

INTRODUCTION TO ANCIENT LITERATURE

STUDENT TEXTBOOK

Compiled and edited by J. Parnell McCarter

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The Puritans' Home School Curriculum

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INTRODUCTION TO ANCIENT LITERATURE
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PREFACE

This is the student's textbook for *The Puritans' Home School Curriculum* course entitled 'Introduction to Ancient Literature'. There are three books that will be read by students in this course:

1. *After the Flood* by William R. Cooper
2. *The Chronicle of the Early Britons* translated by William R. Cooper
3. *Beowulf*

With respect to the first two books, this student's textbook contains instructions on how the books may be either read on the internet or printed out from the internet. Both books are available free on-line. With respect to the third book, *Beowulf*, it is contained in section three of this textbook.

INTRODUCTION TO ANCIENT LITERATURE SECTION ONE : COURSE CHECK-OFF LISTS

Student: _____

Assignment Check-Off List

Assignment #	READINGS	ASSIGNMENT COMPLETED? (X)	GRADE ON 100-POINT SCALE
1	<i>After the Flood</i> , Introduction and Chapter 1 and Appendices 1 and 2		
2	<i>After the Flood</i> , Chapters 2 and 3 and Appendix 3		
3	<i>After the Flood</i> , Chapters 4 and 5 and Appendices 4 to 7		
4	<i>After the Flood</i> , Chapters 6 and 7 and Appendix 8		
5	<i>After the Flood</i> , Chapters 8 and 9 and Appendix 14		
6	<i>After the Flood</i> , Chapters 10 and 11 and Appendices 9 and 10 <i>Beowulf</i>		
7	<i>After the Flood</i> , Chapter 12 and Appendices 11, 12, and 13 <i>The Chronicle of the Early Britons</i>		
<i>Assignment Grade Average (calculated by adding grades for the 7 Assignments and then dividing the total by 7)</i>			

Course Essay Check-Off List

ESSAY #	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT COMPLETED? (X)	GRADE ON 100-POINT SCALE
1	An Assessment of <i>The Chronicle of the Early Britons</i> and Ancient British Life		

Final Exam Check-Off List

FINAL EXAM	TEST TAKEN? (X)	GRADE ON 100-POINT SCALE
Reviews all Assignments		

Course Grade Calculation Table

	Grade Average	Weight	Weighted Average
Assignments		40%	
Course Essay		20%	
Final Exam		40%	
<i>Course Grade on 100-Point Scale</i>			

Letter Grade on Course, converted from the Course Grade on 100-Point Scale* _____

* Grading in this course should be done on a 100-point scale, with letter grades assigned as follows:

Letter Grade	Score on 100-Point Scale
A+	97 - 100
A	94 - 96
A-	90 - 93
B+	87 - 89
B	84 - 86
B-	80 - 83
C+	77 - 79
C	74 - 76
C-	70 - 73
D	60 - 69
F	0 - 59

SECTION TWO : *AFTER THE FLOOD*

Bill Cooper's book entitled *After the Flood* is available free on-line at:

<http://www.ldolphin.org/cooper/contents.html>

Students should either read it on their computer, or print it out and read it from the print out.

SECTION THREE : *THE CHRONICLE OF THE EARLY BRITONS*

The Chronicle of the Early Britons is available free on-line at:

http://homepage.ntlworld.com/mike.gascoigne/chronicle_of_the_early_britons.pdf

Students should either read it on their computer, or print it out and read it from the print out.

SECTION FOUR : *BEOWULF*

The poem of *Beowulf* helps inform us of ancient Anglo-Saxon life and culture. Beowulf opens by demonstrating the power of the Scandinavian kings. Scyld Scefing, who was so strong that he was offered much tributary gold, kept the peace because no other tribe dared face him. Sheer military might was a major peacekeeper in such troubled times. One of the most prevalent virtues of kingship in that era was the responsible distribution of weapons and treasure. The treasures bestowed upon Beowulf by Hrothgar following the defeat of Grendel is an example of the proper distribution of treasure to a warrior who has proven himself worthy to a king (XV, XXVI). Hrothgar's story of Heremod, the Danish king who failed to reward his retainers with gold and soon lost their loyalty, serves as a lesson to Beowulf. The loyalty of followers, and the connections between that loyalty, success in battle and in gold, are intimate.

The poem begins in the setting of the gilded Heorot -- a palace only possible through many years of peace of tribesmen collecting treasures -- and ends with Beowulf's death in front of the dragon's barrow where a long dead tribe had buried their treasure. The poem describes a culture so deeply connected to its material goods that they bury it along with their dead. The Geats' reburial of the gold in Beowulf's funeral mound reflects a custom that modern archeology has confirmed. In 1939, a seventh-century Anglo-Saxon ship burial was excavated at Sutton Hoo near Woodbridge in Suffolk, England.

The account of *Beowulf* revolves around three groups of people: the Geats, the Swedes, and the Danes. The Geats were Beowulf's clan - a seafaring tribe residing in the south of Sweden. As the poem suggests, the Geats appear to have been conquered and disappeared into history. The seafaring Geats appear to be the invading 'Danes' of whom Gregory of Tours writes concerning an attack by Chlochilaicus (Hygelac) against the Franks in 520. Later they were connected to the Gautar people who were eventually subjugated by the Swedes in the inland of Sweden. The Geats are referred to as the Geatas, Guð-Geatas (War-), the Sæ-Geatas (Sea-), and the Weder-Geatas (Weather-).

The Swedes lived in Sweden north of the Vaner and Volter lakes, north of the Geats. Archaeology in Sweden reveals the grave mounds of Ongenþeow who was buried in 510-515, and his grandson Eadgils, buried in 575. These dates correspond with the events described in *Beowulf*. Known as the Sweon (Swedes), the Scylfingas (Sons of Scylf), Guð-Scylfingas (War-), and Heaðo-Scylfingas (War-).

The Danes were residents of Denmark. Hrothgar's Heorot is likely to have been located on the island of Sjaelland near the present day city of Roskilde. The Scylding line is known through Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon sources; the Anglo-Saxon king Cnut (1016-1042, a period coincident with the composition of the *Beowulf* manuscript) is known to have descended from this line. The poem *Widsið*, with its catalogue of Germanic kings, list Hroðgar and Hroðulf as co-rulers of the Danes at Heorot, and of the marriage arrangement with Ingeld of the Heaðo-Bards. The Danes are referred to as the

Dena, Beorht-Dena (Bright-), Gar-Dena (Spear-), Hring-Dena (Ring-, Corselet-), East-Dena, Norð-Dena (North-), Suð-Dena (South-), West-Dena, Scyldings (Sons of Scyld), Ar-Scyldingas (Honour-), Here-Scyldingas (Army-), Sige-Scyldingas (Victory-), Peod-Scyldingas (People-), and Ingwines (Ing's Friends).

The manuscript of this poem dating from ca. 1000 AD is written in Old English. The citation for the Old English version and the modern English translation are as follows:

Anonymous. *Beowulf* - Verse Intermediate Saxon. Transcribed by Altman, R.I.

Anonymous. *Beowulf* Gummere, F.B. *trans.*, Eliot, C.W. *ed.*. Harvard Classics, Vol. 49.: PF Collier & Sons, New York. 1910.

Old English is hard for the modern English speaker to understand, so we have provided a modern English translation of the whole poem. However, just to give you a flavor of how this poem reads in Old English, here are the first 11 lines from the Prologue in Old English:

Hwæt! We Gardena in geardagum,
þeodcýninga, þym gefrunon,
hu ða æþelingas ellen fremedon.
Oft Scyld Scefing sceapena þreatum,
5
monegum mægþum, meodosetla ofteah,
egsode eorlas. Syððan ærest wearð
feasceaft funden, he þæs frofre gebad,
weox under wolcnum, weorðmyndum þah,
10
oðþe him æghwylc þara ymbsittendra
ofer hronrade hyran scolde,
gomban gyldan. þæ was god cyning!

And the following is the entire text in modern English:

BEOWULF (MODERN ENGLISH TRANSLATION)

Prologue

LO, praise of the prowess of people-kings
of spear-armed Danes, in days long sped,
we have heard, and what honor the athelings won!
Oft Scyld the Scefing from squadroned foes,
from many a tribe, the mead-bench tore,
awing the earls. Since erst he lay
friendless, a foundling, fate repaid him:
for he waxed under welkin, in wealth he throve,
till before him the folk, both far and near,

who house by the whale-path, heard his mandate,
gave him gifts: a good king he!
To him an heir was afterward born,
a son in his halls, whom heaven sent
to favor the folk, feeling their woe
that erst they had lacked an earl for leader
so long a while; the Lord endowed him,
the Wielder of Wonder, with world's renown.
Famed was this Beowulf:¹ far flew the boast of him,
son of Scyld, in the Scandian lands.
So becomes it a youth to quit him well
with his father's friends, by fee and gift,
that to aid him, aged, in after days,
come warriors willing, should war draw nigh,
liegemen loyal: by lauded deeds
shall an earl have honor in every clan.
Forth he fared at the fated moment,
sturdy Scyld to the shelter of God.
Then they bore him over to ocean's billow,
loving clansmen, as late he charged them,
while wielded words the winsome Scyld,
the leader beloved who long had ruled....
In the roadstead rocked a ring-dight vessel,
ice-flecked, outbound, atheling's barge:
there laid they down their darling lord
on the breast of the boat, the breaker-of-rings,²
by the mast the mighty one. Many a treasure
fetched from far was freighted with him.
No ship have I known so nobly dight
with weapons of war and weeds of battle,
with breastplate and blade: on his bosom lay
a heaped hoard that hence should go
far o'er the flood with him floating away.
No less these loaded the lordly gifts,
thanes' huge treasure, than those had done
who in former time forth had sent him
sole on the seas, a suckling child.
High o'er his head they hoist the standard,
a gold-wove banner; let billows take him,
gave him to ocean. Grave were their spirits,
mournful their mood. No man is able
to say in sooth, no son of the halls,
no hero 'neath heaven, -- who harbored that freight!

Chapter 1

NOW Beowulf bode in the burg of the Scyldings,
leader beloved, and long he ruled
in fame with all folk, since his father had gone
away from the world, till awoke an heir,
haughty Healfdene, who held through life,
sage and sturdy, the Scyldings glad.

Then, one after one, there woke to him,
to the chieftain of clansmen, children four:
Heorogar, then Hrothgar, then Halga brave;
and I heard that -- was --'s queen,
the Heathoscyfling's helpmate dear.

To Hrothgar was given such glory of war,
such honor of combat, that all his kin
obeyed him gladly till great grew his band
of youthful comrades. It came in his mind
to bid his henchmen a hall uprear,
a master mead-house, mightier far
than ever was seen by the sons of earth,
and within it, then, to old and young
he would all allot that the Lord had sent him,
save only the land and the lives of his men.
Wide, I heard, was the work commanded,
for many a tribe this mid-earth round,
to fashion the folkstead. It fell, as he ordered,
in rapid achievement that ready it stood there,
of halls the noblest: Heorot¹ he named it
whose message had might in many a land.
Not reckless of promise, the rings he dealt,
treasure at banquet: there towered the hall,
high, gabled wide, the hot surge waiting
of furious flame.² Nor far was that day
when father and son-in-law stood in feud
for warfare and hatred that woke again.³

With envy and anger an evil spirit
endured the dole in his dark abode,
that he heard each day the din of revel
high in the hall: there harps rang out,
clear song of the singer. He sang who knew⁴
tales of the early time of man,
how the Almighty made the earth,
fairest fields enfolded by water,
set, triumphant, sun and moon
for a light to lighten the land-dwellers,
and braided bright the breast of earth

with limbs and leaves, made life for all
of mortal beings that breathe and move.
So lived the clansmen in cheer and revel
a winsome life, till one began
to fashion evils, that field of hell.
Grendel this monster grim was called,
march-riever⁵ mighty, in moorland living,
in fen and fastness; fief of the giants
the hapless wight a while had kept
since the Creator his exile doomed.
On kin of Cain was the killing avenged
by sovran God for slaughtered Abel.
Ill fared his feud,⁶ and far was he driven,
for the slaughter's sake, from sight of men.
Of Cain awoke all that woful breed,
Ettins⁷ and elves and evil-spirits,
as well as the giants that warred with God
weary while: but their wage was paid them!

Chapter 2

WENT he forth to find at fall of night
that haughty house, and heed wherever
the Ring-Danes, outrevelled, to rest had gone.
Found within it the atheling band
asleep after feasting and fearless of sorrow,
of human hardship. Unhallowed wight,
grim and greedy, he grasped betimes,
wrathful, reckless, from resting-places,
thirty of the thanes, and thence he rushed
fain of his fell spoil, faring homeward,
laden with slaughter, his lair to seek.
Then at the dawning, as day was breaking,
the might of Grendel to men was known;
then after wassail was wail uplifted,
loud moan in the morn. The mighty chief,
atheling excellent, unblithe sat,
labored in woe for the loss of his thanes,
when once had been traced the trail of the fiend,
spirit accurst: too cruel that sorrow,
too long, too loathsome. Not late the respite;
with night returning, anew began
ruthless murder; he recked no whit,
firm in his guilt, of the feud and crime.
They were easy to find who elsewhere sought
in room remote their rest at night,

bed in the bowers,¹ when that bale was shown,
was seen in sooth, with surest token, --
the hall-thane's² hate. Such held themselves
far and fast who the fiend outran!
Thus ruled unrighteous and raged his fill
one against all; until empty stood
that lordly building, and long it bode so.
Twelve years' tide the trouble he bore,
sovrán of Scyldings, sorrows in plenty,
boundless cares. There came unhidden
tidings true to the tribes of men,
in sorrowful songs, how ceaselessly Grendel
harassed Hrothgar, what hate he bore him,
what murder and massacre, many a year,
feud unfading, -- refused consent
to deal with any of Daneland's earls,
make pact of peace, or compound for gold:
still less did the wise men ween to get
great fee for the feud from his fiendish hands.
But the evil one ambushed old and young
death-shadow dark, and dogged them still,
lured, or lurked in the livelong night
of misty moorlands: men may say not
where the haunts of these Hell-Runes³ be.
Such heaping of horrors the hater of men,
lonely roamer, wrought unceasing,
harassings heavy. O'er Heorot he lorded,
gold-bright hall, in gloomy nights;
and ne'er could the prince⁴ approach his throne,
-- 'twas judgment of God, -- or have joy in his hall.
Sore was the sorrow to Scyldings'-friend,
heart-rending misery. Many nobles
sat assembled, and searched out counsel
how it were best for bold-hearted men
against harassing terror to try their hand.
Whiles they vowed in their heathen fanes
altar-offerings, asked with words⁵
that the slayer-of-souls would succor give them
for the pain of their people. Their practice this,
their heathen hope; 'twas Hell they thought of
in mood of their mind. Almighty they knew not,
Doomsman of Deeds and dreadful Lord,
nor Heaven's-Helmet heeded they ever,
Wielder-of-Wonder. -- Woe for that man
who in harm and hatred hales his soul
to fiery embraces; -- nor favor nor change

awaits he ever. But well for him
that after death-day may draw to his Lord,
and friendship find in the Father's arms!

Chapter 3

THUS seethed unceasing the son of Healfdene
with the woe of these days; not wisest men
assuaged his sorrow; too sore the anguish,
loathly and long, that lay on his folk,
most baneful of burdens and bales of the night.

This heard in his home Hygelac's thane,
great among Geats, of Grendel's doings.
He was the mightiest man of valor
in that same day of this our life,
stalwart and stately. A stout wave-walker
he bade make ready. Yon battle-king, said he,
far o'er the swan-road he fain would seek,
the noble monarch who needed men!
The prince's journey by prudent folk
was little blamed, though they loved him dear;
they whetted the hero, and hailed good omens.
And now the bold one from bands of Geats
comrades chose, the keenest of warriors
e'er he could find; with fourteen men
the sea-wood¹ he sought, and, sailor proved,
led them on to the land's confines.
Time had now flown;² afloat was the ship,
boat under bluff. On board they climbed,
warriors ready; waves were churning
sea with sand; the sailors bore
on the breast of the bark their bright array,
their mail and weapons: the men pushed off,
on its willing way, the well-braced craft.
Then moved o'er the waters by might of the wind
that bark like a bird with breast of foam,
till in season due, on the second day,
the curved prow such course had run
that sailors now could see the land,
sea-cliffs shining, steep high hills,
headlands broad. Their haven was found,

their journey ended. Up then quickly
 the Weders³ clansmen climbed ashore,
 anchored their sea-wood, with armor clashing
 and gear of battle: God they thanked
 for passing in peace o'er the paths of the sea.
 Now saw from the cliff a Scylding clansman,
 a warden that watched the water-side,
 how they bore o'er the gangway glittering shields,
 war-gear in readiness; wonder seized him
 to know what manner of men they were.
 Straight to the strand his steed he rode,
 Hrothgar's henchman; with hand of might
 he shook his spear, and spake in parley.
 "Who are ye, then, ye armed men,
 mailed folk, that yon mighty vessel
 have urged thus over the ocean ways,
 here o'er the waters? A warden I,
 sentinel set o'er the sea-march here,
 lest any foe to the folk of Danes
 with harrying fleet should harm the land.
 No aliens ever at ease thus bore them,
 linden-wielders:⁴ yet word-of-leave
 clearly ye lack from clansmen here,
 my folk's agreement. -- A greater ne'er saw I
 of warriors in world than is one of you, --
 yon hero in harness! No henchman he
 worthied by weapons, if witness his features,
 his peerless presence! I pray you, though, tell
 your folk and home, lest hence ye fare
 suspect to wander your way as spies
 in Danish land. Now, dwellers afar,
 ocean-travellers, take from me
 simple advice: the sooner the better
 I hear of the country whence ye came."

Chapter 4

TO him the stateliest spake in answer;
 the warriors' leader his word-hoard unlocked:--
 "We are by kin of the clan of Geats,
 and Hygelac's own hearth-fellows we.
 To folk afar was my father known,
 noble atheling, Ecgtheow named.
 Full of winters, he fared away

aged from earth; he is honored still
through width of the world by wise men all.
To thy lord and liege in loyal mood
we hasten hither, to Healfdene's son,
people-protector: be pleased to advise us!
To that mighty-one come we on mickle errand,
to the lord of the Danes; nor deem I right
that aught be hidden. We hear -- thou knowest
if sooth it is -- the saying of men,
that amid the Scyldings a scathing monster,
dark ill-doer, in dusky nights
shows terrific his rage unmatched,
hatred and murder. To Hrothgar I
in greatness of soul would succor bring,
so the Wise-and-Brave¹ may worst his foes, --
if ever the end of ills is fated,
of cruel contest, if cure shall follow,
and the boiling care-waves cooler grow;
else ever afterward anguish-days
he shall suffer in sorrow while stands in place
high on its hill that house unpeered!"
Astride his steed, the strand-ward answered,
clansman unquailing: "The keen-souled thane
must be skilled to sever and sunder duly
words and works, if he well intends.
I gather, this band is graciously bent
to the Scyldings' master. March, then, bearing
weapons and weeds the way I show you.
I will bid my men your boat meanwhile
to guard for fear lest foemen come, --
your new-tarred ship by shore of ocean
faithfully watching till once again
it waft o'er the waters those well-loved thanes,
-- winding-neck'd wood, -- to Weders' bounds,
heroes such as the hest of fate
shall succor and save from the shock of war."
They bent them to march, -- the boat lay still,
fettered by cable and fast at anchor,
broad-bosomed ship. -- Then shone the boars²
over the cheek-guard; chased with gold,
keen and gleaming, guard it kept
o'er the man of war, as marched along
heroes in haste, till the hall they saw,
broad of gable and bright with gold:
that was the fairest, 'mid folk of earth,
of houses 'neath heaven, where Hrothgar lived,

and the gleam of it lightened o'er lands afar.
The sturdy shieldsman showed that bright
burg-of-the-boldest; bade them go
straightway thither; his steed then turned,
hardy hero, and hailed them thus:--
"Tis time that I fare from you. Father Almighty
in grace and mercy guard you well,
safe in your seekings. Seaward I go,
'gainst hostile warriors hold my watch."

