An Analysis of Medieval Schemes of Authorship in the Edinburgh University Library Manuscript 184 *The Brut or the Chronicles of England* with a transcription and glossary of the text

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Contents

Abstract
Acknowledgements
Declaration

Introduction 1
i. Background of the Brut 7
ii. The Narrative of E 16

Chapter One: The Medieval Tradition of Historical Chronicle 25
i. Medieval Patterns of Reading 25
ii. Common Symbols in E 33
iii. Number Symbolism and Arithmetical Proportion in E 42
iv. The Spiritual Manifestation of the Cyclical Concept of Time: Brute, Arthur and Richard I 49

Chapter Two: Prophecy and Magic, Hagiography and the Character of Merlin in E 59
i. The Role of Magic 59
ii. Saints in E: Augustine (and Merlin) 64

Chapter Three: The Distribution of Power in E 78
i. The Theme of Power 78
ii. Justice and Brotherhood 80
iii. The Role of Female Characters in E 86
iv. The Historical Material 110

Conclusion 116

Description of Edinburgh Library Manuscript 184 119

Notes on this edition 121

The Brut or the Chronicles of England 122

Notes on the Glossary 213

Glossary of Terms 215

Bibliography 266
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This thesis consists of three chapters of critical analysis of the Edinburgh University Library Manuscript 184 version of the Brut, a description and edition of that manuscript, and a glossary.

The Middle English Prose Brut is divided by modern scholars into two parts, the first consisting of legendary material, and the second of historical material. However, this division does not reflect the medieval conception of the Brut, nor does it allow the modern reader to address the many structures of meaning which form the narrative. This thesis uses Edinburgh University Library MS 184, in conjunction with the edition of the Brut published in 1906 and 1909 by Frederick Brie, to demonstrate the symbolism primarily inherent in the legendary material, which may appear to a modern reader to be simply a collection of legendary stories.

The EUL MS 184 text of the Brut is organised into several layers of meaning, and more than one tactic is used in order to make the aim of the text clear and memorable to the reader. It is also constructed so as to be available to readers at every stage of learning and ability, as well as the illiterate audience, to whom the text may have been effectively narrated. Numerical structures, both within the narrative and in the structure of the manuscript itself, are one way in which the text conveys a depth of meaning beyond the actual stories it relates. Characters are related to each other in a structure which reflects not only a general theme of growth and learning within the narrative, but also represents such growth and learning in mankind in general. Beginning before the advent of Christianity to Britain, the EUL MS 184 version of the Brut traces the effect Christianity has upon the British, again representing mankind, which is demonstrated in the actions, and specifically in the type of punishment assigned to each infraction of another major theme, that of justice.
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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is entirely my own work, excepting the instances which are noted, and that no part of this thesis has been previously submitted for any degree.
Introduction: The Brut

The Middle English Prose Brut was one of the most popular works of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It played a major role in the developing literary and historical traditions of the Middle Ages, and was of considerable influence within the realms of nationalism and politics. It was used as a source for the history of Britain until the end of the sixteenth century. In fact it was regarded as “a standard history that defined and created a sense of England’s past, its national identity, and its destiny.” One primary application was as a didactic tool, a means of presenting moral truths in a manner which would be both understandable and memorable. But the Brut is perhaps better known as a work of propaganda; considered a faithful record of British lineage, additions and alterations were made regularly in the course of its transcription, and it was used, most noticeably by Edward I to justify English claims to Scotland, but also to indicate support for Thomas of Lancaster in EUL MS. 184.²

Although the text of the Brut is continuous, a contemporary reader may perceive a division in the material, between what may be considered “legendary” and that which is “historical.” In this thesis, “legendary material” will refer to the first part of the E, from the first chapter up to and including the chapter of Cadwalader, including material which, to a modern reader, might seem more appropriate to a collection of folklore than a work of history - stories constructed in order to demonstrate a certain “truth”, but which do not necessarily represent actions which actually occurred. Such “truths” may be, as in the case of Greek myths, explicated by stories: for example, place-names are often derived from characters who

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¹ Matheson (1998:29)
² Edinburgh University Library Manuscript 184. Hereafter the sigil E will be used to designate this manuscript version of the Brut.
were of significance in a particular area. In one sense, “truth” in the E Brut is the existence of cities, their names, and the names of rivers, and countries. However, in the Brut, the primary “truth” is God’s will for humanity, and his subsequent participation in daily life. The explanation for the derivation of names from characters, and events in the narrative, is of secondary importance to the role their establishment plays in the overall plan of God for humanity.

By contrast, the material which comprises the ensuing “historical” section of the manuscript is so called because the material it contains is verifiable in a modern sense, and does not contain “legendary” characteristics such as magical creatures and characters. It begins with the Anglo-Saxon king Osbryght and extends, in the E, to Henry VI. This division, between fact (historical) and fiction (legendary), would not have been recognised by the medieval scribe of E; for him the truth of the events represented by the historical section of the text is as valid as the truth represented by legendary material. While the modern division of the manuscript according to truth is invalid, it is likely the medieval scribe and reader would perceive a difference in the narrative at the end of the legendary material; this difference may be attributed to a change in narrative detail. Most obviously, the lack of magic in the historical material, and the absence of mythical creatures, as well as a sense of recitation of events without adherence to the structures of meaning present in the legendary material marks its delineation as a different section of the narrative. This division is a result of a different approach to material contained in the historical section.3 Because the terms “legendary” and “historical” are useful for general reference, they will be applied in this thesis, with the acknowledgement that they are strictly modern terms.

Modern scholarship on the Middle English prose Brut focuses primarily upon the historical material, including the fourteenth-and fifteenth-century Continuations. It is true that,

3 The division at this point, perceived by a medieval audience, would have accorded with a medieval concept of time and the changes necessary in the discussion of history which parallel the progress of humanity. See below on the medieval concept of history pp.26ff., and pp.45ff. for a discussion of the development of humanity within dual and tripartite divisions of time.
unlike the legendary material which tends to be transmitted largely unaltered, the historical material provides political propaganda which is valuable for its contemporary interpretation of the era between the reign of Edward III and that of Henry VI. By contrast, because the first chapters of the Brut involve legendary material, this initial section is often dismissed as mere entertainment. While the historical value of the Continuations is undisputed, the division and literary evaluation of this material without a concurrent understanding of the legendary material can lead to conclusions concerning the Brut tradition as a whole which are quite different from those intended by the author and subsequent scribes. Because the historical material has been so thoroughly discussed, this thesis will focus primarily on the legendary material interpreted as a “historical” text, according to the corresponding medieval concept, which will consequently redeem the legendary material both for its independent significance as a British Creation myth, and also in its essential relationship to the historical events and Continuations.

Additionally, because the Brut has enjoyed considerable recent analysis from a historical perspective, it is logical that a thesis which purports to address the “truth” of the text as a whole should attempt to balance awareness of historical value with the long-neglected meaning made available by the application of medieval literary symbolism, particularly since the text, used primarily as propaganda, is not particularly useful as a historical source. In this case, the “literary” aspects involve those which a modern reader considers the themes, aims, and imagery of the text, and the symbols by which a medieval reader might access them. Although it may seem a perpetuation of the misleading concept of a “literary” or “historical” text to apply these terms, they are nonetheless vital to a coherent explanation of the aspects of the text addressed in this paper.

Indeed, the categorisation of the Brut as a work of history or literature is itself an anachronism. Since there was no precise and definite scholarly division of material into categories involving modern concepts of objective truth or fiction until the 17th century, the categorisation and analysis of the Brut as a work classified in terms exclusive to either history
This thesis involves a revision of the method of reading the Brut as a medieval text, from both approaches since "even in annals of chronicles, bare and brief recitations of ‘what happened’, classical references and rhetorical methods of presentation call attention to the deeply literary organization of much early historical writing."\(^5\) The process of becoming reacquainted with medieval perceptions of reading and classification of texts, will establish the Brut as a text which contains both literary and historical characteristics, but which may not be adequately contained by either category.

The title of the manuscript, The Brut or the Chronicle of England leads one to question the nature of the document, since its self-description as a chronicle seems to suggest that the intent will be merely a recitation of events, when in fact it is obviously a much more complex text. In fact the medieval delineation of chronicle and history is not so solid that a modern reader is able to make assumptions concerning the material of a document, solely on the basis of its title including the word “chronicle”. In one case, “chronicles [...] were defined as being brief and plainly written accounts of events, organized - as the term would suggest - chronologically, while histories [...] were defined as being fuller, more integrated, more interpretive, or more stylistically elegant accounts.”\(^6\) According to this definition, a chronicle should involve record-keeping, with no elaboration of the material, and certainly no intention to convey a moral lesson. Eckhardt states, however, that neither these guidelines, nor those of other eminent medieval scholars were strictly adhered to, a fact that was recognised by the authors themselves.\(^7\) Therefore in her essay, as in this thesis, the term “chronicle” is used more

\(^4\) Partner (1985). However, according to Caroline Eckhardt, the three divisions of narrative by Isidore of Seville in his Etymologiae involve categories relating to truth or fiction: “Histories are concerned with true things that happened; works of realistic fiction, with things that did not happen; and works of imaginative fiction, with things that neither happened nor could happen, because they are contrary to nature.” She goes on to state that these categories were not strictly adhered to by medieval scholars, but it is interesting to note, in relation to the discussion below of the medieval definition of history, that there were varying definitions of “history” and what exactly is the nature of “truth”. Eckhardt (1991:188).
\(^5\) Goldstein (1993:89)
\(^7\) Eckhardt (1991:190)
broadly, "to denote any medieval narrative that presents an extensive account of events regarded as historical." ⁸

Research in *Brut* scholarship reveals a wealth of available original manuscripts to facilitate study. However, while over 180 Middle English manuscripts are available in Britain, Continental Europe, Australia, and the United States, only a handful of these have been edited, and these are scattered among various universities in the United States, Australia, and Britain. ⁹

The authoritative published edition of the Middle English prose *Brut* is a compilation of several manuscripts. Dr. Frederick Brie cites three manuscripts from which he obtains a complete and detailed main narrative of the *Brut*: Oxford, Bodleian Library MSS. Rawlinson B.171 and Douce 323, and Trinity College Dublin MS. 490. For songs and ballads, he also uses British Library MS. Harley 4690 and London College of Arms MS. Arundel LVIII. For the Continuations, Brie uses 22 manuscripts, each a fragment or a section, which he collates into a single text. Brie’s edition was published in two volumes by the Early English Text Society in 1906 and 1909. Although it is therefore not a text contemporaneous with E, and would never have had a medieval readership, it is useful as a point of comparison with E for basic textual organisation and discussion of the narrative.

The first chapters of Brie’s edition generally parallel E in the number of entries and detail of information. However, once the narrative reaches historical events, and in particular the Continuations, the two versions begin to perceptibly diverge. As it approaches the date of authorship, Brie’s text increases in detail and volume. In fact, half of the first volume and the entirety of the second, larger volume consists of historical and Continuation material in Brie’s edition. While the narrative of E similarly increases the detail and length of the chapters, it does not provide the detail of Brie’s edition. Brie’s Continuations are more extensive than those of the E; they include a more complete chapter for Henry VI and Edward IV, while the Edinburgh manuscript ends in the middle of Henry VI’s reign. Generally speaking, the most

⁸ Eckhardt (1991:190) The medieval concept of history is thoroughly discussed below.

⁹ There are also available forty-nine Anglo-Norman Bruts, twenty Latin Bruts and thirteen early printed editions. Matheson (1998:55,139)
common Continuations extend to four dates: 1377, 1419, 1430, and 1461, with 1434 and 1445 occurring less frequently. The E concludes with introduction of the reign of Henry VI. This period coincides most closely with two of the Continuations, those of 1419 and 1430.

