

Paul's in-jera parts of which date from the 7th century faith and stone weren't the only things the Christian missionaries brought to the country they brought the international language of the Christian religion Latin terms became part of the English word horde Altera became otto apostolos became apostle mass monk and verse many others all come from the Latin this will become a pattern of English the layering of words taken from different source languages and from Latin to the English took their script the Angles Saxons Frisians and Jutes who had become the English hadn't brought had become the English hadn't brought script as we know it with them but rules the runic alphabet was made up of symbols formed mainly of straight lines so the letters could be carved into stone or wood those were their media rather than parchment or paper though this is a short poem most examples of runic writing that survived suggest runes were mainly used for short practical messages or graffiti The Latin alphabet was different with its curves and bows it allowed words to be easily written using pen and ink on two pages of parchment or vellum which gathered together into a book could be widely circulated Christianity brought the book to these shores verbum the word Soon a native culture of scholarship began to flower a culture based on Latin And in writing The magnificent Lindisfarne Gospels were created in the 8th century on the island of just off the northeast coast a few miles south at the monastery of St. Paul's in Jarrow the great English monk and scholar Bede born and educated in Northumbria began writing the first ever history of the English-speaking people he wrote of course in Latin the language of scholarship the prevailing language among the people was still Old English but Latin this powerful medium was now amongst them now Old English was written down using the Latin alphabet while retaining some of the old runes as letters from the 7th century While retaining some of the old runes as letters from the 7th century we find English itself written on parchment in a language and a script which was just about recognized as our own with writing Old English still a march on other languages spoken in Europe at the time prayers were recorded and books of the Bible translated the laws of the land were written down and the language soon became capable of recording and expressing an increasingly wide and subtle range of human experience and in the right hands Old English was now powerful and supple enough to take you to imaginary worlds fire the blood be poetry. It was the Victorians who dubbed Alfred the Great he was one of their darlings an English hero whose exploits were enthusiastically woven into the fabric of national myth but he very nearly didn't make it he came to the throne of Wessex within a year of the first Danish attacks in the southeast and at first he could hardly hold them back in 878 the Danes were on what happened appeared to be a decisive battle Chippenham in Wiltshire.