Chapter 5

STONE-BRIGHT the street:¹ it showed the way
to the crowd of clansmen. Corselets glistened
hand-forged, hard; on their harness bright
the steel ring sang, as they strode along
in mail of battle, and marched to the hall.
There, weary of ocean, the wall along
they set their bucklers, their broad shields, down,
and bowed them to bench: the breastplates clanged,
war-gear of men; their weapons stacked,
spears of the seafarers stood together,
gray-tipped ash: that iron band
was worthily weaponed! -- A warrior proud
asked of the heroes their home and kin.
"Whence, now, bear ye burnished shields,
harness gray and helmets grim,
spears in multitude? Messenger, I,
Hrothgar's herald! Heroes so many
ne'er met I as strangers of mood so strong.
'Tis plain that for prowess, not plunged into exile,
for high-hearted valor, Hrothgar ye seek!"
Him the sturdy-in-war bespake with words,
proud earl of the Weders answer made,
hardy 'neath helmet:--"Hygelac's, we,
fellows at board; I am Beowulf named.
I am seeking to say to the son of Healfdene
this mission of mine, to thy master-lord,
the doughty prince, if he deign at all
grace that we greet him, the good one, now."
Wulfgar spake, the Wendles' chieftain,
whose might of mind to many was known,
his courage and counsel: "The king of Danes,
the Scyldings' friend, I fain will tell,
the Breaker-of-Rings, as the boon thou askest,

the famed prince, of thy faring hither,
and, swiftly after, such answer bring
as the doughty monarch may deign to give."
Hied then in haste to where Hrothgar sat
white-haired and old, his earls about him,
till the stout thane stood at the shoulder there
of the Danish king: good courtier he!
Wulfgar spake to his winsome lord:--
"Hither have fared to thee far-come men
o'er the paths of ocean, people of Geatland;
and the stateliest there by his sturdy band
is Beowulf named. This boon they seek,
that they, my master, may with thee
have speech at will: nor spurn their prayer
to give them hearing, gracious Hrothgar!
In weeds of the warrior worthy they,
methinks, of our liking; their leader most surely,
a hero that hither his henchmen has led."

Chapter 6

HROTHGAR answered, helmet of Scyldings:--
"I knew him of yore in his youthful days;
his aged father was Ecgtheow named,
to whom, at home, gave Hrethel the Geat
his only daughter. Their offspring bold
fares hither to seek the steadfast friend.
And seamen, too, have said me this, --
who carried my gifts to the Geatish court,
thither for thanks, -- he has thirty men's
heft of grasp in the gripe of his hand,
the bold-in-battle. Blessed God
out of his mercy this man hath sent
to Danes of the West, as I ween indeed,
against horror of Grendel. I hope to give
the good youth gold for his gallant thought.
Be thou in haste, and bid them hither,
clan of kinsmen, to come before me;
and add this word, -- they are welcome guests
to folk of the Danes."
[To the door of the hall
Wulfgar went] and the word declared:--
"To you this message my master sends,
East-Danes' king, that your kin he knows,
hardy heroes, and hails you all

welcome hither o'er waves of the sea!
 Ye may wend your way in war-attire,
 and under helmets Hrothgar greet;
 but let here the battle-shields bide your parley,
 and wooden war-shafts wait its end."
 Uprose the mighty one, ringed with his men,
 brave band of thanes: some bode without,
 battle-gear guarding, as bade the chief.
 Then hied that troop where the herald led them,
 under Heorot's roof: [the hero strode,]
 hardy 'neath helm, till the hearth he neared.
 Beowulf spake, -- his breastplate gleamed,
 war-net woven by wit of the smith:--
 "Thou Hrothgar, hail! Hygelac's I,
 kinsman and follower. Fame a plenty
 have I gained in youth! These Grendel-deeds
 I heard in my home-land heralded clear.
 Seafarers say how stands this hall,
 of buildings best, for your band of thanes
 empty and idle, when evening sun
 in the harbor of heaven is hidden away.
 So my vassals advised me well, --
 brave and wise, the best of men, --
 O sovran Hrothgar, to seek thee here,
 for my nerve and my might they knew full well.
 Themselves had seen me from slaughter come
 blood-flecked from foes, where five I bound,
 and that wild brood worsted. I' the waves I slew
 nicors¹ by night, in need and peril
 avenging the Weders,² whose woe they sought, --
 crushing the grim ones. Grendel now,
 monster cruel, be mine to quell
 in single battle! So, from thee,
 thou sovran of the Shining-Danes,
 Scyldings'-bulwark, a boon I seek, --
 and, Friend-of-the-folk, refuse it not,
 O Warriors'-shield, now I've wandered far, --
 that I alone with my liegemen here,
 this hardy band, may Heorot purge!
 More I hear, that the monster dire,
 in his wanton mood, of weapons recks not;
 hence shall I scorn -- so Hygelac stay,
 king of my kindred, kind to me! --
 brand or buckler to bear in the fight,
 gold-colored targe: but with gripe alone
 must I front the fiend and fight for life,

foe against foe. Then faith be his
in the doom of the Lord whom death shall take.
Fain, I ween, if the fight he win,
in this hall of gold my Geatish band
will he fearless eat, -- as oft before, --
my noblest thanes. Nor need'st thou then
to hide my head,³ for his shall I be,
dyed in gore, if death must take me;
and my blood-covered body he'll bear as prey,
ruthless devour it, the roamer-lonely,
with my life-blood redden his lair in the fen:
no further for me need'st food prepare!
To Hygelac send, if Hild⁴ should take me,
best of war-weeds, warding my breast,
armor excellent, heirloom of Hrethel
and work of Wayland.⁵ Fares Wyrð[6] as she must."

Chapter 7

HROTHGAR spake, the Scyldings'-helmet:--
"For fight defensive, Friend my Beowulf,
to succor and save, thou hast sought us here.
Thy father's combat¹ a feud enkindled
when Heatholaf with hand he slew
among the Wylfings; his Weder kin
for horror of fighting feared to hold him.
Fleeing, he sought our South-Dane folk,
over surge of ocean the Honor-Scyldings,
when first I was ruling the folk of Danes,
wielded, youthful, this widespread realm,
this hoard-hold of heroes. Heorogar was dead,
my elder brother, had breathed his last,
Healfdene's bairn: he was better than I!
Straightway the feud with fee² I settled,
to the Wylfings sent, o'er watery ridges,
treasures olden: oaths he³ swore me.
Sore is my soul to say to any
of the race of man what ruth for me
in Heorot Grendel with hate hath wrought,
what sudden harrings. Hall-folk fail me,
my warriors wane; for Wyrð hath swept them
into Grendel's grasp. But God is able
this deadly foe from his deeds to turn!
Boasted full oft, as my beer they drank,
earls o'er the ale-cup, armed men,

that they would bide in the beer-hall here,
Grendel's attack with terror of blades.
Then was this mead-house at morning tide
dyed with gore, when the daylight broke,
all the boards of the benches blood-besprinkled,
gory the hall: I had heroes the less,
doughty dear-ones that death had reft.
-- But sit to the banquet, unbind thy words,
hardy hero, as heart shall prompt thee."

Gathered together, the Geatish men
in the banquet-hall on bench assigned,
sturdy-spirited, sat them down,
hardy-hearted. A henchman attended,
carried the carven cup in hand,
served the clear mead. Oft minstrels sang
blithe in Heorot. Heroes revelled,
no dearth of warriors, Weder and Dane.

Chapter 8

UNFERTH spake, the son of Ecglaf,
who sat at the feet of the Scyldings' lord,
unbound the battle-runes.¹ -- Beowulf's quest,
sturdy seafarer's, sorely galled him;
ever he envied that other men
should more achieve in middle-earth
of fame under heaven than he himself. --
"Art thou that Beowulf, Breca's rival,
who emulous swam on the open sea,
when for pride the pair of you proved the floods,
and wantonly dared in waters deep
to risk your lives? No living man,
or lief or loath, from your labor dire
could you dissuade, from swimming the main.
Ocean-tides with your arms ye covered,
with strenuous hands the sea-streets measured,
swam o'er the waters. Winter's storm
rolled the rough waves. In realm of sea
a sennight strove ye. In swimming he topped thee,
had more of main! Him at morning-tide
billows bore to the Battling Reamas,
whence he hied to his home so dear
beloved of his liegemen, to land of Brondings,
fastness fair, where his folk he ruled,

town and treasure. In triumph o'er thee
Beanstan's bairn² his boast achieved.
So ween I for thee a worse adventure
-- though in buffet of battle thou brave hast been,
in struggle grim, -- if Grendel's approach
thou darst await through the watch of night!"

Beowulf spake, bairn of Ecgtheow:--
"What a deal hast uttered, dear my Unferth,
drunken with beer, of Breca now,
told of his triumph! Truth I claim it,
that I had more of might in the sea
than any man else, more ocean-endurance.
We twain had talked, in time of youth,
and made our boast, -- we were merely boys,
striplings still, -- to stake our lives
far at sea: and so we performed it.
Naked swords, as we swam along,
we held in hand, with hope to guard us
against the whales. Not a whit from me
could he float afar o'er the flood of waves,
haste o'er the billows; nor him I abandoned.
Together we twain on the tides abode
five nights full till the flood divided us,
churning waves and chillest weather,
darkling night, and the northern wind
ruthless rushed on us: rough was the surge.
Now the wrath of the sea-fish rose apace;
yet me 'gainst the monsters my mailed coat,
hard and hand-linked, help afforded, --
battle-sark braided my breast to ward,
garnished with gold. There grasped me firm
and haled me to bottom the hated foe,
with grimmest gripe. 'Twas granted me, though,
to pierce the monster with point of sword,
with blade of battle: huge beast of the sea
was whelmed by the hurly through hand of mine.

Chapter 9

ME thus often the evil monsters
thronging threatened. With thrust of my sword,
the darling, I dealt them due return!
Nowise had they bliss from their booty then
to devour their victim, vengeful creatures,

seated to banquet at bottom of sea;
but at break of day, by my brand sore hurt,
on the edge of ocean up they lay,
put to sleep by the sword. And since, by them
on the fathomless sea-ways sailor-folk
are never molested. -- Light from east,
came bright God's beacon; the billows sank,
so that I saw the sea-cliffs high,
windy walls. For Wyrð oft saveth
earl undoomed if he doughty be!
And so it came that I killed with my sword
nine of the nicors. Of night-fought battles
ne'er heard I a harder 'neath heaven's dome,
nor adrift on the deep a more desolate man!
Yet I came unharmed from that hostile clutch,
though spent with swimming. The sea upbore me,
flood of the tide, on Finnish land,
the welling waters. No wise of thee
have I heard men tell such terror of falchions,
bitter battle. Breca ne'er yet,
not one of you pair, in the play of war
such daring deed has done at all
with bloody brand, -- I boast not of it! --
though thou wast the bane¹ of thy brethren dear,
thy closest kin, whence curse of hell
awaits thee, well as thy wit may serve!
For I say in sooth, thou son of Ecglaf,
never had Grendel these grim deeds wrought,
monster dire, on thy master dear,
in Heorot such havoc, if heart of thine
were as battle-bold as thy boast is loud!
But he has found no feud will happen;
from sword-clash dread of your Danish clan
he vaunts him safe, from the Victor-Scyldings.
He forces pledges, favors none
of the land of Danes, but lustily murders,
fights and feasts, nor feud he dreads
from Spear-Dane men. But speedily now
shall I prove him the prowess and pride of the Geats,
shall bid him battle. Blithe to mead
go he that listeth, when light of dawn
this morrow morning o'er men of earth,
ether-robed sun from the south shall beam!"
Joyous then was the Jewel-giver,
hoar-haired, war-brave; help awaited
the Bright-Danes' prince, from Beowulf hearing,

folk's good shepherd, such firm resolve.
Then was laughter of liegemen loud resounding
with winsome words. Came Wealhtheow forth,
queen of Hrothgar, heedful of courtesy,
gold-decked, greeting the guests in hall;
and the high-born lady handed the cup
first to the East-Danes' heir and warden,
bade him be blithe at the beer-carouse,
the land's beloved one. Lustily took he
banquet and beaker, battle-famed king.
Through the hall then went the Helmings' Lady,
to younger and older everywhere
carried the cup, till come the moment
when the ring-graced queen, the royal-hearted,
to Beowulf bore the beaker of mead.
She greeted the Geats' lord, God she thanked,
in wisdom's words, that her will was granted,
that at last on a hero her hope could lean
for comfort in terrors. The cup he took,
hardy-in-war, from Wealhtheow's hand,
and answer uttered the eager-for-combat.
Beowulf spake, bairn of Ecgtheow:--
"This was my thought, when my thanes and I
bent to the ocean and entered our boat,
that I would work the will of your people
fully, or fighting fall in death,
in fiend's gripe fast. I am firm to do
an earl's brave deed, or end the days
of this life of mine in the mead-hall here."
Well these words to the woman seemed,
Beowulf's battle-boast. -- Bright with gold
the stately dame by her spouse sat down.
Again, as erst, began in hall
warriors' wassail and words of power,
the proud-band's revel, till presently
the son of Healfdene hastened to seek
rest for the night; he knew there waited
fight for the fiend in that festal hall,
when the sheen of the sun they saw no more,
and dusk of night sank darkling nigh,
and shadowy shapes came striding on,
wan under welkin. The warriors rose.
Man to man, he made harangue,
Hrothgar to Beowulf, bade him hail,
let him wield the wine hall: a word he added:--
"Never to any man erst I trusted,

since I could heave up hand and shield,
this noble Dane-Hall, till now to thee.
Have now and hold this house unpeered;
remember thy glory; thy might declare;
watch for the foe! No wish shall fail thee
if thou bidest the battle with bold-won life."

Chapter 10

THEN Hrothgar went with his hero-train,
defence-of-Scyldings, forth from hall;
fain would the war-lord Wealhtheow seek,
couch of his queen. The King-of-Glory
against this Grendel a guard had set,
so heroes heard, a hall-defender,
who warded the monarch and watched for the monster.
In truth, the Geats' prince gladly trusted
his mettle, his might, the mercy of God!
Cast off then his corselet of iron,
helmet from head; to his henchman gave, --
choicest of weapons, -- the well-chased sword,
bidding him guard the gear of battle.
Spake then his Vaunt the valiant man,
Beowulf Geat, ere the bed be sought:--
"Of force in fight no feebler I count me,
in grim war-deeds, than Grendel deems him.
Not with the sword, then, to sleep of death
his life will I give, though it lie in my power.
No skill is his to strike against me,
my shield to hew though he hardy be,
bold in battle; we both, this night,
shall spurn the sword, if he seek me here,
unweaponed, for war. Let wisest God,
sacred Lord, on which side soever
doom decree as he deemeth right."
Reclined then the chieftain, and cheek-pillows held
the head of the earl, while all about him
seamen hardy on hall-beds sank.
None of them thought that thence their steps
to the folk and fastness that fostered them,
to the land they loved, would lead them back!
Full well they wist that on warriors many
battle-death seized, in the banquet-hall,
of Danish clan. But comfort and help,
war-weal weaving, to Weder folk
the Master gave, that, by might of one,

over their enemy all prevailed,
by single strength. In sooth 'tis told
that highest God o'er human kind
hath wielded ever! -- Thro' wan night striding,
came the walker-in-shadow. Warriors slept
whose hest was to guard the gabled hall, --
all save one. 'Twas widely known
that against God's will the ghostly ravager
him¹ could not hurl to haunts of darkness;
wakeful, ready, with warrior's wrath,
bold he bided the battle's issue.

Chapter 11

THEN from the moorland, by misty crags,
with God's wrath laden, Grendel came.
The monster was minded of mankind now
sundry to seize in the stately house.
Under welkin he walked, till the wine-palace there,
gold-hall of men, he gladly discerned,
flashing with fretwork. Not first time, this,
that he the home of Hrothgar sought, --
yet ne'er in his life-day, late or early,
such hardy heroes, such hall-thanes, found!
To the house the warrior walked apace,
parted from peace;¹ the portal opened,
though with forged bolts fast, when his fists had struck it,
and baleful he burst in his blatant rage,
the house's mouth. All hastily, then,
o'er fair-paved floor the fiend trod on,
ireful he strode; there streamed from his eyes
fearful flashes, like flame to see.
He spied in hall the hero-band,
kin and clansmen clustered asleep,
hardy liegemen. Then laughed his heart;
for the monster was minded, ere morn should dawn,
savage, to sever the soul of each,
life from body, since lusty banquet
waited his will! But Wyrð forbade him
to seize any more of men on earth
after that evening. Eagerly watched
Hygelac's kinsman his cursed foe,
how he would fare in fell attack.
Not that the monster was minded to pause!
Straightway he seized a sleeping warrior

for the first, and tore him fiercely asunder,
the bone-frame bit, drank blood in streams,
swallowed him piecemeal: swiftly thus
the lifeless corse was clear devoured,
e'en feet and hands. Then farther he hied;
for the hardy hero with hand he grasped,
felt for the foe with fiendish claw,
for the hero reclining, -- who clutched it boldly,
prompt to answer, propped on his arm.
Soon then saw that shepherd-of-evils
that never he met in this middle-world,
in the ways of earth, another wight
with heavier hand-gripe; at heart he feared,
sorrowed in soul, -- none the sooner escaped!
Fain would he flee, his fastness seek,
the den of devils: no doings now
such as oft he had done in days of old!
Then bethought him the hardy Hygelac-thane
of his boast at evening: up he bounded,
grasped firm his foe, whose fingers cracked.
The fiend made off, but the earl close followed.
The monster meant -- if he might at all --
to fling himself free, and far away
fly to the fens, -- knew his fingers' power
in the gripe of the grim one. Gruesome march
to Heorot this monster of harm had made!
Din filled the room; the Danes were bereft,
castle-dwellers and clansmen all,
earls, of their ale. Angry were both
those savage hall-guards: the house resounded.
Wonder it was the wine-hall firm
in the strain of their struggle stood, to earth
the fair house fell not; too fast it was
within and without by its iron bands
craftily clamped; though there crashed from sill
many a mead-bench -- men have told me --
gay with gold, where the grim foes wrestled.
So well had weened the wisest Scyldings
that not ever at all might any man
that bone-decked, brave house break asunder,
crush by craft, -- unless clasp of fire
in smoke engulfed it. -- Again uprose
din redoubled. Danes of the North
with fear and frenzy were filled, each one,
who from the wall that wailing heard,
God's foe sounding his grisly song,

cry of the conquered, clamorous pain
from captive of hell. Too closely held him
he who of men in might was strongest
in that same day of this our life.