The 1977 Doctoral thesis by Lister A. Matheson at the University of Glasgow is a more recent analysis of two Middle English Prose Brut manuscripts, which includes the presentation of the Glasgow University Library, MSS. Hunterian T.3.12 and V.5.13 versions on pages facing their transcription. In his thesis Matheson examines several manuscripts of the Brut and devises a system of categorisation which includes E. Matheson classifies all available manuscripts into four main categories, according to the “type of continuations found to constitute the text”, and not according to differences in text material from one manuscript to the next, either within the same group or between groups. According to this system, E is unusual even within the context of all Bruts. Matheson categorises E as a member of the "peculiar texts", a group of manuscripts which differ significantly not only from the first three categories, but also from each other.¹⁰

Peculiar texts are also characterised by their connection to the “Latin Bruts”¹¹, and the individual aspect of each manuscript’s form resulting from independent scribal alteration.¹² Matheson also states that the category of Peculiar Texts are “often of historical and literary importance, consisting of individual reworkings of Brut texts, works based on or adapted from the Brut, and combinations of the Brut with adaptations of other works. Many such texts are unique”.¹³ E is also unusual with regard to its brevity; Matheson categorises the EUL MS 184

¹⁰Matheson (1977:187)
¹¹ According to Charles L. Kingsford, the Latin Bruts were in fact translated into Latin from English, “for the use of those to whom the ancient literary tradition still appealed.” Kingsford (1913:310-312)
¹² Matheson (1984:213) Matheson’s three other categories are the Common Version, which includes the basic Brut text to 1333 plus all Continuations to 1461, the Extended Version, which incorporates an added exordium and details from another current chronicle, and the Abbreviated Version, which is a “shortened cross between the Common and Extended Versions”.
¹³ Matheson classifies the members of the Peculiar Version category according to three main criteria: “individual reworkings of Brut texts, works based on or adapted from the Brut, and combinations of the Brut with adaptations of other works.” Matheson (1998:8)
as a member of the group “Very Brief Works Based on the Brut”. One particular characteristic of these shorter versions is the chapter of the thirty-three kings, in which the genealogy of thirty-three kings is listed without any detail of the kings or events that occurred during their reigns. According to the above description, E is categorised as “PV-1429”, a Peculiar Version text extending to 1429.

The fidelity with which the legendary material has been handed down from its composition in the twelfth century to the E is a good indication of the importance of this section of material for the audience of the Brut. In fact, it is likely that the popularity of the legendary material, rather than the historical material, created a demand for the text in the Middle Ages. It is such popularity which caused a text to be copiously copied, and the impressive number of surviving manuscripts therefore indicates the Brut was a broadly popular text. Indeed, it has been suggested by critics that the Brut's long-term popularity rested with the legendary material.

i. Background of the Brut

Legendary Typology and the “War of Historiography”

The legendary material of the Brut has a long history, beginning with the Welsh historians, Gildas and Nennius. It is primarily these authors, writing in the 6th and 9th centuries respectively, who are credited with compiling texts of history which are influential for their material as well as their approach. The tradition of these early works develops into the origin myth, which “from the start, had the potential to function in the service of ideologies of racial or national unity.” The settlement of many countries is supported by a foundation myth; although each tradition develops specifically with respect to each country’s own identity, there is a common pattern. The structure typically presents one heroic ancestor, forced to leave his

14 Matheson (1998:76)
15 EUL II. 470-89
16 Matheson (1998:316)
17 Taylor (1987:116)
18 Goldstein (1993:118-19)
homeland; his exile involves the enactment of a series of common typological actions such as previously unsuccessful invasions of the country in question prior to the arrival of this ancestor-hero, the subsequent conquest of a wilderness, and the establishment of racial primacy.

Written evidence of the Brut legend per se extends to the 12th century and the Historia Regum Britanniae by Geoffrey of Monmouth. The legend of Brute purports to establish an origin history for the people of Britain, and as such, E presents a specifically fifteenth-century southern English view of social order. Anglocentrism is established early in any legend of Brute and his sons, with Brute’s selection of London as his capital for all of Britain. The division of Britain amongst Brute’s three sons provides an explanation for the establishment of Scotland and Wales as divisions of territory which Brute’s younger sons inherit. It is clearly stated in the manuscript that although the younger sons were to be considered kings of their region, the concept was one of feudal overlordship, in which each regional king was subject to one king and overlord. The investment of the eldest son, Lotrine, the most direct heir to his father, at London, establishes primary authority over Britain in the southern capital.19 With regard to the relative Anglocentrism of this version of the text in particular, it seems likely that the degree to which this bias is expressed would relate directly to current politics. The portrayal of the Scots in the 15th-century E represents a view which is determined by two hundred years of skirmishes and battles across the Scottish border, and is therefore particularly antagonistic.

Edward I’s invasions of Scotland, described in relative detail in E, are justified by this early establishment of London as capital of all Britain, and therefore warranted the righteous English claim to all of Britain. This claim is further supported by a detailed presentation of the events surrounding the death of Alexander, king of Scotland:

19 In fact, although this is the established mythological way in which Britain is divided into England, Scotland, and Wales, the pages describing this arrangement have been removed in E. However the authorial opinion of the Scots and Welsh is clear in later, “historical” chapters of the text.
And thene fill grete debate in Scotland aftir the deth of Alexandre, king of the lande, for diuers lorde of Scotland and of England clamed to be heire to Alexander. And the Scottys put yt in juggement of king Edward. And anone he made se the coronycles of Scotland, wherby thei fonde that Bailol, a lord of Fraunce, was next heire of blode to Alexander, and also that the lande of Scotlande was holden of the king of England by homage and fealte, wherfore king Edward awarded that Bailol schulde be king.

The Scots consult the English king when there is no clear heir, and he in turn consults their own chronicles. Edward thus establishes the precedent of consulting chronicles in search of historical truth, and also lends weight to his own reliance on the Brut as a set of precedents for the English. Significantly, the Scots themselves turn to Edward in their confusion and more importantly, this “Scottish chronicle” states that Scotland “was holden” of the king of England, and this revelation immediately adds credit to the English claim as well as presenting an obstacle to any potential Scottish claims to the throne.

It is the claim of the Brut, and other origin myths such as that of Scota and Gaythelos, the founders of Scotland, that their status as “histories” proves any contemporary political pretensions. A narrative may easily be “interpreted” to make a specific point, and it is therefore unsurprising to find texts of English and Scottish origin which present conflicting accounts of events leading to the justification of an important political claim. E is a result of this “war of historiography”, itself due to the specific desire by Edward I for such a text. In fact Edward I sent letters to monasteries requesting them to make amendments to chronicles, which would then act as “proof” of his sovereignty over Scotland. In fact, the chronicle of England written by Walter of Coventry is almost entirely a piece of propaganda in favour of Edward. Like the Scots’ decision to seek Edward’s advice with regard to the inheritance of their throne in E, Walter’s chronicle “prove[s] Edward’s claim to the overlordship of Scotland by detailing instances of Scottish kings doing homage to English kings.”

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20 E II. 2308-18.
22 Goldstein (1993:127)
23 Stones (1981:329)
24 Stepsis (1972:53)
Although it is known that Edward I intended to affect the perception of history by applying his influence to the writers and scribes of historical documents, in fact, “chronicles containing government propaganda were atypical of the historiographical tradition of medieval England”. Antonia Gransden states that this characteristic of medieval texts is present only during “times of crisis”, specifically when “the monarchy resorted to propaganda to obtain moral reinforcement” and particularly when the ruler perceived the country to be “threatened by enemies at home”.\(^{25}\) This situation corresponds to Edward’s concept of the relationship between England and Scotland. His own concept of England as the ruling nation meant that the common raids back and forth across the Scottish border were a serious threat, and created the image of Scots as a dangerous, immediate enemy. Propaganda would be intended to support his raids into Scotland, and to encourage general support of the king.

These concepts of sovereignty did not appear for the first time in the \textit{Brut}. Geoffrey of Monmouth, compiling a text of British history, uses as his source Welsh histories, and with their legends incorporates a sense of sovereignty. His perception, however is not one of regional nationalism at the expense of sovereignty. His perception, however is not one of regional nationalism at the expense of sovereignty. In the \textit{Historia Regum Britanniæ} “though there are three regions, there is only one Kingdom”.\(^{26}\) Geoffrey’s text is the most influential on the \textit{Brut}, since it is the single source of the legendary material, but it is also interesting to note that his intention to present a unified Britain is altered with its manipulation by Edward I in his efforts to “prove” the dominance of one region, England, over the other nations.

\textbf{Geoffrey of Monmouth}

Geoffrey of Monmouth, an Augustinian canon, is credited with the first written compilation of British folklore, which itself is later absorbed into the \textit{Brut} tradition. The \textit{Historia Regum Britanniæ}, written in Latin c.1135, is regarded by some as valuable simply as one of the most fanciful works of fiction, an entertaining elaboration of the compilation of

\(^{25}\) Gransden (1975:377)
\(^{26}\) Roberts (1974:37)
regional legends, written during the Middle Ages. In fact, it was one of the most influential and popular works of the Middle Ages. Although Geoffrey himself claims as a source a mysterious book, the sources which are distinguishable are such well-known historians as Nennius, Gildas, Bede, Henry of Huntingdon, and William of Malmesbury. Geoffrey arranges his material according to narrative characteristics generally common to folk tales, and this tradition is conveyed into the Middle English Prose Brut. For example, a rivalry between brothers or cousins, often with a mother intervening, is common to folk tales and is also a situation which occurs frequently in the legendary material of the Brut. Monsters in the Historia are derived from both folklore and specifically Christian material. The sea monster sent by God to punish a British king also appears in the Brut, as do monsters such as Gogmagogg, whose name is the combination of the names of two biblical demons.

Geoffrey’s material may not be valuable for the information it provides concerning rulers or historical events, but its influence upon three hundred years of British writing makes it historically central to a vigorous genre of medieval literature.

Geoffrey’s self-qualification as a “historian” is significant; his approach to British legendary material provides the manner of presentation for E. Although it could possibly be included in the definition of a chronicle cited above, page 5, i.e. “any medieval narrative that presents an extensive account of events regarded as historical”, the structure of the Historia is dissimilar to a chronicle in its use of emotive language. In fact, it is his use of emotive language which establishes Geoffrey as a good medieval historian. As Kinghorn explains of medieval historians, “Sharp divisions into uncompromising categories is not valid when actual writers are being considered, since most historians worthy of the name combine narrative with chronicle in order to achieve an account emotionally as well as factually true.” The approach

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27Hanning (1966:121)  
28Loomis (1959:75)  
29Geoffrey claims that he derives his material from an already existing text, which has never been found. It is this which encouraged previous scholars to view his claims with caution and suspect that he invented such a text as a reference of authority, and actually created the Historia entirely himself.  
30Tatlock (1950:3)
of Geoffrey of Monmouth toward his work as such a historian is transferred to the Brut along with the actual material. By the fourteenth century, when the Brut was reaching the height of its popularity, this elaboration of fact with convincing emotion had become so common an aspect of history that, in modern terms, “fact was easily blended with fiction in order that continuity might be achieved.”31 It is in this manner that the E version may be considered as a work of history.

Geoffrey’s text is credited with several literary innovations. In addition to the novel compilation of earlier, largely oral material, with that of Gildas and Nennius, Geoffrey’s reputed talent for elaboration is evident concerning the characters of Arthur and Merlin.32 His portrayal of Arthur is considered to be the impetus for the creation of Arthurian legend, and the story of King Leir also makes its first written appearance in Geoffrey’s Historia.33 In addition, R.S. Loomis credits Geoffrey with the creation of “a person from the name of a place” and the subsequent story “to account for the latter,” in other words, the committal to writing of the process of place-name derivation.34 Although it is unlikely that Geoffrey was indeed the first to conceive of this kind of story, his work is likely to be the first text popular enough to make it available to a wide medieval audience. Geoffrey is also credited with the introduction of the political prophecy in English literature; presented by Merlin, these prophecies could “prove” that a king had been pre-ordained by God, and were also used for centuries as “proof” of the superiority of one people over another.35 The Continuations of the Brut, written as much as three hundred years later, include references to such prophecies in the legendary material which, for example, justify England’s invasion and conquest of Scotland and establish the genealogy of kings as pre-ordained.

