

## The text

The text has been constructed as a transcript of manuscript features, together with editorial additions. The transcript and the editorial matter are combined so as to enable analysis of certain writing conventions of the copyists in terms of the linguistic and (by inference) the metrical patterns in the verbal composition known now as *Beowulf*. The transcript and the editorial additions in no way overlap: that is to say, the two constituents of the text are encoded so that they cannot contaminate each other. Additional editorial information—grammatical parsing, for example—can be incorporated without impairing the present text.

### A. Manuscript features.

(1) The alphabetic symbols are transcribed in the order in which they appear in the manuscript, following the convention of horizontal lines of writing to be read from left to right, in the order top to bottom, as they are written on leaves arranged in the sequence of codices of Western Europe.

Majuscule letters are transcribed with modern capital letters. Minuscule letters are transcribed with lower case letters.

All letters (graphemes) shared by the conventional alphabets for Old English and Modern English are transcribed with their modern values. This entails insular  $\zeta$  being represented by **g** as well as **Ġ** being represented by **G**. Modern **t** represents its ancestral form, different as it may be in Old English script, and so on. Three letters, with their minuscule and majuscule alternate forms that are used in writing Old English but not Modern English, are retained as **ð** **Ð**, **þ** **Þ**, **æ** **Æ**. The pair **p** **P** (lower and upper case ‘wynn’) are assigned the same values as **w** and **W**, respectively. The infrequent **e** is transcribed as **e**.

(2) Other distinctive symbols in their contexts are represented as follows.

(a) A single point, usually raised in the first scribe’s (S1’s) copy but on the line in the second scribe’s (S2’s) copy, is transcribed as a full stop (a period); most marks of punctuation in the manuscript are of this kind. Multiple marks for pointing have modern symbol approximations.

Scribal marks indicating where a correction is to be made, or where a superscript letter is to be read as a correction, and the like, are not transcribed.

(b) The mark resembling an acute accent is transcribed as an acute accent; it occurs exclusively with letters representing long vowels. The combination of the vowel letter and the mark, resembling *á*, for example, is transcribed as *á*.

(c) Abbreviations are used in the manuscript both for words (or root morphemes) and for following sounds. The word (or morpheme) abbreviations are these:

Manuscript	þ	(for <i>þæt</i> )	transcribed	þ
	7	(for <i>ond</i> )		7
	⌘	(for <i>eþel</i> )		. = eþel.

Abbreviations to signify omission of one or two letters (representing sounds or a syllable) consist of a horizontal stroke above a written letter. Manuscript  $\bar{u}$ ,  $\bar{i}$ , etc. are transcribed  $u=$ ,  $i=$ , etc., where the superior stroke signifies a following nasal consonant, e.g., MS  $g\bar{u}$  for **gum** is the initial part of the compound *gum-cystum* (1486), MS  $d\bar{o}$  is written for the first morpheme of *dōm-lēas* (2890), MS  $bea\bar{r}$  is to be expanded as *bearm*.

In addition, MS  $\bar{g}$  is to be expanded as *ge* in *ge-scipe* 2570, and MS  $\bar{æft}$  is to be expanded as *æfter* 2060, etc. These two belong to S2's copy alone; the few other abbreviations, e.g., MS  $\bar{m}$  for *men* (3165) particularly on the last, and crowded, folio, are transcribed similarly.

(3) Spacing between letters not standing in normal juxtaposition (with or without ligature) is transcribed with numerals 1 through 7, the ascending order of numerals corresponding to increasing measure of space between successive letters in the lineal, left-to-right sequence. Varied measure of spacing is illustrated in these three examples:

0289 <sup>4</sup> wor<sup>2</sup>da / <sup>7</sup> wor<sup>2</sup>ca <sup>5</sup> sē<sup>1</sup> þe<sup>3</sup> wēl<sup>3</sup> þenceð<sup>4</sup>  
 1545 <sup>7</sup> Of<sup>1</sup>-sæt<sup>2</sup> þā<sup>3</sup> þone<sup>4</sup> sele<sup>1</sup>-gyst / . . .  
 1248 / gē<sup>2</sup> æt<sup>3</sup> hām<sup>3</sup> gē<sup>2</sup> on<sup>0</sup> herge<sup>5</sup>  
           gē<sup>1</sup> ge<sup>4</sup>-hwæper<sup>4</sup> þāra /