Chapter 12

NOT in any wise would the earls'-defence¹
suffer that slaughterous stranger to live,
useless deeming his days and years
to men on earth. Now many an earl
of Beowulf brandished blade ancestral,
fain the life of their lord to shield,
their praised prince, if power were theirs;
never they knew, -- as they neared the foe,
hardy-hearted heroes of war,
aiming their swords on every side
the accursed to kill, -- no keenest blade,
no farest of falchions fashioned on earth,
could harm or hurt that hideous fiend!
He was safe, by his spells, from sword of battle,
from edge of iron. Yet his end and parting
on that same day of this our life
woful should be, and his wandering soul
far off flit to the fiends' domain.
Soon he found, who in former days,
harmful in heart and hated of God,
on many a man such murder wrought,
that the frame of his body failed him now.
For him the keen-souled kinsman of Hygelac
held in hand; hateful alive
was each to other. The outlaw dire
took mortal hurt; a mighty wound
showed on his shoulder, and sinews cracked,
and the bone-frame burst. To Beowulf now
the glory was given, and Grendel thence
death-sick his den in the dark moor sought,
noisome abode: he knew too well
that here was the last of life, an end
of his days on earth. -- To all the Danes
by that bloody battle the boon had come.
From ravage had rescued the roving stranger
Hrothgar's hall; the hardy and wise one
had purged it anew. His night-work pleased him,
his deed and its honor. To Eastern Danes
had the valiant Geat his vaunt made good,

all their sorrow and ills assuaged,
their bale of battle borne so long,
and all the dole they erst endured
pain a-plenty. -- 'Twas proof of this,
when the hardy-in-fight a hand laid down,
arm and shoulder, -- all, indeed,
of Grendel's gripe, -- 'neath the gabled roof

Chapter 13

MANY at morning, as men have told me,
warriors gathered the gift-hall round,
folk-leaders faring from far and near,
o'er wide-stretched ways, the wonder to view,
trace of the traitor. Not troublous seemed
the enemy's end to any man
who saw by the gait of the graceless foe
how the weary-hearted, away from thence,
baffled in battle and banned, his steps
death-marked dragged to the devils' mere.
Bloody the billows were boiling there,
turbid the tide of tumbling waves
horribly seething, with sword-blood hot,
by that doomed one dyed, who in den of the moor
laid forlorn his life adown,
his heathen soul,-and hell received it.
Home then rode the hoary clansmen
from that merry journey, and many a youth,
on horses white, the hardy warriors,
back from the mere. Then Beowulf's glory
eager they echoed, and all averred
that from sea to sea, or south or north,
there was no other in earth's domain,
under vault of heaven, more valiant found,
of warriors none more worthy to rule!
(On their lord beloved they laid no slight,
gracious Hrothgar: a good king he!)
From time to time, the tried-in-battle
their gray steeds set to gallop amain,
and ran a race when the road seemed fair.
From time to time, a thane of the king,
who had made many vaunts, and was mindful of verses,
stored with sagas and songs of old,
bound word to word in well-knit rime,
welded his lay; this warrior soon

of Beowulf's quest right cleverly sang,
and artfully added an excellent tale,
in well-ranged words, of the warlike deeds
he had heard in saga of Sigemund.
Strange the story: he said it all, --
the Waelsing's wanderings wide, his struggles,
which never were told to tribes of men,
the feuds and the frauds, save to Fitela only,
when of these doings he deigned to speak,
uncle to nephew; as ever the twain
stood side by side in stress of war,
and multitude of the monster kind
they had felled with their swords. Of Sigemund grew,
when he passed from life, no little praise;
for the doughty-in-combat a dragon killed
that herded the hoard:¹ under hoary rock
the atheling dared the deed alone
fearful quest, nor was Fitela there.
Yet so it befell, his falchion pierced
that wondrous worm, -- on the wall it struck,
best blade; the dragon died in its blood.
Thus had the dread-one by daring achieved
over the ring-hoard to rule at will,
himself to pleasure; a sea-boat he loaded,
and bore on its bosom the beaming gold,
son of Waels; the worm was consumed.
He had of all heroes the highest renown
among races of men, this refuge-of-warriors,
for deeds of daring that decked his name
since the hand and heart of Heremod
grew slack in battle. He, swiftly banished
to mingle with monsters at mercy of foes,
to death was betrayed; for torrents of sorrow
had lamed him too long; a load of care
to earls and athelings all he proved.
Oft indeed, in earlier days,
for the warrior's wayfaring wise men mourned,
who had hoped of him help from harm and bale,
and had thought their sovran's son would thrive,
follow his father, his folk protect,
the hoard and the stronghold, heroes' land,
home of Scyldings. -- But here, thanes said,
the kinsman of Hygelac kinder seemed
to all: the other² was urged to crime!
And afresh to the race,³ the fallow roads
by swift steeds measured! The morning sun

was climbing higher. Clansmen hastened to the high-built hall, those hardy-minded, the wonder to witness. Warden of treasure, crowned with glory, the king himself, with stately band from the bride-bower strode; and with him the queen and her crowd of maidens measured the path to the mead-house fair.

Chapter 14

HROTHGAR spake, -- to the hall he went, stood by the steps, the steep roof saw, garnished with gold, and Grendel's hand:--
"For the sight I see to the Sovran Ruler be speedy thanks! A throng of sorrows I have borne from Grendel; but God still works wonder on wonder, the Warden-of-Glory. It was but now that I never more for woes that weighed on me waited help long as I lived, when, laved in blood, stood sword-gore-stained this stateliest house, -- widespread woe for wise men all, who had no hope to hinder ever foes infernal and fiendish sprites from havoc in hall. This hero now, by the Wielder's might, a work has done that not all of us erst could ever do by wile and wisdom. Lo, well can she say whoso of women this warrior bore among sons of men, if still she liveth, that the God of the ages was good to her in the birth of her bairn. Now, Beowulf, thee, of heroes best, I shall heartily love as mine own, my son; preserve thou ever this kinship new: thou shalt never lack wealth of the world that I wield as mine! Full oft for less have I largess showered, my precious hoard, on a punier man, less stout in struggle. Thyself hast now fulfilled such deeds, that thy fame shall endure through all the ages. As ever he did, well may the Wielder reward thee still!"
Beowulf spake, bairn of Ecgtheow:--
"This work of war most willingly we have fought, this fight, and fearlessly dared force of the foe. Fain, too, were I

hadst thou but seen himself, what time
the fiend in his trappings tottered to fall!
Swiftly, I thought, in strongest gripe
on his bed of death to bind him down,
that he in the hent of this hand of mine
should breathe his last: but he broke away.
Him I might not -- the Maker willed not --
hinder from flight, and firm enough hold
the life-destroyer: too sturdy was he,
the ruthless, in running! For rescue, however,
he left behind him his hand in pledge,
arm and shoulder; nor aught of help
could the cursed one thus procure at all.
None the longer liveth he, loathsome fiend,
sunk in his sins, but sorrow holds him
tightly grasped in gripe of anguish,
in baleful bonds, where bide he must,
evil outlaw, such awful doom
as the Mighty Maker shall mete him out."

More silent seemed the son of Ecglaf¹
in boastful speech of his battle-deeds,
since athelings all, through the earl's great prowess,
beheld that hand, on the high roof gazing,
foeman's fingers, -- the forepart of each
of the sturdy nails to steel was likest, --
heathen's "hand-spear," hostile warrior's
claw uncanny. 'Twas clear, they said,
that him no blade of the brave could touch,
how keen soever, or cut away
that battle-hand bloody from baneful foe.

Chapter 15

THERE was hurry and hest in Heorot now
for hands to bedeck it, and dense was the throng
of men and women the wine-hall to cleanse,
the guest-room to garnish. Gold-gay shone the hangings
that were wove on the wall, and wonders many
to delight each mortal that looks upon them.
Though braced within by iron bands,
that building bright was broken sorely;¹
rent were its hinges; the roof alone
held safe and sound, when, seared with crime,
the fiendish foe his flight essayed,
of life despairing. -- No light thing that,

the flight for safety, -- essay it who will!
Forced of fate, he shall find his way
to the refuge ready for race of man,
for soul-possessors, and sons of earth;
and there his body on bed of death
shall rest after revel.

Arrived was the hour
when to hall proceeded Healfdene's son:
the king himself would sit to banquet.
Ne'er heard I of host in haughtier throng
more graciously gathered round giver-of-rings!
Bowed then to bench those bearers-of-glory,
fain of the feasting. Featly received
many a mead-cup the mighty-in-spirit,
kinsmen who sat in the sumptuous hall,
Hrothgar and Hrothulf. Heorot now
was filled with friends; the folk of Scyldings
ne'er yet had tried the traitor's deed.
To Beowulf gave the bairn of Healfdene
a gold-wove banner, guerdon of triumph,
broidered battle-flag, breastplate and helmet;
and a splendid sword was seen of many
borne to the brave one. Beowulf took
cup in hall:² for such costly gifts
he suffered no shame in that soldier throng.
For I heard of few heroes, in heartier mood,
with four such gifts, so fashioned with gold,
on the ale-bench honoring others thus!
O'er the roof of the helmet high, a ridge,
wound with wires, kept ward o'er the head,
lest the relict-of-files³ should fierce invade,
sharp in the strife, when that shielded hero
should go to grapple against his foes.
Then the earls'-defence⁴ on the floor[5] bade lead
coursers eight, with carven head-gear,
adown the hall: one horse was decked
with a saddle all shining and set in jewels;
'twas the battle-seat of the best of kings,
when to play of swords the son of Healfdene
was fain to fare. Ne'er failed his valor
in the crush of combat when corpses fell.
To Beowulf over them both then gave
the refuge-of-Ingwines right and power,
o'er war-steeds and weapons: wished him joy of them.
Manfully thus the mighty prince,

hoard-guard for heroes, that hard fight repaid
with steeds and treasures contemned by none
who is willing to say the sooth aright.

Chapter 16

AND the lord of earls, to each that came
with Beowulf over the briny ways,
an heirloom there at the ale-bench gave,
precious gift; and the price¹ bade pay
in gold for him whom Grendel erst
murdered, -- and fain of them more had killed,
had not wisest God their Wyrð averted,
and the man's² brave mood. The Maker then
ruled human kind, as here and now.
Therefore is insight always best,
and forethought of mind. How much awaits him
of lief and of loath, who long time here,
through days of warfare this world endures!

Then song and music mingled sounds
in the presence of Healfdene's head-of-armies³
and harping was heard with the hero-lay
as Hrothgar's singer the hall-joy woke
along the mead-seats, making his song
of that sudden raid on the sons of Finn.⁴
Healfdene's hero, Hnaef the Scylding,
was fated to fall in the Frisian slaughter.⁵
Hildeburh needed not hold in value
her enemies' honor!⁶ Innocent both
were the loved ones she lost at the linden-play,
bairn and brother, they bowed to fate,
stricken by spears; 'twas a sorrowful woman!
None doubted why the daughter of Hoc
bewailed her doom when dawning came,
and under the sky she saw them lying,
kinsmen murdered, where most she had kenned
of the sweets of the world! By war were swept, too,
Finn's own liegemen, and few were left;
in the parleying-place⁷ he could ply no longer
weapon, nor war could he wage on Hengest,
and rescue his remnant by right of arms
from the prince's thane. A pact he offered:
another dwelling the Danes should have,
hall and high-seat, and half the power

should fall to them in Frisian land;
and at the fee-gifts, Folcwald's son
day by day the Danes should honor,
the folk of Hengest favor with rings,
even as truly, with treasure and jewels,
with fretted gold, as his Frisian kin
he meant to honor in ale-hall there.
Pact of peace they plighted further
on both sides firmly. Finn to Hengest
with oath, upon honor, openly promised
that woful remnant, with wise-men's aid,
nobly to govern, so none of the guests
by word or work should warp the treaty,⁸
or with malice of mind bemoan themselves
as forced to follow their fee-giver's slayer,
lordless men, as their lot ordained.
Should Frisian, moreover, with foeman's taunt,
that murderous hatred to mind recall,
then edge of the sword must seal his doom.
Oaths were given, and ancient gold
heaped from hoard. -- The hardy Scylding,
battle-thane best,⁹ on his balefire lay.
All on the pyre were plain to see
the gory sark, the gilded swine-crest,
boar of hard iron, and athelings many
slain by the sword: at the slaughter they fell.
It was Hildeburh's hest, at Hnaef's own pyre
the bairn of her body on brands to lay,
his bones to burn, on the balefire placed,
at his uncle's side. In sorrowful dirges
bewept them the woman: great wailing ascended.
Then wound up to welkin the wildest of death-fires,
roared o'er the hillock:¹⁰ heads all were melted,
gashes burst, and blood gushed out
from bites¹¹ of the body. Balefire devoured,
greediest spirit, those spared not by war
out of either folk: their flower was gone.

Chapter 17

THEN hastened those heroes their home to see,
friendless, to find the Frisian land,
houses and high burg. Hengest still
through the death-dyed winter dwelt with Finn,
holding pact, yet of home he minded,

though powerless his ring-decked prow to drive
over the waters, now waves rolled fierce
lashed by the winds, or winter locked them
in icy fetters. Then fared another
year to men's dwellings, as yet they do,
the sunbright skies, that their season ever
duly await. Far off winter was driven;
fair lay earth's breast; and fain was the rover,
the guest, to depart, though more gladly he pondered
on wreaking his vengeance than roaming the deep,
and how to hasten the hot encounter
where sons of the Frisians were sure to be.
So he escaped not the common doom,
when Hun with "Lafing," the light-of-battle,
best of blades, his bosom pierced:
its edge was famed with the Frisian earls.
On fierce-heart Finn there fell likewise,
on himself at home, the horrid sword-death;
for Guthlaf and Oslaf of grim attack
had sorrowing told, from sea-ways landed,
mourning their woes.¹ Finn's wavering spirit
bode not in breast. The burg was reddened
with blood of foemen, and Finn was slain,
king amid clansmen; the queen was taken.
To their ship the Scylding warriors bore
all the chattels the chieftain owned,
whatever they found in Finn's domain
of gems and jewels. The gentle wife
o'er paths of the deep to the Danes they bore,
led to her land.

The lay was finished,
the gleeman's song. Then glad rose the revel;
bench-joy brightened. Bearers draw
from their "wonder-vats" wine. Comes Wealhtheow forth,
under gold-crown goes where the good pair sit,
uncle and nephew, true each to the other one,
kindred in amity. Unferth the spokesman
at the Scylding lord's feet sat: men had faith in his spirit,
his keenness of courage, though kinsmen had found him
unsure at the sword-play. The Scylding queen spoke:
"Quaff of this cup, my king and lord,
breaker of rings, and blithe be thou,
gold-friend of men; to the Geats here speak
such words of mildness as man should use.
Be glad with thy Geats; of those gifts be mindful,

or near or far, which now thou hast.
Men say to me, as son thou wishest
yon hero to hold. Thy Heorot purged,
jewel-hall brightest, enjoy while thou canst,
with many a largess; and leave to thy kin
folk and realm when forth thou goest
to greet thy doom. For gracious I deem
my Hrothulf,² willing to hold and rule
nobly our youths, if thou yield up first,
prince of Scyldings, thy part in the world.
I ween with good he will well requite
offspring of ours, when all he minds
that for him we did in his helpless days
of gift and grace to gain him honor!"
Then she turned to the seat where her sons were placed,
Hrethric and Hrothmund, with heroes' bairns,
young men together: the Geat, too, sat there,
Beowulf brave, the brothers between.

Chapter 18

A CUP she gave him, with kindly greeting
and winsome words. Of wunden gold,
she offered, to honor him, arm-jewels twain,
corselet and rings, and of collars the noblest
that ever I knew the earth around.
Ne'er heard I so mighty, 'neath heaven's dome,
a hoard-gem of heroes, since Hama bore
to his bright-built burg the Brisings' necklace,
jewel and gem casket. -- Jealousy fled he,
Eormenic's hate: chose help eternal.
Hygelac Geat, grandson of Swerting,
on the last of his raids this ring bore with him,
under his banner the booty defending,
the war-spoil warding; but Wyrð o'erwhelmed him
what time, in his daring, dangers he sought,
feud with Frisians. Fairest of gems
he bore with him over the beaker-of-waves,
sovrán strong: under shield he died.
Fell the corpse of the king into keeping of Franks,
gear of the breast, and that gorgeous ring;
weaker warriors won the spoil,
after gripe of battle, from Geatland's lord,
and held the death-field.

Din rose in hall.
Wealhtheow spake amid warriors, and said:--
"This jewel enjoy in thy jocund youth,
Beowulf lov'd, these battle-weeds wear,
a royal treasure, and richly thrive!
Preserve thy strength, and these striplings here
counsel in kindness: requital be mine.
Hast done such deeds, that for days to come
thou art famed among folk both far and near,
so wide as washeth the wave of Ocean
his windy walls. Through the ways of life
prosper, O prince! I pray for thee
rich possessions. To son of mine
be helpful in deed and uphold his joys!
Here every earl to the other is true,
mild of mood, to the master loyal!
Thanes are friendly, the throng obedient,
liegemen are revelling: list and obey!"
Went then to her place. -- That was proudest of feasts;
flowed wine for the warriors. Wyrd they knew not,
destiny dire, and the doom to be seen
by many an earl when eve should come,
and Hrothgar homeward hasten away,
royal, to rest. The room was guarded
by an army of earls, as erst was done.
They bared the bench-boards; abroad they spread
beds and bolsters. -- One beer-carouser
in danger of doom lay down in the hall. --
At their heads they set their shields of war,
bucklers bright; on the bench were there
over each atheling, easy to see,
the high battle-helmet, the haughty spear,
the corselet of rings. 'Twas their custom so
ever to be for battle prepared,
at home, or harrying, which it were,
even as oft as evil threatened
their sovran king. -- They were clansmen good.

Chapter 19

THEN sank they to sleep. With sorrow one bought
his rest of the evening, -- as oftime had happened
when Grendel guarded that golden hall,
evil wrought, till his end drew nigh,
slaughter for sins. 'Twas seen and told

how an avenger survived the fiend,
as was learned afar. The livelong time
after that grim fight, Grendel's mother,
monster of women, mourned her woe.
She was doomed to dwell in the dreary waters,
cold sea-courses, since Cain cut down
with edge of the sword his only brother,
his father's offspring: outlawed he fled,
marked with murder, from men's delights
warded the wilds. -- There woke from him
such fate-sent ghosts as Grendel, who,
war-wolf horrid, at Heorot found
a warrior watching and waiting the fray,
with whom the grisly one grappled amain.
But the man remembered his mighty power,
the glorious gift that God had sent him,
in his Maker's mercy put his trust
for comfort and help: so he conquered the foe,
felled the fiend, who fled abject,
reft of joy, to the realms of death,
mankind's foe. And his mother now,
gloomy and grim, would go that quest
of sorrow, the death of her son to avenge.
To Heorot came she, where helmeted Danes
slept in the hall. Too soon came back
old ills of the earls, when in she burst,
the mother of Grendel. Less grim, though, that terror,
e'en as terror of woman in war is less,
might of maid, than of men in arms
when, hammer-forged, the falchion hard,
sword gore-stained, through swine of the helm,
crested, with keen blade carves amain.
Then was in hall the hard-edge drawn,
the swords on the settles,¹ and shields a-many
firm held in hand: nor helmet minded
nor harness of mail, whom that horror seized.
Haste was hers; she would hie afar
and save her life when the liegemen saw her.
Yet a single atheling up she seized
fast and firm, as she fled to the moor.
He was for Hrothgar of heroes the dearest,
of trusty vassals betwixt the seas,
whom she killed on his couch, a clansman famous,
in battle brave. -- Nor was Beowulf there;
another house had been held apart,
after giving of gold, for the Geat renowned. --

Uproar filled Heorot; the hand all had viewed,
blood-flecked, she bore with her; bale was returned,
dole in the dwellings: 'twas dire exchange
where Dane and Geat were doomed to give
the lives of loved ones. Long-tried king,
the hoary hero, at heart was sad
when he knew his noble no more lived,
and dead indeed was his dearest thane.
To his bower was Beowulf brought in haste,
dauntless victor. As daylight broke,
along with his earls the atheling lord,
with his clansmen, came where the king abode
waiting to see if the Wielder-of-All
would turn this tale of trouble and woe.
Strode o'er floor the famed-in-strife,
with his hand-companions, -- the hall resounded, --
wishing to greet the wise old king,
Ingwines' lord; he asked if the night
had passed in peace to the prince's mind.

Chapter 20

HROTHGAR spake, helmet-of-Scyldings:--
"Ask not of pleasure! Pain is renewed
to Danish folk. Dead is Aeschere,
of Yrmenlaf the elder brother,
my sage adviser and stay in council,
shoulder-comrade in stress of fight
when warriors clashed and we warded our heads,
hewed the helm-boars; hero famed
should be every earl as Aeschere was!
But here in Heorot a hand hath slain him
of wandering death-sprite. I wot not whither,¹
proud of the prey, her path she took,
fain of her fill. The feud she avenged
that yesternight, unyieldingly,
Grendel in grimmest grasp thou killedst, --
seeing how long these liegemen mine
he ruined and ravaged. Reft of life,
in arms he fell. Now another comes,
keen and cruel, her kin to avenge,
faring far in feud of blood:
so that many a thane shall think, who e'er
sorrows in soul for that sharer of rings,
this is hardest of heart-bales. The hand lies low
that once was willing each wish to please.

