

「モールドンの戦い」現代英語試訳

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"A Modern English Trial Version of *The Battle of Maldon* "

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878年に英国のアルフレッド大王がデーン王グズラムと和睦を結び、アングロ・サクソン王朝の基礎を固めて以後1世紀経ってもなお、デーン人即ちヴァイキングの侵入略奪は断続的に続いていた。エドガー平和王の治下(959-975)のわずかな期間を除いて、それは更に半世紀続き、ついにはクヌート(在位1017-1035)に始まる四半世紀に及ぶデーン王朝の出現まで許してしまう。これは1066年のノルマン王朝成立以前の英国の最大の政治的・経済的問題であった。その間の幾多のヴァイキングとの戦いについての武勲詩のうち、最も有名なものの一つが「モールドンの戦い」である。

この戦いについては「アングロ・サクソン年代記」には991年の項にたった2行以下のような記述があるのみである。¹⁾

(Mod E): In this year Ipswich was sacked; and very speedily after that, the aldorman Brihtnoth was slain at Maldon.²⁾

しかし、この事件は無名の詩人によって謳われ、その詩の断片が存在している。東部方言の特徴が顕著であるが、³⁾古英語の語法が確立しているし、代称などの語彙も豊富である。物語の筋立ては、エセックスの太守ビュルフトノスとその重臣たちがイプスウィッチの海岸に来襲してきて入江に野営していたデーン人と戦って戦死する、という単純な展開である。しかし戦闘の各場面の描写に変化をつけていて聞き手または読者を飽きさせない。このように主題的にも語学的にも興味深い詩であるので、現代英語に訳してみた。散文訳はすでにあるが、⁴⁾今回はもとの韻文の形

態を保ちつつ、語順も詩的許容範囲内であればそのままにして、古英語の雰囲気をも温存して私訳を試みた。冠詞は古英語では無い場合が多いのでそれを補った。また、目的語や代名詞、副詞、前置詞も必要に応じて冠詞と同様に括弧にいれて補った。

..... became broken

Then (he) (= Birhtnoth; Brihtnoth; Byrhtnoth) ordered each of young men to leave (a) horse, to drive (one) afar and to go forth, and to think of (using) the arms and of (having) good courage,

5 when (the) kinsman of Offa found at first that the earl would not bear (the) beloved hawk (go)

toward (the) wood, and (he) stepped forward to the battle;

by (doing) that (a) man could know that the youth would not

10 weaken in the battle once he took (the) weapon.

Besides Eadric wanted to stand by his chief,

his lord at fight, then began to bear forth

(a) spear to (the) battle. He had (a) good heart,

while he could hold shield and broad sword

15 in hands; he stood by his vow

that he should fight close by his lord.

Then Birhtnoth began to set (his) warriors firm,

(he) rode and advised (them), taught (the) war-

riors
 how they should stand and hold the position,
 20 and bade that (they) (should) rightly hold their
 shields
 fast with hands and (they) (should) not fear.
 When he arranged the folk well,
 he alighted then among (the) people (who) were
 most dear to him,
 where he knew his retainers (to be) most loyal.
 25 Then (the) Vikings' messenger stood on (the) shore,
 cried out loudly, spoke words,
 who announced (the) message of Viking's
 boastfully to the earl, where he stood on (the)
 river bank.
 "Bold seamen sent me to you,
 30 ordered to say that you must send quickly
 treasure for defence, and (it) is better for you
 that you (would) buy off this battle with tribute
 than we (would) deal with such a fierce war.
 35 We do not need to kill ourselves if you succeed to
 (do) that.
 If you, who are the most powerful, decide
 that you wish to redeem your people
 give the seamen money for peace at their own re-
 quest,
 and take peace from us;
 40 we wish to go to (the) ship with the tribute,
 to (the) sea, and hold peace with you."
 Birhtnoth spoke, held up the shield,
 brandished (the) slender spear, spoke words,
 angry and resolute, gave him (the) answer.
 45 "Do you hear, seaman, what this folk says?
 They wish to give you spears, poisonous spears
 and old swords as tribute,
 the war-equipment which (would) be of no avail to
 you in battle.
 Seamen's messenger, (you) announce in reply,
 50 say to your people more loathsome message
 that here stands (a) noble earl with his troop
 who wishes to defend this homeland,
 the homeland of my lord, Ethelred,
 (my) folk and land. Heathen shall