(See further explanation below.) Measure of spacing that cannot be determined, usually because of loss of or damage to portions of the manuscript, is represented by the numeral 8; the same numeral is also used when editorial emendation adds or deletes word units. End of the manuscript line is represented by the numeral 9. Both 8 and 9 thus represent indeterminate measure of spacing between successive letters, or strings of letters, in contrast to the lineally determinate spacing represented by the numerals 1 through 7. Absence of spacing between letter strings representing types of linguistic materials that elsewhere are commonly written with intervening space—essentially, words and root morphemes—is transcribed as 0 (zero): *seþe* (909) appears as **se 0 þe**; *þese* (1000) appears as **þe 0 se**; *heto* (925) appears as **hē 0 tō**, etc. While these are easily relegated to treatment as particles attaching (cliticizing) to each other (and maybe to some further word) by one of Kuhn's laws, say, and some metrical theory that reflects it, there are also many instances of zero-spacing that are contrastive with other spacings of the same morphic sequences which are not particles. Look at the name in this pair of verses:

1236 <sup>7</sup> him<sup>3</sup> hrōþ<sup>0</sup>-gār<sup>4</sup> ge<sup>1</sup>-wāt<sup>4</sup> tō<sup>0</sup> hofe<sup>3</sup> sīnum<sup>3</sup>  
 1321 Hrōð<sup>3</sup>-gār<sup>5</sup> mapelode<sup>6</sup> helm<sup>3</sup> scyldinga<sup>9</sup>

The zero-spacing in *hrōþ-gār* cannot be accounted for by laws of particles, and whatever principle is found to account for it must be able to account for the 3-spacing as well. (See Appendix IV.)

## B. Editorial additions

(1) Identification of verse lines: each metrical line begins a separate line of transcription. However, a verse line whose transcription requires an excessive number of characters is divided at the halfline position in the printed format, text of the *b*-verse being preceded by seven blanks. A metrical line is identified by its place in the textual sequence by the standard line-count given as a four-digit numeral preceding it.

(2) End of an *a*-verse (a first halfline) is marked by three blanks, and end of a *b*-verse is the end of a line of transcription.

(3) Section numberings in the manuscript, occurring at the fitt divisions of the text, are roman numerals with or without pointing on either side; they are transcribed with the appropriate letters (and punctuation) on a separate line.

(4) Vowel length is represented by separate characters for linguistically distinct “long” and “short” vowels. A long vowel is marked with a macron, *ē* for example being distinguished from a short vowel represented as *e*. The distinction of long and short vowels follows the text of Klaeber’s 3rd edition of *Beowulf and The Fight at Finnsburg*. It differs from Klaeber’s text, however, in regularly transcribing the relative particle *þe* (or *ðe*) with a short vowel. In doubtful instances where, for example, Klaeber prints *anræd* in the text (1529, 1575) but gives “(ān-?)” in his Glossary, the form in the text is given here.

(The text in the original edition used reduplication of letters for long vowels, single letters for short one. This convention has a utility of its own, and conversion of *ē* to *ee*, for example, can be done electronically with little effort or expense of time. That convention—necessitated by the limitation of the character set to one case of letters (upper case, in print)—was suitable because the MS text of *Beowulf* did not employ reduplication of vowel letters, and any two identical vowel letters in succession would have belonged to separate morphemes.)

(5) Emendations of the manuscript text are registered by conventions described next. Most of them are those of Klaeber’s third edition, but some of them have been proposed by others. Several of these are from Kemp Malone’s “Readings” given in his edition of *The Nowell Codex*, cross-checked with his “Readings from the Thorkelin Transcript of *Beowulf*,” and a few others have been gleaned mainly from Kevin Kiernan’s *Beowulf and the Beowulf Manuscript* and “The State of the ‘Beowulf’ Manuscript 1882–1983,” *Anglo-Saxon England*, 13 (1984), 23–32. (Klaeber’s text is inaccurate in reading *Ðā* instead of *pā* (1288), *mapelode* instead of *maðelode* (1473).)

(a) Deletion of manuscript text is marked by a pair of parentheses () preceding the letter(s) omitted in the edited text; end of the deletion is signified by a hyphen, a blank, or an asterisk (or superscript numeral in the printed text). A manuscript reading not incorporated into Klaeber’s text has no editorial additions; the principal instance is that of vowel length.

(b) Addition to the manuscript text is marked by an asterisk preceding the letter(s) that are added; end of the addition is a hyphen or a blank (or su-

perscript numeral in the printed text). Editorial addition may occur with added text.

(c) Replacement of a manuscript reading is transcribed as a deletion and addition sequence. Manuscript *sole* (302) replaced by edited text *sāle*, for example, appears as **()sole\*sāle**.

(6) Restoration of a manuscript reading that has not been preserved in either the manuscript in its present condition or in earlier transcriptions of it is represented as a replacement, as well: the deletion symbol **()** preceding a string of  $\Delta$  characters, one such mark for each illegible or lost letter, so far as this can be determined or estimated. Malone's "Readings," in *The Nowell Codex*, serves as the usual authority for the number of letters lost; restorations are those of Klaeber's text.