Land-dwellers here² and liegemen mine,
 who house by those parts, I have heard relate
 that such a pair they have sometimes seen,
 march-stalkers mighty the moorland haunting,
 wandering spirits: one of them seemed,
 so far as my folk could fairly judge,
 of womankind; and one, accursed,
 in man's guise trod the misery-track
 of exile, though huger than human bulk.
 Grendel in days long gone they named him,
 folk of the land; his father they knew not,
 nor any brood that was born to him
 of treacherous spirits. Untrod is their home;
 by wolf-cliffs haunt they and windy headlands,
 fenways fearful, where flows the stream
 from mountains gliding to gloom of the rocks,
 underground flood. Not far is it hence
 in measure of miles that the mere expands,
 and o'er it the frost-bound forest hanging,
 sturdily rooted, shadows the wave.
 By night is a wonder weird to see,
 fire on the waters. So wise lived none
 of the sons of men, to search those depths!
 Nay, though the heath-rover, harried by dogs,
 the horn-proud hart, this holt should seek,
 long distance driven, his dear life first
 on the brink he yields ere he brave the plunge
 to hide his head: 'tis no happy place!
 Thence the welter of waters washes up
 wan to welkin when winds bestir
 evil storms, and air grows dusk,
 and the heavens weep. Now is help once more
 with thee alone! The land thou knowst not,
 place of fear, where thou findest out
 that sin-flecked being. Seek if thou dare!
 I will reward thee, for waging this fight,
 with ancient treasure, as erst I did,
 with winding gold, if thou winnest back."

Chapter 21

BEOWULF spake, bairn of Ecgtheow:
 "Sorrow not, sage! It beseems us better
 friends to avenge than fruitlessly mourn them.
 Each of us all must his end abide
 in the ways of the world; so win who may

glory ere death! When his days are told,
that is the warrior's worthiest doom.
Rise, O realm-warder! Ride we anon,
and mark the trail of the mother of Grendel.
No harbor shall hide her -- heed my promise! --
enfolding of field or forested mountain
or floor of the flood, let her flee where she will!
But thou this day endure in patience,
as I ween thou wilt, thy woes each one."
Leaped up the graybeard: God he thanked,
mighty Lord, for the man's brave words.
For Hrothgar soon a horse was saddled
wave-maned steed. The sovran wise
stately rode on; his shield-armed men
followed in force. The footprints led
along the woodland, widely seen,
a path o'er the plain, where she passed, and trod
the murky moor; of men-at-arms
she bore the bravest and best one, dead,
him who with Hrothgar the homestead ruled.
On then went the atheling-born
o'er stone-cliffs steep and strait defiles,
narrow passes and unknown ways,
headlands sheer, and the haunts of the Nicors.
Foremost he fared, a few at his side
of the wiser men, the ways to scan,
till he found in a flash the forested hill
hanging over the hoary rock,
a woful wood: the waves below
were dyed in blood. The Danish men
had sorrow of soul, and for Scyldings all,
for many a hero, 'twas hard to bear,
ill for earls, when Aeschere's head
they found by the flood on the foreland there.
Waves were welling, the warriors saw,
hot with blood; but the horn sang oft
battle-song bold. The band sat down,
and watched on the water worm-like things,
sea-dragons strange that sounded the deep,
and nicors that lay on the ledge of the ness --
such as oft essay at hour of morn
on the road-of-sails their ruthless quest, --
and sea-snakes and monsters. These started away,
swollen and savage that song to hear,
that war-horn's blast. The warden of Geats,
with bolt from bow, then balked of life,

of wave-work, one monster, amid its heart
went the keen war-shaft; in water it seemed
less doughty in swimming whom death had seized.
Swift on the billows, with boar-spears well
hooked and barbed, it was hard beset,
done to death and dragged on the headland,
wave-roamer wondrous. Warriors viewed
the grisly guest.

Then girt him Beowulf
in martial mail, nor mourned for his life.
His breastplate broad and bright of hues,
woven by hand, should the waters try;
well could it ward the warrior's body
that battle should break on his breast in vain
nor harm his heart by the hand of a foe.
And the helmet white that his head protected
was destined to dare the deeps of the flood,
through wave-whirl win: 'twas wound with chains,
decked with gold, as in days of yore
the weapon-smith worked it wondrously,
with swine-forms set it, that swords nowise,
brandished in battle, could bite that helm.
Nor was that the meanest of mighty helps
which Hrothgar's orator offered at need:
"Hrunting" they named the hilted sword,
of old-time heirlooms easily first;
iron was its edge, all etched with poison,
with battle-blood hardened, nor blenched it at fight
in hero's hand who held it ever,
on paths of peril prepared to go
to folkstead² of foes. Not first time this
it was destined to do a daring task.
For he bore not in mind, the bairn of Ecglaf
sturdy and strong, that speech he had made,
drunk with wine, now this weapon he lent
to a stouter swordsman. Himself, though, durst not
under welter of waters wager his life
as loyal liegeman. So lost he his glory,
honor of earls. With the other not so,
who girded him now for the grim encounter.

Chapter 22

BEOWULF spake, bairn of Ecgtheow:--

"Have mind, thou honored offspring of Healfdene
gold-friend of men, now I go on this quest,
sovrán wise, what once was said:
if in thy cause it came that I
should lose my life, thou wouldst loyal bide
to me, though fallen, in father's place!
Be guardian, thou, to this group of my thanes,
my warrior-friends, if War should seize me;
and the goodly gifts thou gavest me,
Hrothgar beloved, to Hygelac send!
Geatland's king may ken by the gold,
Hrethel's son see, when he stares at the treasure,
that I got me a friend for goodness famed,
and joyed while I could in my jewel-bestower.
And let Unferth wield this wondrous sword,
earl far-honored, this heirloom precious,
hard of edge: with Hrunting I
seek doom of glory, or Death shall take me."

After these words the Weder-Geat lord
boldly hastened, biding never
answer at all: the ocean floods
closed o'er the hero. Long while of the day
fled ere he felt the floor of the sea.
Soon found the fiend who the flood-domain
sword-hungry held these hundred winters,
greedy and grim, that some guest from above,
some man, was raiding her monster-realm.
She grasped out for him with grisly claws,
and the warrior seized; yet scathed she not
his body hale; the breastplate hindered,
as she strove to shatter the sark of war,
the linked harness, with loathsome hand.
Then bore this brine-wolf, when bottom she touched,
the lord of rings to the lair she haunted
whiles vainly he strove, though his valor held,
weapon to wield against wondrous monsters
that sore beset him; sea-beasts many
tried with fierce tusks to tear his mail,
and swarmed on the stranger. But soon he marked
he was now in some hall, he knew not which,
where water never could work him harm,
nor through the roof could reach him ever
fangs of the flood. Firelight he saw,
beams of a blaze that brightly shone.
Then the warrior was ware of that wolf-of-the-deep,

mere-wife monstrous. For mighty stroke
 he swung his blade, and the blow withheld not.
 Then sang on her head that seemly blade
 its war-song wild. But the warrior found
 the light-of-battle¹ was loath to bite,
 to harm the heart: its hard edge failed
 the noble at need, yet had known of old
 strife hand to hand, and had helmets cloven,
 doomed men's fighting-gear. First time, this,
 for the gleaming blade that its glory fell.
 Firm still stood, nor failed in valor,
 heedful of high deeds, Hygelac's kinsman;
 flung away fretted sword, featly jewelled,
 the angry earl; on earth it lay
 steel-edged and stiff. His strength he trusted,
 hand-gripe of might. So man shall do
 whenever in war he weens to earn him
 lasting fame, nor fears for his life!
 Seized then by shoulder, shrank not from combat,
 the Geatish war-prince Grendel's mother.
 Flung then the fierce one, filled with wrath,
 his deadly foe, that she fell to ground.
 Swift on her part she paid him back
 with grisly grasp, and grappled with him.
 Spent with struggle, stumbled the warrior,
 fiercest of fighting-men, fell adown.
 On the hall-guest she hurled herself, hent her short sword,
 broad and brown-edged,² the bairn to avenge,
 the sole-born son. -- On his shoulder lay
 braided breast-mail, barring death,
 withstanding entrance of edge or blade.
 Life would have ended for Ecgtheow's son,
 under wide earth for that earl of Geats,
 had his armor of war not aided him,
 battle-net hard, and holy God
 wielded the victory, wisest Maker.
 The Lord of Heaven allowed his cause;
 and easily rose the earl erect.

Chapter 23

MID the battle-gear saw he a blade triumphant,
 old-sword of Eotens, with edge of proof,
 warriors' heirloom, weapon unmatched,
 -- save only 'twas more than other men

to bandy-of-battle could bear at all --
as the giants had wrought it, ready and keen.
Seized then its chain-hilt the Scyldings' chieftain,
bold and battle-grim, brandished the sword,
reckless of life, and so wrathfully smote
that it gripped her neck and grasped her hard,
her bone-rings breaking: the blade pierced through
that fated-one's flesh: to floor she sank.
Bloody the blade: he was blithe of his deed.
Then blazed forth light. 'Twas bright within
as when from the sky there shines unclouded
heaven's candle. The hall he scanned.
By the wall then went he; his weapon raised
high by its hilts the Hygelac-thane,
angry and eager. That edge was not useless
to the warrior now. He wished with speed
Grendel to guerdon for grim raids many,
for the war he waged on Western-Danes
oftener far than an only time,
when of Hrothgar's hearth-companions
he slew in slumber, in sleep devoured,
fifteen men of the folk of Danes,
and as many others outward bore,
his horrible prey. Well paid for that
the wrathful prince! For now prone he saw
Grendel stretched there, spent with war,
spoiled of life, so scathed had left him
Heorot's battle. The body sprang far
when after death it endured the blow,
sword-stroke savage, that severed its head.
Soon,¹ then, saw the sage companions
who waited with Hrothgar, watching the flood,
that the tossing waters turbid grew,
blood-stained the mere. Old men together,
hoary-haired, of the hero spake;
the warrior would not, they weened, again,
proud of conquest, come to seek
their mighty master. To many it seemed
the wolf-of-the-waves had won his life.
The ninth hour came. The noble Scyldings
left the headland; homeward went
the gold-friend of men.² But the guests sat on,
stared at the surges, sick in heart,
and wished, yet weened not, their winsome lord
again to see.

Now that sword began,
 from blood of the fight, in battle-droppings,³
 war-blade, to wane: 'twas a wondrous thing
 that all of it melted as ice is wont
 when frosty fetters the Father loosens,
 unwinds the wave-bonds, wielding all
 seasons and times: the true God he!
 Nor took from that dwelling the duke of the Geats
 precious things, though a plenty he saw,
 save only the head and that hilt withal
 blazoned with jewels: the blade had melted,
 burned was the bright sword, her blood was so hot,
 so poisoned the hell-sprite who perished within there.
 Soon he was swimming who safe saw in combat
 downfall of demons; up-dove through the flood.
 The clashing waters were cleansed now,
 waste of waves, where the wandering fiend
 her life-days left and this lapsing world.
 Swam then to strand the sailors'-refuge,
 sturdy-in-spirit, of sea-booty glad,
 of burden brave he bore with him.
 Went then to greet him, and God they thanked,
 the thane-band choice of their chieftain blithe,
 that safe and sound they could see him again.
 Soon from the hardy one helmet and armor
 deftly they doffed: now drowsed the mere,
 water 'neath welkin, with war-blood stained.
 Forth they fared by the footpaths thence,
 merry at heart the highways measured,
 well-known roads. Courageous men
 carried the head from the cliff by the sea,
 an arduous task for all the band,
 the firm in fight, since four were needed
 on the shaft-of-slaughter⁴ strenuously
 to bear to the gold-hall Grendel's head.
 So presently to the palace there
 foemen fearless, fourteen Geats,
 marching came. Their master-of-clan
 mighty amid them the meadow-ways trod.
 Strode then within the sovran thane
 fearless in fight, of fame renowned,
 hardy hero, Hrothgar to greet.
 And next by the hair into hall was borne
 Grendel's head, where the henchmen were drinking,
 an awe to clan and queen alike,
 a monster of marvel: the men looked on.

Chapter 24

BEOWULF spake, bairn of Ecgtheow:--
"Lo, now, this sea-booty, son of Healfdene,
Lord of Scyldings, we've lustily brought thee,
sign of glory; thou seest it here.
Not lightly did I with my life escape!
In war under water this work I essayed
with endless effort; and even so
my strength had been lost had the Lord not shielded me.
Not a whit could I with Hrunting do
in work of war, though the weapon is good;
yet a sword the Sovran of Men vouchsafed me
to spy on the wall there, in splendor hanging,
old, gigantic, -- how oft He guides
the friendless wight! -- and I fought with that brand,
felling in fight, since fate was with me,
the house's wardens. That war-sword then
all burned, bright blade, when the blood gushed o'er it,
battle-sweat hot; but the hilt I brought back
from my foes. So avenged I their fiendish deeds
death-fall of Danes, as was due and right.
And this is my hest, that in Heorot now
safe thou canst sleep with thy soldier band,
and every thane of all thy folk
both old and young; no evil fear,
Scyldings' lord, from that side again,
ought ill for thy earls, as erst thou must!"
Then the golden hilt, for that gray-haired leader,
hoary hero, in hand was laid,
giant-wrought, old. So owned and enjoyed it
after downfall of devils, the Danish lord,
wonder-smiths' work, since the world was rid
of that grim-souled fiend, the foe of God,
murder-marked, and his mother as well.
Now it passed into power of the people's king,
best of all that the oceans bound
who have scattered their gold o'er Scandia's isle.
Hrothgar spake -- the hilt he viewed,
heirloom old, where was etched the rise
of that far-off fight when the floods o'erwhelmed,
raging waves, the race of giants
(fearful their fate!), a folk estranged
from God Eternal: whence guerdon due

in that waste of waters the Wielder paid them.
 So on the guard of shining gold
 in runic staves it was rightly said
 for whom the serpent-traced sword was wrought,
 best of blades, in bygone days,
 and the hilt well wound. -- The wise-one spake,
 son of Healfdene; silent were all:--
 "Lo, so may he say who sooth and right
 follows 'mid folk, of far times mindful,
 a land-warden old,¹ that this earl belongs
 to the better breed! So, borne aloft,
 thy fame must fly, O friend my Beowulf,
 far and wide o'er folksteads many. Firmly thou
 shalt all maintain,
 mighty strength with mood of wisdom. Love of
 mine will I assure thee,
 as, awhile ago, I promised; thou shalt prove a stay in future,
 in far-off years, to folk of thine,
 to the heroes a help. Was not Heremod thus
 to offspring of Ecgwela, Honor-Scyldings,
 nor grew for their grace, but for grisly slaughter,
 for doom of death to the Danishmen.
 He slew, wrath-swollen, his shoulder-comrades,
 companions at board! So he passed alone,
 chieftain haughty, from human cheer.
 Though him the Maker with might endowed,
 delights of power, and uplifted high
 above all men, yet blood-fierce his mind,
 his breast-hoard, grew, no bracelets gave he
 to Danes as was due; he endured all joyless
 strain of struggle and stress of woe,
 long feud with his folk. Here find thy lesson!
 Of virtue advise thee! This verse I have said for thee,
 wise from lapsed winters. Wondrous seems
 how to sons of men Almighty God
 in the strength of His spirit sendeth wisdom,
 estate, high station: He swayeth all things.
 Whiles He letteth right lustily fare
 the heart of the hero of high-born race, --
 in seat ancestral assigns him bliss,
 his folk's sure fortress in fee to hold,
 puts in his power great parts of the earth,
 empire so ample, that end of it
 this wanter-of-wisdom weeneth none.
 So he waxes in wealth, nowise can harm him
 illness or age; no evil cares

shadow his spirit; no sword-hate threatens
from ever an enemy: all the world
wends at his will, no worse he knoweth,
till all within him obstinate pride
waxes and wakes while the warden slumbers,
the spirit's sentry; sleep is too fast
which masters his might, and the murderer nears,
stealthily shooting the shafts from his bow!

Chapter 25

"UNDER harness his heart then is hit indeed
by sharpest shafts; and no shelter avails
from foul behest of the hellish fiend.¹
Him seems too little what long he possessed.
Greedy and grim, no golden rings
he gives for his pride; the promised future
forgets he and spurns, with all God has sent him,
Wonder-Wielder, of wealth and fame.
Yet in the end it ever comes
that the frame of the body fragile yields,
fated falls; and there follows another
who joyously the jewels divides,
the royal riches, nor recks of his forebear.
Ban, then, such baleful thoughts, Beowulf dearest,
best of men, and the better part choose,
profit eternal; and temper thy pride,
warrior famous! The flower of thy might
lasts now a while: but erelong it shall be
that sickness or sword thy strength shall minish,
or fang of fire, or flooding billow,
or bite of blade, or brandished spear,
or odious age; or the eyes' clear beam
wax dull and darken: Death even thee
in haste shall o'erwhelm, thou hero of war!
So the Ring-Danes these half-years a hundred I ruled,
wielded 'neath welkin, and warded them bravely
from mighty-ones many o'er middle-earth,
from spear and sword, till it seemed for me
no foe could be found under fold of the sky.
Lo, sudden the shift! To me seated secure
came grief for joy when Grendel began
to harry my home, the hellish foe;
for those ruthless raids, unresting I suffered
heart-sorrow heavy. Heaven be thanked,

Lord Eternal, for life extended
 that I on this head all hewn and bloody,
 after long evil, with eyes may gaze!
 -- Go to the bench now! Be glad at banquet,
 warrior worthy! A wealth of treasure
 at dawn of day, be dealt between us!"
 Glad was the Geats' lord, going betimes
 to seek his seat, as the Sage commanded.
 Afresh, as before, for the famed-in-battle,
 for the band of the hall, was a banquet dight
 nobly anew. The Night-Helm darkened
 dusk o'er the drinkers.
 The doughty ones rose:
 for the hoary-headed would hasten to rest,
 aged Scylding; and eager the Geat,
 shield-fighter sturdy, for sleeping yearned.
 Him wander-weary, warrior-guest
 from far, a hall-thane heralded forth,
 who by custom courtly cared for all
 needs of a thane as in those old days
 warrior-wanderers wont to have.
 So slumbered the stout-heart. Stately the hall
 rose gabled and gilt where the guest slept on
 till a raven black the rapture-of-heaven²
 blithe-heart boded. Bright came flying
 shine after shadow. The swordsmen hastened,
 athelings all were eager homeward
 forth to fare; and far from thence
 the great-hearted guest would guide his keel.
 Bade then the hardy-one Hrunting be brought
 to the son of Ecglaf, the sword bade him take,
 excellent iron, and uttered his thanks for it,
 quoth that he counted it keen in battle,
 "war-friend" winsome: with words he slandered not
 edge of the blade: 'twas a big-hearted man!
 Now eager for parting and armed at point
 warriors waited, while went to his host
 that Darling of Danes. The doughty atheling
 to high-seat hastened and Hrothgar greeted.

Chapter 26

BEOWULF spake, bairn of Ecgtheow:--
 "Lo, we seafarers say our will,
 far-come men, that we fain would seek

Hygelac now. We here have found
 hosts to our heart: thou hast harbored us well.
 If ever on earth I am able to win me
 more of thy love, O lord of men,
 aught anew, than I now have done,
 for work of war I am willing still!
 If it come to me ever across the seas
 that neighbor foemen annoy and fright thee, --
 as they that hate thee erewhile have used, --
 thousands then of thanes I shall bring,
 heroes to help thee. Of Hygelac I know,
 ward of his folk, that, though few his years,
 the lord of the Geats will give me aid
 by word and by work, that well I may serve thee,
 wielding the war-wood to win thy triumph
 and lending thee might when thou lackest men.
 If thy Hrethric should come to court of Geats,
 a sovran's son, he will surely there
 find his friends. A far-off land
 each man should visit who vaunts him brave."
 Him then answering, Hrothgar spake:--
 "These words of thine the wisest God
 sent to thy soul! No sager counsel
 from so young in years e'er yet have I heard.
 Thou art strong of main and in mind art wary,
 art wise in words! I ween indeed
 if ever it hap that Hrethel's heir
 by spear be seized, by sword-grim battle,
 by illness or iron, thine elder and lord,
 people's leader, -- and life be thine, --
 no seemlier man will the Sea-Geats find
 at all to choose for their chief and king,
 for hoard-guard of heroes, if hold thou wilt
 thy kinsman's kingdom! Thy keen mind pleases me
 the longer the better, Beowulf loved!
 Thou hast brought it about that both our peoples,
 sons of the Geat and Spear-Dane folk,
 shall have mutual peace, and from murderous strife,
 such as once they waged, from war refrain.
 Long as I rule this realm so wide,
 let our hoards be common, let heroes with gold
 each other greet o'er the gannet's-bath,
 and the ringed-prow bear o'er rolling waves
 tokens of love. I trow my landfolk
 towards friend and foe are firmly joined,
 and honor they keep in the olden way."