55 fall in (the) battle. (It) seems to me shameful
 that you go to ship with our tribute
 without fighting, now (that) you (have) come
 thus far hither to our country.
 You shall not get (the) treasure so easily;
 60 spear and sword, grim warplay, shall reconcile
 first,
 before we give tribute."
 Then (he) ordered to bear (the) shields, warriors
 to go
 (so) that they all stood on the river-bank.
 The troop could not come to the other (side) be-
 cause of (the) water,
 65 (the) flood came flowing after the ebb,
 sea-streams closed up. (It) seemed to them too
 long
 until they (could) bear the spears together.
 There vanguard of East Saxons and (of) the ash-
 troop
 surrounded the River Pant in (an) array.
 70 Any of them could not injure the other,
 except (someone) who (would) get death by (the)
 flight of arrow(s).
 The flood went out. Then (the) seamen, many of
 (the) Vikings,
 stood ready, eager for war.
 Then (the) protector of warrisors ordered (a) war-
 rior
 75 to hold the bridge, who was called Wulfstan,
 brave through bold lineage; he was Ceola's son,
 who shot the first man with his spear,
 who most boldly stepped on the bridge there.
 There stood with Wulfstan fearless warriors,
 80 Aelfhere and Maccus, two brave ones,
 who (would) not take flight from the ford
 but they firmly defended against the enemies,
 while they might wield weapons.
 When the loathsome strangers understood and
 saw eagerly
 85 that they found (the) bitter bridge defenseless there,
 (they) began to practice deception. Then (they)
 asked that they might get access to

- go over the ford, lead (the) troop.
 Then the earl began to allow too much land,
 90 for his pride, to hostile people.
 Then Birhthelm's son began to call
 across (the) cold water. (The) warriors listened.
 "Now (it) is opened to you, come quickly to us,
 (as) men (go) to battle. God alone knows
 95 who may wield (power on) the battlefield."
 The slaughter-wolves, Viking's troops, went,
 (they) didn't mind (the) water, westward over the
 River Pant ,
 over (the) clear water, carried shields.
 Sailors bore shield(s) (of linden) to (the) land.
 100 There on the opposite (side) of (the) enemies,
 Birhtnoth stood ready with (his) warriors.
 He ordered (them) to form (a) phalanx and to hold
 (the) troop
 fast against the enemies. Then the fight was
 near,
 glory at (the) battle. The time has come
 105 that (the) doomed men should die.
 There clamour was raised, ravens flew,
 eagle(s) (flew) eager for carrion. (A) cry was on
 (the) earth.
 Then they let file-hard spears,
 sharpened javelins fly from (their) hands.
 110 Bows were busy, shield received spear point(s).
 Bitter was the onslaught. Warriors fell
 on each side; (young) warriors lay (dead).
 Wulfmaer, kinsman of Birhtnoth, was wounded,
 chose (the) bed of death; his (=Birhtnoth's) sister's
 son
 115 was terribly cut down with swords.
 Then (a) requital was given to the Vikings.
 I heard that Edward slayed one harshly
 with his sword, did not refrain from (giving a)
 blow,
 so that (the) fated warrior fell at (his) feet.
 120 His lord said thanks for it
 to the chamber-thane, when he had (the) opportunity.
 Thus, highly resolute, (the) warriors,
 warriors with weapons, stood firm
 in (the) battle, (and) thought eagerly
 125 who could win life first from (the) fated man
 there.
 The slain fell to (the) earth.
 (They) stood steadfast. Birhtnoth commanded
 them,
 asked that each of (the) warriors would think (of
 going to the) battle,
 who would wish to achieve fame by fighting
 against the Danes.
 130 (Then) a war-hard (one) lifted up (the) weapon,
 (the) shield of defence, and stepped forward
 against the warrior (=Birhtnoth).
 (Thus) the resolute (one), (the) earl like a churl,
 went out;
 each of them thought of evils to (the) other.
 Then the seaman threw (the) southern spear,
 135 so that (the) lord of (the) warriors became wounded.
 He shove (the spear) then with the shield, (so) that
 the shaft
 broke apart, and the spear broke, (so) that it
 sprang away.
 The warrior (=Birhtnoth) became enraged; he
 stabbed
 (the) proud Viking who gave him wound with
 (his) spear then.
 140 The warrior was wise; he let his spear go
 through the warrior's neck, guided his hand
 (so) that he hit (the) life of the sudden-attacker.
 Then he quickly stabbed the other,
 (so) that the corselet broke apart; he was wounded
 145 on (the) breast through the corselet;
 the poisonous spear point stood at (his) heart.
 The earl was (the) happier;
 the brave man laughed, said thanks to God
 for the day's work which God gave him.
 One of (the) Vikings let (the) javelin off (the)
 hand,
 150 fly from (the) hand, (so) that it departed forth
 through Aethelred's noble thane.
 By his side stood a warrior, not fully grown,

(a) young man in the battle, who very boldly
 drew (the) bloody spear off a warrior,
 155 Wulfstan's son, Wulfmaer the young,
 (he), let (the) strong (spear) go back again:
 (the) spear point penetrated in. So the one
 who (had) hit his lord hard before lay (dead) on
 (the) earth.

