard had left his friend William Longchamp in charge of England. But Longchamp was very unpopular. He was a Norman and didn't really have a knowledge of English politics. He didn't have a relationship with the English nobles, and he didn't speak English at all. Longchamp also placed many of his relatives in prominent positions. So Longchamp was very unpopular, and Richard's young brother John tried to take advantage of the situation. John led a movement to have Longchamp removed with the goal of seizing control of English government himself. It was also widely believed that Richard would probably die on Crusade anyway. So John was positioning himself to go ahead and take control before the inevitable took place.

So John and his supporters went after Longchamp and accused him of various offenses. Interestingly, one of the charges lodged against Longchamp was that he couldn't speak English. This implies that by the late 1100s, the people of England were starting to demand that officials have some knowledge of English. Of course, it should be noted that neither Richard nor John spoke English either. So maybe it just an expectation for administrators and bureaucrats. Or maybe the accusation was made to emphasize the fact that Longchamp was a Norman with no real connection to England. It's difficult to say, but it was one of many complaints lodged against Longchamp.

Ultimately, the propaganda campaign against Longchamp put so much pressure on him that he was forced to flee the country. According to some contemporary reports, he fled to the southern coast

disguised as a woman and was unable to respond to the local people when they spoke to him in English. Eventually, he did find his way back to Normandy.

Now William Longchamp may seem like an obscure figure form English history, but he is important to our story for at least one reason. Remember that he had been the Chancellor of England. And during his time as Chancellor, the first English documents were composed in which Richard the king was referred to with the plural pronoun ***we*** instead of the singular pronoun ***I***. This was the first known use of the so-called 'royal we' – as in "We are not amused." And Richard was definitely not amused by what was happening back in England.

By this point, Richard and John's mother, Eleanor of Aquitaine, had stepped in to prevent John from seizing control of the English crown in Richard's absence. But John had emerged as a thorn in Richard's side. And he was sowing rebellion among the English nobles. He was also being encouraged by Philip back in France.

In May of 1192, Richard received word of the alliance between John and Philip. The envoy warned Richard of "abominable treachery" and the potential loss of England. Richard knew that he needed to wrap things up as soon as possible and head back home.

A new campaign season was about to begin, so Richard embarked on one last campaign to take Jerusalem before heading back to England. Once again, Richard's forces made the trek to Jerusalem, but he experienced the same problem as before. He could barely maintain his supply lines, and he was facing a bloody protracted siege of Jerusalem. He also knew that he wouldn't be able to hold the city even if he captured it.

By this point, Richard's forces and Saladin's forces had fought each other to a standstill. Their resources were running low and both sides were looking to settle their claims to the region. In September, a 3-year truce was signed. It was agreed, that the Crusaders would continue to hold the coastline, and the Muslim forces would continue to hold Jerusalem. Christian pilgrims would be permitted to enter the city, but it would remain under Muslim control.

In the end, the Third Crusade produced mixed results. The Crusaders were able to re-secure a foothold in the region. And Richard left the Holy Land as a hero for having secured so many victories – from Sicily to Cyprus to Acre – all the way to the outskirts of Jerusalem itself. In the process, he helped to re-establish a viable Crusader kingdom in the Holy Land. But the main prize was always Jerusalem. And that prize remained elusive. Richard was never able to capture it, and in fact, it never passed back to the Crusaders.

I mentioned Richard's brother John as a possible traitor during the Third Crusade. But he wasn't the only figure in this story to be accused of treachery. The Templars eventually faced similar accusation. After the Third Crusade, the Templars moved their headquarters to the captured port city of Acre. There would be more Crusades, but increasingly they were focused more on plunder and personal gain. People started to question the motivations of the Crusaders. And that criticism extended to the Templars.

During the Crusades, the Templars had emerged as one of the wealthiest institutions in Europe and the Mediterranean. And with the permanent loss of Jerusalem, critics alleged that the Templars were more concerned with acquiring wealth than taking back the Holy Land. There were rumors of corruption and misplaced priorities.

About a century after the Third Crusade, the city of Acre once again fell to Muslim forces – and the Templars looked to move their headquarters to Europe. Given their wealth and independence and military power, there were rumors that the Templars were going to try to create their own kingdom in southern France. So the Templars actually became a threat to the French king at the time named Philip the Fair.

The later King Philip decided to eliminate the Templars once and for all – to remove the political threat and get access to all of their wealth. In the year 1307, he accused the Templars of heresy, and the Order was formally abolished by the Church. Almost all the Templars in France were arrested, and most were executed. Many of the leaders were burned alive. In France and England, most of the Templars' wealth was seized by royal officials.

The destruction of the Templars created a financial void in Europe. That early banking system disappeared. But a short time later, new institutions stepped into to fill the void. Several prominent families in northern Italy started to offer many of the same services the Templars had offered. And those families created a new banking network that was really the beginning of modern banking in Europe.

Now in this episode, I've talked about the Crusades, the spice trade, and the origin of the modern banking system. So let me conclude by putting all of these various pieces together for you. The European obsession with Crusades and spices takes us back to Spain where so many of those Arabic influences passed into Western Europe.

Though the Crusades in the Holy Land fizzled over time, the attempt to recapture Spain in the west raged on. Around the time of the Third Crusade, Christian forces had reclaimed roughly the northern half of the peninsula. As Christian forces spread south, new Christian kingdoms emerged in the conquered regions. In the far northeast, the Kingdom of Aragon was firmly established by the year 1035. Around the same time, the county of Castile emerged in north-central part of the Peninsula, and it gradually emerged as the dominant Christian realm in the region. In the far west, the Kingdom of Portugal was established in the 1130s. These were all independent realms, but in 1469, the heir to the throne of Aragon married the heir to the throne of Castile. That was the famous marriage of Ferdinand of Aragon to Isabella of Castile. That marriage sealed the alliance between those two separate kingdoms, and it was the origin of modern country of Spain.

During their joint reign, the re-conquest of Spain was finally completed. In the year 1492, Christian forces finally captured the last Muslim region in the far south – called Granada. One of the persons who was present at the capture of Grenada was a man by the name of Christopher Columbus – perhaps you've heard of him.

Columbus was in Spain because he had a potential solution to a problem that had arisen in the spice trade. The failure of the Crusades in the Holy Land and left the Near East under Muslim control. And Western traders were finding it difficult to secure safe passage through those regions using the traditional trading networks. So Columbus was looking for a different way to get to China and India. Rather than sailing eastward – through the Muslim-controlled lands – he had an idea to sail westward across the Atlantic. He knew the world was round, so he could just go in though the back door. On his way back from siege of Granada, he got an audience with Ferdinand and Isabella. And you probably know the rest of the story. They agreed to help finance the venture, but Columbus still needed a substantial investment from those northern Italian bankers that had filled the void when the Templars were banned.

So it was the desire to find a new trading route – combined with the money of the Italian bankers – and fueled by the successful re-conquest of Spain – that ultimately led Columbus to set sail westward in August of 1492 – just 8 months after the fall of Grenada and the final defeat of Muslim forces in Spain. And of course, that voyage led to the discovery of North and South America, and that discovery led to a later Indo-European migration as Spanish, Portugese, French and English all made their way across the Atlantic to the New World.

One final note before I conclude this look at Eastern influences on English during the early Middle Ages. 15 years before Columbus set sail to the New World, William Caxton starting printing books in England using his brand new printing press. The first book he produced was a version of The Canterbury Tales. But after that book was printed, Caxton decided to date each book he printed so that the date of production could be clearly established. So the next book he produced was the first book to bear a printing date – the year 1477. It's the earliest dated book printed in England, and printed in the English language, using the printing press. It was called "Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers." The book was an English translation of a French translation of a Latin translation of a book that was originally composed in Arabic in the late 11th century. So the oldest dated book printed in the English language was actually a translation of an Arabic text.

So I'm going to conclude this episode on that note. Next time, we'll explore what happened when Richard the Lionheart returned to England. He had to death with kidnappers, a disloyal brother who was trying to overthrow him, and a rival French king who was trying to carve up his empire. This was also the period in which we got the first version of the King Arthur legend written in English.

So next time, we'll look at those developments. Until then, thanks for listening to the History of English Podcast.

EPISODE 92: THE LION KINGS

Welcome to the History of English Podcast – a podcast about the history of the English language. This is Episode 92: The Lion Kings. In this episode, we're going to conclude our look our Richard the Lionheart. And we're going to see where he acquired that nickname – "Lionheart." In fact, lions will be a continuing theme in this episode. During this period, lions became symbols of Western European royalty even though lions weren't native to Europe. Most Europeans had never seen an actual lion in the lifetime, and that was true for many other exotic animals from Africa and Asia. The knowledge of those animals in Western Europe was vague and sometimes confused. And in some cases, it wasn't clear if the animals were real or mythological. So we'll also look at the growing fascination with lions and other exotic animals in the Middle Ages.

But before we begin, let me remind you that the website for the podcast is historyofenglishpodcast.com. And you can sign up to support the podcast at Patreon.com. Just go to historyofenglishpodcast.com and link from there.

So let's pick up where we left off last time – with the end of the Third Crusade and the tenuous reign of Richard I of England. I say "tenuous" because Richard was facing several challenges back home while he was away in the Holy Land. His brother John had an eye on the English throne, and he was encouraging rebellion among the English nobles. Meanwhile, the French king Philip was busy attacking Richard's lands in Normandy. And he had also formed an alliance with John to take down Richard in England. So it became increasingly obvious to Richard that he needed to get back home as soon as possible to deal with the problems there.

Richard was so feared and respected back home that the mere rumor of his return was enough to get some of the more rebellious nobles back in line. Richard had a reputation as a great and powerful warrior, and that reputation is reflected in his nickname – the "Lionheart." He had earned that reputation years earlier as the Duke of Aquitaine where he fought rebellions nobles for years. And he had defeated his powerful father Henry with the help of the French king Philip. During the Third Crusade, he captured Sicily and Cyprus before he even made it to the Holy Land. When he arrived in the Near East, he helped to secure the important port city of Acre. And he nearly took back Jerusalem from Saladin's forces before eventually agreeing to a truce that gave Christians access to the city. So he was considered a great warrior and a model of chivalry, even during his own lifetime.

And that helps to explain why he became known as Richard the Lionheart. During this period, it became common to associate kings and prominent nobles with lions. You might remember from earlier episodes that the King of Scots was known as William the Lion. The Duke of Saxony and Bavaria was named Henry. He was a close ally of Richard's, and he was actually married to Richard's sister. He was known as Henry the Lion. And the son of the French king Philip was named Louis. He later succeeded his father as the King of France, and he is sometimes known as Louis the Lion.

Well back when Richard was the Duke of Aquitaine, and he was fighting again rebellious barons there, he also started to be known as the "Lion." In earlier episodes, I've mentioned the chronicler Gerald of Wales. And it was Gerald who gave us the first written reference to Richard as "the Lion" during that earlier period. But again, that was a common nickname at the time. So how did the Richard "the Lion" became "Richard the Lionheart"?

Well, during the Third Crusade, Richard was accompanied by a Norman poet named Ambroise. It is likely that Ambroise served as a minstrel during the Crusade. And after he returned home to France, he wrote an poetic account of the Crusade in French called "L'Estoire de la Guerre Sainte" – literally the "History of the Holy War."

In his account, he described Richard's arrival as the port city of Acre. He wrote that Richard and his men were heartened. They passed Castle Imbert before seeing the city of Acre for the first time. In that passage, Ambroise wrote in French, ". . . le quor de lion, E trespassa Casel Imbert" – literally "The heart of the lion passed Castle Imbert." And that is the first known reference to Richard as "le quor de lion" – the "heart of the Lion" – or the Lionheart.

So ultimately, this nickname was a just a variation of other regal nicknames at the time that used the word ***Lion***. Even though lions weren't native to Western Europe, most Europeans had some knowledge of the large cats. And in fact, the Latin word for the animal had even passed into Old English during the time of the Anglo-Saxons. That word was ***Leo*** which we still have for the name of the constellation – "Leo." That Latin root also passed into French as ***lion***. And around the current point in our story, that French verison of the word was borrowed into English as ***lion***. So "Leo the lion" is actually redundant. ***Leo*** is the earlier Latin verison of the word found in Old English, and ***lion*** is the later French version that passed into early Middle English.

As I noted, lions weren't native to Europe, but Europeans heard stories about lions from pilgrims, from traders, from minstrels, from the stories of the Bible, and from other sources. And in the popular imagination, they were almost mythological creatures. They were highly regarded for their beauty and power and majesty.

Lions were considered such majestic creatures at the time that the word ***lion*** sometimes found its way into other uses. For example, the beauty and power of the lion is reflected in the name of a common flower which was also borrowed from French during early Middle English. This particular flower had tooth-shaped leaves. And it was thought that the leaves resembled the teeth of a lion. The French word for 'tooth' was ***dent*** – D-E-N-T – from the same root as ***dental*** and ***dentist***. So the flower became known as the 'tooth of the lion' – the 'dent-de-lion.' And after that name entered English, it was Anglicized to ***dandelion***. So a dandelion is literally the 'lion's tooth.'

Also, there was a particular type of lizard that had a head-crest that resembled a lion's mane. So the Greeks called the lizard an 'earth lion' – meaning a lion that crawled along the ground. That term passed through Latin and French into English as ***chameleon***. So a chameleon is literally an 'earth lion.' The skin of a chameleon would change color to help it blend in with its environment. And that tendency of a chameleon to change its appearance led to the other sense of the word today as a person who changes his or her appearance or changes some other personal characteristic.

Chameleon was borrowed into English in the 1300s, and ***dandelion*** came in a couple of centuries of later. So both were borrowed into Middle English.

Now you might have one lion or a group of lions. And today, we call a group of lions a ***pride***. That particular use of the word ***pride*** is based on the notion that lions are powerful and regal and proud creatures. And I mention that connection because there is a more fundamental connection between the word ***pride*** and Medieval ***nobility***. In English, a mounted warrior was called a ***knight***. And in an earlier episode, we saw that the French equivalent was a ***chevalier*** – literally a 'horse man.' But as those horsemen became lesser nobles, they started to acquire a new French name – a ***prudhomme***.

The French word ***prud*** passed into English as ***proud***. And ***homme*** is the French word for 'man.' So a ***prudhomme*** was literally a 'proud man,' but the word ***prud*** had a slightly different sense in Old French. Today, the word ***proud*** refers to someone who is self-assured and pleased with his her accomplishments. But in French, it meant someone who was valiant, and brave and powerful. We have some of that original sense in a variation of the word which entered English around this time, and that's the word ***prouess*** which became ***prowess***. If someone has great ***prowess***, they have great skill and strength and ability. And the word ***prud*** – or ***prowd*** – also once had that sense. So a ***prudhomme*** was a brave and valiant man.

Of course, we can see how the meaning of that word ***proud*** shifted when it came into English. The Norman knights often referred to themselves as ***prudhommes***. And the people of England apparently thought those knights were full of themselves. So in English, the word ***proud*** came to refer to people that had a high opinion of themselves. And over time, ***proud*** and ***prowess*** acquired different and distinct meanings in English, even though they originally had very similar meanings.

By the way, that French word ***prud*** also gave us the Modern English word ***prude*** – as in someone who is uptight and excessively proper. That word was the product of a completely separate development within French. And it actually came from that term ***prudhomme***. As I noted, ***prudhomme*** meant a proud or valiant man. Well, over time, the word was extended to women as well. And that produced the word ***prudefemme***, which literally meant a proud or valiant woman, but it was typically used to mean a noblewoman in the same way that ***prudhomme*** was used to mean a knight or nobleman.

After the Middle Ages, the word ***prudefemme*** came to mean a very proper or demure woman. And it was sometimes shortened to just ***prude***. And that was how English borrowed the word in the 1700s – to refer to someone who is excessively prim and proper, especially as it relates to matters of sex. So that was really the second time that English had borrowed that word – first as ***proud***, and then again in the 1700s as ***prude***.

So that means that ***proud***, ***prowess*** and ***prude*** are all cognate. They all came from a root word that mean 'brave or valiant.' And of course, that same root also produced the word ***pride***. If you are ***proud***, you are full of ***pride***. So it's basically the noun version of ***proud***. And from that original usage, the term was applied to lions. Remember the word ***proud*** originally meant 'brave or valiant,' and it acquired a connection to European nobility. So lions became known as the King of the Beasts. And, just as a group of French nobles were ***prudhommes*** or 'proud men,' a group of lions was

known as a ***pride***. And in fact, several documents from the 1400s make specific reference to a "pride of lions." But as I noted, the sense of the words ***proud*** and ***pride*** started to shift in English. They started to acquire a sense of arrogance, and they lost their original meaning as 'brave or valiant.' And along the way, the term ***pride*** stopped being used to refer to a group of lions. It wasn't until the late 1800s that writers started to revive certain old words for a group of animals. And during the 20th century, it once again became common to refer to a "pride of lions."

So in the development of words like ***proud*** and ***pride***, we can see connections between bravery, knighthood, kings, and lions. And that takes us back to Richard the Lionheart who was ***proud*** in both senses of the word. He was brave and valiant, but he was also kind of full of himself. I alluded to that in the last episode. Even though he was technically a vassal of the French king Philip, he often treated Philip like an underling. He broke an agreement to marry Philip's sister, and he failed to divide money and land with Philip as they had originally agreed.

I also noted in the last episode that Richard and his men made sure that everybody understood that Richard was in charge. When they captured the port city of Acre, they ripped down the banner of one of Richard's allies, Duke Leopold of Austria. Leopold had been involved in the siege of the city for several months before Richard even got there. And it was a major sign of disrespect to rip down another leader's banner, especially if he was an ally. Leopold was so infuriated, that he and his forces soon left for home. He bore a grudge against Richard, and he intended to settle the score. Back home, Leopold complained about Richard to the Holy Roman Emperor. The Emperor had formed a loose alliance with the French king Philip. They all had grievances against Richard. And they planned to teach him a lesson. Their lands stood between the Holy Land and Angevin Empire. So they agreed that if Richard survived the Crusade, he would be seized and arrested on his way back home. That meant that Richard faced a difficult and treacherous journey back to England.

In October of 1192, Richard left Acre and set sail for home. It appears that Richard's plan was to return home and get things back in order, and then return to the Holy Land at a later date to complete the Crusade. But Richard soon found that he had a problem just making his way back home.

His initial stop was the island of Corfu in western Greece. There he heard that his enemies were lying in wait at virtually every port in the western Mediterranean. So Richard decided to change course, and sail up the Adriatic, up the eastern coast of Italy. He eventually became shipwrecked in the northern Adriatic and decided to take a land route home through Central Europe.

I mentioned earlier that Richard's brother-in-law was the Duke of Saxony and Bavaria. His name was Henry, and I noted that he was also known as Henry the Lion. He was one of those nobles with a 'lion' nickname. And he was Richard's ally, so the Lionheart planned to travel overland to the Lion's territory in northern Germany. Richard and his retainers disguised themselves as pilgrims, and they headed out on foot. But three days later, they were spotted about 50 miles from Vienna. Richard was quickly seized and delivered as a prisoner to Duke Leopold. Leopold then sold Richard to the Holy Roman Emperor. The Emperor accused Richard of betraying the Holy Land by agreeing to a treaty to Saladin, and he placed Richard under house arrest.

As you might imagine, the arrest created a political mess. Richard had been on Crusade, and it was considered a violation of Pope's order for a Crusader to be detailed by another leader while he was on Crusade. So the Pope responded by excommunicating Duke Leopold.

Back in England, Richard's brother John tried to take advantage of the situation. He paid homage to the French king Philip for most of the Angevin territory in France. And he agreed to marry Philip's sister Alice. That's the same sister that Richard had refused to marry. So John was fully allied with Philip, and he was trying to position himself as the new leader of the Angevin Empire in Richard's absence. And there is no doubt that he wanted Richard to remain in prison as long as possible.

I should note that this is the period during which many of the tales of Robin Hood are set. In the classic version of the story, 'Prince' John is the evil figure in the background while King Richard is away on Crusade or being held in prison. However, there is no evidence that the Robin Hood legends actually existed during this period. The first reference to songs and stories about Robin Hood occurs in the late 1300s – a couple of centuries later. And in many of the early versions of the legend, the setting varied quite a bit. In fact, fixing the legend during Richard's reign was a relatively modern development.

It is easy to see why later writers would prefer to set the legend in this period. It was a difficult time in England with a great deal of uncertainty. But John was never able to usurp the crown. And he was prevented in part by his mother, Eleanor of Aquitaine. She stood firm in Richard's absence, and she prevented many of the important nobles from siding with John. She also helped to secure Richard's release from house arrest.

The Holy Roman Emperor was demanding a ransom of 150,000 marks for Richard's release. It was an incredible sum of money, but it was the only way to end Richard's captivity. So Eleanor set about raising the money. And keep in mind that massive taxes had been levied a few years earlier to pay for the Crusade. So now, a new round of taxes was imposed.

In almost every church in England, chalices and crucifixes were melted down for their silver. Every freeman was forced to pay a quarter of his earnings to the government to help pay the ransom. It is amazing that so much money was collected in such a short amount of time. And it's a testament to the advanced bureaucracy that had been established in England. And all of those taxes had long-term consequences which we'll cover in upcoming episodes

The amount that had to be paid for Richard's release was literally a King's ransom. And I should note that the word ***ransom*** was borrowed form French around this time. In the end, 100,000 marks were paid for Richard's release, with hostages being given as a guarantee for the remaining 50,000. In February of 1194, after more than a year in captivity, the Lionheart was released from captivity – and he was once agree free to roam the countryside.

With Richard's release, the rebellions in France and England started to fall apart. A contemporary chronicler named Roger of Howden wrote about the reaction of the French king Philip. According

to the account, Philip sent an urgent message to John. The message read, "Look to yourself, the devil is loose."