To him in the hall, then, Healfdene's son
gave treasures twelve, and the trust-of-earls
bade him fare with the gifts to his folk beloved,
hale to his home, and in haste return.
Then kissed the king of kin renowned,
Scyldings' chieftain, that choicest thane,
and fell on his neck. Fast flowed the tears
of the hoary-headed. Heavy with winters,
he had chances twain, but he clung to this,¹ --
that each should look on the other again,
and hear him in hall. Was this hero so dear to him.
his breast's wild billows he banned in vain;
safe in his soul a secret longing,
locked in his mind, for that loved man
burned in his blood. Then Beowulf strode,
glad of his gold-gifts, the grass-plot o'er,
warrior blithe. The wave-roamer bode
riding at anchor, its owner awaiting.
As they hastened onward, Hrothgar's gift
they lauded at length. -- 'Twas a lord unpeered,
every way blameless, till age had broken
it spareth no mortal -- his splendid might.

Chapter 27

CAME now to ocean the ever-courageous
hardy henchmen, their harness bearing,
woven war-sarks. The warden marked,
trusty as ever, the earl's return.
From the height of the hill no hostile words
reached the guests as he rode to greet them;
but "Welcome!" he called to that Weder clan
as the sheen-mailed spoilers to ship marched on.
Then on the strand, with steeds and treasure
and armor their roomy and ring-dight ship
was heavily laden: high its mast
rose over Hrothgar's hoarded gems.
A sword to the boat-guard Beowulf gave,
mounted with gold; on the mead-bench since
he was better esteemed, that blade possessing,
heirloom old. -- Their ocean-keel boarding,
they drove through the deep, and Daneland left.
A sea-cloth was set, a sail with ropes,
firm to the mast; the flood-timbers moaned;¹
nor did wind over billows that wave-swimmer blow

across from her course. The craft sped on,
foam-necked it floated forth o'er the waves,
keel firm-bound over briny currents,
till they got them sight of the Geatish cliffs,
home-known headlands. High the boat,
stirred by winds, on the strand updrove.
Helpful at haven the harbor-guard stood,
who long already for loved companions
by the water had waited and watched afar.
He bound to the beach the broad-bosomed ship
with anchor-bands, lest ocean-billows
that trusty timber should tear away.
Then Beowulf bade them bear the treasure,
gold and jewels; no journey far
was it thence to go to the giver of rings,
Hygelac Hrethling: at home he dwelt
by the sea-wall close, himself and clan.
Haughty that house, a hero the king,
high the hall, and Hygd² right young,
wise and wary, though winters few
in those fortress walls she had found a home,
Haereth's daughter. Nor humble her ways,
nor grudged she gifts to the Geatish men,
of precious treasure. Not Thryth's pride showed she,
folk-queen famed, or that fell deceit.
Was none so daring that durst make bold
(save her lord alone) of the liegemen dear
that lady full in the face to look,
but forged fetters he found his lot,
bonds of death! And brief the respite;
soon as they seized him, his sword-doom was spoken,
and the burnished blade a baleful murder
proclaimed and closed. No queenly way
for woman to practise, though peerless she,
that the weaver-of-peace³ from warrior dear
by wrath and lying his life should reave!
But Hemming's kinsman hindered this. --
For over their ale men also told
that of these folk-horrors fewer she wrought,
onslaughts of evil, after she went,
gold-decked bride, to the brave young prince,
atheling haughty, and Offa's hall
o'er the fallow flood at her father's bidding
safely sought, where since she prospered,
royal, throned, rich in goods,
fain of the fair life fate had sent her,

and leal in love to the lord of warriors.
He, of all heroes I heard of ever
from sea to sea, of the sons of earth,
most excellent seemed. Hence Offa was praised
for his fighting and feeling by far-off men,
the spear-bold warrior; wisely he ruled
over his empire. Eomer woke to him,
help of heroes, Hemming's kinsman,
Grandson of Garmund, grim in war.

Chapter 28-30

HASTENED the hardy one, henchmen with him,
sandy strand of the sea to tread
and widespread ways. The world's great candle,
sun shone from south. They strode along
with sturdy steps to the spot they knew
where the battle-king young, his burg within,
slayer of Ongentheow, shared the rings,
shelter-of-heroes. To Hygelac
Beowulf's coming was quickly told, --
that there in the court the clansmen's refuge,
the shield-companion sound and alive,
hale from the hero-play homeward strode.
With haste in the hall, by highest order,
room for the rovers was readily made.
By his sovran he sat, come safe from battle,
kinsman by kinsman. His kindly lord
he first had greeted in gracious form,
with manly words. The mead dispensing,
came through the high hall Haereth's daughter,
winsome to warriors, wine-cup bore
to the hands of the heroes. Hygelac then
his comrade fairly with question plied
in the lofty hall, sore longing to know
what manner of sojourn the Sea-Geats made.
"What came of thy quest, my kinsman Beowulf,
when thy yearnings suddenly swept thee yonder
battle to seek o'er the briny sea,
combat in Heorot? Hrothgar couldst thou
aid at all, the honored chief,
in his wide-known woes? With waves of care
my sad heart seethed; I sore mistrusted
my loved one's venture: long I begged thee
by no means to seek that slaughtering monster,
but suffer the South-Danes to settle their feud

themselves with Grendel. Now God be thanked
 that safe and sound I can see thee now!"
 Beowulf spake, the bairn of Ecgtheow:--
 "'Tis known and unhidden, Hygelac Lord,
 to many men, that meeting of ours,
 struggle grim between Grendel and me,
 which we fought on the field where full too many
 sorrows he wrought for the Scylding-Victors,
 evils unending. These all I avenged.
 No boast can be from breed of Grendel,
 any on earth, for that uproar at dawn,
 from the longest-lived of the loathsome race
 in fleshly fold! -- But first I went
 Hrothgar to greet in the hall of gifts,
 where Healfdene's kinsman high-renowned,
 soon as my purpose was plain to him,
 assigned me a seat by his son and heir.
 The liegemen were lusty; my life-days never
 such merry men over mead in hall
 have I heard under heaven! The high-born queen,
 people's peace-bringer, passed through the hall,
 cheered the young clansmen, clasps of gold,
 ere she sought her seat, to sundry gave.
 Oft to the heroes Hrothgar's daughter,
 to earls in turn, the ale-cup tendered, --
 she whom I heard these hall-companions
 Freawaru name, when fretted gold
 she proffered the warriors. Promised is she,
 gold-decked maid, to the glad son of Froda.
 Sage this seems to the Scylding's-friend,
 kingdom's-keeper: he counts it wise
 the woman to wed so and ward off feud,
 store of slaughter. But seldom ever
 when men are slain, does the murder-spear sink
 but briefest while, though the bride be fair!¹
 "Nor haply will like it the Heathobard lord,
 and as little each of his liegemen all,
 when a thane of the Danes, in that doughty throng,
 goes with the lady along their hall,
 and on him the old-time heirlooms glisten
 hard and ring-decked, Heathobard's treasure,
 weapons that once they wielded fair
 until they lost at the linden-play²
 liegeman leal and their lives as well.
 Then, over the ale, on this heirloom gazing,
 some ash-wielder old who has all in mind

that spear-death of men,³ -- he is stern of mood,
 heavy at heart, -- in the hero young
 tests the temper and tries the soul
 and war-hate wakens, with words like these:--
 _Canst thou not, comrade, ken that sword
 which to the fray thy father carried
 in his final feud, 'neath the fighting-mask,
 dearest of blades, when the Danish slew him
 and wielded the war-place on Withergild's fall,
 after havoc of heroes, those hardy Scyldings?
 Now, the son of a certain slaughtering Dane,
 proud of his treasure, paces this hall,
 joys in the killing, and carries the jewel⁴
 that rightfully ought to be owned by thee!_
 Thus he urges and eggs him all the time
 with keenest words, till occasion offers
 that Freawaru's thane, for his father's deed,
 after bite of brand in his blood must slumber,
 losing his life; but that liegeman flies
 living away, for the land he kens.
 And thus be broken on both their sides
 oaths of the earls, when Ingeld's breast
 wells with war-hate, and wife-love now
 after the care-billows cooler grows.
 "So⁵ I hold not high the Heathobards' faith
 due to the Danes, or their during love
 and pact of peace. -- But I pass from that,
 turning to Grendel, O giver-of-treasure,
 and saying in full how the fight resulted,
 hand-fray of heroes. When heaven's jewel
 had fled o'er far fields, that fierce sprite came,
 night-foe savage, to seek us out
 where safe and sound we sentried the hall.
 To Hondscio then was that harassing deadly,
 his fall there was fated. He first was slain,
 girded warrior. Grendel on him
 turned murderous mouth, on our mighty kinsman,
 and all of the brave man's body devoured.
 Yet none the earlier, empty-handed,
 would the bloody-toothed murderer, mindful of bale,
 outward go from the gold-decked hall:
 but me he attacked in his terror of might,
 with greedy hand grasped me. A glove hung by him⁶
 wide and wondrous, wound with bands;
 and in artful wise it all was wrought,
 by devilish craft, of dragon-skins.

Me therein, an innocent man,
the fiendish foe was fain to thrust
with many another. He might not so,
when I all angrily upright stood.
'Twere long to relate how that land-destroyer
I paid in kind for his cruel deeds;
yet there, my prince, this people of thine
got fame by my fighting. He fled away,
and a little space his life preserved;
but there staid behind him his stronger hand
left in Heorot; heartsick thence
on the floor of the ocean that outcast fell.
Me for this struggle the Scyldings'-friend
paid in plenty with plates of gold,
with many a treasure, when morn had come
and we all at the banquet-board sat down.
Then was song and glee. The gray-haired Scylding,
much tested, told of the times of yore.
Whiles the hero his harp bestirred,
wood-of-delight; now lays he chanted
of sooth and sadness, or said aright
legends of wonder, the wide-hearted king;
or for years of his youth he would yearn at times,
for strength of old struggles, now stricken with age,
hoary hero: his heart surged full
when, wise with winters, he wailed their flight.
Thus in the hall the whole of that day
at ease we feasted, till fell o'er earth
another night. Anon full ready
in greed of vengeance, Grendel's mother
set forth all doleful. Dead was her son
through war-hate of Weders; now, woman monstrous
with fury fell a foeman she slew,
avenged her offspring. From Aeschere old,
loyal councillor, life was gone;
nor might they e'en, when morning broke,
those Danish people, their death-done comrade
burn with brands, on balefire lay
the man they mourned. Under mountain stream
she had carried the corpse with cruel hands.
For Hrothgar that was the heaviest sorrow
of all that had laden the lord of his folk.
The leader then, by thy life, besought me
(sad was his soul) in the sea-waves' coil
to play the hero and hazard my being
for glory of prowess: my guerdon he pledged.

I then in the waters -- 'tis widely known --
that sea-floor-guardian savage found.
Hand-to-hand there a while we struggled;
billows welled blood; in the briny hall
her head I hewed with a hardy blade
from Grendel's mother, -- and gained my life,
though not without danger. My doom was not yet.
Then the haven-of-heroes, Healfdene's son,
gave me in guerdon great gifts of price.

Chapter 31

"SO held this king to the customs old,
that I wanted for nought in the wage I gained,
the meed of my might; he made me gifts,
Healfdene's heir, for my own disposal.
Now to thee, my prince, I proffer them all,
gladly give them. Thy grace alone
can find me favor. Few indeed
have I of kinsmen, save, Hygelac, thee!"
Then he bade them bear him the boar-head standard,
the battle-helm high, and breastplate gray,
the splendid sword; then spake in form:--
"Me this war-gear the wise old prince,
Hrothgar, gave, and his hest he added,
that its story be straightway said to thee. --
A while it was held by Heorogar king,
for long time lord of the land of Scyldings;
yet not to his son the sovrán left it,
to daring Heorowearð, -- dear as he was to him,
his harness of battle. -- Well hold thou it all!"
And I heard that soon passed o'er the path of
this treasure,
all apple-fallow, four good steeds,
each like the others, arms and horses
he gave to the king. So should kinsmen be,
not weave one another the net of wiles,
or with deep-hid treachery death contrive
for neighbor and comrade. His nephew was ever
by hardy Hygelac held full dear,
and each kept watch o'er the other's weal.
I heard, too, the necklace to Hygd he presented,
wonder-wrought treasure, which Wealththeow gave him
sovrán's daughter: three steeds he added,
slender and saddle-gay. Since such gift

the gem gleamed bright on the breast of the queen.
Thus showed his strain the son of Ecgtheow
as a man remarked for mighty deeds
and acts of honor. At ale he slew not
comrade or kin; nor cruel his mood,
though of sons of earth his strength was greatest,
a glorious gift that God had sent
the splendid leader. Long was he spurned,
and worthless by Geatish warriors held;
him at mead the master-of-clans
failed full oft to favor at all.
Slack and shiftless the strong men deemed him,
profitless prince; but payment came,
to the warrior honored, for all his woes. --
Then the bulwark-of-earls¹ bade bring within,
hardy chieftain, Hrethel's heirloom
garnished with gold: no Geat e'er knew
in shape of a sword a statelier prize.
The brand he laid in Beowulf's lap;
and of hides assigned him seven thousand,²
with house and high-seat. They held in common
land alike by their line of birth,
inheritance, home: but higher the king
because of his rule o'er the realm itself.

Now further it fell with the flight of years,
with harryings horrid, that Hygelac perished,³
and Heardred, too, by hewing of swords
under the shield-wall slaughtered lay,
when him at the van of his victor-folk
sought hardy heroes, Heatho-Scilfings,
in arms o'erwhelming Hereric's nephew.
Then Beowulf came as king this broad
realm to wield; and he ruled it well
fifty winters,⁴ a wise old prince,
warding his land, until One began
in the dark of night, a Dragon, to rage.
In the grave on the hill a hoard it guarded,
in the stone-barrow steep. A strait path reached it,
unknown to mortals. Some man, however,
came by chance that cave within
to the heathen hoard.⁵ In hand he took
a golden goblet, nor gave he it back,
stole with it away, while the watcher slept,
by thievish wiles: for the warden's wrath
prince and people must pay betimes!

Chapter 32

THAT way he went with no will of his own,
in danger of life, to the dragon's hoard,
but for pressure of peril, some prince's thane.
He fled in fear the fatal scourge,
seeking shelter, a sinful man,
and entered in. At the awful sight
tottered that guest, and terror seized him;
yet the wretched fugitive rallied anon
from fright and fear ere he fled away,
and took the cup from that treasure-hoard.
Of such besides there was store enough,
heirlooms old, the earth below,
which some earl forgotten, in ancient years,
left the last of his lofty race,
heedfully there had hidden away,
dearest treasure. For death of yore
had hurried all hence; and he alone
left to live, the last of the clan,
weeping his friends, yet wished to bide
warding the treasure, his one delight,
though brief his respite. The barrow, new-ready,
to strand and sea-waves stood anear,
hard by the headland, hidden and closed;
there laid within it his lordly heirlooms
and heaped hoard of heavy gold
that warden of rings. Few words he spake:
"Now hold thou, earth, since heroes may not,
what earls have owned! Lo, erst from thee
brave men brought it! But battle-death seized
and cruel killing my clansmen all,
robbed them of life and a liegeman's joys.
None have I left to lift the sword,
or to cleanse the carven cup of price,
beaker bright. My brave are gone.
And the helmet hard, all haughty with gold,
shall part from its plating. Polishers sleep
who could brighten and burnish the battle-mask;
and those weeds of war that were wont to brave
over bicker of shields the bite of steel
rust with their bearer. The ringed mail
fares not far with famous chieftain,
at side of hero! No harp's delight,

no glee-wood's gladness! No good hawk now
flies through the hall! Nor horses fleet
stamp in the burgstead! Battle and death
the flower of my race have reft away."
Mournful of mood, thus he moaned his woe,
alone, for them all, and unblithe wept
by day and by night, till death's fell wave
o'erwhelmed his heart. His hoard-of-bliss
that old ill-doer open found,
who, blazing at twilight the barrows haunteth,
naked foe-dragon flying by night
folded in fire: the folk of earth
dread him sore. 'Tis his doom to seek
hoard in the graves, and heathen gold
to watch, many-wintered: nor wins he thereby!
Powerful this plague-of-the-people thus
held the house of the hoard in earth
three hundred winters; till One aroused
wrath in his breast, to the ruler bearing
that costly cup, and the king implored
for bond of peace. So the barrow was plundered,
borne off was booty. His boon was granted
that wretched man; and his ruler saw
first time what was fashioned in far-off days.
When the dragon awoke, new woe was kindled.
O'er the stone he snuffed. The stark-heart found
footprint of foe who so far had gone
in his hidden craft by the creature's head. --
So may the undoomed easily flee
evils and exile, if only he gain
the grace of The Wielder! -- That warden of gold
o'er the ground went seeking, greedy to find
the man who wrought him such wrong in sleep.
Savage and burning, the barrow he circled
all without; nor was any there,
none in the waste... Yet war he desired,
was eager for battle. The barrow he entered,
sought the cup, and discovered soon
that some one of mortals had searched his treasure,
his lordly gold. The guardian waited
ill-enduring till evening came;
boiling with wrath was the barrow's keeper,
and fain with flame the foe to pay
for the dear cup's loss. -- Now day was fled
as the worm had wished. By its wall no more
was it glad to bide, but burning flew

folded in flame: a fearful beginning
for sons of the soil; and soon it came,
in the doom of their lord, to a dreadful end.

Chapter 33

THEN the baleful fiend its fire belched out,
and bright homes burned. The blaze stood high
all landsfolk frightening. No living thing
would that loathly one leave as aloft it flew.
Wide was the dragon's warring seen,
its fiendish fury far and near,
as the grim destroyer those Geatish people
hated and hounded. To hidden lair,
to its hoard it hastened at hint of dawn.
Folk of the land it had lapped in flame,
with bale and brand. In its barrow it trusted,
its battling and bulwarks: that boast was vain!

To Beowulf then the bale was told
quickly and truly: the king's own home,
of buildings the best, in brand-waves melted,
that gift-throne of Geats. To the good old man
sad in heart, 'twas heaviest sorrow.
The sage assumed that his sovran God
he had angered, breaking ancient law,
and embittered the Lord. His breast within
with black thoughts welled, as his wont was never.
The folk's own fastness that fiery dragon
with flame had destroyed, and the stronghold all
washed by waves; but the warlike king,
prince of the Weders, plotted vengeance.
Warriors'-bulwark, he bade them work
all of iron -- the earl's commander --
a war-shield wondrous: well he knew
that forest-wood against fire were worthless,
linden could aid not. -- Atheling brave,
he was fated to finish this fleeting life,¹
his days on earth, and the dragon with him,
though long it had watched o'er the wealth of the hoard! --
Shame he reckoned it, sharer-of-rings,
to follow the flyer-afar with a host,
a broad-flung band; nor the battle feared he,
nor deemed he dreadful the dragon's warring,
its vigor and valor: ventures desperate

he had passed a-plenty, and perils of war,
 contest-crash, since, conqueror proud,
 Hrothgar's hall he had wholly purged,
 and in grapple had killed the kin of Grendel,
 loathsome breed! Not least was that
 of hand-to-hand fights where Hygelac fell,
 when the ruler of Geats in rush of battle,
 lord of his folk, in the Frisian land,
 son of Hrethel, by sword-draughts died,
 by brands down-beaten. Thence Beowulf fled
 through strength of himself and his swimming power,
 though alone, and his arms were laden with thirty
 coats of mail, when he came to the sea!
 Nor yet might Hetwaras² haughtily boast
 their craft of contest, who carried against him
 shields to the fight: but few escaped
 from strife with the hero to seek their homes!
 Then swam over ocean Ecgtheow's son
 lonely and sorrowful, seeking his land,
 where Hygd made him offer of hoard and realm,
 rings and royal-seat, reckoning naught
 the strength of her son to save their kingdom
 from hostile hordes, after Hygelac's death.
 No sooner for this could the stricken ones
 in any wise move that atheling's mind
 over young Heardred's head as lord
 and ruler of all the realm to be:
 yet the hero upheld him with helpful words,
 aided in honor, till, older grown,
 he wielded the Weder-Geats. -- Wandering exiles
 sought him o'er seas, the sons of Ohtere,
 who had spurned the sway of the Scylfings'-helmet,
 the bravest and best that broke the rings,
 in Swedish land, of the sea-kings' line,
 haughty hero.³ Hence Heardred's end.
 For shelter he gave them, sword-death came,
 the blade's fell blow, to bairn of Hygelac;
 but the son of Ongentheow sought again
 house and home when Heardred fell,
 leaving Beowulf lord of Geats
 and gift-seat's master. -- A good king he!