Most of Geoffrey’s successors, including Thomas Higden, author of the Polychronicon, another popular chronicle of the later Middle Ages, indicate that they accept

31 Kinghorn (1969:132)
32 Loomis (1959:83)
33 Tatlock (1950:3)
34 Loomis (1959:82)
35 Keeler (1946:11)
the majority of the material of Geoffrey's *Historia* as true. The main point of contention for Higden is the claim that King Arthur will return, and in fact, many of the Latin chroniclers who accept the majority of Geoffrey's text also reject this concept. Later Latin chroniclers influenced by Geoffrey's *Historia* do not actually copy the material itself, but use it, as mentioned above, as political propaganda. One example, the *Vita Edwardi*, written by an anonymous monk of Malmesbury, chronicles the years between 1307 and 1327. The *Historia* is used in this case solely as a reference work, to explain the uprisings of the Welsh during the reign of Edward II. Like the English claim to Scotland and the Stone of Scone from the ancient division of Britain by Brutus, the reference in the *Vita Edwardi* is to the Welsh claim as the original Britons, whom Merlin prophesies will reclaim all of the country. This use of legendary material as a source of evidence to justify political claims is another way in which Geoffrey's work was used as the template for the *Brut*.

The material in the *Historia Regum Britanniae* ends with Cadwalader, at whose death the narrative of the *Brut* continues with the succession of the Anglo-Saxon king Osbryght to the throne of Britain as a whole. The narrative of the *Historia* is longer than E. The most frequent reduction of detail in the *Brut* involve prolix accounts of battles and sieges, and the specific names and descriptions of minor characters. However, one interesting textual difference between the *Brut* and the *Historia* is the absence of Albion and her sisters at the beginning of the latter text, and therefore the lack of an explanation for the name Albion and the presence of monsters on the island when Brute arrives. The enduring popularity of the *Historia*, and the subsequent frequency with which it was copied, ensured that it would be available to a wide audience in Britain. The alterations upon it made by Anglo-Norman scribes produced the text of the prose *Brut* as it appears in Middle English in the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

36Keeler (1946:29)
37E I. 1531
Anglo-Norman Bruts

The linguistic situation in Britain after the Norman conquest becomes more complicated. Rather than the neat division of a French-speaking aristocracy and an English-speaking general populace, there existed not only a definite mingling of the two peoples, but also the rapid development of a dialect of French distinct from any of the Continental French dialects. From the thirteenth century onwards, the difference between "Insular French" and those varieties spoken on the Continent becomes progressively more marked.38 In addition to this linguistic separation from the Continent, the interests of the Anglo-Normans begin to focus increasingly upon local concerns, including an early history of their island, and for this reason, Geoffrey's Historia Regum Britaniae remained very popular and continued to be studied by contemporary scholars.39

One of the most well-known of the Anglo-Norman chronicles is that of Pierre de Langtoft, an Augustinian canon at Bridlington priory during the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century. His work is a chronicle of Britain's kings, extending from the naming of Britain by Brutus to the year 1307, and is thus quite similar in structure to the Brut. Langtoft's chronicle propagates the embellishment characteristic of Geoffrey of Monmouth's writing style, particularly his use of chivalric language, commonly used in romantic tales intended solely to entertain the French aristocracy. In the tradition of the Brut, Langtoft is particularly noted for his introduction of "popular elements" such as songs, ballads, and poems, which were eventually transferred into the parallel tradition which became the English Prose Brut,40 along with his history of the reign of Edward I.41 This text is of a different lineage than that which eventually produces the Middle English Prose Brut.

The Norman Geoffrey Gaimar composed a version of the Historia in Anglo-Norman, most likely for the purpose of entertaining Anglo-Norman aristocrats.42 The majority of this

38Rothwell (1975:174-176)
39Tatlock (1950:467)
40Gransden (1974:484)
41Stepsis (1972:51)
42Gransden(1974:452)
text is lost, due to general preference for the later *Roman de Brut* by another Norman poet, Wace. Also following Gaimar, Benoit de St. Maur's *Roman de Troie* is a well-known French rendition of the *Historia*, which was regarded as not only superior to that of Gaimar, but possibly even better than the popular *Roman de Brut*. Despite the challenge offered by the *Roman de Troie*, Wace's *Roman de Brut* is the best-known text in this stage of development, and his interpretation of the *Brut* material affects the definition of the genre. His text elaborates considerably upon Geoffrey's *Historia*, adding material from other sources including oral tales acquired during his travels in the south of England. He also considers himself a historian, and thus edits Geoffrey's *Historia* for his own audience. For example, he eliminates passages of "exaggerated sentiment," of "cruel or savage behaviour," and of "purely religious history."

Clearly these are elements which Wace considered a detriment to the main aim of his text, which marks a significant point in the development of the *Brut* and provides the more focused form it will take in the fifteenth century. While Geoffrey's *Historia*, written in the early 12th century, was entitled to narrative embellishments, the concept of "history" for Wace, writing only shortly afterwards, incorporated a mistrust of verbal decoration. The Middle English Prose *Brut* is a descendant of this line, from Geoffrey of Monmouth to Wace, and its distinction as a chronicle is a point of note, since the *Brut* text may incorporate lavish detail, as in Brie's compilation, or may rely on a simpler manner of recitation, as in E. The concept of the "history" and thus the "historian" changes as the material of the *Brut* is inherited and interpreted by the Anglo-Norman authors; by the fifteenth century, when E was written, history had become a much more fluid concept, in which more than one method was acceptable, as we will see below.

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43Gransden (1974:456)
44Loomis (1959:97)
45Loomis (1959:96)
The Continuations of the *Brut* and the London Chronicles

The basic *Brut* text, or the "common Brut", usually extends to 1333. There is a vast number of existing Continuations written by contemporary authors, which extend this text to their own day: 1377, 1419, 1430, and 1461. The material in these Continuations affected the audience of the *Brut*: "The major Middle English translation of the *Brut*, with its derivative groups and versions [the Continuations], was even more popular than its Anglo-Norman forbear. It retained the audience that had already been established [the gentry and monastic audiences] and expanded it among the merchant class in the fifteenth century." During the fifteenth century in particular, a strong tie was established with the London Chronicles, which focus upon the political machinations of the period, as a source for the *Brut* Continuations.

Similar to the above-mentioned Latin works, such as the *Polychronicon* by Thomas Higden and the *Vita Edwardi*, which developed directly from Geoffrey's *Historia*, these later additions often involve contemporary political issues such as yearly Parliaments, new taxes or polls, and military conflicts. Since the events they describe are written by contemporary authors of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, they have much greater detail and historical authority, in the modern sense, than the earlier material, and are often regarded by historians as the only valuable part of the *Brut*. It is for this reason that much modern scholarship on the *Brut* has centred upon these later additions.

ii. The Narrative of E

Because Brie's text is a complete narrative of the *Brut*, his text may be used as a point of comparison for E, in order to determine where material is absent from E which is nonetheless common in the *Brut* narrative, and to offer the possibility of comparing methods.

46 Brie (1906:v)
47 Matheson (1998:12)
48 Taylor (1987:129)
used to encourage memory. Memory is important to the medieval writer, for its relation to moral values: "Medieval culture remained profoundly memorial [i.e. reliant upon the memory] in nature, despite the increased use and availability of books for reasons other than simple technological convenience. The primary factor in its conservation lies in the identification of memory with the formation of moral virtues." The central aim of the Brut, as with all texts of instruction in the Middle Ages, is in its application as a moralising and didactic tool. The inclusion or omission of specific details in E and in the Brie affects interpretation, and thus the ease with which they will be remembered as moral lessons. Brie's text of the legendary material includes more detail, which creates a mental picture for the reader; such an approach is likely to be successful in creating memory from association. In contrast, E is a text which includes less embellishment, leaving a part of the creation of the text to the reader, and allows each individual to create his or her "own" image of the text. This action upon the text creates memory, itself a vital part of the reading process which "precede[s] understanding [and] intellation."53

Although various manuscript versions, including Brie's compilation and E, differ in the measure of detail of the Brut, by definition they include the legendary material and the same basic historical events: the Anglo-Saxon kings, the Norman kings, the reigns of Henry II, Richard I, John, Henry III, Edward I, II, and III. The basic Brut text ends in the middle of Edward III's reign, and manuscripts differ noticeably in the Continuation, or series of Continuations, added to this material; while one Continuation would be added to a text

49 Brie uses two Fifteenth-century manuscripts for the legendary material: MS Rawl.B.171 (Bodl.) and MS Douce 323 (Bodl.) The first leaves of the narrative are from the Douce manuscript and the remainder of the legendary material from the MS Rawl. Therefore, although it is the material in these manuscripts which is discussed in this thesis, the text will be referred to as "Brie" or "Brie's text" since it is this compilation which has been used. I do not mean to imply that the compilation is a continuous medieval text.
50 Carruthers (1990:156)
51 Carruthers (1990:127)
52 According to Mary J. Carruthers, this is a well-known mnemonic device in medieval literature. She cites the example of a bestiary which, not being illustrated, leaves out detail which each reader must construct for him- or herself, which in turn creates an individual's "own mental book". (Carruthers 1990:127).
53 Carruthers (1990:43)
compiled in the 14th Century, a series of Continuations may have been added to a text which is compiled by a scribe of the 15th century, in order to present a current narrative. The legendary material of the Brut genre is a chronology of tales presented as the ancient history of the foundation of Britain, and as such, provides explanations for the derivation of place-names. Accordingly, the narrative of the Brut begins with the legendary derivation of Britain's ancient name Albion.

Dioclesian, the King of Syria, exiles his thirty-three daughters to Britain and Albyn, the eldest, names the island after herself. Albion is subsequently conquered and re-named Britain, after the Trojan Brutus, himself exiled from Troy for the murder of his father. The island appears to him as an unconquered wilderness, which is true in more than a literal sense: although the sisters have settled previously on Albion, they exist within the wilderness, as members of it, eating wild plants and animals. The sisters do not "conquer" the island; their uncivilised existence precludes any necessity to force themselves onto the island. Brute, however, must exert force over the women, their children, and their wilderness, since he must overcome the existing order and establish civilisation.

With the elimination of a population of giants which are the children of the 30 sisters, and which inhabit Albion when Brute arrives, Brute establishes both his superiority over nature itself and his legitimacy as the ruler of the island. Previous to his arrival on Albion in Brie's text, Brute travels through the Continent, where the goddess Diana appears to him and advises him to travel west to the island which will become Albion. These pages of the narrative have been removed from E as has material describing the conquest of the giants. As a result, the narrative skips from Brute's decision to accept exile from Greece, the catastrophe which leads to his foundation of Britain, to the invasion of Britain by Humbar, the Hun, which occurs after

54 E II. 142-43 It is clear from the syntax, the sense of the narrative, and the physical remains of the page that this material was originally included. Perhaps the reference to Diana, a pagan goddess, who gives Brute the vital guidance toward the island which was to become Britain, offended a reader who neglected to interpret Diana as the mouthpiece of God. See below for a discussion of the possible symbolic interpretation of pagan material.
the death of Brute, at which point Britain has already been divided into the three kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Wales, each ruled by one of his three sons.

Since the material concerning the inheritance of Brute’s three sons has been removed from E, the primacy of England and London is left unclear. In Brie’s complete narrative, however, Brute gives his second son Albonake the rule of Scotland, gives rule of Wales to his third son Cambre, but Lotryne, the “firste” son, “was crowned kyng with myche solemniete of all pe land of Brytaigne.”

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Even though E does not clearly establish the line of inheritance through Lotrine, it is his successors who become kings of Britain. Therefore, Scotland is, as in Brie’s edition, presented as the less desirable part of the kingdom.

The legendary material includes King Leir. A comparison between the presentation of Leir in Brie’s Brut and E provides an example of the discrepancies possible between versions of the Brut, due to differences in scribal approaches to the presentation of detail. The connection between the affectation of Leir’s three daughters for their father and the social level to which he will marry them is not as clear in E as it is in Brie. When his daughters “were of age to be married, he thought he wolde knowe whiche loved him best”.

However, in Brie, Leir poses his question specifically bearing in mind that “she that louede him best shulde best bene mariede”. Leir’s motivation is further detailed in Brie: “the king here fader bicome an olde man, and wolde bat his doughtres were mariede or bat he deide bot ferst he bougt assaye whiche of ham louede him most and best; for she bat louede him best schulde best bene mariede”.