A short time later, Richard landed in Kent. He had been gone for nearly 4 years. So in order to reassert royal authority, he was crowned for a second time in Westminster. He spent the rest of the Spring consolidating his control, and dealing with the few rebellious nobles that were still sympathetic to John.

I noted earlier that the King of the Scots was also known as 'the Lion' – specifically William the Lion. William had remained an ally of Richard during his arrest, and that loyalty had helped to secure Richard's position in England. William never joined John's rebellion. And now that Richard was back in town, William arrived to request a favor. He asked Richard for possession of the northern English counties that had also been claimed by prior Scottish kings. But Richard refused. The Lionheart was not willing to cede any territory to the Scottish Lion.

After two months in England putting things in order, Richard decided to head across the Channel to deal with the French king Philip. By this point, Philip had taken control of that disputed region between Paris and Normandy called the Vexin. He had also invaded deep into Normandy and even threatened the Norman capital of Rouen. So Philip was really the biggest threat to Richard's reign.

As soon as Richard arrived in Normandy, Richard's brother John came to beg forgiveness. He apologized for his actions and swore that he would never challenge Richard again. Surprisingly, Richard accepted the apology without argument. He said that John was a mere child, and those who had led him astray would be punished. Of course, Richard was referring to Philip who he considered the more important threat. And by forgiving John, Richard was able to bring his brother back to his side, thereby breaking up the alliance with Philip.

Richard spent the next five years waging war against Philip. It was a bitter and brutal affair with siege after siege, and shifting alliances. It soon became clear that Philip was no match for Richard on the battlefield. Richard finally got the upper hand in the winter of 1195 and 1196. Nobles that had sided with Philip when he was ascendant now switched their loyalty to Richard. It was always better to side with the king who was winning. Over time, Richard regained most of the territory that had been lost.

As we know, the conflict between the French kings and the Angevin kings was part of a larger family tradition. The French Dynasty at the time was called the Capetians. And of course, the English ruling family was the Plantagenets. And by now, the Capetians and the Plantagenets were mortal enemies. Each family made alliances with lesser nobles, and those alliances were secured through arranged marriages. So we have to keep in mind that these wars weren't really wars between nation-states in the modern sense of warfare. In many respects, they were wars fought by one family against another family. And this type of warfare explains another important development that took place during this period. That development was the rise of heraldry.

Heraldry refers to the symbols used to represent specific families – especially noble families. It includes the specific designs on banners and flags, and the symbols used on shields and helmets.

These types of symbols and emblems had been around for a while, but around the current point in our story, they started to acquire a larger significance.

As I noted, military standards had been used for centuries. Germanic kings had tended to use symbols like bears, and wolves and boars. But they were mainly used to represent a particular king or specific group of soldiers. But now, the leaders of various families started to adopt their own unique symbols. These were usually very colorful designs, and they often featured exotic animals like lions and leopards.

One theory is that these symbols arose out of the new tournament tradition. As I've noted before, the tournaments featured large groups of knights who tried to knock each other off of their horses – and then collect a ransom for the fallen knights. The knights were usually covered with chain mail, armor and helmets. So in the melee that took place during the tournament, it was difficult for the knights and the spectators to keep track of various participants. You didn't want to knock an ally off of his horse. So it became common for knights to use specific flags and banners and tunics to identify themselves and their allies. The tournament was a type of mock warfare, but the knights started to carry those same symbols into actual battle.

This development may also help to explain the origin of the word ***heraldry***. A ***herald*** was a French word for the chief official who was in charge of a tournament. The word ***herald*** entered English in the 1200s, and in English the word came to mean a royal messenger. That produced the verb ***herald*** meaning 'to proclaim or announce.' So blooming flowers might herald the arrival of Spring. But the herald or messenger usually wore a coat that was decorated with his mater's coat of arms to clearly identify who he represented. And that produced the word ***heraldry*** to refer to things associated with those symbols.

So the first major development of this period was the widespread adoption of crests and symbols and coats or arms by various noble families. The other major development was use of lions in those banners and symbols. According to some sources, William the Conqueror had used a lion on his royal coat of arms. And the tomb of Richard's grandfather Geoffrey of Anjou also contained depictions of lions. These were some of the earliest known uses of lions as royal symbols.

But at the current point in our story, after Richard's return to England and Normandy, he adopted an official coat of arms. He initially used one lion, then he experimented with two lions, but he finally settled on a design with three lions. The three lions were used for the Great Seal of England that was adopted after he returned from the Crusade. And that is still the same basic design used today on the modern Royal Coat of Arms of England.

The lion became so closely associated with royalty that it soon replaced traditional animals like bears and wolves on military standards and family crests. This is all-the-more fascinating when we consider that lions weren't even native to Europe. I should note that lions actually did inhabit parts of Europe many thousands of years ago. But they certainly had not been there since the last ice age. So they were foreign and exotic animals. Very few people in northern Europe had actually seen a lion during their lifetime, and most only knew the animal through depictions on coats of arms or royal banners.

We have to keep in mind that there were no modern zoos where people could just stroll though see animals from other continents. And most people didn't have access to books where they can see drawings and depictions of those animals. So there was almost a mythological component to animals like lions and tigers and elephants and camels.

It does appear that real-life lions occasionally made their way to English soil. The great historian William of Malmesbury lived during the time of Richard's great-grandfather Henry I. And William wrote that Henry received exotic animals as gifts from foreign kings. He reported that those animals included lions, leopards, lynxes and camels. And he said that Henry kept them in a park at his country estate near Oxford called Woodstock. Unfortunately, other than this account, nothing is really known about Henry's collection of animals. And no trace of it exists today. And since it was located at Henry's country estate, it wasn't open to the public. So again, the average person never had an opportunity to see any of these animals in person. And that meant that they only had vague ideas about the appearance and nature of those animals.

Though most Anglo-Saxons never saw any of these animals in person, they did have words for some of them. But those Old English words suggest a fair amount of confusion.

I noted earlier that Old English had the word ***leo*** – an early form of the word ***lion***. Old English also had the word ***tiger***. Both of those words can be traced back to Latin and Greek, but beyond that, the etymology is not really clear.

Another large cat mentioned in Old English was the ***panther***. The word is found in a late Old English document, and it was apparently borrowed from French and Latin. Latin actually had two names for this particular cat: ***panthera*** – which produced the word ***panther***, and ***pardus*** – which produced the word ***pard***. Of course, ***pard*** has fallen out of use, but it was once a common word for a panther in Middle English.

That word ***pard*** is also a clue that people sometimes confused these animals because it is also part of the word ***leopard***. ***Leopard*** is actually a combination of that word ***leo*** for lion and ***pard*** for ***panther***. The construction actually goes back to Greek, but that means that the literal meaning of the word ***leopard*** is 'lion-panther.' And that suggests that Europeans didn't always understand the distinction between lions, panthers and leopards.

In fact, the words ***leopard*** and ***panther*** were often used interchangeably for the same animal throughout much of the Middle English period. A panther was generally considered to be a large leopard. It wasn't until modern scholars clearly distinguished the various species that these terms finally acquired a more specific and consistent use.

The confusion between these cats can also be seen in the way France and England identified the animals depicted on those royal banners and coats of arms. England referred to them as ***lions***, but France once referred to them as ***leopards***. They were referring to the same animal, they just used different names. Today, the animal is generally called a ***lion*** on both sides of the Channel.

So Old English had references to lions, tigers and panthers. And ***leopard*** was borrowed in early Middle English.

Beyond those cats, Old English also had words for a camel and an elephant. But again, the words they used for those animals suggest that the Anglo-Saxons didn't really know what those animals were. And there is one particular word that has been the subject of much debate and speculation. And that word was an Anglo-Saxon word for camels.

Let me begin by noting that Old English actually had the word ***camel***. The word ***camel*** is actually a Semitic word, ultimately from either Phoenician or Hebrew. And it passed through Greek and Latin and early French before it finally ended up in late Old English.

But it was that other word for a camel that has intrigued scholars. That other word was ***olfend***. Now you're probably saying, "What's the big deal about that word?" Well, it has to do with the possible connection between that word ***olfend*** and the word ***elephant***. Remember that ***olfend*** meant a camel. So are the words ***olfend*** and ***elephant*** related? Well, many scholars think they are.

The word ***elephant*** is derived from the Latin word ***elephantus***, and it passed through French into Middle English as ***olifaunt***. So the resemblance of ***olfend*** and ***olifaunt*** was even greater in Middle English.

But here's where things get even more interesting. Even though ***elephant*** – or ***olifaunt*** – was borrowed in Middle English, Old English already had a word for an elephant, that was the word ***elpend***. And that word also appears to be related to the other words. So again, the Anglo-Saxons had ***olfend*** for camel and ***elpend*** for elephant. Both of those words are also attested in other Germanic languages, so it appears that they originated within the original Proto-Germanic language. And in fact, based on the development of those words in the other Germanic languages, it appears that ***elpend*** could originally refer to either an elephant or a camel.

So from all of that, we can conclude that the original Proto-Germanic speakers had either one word – or two different related words – to refer to large exotic animals from beyond the Mediterranean. It's possible that the original animal was neither a camel nor an elephant. These words might have referred to a mythological creature. In fact, one theory is that the early Germanic tribes heard stories about large beasts in Africa, and they weren't sure if those beasts were real or not. And if they were real, they weren't sure if the stories were about different animals – or just different descriptions of the same animal. You can imagine how all of this would have been very confusing to people in northern Europe. It would have been like people talking about unicorns and dragons. It might not have been clear if these animals really existed or not.

It is possible that some of these stories about strange beasts came from Greek and Roman traders. And that's because Latin had that word ***elephantus***, which is the direct ancestor of the modern word ***elephant***. And as I noted, most scholars think there is some connection between that Latin word ***elephantus*** and those Germanic words ***oflend*** and ***elpend***. So it is possible that all of those words are derived from a common root word.

Now the early Greek writers Homer and Hesiod used the word ***elephas*** as a word for ivory – which of course comes the tusks of elephants. And it is generally accepted that that early Greek word ***elephas*** is directly related to the Latin word ***elephantus*** for elephant. So it is likely that the Romans picked up their word from the Greeks. And one theory is that that Greek word is the common ancestor of all of these later words.

All of this also raises another interesting question. If one or more of these words came from the Greeks, where did the Greeks get the word from? Did they borrow it from people who lived in the Near East or North Africa?

Well, again, the answer is unclear. But one theory is that the Greek word came from the Phoenicians. And if that theory is true, there is a connection between elephants and the letter A.

So let me explain. Today, we know the letter A as 'A.' But as you may know, the letter was called ***alpha*** by the Greeks. Of course, the Greeks borrowed the alphabet from the Phoenicians – and the original Phoenician letter was called ***aleph***. And ***aleph*** was the word for 'ox' in the Phoenician language.

Since the word ***aleph*** meant an 'ox,' and since that word was used for the first letter of the Phoenician alphabet, the Phoenicians depicted the letter with a simplified drawing of an ox's head. So the original Phoenician version of the letter A – or ***aleph*** – was an ox head. And we can still see the remnants of that original drawing in our modern letter A. Take the uppercase letter A and turn it upside down. You now have a little triangle on the bottom with two lines sticking out of the top. Well, originally, that triangle at the bottom was the ox's head, and the two lines sticking out were the ox's horns.

Well, let's think about that word ***aleph***. Remember that the Old English word for a camel was ***olfend***. So ***aleph*** and ***olfend***. And the word for elephant was ***elpend***. Again, some scholars think that Phoenician word for an ox was the ultimate source of those Old English words via Greek. And if true, that word is also the source of ***elephant*** via Latin and French. So this theory means that the word ***elephant*** is cognate with the words ***alpha*** and ***alphabet***, and it is also related to the letter A itself.

Again, the ultimate connection between these words is still uncertain. And that uncertainty is likely the result of some confusion about these animals among northern Europeans.

Another piece of evidence to support this theory is an early term for a giraffe. The word ***giraffe*** came into English in its current form in the 1500s via French, and ultimately from Arabic. But before that version of the word came in, there was an earlier version that was used in some Middle English documents. In the 1400s, some documents referred to the giraffe as a ***gerfauntz***, which appears to combine the 'ger' part from ***giraffe*** and the 'faunt' part from ***olifaunt*** – the early form of ***elephant***. Again, this suggests some confusion between a giraffe and an elephant.

The confusion is also reflected in another Middle English term for a giraffe. That term was a ***camelopard*** – literally a combination of ***camel*** and ***pard***. Remember that ***pard*** was that word for

panther, and it was also used as a shortened form of ***leopard***. So a giraffe was sometimes called ***camelopard***, implying that it was an exotic African animal like a camel, but it had spots like a leopard – thus ***camelopard***.

The important thing to take from all of this is that the people of England had these words for these exotic animals. So they had some knowledge of those animals. But that knowledge was limited – and it walked a fine line between reality and myth.

That knowledge came from stories and legends. Those stories came from traders and pilgrims. Sometimes they came from minstrels and other story-tellers. They also came from the stories in written documents like the Bible. And it wasn't just the Bible. There was a solid literary tradition by this point, especially in Latin. And descriptions of these animals were also passed along in those written texts.

In fact, texts about exotic animals were very popular in the Middle Ages. Most of them were based on an old Greek text called Physiologus. That document was written in the early Christian period, and it contained descriptions of many animals known to the Greeks. It also mixed in mythological animals like the unicorn and the phoenix alongside actual animals like the lion, the elephant and the panther.

This Greek text was very much a Christian document. It contained a description of each animal, but then it attempted to explain how the animal was a metaphor for some aspect of Christianity. So these stories were popular among scribes who received their education in monasteries and church schools.

That original Greek text was translated into Latin, and there were actually many different Latin translations. Some translations added new animals and dropped some of the original animals. Those Latin texts were then translated into other languages including English. This type of document about animals became known as a bestiary. There was also an Old English version of the bestiary. But around the current point in our story, a Middle English translation was also composed. The author is unknown, but thankfully, the text has survived the centuries.

Of course, the word ***bestiary*** is based on the word ***beast***. And the word ***beast*** entered English around this time in the late 1100s and early 1200s. In its original sense, the word ***beast*** simply meant an animal that lived in the wild. You might remember that the Anglo-Saxons used the word ***deer*** in the same way. But as the word ***beast*** started to be used that general sense, the word ***deer*** became restricted to the animal we know today as a deer. I should also mention that the word ***beast*** was largely replaced by the word ***animal*** when the word ***animal*** came in during the 1300s.

Even though there were many different versions of the Bestiary, the first animal to be described was almost always the lion. After all, the lion was the King of the Beasts. And that was also true in the Middle English Bestiary. It contains descriptions of 13 different animals, beginning with the lion. The text describes several characteristics of the lion.

The passage alludes to the lion's intelligence by stating that the lion covers its tracks when it senses a hunter approaching. It sweeps the ground with its tail to clear the tracks. Here's the passage in Modern English, then in the original Middle English.

All his footsteps he fills after him;
He drags dust with his tail over his steps,
Either dust or dew so that he cannot be found,
And drives down to his den, where he will take refuge.

Alle hise fet steppes After him he filleð;
Drageð dust wið his stert ðer he steppeð,
Oðer dust oðer deu, ðat he ne cunne is finden,
driueð dun to his den ðar he him bergen wille.

The passage then describes another characteristic of the lion. It states that a newborn lion sleeps for three days until his father awakens him with a roar. Here's the passage:

Still lies the lion; he stirs not from sleep,
til the sun is seen thrice about him;
Then he is raised by his father with the cry that he makes.

tille lið ðe leun, ne stireð he nout of slepe,
Til ðe sunne haueð sinen ðries him abuten,
ðanne reiseð his fader him mit te rem ðat he makeð.

The entry for the lion then describes a third characteristic. The passage says:

The lion has a third feature:
when he lies sleeping,
He never closes the lids of his eyes.

Ðe ðridde lage haueð ðe leun,
ðanne he lieð to slepen,
Sal he neure luken ðe lides of hise egen.

Now I noted that the Bestiary was a Christian text, and each animal description was a metaphor for some aspect of Christianity. The entry for the lion concludes by explaining the Christian analogies. The lion's ability to hide from the hunter is a metaphor for Christ's ability to elude and frustrate and perplex the devil. And a newborn lion sleeping for three days before being awakened by his father is a metaphor for Christ lying in the tomb for three days before being resurrected. And the lion's ability to sleep with its eyes open is a metaphor for the way that Christ keeps an ever-watchful eye over his flock.

So you can see how the Bestiary was more than just a book about animals. It was used as a teaching guide by churches and monasteries. And in a period when most education had a religious

foundation, students were routinely exposed to these stories. And so, you can see how the Bestiary also contributed to the way people of Western Europe perceived these exotic animals.

By the way, the Middle English version of the Bestiary also discusses elephants, panthers, serpents and eagles, among other animals. I'll look at some of those other passages in the next bonus episode at Patreon. The Bestiary also contains several new words that are used for the first time in an English text. That includes words like ***beak***, ***snout***, ***venom***, ***cave*** and ***clever***. All were brand new words in the English language.

Now the passage I just read about the lion states that he keeps an ever-watchful eye on his surroundings. Well, that was also true of the Lionheart. Richard the Lionheart was a diligent and aggressive warrior. And it was difficult to get anything past him.

Over time, he gradually re-captured the castles and territory that had been lost during his absence in the Holy Land.

Eventually the French king Philip realized that he needed to settle his differences with Richard. In January of 1199, Philip and Richard met to discuss a long-term truce. The negotiations extended into March. But by the end of March, a couple of nobles had started to rebel against Richard in the southern part of the Angevin Empire. Richard left to put down the revolt by seizing a local castle. The castle was poorly defended, and after three days, the castle's defenders were barely hanging on. Richard left his tent to inspect the work of his men who were digging under the castles walls. He had a shield, and he had on a helmet, but he wasn't wearing any armor.

As Richard looked up, he saw someone pop up from behind the castle walls and fire a crossbow in his general direction. The arrow struck Richard in the shoulder. The blow itself was not fatal, but the arrow was lodged deep in Richard's shoulder. A surgeon was called, and he was eventually able to remove the arrow. At first, everything appear to be ok, but surgeries were very risky during this period. The wound soon turned to gangrene. And given the proximity of the wound against Richard's heart, everyone knew that he wouldn't live for very long. As the castle finally fell, a message was sent to Eleanor of Aquitaine that her son was dying. She arrived at the camp just in time to see Richard pass away on April 6, 1199.

Now Richard didn't have any children, so there was initially an issue over the succession. I'll deal with the succession issue in more detail in the next episode, but ultimately, Richard's brother John emerged as the successor. And he soon received the title that he had coveted for years. John became King of England in April of 1199.

Now John had several nicknames. I noted in an earlier episode that he was known as John Lackland – because his father Henry had not left him any land in the initial division of his estate among his children. He also became known as John Softsword because he was seen as a weak negotiator and military leader. He is also known as Bad King John because he is generally considered to be one of the worst kings in English history. And that's also why he is the ONLY English monarch to be named John. No one else wanted to take that name after him.

That may also explain why John never had a nickname associated with lions. But John did have one connection to lions. And it actually ties together two themes that we've explored in this episode – lions and captivity.

One of the most famous prisons in Medieval England was the Tower of London. Many captives were detained there over the centuries. In fact, it was such an infamous prison that the phrase "sent to the tower" became a euphemism for putting someone in prison. And the captives in the Tower of London didn't get the royal treatment that Richard the Lionheart had received as a prisoner in Germany.

Believe it or not, the Tower of London was not only home to captive humans, it was also home to captive animals. And during the reign of King John, it was home to a lion. We know this because written records survive showing payments made to workers at the Tower who are identified as lion-keepers. It also shows that payments were made for an iron gate and chain for the lion. From this, most scholars agree that John was keeping at least one lion in the Tower during his reign. This was the beginning of a small collection of animals at the Tower called the Royal Menagerie.

A few years after John's reign, it is recorded that the Holy Roman Emperor gave three lions to John's son and successor as a wedding gift. They were also kept at the Tower. Other animals were added over time, including ostriches and elephants. It was Queen Elizabeth I who opened the menagerie to the public, and it proved to be a very popular attraction. It was the first time that most Londoners had actually seen these exotic animals in person. In the early 1800s, the menagerie at the Tower was finally closed, and the animals were transferred to a new facility for animals at Regent's Park in London. The new facility was called the "Zoological Gardens in Regent's Park." But that long name was soon shortened. The term ***zoological*** was based on an old Greek word – ***zoion*** – which meant 'animal.' And that term was shortened from ***zoological*** to ***zoo***. The facility itself became known simply as the London Zoo. And in the process, the word ***zoo*** replaced the French word ***menagerie***.

The London Zoo was one of the first modern zoos, and it was a model for many other public zoos that started to spring up around the world. Of course, the London Zoo still exists today. And the lion exhibit at the zoo follows a continuous tradition of lion-keeping in England that goes all the way back to King John and lions of the Tower.

Next time, we'll look at some of John's other contributions, most of which were not very good. He lost Normandy forever, he got into a fight with his barons. And he was forced to sign Magna Carta. All in all, it was one of the worst reigns of any king in English history. That reign was juxtaposed against the legendary reign of King Arthur. And the popularity of the Arthurian legend was exploding during that same period. In fact, first English version of the Arthurian legend appeared around the time that John became king. I didn't have time to get that text in this episode. So next time, we'll look at John's early reign, and we'll dig through that first English version of the legend of Arthur.

Until then, thanks for listening to the History of English Podcast.

EPISODE 93: THE TWO ARTHURS

Welcome to the History of English Podcast – a podcast about the history of the English language. This is Episode 93: The Two Arthurs. In this episode, we're going to turn our attention to developments during the early reign of King John. As we know, John became King of England when his brother Richard died in 1199. But it didn't happen automatically. John actually had a nephew named Arthur who had a competing claim. And that struggle between John and Arthur ultimately led to a split within the Angevin Empire, and that split led to the loss of Normandy and most of the other territories in northern France. The loss of Normandy meant that England was no longer an outpost in a larger French Empire. For the first time since the Norman Conquest, England was severed from France. And that led to renewed sense of Englishness and an increase in the production of documents composed in English. One of the first documents to be composed in the wake of these events was the story of another Arthur – the legendary King Arthur. It was the first time that the story of Arthur had been composed in English. So this time, we'll also take a closer look at that text.