Chapter 34

THE fall of his lord he was fain to requite

in after days; and to Eadgils he proved
 friend to the friendless, and forces sent
 over the sea to the son of Ohtere,
 weapons and warriors: well repaid he
 those care-paths cold when the king he slew.¹
 Thus safe through struggles the son of Ecgtheow
 had passed a plenty, through perils dire,
 with daring deeds, till this day was come
 that doomed him now with the dragon to strive.
 With comrades eleven the lord of Geats
 swollen in rage went seeking the dragon.
 He had heard whence all the harm arose
 and the killing of clansmen; that cup of price
 on the lap of the lord had been laid by the finder.
 In the throng was this one thirteenth man,
 starter of all the strife and ill,
 care-laden captive; cringing thence
 forced and reluctant, he led them on
 till he came in ken of that cavern-hall,
 the barrow delved near billowy surges,
 flood of ocean. Within 'twas full
 of wire-gold and jewels; a jealous warden,
 warrior trusty, the treasures held,
 lurked in his lair. Not light the task
 of entrance for any of earth-born men!
 Sat on the headland the hero king,
 spake words of hail to his hearth-companions,
 gold-friend of Geats. All gloomy his soul,
 wavering, death-bound. Wyrð full nigh
 stood ready to greet the gray-haired man,
 to seize his soul-hoard, sunder apart
 life and body. Not long would be
 the warrior's spirit enwound with flesh.
 Beowulf spake, the bairn of Ecgtheow:--
 "Through store of struggles I strove in youth,
 mighty feuds; I mind them all.
 I was seven years old when the sovrán of rings,
 friend-of-his-folk, from my father took me,
 had me, and held me, Hrethel the king,
 with food and fee, faithful in kinship.
 Ne'er, while I lived there, he loathlier found me,
 bairn in the burg, than his birthright sons,
 Herebeald and Haethcyn and Hygelac mine.
 For the eldest of these, by unmeet chance,
 by kinsman's deed, was the death-bed strewn,
 when Haethcyn killed him with horny bow,

his own dear liege laid low with an arrow,
missed the mark and his mate shot down,
one brother the other, with bloody shaft.
A feeless fight,² and a fearful sin,
horror to Hrethel; yet, hard as it was,
unavenged must the atheling die!
Too awful it is for an aged man
to bide and bear, that his bairn so young
rides on the gallows. A rime he makes,
sorrow-song for his son there hanging
as rapture of ravens; no rescue now
can come from the old, disabled man!
Still is he minded, as morning breaks,
of the heir gone elsewhere;³ another he hopes not
he will bide to see his burg within
as ward for his wealth, now the one has found
doom of death that the deed incurred.
Forlorn he looks on the lodge of his son,
wine-hall waste and wind-swept chambers
reft of revel. The rider sleepeth,
the hero, far-hidden;⁴ no harp resounds,
in the courts no wassail, as once was heard.

Chapter 35

"THEN he goes to his chamber, a grief-song chants
alone for his lost. Too large all seems,
homestead and house. So the helmet-of-Weders
hid in his heart for Herebeald
waves of woe. No way could he take
to avenge on the slayer slaughter so foul;
nor e'en could he harass that hero at all
with loathing deed, though he loved him not.
And so for the sorrow his soul endured,
men's gladness he gave up and God's light chose.
Lands and cities he left his sons
(as the wealthy do) when he went from earth.
There was strife and struggle 'twixt Swede and Geat
o'er the width of waters; war arose,
hard battle-horror, when Hrethel died,
and Ongentheow's offspring grew
strife-keen, bold, nor brooked o'er the seas
pact of peace, but pushed their hosts
to harass in hatred by Hreosnabeorh.
Men of my folk for that feud had vengeance,

for woful war ('tis widely known),
though one of them bought it with blood of his heart,
a bargain hard: for Haethcyn proved
fatal that fray, for the first-of-Geats.
At morn, I heard, was the murderer killed
by kinsman for kinsman,¹ with clash of sword,
when Ongentheow met Eofor there.
Wide split the war-helm: wan he fell,
hoary Scylfing; the hand that smote him
of feud was mindful, nor flinched from the death-blow.

-- "For all that he² gave me, my gleaming sword
repaid him at war, -- such power I wielded, --
for lordly treasure: with land he entrusted me,
homestead and house. He had no need
from Swedish realm, or from Spear-Dane folk,
or from men of the Gifths, to get him help, --
some warrior worse for wage to buy!
Ever I fought in the front of all,
sole to the fore; and so shall I fight
while I bide in life and this blade shall last
that early and late hath loyal proved
since for my doughtiness Daeghrefn fell,
slain by my hand, the Hugas' champion.
Nor fared he thence to the Frisian king
with the booty back, and breast-adornments;
but, slain in struggle, that standard-bearer
fell, atheling brave. Not with blade was he slain,
but his bones were broken by brawny gripe,
his heart-waves stilled. -- The sword-edge now,
hard blade and my hand, for the hoard shall strive."
Beowulf spake, and a battle-vow made
his last of all: "I have lived through many
wars in my youth; now once again,
old folk-defender, feud will I seek,
do doughty deeds, if the dark destroyer
forth from his cavern come to fight me!"
Then hailed he the helmeted heroes all,
for the last time greeting his liegemen dear,
comrades of war: "I should carry no weapon,
no sword to the serpent, if sure I knew
how, with such enemy, else my vows
I could gain as I did in Grendel's day.
But fire in this fight I must fear me now,
and poisonous breath; so I bring with me
breastplate and board.³ From the barrow's keeper

no footbreadth flee I. One fight shall end
our war by the wall, as Wyrð allots,
all mankind's master. My mood is bold
but forbears to boast o'er this battling-flyer.
-- Now abide by the barrow, ye breastplate-mailed,
ye heroes in harness, which of us twain
better from battle-rush bear his wounds.
Wait ye the finish. The fight is not yours,
nor meet for any but me alone
to measure might with this monster here
and play the hero. Hardily I
shall win that wealth, or war shall seize,
cruel killing, your king and lord!"
Up stood then with shield the sturdy champion,
stayed by the strength of his single manhood,
and hardy 'neath helmet his harness bore
under cleft of the cliffs: no coward's path!
Soon spied by the wall that warrior chief,
survivor of many a victory-field
where foemen fought with furious clashings,
an arch of stone; and within, a stream
that broke from the barrow. The brooklet's wave
was hot with fire. The hoard that way
he never could hope unharmed to near,
or endure those deeps, for the dragon's flame.
Then let from his breast, for he burst with rage,
the Weder-Geat prince a word outgo;
stormed the stark-heart; stern went ringing
and clear his cry 'neath the cliff-rocks gray.
The hoard-guard heard a human voice;
his rage was enkindled. No respite now
for pact of peace! The poison-breath
of that foul worm first came forth from the cave,
hot reek-of-fight: the rocks resounded.
Stout by the stone-way his shield he raised,
lord of the Geats, against the loathed-one;
while with courage keen that coiled foe
came seeking strife. The sturdy king
had drawn his sword, not dull of edge,
heirloom old; and each of the two
felt fear of his foe, though fierce their mood.
Stoutly stood with his shield high-raised
the warrior king, as the worm now coiled
together amain: the mailed-one waited.
Now, spire by spire, fast sped and glided
that blazing serpent. The shield protected,

soul and body a shorter while
for the hero-king than his heart desired,
could his will have wielded the welcome respite
but once in his life! But Wyrð denied it,
and victory's honors. -- His arm he lifted
lord of the Geats, the grim foe smote
with atheling's heirloom. Its edge was turned
brown blade, on the bone, and bit more feebly
than its noble master had need of then
in his baleful stress. -- Then the barrow's keeper
waxed full wild for that weighty blow,
cast deadly flames; wide drove and far
those vicious fires. No victor's glory
the Geats' lord boasted; his brand had failed,
naked in battle, as never it should,
excellent iron! -- 'Twas no easy path
that Ecgtheow's honored heir must tread
over the plain to the place of the foe;
for against his will he must win a home
elsewhere far, as must all men, leaving
this lapsing life! -- Not long it was
ere those champions grimly closed again.
The hoard-guard was heartened; high heaved his breast
once more; and by peril was pressed again,
enfolded in flames, the folk-commander!
Nor yet about him his band of comrades,
sons of athelings, armed stood
with warlike front: to the woods they bent them,
their lives to save. But the soul of one
with care was cumbered. Kinship true
can never be marred in a noble mind!

Chapter 36

WIGLAF his name was, Weohstan's son,
linden-thane loved, the lord of Scylfings,
Aelfhere's kinsman. His king he now saw
with heat under helmet hard oppressed.
He minded the prizes his prince had given him,
wealthy seat of the Waegmunding line,
and folk-rights that his father owned
Not long he lingered. The linden yellow,
his shield, he seized; the old sword he drew: --
as heirloom of Eanmund earth-dwellers knew it,
who was slain by the sword-edge, son of Ohtere,

friendless exile, erst in fray
killed by Weohstan, who won for his kin
brown-bright helmet, breastplate ringed,
old sword of Eotens, Onela's gift,
weeds of war of the warrior-thane,
battle-gear brave: though a brother's child
had been felled, the feud was unfelt by Onela.¹
For winters this war-gear Weohstan kept,
breastplate and board, till his bairn had grown
earlship to earn as the old sire did:
then he gave him, mid Geats, the gear of battle,
portion huge, when he passed from life,
fared aged forth. For the first time now
with his leader-lord the liegeman young
was bidden to share the shock of battle.
Neither softened his soul, nor the sire's bequest
weakened in war.² So the worm found out
when once in fight the foes had met!
Wiglaf spake, -- and his words were sage;
sad in spirit, he said to his comrades:--
"I remember the time, when mead we took,
what promise we made to this prince of ours
in the banquet-hall, to our breaker-of-rings,
for gear of combat to give him requital,
for hard-sword and helmet, if hap should bring
stress of this sort! Himself who chose us
from all his army to aid him now,
urged us to glory, and gave these treasures,
because he counted us keen with the spear
and hardy 'neath helm, though this hero-work
our leader hoped unhelped and alone
to finish for us, -- folk-defender
who hath got him glory greater than all men
for daring deeds! Now the day is come
that our noble master has need of the might
of warriors stout. Let us stride along
the hero to help while the heat is about him
glowing and grim! For God is my witness
I am far more fain the fire should seize
along with my lord these limbs of mine!³
Unsuited it seems our shields to bear
homeward hence, save here we essay
to fell the foe and defend the life
of the Weders' lord. I wot 'twere shame
on the law of our land if alone the king
out of Geatish warriors woe endured

and sank in the struggle! My sword and helmet,
breastplate and board, for us both shall serve!"
Through slaughter-reek strode he to succor his chieftain,
his battle-helm bore, and brief words spake:--
"Beowulf dearest, do all bravely,
as in youthful days of yore thou vowedst
that while life should last thou wouldst let no wise
thy glory droop! Now, great in deeds,
atheling steadfast, with all thy strength
shield thy life! I will stand to help thee."
At the words the worm came once again,
murderous monster mad with rage,
with fire-billows flaming, its foes to seek,
the hated men. In heat-waves burned
that board⁴ to the boss, and the breastplate failed
to shelter at all the spear-thane young.
Yet quickly under his kinsman's shield
went eager the earl, since his own was now
all burned by the blaze. The bold king again
had mind of his glory: with might his glaive
was driven into the dragon's head, --
blow nerved by hate. But Naegling⁵ was shivered,
broken in battle was Beowulf's sword,
old and gray. 'Twas granted him not
that ever the edge of iron at all
could help him at strife: too strong was his hand,
so the tale is told, and he tried too far
with strength of stroke all swords he wielded,
though sturdy their steel: they steeled him nought.
Then for the third time thought on its feud
that folk-destroyer, fire-dread dragon,
and rushed on the hero, where room allowed,
battle-grim, burning; its bitter teeth
closed on his neck, and covered him
with waves of blood from his breast that welled.

Chapter 37

'Twas now, men say, in his sovran's need
that the earl made known his noble strain,
craft and keenness and courage enduring.
Heedless of harm, though his hand was burned,
hardy-hearted, he helped his kinsman.
A little lower the loathsome beast
he smote with sword; his steel drove in

bright and burnished; that blaze began
to lose and lessen. At last the king
wielded his wits again, war-knife drew,
a biting blade by his breastplate hanging,
and the Weders'-helm smote that worm asunder,
felled the foe, flung forth its life.
So had they killed it, kinsmen both,
athelings twain: thus an earl should be
in danger's day! -- Of deeds of valor
this conqueror's-hour of the king was last,
of his work in the world. The wound began,
which that dragon-of-earth had erst inflicted,
to swell and smart; and soon he found
in his breast was boiling, baleful and deep,
pain of poison. The prince walked on,
wise in his thought, to the wall of rock;
then sat, and stared at the structure of giants,
where arch of stone and steadfast column
upheld forever that hall in earth.
Yet here must the hand of the henchman peerless
lave with water his winsome lord,
the king and conqueror covered with blood,
with struggle spent, and unspan his helmet.
Beowulf spake in spite of his hurt,
his mortal wound; full well he knew
his portion now was past and gone
of earthly bliss, and all had fled
of his file of days, and death was near:
"I would fain bestow on son of mine
this gear of war, were given me now
that any heir should after me come
of my proper blood. This people I ruled
fifty winters. No folk-king was there,
none at all, of the neighboring clans
who war would wage me with 'warriors'-friends'¹
and threat me with horrors. At home I bided
what fate might come, and I cared for mine own;
feuds I sought not, nor falsely swore
ever on oath. For all these things,
though fatally wounded, fain am I!
From the Ruler-of-Man no wrath shall seize me,
when life from my frame must flee away,
for killing of kinsmen! Now quickly go
and gaze on that hoard 'neath the hoary rock,
Wiglaf loved, now the worm lies low,
sleeps, heart-sore, of his spoil bereaved.

And fare in haste. I would fain behold
the gorgeous heirlooms, golden store,
have joy in the jewels and gems, lay down
softlier for sight of this splendid hoard
my life and the lordship I long have held."

Chapter 38

I HAVE heard that swiftly the son of Weohstan
at wish and word of his wounded king, --
war-sick warrior, -- woven mail-coat,
battle-sark, bore 'neath the barrow's roof.
Then the clansman keen, of conquest proud,
passing the seat, I saw store of jewels
and glistening gold the ground along;
by the wall were marvels, and many a vessel
in the den of the dragon, the dawn-flier old:
unburnished bowls of bygone men
reft of richness; rusty helms
of the olden age; and arm-rings many
wondrously woven. -- Such wealth of gold,
booty from barrow, can burden with pride
each human wight: let him hide it who will! --
His glance too fell on a gold-wove banner
high o'er the hoard, of handiwork noblest,
brilliantly brodered; so bright its gleam,
all the earth-floor he easily saw
and viewed all these vessels. No vestige now
was seen of the serpent: the sword had ta'en him.
Then, I heard, the hill of its hoard was reft,
old work of giants, by one alone;
he burdened his bosom with beakers and plate
at his own good will, and the ensign took,
brightest of beacons. -- The blade of his lord
-- its edge was iron -- had injured deep
one that guarded the golden hoard
many a year and its murder-fire
spread hot round the barrow in horror-billows
at midnight hour, till it met its doom.
Hasted the herald, the hoard so spurred him
his track to retrace; he was troubled by doubt,
high-souled hero, if haply he'd find
alive, where he left him, the lord of Weders,
weakening fast by the wall of the cave.
So he carried the load. His lord and king

he found all bleeding, famous chief
 at the lapse of life. The liegeman again
 plashed him with water, till point of word
 broke through the breast-hoard. Beowulf spake,
 sage and sad, as he stared at the gold. --
 "For the gold and treasure, to God my thanks,
 to the Wielder-of-Wonders, with words I say,
 for what I behold, to Heaven's Lord,
 for the grace that I give such gifts to my folk
 or ever the day of my death be run!
 Now I've bartered here for booty of treasure
 the last of my life, so look ye well
 to the needs of my land! No longer I tarry.
 A barrow bid ye the battle-fanned raise
 for my ashes. 'Twill shine by the shore of the flood,
 to folk of mine memorial fair
 on Hrones Headland high uplifted,
 that ocean-wanderers oft may hail
 Beowulf's Barrow, as back from far
 they drive their keels o'er the darkling wave."
 From his neck he unclasped the collar of gold,
 valorous king, to his vassal gave it
 with bright-gold helmet, breastplate, and ring,
 to the youthful thane: bade him use them in joy.
 "Thou art end and remnant of all our race
 the Waegmunding name. For Wyrð hath swept them,
 all my line, to the land of doom,
 earls in their glory: I after them go."
 This word was the last which the wise old man
 harbored in heart ere hot death-waves
 of balefire he chose. From his bosom fled
 his soul to seek the saints' reward.

Chapter 39

IT was heavy hap for that hero young
 on his lord beloved to look and find him
 lying on earth with life at end,
 sorrowful sight. But the slayer too,
 awful earth-dragon, empty of breath,
 lay felled in fight, nor, fain of its treasure,
 could the writhing monster rule it more.
 For edges of iron had ended its days,
 hard and battle-sharp, hammers' leaving;¹
 and that flier-afar had fallen to ground

hushed by its hurt, its hoard all near,
no longer lusty aloft to whirl
at midnight, making its merriment seen,
proud of its prizes: prone it sank
by the handiwork of the hero-king.
Forsooth among folk but few achieve,
-- though sturdy and strong, as stories tell me,
and never so daring in deed of valor, --
the perilous breath of a poison-foe
to brave, and to rush on the ring-board hall,
whenever his watch the warden keeps
bold in the barrow. Beowulf paid
the price of death for that precious hoard;
and each of the foes had found the end
of this fleeting life.

Befell erelong
that the laggards in war the wood had left,
trothbreakers, cowards, ten together,
fearing before to flourish a spear
in the sore distress of their sovran lord.
Now in their shame their shields they carried,
armor of fight, where the old man lay;
and they gazed on Wiglaf. Wearied he sat
at his sovran's shoulder, shieldsman good,
to wake him with water.² Nowise it availed.
Though well he wished it, in world no more
could he barrier life for that leader-of-battles
nor baffle the will of all-wielding God.
Doom of the Lord was law o'er the deeds
of every man, as it is to-day.
Grim was the answer, easy to get,
from the youth for those that had yielded to fear!
Wiglaf spake, the son of Weohstan, --
mournful he looked on those men unloved:--
"Who sooth will speak, can say indeed
that the ruler who gave you golden rings
and the harness of war in which ye stand
-- for he at ale-bench often-times
bestowed on hall-folk helm and breastplate,
lord to liegemen, the likeliest gear
which near of far he could find to give, --
threw away and wasted these weeds of battle,
on men who failed when the foemen came!
Not at all could the king of his comrades-in-arms
venture to vaunt, though the Victory-Wielder,

God, gave him grace that he got revenge
sole with his sword in stress and need.
To rescue his life, 'twas little that I
could serve him in struggle; yet shift I made
(hopeless it seemed) to help my kinsman.
Its strength ever waned, when with weapon I struck
that fatal foe, and the fire less strongly
flowed from its head. -- Too few the heroes
in throe of contest that thronged to our king!
Now gift of treasure and girding of sword,
joy of the house and home-delight
shall fail your folk; his freehold-land
every clansman within your kin
shall lose and leave, when lords highborn
hear afar of that flight of yours,
a fameless deed. Yea, death is better
for liegemen all than a life of shame!"

