

WONDERLINGS

FOOTNOTES

I am not the first person to try to avoid French-based words when writing about the Anglo-Saxons. If I found myself in novelist-mode, discussing a scene from days-of-yore, then I felt entitled to wax lyrical in modern English, regardless of the root source of the words.

However, it seemed unfair to ask Jutes who existed in 683 AD to frame sentences dotted with healthy Norman or French derivatives.

The best way to go in this situation is to read Saxon scripts, then decide on a better word or group of words for the French equivalent.

For instance, the made-up word **folk-clutch** was used instead of "village"; **flesh-hacker** instead of "butcher". Oh, and some of the wild-flowers gained new names at Netta-Vere's hands. For instance, yellow mustard was called "wisp". And I know (!!!) that geese are not "fowl". I know that. But I could not have my characters mention "poultry". So I decided that (in those times) "fowl" was probably an all-purpose word for birds, and went that way. Sorry if I've offended the purists.

Fargang (literally "far-going") was a word of a different order; for I needed to include several threads of meaning here. Firstly, yes, it was a journey, etched from South to North over English then Scottish lands. Secondly, there was a hugely important religious element. Hence, the pledges to the god Seaxneat which were intended to ensure safe passage (and often did). Thirdly, the fellowship

demanding of the men (that they did not desert the fargang for any reason) was a nod to the "mateship" factor which must necessarily encompass any such large undertaking. The fact that Murdo left the fargang, his work all unfinished, was a desertion, causing the enterprise to teeter on the edge.

Now to more mundane matters. Joan was dumped in favour of her younger sister. Well, I wanted to assure the reader that she ended up alright, but I did not care either way. I lost interest in her. If she believed that a woman should be with her man, then she could have chucked in her job at Jennings and move South. I just completely lost patience with her iffing and butting, so I allowed Charles to dump her unceremoniously.

The most amazing admission of all is this:-- Years ago, it seemed to me that there was an innate "mirthfulness" about the English, which must have seeped down from the Anglo-Saxons. There was an English version of "Ground Force" which illustrated just this concept; that the English can work and be amusing (both for us and for each other). In so many ways, Reg Thorrock encapsulated that marvellous jollity which is so very English. Even when he tried to be serious, that in-built mirth shone through. Arthur and Charles might have been dazzling heroes, but Reg was the stolid, cricket-playing Englishman who was so fashionable in pre- and post-war British films.

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