But before we begin, let me remind you that the website for the podcast is historyofenglishpodcast.com. And you can sign up to support the podcast at Patreon.com. Just go to historyofenglishpodcast.com and link from there.

So this time, we're going to explore the early part of King John's reign. And let's begin by noting that John was the youngest of the five legitimate sons born to Henry II, so he was never really destined for kingship. His nickname was John Lackland because, early on, his father had not even bothered to set aside any territory for him.

John had two older brothers who died many years earlier. There was a brother named William who died as a small child. The next oldest brother was Henry who died of dysentery. And neither of them had any children.

And there was also Richard, who became Richard the Lionheart. And we saw last time, he died from a crossbow shot in the year 1199. And he didn't have any children either.

That leaves the last remaining brother, Geoffrey. But Geoffrey had also passed away by this point. But unlike the other brothers, Geoffrey did have a young son. So Geoffrey's young son and John were the two potential claimants to the throne when Richard died.

So I want to begin this episode by providing some historical context for this rivalry because these competing claims ultimate tore apart the Angevin Empire, and it led to the permanent loss of Normandy and most of northern France. And as we'll see, those developments actually gave the English language a boost in England.

This story really begins with John's older brother Geoffrey – the fourth son on Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine. He was born after Richard and before John, so he would have been next in line for the throne after Richard if he had survived.

I've mentioned Geoffrey in passing in earlier episodes because he was made the Duke of Brittany during his father's lifetime, and that's very important to this part of the story. His father, Henry II, had invaded Brittany and forced the noble who was serving as the Duke of Brittany to step down. The duke's daughter then became the heiress to the Breton throne. Her name was Constance, and Henry demanded that she marry Geoffrey. And by virtue of that marriage, Geoffrey then became the new Duke of Brittany. This was the way politics was played in Medieval France. Military invasions and forced marriages were not unusual. And this arrangement brought Brittany into the Angevin orbit. And Geoffrey was supposed to inherit Brittany when his father eventually died.

But in 1186, all of those plans went up in smoke. While participating in a tournament in France, Geoffrey fell off his horse in the middle of a melee, and he was trampled to death. Now at that moment, Geoffrey had a daughter, but he didn't have a son. However, his wife Constance was pregnant. And a few months later, she gave birth to a son.

Now we have to keep in mind that Brittany was a very unique region in northern France. It was a region that had a heavy Celtic influence, and a Celtic language called ***Breton*** was widely spoken there – as it still is today. You might also remember that the name ***Brittany*** is related to ***Britain*** because many British refugees had fled there during the Anglo-Saxon conquest about seven centuries earlier. And throughout this Celtic fringe – in places like Brittany, and Wales and Cornwall – there were legendary stories about a Celtic king named Arthur who had fought against the Anglo-Saxons many centuries earlier.

In many respects, Arthur was seen as a resistence figure. He was the great Celtic hero who stood up to foreign invaders. And in Brittany, at the current point in our story, the Angevins kings were widely viewed as modern-day invaders – carrying on the tradition of the Anglo-Saxons. Even though they were French, they were also the Kings of England. So they had inherited the legacy of the Anglo-Saxons. And the Bretons didn't care for Angevin meddling in Brittany. And they probably didn't care too much for the fact that young Geoffrey had been forced upon them as Duke. And it's possible that Geoffrey's wife Constance also resented the interference that had toppled her father. One clue that she may have harbored some resentment is the name she gave her newborn son after Geoffrey died.

It was traditional for French nobility to give their sons French names – like William, or Henry, or Richard, or John. But Constance chose a different name – "Arthur." We don't know for certain why she chose that name. It could have simply been because it was a popular name at the time – associated with the legends of King Arthur. But many historians have speculated that she chose that name as a symbol of resistence. Whatever the reason, young Arthur grew up in Brittany while the rest of the Plantagents fought each other for control of the Angevin Empire.

When Henry died three years later, Richard the Lionheart was the eldest living child. So Richard went to England to be crowned as king and to raise money for the Third Crusade. While he was in England, he was presented with an unusual gift. It was a sword that supposedly belonged to the legendary King Arthur. It was a sword known as Caliburn, but over time, that name evolved into Excalibur.

So where did this sword come from? Well, a few episodes back, I told you about an excavation at an abbey in Glastonbury in southwestern England. The monks had heard rumors that Arthur was buried there. And when they excavated part of the cemetery, they found the bodies of a man and woman who they presumed to be Arthur and Guinevere. And they also found an old sword which they presumed to be Excalibur. This excavation was completed around the time that Richard arrived in England for his coronation, so he was given the sword, and he took it with him when he left for the Crusade.

Now Richard knew that the Crusade was dangerous, and he might not return alive. And he didn't have any children. So if he died, the throne was either going to pass to his younger brother John or his nephew Arthur in Brittany who was about three years old at the time. We have to keep in mind that there were no clear rules of succession at this point in history. John was the only remaining brother, but Geoffrey had been an older brother. So did the line pass through Geoffrey's descendants first before it got to John? If so, then Arthur in Brittany was next in line. And there were many nobles who supported that view. Before Richard left England for the Crusade, he also accepted this view. He indicated that he wanted Arthur to succeed him if he died while on Crusade.

Now, as you may recall, Richard's forces got into a fight with traders and townspeople in Sicily on his way to the Holy Land. And his forces ended up conquering Sicily in the process. But having conquered the island, Richard couldn't head out for Jerusalem until he figured out what to do with it. So in exchange for a large payment from the King of Sicily, Richard agreed to let him remain as the king. The agreement was sealed with a marriage alliance. Richard agreed that his young nephew Arthur would marry one of the king's daughters. But that meant that Richard had to formally recognize Arthur as his heir. So in Sicily – in the year 1190 – Arthur was formally recognized as Richard's heir as part of this treaty. That meant that England was destined to one-day have a real life King Arthur.

As a sign of friendship, Richard gave the Sicilian king that sword that was widely thought to be Excalibur. By the way, if it seems surprising that Richard was so easily part with Arthur's famous sword, it was probably because Richard didn't really believe the story either. He was probably one of many sceptics.

All of this takes us to Richard's return from the Crusade, and his eventual death from a crossbow shot. According to the chronicler Roger of Howden, Richard reconsidered the succession while lying on his deathbed. Supposedly, before he died, he changed his mind and stated that he wanted John to be his heir.

We have to keep in mind that Richard and John's mother – Eleanor of Aquitaine – was there when Richard died. She was still a very influential figure, and she favored John over Arthur. So she may have influenced that decision. Whatever the motivation, Richard's last wishes mattered, and that gave a John's claim a boost.

But Arthur actually won the first political battle for the crown. The Angevin Empire encompassed most of western France. And in the middle of that landscape were the territories of Anjou, Maine and Touraine. That region was also adjacent to Brittany. And the barons in all of those regions threw

their support to Arthur and proclaimed him the new ruler. Then the French king Philip stepped in and recognized Arthur. So at first, it looked like Arthur was on his way to becoming King Arthur.

But John didn't give up. He had supporters to the north in Normandy. In fact, Norman tradition tended to give preference to a younger brother over the child of an older brother. So that meant that the Norman barons were inclined to favor John's claims. So John quickly headed to Normandy where he was installed as the new Duke of Normandy.

John also had support down in Aquitaine where his mother Eleanor was still the dominant political figure. So the net result of all of this is that the Angevin Empire was now split. John ruled over Normandy in the far north and Aquitaine in the far south, but Arthur was recognized in the regions in between. The great empire pieced together by Henry and Eleanor was starting to break apart.

Of course, England was the big prize here because England offered the title of king, and it also offered a lot of wealth and manpower. The English barons were inclined to support John because he was now the Duke of Normandy. Remember that many of the English barons held lands in both England and Normandy. So they always preferred a common ruler who could secure their interests on both sides of the Channel.

A month after being declared the Duke of Normandy, John headed to England to be crowned as the new King of England on May 27, 1199. So John now held Normandy, Aquitaine and England, and he also held the title of king. He had effectively outflanked Arthur.

The French king Philip saw the writing on the wall, and by the end of the year, he started to switch his loyalty from Arthur to John. In January of the following year, a formal agreement was made between Philip and John which effectively recognized John as the proper heir to all of Richard's lands in France. Young Arthur remained in the picture. It was agreed that he would hold Brittany as John's vassal.

At this point, John had put himself in a winning position. But throughout his life, he had a tendency to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory. And that's exactly what he did at this point.

A few months later, John headed south for a tour of Aquitaine. In July, he attended a gathering where he met with the leading nobles from the two most prominent families of northern Aquitaine. And he met the 12-year daughter of one of the nobles named Isabella. Young Isabella was betrothed to a prominent noble from the other family as part of a larger peace agreement between the two prominent families. Even though the marriage had been agreed to, Isabella was still considered a bit too young to get married given her age.

But none of that really mattered to John. He didn't care about her age, or the marriage agreement, or the fragile peace that had been negotiated in northern Aquitaine. He just wanted the young girl. So John whisked her away, and a few weeks later, he married her. He then took her to England, where she was crowned as Queen in Westminster Abbey.

Now as you might imagine, all of this infuriated the nobles in northern Aquitaine – especially Isabella's former fiancé. The fiance's family, who were the leading nobles of a region called Lusignan, decided to get revenge on John. So they agreed to support any claims that Arthur still had to the throne. And more importantly, they appealed to the French king Philip. Philip was their feudal lord, and technically, he was also John's feudal lord. So John should have gotten Phillip's consent before stepping in and taking another vassals' daughter and marrying her. Of course, John had never consulted Philip about the marriage.

So Philip demanded that John come to his court at Paris to address the issue, but John refused to appear. When John ignored the summons, Philip responded by declaring John in violation of his feudal oath, and he formally deprived John of his French territories. Philip then switched his loyalty back to Arthur. Philip agreed to let Arthur have all of John's lands in France, except Normandy which Philip intended to keep for himself. Of course, Arthur would hold those lands Philip's vassal. So once again, Arthur was back in the picture.

Philip has seized John's lands by proclamation, but now he needed to enforce that proclamation. And the only way to do that was to take the lands by force. So Philip attacked Normandy, and he gave Arthur 200 knights to help him take control of Aquitaine in the south.

As I noted, Eleanor of Aquitaine was still the dominant political figure in Aquitaine, despite her advanced age. And she had been a strong supporter of John. So Arthur needed to deal with Eleanor first. Of course, Eleanor was Arthur's grandmother, but that didn't really matter. He heard that Eleanor was staying in a castle in Mirebeau in northern Aquitaine. So he headed there with the intention of capturing the castle and taking Eleanor prisoner. His forces joined with the rebellious nobles from Lusignan, and together they quickly captured the city. And then they started to besiege the castle.

But during the siege, Eleanor was able to send a messenger to John who was located about 80 miles to the north in Le Mans. John gathered his forces and made the 80 mile trek to Mirebeau in two days. And he caught Arthur's forces completely by surprise. In the ensuing battle, many of Arthur's troops were killed, and Arthur himself was taken prisoner, together with about 200 barons and knights who were supporting him. The nobles from Lusignan were also captured.

In light of John's victory, the French king Philip withdrew from the Norman border and returned to Paris. And given all of this, John should have been able to re-secure his control over the various French territories. But once again, John snatched defeat from the jaws of victory.

John had taken lots of prisoners after that siege at Mirebeau. But he treated them horribly. Twenty-two of the prisoners were starved to death. And even for this period of history, that was considered unacceptable. But John wasn't done. He had his nephew Arthur imprisoned in Normandy. And Arthur was never seen in public again.

So what happened to Arthur? Well, there is no definitive answer, but it is almost certain that he was murdered. Years later, a monk who maintained an annual chronicle at an abbey in Wales recorded a specific account of what happened. The monk was given information from a source close to John's

court, but isn't entirely clear who that source was. It is widely believed that the source was a man named William de Braose. He had access to John's inner court during the time when Arthur was imprisoned, and his family were also patrons of this particular abbey.

Anyway, the monk recorded that John himself murdered Arthur. He wrote that on the day before Good Friday, John was drunk from wine and "filled with the devil." After dinner, John killed Arthur with his own hands, and he then had a heavy stone tied to Arthur's body, and the body was thrown in the River Seine. Now, there is no way to confirm this version of events, but this is the most widely accepted version of what happened. And even if John didn't commit the murder himself, he almost certainly had Arthur killed after he was thrown in prison. And that's because rumors soon spread throughout England and France that Arthur was dead. And one noble after another started to abandon John due to his mistreatment of the prisoners and his presumed murder of Arthur. All he had to do to stop the hemorrhaging was produce Arthur and show that he was still alive. But John never did that.

This was the year 1203. And by this point, many of John's nobles had concluded that he was simply too brutal and treacherous. If he could kill nobles that easily – even his own nephew – then what might he do to them? They abandoned John, and threw their support to the French king Philip. Once again, the tide turned against John and in favor of Philip.

Philip was able to take advantage of the situation. He and his allies regrouped their forces and again took aim at Normandy. In fact, Philip had such strong support that two of the great Norman castles surrendered to him without a fight. As the weeks passed, more prominent nobles went over to the French king.

The middle territories soon fell into Philip's hands, once again cutting the Angevin Empire in half. So John no longer had direct access to Aquitaine in the south. John also failed to put up an effective resistance in the north. In November of 1203, John slipped away across the Channel to England – never to return to Normandy. With John's absence, the loss of Normandy was just a matter of time. One Norman town after another fell to Philip's forces – many without a fight.

On April 1 of 1204, as Philip marched across Normandy, Eleanor of Aquitaine reached the end of her life. Some later historians claimed that the fall of Normandy hastened her death. But Eleanor was 82 years old, which made her a very old woman for the 13th century. And some contemporary chronicles suggest that she was already incapacitated at the time. So no one knows if these events really had an impact on her death. But either way, these events marked the end of an era. Arthur was dead, Eleanor was dead, and Normandy and most of northern France was lost – never to be fully recovered.

By midsummer, Philip strolled into the Norman capital of Rouen, and Normandy officially fell to the French king. This was actually a very important event in the overall history of England.

John had lost all the lands in northern France that he had inherited from William the Conqueror and Geoffrey of Anjou. He still retained Aquitaine in the south of France. But it was so far from England

that is essentially functioned as an independent duchy going forward. For all practical purposes, the English king's domain was now restricted to the British Isles.

These events are often referred to as the "loss of Normandy." But that is the perspective from England. From France, it is often viewed that "winning of Normandy." And it was the first step in a long, gradual process leading to a unified French state. The year after Normandy fell, the last castles in Anjou fell to Philip. And the following year, Brittany came into Philip's hands.

I've noted before that John is often referred to as "Bad King John." And we can start to see why. And I've only covered the first five years of his reign. I should also note that John didn't simply give up on his former French territories. Throughout the remainder of his reign, he tried to recover them. And those attempts created their own problems in England which I'll explore in future episodes. In fact, the lost regions weren't formally conceded for another half century. And English kings continued to find themselves at war in France for several more centuries.

But the events of 1204 are important to our story because they marked the beginning of a fundamental break between England and France. For nearly a century and half, England had been part of a French-speaking empire, and most its nobles spoke French and encouraged the use of French. But after 1204, that gradually started to change.

In the following year, Philip demanded that the barons with divided loyalties choose between England and France. He demanded that all Norman knights living in England should return to Normandy by a given date. If they chose to remain in England, they would forfeit all their lands in Normandy. John then retaliated with a similar order whereby he claimed the English lands of all knights who chose to remain in Normandy. All of this meant that most barons and knights had to make a choice. They could either be an English noble or a Norman noble, but they couldn't be both. A few exceptions were made, but not many. And to be fair, this process played itself out over the next four of five decades. But the upshot is that most of the nobles who remained in England forfeited their lands in France. They were no longer 'Anglo-Norman' – with divided loyalties. The were just English. The traditional links to Normandy were severed, and a sense of English identity re-emerged.

As 'Englishness' increased, 'Frenchness' decreased. And over the long run, the use of French itself decreased. But let's not get the cart before the horse. These were all long-term trends. French was still a very prominent and important language. It was a language of scholarship and romantic literature – even in England. And French was increasingly used in place of Latin as a language of administration. Government documents that had been composed in Latin were increasingly written in French. French was also the language of the law courts. Business scribes routinely made accountings in French. So French would continue to play an important role in English society. In fact, the next two centuries were the period when French words really flowed into English. And of course, Latin also maintained an elevated status in certain formal documents, and especially in the Church. So French and Latin didn't just disappear from England.

But there was a major change after the fall of Normandy. And that was an increase in the use of English. For the past century and half, English had been relegated to the bottom of the totem pole

– well below Latin and French. It was looked down upon as peasant language – just a local vernacular – one of many spoken by common people throughout Europe. But now, with a renewed sense of Englishness, English started to get a boost. It didn't overtake Latin or French, but it started to take an acceptable place beside those languages in England.

It once again became acceptable to compose documents in English, presumably because the nobility wanted English books and manuscripts. Over the next few decades, there was a renaissance of English literature. That included histories, romances, and poetry. English was no longer relegated to the background. It started to come forward.

As I've noted, King John is generally regarded as a bad king. But in many ways, his reign gave English the boost that it needed. His poor decisions led to the loss of Normandy, and that created an environment where English could once again flourish. So the irony is that Bad King John was actually 'good' for the English language.

But that language had undergone a lot of changes, and it was still evolving during this period. With the loss of formal education in English, there were very few standards to keep the language in tact. Grammar varied – word order varied – pronunciations varied. And the vocabulary itself continued to change as old words were dropped and new French and Latin words were borrowed.

Those new English documents reveal a language that was still in flux, but it was starting to make a comeback. And one of the documents that spearheaded that comeback was a version of the King Arthur legend – the first version composed in English. The exact date of the text is unknown, but as we'll see, many scholars think it was composed shortly after the loss of Normandy.

This particular text is called 'Brut,' and it's really a translation and re-working of the text called "Roman de Brut" which I mentioned in an earlier episode. As you may recall, Geoffrey of Monmouth had composed the first known verison of the Arthurian legend in Latin. And it was extremely popular throughout Europe. Then a Norman poet named Wace re-worked the story in French as "Roman de Brut." And now, a few decades later, Wace's version was translated into English, and it was expanded with lots of new details.

This English version of the story was composed by a priest who lived in the West Midlands. His name was Layamon – probably pronounced more like 'Laʒamon' at the time based on the way he spelled his name. And nothing is really known about him other than what he tells us in the opening lines of the text. Here are the first three lines – first in Modern English and then in the original text:

(There) was a priest in the land; Layamon was he called.
An preost wes on leoden; Laʒamon wes ihoten.

He was Leovenath's son; gracious to him be the Lord;
he wes Leouenaðes sone; liðe him beo Drihten.

He dwelt at Earnley (Areley), at a noble church,
He wonede at Ernleʒe; at æðelen are chirechen.

Now from these passages, we can discern that the author was named Layamon, he was a priest, his father was named Leovenath, and he lived in a church in Earnley – which is modern-day Areley Kings in Worcestershire. So that tells us that he lived in the West Midlands.

Even though that might not seem like much of a biography, it's actually quite a bit of personal information for a writer of this period. For many of the surviving manuscripts, the author is completely unknown.

The introduction then says that Layamon decided to relate the history of the English people – from where they came and who they dispossessed when they arrived in Britain. So Layamon traveled wide and collected books which he used as the basis for his history. The text then says:

He took that English book that Saint Bede had made;
He nom þa Englisca boc; þa makede Seint Beda.

So that is Bede's famous text called the "Ecclesiastical History of the English People" composed in the early Anglo-Saxon period. Interestingly, Layamon only used one excerpt from Bede's book. And he actually contradicted Bede's history in many places.

The text then says that Layamon used another book which modern scholars haven't been able to identify. It was probably a book that had been lost over time.

The text then says that Layamon relied upon a third book. The intro reads:

A third book he took, and laid it alongside,
Which a French cleric had made, well learned in lore;
Wace was his name, he knew well how to write,
And he gave it to the noble Eleanor,
Who was Henry's queen.

Boc he nom þe þridde; leide þer amidden.
þa makede a Frenchis clerc;
Wace wes ihoten; þe wel couþe writen.
& he hoe ȝef þare æðelen; Ælienor
þe wes Henries quene.

So this is actually a very important passage because it is one of the few passages that provides a clue as to the date of the text.

Of course, the referenced text is Wace's "Roman de Brut" which was the French translation of Geoffrey's of Monmouth's classic Latin text. And it was clearly the main inspiration for Layamon's work. In an earlier episode, I mentioned Wace's manuscript, and I noted that he dedicated it to Eleanor of Aquitaine. And this passage from Layamon's text also mentions that dedication. But notice, that it says that Eleanor "was" Henry's queen – not "is" Henry's queen. So the past tense is used. Now Eleanor was married to Henry until he died in 1189. So at the very least, this means that

the text was composed after Henry died in 1189. But many scholars have interpreted this passage as meaning that Eleanor was also deceased. And I noted that she died in 1204 as Normandy was in the process of falling. So based on this later view, the text was probably composed sometime shortly after 1204.

There's another portion of the text where a reference is made to certain payments that were required to be made directly to the Roman Catholic Church is Rome rather than to local parishes. This was called the "Rome fee" or "Peter's Pence." And the text says that it is doubtful that that payment will continue. Well, there were a few occasions when English kings objected to that payment, but there was a specific occasion in the year 1206 when John wrote a letter to the English clergy forbidding them from taking any measures to collect the payment. So that's another big clue that the text was written around this period in 1205 or 1206.