The additional detail in Brie’s compilation means that it is clear to the reader that Leir challenges his daughters because he is old. He wishes to have his daughters married

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55 Brie (1906:12 ll.18-19)
56 Thus in the later chapter of Belen and Branne, two brothers whose father divides the country upon his death, the younger, Brenne, inheriting Scotland, the “warse party”, while his elder brother Belen inherits England. His inheritance of Scotland is in fact, seen as an insult and a cause for war; Brenne solicits military aid from the Norwegian king, and when this fails, continues to harass his brother with invasions until their mother settles the dispute. E ll. 349-98.
57 E ll. 244-45
58 Brie (1906:16)
59 Brie (1906:16 ll.25-29)
before he dies, which implies some urgency, but is unsure whether they each love him enough to "deserve" a substantial amount of his fortune in order to be married well. It is vanity which motivates his challenge to his daughters, not concern for their well-being. Because this is clear, there is no need for the reader to reflect upon Leir's motivation, and to determine independently the aim of the passage; the elaboration of motive allows the reader to directly identify specific components of the moral lesson, such as the sin of pride which is the initial cause for Leir's challenge.

The lack of description in E, by contrast, shortens the text at the expense of the reader's psychological access to the characters, Leir in particular. The medieval concept of the human perception of truth allows for an inherent ability to "know" what is true. This innate ability works without textual clues such as emotive detail, and informs the reader that Leir's motivation, the transgression in this story, is pride. As the most commonly-mentioned sin in the manuscript, Leir's motivation of pride connects him with additional characters who act similarly, creating a network of lessons emphasising one of the text's central points. The fact that E has been constructed in this complicated a manner implies that the reader is intended to read and to reflect, and to discover the point independently, which will in turn act as an aid to memory.

A level of textual detail corresponding to the required degree of active participation by the reader exists in the Leir material in both Brie and E, most noticeably at junctures in the narrative at which the main aim of the chapter is at issue. In both versions, the two elder sisters state that they love their father "more than hire owne life", and "more then all erthy creatours." Cordell refuses to "glose" her father as her sisters have done, and her honest answer is misinterpreted by her father, who marries his eldest daughters well and abandons his youngest. None of this material warrants particular consideration by the reader, but the different versions vary in length after this point, and it is at this point of crisis that the narrative begins to reveal scribal intent. In the E version, the story is told briefly: the land is divided

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60 McGinley (1996:57)
61 E ll.247-50, Brie (1906:16 ll.19 to 17 ll.4)
between Gonorill and Began, Agamp sends for Cordell, who then leaves for France. The sisters and their husbands tire of Leir and take from him his land as well as his company. Leir realises his mistake, and with regret, sends for Cordell who, with the army of her husband, returns to Britain and restores her father to his throne. All of this occurs in 23 lines. Brie's compilation, however, uses 98 lines, which involve a much more detailed rendition of the story. In particular, the progression of events which gradually weaken Leir's power are given in detail, and in Brie, Leir finally escapes to France to take refuge with Cordell and seek her help, a dramatic action, whereas in E, he remains in Britain and "sent worde of his aduersite to Cordell." The level of detail in Brie creates sympathy with Leir's humiliation and allows the reader to identify with him, which is one method of facilitating the direct perception and retention of the moral point. The construction of E, by contrast, requires more effort on the part of the reader. In this case it is the active participation in the revelation of Leir's fault which conveys the point and acts as an aid to memory.

The legendary material concludes with the chapter of Cadwalader. The genealogy surrounding this character is slightly different in Brie than that of E. The last three chapters in E concern Saint Austeyn, King Cadwelyn, and King Cadwalader, with the latter being the son and heir of Cadwelyn. In Brie this order is reversed, and Cadwalader is the father of Cadwelyn. In addition, the chapters themselves contain different material. The chapter on Cadwelyn corresponds to Brie's chapter on Oswolde and King Cadwelyn, which follows Cadwalader, and the E chapter of Cadwalader does not appear in Brie at all. This chapter also provides the last reference to a prophecy of Merlin, which effects the transition into historical material.

Cadwalader is a lesser-known saviour of Britain in E: during his reign there is "grete scarcesenesse of corne and catell that men couth finde no vytaille to selle for gold nor siluer but thei lyved by Rotes and Erbes and thenne fill the grete pestilence emong hem that euer was sene in the lande." Cadwalader's reaction is to accept the famine and disease on behalf of

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62 E II.279-80
63 E II.1475-79.
the British, as the punishment for their sins and lack of repentance, their moral decline for which God punishes them. The survival of the British on "Rotes and Erbes" is reminiscent of the survival of Albyn and her sisters in the wilderness. The similar situation acts as a trigger to the memory, inspiring a comparison between the lack of civilisation of both parties, and reminding the reader of the fate of Albyn and her sisters. However, Cadwalader rescues his people from this barbarity as Brute rescues the Trojans from slavery, and he conquers the wilderness of their moral decline as Brute conquers the wilderness created by the 30 sisters. Also like Brute, Cadwalader saves his people by leaving the country; by making a pilgrimage to Little Britain in a self-imposed, and what will become a permanent exile, he echoes Brute's voyage to Britain. Like Brute, he redeems his native country through his own exile, and also will create a new civilisation. In the narrative, immediately after he is welcomed into Little Britain, then "sone after seced the grete deth", and numerous Saxons emigrate to Britain and "replenysched" the many who had died from the plague and famine.\(^6^4\) It is Cadwalader's action to save the British which classifies him as a national hero; the confusion in the text of E undoubtedly results from the long transmission of his story from its ancient Welsh source.\(^6^5\)

While characters such as Cadwalader may be less familiar to a modern reader, many of the names are completely foreign and even seem nonsensical. It seems safe to assume that many of these names in the legendary material are characters whose legend has been lost and whose names may have been subsequently and repeatedly, misspelled. This makes particular sense when one examines the variation between chapters with regard to amount of material available; two chapters consist of only a list of names, undoubtedly kept in order to maintain the line of succession,\(^6^6\) while other chapters are more or less complete in varying levels of detail. This may be an indication of which stories Geoffrey of Monmouth thought most applicable to his construction of a British text. Since many of these characters are Welsh in

\(^{64}\) E II.1496-1514  
\(^{65}\) Roberts (1974:34-35)  
\(^{66}\) E II. 319-32: "howe.ij.kinges helde the lande of Bretane" and E II.470-89: "Off xxxij kinges that regned in pese ichon after other". This second chapter lists 34 kings.
origin, it is plausible that at least some of his original material would be more locally significant than served Geoffrey’s purpose, and would therefore have been minimised.

The various versions of the Arthurian material also differ in the degree of detail included in the narrative. One of the most obvious differences between Brie’s chapters on Arthur and the corresponding material in E is the presence of the prophecies of Merlin concerning the future kings of Britain in Brie’s text, and their absence from E. In Brie, Merlin and his prophecies are presented in one chapter, inserted into Arthur’s section. They interrupt the narrative, suggesting that the prophecies were actually inserted into the text separately from the original arrangement of the Arthurian narrative. The only transition to this highly symbolic narrative is a reference to Arthur in the heading, which ties the material to the chapter in which it appears. The prophecies are an independent narrative within the Arthurian material. As prophecies, they not only refer to a future time for the characters, but a future point in the narrative for the reader; they function as a reference point for later material within the same text. In Brie the prophecies state who “will” rule Britain, and later in the narrative, the prophecy is fulfilled. The kings whose reigns are “foretold” will indeed be seen to have ruled. Their function is to provide “evidence” of the divine approval of these “future” kings, in the same manner as Edward I applied the lineage of Brut and his sons.

Aside from the exclusion of Merlin’s prophecies from E, the Arthurian material is identical, in order of events, in Brie and E. The differences which do occur between the texts involve the level of detail applied to the summation of events; Brie’s text presents more detail in such instances. For example, the antagonism that is evident in Brie’s text between the Roman Emperor and Arthur is not so clear in E. Referring to the claim of Julius Caesar, and the recent murder of the Roman representative in France, the Emperor sends a letter demanding truage from Arthur, and in his reply Arthur refers to his own genealogy of

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67 According to Brynley F. Roberts, Nennius may be credited for much of the alteration to legend which appears in Geoffrey of Monmouth, including the details of the chapter on Vortigern, specifically his name, and the chapters on Merlin, involving the episode with the dragons. Roberts (1974:35)

68 The material of Arthur in E includes 176 lines in total, compared to 551 lines in Brie, which excludes the 160 lines of Merlin’s prophecy.
Constantine and Maximian, which in fact supports his claim to truage from Rome. In the E version, by contrast, the letters are summarised: a messenger brings "lettres to Kyng Arthour, him charching by the lettres vppon lyffe and lyme to come to Rome and do his homage, and bryng with him his Troage that was graunted by the king Cassabilan of bretane to Julius Cesar." And Arthur’s reply is similarly paraphrased: he “sent worde to the emperour agane that he schuld nether of him haue homage nor troage, but that he wolde be avenged on the emperour for the dispetefull message that he had him sent.” The result of this alteration in E is a lessening of immediate reader response. As with the chapter of King Leir, the presence of such detail, and particularly the evocative language in which these letters are written, serves to draw the reader into the drama of the version used in Brie’s text, in a more involved manner than in E:

Gretely vs mervailes, Arthure, bat bow art on so hardy, wiB eyen in Bi heuede, to maken oppen werr and contak a3eynes vs of Rome, Pat owen al Be worlde to deme; for bow haste neuer sitte before Biis tymne prouede ne assaiede Be strengB of Be Romayns, and perfor, bow it shalt in litil tymne. For Iulius Cesar conquerede al Be lande of Britaigne, and tok berof truage, andoure folc longe tymne haue it had; and now, brouz Bi pryde, bow hit withholdes; wherfore we commande Be Bat Bow 3elde a3eyne.

One interesting narrative difference is the order of events involving Mordred. In Brie, the narrative foreshadows betrayal before Arthur leaves for Rome in answer to the Emperor’s letter: “Kyng Arthour, his lande & Gunore his wif, he bitoke to one of his Neveus [...] bat me callede Mordrede: but he was nou3t al trewe, as 3e shul here afterarde.” In E, Mordred is not mentioned until Arthur is abroad, at which point the betrayal has already occurred; at the point of taking Rome, “tithinges come to him [Arthur] oufe of this lande how Mordred, that was neveu to King Arthour, and that King Arthoure of grete trust lefte to kepe this lande.

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69 Brie (1906:81-2 II.21-32, II.1-31)
70 E II. 1223-27.
71 E II. 1228-32.
72 Brie (1906:81 II.21-29)
73 Brie (1906:83 II.25-8)
whenne he wente toward Rome, had seased all the lande into his handes and helde himselfe as king and held Gyamore the quene as his paramour.74 Again, the effect is in the detail; the use of foreshadowing as a device creates a dramatic aspect of the story, while E maintains the narrative order, so that the reader will be affected by events themselves, rather than by their anticipation.

The E version and Brie’s text may be effectively compared for narrative differences, if one assumes Brie’s Brut as a compilation represents a “complete” text. It seems safe to conclude, with reference to Lister Matheson’s categorisation of Brut manuscripts, and the necessary length of Brie’s complete Brut, that E is unusually brief. The lack of detail focuses the reader on the events of the narrative, on action and punishment, upon events rather than method; this forces the reader to analyse the text and come to individual conclusions, which coincides with the medieval historian’s responsibility to elicit a response from his reader in order to make the moral point. The necessity for the reader to actively interpret the text emphasises the moral lesson over the progress of the narrative, and requires the reader to participate more fully in the progress of the text, preventing the passive, predictable response expected when the reader’s reaction is completely constructed by a high level of detailed description of motive.

Chapter One: the Medieval Tradition of Historical Chronicle

I. Medieval Patterns of Reading

The application of this discussion of the medieval concept of history, and differing methods of presentation, to the Brut lies in the interpretation of the Brut as a work of history, with its stylistic presentation using techniques one may today consider appropriate to a work of literature. The aim of this thesis is to analyse these literary approaches to the

74 E II. 1281-88
history presented in the *Brut*, and in order to do this, a modern reader must be familiar with medieval methods of interpretation.

During the Middle Ages, scholarly interest in the past for the sake of knowledge alone, even in its application to the present, was limited. A text chronicling the past was seen as having value primarily for its ability to prepare man for heaven. The past, particularly when compared to the present, provided examples of “the eternal, unchanging plan of God for the salvation of man, and [...] the moral constants of good and evil which reveal themselves in human behavior”.\(^75\) In other words, history is valuable for the pattern it may reveal in God's plan so far, and the lessons it may teach from the experience of others. Similarly, the present allows time to learn these lessons and make oneself deserving of heaven.\(^76\) Although one application of a chronicle in the Middle Ages was certainly to entertain with magical stories and impressive feats, the stories themselves are irrelevant if taken out of context from their primary use as moral instruction.