Chapter 40

THAT battle-toil bade he at burg to announce,
at the fort on the cliff, where, full of sorrow,
all the morning earls had sat,
daring shieldsmen, in doubt of twain:
would they wail as dead, or welcome home,
their lord beloved? Little¹ kept back
of the tidings new, but told them all,
the herald that up the headland rode. --
"Now the willing-giver to Weder folk
in death-bed lies; the Lord of Geats
on the slaughter-bed sleeps by the serpent's deed!
And beside him is stretched that slayer-of-men
with knife-wounds sick:² no sword availed
on the awesome thing in any wise
to work a wound. There Wiglaf sitteth,
Weohstan's bairn, by Beowulf's side,
the living earl by the other dead,
and heavy of heart a head-watch³ keeps
o'er friend and foe. -- Now our folk may look
for waging of war when once unhidden
to Frisian and Frank the fall of the king
is spread afar. -- The strife began
when hot on the Hugas⁴ Hygelac fell
and fared with his fleet to the Frisian land.
Him there the Hetwaras humbled in war,

plied with such prowess their power o'erwhelming
that the bold-in-battle bowed beneath it
and fell in fight. To his friends no wise
could that earl give treasure! And ever since
the Merowings' favor has failed us wholly.
Nor aught expect I of peace and faith
from Swedish folk. 'Twas spread afar
how Ongentheow reft at Ravenswood
Haethcyn Hrethling of hope and life,
when the folk of Geats for the first time sought
in wanton pride the Warlike-Scylfings.
Soon the sage old sire⁵ of Ohtere,
ancient and awful, gave answering blow;
the sea-king⁶ he slew, and his spouse redeemed,
his good wife rescued, though robbed of her gold,
mother of Ohtere and Onela.
Then he followed his foes, who fled before him
sore beset and stole their way,
bereft of a ruler, to Ravenswood.
With his host he besieged there what swords had left,
the weary and wounded; woes he threatened
the whole night through to that hard-pressed throng:
some with the morrow his sword should kill,
some should go to the gallows-tree
for rapture of ravens. But rescue came
with dawn of day for those desperate men
when they heard the horn of Hygelac sound,
tones of his trumpet; the trusty king
had followed their trail with faithful band.

Chapter 41

"THE bloody swath of Swedes and Geats
and the storm of their strife, were seen afar,
how folk against folk the fight had wakened.
The ancient king with his atheling band
sought his citadel, sorrowing much:
Ongentheow earl went up to his burg.
He had tested Hygelac's hardihood,
the proud one's prowess, would prove it no longer,
defied no more those fighting-wanderers
nor hoped from the seamen to save his hoard,
his bairn and his bride: so he bent him again,
old, to his earth-walls. Yet after him came
with slaughter for Swedes the standards of Hygelac
o'er peaceful plains in pride advancing,

till Hrethelings fought in the fenced town.¹
 Then Ongentheow with edge of sword,
 the hoary-bearded, was held at bay,
 and the folk-king there was forced to suffer
 Eofor's anger. In ire, at the king
 Wulf Wonreding with weapon struck;
 and the chieftain's blood, for that blow, in streams
 flowed 'neath his hair. No fear felt he,
 stout old Scylfing, but straightway repaid
 in better bargain that bitter stroke
 and faced his foe with fell intent.
 Nor swift enough was the son of Wonred
 answer to render the aged chief;
 too soon on his head the helm was cloven;
 blood-bedecked he bowed to earth,
 and fell adown; not doomed was he yet,
 and well he waxed, though the wound was sore.
 Then the hardy Hygelac-thane,²
 when his brother fell, with broad brand smote,
 giants' sword crashing through giants'-helm
 across the shield-wall: sank the king,
 his folk's old herdsman, fatally hurt.
 There were many to bind the brother's wounds
 and lift him, fast as fate allowed
 his people to wield the place-of-war.
 But Eofor took from Ongentheow,
 earl from other, the iron-breastplate,
 hard sword hilted, and helmet too,
 and the hoar-chief's harness to Hygelac carried,
 who took the trappings, and truly promised
 rich fee 'mid folk, -- and fulfilled it so.
 For that grim strife gave the Geatish lord,
 Hrethel's offspring, when home he came,
 to Eofor and Wulf a wealth of treasure,
 Each of them had a hundred thousand³
 in land and linked rings; nor at less price reckoned
 mid-earth men such mighty deeds!
 And to Eofor he gave his only daughter
 in pledge of grace, the pride of his home.

"Such is the feud, the foeman's rage,
 death-hate of men: so I deem it sure
 that the Swedish folk will seek us home
 for this fall of their friends, the fighting-Scylfings,
 when once they learn that our warrior leader
 lifeless lies, who land and hoard

ever defended from all his foes,
furthered his folk's weal, finished his course
a hardy hero. -- Now haste is best,
that we go to gaze on our Geatish lord,
and bear the bountiful breaker-of-rings
to the funeral pyre. No fragments merely
shall burn with the warrior. Wealth of jewels,
gold untold and gained in terror,
treasure at last with his life obtained,
all of that booty the brands shall take,
fire shall eat it. No earl must carry
memorial jewel. No maiden fair
shall wreathe her neck with noble ring:
nay, sad in spirit and shorn of her gold,
oft shall she pass o'er paths of exile
now our lord all laughter has laid aside,
all mirth and revel. Many a spear
morning-cold shall be clasped amain,
lifted aloft; nor shall lilt of harp
those warriors wake; but the wan-hued raven,
fain o'er the fallen, his feast shall praise
and boast to the eagle how bravely he ate
when he and the wolf were wasting the slain."

So he told his sorrowful tidings,
and little he lied, the loyal man
of word or of work. The warriors rose;
sad, they climbed to the Cliff-of-Eagles,
went, welling with tears, the wonder to view.
Found on the sand there, stretched at rest,
their lifeless lord, who had lavished rings
of old upon them. Ending-day
had dawned on the doughty-one; death had seized
in woful slaughter the Weders' king.
There saw they, besides, the strangest being,
loathsome, lying their leader near,
prone on the field. The fiery dragon,
fearful fiend, with flame was scorched.
Reckoned by feet, it was fifty measures
in length as it lay. Aloft erewhile
it had revelled by night, and anon come back,
seeking its den; now in death's sure clutch
it had come to the end of its earth-hall joys.
By it there stood the stoups and jars;
dishes lay there, and dear-decked swords
eaten with rust, as, on earth's lap resting,

a thousand winters they waited there.
For all that heritage huge, that gold
of bygone men, was bound by a spell,⁵
so the treasure-hall could be touched by none
of human kind, -- save that Heaven's King,
God himself, might give whom he would,
Helper of Heroes, the hoard to open, --
even such a man as seemed to him meet.

Chapter 42

A PERILOUS path, it proved, he¹ trod
who heinously hid, that hall within,
wealth under wall! Its watcher had killed
one of a few,² and the feud was avenged
in woful fashion. Wondrous seems it,
what manner a man of might and valor
oft ends his life, when the earl no longer
in mead-hall may live with loving friends.
So Beowulf, when that barrow's warden
he sought, and the struggle; himself knew not
in what wise he should wend from the world at last.
For³ princes potent, who placed the gold,
with a curse to doomsday covered it deep,
so that marked with sin the man should be,
hedged with horrors, in hell-bonds fast,
racked with plagues, who should rob their hoard.
Yet no greed for gold, but the grace of heaven,
ever the king had kept in view.⁴
Wiglaf spake, the son of Weohstan:--
"At the mandate of one, oft warriors many
sorrow must suffer; and so must we.
The people's-shepherd showed not aught
of care for our counsel, king beloved!
That guardian of gold he should grapple not, urged we,
but let him lie where he long had been
in his earth-hall waiting the end of the world,
the hest of heaven. -- This hoard is ours
but grievously gotten; too grim the fate
which thither carried our king and lord.
I was within there, and all I viewed,
the chambered treasure, when chance allowed me
(and my path was made in no pleasant wise)
under the earth-wall. Eager, I seized
such heap from the hoard as hands could bear

and hurriedly carried it hither back
to my liege and lord. Alive was he still,
still wielding his wits. The wise old man
spake much in his sorrow, and sent you greetings
and bade that ye build, when he breathed no more,
on the place of his balefire a barrow high,
memorial mighty. Of men was he
worthiest warrior wide earth o'er
the while he had joy of his jewels and burg.
Let us set out in haste now, the second time
to see and search this store of treasure,
these wall-hid wonders, -- the way I show you, --
where, gathered near, ye may gaze your fill
at broad-gold and rings. Let the bier, soon made,
be all in order when out we come,
our king and captain to carry thither
-- man beloved -- where long he shall bide
safe in the shelter of sovran God."
Then the bairn of Weohstan bade command,
hardy chief, to heroes many
that owned their homesteads, hither to bring
firewood from far -- o'er the folk they ruled --
for the famed-one's funeral. " Fire shall devour
and wan flames feed on the fearless warrior
who oft stood stout in the iron-shower,
when, sped from the string, a storm of arrows
shot o'er the shield-wall: the shaft held firm,
featly feathered, followed the barb."
And now the sage young son of Weohstan
seven chose of the chieftain's thanes,
the best he found that band within,
and went with these warriors, one of eight,
under hostile roof. In hand one bore
a lighted torch and led the way.
No lots they cast for keeping the hoard
when once the warriors saw it in hall,
altogether without a guardian,
lying there lost. And little they mourned
when they had hastily haled it out,
dear-bought treasure! The dragon they cast,
the worm, o'er the wall for the wave to take,
and surges swallowed that shepherd of gems.
Then the woven gold on a wain was laden --
countless quite! -- and the king was borne,
hoary hero, to Hrones-Ness.

Chapter 43

THEN fashioned for him the folk of Geats
firm on the earth a funeral-pile,
and hung it with helmets and harness of war
and breastplates bright, as the boon he asked;
and they laid amid it the mighty chieftain,
heroes mourning their master dear.
Then on the hill that hugest of balefires
the warriors wakened. Wood-smoke rose
black over blaze, and blent was the roar
of flame with weeping (the wind was still),
till the fire had broken the frame of bones,
hot at the heart. In heavy mood
their misery moaned they, their master's death.
Wailing her woe, the widow¹ old,
her hair upbound, for Beowulf's death
sung in her sorrow, and said full oft
she dreaded the doleful days to come,
deaths enow, and doom of battle,
and shame. -- The smoke by the sky was devoured.
The folk of the Weders fashioned there
on the headland a barrow broad and high,
by ocean-farers far descried:
in ten days' time their toil had raised it,
the battle-brave's beacon. Round brands of the pyre
a wall they built, the worthiest ever
that wit could prompt in their wisest men.
They placed in the barrow that precious booty,
the rounds and the rings they had reft erewhile,
hardy heroes, from hoard in cave, --
trusting the ground with treasure of earls,
gold in the earth, where ever it lies
useless to men as of yore it was.
Then about that barrow the battle-keen rode,
atheling-born, a band of twelve,
lament to make, to mourn their king,
chant their dirge, and their chieftain honor.
They praised his earlship, his acts of prowess
worthily witnessed: and well it is
that men their master-friend mightily laud,
heartily love, when hence he goes
from life in the body forlorn away.

Thus made their mourning the men of Geatland,

for their hero's passing his hearth-companions:
quoth that of all the kings of earth,
of men he was mildest and most beloved,
to his kin the kindest, keenest for praise.

SECTION FIVE : ASSIGNMENTS

Each assignment in this course indicates the required reading at top. It will be necessary to study the required reading in order to answer the assignment questions. Answer the questions, and then turn in your assignment answers by the scheduled due date.

ASSIGNMENT 1

Required Readings:

After the Flood, Introduction and Chapter 1 and Appendices 1 and 2

Answer the Following Questions, based upon the Readings:

1. What is the Table of Nations?
2. Who was the father of the Semitic nations?
3. Of which son of Noah did William Strachey comment as follows in 1612: “that what country soever” his children “happened to possess, there began both the ignorance of true godliness...and that no inhabited countries cast forth greater multitudes, to range and stray into diverse remote regions”?
4. Which son of Shem settled in what is the modern Persian name of Khuzistan? (Hint: His descendants were known to the Greeks as Elymais, and they recorded their own name as Haltamti.)
5. Which son of Shem was the progenitor of the Chaldeans, in the region of present day Iraq?
6. Which son of Shem became the father of the nation known as Assyria?
7. Which descendant of Shem and Arphaxad gave his name to the Hebrew race?
8. Which son of Eber is said in Genesis to have lived during the time when the earth was divided? (Hint: The Akkadian noun “pulukku” means a dividing up of territory, and the Assyrian word “palgu” means dividing up of land by canals.)
9. Which son of Eber is remembered among modern Arabs as Yaqtan, and his descendants are regarded as the purest Arabs (in contrast to the Musta’rabs)?
10. Serug was the son of Reu and is descended from Shem, Eber and Peleg. His name is given to the land west of Haran. What land- which is still a country today - appears to have been named after him?
11. This father of Abraham later in life settled in Haran, where he died. There seems to be a direct etymological link between his name and the teraphim, small idolatrous images kept in most households. Joshua 24:2 indicates he was an idolator. There is a place near Haran apparently named after him, called Turahi by the Assyrians. What was his name?
12. Which son of Lot was a founder of a nation known to the Akkadians and Egyptians as Mu’abu?
13. What is the name of Lot’s son, from which the modern city of Amman, Jordan derives its name?
14. What is the name of this son of Abraham by Keturah, who is founder of a tribe of Arabs known as Modiana from Egyptian and other sources?
15. What is the son of Ishmael known to the Assyrians as Qidri who settled in the north-west Arabian peninsula, from whom Mohammed traced his descent?
16. What son of Ham reigned over the Ethiopians, and so have long been known by his name?

17. What son of Ham settled in Egypt, and so the land of Egypt has long been associated with his name by many different sources? (Hint: For instance, Egypt is known as Misri in the Amarna tablets of Egypt.)
18. This son of Cush seems to have been worshipped from the very earliest of times. His name is perpetuated as various deities: Marduk by the Babylonians, Nimurda by the Assyrians, and Bacchus (meaning son of Cush) by the Romans. Who is this mighty leader who instigated the Great Rebellion at Babel?
19. From which son of Mizraim who settled on the northern coast of Africa do we get the name of Lybia?
20. Philistim descended from Mizraim. What territory in the Middle East is named after Philistim?
21. Which son of Ham settled in the land that was later given to Israel? (Hint: The Egyptians knew them as Kn'nw.)
22. Which son of Canaan settled along the Mediterranean coast in what became the modern city of Sidon, giving rise to the Phoenician peoples?
23. In Romans 1:20-21 we read the following: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead...when they knew God, they glorified him not as God...but became vain in their imaginations..." These verses speak of the debate that has raged in human history between the truth regarding God and the lie of paganism and naturalism. What modern debate concerning human origins is really a continuation of that ancient debate?
24. Naturalism (or materialism) is the philosophy that all that exists can be explained in terms of natural phenomena, without reference to the supernatural. How prevalent was naturalism in the history of ancient Egyptian philosophy?
25. Among the various cultures in the ancient world, what was the consensus view regarding the creation of the universe?
26. How did the philosophy of Plato and Xenophanes contrast with that Hesiod on the topic of the nature of God/gods?
27. Even at the time the view of one supreme divine Creator was becoming predominant in Greek philosophy, what view was contending with it, from such philosophers as Anaximander [ca 610-540 BC] (and perhaps Thales of Miletus [ca 625-545 BC])?
28. Which Greek philosopher around the close of the 4th. century BC, although acknowledging the existence of supernatural gods (detached from the universe), argued that the cosmos culminated from a long, perhaps infinite, series of accidents resulting from the random jostling of atoms?
29. Who founded the Stoic school in Greek philosophy ca 308 BC?
30. Of what ethnic stock was Cicero, who was a Stoic living in the first century BC, author of *On the Nature of the Gods*, and argued the existence of a supreme, intelligent Creator using evidence from design?
31. Which materialist philosopher was rebutted in Cicero's *On the Nature of the Gods*?

ASSIGNMENT 2

Required Readings:

After the Flood, Chapter 2 and 3 and Appendix 3

Answer the Following Questions, based upon the Readings:

1. Who was the father of the Indo-European nations, who the Greeks knew as Iapetos and the Romans as Jupiter?
2. Who is the son of Gomer, from whom the Askuzi tribe came, and which Herodotus the Greek historian called the Skythai (Scythians)?
3. Which son of Japheth and brother of Gomer had descendants that seem to have mixed with the descendants of Gomer to form the Scythian hordes?
4. Which son of Japheth had descendants known as the Mada in Old Persian inscriptions and are better known to us as the Medes?
5. The Hebrews knew the Greeks as Jevanim, because they descended from this son of Japheth. Homer called this son of Japheth Iawones, the progenitor of the Ionians. Who was this son of Japheth?
6. From which descendant of Japheth and Javan do we derive the name Dardanelles, an area around the ancient city of Troy in modern day Turkey?
7. Which Roman Catholic bishop arrived in Britain in the closing years of the 6th century AD with the task of bringing British Christians under the authority of the Roman pontiff?
8. Which invading Germanic tribe was largely responsible for the displacement and the conquest of the Britons?
9. What was the consequence on the knowledge of ancient British history when invading Germanic tribes conquered much of Great Britain?
10. In the 1130s AD the archdeacon of Oxford handed over to a British (i.e., Welsh) monk an ancient manuscript of the early history of the Britons. What is the name of this monk who authored the *History of the Kings of Britain*, translating the ancient manuscript into Latin?
11. Is there merely one ancient manuscript attesting to the ancient history of the Britons?
12. Who at the end of the 8th century AD authored *Historia Brittonum*- the History of the Britons - which was a compilation of historical documents and testimonies available to him at the time?
13. How does Nennius' Table of European Nations differ from the Table of Nations in scripture?
14. Tubal, a son of Japheth, was the father of a people known to the Assyrians as the Tabali whose land is in the present-day nation of Georgia. What is the modern capital of Georgia that perpetuates the name of Tubal?
15. Who do Josephus and Nennius indicate was the father of the Iberians (aka Thobelites) who settled in modern day Spain?
16. The Britons were Celts that settled in Great Britain. Which Celts on a nearby island also maintained the genealogies of their nation for comparison purposes?

ASSIGNMENT 3

Required Readings:

After the Flood, Chapters 4 and 5 and Appendices 4 to 7

Answer the Following Questions, based upon the Readings:

1. Which Roman leader invaded Great Britain in 55 BC, leaving a Roman account of the incident?
2. What do we learn about the historical reliability of Nennius' *Historia Brittonum*, the *Tysilio Chronicle* (aka the Welsh chronicle), and Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain* by comparing them with the Roman account of the event?
3. How does the Roman historian Titus Livius' *History of Rome* - written some time during his life between 59 BC - 17 AD - confirm the general historical reliability of the *Tysilio Chronicle* (aka the Welsh chronicle), and Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*?
4. The *Tysilio Chronicle* (aka the Welsh chronicle) and Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain* tell of the history of Dunvull Molmutius, who reigned during the 5Th.-4Th. centuried BC. Of what is he especially famous for in British history, which had a lasting impact upon British society for centuries afterwards?
5. From what we can tell, was government despotic under pagan kings of the Britons like Dunvull Molmutius?
6. What native rights did all freeborn men and women enjoy during this era of the pagan Britons?
7. According to the Welsh chronicle, who in the 12Th. century BC led the Britons in their formation of a colony on what became the British Isles?
8. According to ancient manuscripts, such as the Welsh chronicle, why was England known as Cambria, Scotland known as Albany, and England known as Loegria?
9. Upon the founding of the city of London, what was its name?
10. Which ancient British king is celebrated in a play by Shakespeare and founded the city of Kaerleir (Leicester) in England?
11. How did London acquire its present name?
12. Which British king from 306-309 AD is immortalized in the nursery rhyme "Old King Cole" and founded the city of Colchester in England?
13. The British king who we know as "Old King Cole" had a daughter named Helen, who married a Roman Senator named Constantius. This Roman Senator eventually became king of Britain. Who was the son of Helen and Constantius that eventually became emperor of the Roman Empire, famous for legalizing the Christian religion in the Roman Empire?
14. Which infamous British king who ruled from 43-455 AD and 460-480 AD invited Saxon adventurers, Hengist and Horsa, to Britain to help fight the Picts?
15. Which famous son of Uther Pendragon reigned over the Britons from 521-542 AD?
16. Which event occurring in 604 AD greatly debilitated the scholarship of the Britons?

17. According to Nennius, in Nennium 17, who were the 3 sons of Noah and where did they each primarily settle?
18. According to Nennium 18, who were the first inhabitants of Britain?