The third big clue is based on the circumstantial evidence. As I noted earlier, the loss of Normandy created a situation where it was once again acceptable to compose manuscripts in English. So scholars feel that it is unlikely that Layamon would have bothered to compose a history of England in English while England was still part of the Angevin Empire. But when Normandy and northern France were lost, and England once again existed as an independent nation, there was a renewed interest in Englishness – and English history – and English literature. So it makes sense that Layamon would have decided to compose his history in the wake of those events shortly after the loss of Normandy in 1204.

Now I should mention something very important about Layamon's manuscript that makes it a goldmine for scholars of the language. The manuscript actually survives in two copies. One version appears to date from the early 1200s and represents the original language of Layamon. The second version is a copy that was apparently made in the mid to late 1200s – so about a half century later. Now here's the thing. That later scribe generally copied the original text word for word. But there were times when he decided to update the language. Layamon used very few loanwords. Most of his words were from Old English. And the later scribe apparently thought some of those words were too old-fashioned or too antiquated. So he replaced them with new French words. He also changed some of Layamon's original grammar and syntax. In a few places, he didn't copy any of the original text, perhaps because he couldn't understand what the passages meant.

The reason why that is so important is because those changes made by the second scribe show how the language was changing in the 1200s – within just a few decades from the early 1200s to the middle 1200s. It shows how certain words were falling out of use, and how new words were replacing them. And it also provides a time frame for some of those new loanwords. And it shows how the grammar was evolving. So the two manuscripts make for some interesting comparisons.

For example, Layamon includes a passage where an angry duke gets into an argument with a knight and says "Knight, you are a fool." Layamon renders the passage as "Cniht þu aert muchel fol." A short time later, the second scribe renders the same line as "Cnipt þou art mochel fol." It's a subtle difference, but it's the difference between Old English "þu aert" and the much more familiar Middle English "þou art." Again, this is the same line – only a few years apart. I should also note that this is the oldest surviving use of the word ***fool*** in the English language.

Another example of the subtle difference between the two scribes can be seen at the beginning of the poem. Layamon begins his story with the legendary Trojan hero Aeneas. In one passage, he introduces Aeneas's grandson named Silvius. And he writes that Silvius fell in love with a maiden. Layamon writes:

Then loved he a maid
þa luuede he a maide.

Notice that the woman is described as a ***maide*** and not a ***maiden***. A ***maiden*** was a young girl, and this is the first known instance of the word ***maiden*** being shortened to ***maid***. Both words could refer to a young girl. And we still have that original sense of ***maid*** in a term like ***maid of honor*** – and also ***Maid Marion*** from the Robin Hood tales. And since many young maidens or maids worked as household servants, the word ***maid*** eventually came to refer to a female household servant. But again, the first use of the shortened form ***maid*** was in this particular passage from Layamon's Brut.

Layamon preferred to call the girl in this passage a ***woman***. But the later scribe preferred that word ***maid***.

Layamon writes that it was discovered that the young woman was with child. In his original text, "þat þeo wimon was mid childe." But the later scribe copied that line as "þat þe mayde was wið childe." Notice the subtle changes in just a few decades. The Old English word ***þeo*** is changed to the modern article ***the***. ***Wimon*** becomes ***mayde***. And the Old English preposition ***mid*** becomes the modern word ***with***. These subtle changes show the evolution of the language. Again, here are the two versions. The original – "þat þeo wimon was mid childe." And the later – "þat þe mayde was wið childe." We can see that the second scribe preferred to update the text and write in a slightly more modern style.

Whereas Layamon stuck close to traditional Old English, I noted earlier that the second scribe was willing to use newer loanwords – especially French words. But it is important to note that both versions of the manuscript actually have very few French words. This is one of the longest poems ever written in the English language. There are over 30,000 lines. And scholars have studied every page of both manuscripts and identified only about 250 French words in both documents combined. But interestingly, two-thirds (2/3) of those words are used in the later version. Layamon only used about a third (1/3) of them. So the second scribe was twice as likely to use a French loanword.

For example, Layamon used the Old English word ***friðe*** to refer to restraint and tranquility. When the second scribe copied the text, he dropped that word and used the new French word ***peace*** in its place. So apparently he thought that ***friðe*** sounded old fashioned. So he replaced it with ***peace***.

The word ***friðe*** was also sometimes used to describe a royal forest or fenced area of the forest. It was also sometimes called a ***deor friðe***– in other words the place where deer or wild animals live in peace. In the text, a knight is caught hunting in the king's royal forest, and the noble who catches him accuses him of hunting in the "kinges friðe " But the second scribe renders it as the "kinges parc." So he replaces ***friðe*** with the French word ***parc***. And this is one of the first uses of the word ***park*** in the English language. So from all of this, we can see that ***friðe*** was considered a very old-

fashioned word at the time, and many people preferred to use newer words like ***peace*** and ***park*** in its place.

Interestingly, Layamon is the first known English writer to use the French word ***mountain***, but the later scribe didn't like that loanword for some reason. Layamon refers to the "montaine of Azare," but the second scribe wrote the line as the "contre of Assare." So he replaced ***mountain*** with ***country***. Both words come from French. Interestingly, these are the oldest known uses of both of those words in English. Layamon used ***mountain*** for the first time, ad the later scribe used ***country*** for the first time.

Now the title character of the story is named Brutus. He is the great-grandson of Aeneas. And Brutus leads a group of Trojan followers on a journey from Greece. They encounter 20 giants and send them fleeing into the mountains by shooting arrows at them. But later, the giants return for a surprise attack. Layamon says that they descended from "þan munten' – 'the mountain.' But the later scribe says that they descended from "þe hulles" – 'the hills' – which is an Old English term. So again, the later scribe didn't like that new word ***mountain*** for some reason.

So the 20 giants descend from the mountain, but the Trojans attack them and kill all but one. With one remaining alive, the Trojans gather together and link arms to take him down. Layamon writes that they yoked their arms, and 'they thrust out their shanks' – "Heo scuten heora sconke." The later scribe re-worded the sentence as "Hii soté hire legges" – 'they thrust out their legs.' So in this example, we see the Old English word ***shank*** being replaced with the newer Norse word ***leg***. And this is the first known use of the word ***leg*** in English.

Brutus and his Trojans eventually find their way to Britian, and in the legend of the story, the island of Britain is named after Brutus. They eventually encounter the leader of Cornwall. At one point, Layamon describes him as ***un-eðe*** – which literally meant 'uneasy.' The later scribe apparently thought that term was old-fashioned, and he replaced it with the French word ***annoyed*** – which is the oldest known use of the word ***annoy*** in the English language.

Layamon also introduces us to the legendary British king named Lear – the same King Lear that was the subject of Shakespeare's later play. In one passage, Layamon says that Lear grew old and ***wakede*** – or 'weakened' – in strength. The later scribe reworded the sentence to say of King Lear that "failede his mihte" – 'his might failed.' So he replaced 'weakened' with the French term ***fail***, and this is one of the oldest known uses of the word ***fail*** in an English document.

In a later passage, King Lear seeks to divide his kingdom among his three daughters. The two eldest daughters flatter him, but the youngest daughter loves him honestly. However, Lear is deceived by the older daughters' flattery, and he objects to his youngest daughter's honesty. He ends up giving his kingdom to the older daughters, and he disinherits the youngest daughter.

The King of France then asks to marry the youngest daughter. Lear agrees to the marriage but informs the French king that the daughter has no property other than her ***claðen*** – which the later scribe renders as ***cloþing*** – and this is the oldest known use of the word ***clothing*** to refer to a

person's garments. It comes from the Old English word ***claþ*** – or 'cloth.' But here, we have ***clothing*** which is cloth that is used in a very particular way – for a person's attire.

And speaking of ***attire***, we also find the first use of that French word in a following passage. The husbands of the older daughters plot to overthrow King Lear. So Lear travels to confront one of the husbands, and he is accompanied by a large retinue of knights. Layamon says that Lear traveled 'with his 40 knights and their horses and hounds' – "mid feowerti hire cinhdtes mid horsen & mid hundes." But the later scribe changed that line to read "mid his fourti cniptes and hire hors and hire atyr.' So in the later manuscript, the king is accompanied by 40 knights and their horses and their 'attire.' This is the oldest known use of the French word ***attire*** in the English language.

Now, there is actually a lot going on between those two passages I just read. In the later version, Layamon's ***feowerti*** is rendered as modern ***fourti***. And Layamon's ***horsen*** becomes ***horses***. Believe it or not, the plural form of horse was ***hors*** in Old English. You could have several ***hors***. But Layamon gives it a plural suffix – ***horsen***. As I've noted before, the plural suffix 'E-N' was once very common – especially in the south of England. We still have it in words like ***children*** and ***brethren*** and ***oxen***. And here we see that Layamon used it for ***horsen***. But the later scribe apparently thought that seemed strange, so he changed it to ***horses*** which is what we use today. So we can see how plural suffixes were in flux during this period.

Also notice the change in syntax – or word order. Layamon wrote "mid feowerti hire cinhdtes" – literally "with forty his knights." But the second scribe changed it to "mid his fourti cniptes" – just like Modern English. The possessive pronoun is changed from ***hire*** to ***his*** – and its moved from after the word ***forty*** – and it's placed in front of ***forty***. So it becomes "his forty" instead of "forty his." All of those little changes makes the passage sound much more like Modern English. Once again, just for comparison: First, "mid feowerti hire cinhdtes." Then, "mid his fourti cniptes." These passages show the English language in transition.

By the way, since I mentioned the first use of the word ***attire***, I should note that the word is ***attire*** is generally considered to be the source of the word ***tire*** as well. The tire on your car is just a shortened version of the word ***attire***. And that's because wooden wheels were sometimes covered with curved iron plates to make them more durable. In that sense, the wheels were covered or dressed with iron plates. And thus, the wheel's ***attire*** became known as a ***tire***.

So back to the story of King Lear. He is eventually overthrown by the two husbands of his eldest daughters, and he is forced into exile in France. There his youngest daughter embraces him. She is now married to the French king, so the French king helps Lear recover his kingdom in Britain. Lear dies a short time later, as does his youngest daughter, and the kingdom passes to two grandsons from his eldest daughters.

The two cousins agree to divide the kingdom, and they live in friendship for a while. But then they start to argue and quarrel. Layamon says that they ***twinedè*** their thoughts, using an Old English word related to the word ***twine***. The second scribe didn't like that word, so he wrote that the two cousins ***changede*** their thoughts. Of course, that's the word ***changed*** – a loanword from French. So the

second scribe 'changed' the line to add the word ***changed***. Again, this is one of the first instances of the word ***change*** in an English document.

The two cousins soon go to war, and the one who started the conflict is killed in battle. Layamon writes that 'his fate was the worse' – "his hap wes þa wurse." This is the oldest known use of the word ***hap*** – H-A-P – in an English document. It meant 'chance or fortune.' It actually came from Old Norse, so it had probably been in the language for a while, but Layamon finally used it in an English document.

Now you may not recognize that word ***hap***, but it soon evolved and produced other words like ***happy*** and ***happen*** and ***hapless*** – and ***happenstance***. We'll come across those words in future episodes, but they all have their origins here with the Norse word ***hap***.

Layamon then takes us though the various legendary kings of Britain. Along the way, introduces the French word ***legion*** for the first time in a surviving English document. He also gives us the first known uses of the word ***aghast*** – and the verb ***pitch*** – which are both derived from Old English words but attested for the first time here. The same is true for the word ***talk***. Layamon uses it for the first time in an English document, but it appears to be derived from the Old English word ***tale*** – T-A-L-E.

In one passage, Layamon mentions several musical instruments – including a ***fiðele*** – or fiddle – and a ***lire*** – or lyre. These are the oldest known uses of ***fiddle*** and ***lyre*** in English.

Layamon continues to follow along with the general narrative used by Geoffrey of Monmouth in his Latin history, and Wace in his French version. He then introduces us to Julius Caesar. He says that Caesar invaded and conquered France. He uses the word ***France***, but as we know, it wasn't called ***France*** at the time. It was ***Gaul***. Layamon writes that Caesar desired to conquer and obtain 'all Middle-Earth's land' – "al middel-eaerðes lond." This is the first known use of the phrase 'Middle Earth' in an English document. So for fans of J.R.R. Tolkien, we can trace that common phrase back to Layamon.

He then makes another interesting comment about Caesar. Layamon says that 'he made the calendar that denotes the months of the year' – "he makede þane kalend þe dihteð þane moneð & þe ȝer." So Layamon uses the word ***kalend***, but the later scribe changed that word to ***kalender***. And this is the oldest known use of the word ***calendar*** in an English document. The Old English word for a calendar was a ***ge-rim*** or a ***gerim-boc***.

I actually discussed the word ***calendar*** back in Episode 69. You might remember that the first day of each month was called the ***calends*** – or ***calendae*** in Latin. That was the day monthly interest payments on loans were usually due. From there, a lender's account book came to be called a ***calendarium*** in Latin. And that word passed through French, and now it came into English as ***calendar*** to refer to a document that lists the various days and months of the year.

And way back in Episode 16, we saw that Julius Caesar had implemented certain reforms to the traditional Roman calendar – getting rid of the lunar cycles and using a fixed period of 365 days and

a leap day added every four years. That was the so-called Julian Calendar, and that's the calendar that Layamon is referring to when he says that Caesar made the calendar.

Now in the story, Caesar completes his conquest of France, and then looks across the Channel and sees Britain. Caesar invades Britain, but is repelled on two different occasions. After the second defeat, the Britons rejoice and have a celebration, but during the celebration, a fight breaks out between the British king's nephew and a duke's nephew. This leads to a division among the Britons, and when the king threatens the duke, the duke appeals to Caesar to once again send his forces to Britain.

Caesar accepts the invitation and leads his forces into Britain for a third time. He joins the duke and confronts the British king. Layamom proclaims: "Julius wes al raedi" – 'Julius was all ready.' This is the oldest known use of the phrase 'all ready' – in this case rendered as two distinct words and meaning literally that he was ready or prepared for battle. Within a couple of centuries, this phrase will appear as one word – ***already*** – and the meaning will have evolved to indicate that something has happened previously as in "it has already occurred." The connection appears to be based on the fact that someone who is ready – or 'all ready' – has taken precautions and made plans and is therefore prepared. So ***ready*** implies that some particular action has taken place previously. And that sense of a prior action led to the modern sense of the word ***already*** meaning 'beforehand.'

So Caesar is 'all ready,' and he lays siege to the British king's castle. The king is eventually forced to offer peace terms to Caesar. He offers to make an annual payment to Rome as tribute. At first, Caesar refuses the offer. But the duke who initiated the conflict informs Caesar that he should accept the offer, expressing sympathy for the king who is a kinsmen. Layamon says that Caesar then agreed to the offer for fear that the duke would deceive him. Layamon uses an Old English word to express the act of deceiving. The word was ***swiken***. But the later scribe changed that word. He changed it to ***bi-traie***. This is the oldest known use of the word ***betray*** in an English document.

So peace was made between the Roman Emperor Julius Caesar and the king of Britain – at least for the time being. The next few kings continue to pay tribute to Rome, but then a later king of Britons refuses to pay tribute, and that leads to another Roman invasion – this time by the Emperor Claudius. This invasion results in the complete conquest of Britain which becomes part of the Roman Empire.

Layamon eventually introduces us to Maximian – his name for the Roman Emperor Magnus Maximus. Maximian had usurped the Roman throne, and he proceeds to conquer the northwestern part of France – called Amorica at the time. Meanwhile, in Britain, the king's nephew is named Conan, and he is a potential heir to the British throne, but he can't claim the throne there because Britain is under the authority of Maximian. So Maximian offers to make Conan the king of this conquered region of northern France. He shows Conan the 'rich lands' – "wunliche londes" – the 'wild deer' – "wilde deores" – the 'peaceful land to live in' – "liðe londe on to libbenne." Maximiam then offers this land to Conan as king.

Maximian says that he will send a message to his Earl in Britain, and he will direct the British earl to send to this region 'men and women of well many crafts (or skills)' – "wapmen and wifmen of wel feole craeften." He will send 'knights and thegns – "cnihtes & þeines" – seven thousand

servants – "seoue þusend sweines" – seven thousand burgers or townspeople – "seoue þusend burh-me" – and thirty thousand women – "þritti þusend wifmen."

Since these new British migrants will be given this land in France, Maximiam says that the region will be thereafter known as Lesser Britain – "Brutlond þat lasse" – 'Britain the Lesser." 'Now and ever more the name will stand there' – "Nu and auere mare þe nom stondeð þere." Of course, this name "Lesser Britain" is an old name for Brittany. And since Britain was supposedly named after the title character Brutus, that means that Brittany is also named after him. But the primary purpose of this passage is to describe the legendary founding of Brittany under its first king Conan. And it's also intended to establish the historical cultural links between Brittany and Britain.

A short time later, Britain is invaded by a variety of barbarians. These were men from Gothland – so Germanic tribes. They were also men from Norway and Denmark, which is obviously an allusion to the Vikings even though the Vikings were later invaders. There were also men from Ireland and Scotland, so these are allusions to the Picts among others.

The people of Britain are now under constant assault by these invaders, so they appeal to Rome, and Rome sends 2,500 knights to help defend the island. The invaders are repelled, but afterwards, Rome informs the Britons it has lost too many men defending the island. Going forward, the Britons will have to defend themselves. In Layamon's words – 'for we will never more again come here' – "for nulle we nauere mare aʒan comen here." The Britons are told to make their castles strong and defend their country against the 'foreign folk.'

As soon as the Roman forces leave, the barbarian invasions resume. There is much killing and bloodshed. The Archbishop holds a great meeting to discuss the predicament and how the people of Britain might defend themselves and preserve Christianity from the pagans. He informs the gathering that he will travel across the sea and find a king who will help them defend the island from the invaders.

Layamon then says that the Archbishop traveled across the sea, and 'over the sea he came into Brittany' – "ou sæ comen in to Bruttaine." Conan, the original King of Brittany has died. So Brittany is now ruled by his son. And the Archbishop throws himself as the young king's feet and pleads for help. He asks for the king's assistance since the king and his father were both descended from the Britons. Layamon says that the Breton king began to cry, and he assures the Archbishop that he will help. He agrees to send two thousand knights, as well as his brother Constantine who is the best knight in his realm. Constantine will help defend the island and will become the new King of Britain.

Constantine and the Archbishop return to Britain, together with the contingent of knights. And this really begins the legend of Arthur because Constantine is the grandfather of Arthur. And from this point forward, we hear about the intrigue and events leading to the birth of Arthur – the role of Merlin – the intrigue of Vortiger – and eventually the rise of Arthur as the once and future king of Britain.

But it is important to note the context of King Arthur's rise. He is a British king, but in this legendary story, he is directly descended from the kings of Brittany. So he is ultimately of Breton descent.

And this takes us full circle back to where we began – with King John's nephew known as 'Arthur of Brittany.' He was also a Breton, and he was destined to be a real life King Arthur in Britain. But unlike the legendary story told by Geoffrey of Monmouth in Latin – and then by Wace in French – and then by Layamon in English – the real-life Arthur of Brittany never became king. His uncle John made sure that didn't happen when he had Arthur murdered.

But now we can see how the actual events took place against this background and against this legendary story that had been around for nearly a century. We can start to understand why so many people were intrigued by the prospect of his future kingship – and why so many people in France put their hopes in him. We can see how he was tied to this legendary story. And we can also see why his murder at the hands of John outraged so many people, including the nobles of France who were most familiar with these legends. And we can also see why Arthur's murder caused so many of those nobles to abandon John and side with his rival Philip. So John's loss of northern France, and the new sense of Englishness that followed, are directly tied to the story of the two Arthurs.

Unfortunately, I didn't have time to get to the actual story of King Arthur in Layamon's manuscript. It is a fascinating tale that follows the later legend in some respects, but also veers off into other directions at times. So next time, I want to complete our look at Layamon's text. We'll look specifically at the story of King Arthur, and we'll also take a closer look at what the text reveals about the evolution the English language.

So until next time, thanks for listening to the History of English Podcast.

EPISODE 94: FROM BRITISH LEGEND TO ENGLISH KING

Welcome to the History of English Podcast – a podcast about the history of the English language. This is Episode 94: From British Legend to English King. In this episode, we're going to complete our look at Layamon's early Middle English text called 'Brut.' We'll examine the second half of the poem which is the story of King Arthur, and it's the first version of the Arthurian legend composed in the English language. As we go through the poem, we'll take a closer look at the language used by Layamon, and we'll see how it reflects certain changes that were taking place in the early 1200s.

But before we begin, let me remind you that the website for the podcast is historyofenglishpodcast.com. And you can sign up to support the podcast at Patreon.com/historyofenglish. And as always, you can reach me by email at kevin@historyofenglishpodcast.com

One other quick note before we begin. Many of you may be familiar with Zack Twamley's podcast called "When Diplomacy Fails." Well, Zack is celebrating the fifth anniversary of the podcast – and he has put together a remarkable series of episodes to celebrate that achievement. He is releasing at least two new episodes each day for five weeks. And one of the first episodes in this series is a discussion that he and I had a few weeks ago about podcasting – and about certain English terms associated with diplomacy. The first part of that interview has been posted for everyone to listen to at the "When Diplomacy Fails Podcast." That part focuses on podcasting and some behind the scenes stuff associated with this particular podcast. So check that out if you're interested – and check out Zack's podcast if you haven't listened before.

So with that, let's turn to this episode. And this time, we're going to complete our look at Layamon's Brut. As we saw last time, this particular text was probably composed in the early 1200s, perhaps around the year 1205 or 1206, but nobody really knows for sure. The text is an English translation of an earlier French text called Roman de Brut, which itself was a translation of a Latin text composed by Geoffrey of Monmouth called "The History of the Kings of Britain."

