

William Shakespeare, *Henry V*, 4.3.40-67

This day is called the Feast of Crispian.
He that outlives this day, and comes safe home
Will stand a-tiptoe when the day is named And
rouse him at the name of Crispian.
He that shall live this day, and live t'old age,
Will yearly on the vigil feast his neighbours
And say, 'To-morrow is Saint Crispian.'
Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars
And say 'These wounds I had on Crispin's day.'
Old men forget; yet all shall be forgot,
But he'll remember, with advantages,
What feats he did that day. Then shall our names,
Familiar in his mouth as household words —
Harry the King, Bedford and Exeter,
Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester —
Be in their flowing cups freshly remembered.
This story shall the good man teach his son,

And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by
From this day to the ending of the world
But we in it shall be remembered,
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers.
For he today that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,
This day shall gentle his condition:
And gentlemen in England now abed
Shall think themselves accursed they were not here,
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.





MIDDLE ENGLISH DIALECTS

SOME KEY EVENTS IN THE MIDDLE ENGLISH PERIOD

The following events during the Middle English period significantly influenced the development of the English language.

1066 The Normans conquered England, replacing the native English nobility with Anglo-Normans and introducing Norman French as the language of government in England.

1204 King John lost Normandy to the French, beginning the loosening of ties between England and the Continent.

1258 King Henry III issued the first English-language royal proclamation since the Conquest, having been forced by his barons to accept the Provisions of Oxford, establishing a Privy Council to oversee the administration of the government, so beginning the growth of the English constitution and parliament.

1337 The Hundred Years' War began and lasted until 1453, promoting English nationalism.

1348-50 The Black Death killed an estimated one-third of England's population and continued to plague the country for much of the rest of the century.

1362 The Statute of Pleadings was enacted, requiring all court proceedings to be conducted in English.

1381 The Peasants' Revolt led by Wat Tyler was the first rebellion of working-class people against their exploitation. Although it failed in most of its immediate aims, it marks the beginning of popular protest.

1384 John Wycliffe died, having promoted the first complete translation of scripture into the English language (the Wycliffite Bible).

1400 Geoffrey Chaucer died, having produced a highly influential body of English poetry.



1430 The Chancery office (where legal records were deposited) began recordkeeping in a form of East Midland English, which became the written standard of English.

1476 William Caxton brought printing to England, thus promoting literacy throughout the population.

1485 Henry Tudor became king of England, ending thirty years of civil strife, called the War of the Roses, and introducing 118 years of the Tudor dynasty.

1497 John Cabot sailed to Nova Scotia, foreshadowing English territorial expansion overseas.

Standard English can be traced back to the language of the Court of Chancery, founded in the fifteenth century to give prompt justice to English citizens and to consolidate the king's influence in the nation. It was then taken up by the early printers, who adapted it for other purposes and spread it wherever their books were read, until finally it fell into the hands of schoolteachers, dictionary makers, and grammarians.

| (type 3) London English | (type 4) Chancery Standard |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| nat | not |
| bot | but |
| swich(e) | such(e) |
| thise | thes(e) |
| thurgh | thorough |