Since the approach to reading a historical text is so different today, the accurate interpretation of a medieval chronicle depends upon a re-acquaintance with both the medieval concept of history and structures of authorship. It is accepted that chronicles should not be read as a modern history, assuming that the author was attempting to record “true events that occurred in the past.” Although medieval scholars were interested in recording a truthful text, it is unsatisfactory to assume this is merely the equivalent in intent to the attempt to compile a modern text of “objective” history. “Truth” in one sense was vital for the success of the didactic purpose; examples gain force when the author can provide evidence that these events really occurred.\(^77\) Therefore, with regard to a text such as the legendary material of the *Brut*, and the particular examples the author wishes to emphasise to the audience and to present for moral instruction, the narrative must present a “truth” which exists within the bounds of the reasonable and the symbolic.

\(^{75}\)Kolve (1966:108)
\(^{76}\)Kolve (1966:102)
\(^{77}\)Morse (1991:92)
The legendary tales in the Brut provide examples of acceptable and unacceptable action; as participants in these actions, the characters of the legendary material function as symbols for the reader. Whether a reader interprets the tales as literally true or not is ultimately of no consequence. The real, important truth is that God punishes the wicked and rewards the righteous and good in accordance with his plan for humanity. In the expression of this truth, the medieval historian was expected to produce a text which symbolically conveyed these concepts, and provided immediate results for acting to facilitate or to obstruct God’s will. The immediacy and literal reaction by God in the tales provides the impetus for good behaviour in the reader, since tales of rewarded heroism and punished sin are ineffectual if a reader is not convinced that God will act, to punish or reward. Embellishments added to the text, to tailor it for a particular readership, did not make it any less “truthful” in this sense; they were considered to emphasise what truth, or point was already present in the text, or what should have already been there, if intent is correctly interpreted.

In Christian terms, the ultimate “truth” involves God’s overall plan for humanity, the consequential progression of events, and the expectation of eventual human achievement. Within any text the representation of this plan is the central core of truth, and the narrative in and of itself is of relatively little significance. In fact, to some extent, it was thought that “if the subject manifests God’s work, then even if an action didn’t really happen, it’s true anyway.”78 As God’s plan has existed before Creation and is revealed as human events unfold, within “truth-ful” texts, there is a pre-existing message which the reader must discover. Even completely new interpretations of texts were not credited as ambitious and creative, but as the realisation of a “prelinguistic” truth that has always been present in the text.79 Just as the ability to re-interpret the meaning of events for a particular audience is a valuable means of emphasising specific aspects of morality, the added possibility of actually re-writing an event, as long as it expresses the same idea, is an

78Morse (1991:147-48)
79Morse (1991:194)
acceptable didactic tactic. For this reason the text of E will be equally as “true” as another, noticeably different version of the Brut.

Viewed additionally as a mnemonic device, which takes advantage of the pleasure to be taken from hearing or reading the tales, the entire narrative of E may be seen as a means by which an audience may gain access to the moral truths it puts forth; because the pleasure gained from a text makes the mind more receptive to virtue and truth, and “the mind naturally tends to embrace what it sees to be good, when the members of an audience perceive the relation between fact and truth [...] they are moved to assimilate what is represented, making it the criterion for their own actions and thoughts.”\(^80\) It is not merely the conscientious reading and active analysing of texts such as the Brut which furnished an audience with examples for moral behaviour, but also it is the effect of a work of fiction upon the mind of the reader, inherently able to perceive truth and goodness, which establishes a foot-hold for the absorption of the moral points the author wishes to convey. The texts of Monmouth and the Brie compilation act upon the emotions of the reader to express their point, but E functions as a less intrusive text. The lack of influential writing leaves the reader able to form an independent interpretation, free and unbiased. This allows the reader’s presumed inherent awareness of good and evil to determine the right and wrong in each story, and to make conclusions that will be the more memorable because they have been achieved individually.

The medieval concept of truth in history ultimately derives from the Classical tenet that the historical text necessarily involves “the truth”.\(^81\) While the perception of truth differs between Classical and medieval periods due to the application of Christianity, the concept that truth is a requirement for a historical work, whatever its definition, is central to the understanding of medieval methods of reading. Pagan histories, although considered to be devoid of ultimate value because of the absence of God’s truth, were acceptable to medieval historians insofar as they dealt with “useful things.” A pagan author could be

\(^80\) McGinley (1996:57)
\(^81\) Beer (1981:23)
viewed by his medieval successor as participating, unwittingly, in the scheme of God. This enabled the medieval scholar to consider pagan texts, and established a concept which could also be applied to medieval texts: structure becomes less significant in a work of history, in fact, “the assumption that eye-witness history was valuable despite [any] incompleteness implied that the absence of certain details had no particular significance. Facts [...] contributed to the truth [...] without being essential to it.”

Additionally, a modern reader must be aware that medieval historians inherited the concept of “history as literature” from Antiquity, which concept determined the function of medieval historical texts. Instead of merely being the record of past events, a “history” typically has a didactic function, and the emphasis on style of writing, in Classical thought, with the aim of affecting the reader, was even more important than the logical order of the narrative argument. This concept of the importance of style in order to affect the reader is demonstrated in E in the structure of the legendary material. As a series of interesting and adventurous stories, E will have more effect on a reader than a simple chronology of names and events, and at the same time, because it does not provide much detail, it forces the reader to act upon the text, to actively consider the material, which then creates memory.

The legendary material also inherits from Classical tradition another of its major components: the text is to be introduced with a “generational plot”, which is referred to as “legendary material”, a structure clearly manifest in the Brut.

Authors of chronicles in particular were interested in using history’s participants to teach moral lessons aimed at the salvation of the living. In a historical text, any progression of events forms an immediately visible structure, a “skeleton”, upon which

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82 Beer (1981:29)
83 Partner (1985:12-13)
84 Goldstein (1993:93)
85 The progression of events in a chronicle involves more previous knowledge than a verbatim recitation of a popular text; in order to affect a particular audience, an author would intentionally include, embellish, alter or remove episodes which were relevant to his moral purpose. In fact, medieval scribes repaired texts from which sections has disappeared, or had never been completed, and this provided ample opportunity to tailor the document not only for moral purposes, but also for inclusion of the interpretation of this record of history current at the time.
narrative detail is constructed. This basic progression of events also acts as a reference to pre-existing events which are the true focus of the chronicle.\textsuperscript{86} Within the narrative are characters who act as symbols of a particular action, and signals, which refer the reader to a particular result in a previous historical situation. To this end, the objective verifiability of the material in the chronicle as a whole is insignificant. Unconcerned with the historical "limitations" of a text, the author and audience of a chronicle valued the events cited therein for their symbolic representation and explanation of the past, which provide the moral lessons; it was for the application of past events to the present, their ability to be re-read and re-applied, their timelessness, that medieval scholars considered the material historically valuable. In this respect also, the alterations in legendary material in E would not have caused any difficulties for a medieval scribe or audience. The concern is, rather, in what manner, and to what extent the reader is directed toward a particular goal, and in this process, what lessons may be learned from the examples these tailored entries provide.\textsuperscript{87} 

In view of the discussion so far of the medieval treatment of a historical text, it may be argued that a text such as the E Brut, an established narrative which is altered with each transcription, is acted upon in two ways: by the author and by the reader. First, the act of writing the text which incorporates the intent of the author, creates a potentially "new" interpretation with each transcription. Because of the necessity of authorial interpretation of texts in the Middle Ages, the ideas of "truth" and "fiction" regarding historical texts were not regarded as mutually exclusive.\textsuperscript{88} In a basic sense, a "truthful" medieval historical document must necessarily include some "fictions"; since texts were copied with the intent to address various audiences, it is common for a history to be altered and embellished to suit the particular purpose of the author. Pivotal events in historical texts might be interpreted by a particular author as having less significance to a specific audience and therefore be given less prominence, or even eliminated, in a new transcription.\textsuperscript{89} Evidence of this in the 

\textsuperscript{86}Kolve (1966:108)  
\textsuperscript{87}Kolve (1966:108)  
\textsuperscript{88}Morse (1991:231)  
\textsuperscript{89}Morse (1991:6)
“historical” material of E concerns political bias in favour of the Lancastrian dynasty, with reference to “goode Erle Thomas of Lancastr”, who is “martired”, and in whose name God performs various miracles of healing. This support of Thomas of Lancaster may be due simply to its origin in an area of traditional Lancastrian sympathy, or it may be appropriate sentiment for the person or group for whom it was destined. It is possible that a copy of the Brut originating in another part of Britain would not include this favour for Lancaster, or would perhaps, similarly emphasise another character in the narrative.

The concept of “history” as flexible also derives in part from the Classical tradition, whose scholars noted the necessity of editing and interpreting the text to suit a particular audience, and doing so in order to emphasise important moral points. This is an important concept in the exegesis of the Bible, a text clearly quite distant from any medieval author or scribe, and becomes applicable to other texts which intend to convey a Christian symbolism. The justification for the variation of a single text is explicated in Alexander of Hales’ Sum of Theology and becomes widely accepted in the later Middle Ages:

The conditions of man are manifold: in the time of the Law, in the time after the Law, in the time of prophecy, in the time of grace. Even within these periods the conditions of men are manifold. For some are sluggish in matters relating to faith, some are rebellious in matters relating to good morality, and [fall short] in different ways. Some pass their lives in prosperity, some in adversity, some in good works, some in sin. The conclusion must be drawn that the teaching of Holy Scripture, which has been ordained for the salvation of men, must employ a multiple mode, so that the mode matches the objective.

Not only should a text thus be appropriate for various men, each at a different level of understanding, but also for one man at a more or less competent stage of comprehension. Because of this accessibility for varying levels of reader, several, conflicting interpretations of the same text are inevitable, and perfectly acceptable, because even the exclusion of part

90 E I.2.501ff.
91 Morse (1991:94)
92 Hales quoted in Minnis (1988:219)
of the narrative in the course of analysis does not detract from a legitimate conclusion.93 The text is therefore “edited” again, by each reader. A reflection of this consideration of various levels of analytical ability, God’s plan for men in E is revealed in increasingly complex stages in accordance with general human spiritual development. The variegated exegesis of a text such as the Brut would act as an effective tool in which moral truths are interpreted from the examples provided by the narrative. While the physical editing of material affects the impression a text will convey to a reader, it is the independent interpretation performed by each individual reader which ultimately reveals the value of the narrative as a symbolic conveyor of truth.

The translation of such history became an important issue as the vernacular increased in popularity. Although texts in older, original languages such as Latin were considered to be closer to God and thus more “truthful”, the demand for translation into English brought another aspect of the question of accuracy to the forefront of scholastic attention. Again medieval scholars looked to Classical precedent: authorities such as Cicero explained that in the process of translation, the integrity of the text is paramount. The emphasis in this process, then, was not a word-for-word translation, but the assurance that the original meaning or intent was retained.94 For the text to be a “successful” translation, the reader must be confident that the translation is accurate in its transmission of the matter of the original document. In accordance with this guideline, the “truth” in a medieval document, as with the “truth” of a text’s moral examples, relies upon the reader’s perception of accurate representation. These issues are relevant with regard to the Brut, as a text resulting from transcription and translation over a period of 350 years; the text of the Middle English prose Brut in the later 15th century is a result of processes of translation from one variety of English to another. Just as the Brut may be legitimately edited by each scribe, as long as the main point remains intact, it is also subject to interpretation by the translators.

93 McGinley (1996:55) The author explains that “the fictional details of a poem are seen as making no essential contribution to meaning, as long as the interpretation offered is consistent with Christian doctrine”.

94 Goldstein (1993:187)
As with scribes within one language, the conveyance of the main point of the text is of utmost importance, which accommodates a variation in the actual wording of the text.