I also noted last time that Layamon's manuscript survives in two copies. The older version contains Layamon's original text, but a few decades later, another scribe copied the text and made certain changes in the process. These changes tend to show certain developments in the language in the early 1200s.

So this manuscript is important to our story for two reasons. It shows how the English language was changing in early Middle English, and it also provides us with the first verison of the King Arthur legend in English. So let's pick up the text where we left off last time.

We left the story with Britain under attack by barbarian tribes and the arrival of Constantine from Brittany. In the story, Constantine is accompanied by two thousand knights. Together, they march into London, and call upon brave men throughout the country to join their cause. The men

of Britain respond and travel to join Constantine's army. Layamon writes, "The came out of the mountain many thousand men" – "þa comen ut of munten moni þusend monne."

Now, I noted last time, that Layamon was the first known English writer to use the word ***mountain***, but the second scribe preferred to use other words. In earlier passages, he replaced the word ***mountain*** with words like ***country*** and ***hills***. And here, he replaced ***mountain*** with the word ***wilderne***. He says that many thousand people came out of the ***wilderne***, which is an early form of the word ***wildnerness***. And ***wilderness*** was a brand new word in the English language at this point. The word is actually based on an Old English phrase – ***wild deor*** – literally 'wild deer.' As we know, ***deer*** was an Old English term, and it had a much broader meaning back then than it has today. It referred to any animal that lived in the forest. So ***wild deor*** – or 'wild deer' – meant 'wild animal.' And here, we have ***wilderne*** which is the place where 'wild deer' live. So ***wilderness*** is literally 'wild deer ness.' And the second scribe tells us that many thousands of men came from the 'wilderness' to join Constantine's forces.

Now with his hastily assembled army, Constantine is able to defeat the various peoples who had invaded the island. And following the victory, a great meeting is held and Constantine is made the King of Britain.

Twelve years pass under Constantine's leadership. But one of his knights turns out to be a traitor, and the knight murders Constantine by stabbing him in the heart with a knife.

With Constantine's death, a new king has to be chosen. Constantine has three living children, but none of them are a good candidate. The eldest child is named Constance, and he was placed in a monastery as a small child to be raised as a monk. So he has never been trained for kingship. The two youngest children are named Aurelie and Uther, and they are barely more than infants.

So all the landed nobility come to London to decide what to do. Initially, they choose one of the younger children, but a prominent earl named Vortiger steps forward and disagrees with the choice. He convinces the nobles to delay their final decision for a few days. He then rides to the monastery where the eldest child Constance is living as a monk.

Constance hates being a monk, but he is bound to the monastery. Vortiger offers him a deal. He will help to free Constance from the monastery and support him as king if Constance will agree to let Vortiger be the real power behind the throne. Constance eagerly agrees to the deal.

In order to free Constance from the monastery, Vortiger devises a plan. He decides that Constance should switch clothes with one of Vortiger's knights. He grabs the knight's cape and places it on Constance. And that enables to Constance to sneak out of the monastery disguised as Vortiger's knight.

Now in this particular passage, Layamon uses the word ***cape*** – a Latin word that had been introduced during the Anglo-Saxon period. But the later scribe changed that word from ***cape*** to ***cloak***, and that is the first known use of the work ***cloak*** in an English document. ***Cloak*** is a French word and, believe it or not, it is actually cognate with the word ***clock***. Both words come

from the Latin word ***clocca*** – which meant 'bell.' Since many early clocks had bells, the word ***clocca*** came to be associated with time keeping devices, and that produced the word ***clock***. And since a long, loose-fitting cape was sometimes shaped like a bell, it was also called a ***clocca***. And that produced the word ***cloak*** which passed into English around this point in the early 1200s.

So disguised as a knight, Constance escapes from the monastery. Vortiger and his knights soon follow, and they all head to London. A few days later, the nobles have a second meeting to discuss the succession, and Vortiger presents Constance to the gathered nobles and convinces them that he is the best choice since he is the eldest son – even though he was raised in a monastery – and even though he has little knowledge of government affairs. The nobles agree, and Constance becomes king – but Vortiger is the real power behind the throne. Layamon writes: "Vortiger was very strong, the highest man in Britian" – "Vortiger wes swiðe strong, þe hæhste mon of Brutlod."

Time passes, and Vortiger hatches a plan to usurp the throne. He brings in foreign knights who owe the primary loyalty to him. The knights end up killing the young king Constance, but Vortiger plays naive and accuses the knights of treachery. He then has the foreign knights executed and he claims the throne for himself.

Vortiger becomes the new king, but several of the wise men of Britain see behind Voritger's plot, and they usher Constance's younger brothers out of Britain to spare them from Vortiger's wrath. They are sent to Brittany to be raised with their relatives there.

With Vortiger now in charge, he forms an alliance with the Saxons and even marries a Saxon princess. The Saxons are also given land in Britain. All of this enrages the native Britons. Eventually, the Saxons turn on Vortiger and force him into exile in Wales.

Vortiger makes his way to the Welsh lands, and there he builds a refuge and lives in fear awaiting the arrival of the Saxon forces. He builds a castle and tries to surround it with a great wall for protection. Each day his workers construct part of the wall, but each night it falls down. This happens over and over. So Vortiger call upon sages and prophets to advise him what to do. One of them advises Vortiger that if he can find a boy who has no father, the boy's blood can be mixed with the lime and laid in the wall, and the wall will then stand forever.

So Vortiger's knights search the countryside for such a boy, but none can be found. Two of the knights engaging in the search finally decide to take a rest, and they sit down to watch several children playing. Layamon says that they were engaged in 'childrene plæʒe' – or 'child's play.' This is the first use of the phrase 'child's play' in an English document. Here the phrase is used literally to mean children at play. A couple of centuries later, Geoffrey Chaucer will use the same phrase figuratively to mean an easy task, and that will be the first known use of the phrase in that figurative sense. In the sense that we often use it today. But here we have the first literal use of that phrase – 'child's play.'

While the young boys are playing, one child strikes the other. The child who receives the blow yells at the boy who hit him. He says, "Merlin, why did you hit me? Your mother is a whore. She doesn't even know who your father is. You embarrass us and make all of us ashamed." The knights sitting nearby overhear this. So they approach the young boy who started the fight and ask him to take them to his mother. The boy does as they ask, and the knights take the boy and his mother to Vortiger's castle.

There, Vortiger questions the mother about the boy's father. She replies that she does not know the boy's father. She tells how she was visited in her sleep by a vision in the form of a beautiful young knight. She says that she later discovered that she was pregnant with the young boy – who she named Merlin.

Vortiger is informed by one of his advisors that there is race of supernatural beings called Incubi that appear to men and women while sleeping, and that is what the woman is describing. This is actually the first use of the word ***Incubi*** – or ***incubus*** – in the English language.

At this point, Merlin speaks up and asks why he has been brought to Vortiger's castle. Vortiger explains what the sages have told him – that the blood of a fatherless child will secure the stones in the castle wall.

So having been told why he was being detained, young Merlin angrily responds that Vortiger's sages are lying. His blood is useless. He then confronts the sages, and he asks them if they know why the walls won't stand. But the sages are silent.

Merlin then tells Vortiger that if his men dig seven feet under the wall, they will find a stone. And if they remove the stone, they will find a pond. And if the water is drained, they will find two dragons. At midnight each night, the dragons fight each other, and that's what causes the wall to fall down.

Vortiger directs his men to dig beneath the wall to see what they find. They dig, and they find a stone, and beneath the stone they find a pond. And when they drain the pond, they find two dragons fighting just as Merlin had said. Realizing that Merlin is a true wizard, Vortiger beheads all of his other sages.

Vortiger then meets with Merlin in private, and he asks Merlin to tell him what is to come in the future, but Merlin warns him that it is a sorrowful story. Vortiger will be challenged by Constantine's two younger sons who have been in exile in Brittany. Merlin says that the two brothers are on their way to Britain as he speaks. They will arrive the next day, and they will defeat Vortiger. The two brothers will have the kingdom in succession. And Uther – the younger brother – will give birth to a child who will destroy all of the traitors in Britain including those who have supported Vortiger. This was Merlin's prophesy.

Now one quick comment about this passage before we proceed. Merlin says of Constantine's two sons, "Nu beoð of Brutaine beornes ariued" – literally "Now be of Britain men arrived," but it

means that the two brothers have now arrived in Britain. And this is the first known use of the word ***arrive*** in the English language. Merlin then says, "heo cumeð to-mærʒen fuliwis i þis lond" – literally "they come tomorrow full truly in this land." So which is it? Have they now arrived? Or are they coming tomorrow? Well, this is only confusing in Modern English because the word ***arrive*** had a slightly different meaning at the time.

When Layamon says that the two brothers have "arrived," he is saying that they've reached the British shore by boat today, and they will proceed across land tomorrow. And that makes more sense if we look a little closer at that word ***arrive***. If you focus on the last part – R-I-V-E – you might notice a similarity to the word ***river***. Both words came in from French in the 1200s, and both words are derived from the same Latin root meaning a 'river bank or shore.' A ***river*** is a current of water that flows between the banks, and to ***arrive*** is literally to cross a body of water and reach the bank or shore on the other side. So during this period, if someone ***arrived***, they literally docked their boat on the short having crossed a river or other body of water. Of course, the word has acquired a much broader meaning over time.

So back to the story. Constantine's two younger sons have indeed arrived in Britain, and the native Britons come by the thousands to join their cause. The British nobles have a great meeting and choose the elder brother Aurelie as their king. The newly selected king tracks down Vortiger to a castle where he has taken refuge. And the besiegers set fire to the castle. The castle burns to the ground, killing all inside, including Vortiger. Layamon writes: "Thus ended there with much harm Vortiger" – "þus ændede þer mid muchele ærme Vortiger."

The Britons then defeat the Saxon army and re-secure the country. There are still occasional invaders and outside threats which Layamon refers to as ***feonden*** – the original Old English version of the word ***fiends***. But the later scribe changed that word to ***onfreonds*** – literally 'unfriends.' Now even though the scribe uses this term as a noun and not a verb, this is the first recorded instance of the word ***unfriend***. So if you 'unfriend' someone on social media, you're actually using a word that can be traced back to Layamon's manuscript.

The youngest brother Uther is away fighting against these invaders in a different part of the island when a plot is hatched by the king's enemies to kill him. The king is sick, and an assassin pretends to be a doctor and poisons him.

Meanwhile, Uther is still at war with the invaders in the countryside. Uther lies awake at night and looks to the sky as the moon begins to shine 'as bright as sunlight' – 'swa brihte swa þe sune-lihte.' Now the words ***sun*** and ***light*** are both Old English words, but this is the oldest recorded instance of the compound word ***sunlight***. Uther then sees a comet cross the sky. Light gleams from the comet, and the image of a dragon appears at the end of one of the gleams. Uther summons Merlin and asks what omen the comet represents.

Merlin says that much sorrow has come to this land. He says that the comet is a sign that Uther's brother – the king – has been murdered. Uther will soon become the new king. And the various gleams of light represent a son who will be born to Uther who will conquer many nations.

The next morning, Uther's forces defeat the invaders, and he returns to Winchester where he learns that his brother has indeed been murdered, and he has been chosen as the new King of Britain.

Uther recalls the comet and the image of the dragon in the sky. So he decides to use a dragon on his standard, and his people began to call him Uther Pendragon. We are told that Uther is a good king, but he hears nothing from Merlin.

Uther soon defeats another Saxon army, and that seemingly brings an end to the forces that have threatened the kingdom. A great celebration is held in London, and there during the feast Uther meets Ygærne – rendered in later versions of the story as Igraine. She's the wife of the Earl of Cornwall. During the feast, they openly flirt with each other, but the Earl sees what's happening, and he becomes angry and leaves the feast. Uther chases after the Earl and apologizes for his behavior. But the Earl refuses the apology and leaves anyway bearing a heavy grudge against Uther. Uther is also enraged that the Earl refused his apology.

The Earl returns to Cornwall and gathers his forces for a showdown with Uther. Uther leads his army to Cornwall to engage the Earl. He not only is offended by the Earl's reaction, he is also in love with Igraine, so he is also blinded by jealously. Uther lays siege to the Earl's castles, but the Earl relies upon his defenses and he refuses to engage Uther. Uther is desperate to defeat the Earl and win the Earl's wife.

One of Uther's knights informs him that he had been approached by a hermit the day before, and the hermit told him that he knew where Merlin slept each night. Uther directs the knight to locate Merlin and bring the wizard to him as soon as possible. By the way, this passage is the first known use of the French word ***hermit*** in an English document.

The knight locates the hermit, and the hermit leads him to Merlin. But being a wizard, Merlin already knows why the knight has come looking for him. He knows of Uther's love for Igraine, but he says that Uther will never have her because there is no truer woman in the world. However, he says that a child will be born to the Uther and Igraine, and that child will become a great ruler, and that the prophesy must come to pass. So Merlin offers to help make the prophesy come true.

Merlin travels to meet with King Uther. And he tells Uther that he can perform magic that will enable Uther to take on the appearance of the Earl. In his disguise, he can pass through the Earl's guards and into Igraine's chambers. Merlin then works his magic, and he accompanies Uther and Uther's knight. They are all disguised thanks to Merlin's sorcery.

Uther then enters Igraine's bedchamber. And the two spend the night together. Of course, Igraine thinks that she is with her husband, but she is really with Uther. That night a child is conceived. Layamon says of Uther: "he begat her a wonderful man, keenest of all kings, that ever came among men, and he was on earth named Arthur" – "he streonede hire on ænne selcuðne mo, kingen alre kenest: þæ æuere com to monnen. & he wes on ærde Ærður ihaten."

While this is happening, Uther's forces engage the actual Earl at a nearby castle. The Earl is killed in the conflict, and his forces are defeated. Even though rumors spread that the Earl has been killed, Uther is still disguised as the Earl, so he has to act quickly.

While still disguised, Uther addresses the gathered knights and informs them that he is still alive, and he will muster his forces to defeat Uther. He then tells the gathered men, "habbeost alle gode niht" – "Have ye all good night." Now, believe it or not, this is the first recorded instance of the phrase '***good night***.' Both ***good*** and ***night*** are Old English words, but the phrase '***good night***' is not attested in any Old English document. It appears for the first time here. So if you a wondering who the first person was to utter the phrase '***good night***,' now you know. It was Uther Pendragon while disguised as the Earl of Cornwall immediately after conceiving Arthur.

Now Uther – still in disguise – returns to his camp and resumes his actual appearance. With the Earl's death and defeat, Uther takes Igraine as his queen, even though she is already pregnant with his child. Arthur is born a few months later.

Several years pass, and Saxon invaders return from across the Channel. Uther is able to defeat the forces, so the Saxons look for a way to kill Uther. Several Saxon spies infiltrate Uther's camp and they poison a well that Uther drinks from every day. A short time later, Uther drinks water from the well, and he dies.

Layamon tells us that the dead king is then buried beside his brother near Stonehenge; He writes: "They buried him there by his brother, side by side, there they both lie" – "hine þer bureden bi leofen his broðer, side bi side, beiene heo þer liggeð." By the way, this is the first recorded use of the phrase '***side by side***' in an English document.

Now with Uther's death, the British nobles reach out to Uther's son, Arthur who is living in Brittany. Arthur is 15 years old, and he is made the new King of Britain. Layamon writes: "Then Arthur was king, harken now a wonderful thing" – "þa þe Arður wes king, hærne nu seollic þing."

Now you'll notice that there is no stone with a sword in it. Arthur didn't have to remove Excalibur from a stone in this version of the story. That feature was added by other writers.

Now we are told that Arthur was a great king, and his people loved him. He always sought to do right and hated to do wrong. Soon after becoming king, the Saxons and the Picts join forces and invade Arthur's kingdom. Arthur eventually defeats them. He besieges the castle where the Saxon leader is hold up. On the verge of starvation, the Saxon leader surrenders and offers to return to Germany. Arthur accepts the surrender. And the Saxons are allowed to set sail back home.

But they only sail part of the way, and they soon return to the coast on a different part of the island. And once again, they ravage the people and the land. Layamon says that they stabbed and murdered and slew men with ***clibben*** – an early form of the word ***clubs***. ***Club*** is a Norse word,

apparently picked up form the Vikings or their descendants. And this is the first known use of that word in an English document.

The Saxons claim a large portion of southwestern Britain before Arthur is made aware that they have violated their promise to return home. Arthur marches on the Saxons. This time, he intends to destroy them once and for all. He will not agree to a peace. As he approached the Saxons, Arthur puts on his armor. Layamon writes, "Caliburn, his sword, he hung by his side" – "Calibeorne his sweord he sweinde bi his side." Note that Arthur's sword is called Caliburn – not Excalibur. Caliburn is the original name of the Arthur's sword. It is based on the Latin name Caliburnus which Geoffrey of Monmouth had picked up from a Welsh source. Over the next couple of centuries, as portions of this story were re-told and expanded, the name of the sword evolved from Caliburn to Excalibur. Now Geoffrey of Monmouth wrote that the sword was forged on the Isle of Avalon. But Layamon adds a new feature. He says that the sword was forged 'with magical arts' – 'mid wiȝelefulle craften.' So Caliburn – or Excalibur – is a magical sword.

Arthur then leads his troops into battle against the Saxon, and his men slaughter 2000 Saxons without losing a single man. This time, many of the Saxon leaders are killed, several at the hands of Arthur himself. Arthur then decides to deal with certain threats in Scotland. He calls upon his kinsmen – the rulers of Brittany and Cornwall. Together, the three leaders combine their forces, and they invade Scotland. They subdue the Scots, but Arthur ultimately shows mercy on the people because they are Christian like himself and not pagans like the Saxons. So they accept Arthur as their lord.

Arthur then travels to Cornwall. Layamon says, "he found there a maiden extremely fair" – "he furide þer a mæide unimete fæier." Layamon then writes the following passage:

She was of noble race, of Romanish men
was in no land, any maid so fair
of speech and of deeds, and of manners most good
she was named Guinevere, fairest of women
Arthur took her to wife, and loved her very much
this maiden he then wed, and took her to his bed.

Heo wes of heȝe cune, of Romanisce monnen.
næs in nane londe, maide nan swa hende.
of specche & of dede, and of tuhtle swiðe gode.
heo wes ihate Wenhaver, wifmonne hedest.
Arður heo nom to wife, & luvede heo wunder swiðe.
þis maiden he gon wedde, and nom heo to his bedde.

After marrying Guinevere, Arthur defeats the Irish and accepts their submission. The kings of Iceland and the Orkneys also submit to Arthur and accept him as their overlord. Gothland also submits. This is presumably Gothic territory in continental Europe.

We are then told that there was great joy in Britain. Songs and merriment filled the air. "Poets (or scops) sang of Arthur the king" – "Scopes þer sungen of Arðure þan kingen."

"Here was fiddling and song, here was harping among" – "her wes fiðelinge and song, her wes harpinge imong." So minstrels were playing fiddles and harps.

Now there is something very interesting about that passage. It shows a brand new development in the language, specifically in words like ***fiðelinge*** – or 'fiddling' – and ***harpinge*** – or 'harping.' It has to do with that ending '-inge.' That ending is used to form what English teachers call a present participle.

In Modern English, we can show present tense with a simple present tense verb, like "I sing." But if we want to show continuous action, we can convert that verb into a present participle. We basically just take the verb and add '-ing' to the end. And when we do that, we can also use that word as an adjective or a noun. So this little ending allows us to use that verb in a lot of different ways.

So we have the verb ***sing***. The simple present tense is ***sing*** or ***sings***. But if we add '-ing' to the end, we get the present participle ***singing***. And that allows us to show continuous action as in "I am singing.' But we can also use that word as an adjective. We can have a 'singing' minstrel. We can also use that word as a noun as in "Singing is fun." And when we use it as a noun, it is technically called a gerund. Anyway, you're probably saying, "So what? Why the grammar lesson?" Well, it's because that modern ending '-ing' was a brand new development in the language when Layamon composed this manuscript.

Old English also had participles, and it could also use verbs as adjectives and nouns in much the same way. But the ending was different. In Old English, the ending was, appropriately enough, '-ende' – E-N-D-E. So the present participle of ***sing*** in Old English would have been ***singend(e)*** – not ***singing***. But around this point in the West Midlands of England, that 'd' at the end started to be replaced with 'g'. And it went from ***singend(e)*** to ***singinge***. Remember that Layamon was from the West Midlands, so his manuscript was one of the first to show this change. The old ending didn't disappear though. It continued to be used alongside the newer ending, and Layamon uses both forms in the manuscript.

Over the next couple of centuries, the '-ing' suffix spread throughout the Midlands and the south of England. It wasn't really used in the north though. By the time of Geoffrey Chaucer in the late 1300s, both forms were still being used in the East Midlands – including London. Chaucer tended to use the '-ing' suffix, but some of his contemporaries preferred the older ending. Of course, the '-ing' ending became the standard ending by the time of Modern English, and it remains the standard form today. But that 'g' at the end was already variable by the time of early Modern English. Many people were dropping that 'g' even during the time of Shakespeare. And it still varies today. Even though it is not considered standard, many speakers still drop the 'g' at the end. So instead of 'singing and dancing,' some people prefer 'singin' and dancin'.'

Now you may be wondering where that '-ing' ending came from. After all, these types of grammatical changes don't tend to appear out of thin air. Well, it is probably derived from an ending that was used when a verb was used as a noun – in other words, when a verb was a gerund. Today, we use the same form with the '-ing' ending for the verb and the noun. We have the verb form "I am singing" and the noun form "Singing is fun." But in Old English, the two forms were different. The verb form ended in '-ende' and the noun form ended '-ung.' So it would have been "I am *singende*" but "*Singung* is fun." And it appears that those forms blended together in the West Midlands, and the '-ung' ending became '-ing.'