Then the armed warrior went toward the
 earl(=Birhtnoth);
 160 he wished to fetch (the) ornaments of (the) war-
 rior, garment and rings, and decorated sword.
 Then Birhtnoth drew (the) sword from (the)
 sheath,
 broad and brown-edged, and struck through the
 corselet.

Too soon one of the sailors hindered him,
 165 so he wounded the earl's arm.
 Then (the) gold-hilted sword fell to (the) ground:
 he could not hold the hard sword,
 wield (the) weapon. Yet (the) hoar battle-leader
 spoke words, encouraged (his) warriors,
 170 told (his) good comrades to go forth.
 (He) could not stand fast on (his) feet.
 He looked toward heaven.

"I thank you, Lord of the world,
 for all those joys which I experienced in the
 world.
 175 Now, mild Lord, I have (the) greatest need
 that you grant grace to my spirit
 that my soul may travel to you
 by your power, Lord of Angels,
 depart in peace. I am desirous to you
 180 that they, the devils, may not harm (it)."

Then (the) heathen warriors killed him,
 and both warriors, Aelfnoth and Wulfmar,
 who stood by him both lay (dead).
 They gave up their lives near their lord.
 185 Then they, who did not wish to be there, turned
 away from (the) battle.
 There, Odda's son was the first on flight;
 Godric (also) out of the battle and he abandoned
 the good (one)

who (had) given him horses often times.
 He leapt upon the horse which his lord owned,
 190 on the trapping which was not right,
 and his brothers, Godwin and Godwig,
 both galloped away, did not care for (the) fight
 and went out from (the) battle and sought the
 wood,

quickly flew away and saved their lives;
 195 and (for) more of the men (it) would be fitting
 if they remember all the merits
 which he had bewtowed (on) them as benefit.

So Offa had said to him on the day
 at the council place, where he had the meeting
 200 that there many boldly spoke
 who would not endure at need.

Then the folk's lord was fallen
 Aethelred's earl: all hearth-companions
 saw that their lord lay (dead).
 205 Then (the) proud thanes went forth there,
 brave men eagerly hastened;
 then they all wished one of two (things):
 to leave life or to avenge (their) beloved (lord).

Thus Aelfric's son encouraged them on,
 210 (the) warrior, young in age, spoke words;
 (it was) Aelfwine who said; he spoke with cour-
 age;

"Remember the speech which we often spoke at
 mead,
 when we raised boast on (the) bench,
 warriors in (the) hall, about (a) hard battle.

215 Now may the man, who is bold, prove that he is.
 I will make noble lineage known to all,
 that I was from (the) great kin in (the) Mercians.
 My grandfather was called Ealhelm,
 (a) wise alderman, prosperous in worldly (things).

220 Now thanes among the people shall not reproach
 me
 if I wish to go (out) of this array,
 seek(ing) homeland, now (that) my lord lies
 hewn in battle. That is (of) greatest sorrow to
 me.
 He was both my kinsman and my lord."