The main point of the text may be presented literally and symbolically, and it is this varied and complex use of symbolism which will be discussed in the remainder of this chapter and the next, in an attempt to disengage and examine the layers of meaning which are constructed onto the narrative of E. In this, we are ourselves performing the "method of exegesis [which] developed during the Middle Ages, whereby one builds layers of interpretation according to allegorical, moral, and mystical senses upon the foundation of the literal." The trained medieval reader would, of course, already have been familiar with this type of analysis, and we will re-acquaint ourselves with these methods and the assumed knowledge of such a reader as we examine E.

I.ii. Common symbols in E

The medieval method of learning to read involves, in part, training the reader to identify and interpret certain pre-established symbols which might appear in any text. In particular, images from the Bible are powerful symbols in literature, acting as a series of reference points to an experience in a prevalent and very significant text of "history." Once a specific image is singled out, and its symbolism established, its subsequent appearance in future texts requires no explanation. Such an image would recall a stock of interpretations and suggestions which, when added to a character or plot, would remind the reader of past outcomes, suggest moral parallels, and add a further dimension of meaning to the current narrative. Language or key images familiar from common Christian readings could then be applied in the form of analogy or symbol in a text intended to teach a moral lesson. One such image in E is water, which acts as a symbol for baptism. The function of water in baptism as the judgement of God through its cleansing and the subsequent absolution, are images with which a reader would be familiar. Baptism is thus equated with "submission

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95 Carruthers (1990:43)
96 Kolve (1984:319)
to water, in both its power to destroy and its power to give and sustain life".97 As such, the use of water in the Brut may be both threatening and forgiving.

In the E chapter of King Canute and Edmund Ironside, water represents both God’s power over all life, and his power of forgiveness. The king, Canute, “become so proude that he wende he had ben as grete as Godde.”98 As a direct result of Canute’s pride, God causes the river Thames to flood the palace of Westminster, covering the tops of the king’s shoes, and again from pride, Canute “smote the water and seid ‘Y commaunde the water to torne agane,’ but for all that the water wolde not leve”. The water in this situation is physically threatening: “the water wolde not leve, but come vpon him so that he stode in the water on the schoes.”99 The uncontrollable rising of the Thames is a manifestation of God’s power to both flood the earth and destroy the king, but also, with the King’s repentance, to use water in baptism, as an act of forgiveness. Baptism is suggested in the description of the action of the water and the movement of the king: the Thames “come vpon him so that he stode in the water on the schoes. Then come he awey, and in presence of his people, he kneled doune and helde vp his handys and seid, ‘O God Pat art lorde of all things and art eternall, and y am a wrecched caytiff and mortall and haue no duracion but be thi sufferaunce, y yeld me to thi mercy.’”100

The water rises up onto the king’s feet, at which precise point he acknowledges his sin and his absolution. The action of the water covering his feet symbolises baptism, his kneeling indicates his blessing and the absolution of his sin, and the instant access to spiritual awareness that accompanies it; baptism not only brings forgiveness but also spiritual insight into the true order of humanity. This event illustrates the innate awareness of humanity of God’s omnipotence and mercy. The image of the Flood is also clear, as an image of the end of one “world”, in this case the unjust society in which Canute neglects his subjects. The king is humbled by his inability to affect the progress of the water, appearing

97Kolve (1984:321)
98E II.1814-16
100 E II. 1823-30.
as a powerless and bad-tempered king, striking it and commanding it to halt, and leaves the palace to kneel, significantly before his people, and ask forgiveness of God. Canute's pride has made him an unjust ruler, and in the process of repenting his own sin, he redresses the imbalance his pride has caused.101

While water as a symbol of baptism is a recognisable image from the Bible, it has other applications which were influenced by the acceptance of Classical concepts into Christianity. Specifically, the function of water may be traced to Classical myth. Poseidon, the god of the sea was commonly thought to determine the fate of those people put upon the sea; the medieval interpretation of this concept substitutes God for Poseidon, where water functions as a natural participant in God’s will. Therefore the act of putting someone to sea is the equivalent of putting them in God’s hands, and in this manner, one may put one’s faith in God to determine guilt or innocence. Water may act as the means by which a character is tried, and may be used as a determinant of a character’s fate.102 Therefore, the fortune suffered by a character while on board a sea-bound ship becomes a pre-established literary device which provides background and information about a character, which is then not explicited in the narrative. The first characters in E, both the daughters of Dioclesian and Brute himself, are put to sea as a punishment for murder. The introduction of the text with two consecutive chapters revolving around characters in a ship places the text itself, and therefore the reader interacting with it, in the hands of God. The details of both chapters are beneficial for the understanding of both the way in which water was accepted as a general symbol in medieval literature, and the specific point intended by the author. Awareness of the symbolic participation of the sea in the literature of the Middle Ages explicates what may seem an incongruous outcome in the first chapters of the Brut.103

101 The concept of justice in the Brut is discussed further below, chapter three.
102 According to Kolve, this is an influence of the Greeks, who believed that the sea was by nature a good entity, and would reveal the good or evil truth of people set to sea. Kolve (1984:325-6)
103 The page including details of the ship in Brute’s chapter have been removed from E, and therefore the events in this chapter must be referred to only basically, with reference to the general story.
As punishment for the murder of their 30 husbands, Albyn and her sisters are exiled from Syria. There are no extenuating circumstances in the E text; they murder their husbands in order to avoid a life married to men who are of lower lineage, in other words, they act out of pride.¹⁰⁴ Their father intends to burn them as punishment, but his barons prevent him, suggesting instead that he exile them. Committing the daughters to the sea, the nobles absolve themselves from the responsibility of determining either their guilt or innocence, or their subsequent fate. It is a satisfactory solution because exile acts as punishment, and it thereby satisfies Syrian society which would demand some sort of discipline. The exile is also an act of mercy; rescuing the women from immediate death, the barons give them the opportunity, if they survive, to live elsewhere.¹⁰⁵ They have also rid themselves of the decision; the sea will determine the sisters’ fate by means of their guilt or innocence.

The survival of Albyn and her sisters is not an indication that they are forgiven by God and therefore allowed to survive their journey. They are not innocent upon their arrival at Albion, and they do not escape punishment; the fact that their children take the form of monsters is proof of this. Similar to later stories of various creatures in the legendary part of the Brut, the presence of beasts in this chapter reflects the brutish features of the human characters with whom they are associated. The women live as beasts themselves, arriving at an uninhabited island, and living on roots and herbs, and seasonal plants. This animalistic behaviour escalates to first a craving for animal flesh, and then, directly associated in the narrative, for the company of men. The devil responds to their craving, appearing in the disguise of a man, but even the devil’s appearance and seduction of the women is ultimately

¹⁰⁴ In the E version of the Brut, the behaviour of the daughters has no textual justification. However, in other manuscripts of the Brut, namely a heretofore uncatalogued manuscript from Glasgow University Library, the sisters are presented as ill-treated by their husbands, a point which was surely intended as a move in their defense. The lack of this information in E results in a much more harsh characterisation of the sisters.
¹⁰⁵ Kolve (1984:326) Kolve states that there are three logical reasons for putting people adrift: if “guilt could not be conclusively determined by human judgement”, “when men wished to combine severity with some possibility of mercy”, and “when society wished to expel an unwanted person from its midst”.

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the working of God’s plan, the devil also acting as a means of its fulfilment.106 Their production of the giant-monsters as children is another means of expressing their animalistic nature; consorting with evil brings evil results. More importantly, Albyn and her sisters function as Eve characters in the narrative of E, bringing sin into the world, and corrupting an island-Eden. Sin, taking the form of monsters, is now free to plague humanity, and these creatures do make other appearances in the narrative. Although the sisters have escaped Syria, and their murders have gone unanswered in a legal sense, their bestial existence is God’s punishment: they have behaved as monsters, and God condemns them to life as and with such.

In a premise similar to that governing the story of the daughters of Dioclesian, Brute is exiled from Troy, having accidentally killed his father. In fact, Brute is responsible for the deaths of both his parents; his mother dies in childbirth, and his father is shot by a stray arrow of Brute’s while the two are hunting. Brute is responsible, whether intentionally or not, for the death of a king, and for the death of his father. Again exile by sea is an acceptable recourse to societal punishment when there could be no conclusive judgement of guilt or innocence. Since it was thought that the sea would no more hurt an innocent man than tolerate a guilty one, the result of the exile may inform the reader of Brute’s true guilt or innocence.107

In addition, this exile is an act of mercy. Even though Trojan society will not tolerate him to remain, Brute is not a murderer; although they feel obliged to punish him, exile with its chance to build a new life is certainly better than death.108 The sea determines Brut’s fate; banishment relieves his countrymen of an awkward judgement, gives him the chance to live elsewhere, and also functions as a literary device which informs the audience of his true character. Establishing his nobility, it is Brute himself who initiates his own exile: “And whenne this mischefe was falen, the people of the londe wolde not suffre Brute

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106 While the devil appears in the manuscript as the representative of temptation, he does not act on his own will, but rather as a character used by God to affect humanity.
107Kolve (1984:326)
108Kolve (1984:326)
to abide among hem, wherefore he went fro thens into Greke.\textsuperscript{109} The language suggests that Brute is in control of his punishment, and further, it is he who decides when he and his fellow Trojans, kept prisoner in Greece, will leave that country. Defeating the Greek king is a mere formality. Realising he would "neuer have reste of them of Greke\textsuperscript{110}" if he were to remain there, he captures Pandras, and bargains for his and his fellow Trojans' release. It is by his noble behaviour, and the way in which he controls his destiny, that we are provided with characteristics to prove that, despite the unfortunate circumstances, the murder is not intended to define him as a character. In fact, similar to the story of Merlin,\textsuperscript{111} an unfortunate circumstance acts as the catalyst which introduces Brute to the world; in Brute's case, his exile eventually leads him to the foundation of Britain's royal line.

His journey, in terms of its function as punishment to satisfy Trojan society, is a success. In a part of this story that is missing from E, Brute lands in Europe and finds a temple dedicated to Diana. This is not simply chance - the sea brings him to a goddess who gives Brute directions to Britain. The amalgamation of Greek and Christian tradition provides an adequate setting both for a pagan character and a medieval audience. It is easy to justify Diana's presence, as it is for the giant children of Albyn and her sisters, as a manifestation constructed by God to guide Brute.\textsuperscript{112} By means of contact with Brute through Diana, God expresses his divine approval of the hero and his voyage, and reinforces the concept that pagan characters may be adopted into a Christian text, but they must be adapted into a Christian scheme, within the concept of God as the supreme being. God advises Brute through Diana, leading Brute and his men to Albion, where they kill the

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item 109 E II.110-12.
\item 110 E I.141.
\item 111 See Chapter Two.
\item 112 According to the concept of euhemerism in fact, Diana may be considered a human character in the Brut, one who is highly venerated for her warrior skills and wisdom, and not really a goddess at all. It may have been a misunderstanding of Diana's representation which motivated the removal of these pages from E, by a reader who assumed her character represented a deity from a pagan system of belief and thus by definition in conflict with God.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
monsters that inhabit the island, destroying as a result the remnants of the carnality and moral wilderness remaining from Albyn and her sisters.

Clearly, in both of these chapters, exile functions at a basic narrative level to force the characters to leave their homelands and create a heroic foundation for Britain. But there is also a spiritual lesson of morality, and of forgiveness. The juxtaposition of these chapters in the narrative reflects a balance which will be the structure for the rest of the legendary material in E a balance between good and evil which serves as the basis for moral lessons. In a world before the organisation of written law, justice must be meted out in accordance with a crime. Without precedents, citizens are left to their faith in natural justice, and a belief that good will always prevail because nature itself cannot tolerate evil.

A central participant in both the above-mentioned instances of societal resolution for a crime is the ship, itself also a Christian image vital to the interpretation of events in the legendary material. Educated medieval readers would be aware that the voyage of a ship serves as a symbol of the spreading of Christian faith from one land to another, and the ship itself represents the bulwark of true faith.113 Such use of a ship is illustrated most clearly in the chapter of Ursula and the 11,000 virgins. The basic plot involves the collection of women as brides for British men settled in Little Britain, or western France. Gathered and set aboard a ship with provisions, Dionotho establishes his daughter Ursula as their leader, intending her, as the most noble, to marry the king, Conan. Unknown to Dionotho, Ursula has "prively avowed to lyfe chaste," and it is this vow, representing her commitment to her faith, in existence aboard a ship representing Christianity, which establishes Ursula herself as the physical representative of Christianity, while the ship represents faith to be defended.114 Once at sea, the ship is driven by a tempest into a foreign port, Colyn, and to the attention of the Saracen king Gowane, who captures it. Upon realising their predicament, the women decide to resist Gowane and his men, that "rather than thei schuld

113Kolve (1984:308)
114E II.710-89
lese theire virginite for to dye". They successfully repel the advances of the Saracens, but are then killed for their resistance.