One other quick note. In Old English, that noun form with the '-ung' ending usually followed a preposition like ***on***. So it was usually used as the object of a prepositional phrase. Rather than saying "*Singung* is fun," it would have been more common to say something like "*on-singung* is fun." And in Middle English, as this noun form started to merge with the verb form, the ***on*** at the front was shortened to '***a***.' And it went from 'on-singung' to 'a-singing.' And that form still exists in some dialects today. You might hear someone say "He was a-singing" or "They were a-dancin'." It's usually associated with rural dialects. And it may seem like a corrupt from of English, but it is actually derived from the way the gerunds worked in Old English. And again, it is also the likely source of the '-ing' ending that we still use on verbs today.

Anyway, the important point is that the '-ing' verb ending started to appear in English around this time in the West Midlands, and Layamon's Brut is one of the first English documents to use it.

So returning to our story, there was much 'fiddling' and 'playing of the harp' in Arthur's kingdom. Layamon then writes: "All that Arthur saw, all it submitted to him, rich men and poor, as the hail that falleth" – "Al þat Arður isæh, al hit him to baeh, riche men and povere, swa þe haʒel fallest." In this passage, Layamon uses the phrase "rich men and poor," and this is one of the first recorded instances of the word ***poor*** in the English language. It comes from the French word ***pauvre***. By the way, thanks to the 'p' to 'f' sound shift associated with Grimm's law, English has the native word ***few*** from the same root. So ***few*** and ***poor*** are cognate.

Also, in Modern English, it is very common to use the words ***rich*** and ***poor*** together to refer to both elements of society. ***Rich*** is a native Old English word that we've seen before, and ***poor*** comes from Old French. So in the phrase 'rich and poor,' we see a classic blending of English and French.

But interestingly, the word ***rich*** referring to the upper classes is from Old English, and the word ***poor*** referring to the lower classes comes from French. Usually, it works the other way around. Words associated with the aristocracy tended to come from French, and words associated with the peasants tended to come from Old English.

So both the rich and the poor loved Arthur. And a state of peace exists throughout Britain for the next 12 years. Now up to this point, Layamon has followed the general narrative outlined by Geoffrey of Monmouth in Latin and Wace in French. But at this point, he includes a completely new section. And it relates to the round table.

Geoffrey of Monmouth didn't mention anything about a round table. But Wace had included a very brief passage at this point in his French translation where he said that Arthur had directed the construction of a round table so that all of his knights could sit around it, and none would hold a position higher or more prominent than the others. Layamon takes this brief reference to a round table, and he composes an extended passage about how the table came to be created.

In the passage, men from all of Arthur's kingdoms come to London at Christmas time to celebrate the holiday. And a feast is held where everyone is present. All the knights are proud, and each one thinks he is better than the others. Layamon writes, "Each had in heart proud thoughts, and thought that he was better than his companion" – "Ælc havede an heorte leches heȝe, and lette þat he weore betere þan his iuere."

Soon the knights start to argue and a fight breaks out. Loaves of bread and bowls of wine are thrown around. The argument escalates into a fistfight. And then weapons are drawn and the fight turns into a riot. Arthur needs 100 knights to quell the riot. When the fight is finally brought to the end, Arthur punishes the knight who started the riot by having him thrown into a bog, and he has the knight's nearest kinsmen beheaded.

A short time later, Arthur travels to Cornwall and meets a craftsman. The man says to Arthur, "I know of tree works many wonderful crafts" – "ich co of treo-wrekes wunder feole craftes." 'Tree-works' is an old term for 'carpentry.' ***Carpentry*** came in from French about a century after this text. The carpenter says that he has heard about the fight involving the king's knights, and he offers to build a large round table so that none is above the other. The man says, "I will the work a board exceedingly fair, that there-at may sit 1600 hundred and more, all turn about, so that none be without, without and within, man against man" – "Ah ich þe wulle wurche a bord swiðe hende, þat þer maȝen setten to sixtene hundred & ma, al turn abute, þat nan ne beon wið ute, wið uten and wið inne, mo to-ȝæines monne." Four weeks later the board – or table – is finished. From that point on, Arthur's knights sit around the table, and no more fights occur.

Layamon then includes another passage which is new to the legend and very important to the idea that Arthur was the 'once and future' king of Britain. He says that Arthur's rise fulfilled the prophesy foretold by Merlin. But he adds that Merlin made another prophesy. He says that no Briton will believe and accept the death of Arthur unless it is Judgment Day – the last of all mankind – because "he will fare into Avalon, into the island, to Argante the fair, for she will with heal his wounds, and when he is whole, he will return to them" – "þat he uaren wolde into Aualune, in to þan æit-londe, to Argante þere hende, for heo sculde mid haleweie, helen his wunden, and þene he weore al hal, he wolde sone com heom."

So after these new sections added by Layamon, he returns to the basic narrative of Geoffrey and Wace. Arthur's knights propose that they go to France, and force the submission of the French. Arthur agrees, but says that they must take Norway first. The Norwegian king has died and he has no sons or daughters. The later scribe changed this line to read – "and heir he haveth none" – "and eyr haueþ he nanne." This is the first recorded use of the French word ***heir*** in an English document.

Since the Norwegian king has no children, Arthur says that the king's nephew who is also a relative of Arthur should be made king, so Arthur travel to Norway to make sure that the nephew succeeds to the throne. After this is accomplished, Arthur heads home, but he stops in Denmark on his way back. The Danish king is so afraid of Arthur that his submits on the spot. Arthur is now the overlord of Norway and Denmark.

Arthur then sets his sights on France. He gathers knights and soldiers from throughout his massive realm, and he crosses the channel to Flanders where he begins his conquest. Over the next nine years, he completes the conquest of France as well.

Arthur then arranges a great coronation ceremony at Kaerleon in Wales. Layamon says that no city was as fair during the time of Arthur with the possible exception of Rome. There were broad meadows, and abundant fish, fowl and wild deer. And he says that the city has never been as great as it was during the days of Arthur. He writes, "Some books say certainly that the burgh was bewitched" – "Sume bokes suggeð to iwisse þat þa burh wes biwucched." Now this is the first time the word ***bewitched*** appears in the English language. It is based on the Old English word ***witch***, but the verb ***bewitch*** is not found in any document before this point. Later in the story, Layamon suggests why the town has been bewitched. But more on that later.

Now during this period of Arthur's reign, Kaerleon has many scholars. They use special skills to examine the sky. Layamon says that the craft is called ***astronomy*** – "þe craft is ihate Astronomie." This is the first time the word ***astronomy*** appears in an English document. It's actually a Greek word, and it passed through Latin and French into English. The appearance of this word also shows the increasing influence of Greco-Roman scholarship in Britain at the time. And I'll cover that topic in more detail in the next episode.

A short time after Arthur's grand coronation, twelve soldiers arrive in Arthur's court from Rome. They address Arthur and inform him that they have been sent by the Roman Emperor. Remember that this story is set at the end of the classical Roman period. The messengers tell Arthur that the Roman Emperor is the most powerful ruler in Europe, and he demands that Arthur recognize him as Arthur's lord. If Arthur refuses to submit to Rome, the Emperor will send forces to destroy Arthur and his kingdom.

Arthur's knights are outraged at the demand. Arthur addresses them and tells them that Rome had conquered Britain by force several centuries earlier and killed many Britons in the process. So as the ruler of Britain, he has every right to return the favor and he intends to invade and conquer Rome itself.

This will be Arthur's greatest test, and the battle between Arthur's realm and Rome is the culmination of the story. Several of Arthur's nobles step forward to offer their support for the Roman campaign. One of them is the leader of the Scots, and he steps forward to address Arthur and the gathered knights. Layamon says that he 'stood upon a bank' – "stod uppen ane boncke.' The word ***bank*** here means 'a bench.' In fact, the later scribe didn't like Layamon's use of the word ***bank*** here, so he changed it to the Old English word ***bench***. In fact, ***bank*** and ***bench*** are cognate.

The reason I mention this is because this is one of the first known uses of the word ***bank*** in the English language. The word ***bank*** actually came into English from Old Norse. ***Bank*** is the Norse word, and ***bench*** is the related Old English word. They have a common Germanic root. Now the Norse word ***bank*** was first used by Orm in the Ormulum. He used it in the sense of a mound or slope like a 'river bank.' And here, Layamon uses it as a synonym for ***bench***. And that's notable because the same Germanic word ***bank*** also passed into the Romance languages. And in Italy, money-changers exchanged money at a table or bench that was called a ***bank*** from this same sense of the word as a bench.

And of course, that gave rise to the other sense of the word ***bank*** as a financial institution. So I just wanted to make the note that the sense of the word ***bank*** as a bench was well-established in England long before the later connection between banks, benches and financial institutions.

So Arthur decides to take on the Roman Emperor, and he sends a message to Rome that he will not pay tribute to the Emperor or recognize the Emperor as his overlord. The Romans are stunned by Arthur's defiance. And Layamon says that the senators in the Roman Senate advised and counseled the Emperor how to respond. This is the first recorded use of the words ***Senate*** and ***Senator*** in the English language. Of course, these are references to the Roman institutions, but they now became part of English as well.

The Senate advises the Emperor to gather a great army to take on Arthur. They suggest that he obtain troops from the four corners of his massive Empire. Meanwhile, Arthur assembles his forces and prepares to cross the Channel to France. He leaves his nephew Modred in charge of Britain. Modred is the child of Arthur's sister. Modred is a well-respected knight, but as we'll soon discover, he is also a traitor.

During his journey to engage the Romans, Arthur has a dream in which a giant bear battles a dragon. During the fight, Layamon says that "flames flew from their eyes as firebrands" – "floȝe of heore hæȝene swulc fur-burondes." This is the first recorded use of the term ***firebrand***. Here it is used to mean a spark or flame. Today, the word has a more figurative sense, usually referring to someone with a great deal of energy – often an agitator. But Layamon is the first known writer to use the term, and he uses it here to describe the fight between the bear and the dragon in Arthur's dream. Arthur is confused by the dream. He is unsure how it should be interpreted.

Arthur then musters his forces for the confrontation with the Roman army. The two armies meet in France, and several battles are fought. Over time, Arthur gets the better of the Emperor, and the city of Rome itself falls to Arthur's forces. But the Emperor continues to hold out and wage war.

During one great battle, Arthur's knights are attacked by one of the Emperor's allies from the Near East. In Layamon's words, "an admiral, of Babylon, he was prince" – "on admirail of Babiloine he was ældere." Now this is an interesting passage for a couple of reasons. First, Layamon render the name of Babylon as Babiloine – spelled B-A-B-I-L-O-I-N-E. That spelling – 'O-I' – was a brand new spelling in English. And that's because it represented a new sound or phoneme in English. It represented the /oy/ sound – as in ***toy*** or ***boy*** or ***voice.*** This vowel sound

is a diphtong, and it didn't exist in Old English. It actually came in from French. And we now see evidence that that new /oy/ sound was being used in spoken Englisih.

The other reason why this passage is interesting is because it contains the first recorded use of the word ***admiral*** in an English document. And if it seems a little strange that Layamon describes a Babylonian ruler as an ***admiral***, it shouldn't, because ***admiral*** is actually an Arabic word.

As we saw a few episodes back, this was a period in which Arabic influences were moving into northwestern Europe – thanks to trade, pilgrimage and the Crusades. And that included quite a few Arabic words. And the word ***admiral*** was another one of those words. In fact, the word ***admiral*** is actually derived from the Arabic title of ***emir*** which is still used today.

Emir – or ***Amir*** – meant 'leader or commander' in Arabic. As we know from the recent episodes about Arabic influences, the word ***al*** was the Arabic word for 'the.' So ***Amir-al*** meant the 'commander of the.' So that phrase usually came before some other noun. ***Amir-al-muninin*** meant the 'Commander of the Faithful.' ***Amir-al-Umara*** meant the 'Commander of commanders' or the 'ruler of rulers.'

Now Europeans picked up that phrase ***Amir-al***, but they didn't really understand that the ***al*** part was the word for 'the.' They just thought ***Amir-al*** was the full name of the title. So rather than just ***Amir***, French and English took the title as ***Amir-al***. And it's not surprising that it first appears in Layamon's Brut in reference to a Babylonian prince because it was still considered a Arabic title at the time.

So how did ***Amir-al*** become ***admiral*** with a 'd'? Well, it is appears to be the result of some confusion among scribes who generally wrote in Medieval Latin. Latin had this title as ***amiralis***, but Latin also had the word ***admirabilis*** which later produced the word ***admirable***. So modern scholars think that scribes sometimes confused the two words. After all, admirals were often admirable. So it became increasingly common for scribes to write this title with a 'd' at the end of the first syllable. And that's how it appears in Layamon's text.

So if that's how the ***amir-al*** became ***admiral***, how did the title come to be associated with naval commanders? As we can see, it didn't originally have that meaning. It meant any kind of commander or leader. Well, the answer is related to the fact that Arab navies were very prominent in the Mediterranean during this period. In the 1100s, Arab leaders in Spain and Sicily created a specific naval rank called the 'Commander (or Amir) of the sea' – the ***Amir-al-bahr***. During the Crusades, Crusaders and pilgrims often encountered these Arabic naval officers in the Mediterranean. When Christian forces took control of Sicily, they retained the position and the title. And over time, Europeans started to associate that title of ***admiral*** with naval commanders. In the late 1200s, King John's grandson, Edward I, appointed a man named William de Laybourne to a newly-created position in the English navy called "Admiral of the English Seas" which was obviously based on that title used in the Mediterranean. And from there, the word ***admiral*** acquired a very specific meaning as a naval commander in English. But those developments took place about a century after Layamon's text, so Layamon uses the title of ***admiral*** in its original sense as an Arabic commander or military leader.

In the story, the Babylonian admiral is killed in battle by one of Arthur's knights. But the admiral's son witnesses his father's death, and he grabs a spear and stabs the knight (quote) "on the left side throughout his heart" – "a þa lift side þurh ut þa heorte." The knight falls to the ground and dies.

Now this passage shows another development in the language. And that development has to do with the statement that the knight was stabbed on the 'left' side of the heart. This is the first use of the word ***left*** in an English document to mean the opposite of the right side. The Anglo-Saxons actually used the word ***winestra*** to refer the left side. So where did the word ***left*** come from?

Well, it apparently came from Old English. But it isn't actually found in any of the surviving Old English documents. Modern scholars think the word probably existed in Old English because it has cognates throughout the Germanic languages. So it was almost certainly a Proto-Germanic word.

Now, it is possible that it fell out of use in Old English, but there is an old Latin text that has some English glosses or translations in the margins, and one of those texts has the Latin word ***inanis*** which meant 'empty or weak.' And in the margin, an English scribe translated that word as 'left.' And in Old English, paralysis was called ***lyftadl***. This had been interpreted by some as the 'lifting disease' meaning a disease that makes a person unable to lift his or her limbs. But other scholars have interpreted the word ***lyftadl*** to mean the 'left disease.' Again, this alternate interpretation assumes that the word ***left*** originally meant 'weak,' just like it did in that Latin translation. So ***lyftadl*** meant the 'weakening disease' – the disease that made a person so weak that they can't move.

So all of this suggests that the word ***left*** did exist in Old English, and it probably meant 'weak.' And since most people were right-handed, their right arm was their stronger arm. And that meant their left arm was their weaker arm. And since ***left*** meant weak, that weaker arm became known as the 'left' arm. So ***left*** came to mean the opposite of 'right.' Anyway, that's the best theory as to how the word ***left*** evolved within English.

All we can say for certain is that Layamon gave us the first use of the word ***left*** to mean the opposite of right, and he did so in the passage where one of Arthur's knights is stabbed in the left side of the heart.

Despite the death of Arthur's knight, the Emperor's forces are finally defeated, and the Emperor himself is killed in battle. This is the Arthurian explanation for the fall of the Roman Empire in Western Europe. Rome fell because Arthur defeated it.

A short time after Arthur's victory, while he is still on the continent, a visitor arrives from Modred's court back in Britain. As you may recall, Modred is Arthur's nephew – his sister's son – and Arthur had left Modred in charge of Britain during the campaign against Rome. Arthur and the visiting knight speak for much of the evening, and Arthur eventually retires to bed. While sleeping, Arthur has a disturbing dream. His nephew Modred attacks him with an ax. So Arthur

pulls his sword and cuts off Modred's head. And he also kills his wife, Guinevere, and cuts her to pieces.

The next morning, the visiting knight asks Arthur how he slept, and in reply Arthur recalls the dream. Arthur tries to interpret the meaning of the dream, and he says that he thinks that Modred has committed treachery, and he suspects that he has taken Guinevere as his lover. The visiting knight reluctantly confirms Arthur's suspicions.

He says "þus hafeð Modred idon" – "thus hath Modred done" – "þine quene he hafeð ifon" – "thy queen he hath taken" – "and þi wuliche lond isæt an his aȝere hond" – "and thy fair land set in his own hand" – "he is king & heo is quene" – "he is king and she is queen."

In anger, Arthur vows to immediately return to Britain and kill Modred and Guinevere for their treachery, as well as all people in Britain that have sided with them. Before Arthur and his forces can make their way to Britain, word arrives that they are on their way. Guinevere flees to Kaerleon and lives in secrecy as a nun. Layamon says that no one thereafter knew where she was – or if she was living or dead. This also explains Layamon's earlier statement that Kaerleon was 'be-witched,' and had never regained the glory that it had during the time when Arthur's coronation was held there.

Meanwhile, Modred realizes that he will face Arthur's wrath, so he sends his messengers to Saxony to ask for help from the Saxons. Modred offers them part of his realm if they will help him defeat Arthur. As the Saxons arrive, Modred retreats to Winchester where he is besieged by Arthur. He then escapes to Cornwall. Arthur maintains his pursuit of Modred, and finally traps him in Cornwall. The two leaders and their respective forces meet for a final battle. A bloody showdown takes place where almost all of the warriors on both sides are killed. Arthur himself is slashed and bloody, but he is able to kill Modred with his sword.

Arthur is in a very bad state after the fight. Layamon writes, "Arthur was wounded wondrously much" – "Arður wes for-wunded wunder ane swiðe."

Arthur is lying on the ground, and he is attended to by a knight named Constantine who is both Arthur's kinsmen and the son of the Earl of Cornwall. Arthur gives his kingdom to Constantine and asks him to defend the kingdom and maintain his laws. He then says that he will fare to Avalon, where the elfen queen named Argante will heal his wounds. He then says the following: "And seoðe ich cumen wulle to mine kineriche and wunien mid Brutten mid muchelere wunne" – "And afterward I will come again to my kingdom and dwell with the Britons with much joy." This establishes the legend that Arthur is the 'once and future' king of Britain.

As Arthur speaks, a small boat arrives from the sea with two women inside. They take Arthur and place him in the boat. And the boat then sails away.

Layamon concludes his section on Arthur by saying that the Britons believe that Arthur is still alive, and he dwells in Avalon with the elves. They expect him to return one day. Layamon's final line regarding Arthur is very interesting. He says that Merlin foretold that Arthur would one

day return. "His quiðes weoren soðe" – "His saying were sooth" – "þar an Arður sculde ȝete cum Anglen to fulste" – "that an Arthur should yet come to help the English."

Notice that Layamon concludes his Arthurian story by saying the future Arthur will come to the aid of the ***Anglen*** – the English. Throughout the poem, he has referred to Arthur's people as the 'Britons,' but here at the end he changes the word to the 'English.' I should note that the later scribe changed Layamon's word to the ***Bruttes*** – the 'British.' But that was not Layamon's word. Layamon concludes by identifying Arthur with the English. So he in effect makes Arthur an English king – not a strictly British king.

This is all the more interesting when we consider that the remaining sections of the manuscript describe how the Saxons invited by Modred proceed to conquer the Britons. This is the legendary version of how the Anglo-Saxons came to capture so much of the island. So the Saxons were the mortal enemies of Arthur's Britons. But by the time that Layamon composed his poem – around the year 1200 – the people of England were no longer seen as Germanic Saxons. Now they were the English. And Arthur was just as much their king as the king of the Britons who had proceeded them.

This distinction makes sense when we consider that the Celtic Britons had mixed with the Saxons, and the Vikings, and the Norman-French to produce the nation of England. Notions of Saxon purity were long gone by this point. In Layamon's mind, there was very little difference between the ancient Britons and modern English. And that helps to explain how Arthur was embraced as an English king.

In fact, let me make this point with some additional evidence. Contemporary evidence from this period suggests that the terms 'England' and 'Britain' were being used interchangeably. In prior episodes, I've mentioned the well-known writer of the period known as Gerald of Wales. Around the year 1188 – so about a decade before this manuscript was completed – Gerald wrote a text in Latin called "Topography of Ireland" which was about the people and landscape of Ireland. The text included a map of the British Isles. Ireland is identified with its Latin name "Hybernia." Scotland is identified with its Latin name "Scotia." Wales was labeled with its Latin name "Wallia." But England is not identified as "Anglia," as we would expect. It is labeled as "Britannia." That suggests that "Bittannia" – or Britain – was considered a synonym of England at the time.

Henry of Huntingdon was another English writer who lived during the 1100s. Again he wrote in Latin as was customary at the time. But in one of his texts called "Historia Anglorum" – or "History of the English" – he states that the island of Britain was once called "Albion," then it came to be known as "Britain," and he says that during his lifetime, it is known as "England." So he calls the entire island "England."

So all of this suggests that the old distinctions between Britons and Saxons had been eroded over time, and the political and social and economic power of England had caused some people during this time to equate Britain with England. The English were seen an the natural heirs and successors of the people who had once inhabited the island. It was their island as much as the

Welsh or the Cornish or the Scots. And when Arthur one day returns from Avalon, he will be a king of the English as much as anyone else. And they had Layamon's words to prove it, and those words were written in English. And that's how a British legend became an English king.

Next time, we'll return to events during the reign of King John. And we'll continue to look at developments in the language during the early 1200s. Until then, thanks for listening to the History of English Podcast.