- 225 Then he went forth, remembered the feud,
 (so) that he hit a Viking in the group;
 then he lay on (the) earth, killed by his weapon.
 (He) began to urge comrades, friends and com-
 panions,
 (so) that they (would) go forth.
- 230 Offa spoke, shook ash-wood (spear),
 "Lo, you Aelfwine have exhorted all,
 thanes in danger. Now our lord, (our) earl,
 lies on (the) earth, (it is) in need for us all
 that each of us embolden (the) other(s),
 235 (the) warriors to battle, as long as he may
 have and hold (a) strong weapon, hard blade,
 spear and good sword. Godric, Odda's coward son
 has betrayed us all.
 Many men thought that it (would) be our lord,
 240 when he (=Godric) rode (off) on (the) horse, on
 that proud horse.
 For that here on (the) field, folks (were) divided,
 the shield-wall (was) broken. His action would be
 a failure
 that he caused so many a man here to flee."
 Leofsunu spoke and raised his linden shield,
 245 (a) shield for defense. He answered the warrior.
 "I promise that, that I will not flee
 a foot-step from here, but will go further,
 avenge my beloved lord in (the) fight.
 Steadfast warriors around Sturmer need not
 250 blame (me) with words, now that my lord fell,
 that I would travel home lordless,
 turning from battle, but weapon, spear
 and sword shall take me." He advanced very an-
 grily,
 fought hard; he scorned flight.
- 255 Then Dunnere spoke, (a) humble churl,
 brandished (the) spear. (He) cried out to all,
 bade each of (the) warriors avenge Birhtnoth.
 "He who thinks (to) avenge (his) lord on (the) folk
 may not hesitate, nor mourn for life."
 260 Then they went forth; they did not care about
 life.
 Then the warriors, fierce warriors,
- began to fight hard and bade God
 that they must avenge their beloved lord
 and cause death on their enemies.
- 265 The hostage began to help them.
 He was from (a) brave kin of the Northumbrians,
 Ecglaf's son. Aescferth was his name.
 He did not hesitate at the battle-play,
 but he sent forth arrows one after another.
- 270 Now he shot at (the) shield, now tore (the) warrior
 apart.
 He gave a wound at each time,
 as long as he could wield weapons.
 Still, Eadweard the Long stood with (a) spear,
 ready and earnestly, spoke boastful words
 275 that he would not flee a step on the land,
 turn away, when his better (one) lay (dead).
 He broke the shield-wall and fought against the
 warriors,
 until he (would) avenge the seamen for his trea-
 sure-giver worthily,
 before he (would) lie on (the) slaughter (place).
- 280 So did Aethelric, noble comrade,
 ready and eager to advance, earnestly fought,
 Sibirht's brother and very many other(s)
 split hollow shields; they defended (themselves)
 bravely.
 (The) rim of (the) shield burst, and the byrnie
 sang
 285 one of (the) terrible song(s). Then in (the) battle
 Offa slayed the seaman,
 (so) that he fell on (the) ground.
 In (the) battle-field Offa was quickly hewn
 (down).
 However, he had carried out what he promised to
 his lord
 290 as he vowed formerly to his ring-giver,
 that they should both ride in the town,
 hale to (their) home(s), or fall in (the) army,
 at (the) battle-place, die of wounds.
 He lay thane-like near (the) lord.
- 295 Then (the) shields' crash happened. (The) seamen
 advanced,

enraged by (the) battle. Spear often went through
(the) body of (the) doomed. Then Wigstan went
forth, Thurstan's son, fought against the warri-
ors.

He was (the) slayer of the three in the throng,
300 before Wighelm's son lay himself in the slaugh-
ter.

There was (a) hard encounter. (The) warriors
stood fast

in the battle; warriors fell
with weary wounds. Slaughter fell on (the) earth.
Oswold and Eadwold, all (the) while,

305 both of them brothers, encouraged the men,
bade the beloved kinsmen with words
that they should endure in danger,
make use of (the) weapons not weakly.

Byrhtwold spoke, held up the shield --
310 who was (an) old retainer -- brandished (the)
spear.

He taught the warriors very boldly.

"Mind shall be the harder, heart the keener,
courage shall be more, as our might diminishes.

Here lies our lord, all hewn down,

315 good (man) in (the) dirt. Ever may (he) mourn
who now thinks to turn from this battle.
I am old of life; I will not (return),
but I intend to lie by (the) side of my lord,
by such (a) beloved man."

320 So Athelgar's son, Godric, encouraged them all
to (the) fight. He often let (the) spear go,
let fly (the) deadly spear, to the Vikings,
thus he went foremost among the folks,
cut down and injured until he fell in (the) battle.
325 (He) was not the Godric who fled from (the) battle
then.

註

- 1) "The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle" の写本の中でも
Parker Chronicle だけはこの事件の記述を993年
においている
- 2) Benjamin Thorpe, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.
(*Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores*)
Rolls Series 23, Opera 2, Kraus Reprint, 1964,
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- 3) Mark Griffith, "Dialect and Literary Dialect in
the 'Battle of Maldon'," *Notes and Queries*, Vol.
243, No. 3, (New Series Vojl. 45), 1998, p.272
- 4) M. H. Abrams, ed., *The Norton Anthology of*
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Saxon*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1995

Summary

This is an attempt to translate one of the famous heroic poems concerning the defense of the Saxon shores against the Vikings' raid in 991. The unknown poet praises heroic deeds of Birhtnoth, earl of Essex, in the fight. Although the poem is incomplete, the Saxon force led by him seemed to have been doomed to lose. In spite of King Alfred's consolidation of the Anglo-Saxon Dynasty the Danes thus continued to harrass the Anglo-Saxons until Canute established his Dynasty in England immediately before the dawn of the Norman Conquest.