Reading this tale in terms of overt and covert meaning explains the unjust outcome. On the surface this is a tale of bad luck and murder; the overt meaning of the women’s actions is the struggle by the women to conform to current societal values and retain their virginity. But the symbolism of the ship and the sea provide further explanation, and since the moral of the tale is so significant, the actual end of the characters becomes irrelevant. It is not the defense of virginity itself which is to be praised - the overt meaning is not the aim of the chapter. Rather, because female virginity was associated with Christian virtue, Ursula’s virginity may be interpreted as a symbol of the faith which she preserves in the face of pagan attack; the covert meaning to this story is Ursula’s defense of her faith to the death, and the ship as a larger symbol of Christianity is thereby defended and its principles upheld, as the women prevent the pagans from breaching it.

Just as it is significant that the intent of the pagans is thwarted by faith, it is also notable that at the end of the chapter the same Saracens are killed by Constantine, Ursula’s intended brother-in-law. Although the chapter ends with the revenge for the lives of Ursula and her shipmates expected by the modern reader, and indeed the medieval reader expecting justice to be upheld, the lack of emphasis on the final outcome indicates its lack of importance. The act of revenge is necessary for the over-reaching theme of justice in E, which demands punishment equal to a crime. The chapter may be seen as a parable: the tale of a foray of Christianity into pagan lands, the misunderstanding and violent rejection of the faith, and the final triumph of Christianity over her enemies. In its completeness, and concentrated use of symbolism, this tale seems likely to have been adopted from an already existing tradition, perhaps Ursula’s own hagiography, which may be used on its own to describe the strength of Christianity, and which was amalgamated into the legendary material of the Brut.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵E II.759-60
¹¹⁶ And see below for further discussion of Ursula, in chapter three.
The justice of the sea also applies to the creatures who live in it. The chapter of Morwith presents a sea-monster who kills the king as punishment for his wicked behaviour. Morwith is: “full wikked, and therfor God toke vengeaunce, for on a dai as he walked by the see, [...] he mette with a wilde beste that no man sawe neuer suche another best. And the beste deuored him and ete him all hole at oon morsell and thenne vanysshed awey no man wiste whider.”

Reminiscent of the monster-giant children of Albyn and her sisters, this creature is again ultimately sent by God. As in Brute’s communication with God through Diana, the physical presence of the monster is proof of God’s presence and participation in human lives during a time before Christianity is accepted in Britain. The monster, specifically its incivility, is a reflection of Morwith’s sins, his description as “full wikked”; it characterises his inner spiritual state, and it also represents the way in which he has debased himself as a human.

A reacquaintance with the use of such symbols as the ship and water in medieval texts is necessary for the interpretation of authorial intent; not only are these images familiar to a medieval reader in their direct Christian symbolism, but their repetition creates a system of reference, and suggests a pattern of development within the text which conveys the moral point of the author. While each mention of the use of water refers to the concept of “natural” punishment, it also refers to all previous uses of water, and the outcome of each event.

When the narrative reaches the chapter of king Canute, in which water acts as a specific reference to baptism as well as the Flood, this developing use of water reflects the evolution, within the text as a whole, of humanity; characteristics of water, established and developed in the chapters of Albyn and her sisters, Brute, and Ursula by this point culminate in the function of water in baptism as judging, punishing, saving and forgiving.

117 E II. 429-37.
118 E I. 431.
I.iii. Number Symbolism and Arithmetical Proportion in E

It is not only the medieval definitions of truth and corresponding symbols which affect the structure of a chronicle. Far from structuring history solely upon chronological order, medieval chroniclers often applied frameworks derived from contemporary theological thought. In addition to Biblical symbols and themes, the use of number symbolism and arithmetical proportion within a text such as E provides references to a system of meaning based on the significance of individual numbers, and their interpretation when present in various combinations. In addition to the meaning of the numbers themselves, and the established values they convey within the narrative of a text, the calculated use of the numbers in the chapter headings and divisions of the text relates to the concept of numbers used as an aid to memory.119 This connects E to a moralising purpose in its very structure, as well as through the stories it includes.

Numbers were considered to have an absolute significance, in fact, “so pure and absolute is number that it was held to exist even before form, time, or space, pre-existent in the mind of God”.120 Because of this, numbers provided a means of contact between God and man. The belief that “things measured by the same numbers were held to be in some way correspondent” and “they also in turn acquire connotations from the comparisons they purvey”121 meant that, in a scheme similar to that of symbols such as water, a system of significants referring to numbers was established for which the mere reference in a text would immediately call to mind a specific connotation.122

Number symbolism is evident in E. Within the narrative of the Legendary material, the number three is particularly common: Albyn and her 29 sisters is 30, Brute’s three sons, Leir’s three daughters, and also in events such as a challenge occurring on the third day of a

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119 Carruthers (1990:80-84) Carruthers discusses the use of numbers in a representative system of connected memories, in which one memorised number can be used to represent a series of ideas.
120 Peck (1980:17)
121 Peck (1980:18)
122 While the numbers I discuss in this text are significant for “good” reasons, there are also specific numbers which symbolise evil or the lack of order.
feast, and a rain of blood which lasts for three days.\textsuperscript{123} The number 3 is the first “real” number in medieval symbolism, and is “fundamental to the Christian concept of the Trinity” in the sense that the Trinity represents “eternity expressed or made real”.\textsuperscript{124} The number 3 is the number used most often in E, both independently and as a factor in a larger number. It lends the highest authority to not only individual chapters but also the structure of the legendary material as a whole.\textsuperscript{125} The configuration of the chapters around a central point in the legendary material also reflects a pattern of threes, with the central point being the birth of Christ: there are 33 named kings before King Lucy, and 21 remaining chapters from Lucy to Cadwalader, a number divisible by 7 and 3.\textsuperscript{126} One structural application of the number 3 which relates directly to the medieval circular concept of time is the tri-partite cycle of Brute, Arthur and Richard.\textsuperscript{127}

\begin{itemize}
\item The feast occurs in Arthur's chapter, E II. 1217-27, the rain of blood under Reynolde, E II.300-02.
\item Peck “(1980:24) Numbers 1 and 2 are imperceptible to humans because they represent unity, or a single point, and a line respectively; because 3 and 4, by contrast, represent “space” and “volume”, we are able to perceive them, and they are therefore the first “real” numbers.
\item I refer to only the legendary material in this discussion of numerical symbolism. Because this material tends to retain its basic structure and material, the presence of a numerical pattern is in a sense, more constant, and it is a more reliable indication of similar structures in the legendary material of other manuscripts. The historical material, by contrast, exhibits a much greater degree of variation, and for this reason, we must restrict our discussion of any numerical symbolism in historical material to E. In the E manuscript, a total of 30 chapters are evident. This conclusion requires consideration of which chapters have been removed from the manuscript, and the division of the remaining ones. If we include in our tally chapters which would have been included in the chronology, but are now not present in the manuscript, we must count a chapter for Henry I and Stephen, plus the beginning of the chapter for Henry II. We must also assume, due to the importance given Edward III that he too would have been given his own chapter heading. The chapter for Henry VI, however, is included in that of his father, Henry V; a chapter of his own would give a total of 31 chapters, therefore it seems likely that the scribe intentionally combined the last two chapters to give a multiple of 3 and 10, signifying the Trinity and “unity perfection, all-inclusiveness, [the number] one extended to include all numbers” and thus in its factored and multiple forms the number 30 is suggestive of completeness and eternity, appropriate for the completion of a text.
\item The number 7 is also a common symbol in medieval texts, representing “eternal rest”. Jack (1989:33) It also suggests totality, and strength, because it is an indivisible number. Peck (1980:61)
\item See below page 51ff.
\end{itemize}
The use of arithmetical proportion may be seen in the dual and tri-partite structure of E as a whole: in fact, authors of medieval texts often relied upon a system of numerology to determine the number of divisions in a text. Like the system of established Biblical symbols, the number suggested by narrative divisions is a means of reference which lends authority to a text. The numbers two and three, in particular, are commonly used as divisions, being of crucial significance in the structure and premise of the Bible; the number two parallels the division into Old and New Testaments, which lends the authority of the Bible to the new text, and the number three suggests the Trinity, a reference to eternity, and therefore suggests the presence of God's eternal truth within the text itself.128

In a historical text in particular, a reference to the eternity of the Trinity parallels the eternal cycle of history, and supports the subsequent usefulness of a historical text for several generations. Within the structure of the Legendary material, which corresponds in order to the Old Testament, reference to the Trinity, itself a New Testament concept, acts as a sort of foreshadowing of the ensuing Historical section of the Brut.129 R.D.S. Jack states, “It is in the nature of typological events that although they are real and prefigure later realities, they do not in themselves fulfil those realities.”130 One result of this foreshadowing is the enactment of the concept of the connectedness of time, the awareness in the “present” of the “future”, and therefore for a reader involved in a text, their constant interaction; an awareness of the Trinity in the legendary material means that pre-Christian material is analysed from a Christian viewpoint.131 The arrangement of a text into significant divisions, and the specific mention of numbers within the narrative act together to create a reference for the authority of the text within a specifically Christian context.

128 Peck (1980:18)
129 However I am not suggesting actual foreshadowing as a literary device is employed in the Brut.
130 Jack (1989:36) The author explains that typology within the Bible “defeats strict chronology, the events of the OT contain[ing] and herald[ing] the promise of the New.”
131 Though not immediately related to role of numbers, this circularity also functions in the prophecies described in the legendary material which are enacted in the historical material.
Medieval theological and secular divisions of time were based upon perceived periods of progress in the Bible. Each period in a medieval text may be demarcated by an event which represents an act of direct intervention by God in the lives of men, and this act of God both indicates progress, and defines each period. In E, two systems of division are apparent. A dual division centres around that most familiar intervention by God, the birth of Christ. Within the tripartite division, it is the advent of Christianity to Britain which localises the narrative and reflects a larger “theme” in E, and establishes God’s presence specifically in Britain. Indeed, the direct participation of God in the history of Britain, in the form of Augustine’s arrival in the country as a missionary, marks a third, new age. The location of the chapter of Saint Augustine accordingly marks the beginning of a new section of human time, the time of Grace and Mercy. The story of a saint’s life, by definition holier than the common man, represents an elevation from the general chronicle, and as such, indicates the increased spiritual awareness that will be present in Britain, after his missionary conversion within the text, and following the change in atmosphere within the manuscript. The tripartite division then, is indicated by the birth of Christ and the chapter on Saint Augustine, whereas the dual division is characterised by the birth of Christ alone.

We will focus on this latter structure first.

Since we have established that it is improbable that the writer responsible for E regarded his text as two distinct sections of material regarding their plausibility, the appearance of a division between fable and “history” may be regarded as a modern imposition upon the text and therefore is not a part of the intentional structure. The dual

132 Jack (1989:33)
133 Because of the extent of the detail in the historical material in Brie, the legendary material represents proportionately less of the total text than it does in the E text, approximately one fourth of the two-volume compilation. In E the historical material actually begins at the end of the chapter of Cadwalader, the transition being a description of his death and the subsequent warring among five regions of Britain, with Ossa emerging as the next king of the entire country. E II.1528-33. In Brie legendary and historical material are combined so that Cadwalader and Elfride of Northumberland exist simultaneously. Since the events in the two versions differ considerably at this juncture, including even the names of the kings, it is difficult to provide a meaningful comparison of the introduction of the historical material, aside from the general conclusion that in Brie’s narrative the legendary overlaps the historical. Even this is not to say the transition is unusually abrupt in
division is thematic, and is intended to recall the movement from Old Testament to New Testament in the Bible which centres on the birth of Christ, and thus establishes the two medieval historical divisions of “Time of Misdoing”, before Christ, and the “Time of Mercy”. This division corresponds in E to the chapter on King Kymbaline, which marks the birth of Christ.