EPISODE 95: OLD SCHOOL AND NEW SCHOOL

Welcome to the History of English Podcast – a podcast about the history of the English language. This is Episode 95: Old School and New School. In this episode, we're going to look at an important development in the early 1200s. And that was the rise of universities including Oxford and Cambridge. These institutions offered a new type of higher education, and they reflected certain changes that were taking place at the time. Western Europe was becoming more urban, more bureaucratic, and more literate. And the old educational system simply couldn't meet the demands of this new society. So 'old school' learning was supplemented with these brand new universities. And along the way, the English language acquired lots of new words to express these emerging ideas and concepts. So this time, we'll explore those developments.

But before we begin, let me remind you that the website for the podcast is historyofenglishpodcast.com. And you can sign up to support the podcast at Patreon.com/historyofenglish. And as always, you can reach me by email at kevin@historyofenglishpodcast.com

So let's turn to this episode. And let's pick up the story where we left off back in Episode 93. In that episode, we saw that King John lost control of Normandy and most of the rest of northwestern France in the year 1204. After that, John's realm was restricted to the British Isles and Aquitaine in the southwest of France. And since Aquitaine was so far away, he was largely confined to the British Isles. In fact, John not only had the title of 'King of England,' he was also officially the 'Lord of Ireland.' He had actually held that title since he was young boy.

And in the same year that John lost control of Normandy, he authorized a great fair to be held in Ireland. He granted a license for an annual eight-day fair to take place in Donnybrook, which today is part of Dublin, but back in 1204, it was small town just outside of the main city. The Donnybrook Fair was held every August for more than six centuries. It was very popular, and lots of people showed up every year. But when they showed up, they tended to drink lots of alcohol. The fair became known for its drunkenness and the large number of fights and brawls that took place there every year. Eventually, the fair's reputation for lawlessness became so bad, that it was finally shut down in the mid-1800s. And by that time, the word ***donnybrook*** had become a euphemism for a melee, or a riot, or a heated argument. And even today, you might hear a fight or brawl described as a ***donnybrook***.

I mention this etymology for a couple of reasons. First of all, the ultimate origin of that term can be traced back to this well-known fair that began around the current point in our overall story. But the other reason I mention that fair is because that type of lawlessness was actually common at the time. Whenever people congregated with lots of alcohol nearby, there was always a risk of brawling and rioting. That could happen at a fair or a festival, but it could also happen wherever lots of young men congregated looking to let off a little steam. And one place where that tended to happen a lot was in a university town.

That included the small town of Oxford – west of London – which was home to a burgeoning university. With lots of young men congregating there – there was an uneasy relationship between the students and the townspeople. And sometimes this spilled over into the streets. These types of conflicts were so common that the relationship between two groups became known as 'town and gown.' And it was very often 'town versus gown.'

That was often the case in Oxford, and it nearly brought an end to the university in the year 1209. In that year, a young man who was attending Oxford killed a local woman, and then he fled town. The townspeople demanded retribution, and the missing student's roommates were arrested. By all accounts, the three roommates were completely innocent, but nevertheless, they were taken to the outskirts of town and hanged.

The students and teachers at the school were so shocked and outraged by what happened that most of them left town. And a large contingent of them headed to a small town north of London called Cambridge. There, they started a new university which became the University of Cambridge. So by the early 1200s, both Oxford and Cambridge had been established. But these major institutions of higher learning were still in their infancy. There were only a small handful of universities in all of Europe. In fact, the entire concept of a university was still brand-new. But it was a concept that was destined to change the nature of education throughout the Western world.

So in this episode, I want to trace the developments that led to the creation of the university as an institution of higher learning. Let's begin with the state of education in Western Europe before these changes took place. That system was basically the same educational system that we've explored since the early episodes about the Anglo-Saxons. It was a system that was primarily tied to the church. Almost all formal education in Western Europe was provided by monasteries and churches.

Now I should note that there were other types of education that were less formal. It was very common for a young person to learn a particular trade or skill by serving as an apprentice under an older, more experienced person. That was common for basic trades like carpentry and iron working. Even knighthood worked on that same basic principle with a young squire serving under a knight in order to learn how to ride and fight and behave at court. So apprenticeship was very common. And I should note that the word ***apprentice*** is a French word that entered English in the early Middle English period. It was first attested in the 1300s, and you might notice a connection between the words ***apprentice*** and ***apprehend***, and that's because an apprentice was someone who acquired or grasped or 'apprehended' knowledge.

Of course, this type of vocational training is different from the formal education offered by schools. If you wanted to learn how to read and write – if you wanted to become literate and work as a scribe or record-keeper or bureaucrat – you really needed to go to school. And again, that meant that you had to a church school.

Now way back in Episode 40, I introduced you to this basic form of education in an Episode I called "Learning Latin and Latin Learning." And I chose that title because this type of education was administered by the Church, and that meant that it was offered in the language of the Church – which was Latin. And even today, many of our words associated with education come from Latin and French, and quite a few come from Greek. But very few come from Old English. And that's partly because English wasn't really used in most of these schools.

There are a few exceptions. The word ***teach*** is an Old English word. Of course, a person who teaches is a ***teacher***, and that makes ***teacher*** a native English word as well, even though it doesn't actually appear in any surviving Old English documents. The noun ***teacher*** first appears in the 1300s.

Another common Old English word related to education is the word ***learn***. That was really the main word used in Old English to describe various aspects of education. So a student was a ***leornung-cild*** – literally a 'learning child.' A teacher was a ***leornung-man*** – a 'learning man.' And a school was a ***leornung-hus*** – a 'learning house.'

So the words ***teach*** and ***learn*** both come to us from the Anglo-Saxons. And notice that they have very distinct meanings. A teacher 'teaches' or imparts knowledge. And a student 'learns' or acquires knowledge. But I should note that it became common in Middle English to use the word ***learn*** both ways. It was often used as a synonym for ***teach***. So a teacher might 'learn' his students some important lessons. Even Shakespeare used the word ***learn*** in that way from time to time. But in the 1700s, grammarians were able to stamp out that usage which they deemed improper. It still survives today. You might hear someone say something like "That'll learn you" to mean "That'll teach you." It's considered bad English today, and it would have been considered bad English in the Anglo-Saxon period as well, but again, during the Middle English period, it was very common and it was considered acceptable at the time.

Also, around this time in early Middle English, it became common to use the phrase "lernid and lewid" to refer to educated and uneducated persons. It specifically meant 'literate and illiterate.' ***Lernid*** was of course the modern word ***learned***. And ***lewid*** was an early version of the word ***lewd*** – L-E-W-D. Even though "lernid and lewid" meant 'educated and uneducated,' it acquired a broader sense over time. It came to mean 'church officials and the laity' because church officials were usually educated and literate, and the laity usually were not. And that helps to explain how ***lewd*** acquired its modern meaning as 'profane or vulgar.'

In fact, ***lewd***, ***profane*** and ***vulgar*** all have a similar history. At one time all three words simply referred to common people or common things, as opposed to members of the church. The 'Vulgar' Latin dialects were simply the dialects of the common people, as opposed to the official Latin taught in the church schools. But over time, ***vulgar*** came to mean 'crude and indecent.' I also discussed the etymology of ***profane*** in an earlier episode. It was literally ***pro*** meaning 'in front of' and ***fanum*** which meant 'temple.' So ***profane*** meant 'in front of or outside of the temple.' So again, it meant common, but it eventually acquired a negative connotation over time. And ***lewd*** worked the same way.

As I noted, it originally meant illiterate or uneducated which was the case for most common people outside of the church. And again, just like ***vulgar*** and ***profane***, it acquired a negative sense over time. So those three words show a fundamental connection in the Medieval mind between church, education and proper behavior on the one hand – and commonness, illiteracy , and lewdness on the other hand.

As I noted earlier, the church and monastery schools taught their students in Latin – not in English. And that helps to explain why certain Latin words associated with education entered English very early on – even before the Normans arrived. Old English had actually borrowed several Latin words to describe the educational process. For example, Old English had the words ***school*** and ***scholar***, which were both derived from the Latin word ***schola***, which itself was derived from a Greek word that meant 'leisure.' During your leisure time, when you weren't engaged in physical labor, you could sit around and discuss the nature of the world. And that's how the word evolved from a sense of leisure to a sense of education. And from that root word, we got the word ***scholar*** meaning a 'young student,' and the word ***school*** meaning 'the place where the student was educated.' And again, both words were borrowed by the Anglo-Saxons.

Old English had also borrowed the Latin word ***master*** which meant a 'teacher.' And in fact, around the current point in our story – in the early 1200s – the compound word ***schoolmaster*** appeared for the first time in an English document.

During the period after the Norman Conquest, these local church schools continued to spread. Most towns of any size had some sort of local school. The students in those schools mostly came from the upper classes because they had to pay a fee to attend. So poor peasants were not usually able to send their children to school.

Now even though we call these places ***schools***, they didn't offer the broad curriculum that modern schools offer. In fact, in many respects, the schools were focused on one primary subject – and that was Latin. The main goal of most students was to try to learn Latin because it was a skill that was in high demand. And that was the focus of the most of the teachers as well.

The typical school day was hard. It began early in the morning – as early as 6 or 7 o'clock. And it didn't end until late in the day – usually around 5 or 6 o'clock in the afternoon. There were just a couple of breaks in the middle. The students sat on the floor – all ages together. And the instruction was mostly oral and almost entirely in Latin. Keep in mind that this was the era before the printing press. So books were still rare and expensive. That meant that much of teaching was done through oral drills. The teacher or master would state something in Latin, and the students had to repeat it together – over and over again – until they had learned it by heart.

And that brings up an interesting phrase – to "learn something by heart." When we memorize something, why do we learn it 'by heart'? Why don't we learn it by brain? Well, the answer lies with the Greeks. The Greeks didn't fully understand how the brain works. They actually thought that the heart was the center of memory, and intelligence and emotion. And some modern scholars think this ancient link between the heart and emotions contributed to the use of the heart as a symbol of love. In fact, the idea of lovers giving their hearts to each other can actually by

traced back to around the current point in our story. A French manuscript from the mid-1200s contains a love poem that is illustrated with several scenes of lovers. One of the pictures shows a young man kneeling and giving his heart to a woman. This is the first known depiction of someone giving their heart to another person as a symbol of love. And of course, today we use the heart symbol as a sign of love. Well, this idea can apparently be traced back to the 1200s. And it may be based on that more fundamental idea of the heart as the source of emotions which goes back to the Greeks.

Well, again, the Greeks also thought that the heart was the center of memory and intelligence. So if you learned something – or memorized something – you did it with your heart. And that is apparently the source of the phrase "to learn by heart." It may have been around in some form in the 1200s, but Geoffrey Chaucer is actually the first known person to use the phrase in English in the 1300s.

And while I'm discussing the phrase "learn by heart," I should also mention another interesting word that is based on the same idea. And that's the word ***record***. The word was borrowed into English from French around the current point in our story in the early 1200s. The word combines the Latin prefix '***re***' meaning 'again' with the word '***cor***' – meaning 'heart.' We find that same root in words like ***cordial***, ***accord***, and ***discord***. We also have it in the word ***courage***. The Indo-European root of that word also passed into Greek and gave us the word ***cardiology***.

So in the word ***record***, we have a word that combines the idea of repeating something with the heart. And that's how you memorized something. You repeated it over and over until your heart committed it to memory. That was the original sense of the word ***record***. Over time, it referred to any attempt to preserve something in a fixed form – from memory to parchment or paper. And of course, as technology developed, it came to refer to efforts to preserve something in audio or video form. But ultimately, to ***record*** something was to literally learn it by heart.

Now as I noted, this is how students learned in those church schools – though memory and repetition. And the basic subject matter covered in all of those schools was more or less the same. Since those schools were tied to the Church, students were taught about the Bible and the official Church decrees. But they were also taught the basic courses called the trivium and quadrivium.

I discussed the trivium and quadrivium back in Episode 40, but just to refresh your recollection, the trivium consisted of three courses – grammar, rhetoric, and logic. These were considered the easiest and most basic courses. And since there were three of them, they were called the ***trivium***. And since they were the easiest courses, the word ***trivium*** ultimately produced the word ***trivial***. And those words also produced the word ***trivia*** meaning a collection of acquired knowledge.

Beyond the basic three courses of the trivium were the four courses of the quadrivium – arithmetic, music, astronomy, and geometry. These were considered the more advanced courses. Together these seven courses were called the ***artes liberales*** in Latin, but we know them better by the Anglicized version of that term – the ***liberal arts***. The structure of these courses can be traced back to the late Roman period – so that should tell you something. The basic education

taught in schools in the 1100s hadn't changed much over the prior six or seven centuries. These courses were called the ***liberal arts*** – because in Rome, an education was only available to free-born Roman citizens. The Latin word ***liber*** meant 'free.' Of course, we have the word ***liberty*** from that word. And we also have the liberal arts – the subjects which a well-to-do free man would be expected to learn. These were in contrast to the ***servile arts*** – or the ***artes serviles*** as they were called in Latin. That term referred to the manual chores that a Roman slave had to learn. So you had servile arts and liberal arts. And the liberal arts were the seven main subjects taught in the Church schools.

Ultimately these seven liberal arts have their roots in Greek philosophy and study, but it was the late Roman writer named Martianus Capella who laid out the framework of the curriculum. Over the next few centuries, the Church schools standardized the content taught in those classes.

Now it is important to note that these were very basic courses compared to modern standards. The actual level of knowledge was very limited. This was the period before the scientific revolution, so students weren't really learning science in the sense that we know it today. For example, in the course on astronomy, they would learn the constellations. Astronomy and astrology were not considered distinct disciplines yet, so the astronomy class included a lot of astrology as well. The course on arithmetic covered the basic math that could be handled with Roman numerals. So there was no algebra or calculus. Just rudimentary math. The course on geometry covered circles and triangles and some basic geometry concepts. But again, it was very basic. And that's because the overall level of knowledge at the time was still very basic.

As I noted earlier, the real education provided in those Church schools was in language – specifically Latin. That was the real practical knowledge that a student could acquire and use a basis for a career.

Remember that the basic course was the trivium – logic, rhetoric and grammar. All three of these subjects were focused on different aspects of Latin. At first glance, logic may not seem like a language subject. But it was at the time. It was the study of reasoning, but it was also the study of how to express that reasoning with words. So it trained students how to make logical arguments. And specifically, how to make logical arguments in Latin.

In fact, the word ***logic*** is based on the Greek word ***logos*** – which meant 'word, or idea, or speech, or discourse.' In fact, we find that same root in other words borrowed from Greek – like ***apology***, and ***dialogue***, and ***monologue***, and ***prologue*** – all words related to speech. Those words are also cognate with Greek words like ***lexicon*** and ***dialect***. The same Indo-European root also appears in Latin words like ***intelligent*** – which is what you hope to become when you go to school – and ***lecture*** – which is what your teacher gives – and ***legible*** – which is what you hope your words are when you write them down. So the word ***logic*** shares a common root with all of those words – and we can start to see how ***logic*** itself was rooted in the use of language.

In fact, the logic course wasn't always called 'logic.' Another common word for it at the time was ***dialectic***, which as you may notice sounds a lot like ***dialect***. And that's because they are both derived from the same Greek root. Again, ***dialectic*** was just another word for ***logic***, and it

meant a philosophical discussion or conversation. So again, logic or dialectic was rooted in language and the use of language to formulate arguments.

So I've covered logic, which is one branch of the trivium. So what about the other two – rhetoric and grammar? Well, obviously, those two courses are also about language and the use of language. ***Rhetoric*** is the art of the speaker or orator. Students were taught how to use words to seize and hold the attention of an audience. Again, the word ***rhetoric*** is ultimately a Greek word. But check this out. Believe it or not, ***rhetoric*** is actually cognate with the words ***word*** and ***verb***. They all came from the same Indo-European root word which meant 'to speak.' That word has been reconstructed as ****were***. One variation was ****wre-tor-*** which passed into Greek, and there the initial 'w' sound was lost, and that produced ***rhetoric***. That same root word ****were*** also passed into the Germanic languages where it eventually acquired a 'd' sound at the end. And that produced the native Old English word – ***word***. The same root also passed into Latin, but in Late Latin, the 'w' sound at the front of words shifted to a 'v' sound. And that produced the Latin word ***verb***. So that makes ***rhetoric***, ***word*** and ***verb*** cognate. They represent a Greek, a Germanic and a Latin version of the same root word. So again, the course on rhetoric was fundamentally rooted in the use of language – specifically Latin.

And then there was the third branch of the trivium which was grammar. Now today, when we think of grammar, we think of the technical rules that govern how we speak – the way we use words to convey specific meaning. But during the Middle Ages, the concept of grammar was very different. First of all, grammar was a specific course taught in schools, but Latin was the only the only language that was taught. So grammar was synonymous with Latin. There really was no such thing as English grammar or French grammar or Norse grammar – at least not in schools. When teachers spoke of grammar, they meant the rules of Latin. In fact, it didn't just mean the rules of Latin, it was broader than that. It included a general study of Latin and Latin literature.

This also helps to explain why grammar schools were called 'grammar schools.' They didn't just teach the rules of grammar. Originally, the term 'grammar school' simply meant a school that taught its students in Latin which was standard practice in the Middle Ages. So almost all basic schools were grammar schools because they taught in Latin. And we still use the term 'grammar school' is that more general sense today.

So the trivium of grammar, rhetoric, and logic was really designed to teach students how to speak Latin and how to formulate arguments in Latin. And as I noted, that was really the main reason students wanted to attend school. They wanted to acquire that special skill. And knowledge of Latin really was considered a special skill at the time. To learn Latin was to unravel the mystery of this ancient and revered language that no one spoke as their native language anymore. It was like a secret code that was only available to a select few scholars. Learning Latin was like having a magician tell you how he performs his magic tricks. And I make that comparison because it helps to explain a very interesting bit of etymology. It helps to explain the connection between ***grammar*** and ***glamour***. Believe it or not, they are cognate. Not only did they come from the same root word, they are really just two different versions of the same word, and they didn't become distinct until the late Middle Ages.

Now we don't tend to think of grammar as being glamorous, but we have to think of the word ***glamor*** in a slightly different way. We have to think of the word with its original meaning which was 'to charm or enchant or cast a spell.' In fact, if you're a fan of vampire stories, you've probably encountered this use before. When a vampire casts a spell over a person, the victim is said to be 'glamored.' Well, that was actually the original meaning of the word. It was only in the last century that the sense of the word started to change to its modern meaning – as something beautiful or extravagant. And that was because it was thought that a very beautiful person who dressed up in fancy clothes had the ability to enchant people and cast a spell over them.

Well if we go back to the original meaning of ***glamour*** – as a charm or a magic spell – we can start to see how the word is related to the word ***grammar***. Most common people didn't really know what took place in those Church schools. There was a secret nature to them. Most people didn't understand the educational process, and they weren't sure what those young boys were learning in those schools. And I say "young boys" because girls were not generally allowed to attend schools in the Middle Ages. So young illiterate boys went to those schools, and soon, they were speaking and writing in this special language called 'Latin.' A lot of people just assumed that they were also learning astrology and magic. If the students could speak Latin, then they could probably recite special charms and incantations as well. It was assumed that those educated boys and men could cast spells and work charms. So the word ***grammar*** had a VERY broad meaning. It could refer to anything that was taught in the schools or was believed to be taught in the schools. So it not only referred to a knowledge of Latin, it also referred to a knowledge of magic, witchcraft and astrology.

Over time, in the south of England, the word ***grammar*** became restricted to a Latin education and ultimately to the structural rules of a language. But in the north, in Scotland, the word had a different history. The Scots dialect had this same word, and over time, the 'gr-' sound at the front of ***grammar*** evolved into a 'gl-' sound. And the word appeared as ***glamour*** – meaning 'magic or a spell.' That version of the word made its way south over time, and it was later borrowed into the standard English of England in the early 1800s primarily through the writing of the Scottish writer Sir Walter Scott who really popularized the word ***glamour*** in his writings.

I should also mention that the British linguist David Crystal has written lots of books about the history of English, and he has just completed a new book about the history of English grammar. He titled it: "Making Sense: The Glamorous Story of English Grammar." So he also tapped into this little bit of etymology for his title. And, by the way, I recommend the book if you're interested in the history of English grammar.

If the connection between learning and magic seems a bit odd, it wasn't really all that strange during the Middle Ages. Think about the connection between ***wisdom*** and ***wizard***. Both words are derived from the Old English word ***wise***. A wizard was literally a 'wise man.'

Also think about the connection between being a good speller – and casting a spell. One version has to do with education – and one has to do with magic. The word ***spell*** is ultimately an Indo-European word – and it originally meant 'to speak or tell a story.' So once again, the word originally had to do with speech. Within English, it developed a sense as a short saying or

utterance – and then, a short saying that induced magic. So it came to mean a charm or incantation. And that is where we got the sense of putting a spell on someone.

Well, the Frankish version of the word passed into French and was then borrowed into English in the 1300s. And that version of the word ***spell*** meant 'to explain something' – specifically to explain an idea or process in a step-by-step manner. It's sort of like when we say, "I am going to spell it out for you." What I'm really saying is that I'm going to break it down piece by piece. Well, this French version of the word was applied to students who were trying to read all of those difficult passages in Latin. They often had to break it down word by word to make sense out of it. And that process was called ***spelling***. It meant that they were reading a passage very slowly and deliberately. Well over time, by logical extension, the word ***spell*** came to refer to the process of breaking down individual words letter by letter. To make sense of a word, you had to 'spell' it. In other words, you had to break it down. You had to identify each individual letter, and then put them all together in the right order. And thus the modern sense of the word ***spell*** as in a 'spelling bee.'

So between ***grammar*** and ***glamour*** – and ***wisdom*** and ***wizar***d – and a 'spelling bee' and 'witch's spell,' we can see that education and Latin fluency were held in such high regard that common people were in awe of that knowledge, and many common people even thought that those scholars had magical powers. So we can start to see why young men wanted to receive a formal education if their family could afford it.

