In this abbess's monastery was a certain brother particularly glorified and honoured with a divine gift, in that he fittingly was accustomed to make songs, which pertained to religion and virtue, so that whatever thus he he learned of divine letters from scholars, those things he after a moderate space of time he brought forth, in poetic language adorned with the greatest sweetness and inspiration and well-made in the English language. And by his poem-songs the spirits of many men were kindled to distain of the world and to service of a heavenly life. And likewise, many others after him among the English people endeavoured to compose pious songs, but none however in like manner to him could do so because he had learned not at all from men nor through man that he songcraft learned, but he was divinely aided and through God's gift received the art of poetry. And he therefore he never could make any sort of lying or idle songs, but just those alone which pertained to piety, and those which were fitting for his pious tongue to sing. The man was established in worldly life until the time when he was of advanced age, and he had never learned any songs. And consequently, often at a drinking gathering, when there was deemed to be occasion of joy, that they all must in turn sing with a harp, when he saw the harp nearing him, he then arose for shame from that feast and went home to his house. Then he did this on a certain occasion, that he left the banquet-hall and he was going out to the animal stables, which herd had been assigned to him that night. When he there at a suitable time set his limbs at rest and fell asleep, then some man stood by him in his dream and hailed and greeted him and addressed him by his name: 'Caedmon, sing me something.' Then he answered and said: 'I do not know how to sing and for that reason I went out from this feast and went hither, because I did not know how to sing at all.' Again he said, he who was speaking with him: 'Nevertheless, you must sing.' Then he said: 'What must I sing?' Said he: 'Sing to me of the first Creation.' When he received this answer, then he began immediately to sing in praise of God the Creator verses and words which he had never heard, whose order is this:

(Nu we sculon herigean heofonrices weard,)  
Now we must praise the Protector of the heavenly kingdom,

(meotodes meahte ond his modge?anc,)  
the might of the Measurer and His mind's purpose,
(weorc wuldorfaeder, swa he wundra gehwæs,)
the work of the Father of Glory, as He for each of the wonders,

ece drihten, or onstealde.)
the eternal Lord, established a beginning.

(He ærest sceop eor?an bearnum)
He shaped first for the sons of the Earth

(heofon to hrofe, halig scyppend;)
heaven as a roof, the Holy Maker;

(a middangeard moncynnes weard,)
then the Middle-World, mankind's Guardian,

(ece drihten, æfter teode)
the eternal Lord, made afterwards,

(firum foldan, frea ælmihtig.)
solid ground for men, the almighty Lord.

Then he arose from that sleep, and all of those (songs) which he sang while sleeping he had fast in his memory, and he soon added in the same manner to those words many words of songs worthy of God. Then in the morning he came to the town-reeve, who was his alderman. He said to him which gift did he bring, and he directly lead him to the abbess and made it known and declared to her. Then she ordered all of the most learnèd men and scholars to assemble, and to those who were present commanded him to tell of that dream and sing that song, so that it might be determined by the judgement of all of them: what it was and whence it had come. Then it was seen by all even as it was, that to him from God himself a heavenly gift had been given. Then they spoke to him and told some holy story and divine words of knowledge; they bade him then, if he could, that he turn it into poetical rhythm. Then, when he had undertaken it in this manner, then he went home to his house, and came again in the morning, and with the best adorned song he sang and rendered what he was bid (to recite).

Then the abbess began to embrace and love the gift of God in that man, and she exhorted and advised him that he should abandon the worldly life and accept monkhood, and he readily agreed to this. And she accepted him into the monastery, with his goods, and united him into the community of God's servants, and ordered that he be taught the (entire)
series of holy stories and narratives. And he was able to learn all that he heard, and, keeping it all in mind, just as a clean animal chewing cud, turned (it) into the sweetest song. And his songs and his poems were so beautiful to hear, that his teachers themselves wrote and learned at his mouth. He sang first about the creation of the world and about the origin of mankind and all of the history of Genesis--that is the first book of Moses--, and afterwards about the exodus of the Israeli people from the land of Egypt and their entry into the promised land; and about many other stories of the holy writ of the books of the canon; and about Christ's incarnation, and about his suffering and about his ascension into the heavens; and about the coming of the Holy Ghost, and of the lore of the apostles; and after about the day of impending judgement, and about the terror of the torturing punishment, and about the sweetness of the heavenly kingdom, he wrought many songs. And so also many others he made about divine mercy and judgement. In all of them he eagerly sought to pull men away from love of sin and criminal deeds, and to love and to zealously awake to (the doing) of good deeds. For he was a very devout man, and humbly subjected himself to regular service. And against those who wished to do otherwise, he burned with surging of great ardour. And he for this reason with a beautiful end he closed and ended his life.

For when the time of his departure and going-forth neared, he was for fourteen days before (his death), that he was afflicted and encumbered by bodily weakness, yet so moderately that he all the time could both speak and move about. There was in the neighbourhood a house for sick men, in which it was the custom to carry in those who were ill and those who were near to death, and minister there to them together. He bade that his servant--in the evening when (the time) of his leaving the world was nearing--that he prepare for him a place in that house, that he might rest (there). Then the servant wondered why he bade thus, because he thought that his end was not so near, but nevertheless did as he said and commanded. And when he went there to rest, and he in a happy mood was jesting and speaking about various things with those who were gathered together with him, those who were in (the sickhouse) before (him); when it was past midnight he asked, if they had any housel within. Then they answered and said: 'What need of the housel? Your passing is not so near, when now you are this cheerfully and this pleasantly speaking to us.' He said again: 'Bring me the housel.' When he had it in his hand, he asked whether they had peaceful minds and happily beared him no ill-will. Then they all answered, and said that they knew no ill-will towards him, but they all were very happily disposed towards him. And they in turn asked him if he was happy with all of them.
Then he answered and said: 'My brothers, my beloved ones, I am very blithe of mind towards you and all men of God.' And he was thus strengthening himself with heavenly provisions, and he prepared himself for entry into the other (next) life. Then yet he asked how near the time was to when the brothers must arise, and offer up praise to God and sing their matins. They answered, 'It is not long til then.' He said: 'Good, let us fully wait that time.' He then prayed and blessed himself with the sign of Christ's Rood, and inclined his head to the bolster, and in a small space of time, he fell asleep -- and thus ended his life in stillness.

And so it came to pass that as he served God with pure spirit and with mild and serene devoutness, that he likewise left this middle-earth by a serene death, and he arrived in His sight. And the tongue which had set so many healing words in praise of the Maker, so likewise (uttering) its last words to praise Him--as he crossed himself and offered up his spirit into His hands--ceased. Also likewise it is aid that he was certain of his own passing, of which we have now heard said.