ASSIGNMENT 4

Required Readings:

After the Flood, Chapters 6 and 7 and Appendix 8

Answer the Following Questions, based upon the Readings:

1. For centuries the Anglo-Saxon king-lists were held to be reliable genealogies. But then Enlightenment Rationalists began to deny the historicity of these ancient records. (Ironically, many of these same type Rationalists attempt to construct a chronology from ancient Egyptian king-lists.) In what century did Enlightenment Rationalists begin to deny their historical reliability, and what was in the Anglo-Saxon king-lists that discomfited these Rationalists?
2. In pagan Anglo-Saxon culture (as with other pagan cultures) how would descendants often treat an ancestor who founded a dynasty or did something of great distinction?
3. Which king of the House of Kent ruled in 597 AD when Augustine landed with instructions to bring the English under the dominion of the papacy?
4. Which great English king of the House of Wessex was the son of Aethelwulf, had an authorized biography prepared by Asser, and had Bede's *Historia Ecclesiasticae* translated into old English?
5. What reason do many Rationalists assert for rejecting the Anglo-Saxon genealogies which trace back to Noah?
6. How do the patriarchal genealogies of the Norwegians, Danes, Icelanders and English Saxons compare?
7. In the pagan Norwegian and Danish king-lists, who does it seem "Noa" was?
8. In the pagan king-lists of the Norwegians, Danes, and Icelanders who does it appear Seskaf (or Scaef) is?
9. One common ancestor on the king-lists of the pagan Norwegians, Danes, Icelanders and English was affectionately deified by many of his descendants. One sacrificial rite the Vikings performed on his behalf was cutting out the lungs of a living man and laying them out on his shoulders so they resembled the outspread wings of an eagle. Who was this ancestor so revered by his pagan descendants?
10. The genealogy of the East Saxon kings was discovered comparatively recently. What had the early Saxons done to safeguard against omissions and accidental repeats?

ASSIGNMENT 5

Required Readings:

After the Flood, Chapter 8 and 9 and Appendix 14

Answer the Following Questions, based upon the Readings:

1. Which people's genealogy comes to us by way of such books and manuscripts as *The Book of Leinster*, the *Saltair of Cashel*, the *Book of Ballymote*, the *Chronicum Scotorum*, and the *Cin of Drom Snechta*?
2. Who were the fathers of the Scythian peoples?
3. The modern name of which people is the same in etymology as "Scythian"?
4. What people were long referred to as 'Scots' before the Scots migrated to Scotland?
5. Who led the first colonization of Ireland in 1484 BC according to the various chronicles of the Irish?
6. Where had then colony been expelled from before arriving in Ireland, according to Geoffrey of Monmouth?
7. What apparently happened to this first colony approximately 300 years later?
8. Who led the second colonization effort of Ireland circa 1145 BC?
9. From which city in Asia Minor did the third and last colonization of Ireland come circa 504 BC?
10. What invading army was coming into Asia Minor at this time?
11. From which of the 3 invasions of Ireland do we have the most extensive genealogical and historical records?
12. Which of the 3 invasions of Ireland were led by the brothers Eber (from whom came the southern chieftains) and Eremon (from whom came the northern chieftains)?
13. Eber and Eremon traced their descent from Gadelas. What is the significance of Gadelas?
14. What theory did men like Hutton and Lyle promote, which had the effect of persuading the modern western world that the earth is millions or billions of years old?
15. There are various complications involved in chronology. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle indicated the world was created circa 5200 BC. The author of *After the Flood* suggests the creation was circa 4700 BC. Much more likely is the approximate date suggested by the early Irish chroniclers (and agreed with by Ussher). What approximate date did they suggest?
16. What evidence suggests that the first colonization of Ireland may have experienced the Ice Age?

ASSIGNMENT 6

Required Readings:

After the Flood, Chapters 10 and 11 and Appendices 9 and 10

Beowulf (Do **not** feel like you have to read it all. We recommend you read the Prologue, Chapter 1, Chapters 11 and 12, and Chapters 42 and 43. You may just scan through the rest of the chapters in "Beowulf" if you want, and we will summarize the plot of these chapters in our classes.)

Answer the Following Questions, based upon the Readings:

1. Modern evolutionists assert that dinosaurs died out before the advent of man. Is this assertion consistent with recorded history?
2. Here is a several sentence summary of the Prologue of *Beowulf*: “The story begins with an account of Scyld Scefing, a great king who ruled by virtue of his power being greater than all others, and none would challenge him. This kept the peace, and he was rewarded tribute of gold. The son of Scyld, Beow(ulf), continued the rule gifting gold to the worthy and earning respect and loyalty. This fame spread throughout the North-lands and their prosperity grew. And when Beow died, they adorned him and his ship with treasure and set him off to burial at sea.” Where in 1939 was a seventh-century ship burial excavated, confirming just such a custom among people groups like that of Beowulf?
3. The Columbia Encyclopedia, Sixth Edition says this under the entry “Beowulf”:
“(bēowulf) (KEY <<http://www.bartleby.com/65/12.html>>), oldest English epic, probably composed in the early 8th cent. by an Anglian bard in the vicinity of Northumbria. It survives in only one manuscript, written c.A.D. 1000 by two scribes and preserved in the British Museum in the collection of Sir Robert Cotton. The materials for the poem are derived mainly from Scandinavian history, folk tale, and mythology. Its narrative consists of two parts: The first relates Beowulf’s successful fights with the water monster Grendel and with Grendel’s mother; the second narrates the hero’s victory in his old age over a dragon and his subsequent death and funeral at the end of a long life of honor. These events take place entirely in Denmark and Sweden. The poem contains a remarkable fusion of pagan and Christian elements and provides a vivid picture of old Germanic life. It is written in a strongly accentual, alliterative verse. There have been some 65 translations of the work into modern English; one of the most accomplished is by the Irish poet Seamus Heaney <<http://www.bartleby.com/65/he/Heaney-S.html>> (2000).” Pretend instead that you were asked to write the entry under “Beowulf” in the encyclopedia, approximately of the same length as the entry above, but in light of the information you have read in Chapter 11 of *After the Flood*. What would your entry read?

4. Louis J. Rodrigues, in the *Introduction* of his 2002 book *Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburh*, wrote the following answer to the question 'what is Beowulf?' :
5. "*Beowulf* is the editorial title of a long heroic poem considered the supreme achievement of Anglo-Saxon poetry because of its length (3182 lines) and sustained high quality, although it may be thought to have been surpassed in individual excellences by parts of some of the shorter quasi-lyrical 'elegies' such as *The Wanderer* and *Seafarer*."
6. Briefly, it is the poetic presentation of a man Beowulf as the ideal example of Germanic heroic culture, treated for a Christian audience with an explicit symbolism of the conflict of man with the powers of evil. In its dramatic portrayal of moments of high adventure and tragedy in the life of its hero, it employs parallelism, contrast, and a kind of tragic irony through allusive echoes of Germanic heroic lays and historic traditions well-known to its listeners. It has something of the depth and tone of an epic but not the form and construction commonly associated with that ancient classical term. Through Germanic history, legend, and folklore in a style and diction that sustains the best qualities of 'classical Anglo-Saxon verse', it presents a universally appealing tragedy of the human predicament.
7. The sole surviving manuscript, in which *Beowulf* was copied along with *Judith*, belongs to the tenth or early eleventh century. Although written in Late West Saxon which was the literary *koine* of the period, the poem is presumed to have originated either in Northumbria or Mercia. Generally called the *Beowulf Manuscript*, and also containing three prose pieces (*The Passion of St Christopher*, *The Wonders of the East*, and *The Letter of Alexander to Aristotle*), it was bound up early in the seventeenth century with another twelfth century manuscript containing chiefly King Alfred's adaptation of St Augustine's *Soliloquies*. Laurence Nowell, Dean of Lichfield, whose signature appears on the fly-leaf may have been responsible for its re-discovery after the dissolution of the monasteries. The combined manuscript was catalogued in the library of Sir Robert Cotton under the press-mark Vitellius A.xv and passed into the possession of the British Museum on his death in 1631. It later suffered scorching during the disastrous fire that destroyed part of the Cottonian collection in 1731 [*more on the fire at www.jagular.com/beowulf/fire.shtml* <<http://www.jagular.com/beowulf/fire.shtml>>]. This left the edges of the manuscript brittle, and fragments continued to break off until the folios were mounted in paper frames and rebound in the later nineteenth century. What is now the official foliation of the manuscript was added in 1884; this replaced the 'old' foliation, which did not include three leaves inserted at the beginning of the manuscript, and which was made at a time when two leaves of *Beowulf* were displaced from their correct positions.
8. The section of the MS Cotton Vitellius A.xv in which *Beowulf* is preserved was written by two scribes, the first of whom copied as far as *Beowulf* 1939 *scyran*, and the second from 1939 *moste* to the end [*more on the scribes at www.jagular.com/beowulf/scribes.shtml*]

- <http://www.jagular.com/beowulf/scribes.shtml>]. The division is reflected in the language of the poem, for the forms used by the second scribe diverge in some respects from those of the first: words spelt with *eo* in the earlier part of the manuscript, for instance, often show *io* in the work of the second scribe.
9. Before the Cottonian fire, Humfrey Wanley had prepared a transcript of lines 1-19 and 53-73 of *Beowulf*, and this provides some limited evidence of readings that have since been lost. Much more important, however, are two complete transcripts of the manuscript made in the later 1780's, now generally known as Thorkelin A and B; the former undertaken by a copyist on behalf of the Icelander Grimur Jónsson Thorkelin, and B by Thorkelin himself. According to Thorkelin both transcripts were made in 1787, though, as Kiernan has argued, it is possible that B was prepared two or three years later than this. At any rate it is apparent that A was undertaken before B, since, according to Malone, some of the readings that were visible to the copyist of A had evidently disappeared when B was made.
 10. Some stylistic characteristics of the poem suggest that it is likely to have been composed in writing and is of monastic origin because the art of composing an extended narrative such as *Beowulf*, markedly reflective and meditative in character, seems unlikely to have developed except within monastic culture, which provided the conditions for sustained composition influenced by Latin literature.
 11. The chief human protagonists in *Beowulf* are Scandinavian peoples: the Danes, prominent in the earlier part of the poem, who endure the marauding attacks of Grendel until both the monster and its avenging mother are overcome by Beowulf; the Geats, of whom Beowulf afterwards becomes king and in whose defence he meets his death in battle against a fire-breathing dragon; and the Swedes, whose conflicts with the Geats are recounted in passages interwoven into the narrative in the later part of the poem.
 12. The narrative material found in *Beowulf* concerning the Danes, the Geats, and the Swedes has analogues in a number of sources, notably the Anglo-Saxon poem *Widsith*, Snorri Sturluson's *Ynglinga saga*, and the Latin work known as *Gesta Danorum* by the Dane Saxo Grammaticus."
 13. List at least 3 errors Mr. Rodrigues has made in his essay above, based upon information in Chapter 11 of *After the Flood*, as well as "Beowulf" itself.
 14. What is an 'epic'?
 15. What is a 'poem'?
 16. What is 'prose'?
 17. Is "Beowulf" more accurately described as a poem or prose?
 18. Is *The Chronicle of the Early Britons* more accurately described as a poem or prose?
 19. "Beowulf" contains many alliterations, which enhance its literary beauty. What is an alliteration?
 20. Write a several sentence summary of the plot of chapter 11 of *Beowulf*. Use the chapters and appendices of *After the Flood* to assist you.

21. Write a several sentence summary of the plot of chapter 12 of *Beowulf*. Use the chapters and appendices of *After the Flood* to assist you.
22. In chapter 24 there is evidence that the pagan Scandinavian people believed in the Noahic Flood. What reference is made in chapter 24 to the Noahic Flood?
23. In Christian practice, the bodies of the dead are customarily buried, and not burned. Also, in Christian belief, it is understood that earthly treasures serve no purpose in the afterlife, so there is no need for one's earthly treasures to be buried with bodily remains. But in pagan Germanic culture, the rite of cremation falls in line with the idea that the body must be destroyed in order secure the spirit. Also, in pagan Germanic culture it is important that one's earthly treasures be buried alongside one's cremation ashes, so as to have them in the afterlife. In chapters 41 through 43, how do the practices concerning Beowulf's remains conform either to Christian or pagan practice?

ASSIGNMENT 7

Required Readings:

After the Flood, Chapter 12 and Appendices 11,12, and 13

Beowulf (You do not have to read all of it, but read some chapters as well as the plot summaries of the other chapters provided to you.)

The Chronicle of the Early Britons (Peruse it, but you do not need to read all of it in detail.)

Answer the Following Questions, based upon the Readings:

1. Using the 5 genealogical tables listed in Appendix 11 of *After the Flood*, prepare a genealogical table that incorporates what we know from the 5 tables to make as complete a genealogical table as possible from Japheth to Brutus.
2. What people in China claim descent from Japheth?
3. In what years was Bran, father of Caradog, a captive in Rome before his return to Britain?
4. Which ruler of Britain between 130 and 160 AD, who was the great grandson of Caradog, first gave lands and privilege of the country to Christians?
5. Give one example of parallelism in *Beowulf*.
6. Explain in a few sentences why you think *Beowulf* does or does not fit under the genre of tragedy.
7. Explain in a few sentences why you think *Beowulf* does or does not fit under the genre of historical narrative.
8. Explain in one or two sentences what you think is the climax of the plot in *Beowulf*.
9. What is the denouement in a story?
10. Give an example of alliteration in *Beowulf*, and briefly explain what makes it an example of alliteration.
11. If *Beowulf* was written by a pagan Scandinavian author, how most likely would this author then have known about the Great Flood, Cain, the race of giants before the Flood, the devil, hell, etc.?
12. For those modern critics who believe *Beowulf* was written by a Christian author, what do they generally assume concerning knowledge about the Great Flood, Cain, the race of giants before the Flood, the devil, hell, etc.?
13. Although compiled from pagan source documents, it is apparent that the compiler and editor of *The Chronicle of the Early Britons* was a Christian. Give one example from *The Chronicle of the Early Britons* that shows it was clearly of Christian authorship.
14. Shakespeare bases his play *King Lear* on historical records concerning King Lear (also spelled Leir), such as found in *The Chronicle of the Early Britons*. Below is a plot summary of Shakespeare's play *King Lear*. Read the plot summary, and then give an example of historical inaccuracy in this plot of the play *King Lear*, from what we read about the historical life of King Lear in *The Chronicle of the Early Britons*?

Plot Summary (from <http://shakespeare.about.com/library/weekly/aa021903c.htm>) :

“The story opens in ancient Britain, where the elderly King Lear is deciding to give up his power and divide his realm amongst his three daughters, Cordelia, Regan, and Goneril. Lear's plan is to give the largest piece of his kingdom to the child who professes to love him the most, certain that his favorite daughter, Cordelia, will win the challenge. Goneril and Regan, corrupt and deceitful, lie to their father with sappy and excessive declarations of affection. Cordelia, however, refuses to engage in Lear's game, and replies simply that she loves him as a daughter should. Her lackluster retort, despite its sincerity, enrages Lear, and he disowns Cordelia completely. When Lear's dear friend, the Earl of Kent, tries to speak on Cordelia's behalf, Lear banishes him from the kingdom. Meanwhile, the King of France, present at court and overwhelmed by Cordelia's honesty and virtue, asks for her hand in marriage, despite her loss of a sizable dowry. Cordelia accepts the King of France's proposal, and reluctantly leaves Lear with her two cunning sisters. Kent, although banished by Lear, remains to try to protect the unwitting King from the evils of his two remaining children. He disguises himself and takes a job as Lear's servant. Now that Lear has turned over all his wealth and land to Regan and Goneril, their true natures surface at once. Lear and his few companions, including some knights, a fool, and the disguised Kent, go to live with Goneril, but she reveals that she plans to treat him like the old man he is while he is under her roof. So Lear decides to stay instead with his other daughter, and he sends Kent ahead to deliver a letter to Regan, preparing her for his arrival. However, when Lear arrives at Regan's castle, he is horrified to see that Kent has been placed in stocks. Kent is soon set free, but before Lear can uncover who placed his servant in the stocks, Goneril arrives, and Lear realizes that Regan is conspiring with her sister against him.

Aware now of the extent of his daughters' betrayal, Lear rushes from the castle alone into the wilderness in a raging storm. After wandering for some time in the howling wind and pelting rain, the Fool and Kent find the King and beg him to seek shelter in a nearby hovel. But Lear, overcome with feelings of sorrow and remorse over his own transgressions, refuses to move, until the Earl of Gloucester arrives and convinces Lear that he understands his turmoil, for he too has an evil child, Edmund, and a beloved banished child, Edgar. The unsuspecting Gloucester has no idea that Edgar is nearby on the heath, disguised as a beggar.

Gloucester arrives back at Regan's castle in time to hear that the two sisters are planning to murder the King. He rushes away immediately to warn Kent to send Lear to Dover, where they will find protection. Kent, Lear, and the Fool leave at once, while Edgar remains behind in the shadows. Sadly, Regan and Goneril discover Gloucester has warned Lear of their plot, and Cornwall, Regan's husband, gouges out Gloucester's eyes. A servant tries to help Gloucester and attacks Cornwall with a sword – a blow later to prove fatal.

News arrives that Cordelia has raised an army of French troops that have landed at Dover. Regan and Goneril ready their troops to fight and they head to Dover. Meanwhile, Kent has heard the news of Cordelia's return, and sets off with Lear hoping that father

and daughter can be reunited. Gloucester too tries to make his way to Dover, and on the way, finds his own lost son, Edgar.

Tired from his ordeal, Lear sleeps through the battle between Cordelia and her sisters. When Lear awakes he is told that Cordelia has been defeated. Lear takes the news well, thinking that he will be jailed with his beloved Cordelia – away from his evil offspring. However, the orders have come, not for Cordelia's imprisonment, but for her death.

Despite their victory, the evil natures of Goneril and Regan soon destroy them. Both in love with Gloucester's conniving son, Edmund (who gave the order for Cordelia to be executed), Goneril poisons Regan. But when Goneril discovers that Edmund has been fatally wounded by Edgar, Goneril kills herself as well.

As Edmund takes his last breath he repents and the order to execute Cordelia is reversed. But the reversal comes too late and Cordelia is hanged. Lear appears, carrying the body of Cordelia in his arms. Mad with grief, Lear bends over Cordelia's body, looking for a sign of life. The strain overcomes Lear and he falls dead on top of his daughter. Kent declares that he will follow his master into the afterlife and the noble Edgar becomes the ruler of Britain.”

15. How does drama generally differ from historical narrative?
16. Give an example of an onomatopoeia in *Beowulf*, and explain how it is an onomatopoeia.
17. What is a theme?
18. What is a motif?
19. On page 47 of *The Chronicle of the Early Britons*, what do we read is placed upon Arthur's head, and what is it a symbol of?
20. After the reign of Cordelia, daughter of Leir, Cunedagius was a king of the Britons. According to *The Chronicle of the Early Britons*, which two brothers founded Rome, during the reign of Cunedagius?
21. According to *The Chronicle of the Early Britons*, which city did King Leir build, which unto this day bears his name in it?
22. Leir, like *Beowulf*, was a pagan. For example, they both believed in fate. The pagan Britons, coming originally from an area near the pagan Greeks, shared with the Greeks similar myths about fate. According to Greek and Roman mythology, the Goddess of Necessity, Themis, brought forth three lovely daughters, known as The Fates. All living things must eventually submit to these divine daughters of Zeus and Themis. Their names are: Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos. Life is woven by Clotho, measured by Lachesis and finally, in a very literal sense, the thread of life is cut by Atropos. They laugh at our feeble attempts to cheat them because they always prevail. What question does Leir ask of the Fates in his prayer, as he is traveling from Britain to Gaul?
23. Yet, as part of this same prayer, who else did Lear pray to, which suggests he had a knowledge of a Supreme Being, albeit also believing in lesser gods?

SECTION SIX : ESSAY PAPER

The course essay gives students an opportunity to communicate more thoroughly information you have learned in the course. It gives practice in presenting that knowledge in a logical and understandable manner.

Required Readings:

The Chronicle of the Early Britons
Beowulf

The Essay Assignment:

The Britons and the Anglo-Saxons were two of the most important early settlers in Great Britain. We can learn much about their respective societies from source documents like *The Chronicle of the Early Britons* and *Beowulf*. Describe each of their societies based upon the information in these two source documents. Include information about their government, their culture and lifestyle, their scholarship, their religious knowledge, and their values. Compose a 1-2 page typewritten essay (single-spaced, 12-point font) examining these two cultures.