Now so far, we've explored the basic nature of a church school education in the early Middle Ages – up to the 1100s or so. But then, that traditional structure started to change. And the impetus for that change came from the Mediterranean.

As we saw back in Episode 90, Muslim scholars had discovered lots of Greek manuscripts – especially in the eastern Mediterranean where Muslims came into contact with the Byzantine Empire. The Muslims embraced those ancient Greek scholars, and they translated many of those old texts into Arabic. Those Arabic translations spread across the Mediterranean to southern Spain which was still under Muslim control at the time. And from there, Western Europeans started to encounter those texts for the first time. Many of those manuscripts were then translated into Latin – and they started to filter into Western Europe.

Now at one time, the common view of European history was that Greek learning came to Western Europe after Constantinople fell to the Muslim Turks in the mid-1400s, and the Byzantine scholars then fled into Western Europe and carried those Greek manuscripts with them. That was considered to be one of the major factors contributing to the Renaissance. Well, modern scholars have modified that view a little bit. They now acknowledge that Greek scholarship had started to enter Western Europe a few centuries earlier in the 1100s from Muslim Spain. This initial wave of scholarship contributed to an earlier – smaller – renaissance. Today, it is commonly known to as the Twelfth Century Renaissance. It was a smaller revival of classical learning that took place before the major Renaissance of the 1400s and 1500s. One of the consequences of this earlier mini-Renaissance was the creation of universities which were a completely new type of educational institution.

So let's shift our focus to this new scholarship – from 'old school' to 'new school' – and the new universities that were starting to pop up. We've seen that the normal curriculum taught in church schools was the trivium and the quadrivium – grammar, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, astronomy, geometry and music. But even though that list sounds impressive, the actual knowledge conveyed in those classes was very limited.

Most of those particular subjects had their ultimate roots in Classical Greece, but Western Europe received their knowledge of those disciplines from the Romans. And over time, those original Greek subjects had been limited, edited and abridged, and had passed through Roman and Church filters. In fact, most of the original Greek texts had been lost to time, and they weren't available to Western European. So the full extent of classical Greek knowledge was unknown in the most of Europe.

But in the 1100s, Europeans started to discover those Muslim libraries in Spain with those Arabic translations of those classical Greek works. Over the next couple of centuries, most of those works were gradually translated into Latin, and for the first time, Europeans had access to all of those ancient Greek ideas and concepts.

They discovered the geometry of Euclid which was far more advanced than the basic circles and squares that were being taught at the time. They discovered the astronomy of Ptolemy which included a mathematical model of the universe, and which contained for some of the most advanced astronomical calculations known at the time. They discovered the medicine of Galen and Hippocrates which helped to revolutionize the study of medicine. Of course, they also discovered Arabic numerals which were much more versatile than Roman numerals, and that allowed for an expansion of mathematics.

But the biggest discovery may have been the writings of Aristotle. Prior to this point, only two of Aristotle's works were generally known in European schools – a text called 'Categories' and another called ' On Interpretation.' But Muslim scholars had found and preserved dozens of his works, and they had also included a great deal of commentary about his works.

When those texts started to be discovered by Europeans, they also became fascinated by his writings and philosophy. The entire collection of Aristotle's writings was gradually translated into Latin. I should note that it wasn't just Aristotle's works that had been lost over time. Most of Plato's works had also been lost. You might remember that Plato was Aristotle's teacher. Well, it took even longer for Plato's works to be rediscovered. It would be another two centuries before his works were fully translated into Latin and made available to western scholars.

All of these new Greek texts provided new insights, and they sparked an interest among scholars and students throughout Western Europe. More and more people wanted to find out what these ancient philosophers and scholars had to say about the world. But there was one problem with all of this new scholarship. It was pre-Christian. And in some respects, it flat-out contradicted traditional teachings of the Church. So these new texts were not generally available in those traditional Church schools. First of all, there simply weren't enough copies to go around. Even if there were copies, most of the teachers in those schools hadn't read them, or they didn't

understand them well enough to teach from them. And even if the teachers were willing and able to teach from them, the Church itself restricted access to many of the texts, especially those composed by Aristotle. It would take many years for Western scholars to reconcile some of these Greek writings with Church teachings. So for now, if you wanted to learn about all of this new scholarship, you had to go find someone who could teach you about it. And there were only a handful of those scholars in Western Europe.

They were mainly congregated around a few cathedral schools located in prominent cities. These were places where some of these old Greek manuscripts were being translated. And these were places where some of those leading scholars and translators had taken up residence. This included places like Bologna in northern Italy and Paris in France. Students sought out those scholars – and soon, large numbers of students were traveling across the continent to learn from them.

You might remember that teachers were sometimes called the ***magistri*** in Latin – which became ***masters*** in Old English. So these early Medieval professors were generally known as 'masters.' And these Masters soon realized that their knowledge and skills were in high demand.

The number of students arriving started to exceed the capacity of the Cathedral schools. So those prominent masters began to offer their services outside of those church schools for a fee. A snowball effect ensued. Prospective students came to where the masters taught. And then other teachers saw an opportunity to charge for their services, so they also headed to where the students had gathered. And then even more students came to those burgeoning educational centers where the leading scholars had assembled.

These were the first universities, but they weren't called ***universities*** yet. This gathering of masters and students was originally called a ***studium generale*** – in other words, a 'general study.' But it meant a gathering of scholars who sought to study various subjects. And those were 'general' subjects. They went beyond the trivium and the quadrivium, and focused on topics like law, and medicine and the arts. So these new institutions represented a break from the traditional church schools, and a break from the control of the Church.

But these new educational collectives had lots of problems that had to be sorted out. Students were far from home and were vulnerable to those who might try to exploit them. A teacher might arrive and hold himself out a master, but he might not have a clue what he was talking about. He could charge fees from the students and not really teach anything. Sometimes, he took their money and ran. Students also had to find a place to live. And there were always landlords looking to exploit the students by charging excessive fees. Students were sometimes robbed and attacked by locals. So students started to band together for mutual protection.

As a collective, the students could bargain with the teachers and members of the local community. They could threaten to boycott merchants that engaged in price gouging. And they could bargain with community leaders by threatening to leave and go elsewhere – which they sometimes did. This forced landlords and merchants and city leaders to deal with the students fairly, or risk losing the entire group. This was similar in many respects to modern trade unions.

The students had very little power as individuals, but they had a lot of power as a group. And it's important to keep in mind that this was an era dominated by trade guilds that regulated most professions. So in this respect, the students were just following the tradition of the various trade guilds.

Soon, this type of collective came to be known in Latin as a "universitas magistrorum et scholarium" which meant the 'community of masters and scholars.' The term ***universitas*** simply meant the community or the entire group of scholars. Since the group – or guild – included all of the teachers and students, it was a 'universal' organization. And that's why it used that word ***universitas***. Over time, that long title "universitas magistrorum et scholarium" was shortened to just the first word – the ***universitas***. And in English, that word became ***university***.

So today, when many people think about the word ***university***, they probably assume that it refers to some sense of a 'universal education' or a 'universal nature of learning.' Well, it sounds good, but that isn't really the case. The word really just means a collective, or guild, or student union. In fact, a university was basically an early type of union. And ***union*** and ***university*** are both based on Latin word ***unus*** meaning 'one.' So in its original sense, the word ***university*** basically meant a group of scholars who joined together into a single entity. It was all for one and one for all.

This arrangement really began with the first group of scholars to adopt this model in Bologna in northern Italy, and from there it was imitated throughout Western Europe. The Bologna university or student union helped to arrange lodging for the students, and they established the basic curriculum that had to be taught by the masters. They also made sure that the teachers adhered to certain standards.

It's important to keep in mind that these early universities were just groups of people – not a specific place or a specific group of buildings. There was no university campus early on. It was just a group of scholars who met wherever they could – at a church, at a master's home, at a rented building or hall, in open areas around town, wherever. Again, the word just referred to the collection of scholars, not any specific place.

Over time, the teachers started to form separate guilds or unions to protect their own interests. Again, this is how Medieval guilds worked. They restricted access to certain trades and professions. And the teachers didn't want to have a situation where anyone could just show up and claim to be a master. So they followed the model of other guilds, and they required anyone claiming to be a scholar to pass certain tests and meet certain standards. In the same way that a goldsmith had to serve as an apprentice, and then work as a journeyman before he could finally become a master craftsman, students had to follow a similar process to become a teacher.

They began as basic students – roughly the equivalent of an apprentice. When they completed that first stage, they then proceeded to a second stage where they could give practice lectures. This was roughly equivalent to a journeyman. And then finally, when they had proven their abilities at this second stage, they could advance to the third and final stage, and become a master of the trade. In order to become a full-fledged master, the student had to submit to an

examination before the other masters. Like any other guild, the masters had to give consent before someone could join their group.

This Medieval model is still followed by most universities to this day. And the degrees that a student receives reflects the fact that early universities were modeled after trade guilds. So let's take a closer look at the words used to describe that process.

Over the following few centuries, as universities spread and became more common, they developed a somewhat consistent structure. A typical student joined the university when he was around 14 or 15 years of age. The curriculum was still rooted in the liberal arts, but it also included some of the newly-acquired knowledge from all of those Greek texts. The first few years focused on the trivium – grammar, rhetoric and logic. After about three or four years, if the student had shown proficiency in the trivium or some other specific area of study, he was deemed a 'bachelor,' and he was then able to focus more on the advanced courses of the quadrivium or some other area of study.

I should note that the ultimate origin of the word ***bachelor*** is a little unclear. Latin had the apparently related word ***baccalarius*** – which had a similar meaning to ***bachelor*** – but that Latin word is only attested in the late Middle Ages. So it might have just been a Latinized version of ***bachelor***. Anyway, the word ***bachelor*** came into English from French where it meant a 'young knight.' So it essentially meant an apprentice who was still learning the ropes. And from that sense, it came to mean a young student who was working his way towards being a master, but he was still in the apprentice stage.

That original sense of the word ***bachelor*** as a 'young man' still exists in Modern English. We still refer to a young unmarried man as a ***bachelor***. But within the trade guilds of the Middle Ages – and especially within these burgeoning universities – ***bachelor*** came to refer to a young student who had completed the most basic level of university education, but had not yet become a master.

After the student became a bachelor, he was allowed to teach under the supervision of a master. So he had acquired the basic skills to teach, but he wasn't fully independent yet. He was still a student.

After a couple of more years, he could then apply to be a master. As we've seen, a master was a fully sanctioned teacher. The student had to submit to an oral examination before the other masters, and if he could prove himself, he was allowed into the guild or profession of the masters. At this point, the newly-minted master received a license to teach. And with that license, he could go to any of the other universities and teach. He could also go into the civil service or he could become a church official. The key was that license to teach, which was in many respects the first version of what became known as a ***degree***. Today, universities still grant Bachelor's Degrees and Master's Degrees.

I should note that the word ***degree*** is cognate with the words ***grade*** and ***graduate***. The Latin word ***gradus*** meant 'a step.' And the various levels of advancement in schools and universities

were seen as steps toward the ultimate goal of becoming a master. So when you moved from one step or grade to the next, you were said to ***graduate*** – from that Latin root word ***gradus***. And that accomplishment was marked with a certification called a ***degree*** – derived from the same Latin root. Interestingly, ***degree*** comes directly from the word ***degradus*** – literally 'a step down.' We still have that term as the word ***degrade***. So ***degree*** and ***degrade*** are derived from the same word. But why does a ***degree*** indicate a step up, while to ***degrade*** something is to take a step down?

Well even though the word ***degradus*** originally meant 'a step down,' it eventually just came to mean 'any kind of step.' So it could refer to a step forward or backward – or up or down – or sideways. And that was the more general meaning of the word at the time French developed the word ***degree*** from that root. So a ***degree*** just meant 'a step' – one part of larger group. And that word was first attested in English around the current point in our story in the early 1200s. Again it meant 'a step' – like one step in a set of stairs or one part of a larger whole. We still have some of that original sense when we refer to the 'degrees' of an angle, or the temperature being a certain number of 'degrees.' We just mean smaller parts of a larger group. So that was the original sense of the word when it was borrowed by scholars to mean a step from one level of academic achievement to the next. And since a degree represented an advancement in education, it acquired a sense as 'a step up' in school, even though the original root word meant 'a step down.'

So that explains ***degree*** and ***graduate***, but what about ***grade***? You advance from one grade to the next as you go through school. And you hope to get good grades along the way. Well, these are relatively recent developments. Even though ***grade*** obviously comes from the same Latin root as ***graduate*** and ***degree***, these modern senses of the word ***grade*** didn't appear until the 1800s. In fact, the sense of the word ***grade*** as a school year – as in 4th grade or 5th grade – that's really an Americanism. It developed in North America in the 1800s.

So ***grade***, ***graduate*** and ***degree*** are all cognate. Now having 'graduated' with a Master's 'Degree,' a newly-certified master could then teach or pursue another prestigious career. But sometimes, the master decided to stay on and pursue his studies even further. During this early period, several universities developed specialized fields of study. I mentioned that early university at Bologna which is considered to be the first university. Well, it developed a speciality in law. And if you wanted to be a highly-trained lawyer, you would probably try to go to Bologna to learn from the legal masters there. In Salerno, the local university developed a specialty in medicine which trained aspiring physicians. Meanwhile, the large university in Paris specialized in theology, or as it was called at the time – 'philosophy.' And if you wanted to achieve a very advanced position in the Church, you might go to Paris to learn from the masters there. Some other universities also started to specialize in one or more of these three fields.

Well after a student had become a master, he could choose to continue his education in one of these three specialized fields. Very few students had the time or resources to pursue that advanced certification. It usually took anywhere from 8 to 12 additional years to achieve that ultimate level of academic achievement. But if the master made it, he could be deemed a ***doctor***, which was just another word for a teacher. The word ***doctor*** is derived from the Latin word

docere meaning to 'to show or teach or illustrate.' By the way, it also gives us the word ***document*** which meant 'written instructions or guidance.' And a ***doctor*** was a teacher who provided instructions or guidance. And now, the word started to acquire a sense as the highest ranking teacher or master.

So if you wanted to be an ultimate master of law, you might go to Bologna to be deemed a doctor of law. And even today, a standard law degree is called a Juris Doctor degree – at least in the United States, Canada and Australia.

And if you wanted to become an ultimate master of medicine, you might go to a university like the one in Salerno and become a doctor of medicine. Of course, this sense of the word ***doctor*** has passed into Modern English, and today, when we think of doctors, we usually think of medical doctors. You might remember from an earlier episode that a physician was called a ***læce*** in Old English. But during the period of Middle English, the word ***doctor*** gradually replaced that word.

Now if you wanted an advanced career in the church, you might want to go to Paris where they specialized in teaching about philosophy, which again was just another word for theology or religion. If you rose to the level of doctor, you would be deemed a doctor of philosophy, and that is the ultimate origin of the modern Ph.D. The 'Ph' stands for philosophy.

Now I mentioned that early university at Paris because it was very important in the development of universities in northern Europe – especially in the British Isles. The University of Paris was another very early university, and it developed out of the cathedral school at Paris. Specific dates are uncertain, but at some point by the late 1100s, a university had developed within the city. In fact, in the year 1200, shortly before John lost Normandy to the French King Philip, Philip issued the first royal charter recognizing the university. Once again, that official recognition was the result of confrontation between students and townspeople. After some students were killed, Philip issued a charter to give the students some protection. The charter gave the students certain legal privileges. This essentially made the university a separate institution, independent from the cathedral school. In fact, the University generally cites that date as the official beginning of the institution, even though students had been assembling there for about 50 years prior to this official recognition. And we know that in part because there are references to the university at Paris in documents composed in the mid to late 1100s.

In fact, it is generally believed that the ultimate origin of Oxford University is tied to events in Paris in the late 1100s. I actually mentioned this back in Episode 84 in the context of the dispute between Henry II and Thomas Becket. You might remember that Becket was the Archbishop of Canterbury, and he was fighting with Henry over control of the church courts. When Becket fled into exile to Paris in the year 1167, Henry demanded that all clerics in France should return to England if they had revenues in England. If they failed to return, they would lose those revenues. It was partly designed to lure Becket back to England, but all it did initially was force some of the other clerics and students in Paris to return to England.

When they returned, many of those scholars settled in Oxford – west of London. The ultimate foundations of Oxford are not well documented, but it appears these returning students established the foundation for England's first university.

I noted at the beginning of the episode that the Oxford students often found themselves in conflict with the townspeople, and I mentioned a riot in the year 1209 that resulted in the death of several students. After those deaths, most of students and teachers at Oxford fled to Cambridge or Paris or elsewhere. This ultimately led to the establishment of a separate university at Cambridge. Five years later, in the year 1214, King John issued a proclamation designed to get the students and teachers to return to Oxford. The proclamation was similar in some ways to the one that had been issued by Philip of France for the University of Paris a few years earlier. John's proclamation stated that the students fell under the jurisdiction of the bishop at Lincoln, and the bishop was permitted to designate a chancellor at Oxford as his representative. So the chancellor had effective control over the students and teachers, and within a short period of time, the chancellor became independent of the local bishop. John's order also forced the townspeople to defer to the chancellor's authority. With the situation stabilized, students and teachers start to return, Oxford's foundations were finally secured.

The northern universities like Paris and Oxford and Cambridge continued the tradition that had been started over a century earlier at Bologna. But there was a general difference between those northern universities and the universities in Italy and Spain and other parts of southern Europe. Whereas the student guilds tended to dominate the universities in the south, the masters guilds tended to dominate the universities in the north. In places like Oxford and Paris, the teachers or masters had much more control over the curriculum and selection of teachers and general administration of the university.

But there was still no official campus. These universities were still just groups of students and teachers who could leave and head elsewhere if the circumstances dictated, as had happened in Oxford in the early 1200s. But all of that started to change with the advent of the college. Today, we often use the words ***university*** and ***college*** interchangeably. But they once had very distinct meanings.

In these burgeoning university towns, there was a constant need to find and arrange housing for poorer students. And with the growth and expansion of universities, more and more students were flocking to those towns. Many of them could barely afford the tuition, much less the cost of lodging.

So in order to address this problem, some wealthy donors – who were usually prominent nobles – decided to donate the funds to construct a dormitory or residence hall for the students who needed a place to live and couldn't afford to rent a place in town. These new buildings helped to fix the location of the university, and it was the beginning of the college campus.

Since these were often the only permanent buildings associated with the university, they were often used for other purposes as well. They were convenient places for teachers to give their lecture. And they became centers of student life – both academic and otherwise. So within each

of these buildings, a sub-group of students assembled and banded together. These were smaller collections of students. And I say "collections" because the word ***collec***t is based on the same two Latin roots as the word ***college***. A ***college*** is ultimately just a 'collection.' It is a collection of ***colleagues*** – also from the same root.

In many respects, the individual colleges embodied much of what we think of as college-life today. And the 'university' was just the larger collection of students and teachers. So in many cases, a ***university*** was really just a collection of separate colleges. Today, we still tend to refer to smaller schools as 'colleges' and larger institutions as 'universities,' but the distinctions between the two have become blurred over time.

Many European universities had colleges, but they were the most prominent at Oxford and Cambridge. And they helped to distinguish those universities from the universities on the continent.

Now at the current point in our story – in the early 1200s – students in England who wanted to attend a university didn't have to cross the Channel. They could stay at home and attend Oxford or Cambridge. But notice where those two universities were located. Oxford was located west of London – and Cambridge was north of London. But they were all located in the same general part of England – the East-Midlands.

So you had the largest city and the national capital in London, and you had the two most influential universities located nearby, all in the part of England where people spoke the same general dialect of English. So all of these important influences converged in this one part of the country, and that convergence ensured that the East Midlands that was dialect spoken there would eventually emerge as the standard dialect of English.

So the events of this episode not only shaped the future of higher education, they also shaped the future of the English language.

But keep in mind that English was not allowed in those new universities. Students could only speak Latin. And this was often a problem for new students who knew little, if any, Latin. If they were caught using their naive language, they were subject to various punishments. But how could new students communicate in a language that many of them barely knew?

Well, around the year 1220, and Englishman named John of Garlanda came up with a solution to this problem. He was teaching at the University in Paris at the time. And he decided to help his students by composing a book that contained a long list of Latin words, and most of the words related to objects that the average student would encounter as they walked through the streets of Paris. He then explained what each word meant, including some translations into French. John wanted to help his young students with their Latin diction. So he titled his book "Dictionarius." Of course, in English, that Latin word was Anglicized to ***dictionary***. And that is the first known manuscript to bear than name. So the word ***dictionary*** was actually invented by an Englishman who was teaching at the University of Paris around the current point in our story.

To be fair, dictionaries or lists words with definitions can be traced back to the earliest attested languages, but the word ***dictionary*** was only coined at this point. By the way, we wont get a proper English dictionary for four more centuries – in the early 1600s.

Of course dictionaries are designed to teach people the proper meaning of words, and I should note here that the word ***teach*** is actually cognate with the words ***diction*** and ***dictionary***. ***Diction*** and ***dictionary*** come from Latin, and they have the initial 'd' sound of the original Indo-European word. But thanks to the 'd' to 't' sound shift under Grimm's Law, English acquired that same root word with a 't' sound, and that gave us the word ***teach***.

I actually began this episode with that Old English word ***teach***, and I'm going to conclude with the word ***dictionary*** – coined by an Englishman in Paris in the early 1200s. As we now know, those words are cognate, and they help to illustrate how our words have evolved over the centuries to reflect the changing nature of our educational system.

Next time, we're going move the story forward and look at King John's conflicts with the Church – and specifically his conflict with the Pope. It was a dispute that weakened John's position in England, and fed the anger of the barons, and ultimately drew the country one step closer to Magna Carta.

So next time we'll look at those events. Until then, thanks for listening to the History of English Podcast.