Illegible text that cannot be restored except by pure conjecture is transcribed as a string of  $\Delta$  symbols only.

(7) Morph boundaries are signified by a hyphen, a blank, or a combination of these symbols according to the following rules:

(a) Identification of morph boundaries.

(1) Any position in the manuscript text at which space is left between letter strings is regarded as a morph boundary. Space is defined here as any distance between successive letters, measured along the ruled line of writing, that is greater than that for normal contiguity or juxtaposition, in this noncursive script. (Ligature is discussed in a later section.) End of a manuscript line, as mentioned earlier, is treated as spacing of a distinctive and indeterminate kind.

(2) Any position corresponding to a word boundary (as defined by morphotactic and syntactic principles) is regarded as a morph boundary.

(3) Any position corresponding to onset of a root morpheme or a prebase morpheme is regarded as a morph boundary. However, the onset of an inflectional suffix is not so regarded for purposes of transcription, and neither is the onset of a derivational suffix, with the exception of *-lice*. Reasons for these rules are pragmatic. Roots and prebases are usually set off from preceding morphs by spacing; see Appendices II and III. On the other hand, suffixed morphemes almost never are separated from preceding morphemes unless morpheme boundary and syllable boundary are coincident—**mār-2-ne** 36, but usually **bēa-2-ga** 35, **-hrē-2-pig** 94, etc.; see Appendix I.

(b) Notation of morph boundaries

Because the identification of morphs, for purposes of transcription, proceeds from both graphic and linguistic criteria, the types of morphs thus isolated are distinguished in the notation.

(1) The boundary of a morph that is not also a morpheme or word boundary as stipulated in (2) and (3) just above is marked by a hyphen attached to the letter string with no blank intervening between the hyphen and the numeral representing the measure of spacing between letters. Single morpheme *fela*, for example, divided at the end of a manuscript line is transcribed **fe-9-la**.

(2) The boundary of a morph that is also a root or prebase morpheme but is not a word (see (3), just above) is represented by a hyphen attached to the letter string and a blank intervening between the hyphen and the spacing numeral. The text represented editorially as *māpumgestrēona* (1931) is transcribed **4 māp̣m- 3 -ge- 2 -strēona 4**.

(3) The boundary of a morph that is also a word boundary, as stipulated above, is marked by a blank (only) intervening between the letter string and the spacing numeral. Thus, text normally printed as *gyf hēo gýt lyfað* (944b) is transcribed **4 gyf 9 hēo 1 gýt 3 lyfað 5**.

A comprehensive example is *drēamhealdende*. (1227) transcribed as

**6 drēam- 4 -heal-2-den-9-de. 7**.

Because both graphic and linguistic criteria are employed for identification of morphs in the transcription, the numeral 0 appropriately registers absence of manuscript spacing (other than normal juxtaposition of letters) at a linguistically defined morph boundary: in line 1277 occurs **9 gīfre 4 7 0 galg- 0 -mōd 4**. As the transcription shows, zero-spacing has unqualified pragmatic justification in that the positions in which it occurs are similar to those in which spacing occurs elsewhere—and unexceptionally—in the manuscript. As the analyses in the appendices will confirm, zero-spacing is a crucially important feature of the graphotactic scheme of the manuscript text.

## Summary of the notation system for this transcription.

Letters shared by Old and Modern English alphabets are transcribed with their modern values. (The letters *j q z* do not occur; *w* transliterates *p*.)

Old English letters not part of the modern English alphabet:

ƿ þ ƿ ð Ð æ Æ.

Vowel letters with superior accent-like mark have these values (all of them are also long vowels): á æ é í ó ū ý.

Abbreviations: þ = þæt, ʒ = ond.

Linecount of metrical lines, according to Klaeber and all principal editors, precedes each line of the transcription.

End of a metrical line is the end of a line of transcription. End of a first halfline (an *a*-verse) is represented by three blanks.

- 0–9 a numeral registers lineal measure of spacing between strings of letters; arabic numerals do not occur in the Anglo-Saxon text.
  - 0–7 represent spacing between letter-strings;
  - 8 represents spacing that is indeterminate, whether for text being lost, erasures or corrections, or other cause.
  - 9 represents end of a manuscript line.
- (blank) represents word boundary and some morpheme boundaries; see B(7)(b).
- (hyphen) represents morpheme boundaries not coincident with word boundaries; see B(7)(b).
- \* (asterisk) signifies beginning of editorial addition; see B(5)(b).
- () (open and close parentheses juxtaposed) signify emendation by deletion of manuscript text; see B(5)(a).
- = represents an abbreviation mark in the manuscript; see A(2)(c).
- . (full stop, or period) represents the similar mark in the manuscript, usually raised in S1's copy.
- Δ represents an illegible or lost letter; see B(6).