Thematically speaking, this medieval history of “Two Times” corresponds to the dual narrative structure of E. This division clearly demonstrates the process of development suggested in the movement from Old to New Testament. According to this theological system of classification, the Time of Misdoing includes the material from the beginning of the text to Christ’s birth, in which man is only influenced by the physical presence of God through his punishments; although he exists, humanity in the pre-Christian days of the Brut is unaware of him. People continue to worship pagan gods, unaware that the deities are motivated by God. The effect of this ignorance is the inevitable “misdoing” which occurs in an uninformed state. After the chapter on King Kymbaline, which includes the birth of Christ, the Time of Grace includes the rest of the narrative, including the historical material, in which the effect of Christ’s birth, life and death changes human existence.\textsuperscript{134} This concept of time effectively presents a structure for the Brut, which refers to the Bible in its method of presenting a pattern of development for humanity, which itself revolves around the spiritual and social adjustment before, and as a result of, the birth of Christ.

A three-part structure is also visible in E, which reflects both medieval theological and historical theory. Since this structure incorporates three periods, the “theme” of the development of man is more readily visible. The historical three-part structure incorporates both the ecclesiastical concept of time, represented by the Trinity, and a human concept of the progress of time through the development of law. While the dual division represents human existence before and after the life of Christ, this division reflects both the influence

\textsuperscript{134} E II. 1-536
of Christ on humanity in general, and also the specific conversion of Britain to Christianity. The "Three-Fold Division of Time" classifies human linear time since Creation in terms of the human law that was applied. The first division, "natural law", exists before law is written, and corresponds to the material in the Brut from Dioclesian to the birth of Christ under King Kymbaline. In this section of text, actions are punished or rewarded solely in terms of justice and retribution. The second division of time, "under written law", extends from the giving of written law to Moses, to the life of Christ, and refers to the material in the Brut from King Kymbaline to Augustine. The world is viewed in terms of the symbolic physical evidence of the love of God for humanity, Christ's birth, which heralds a new age of mercy which first extends to the world and then specifically to Britain.

The third division in this scheme is the largest, both in terms of the length of time represented, and of the amount of material in this third section of the Brut. The period of "grace and mercy" begins with Austeyn and extends to the end of the world. This section corresponds to the last three chapters of the legendary material in E, and includes the "historical" half of the Brut. The application of these structures, each either based upon or developed from theological concepts, serves to emphasise God's omnipresence. His plan for and constant, active participation in the lives of men, represented by the advent of Christianity in various circumstances, suggests that while he exists outside time, he also acts as advisor and catalyst to each new period. Accordingly, time was not considered to progress of its own accord, nor elements develop one from another. God's interaction was regarded as vital and primary to any general human development, both in the past and present. It was this identification with the people in a history, whose lives God also acted upon, which resulted in a particular interest in the use of the past for future individual betterment. Thus two structures are evident in E, of dual and triple division, and it is difficult to support one over the other. It is not impossible, nor even implausible, that both

135 Ell. 1-536
136 Ell. 537-1450
137 Kolve (1966:97) and E l.1389.
138 Jack (1989:11)
schemes were intended to surface in the narrative, since both effectively add to the interpretation of the text. The triple structure in particular reflects the triple concept of time, in which events occur in linear succession, but are also, in another sense, circular, and in which all actions occur with reference to eternal life.

The medieval triple sense of time co-exists with both the linear and circular viewpoints. In a linear sense, the medieval Christian understood life as a chronology, a progression of events from birth to death. This concept existed “within” a view of time as circular, which stems from an awareness of the cycle of yearly events and seasons, and the fact that this complete cycle is itself repeated annually.\(^{139}\) In turn this relates one life with that of every other life in the past, creating a cyclical sense of history in general, emphasising the need and the ability to learn from the mistakes of others. According to this view, if an event is truly “historical”, its result is applicable to the present, it will continue to be cited as an example, and will thereby succeed in teaching the audience each time. The repetition of an outcome in a text, favourable or otherwise, which was the result of some specific action, confirms that history repeats itself, and the more vital it is to learn from the mistakes and successes of others.

The third, medieval sense of living “within Eternity”, a self-placement in God’s overarching plan for humanity, relates to the spiritual “recovery of [the] centre,” the return to the blessed internal one-pointed condition that existed before the Fall, which may occur during this lifetime.\(^{140}\) This concept is reflected in the theme of the pilgrimage in medieval literature, and therefore was an accessible concept for the medieval audience of the Brut; as humanity must embark on a spiritual pilgrimage during life to recover the divine state of one-pointedness, so characters in the Brut together enact a cyclical pilgrimage which progressively achieves a sense of wholeness with regard to the position of the character in relation to his “home”. This cycle is manifested in the relationship between Brute, Arthur and Richard I.

\(^{139}\) Peck (1980:34)  
\(^{140}\) Peck (1980:34)
The application of the past to the present in a repetitive manner, with regard to a text such as E, creates a cycle of history which is active outside the actual chronicle; while the text itself follows a linear pattern of progress and intervention by God, the effect of the material is interconnected in that it may be referred to repeatedly by its readers and may have the same effect on different people each time. The connection between the linear and circular concepts of time is visible in the birth of Christ, who, primarily the redeemer of humankind, exists within a linear progression of time, but also represents a second, redeemed Adam. His death and resurrection may be paralleled with the concept of the death of a character in a text, and the "re-birth" each time the text is read.

I.iv. The Spiritual Manifestation of the Cyclical Concept of Time: Brute, Arthur and Richard I

A medieval historian would have been aware of the application of the concept of circularity present in the Brut as a genre, and its usefulness as a tool in more than one sense. Since patterns tend to be repeated within one single manuscript, in accordance with the system of reference which serves to emphasise themes, a reader must be aware of the possibility of such echoes. Analysis of the narrative pattern of E brings to the reader's attention a pattern which exists within the material itself, and which is supported by literary evidence. The manifestation of the circularity of time in the E is seen in the circular relationship between three kings of Britain, Brute, Arthur and Richard. This type of structure, a separate relationship within the narrative, is a scribal tactic which enables the progression of the narrative to embody a theme. This relationship functions to emphasise the connection between the three parts of the text as a whole, since each of the kings appears in one of the three periods of history: Brute during the period of natural law, pre-Christianity, Arthur during written law, after Christ's birth but before it is widely accepted in Britain,141 and Richard during the time of mercy.

141 It may seem a stretch to classify Arthur as a Christian king before Christianity reaches his country. However, the Arthurian material, a separate tradition inserted into the narrative of
Since structure orders sense in medieval texts, and the structure in this case is the cycle, thus it is the cycle which organises the material of Brute, Arthur and Richard, around a theme of travel. As the Brut offers numerous individual moral lessons, for which it provides a structure of progressive linear development concerning the maturation of man, additionally, it presents a cyclical structure which in the E is reflected primarily in the relationship between these three kings. The Brute-Arthur-Richard relationship participates in the text as a whole, functioning as a connection of the three times.

Brute, Arthur, and Richard are “deified heroes”, credited with the foundation of societies in the Brut. It is as such heroes that Brute, Arthur, and Richard I are presented in E, each a founder of what may be seen as an independent, ideal civilisation within the chronological progression of events in the history of Britain. This concept of a hero credited as the founder of a civilisation was a popular historian’s tactic since at least the fifth century, used by such fathers of national history as Paulus Orosius, Gregory of Tours, and Isidore of Seville. Adapting the Classical concept of the gods, Isidore specifically included in his work a method of “euhemerism”, in which mythological gods are redefined as deified humans, and which therefore re-establishes legendary heroes as “benefactors of humanity, who should be remembered with gratitude,” rather than dismissed as pagans. Since pagan histories were acceptable to medieval Christians if the material was useful, this reclamation of pagan heroes meant that the type of Classical hero such as Brute was an acceptable participant in medieval representations of history. The creation of “ethnogenic fables”, such as the Brut, in which a single hero is the ancestor for an entire race of people, the Brut, describes Arthur as a Christian king. In addition, Arthur’s faith in the context of the Brut may be seen as a herald of a new era for his country; as the progenitor of his own “ideal society” (see below) it is his duty to bring to his people the life of the future, and in the view of the Brut, the future is Christianity.

142 Vinsauf, transl. Margaret F. Nims (1967:18) The author discusses the correct progression for the construction of a text, which begins with the establishment of a structure, or “order”. This is then followed by level of emphasis, the beauty of the language used, and the recitation of the text.

143 Seznec, Jean (1953:12-14)

144 Seznec (1953:19) Seznec states that “‘ethnogenic’ fables (as Gaston Paris called them) [are tales] which name a hero or demigod as ancestor of a whole people”.

145 Seznec (1953:14-15)
may also be seen to have developed from this concept of euhemerism.\textsuperscript{146} This interpretation of myth, and the application of divine characteristics to human heroes, allowed mythology to be adapted to Christianity, and "in fact there is hardly a chronicler or compiler of universal history writing after [Isidore] who fails to include humanized gods in his enumeration of ancient kings and heroes."\textsuperscript{147}

The relationship between Brute, Arthur, and Richard is established by their function and treatment in the text. Regarding E as a unit comprising the complete history of Britain, an author might fairly expect his medieval audience to see the text not only as a series of individually relevant chapters, but also as a whole, as a progression of events which teach by example, each example building on the last. The appearance of each of these three characters in one of the three Times suggests individual development which parallels that of humanity. In this case, even the "heroes" of this Brut are susceptible to learning and improvement; such a progression would provide the exempla for the noblest members of the audience, kings and princes. Heroic topoi provide the means which associate the three characters, initially by their similar descriptions, and subsequently by their actions, which belong to the category of epic as well as that of legend. Such themes, and common reference, function as a means of categorisation for a medieval audience, and which would have been immediately recognised.\textsuperscript{148}

Brute and Arthur are more obvious members of this category because of their modern identification with legendary and mythological deeds, but Richard I is also presented in the text in the same category, and for similar reasons. His actions during the Crusades, perceived as heroic, the popular legend of Robin Hood which becomes associated

\textsuperscript{146} Seznec (1953:19) The author explains that "euhemerism" derives from Euhemerus who, in the third century B.C., interpreted mythological gods as humans who were greatly loved and admired. Initially euhemerism was used as a defense against paganism by Christian authors, accepted and adapted rather than rejected, much as pagan beliefs were amalgamated into Christianity. Euhemerism was developed into a tool for historical research, which consistently recognised that these characters did indeed exist. See also Seznec 12-13.

\textsuperscript{147} Seznec (1953:14-15)

\textsuperscript{148} I will refer to both a general topos of the hero, which incorporates the various topoi which are included in this categorisation, as well as using the word topos to refer to a single theme of heroic action. I hope this distinction is made clear within the text.
with his reign, and his general popularity as an extraordinary ruler establish his legendary qualities. Although Richard may be viewed as a “historical” persona, his characterisation associates him with Brute and Arthur. In a text whose aim is to provide examples and teach moral behaviour, the similar characterisation of Brute, Arthur and Richard in the Brut serves as an immediate signal to the audience that they are heroes and models to be associated with each other, as well as to be emulated by the readership, perhaps contemporary rulers aspiring to excellence themselves.

All three act as euhemeristic characters, in their establishment of an ideal medieval society within E. Taken separately, the society of each of these kings may function as a complete unit, independent of the Brut; in this aspect of the comparison, the kings each act as a founder of a new society of justice, and as upholders of such justice. The connection between them functions initially on this heroic level; the reader perceives a relationship between the three kings because of their shared heroism, and the presumed rhetorical familiarity with the *topos* of the heroic character. The “ideal society” is one in which peace is upheld and a heroic king is strong and acts on behalf of his people, to facilitate their betterment. There are other chapters in the Brut which describe kings who are just, but what makes the chapters of Brute, Arthur and Richard representative of an ideal society begins with the heroic characteristics attributed to the kings. Heroes construct and maintain societies which exist at a higher level of justice, simply by the nature of their own greatness.

The vision of a utopian Britain is clearest in E in the legend of Arthur, in which Arthur makes the land safe from all neighbouring enemies, conquers the vast majority of the surrounding countries, defends the country against foreign insult, defends the honour of women, and in the meanwhile provides for his soldiers and gives his people great feasts.\(^{149}\) Brute is similarly presented as the caretaker of his fellow Trojans: fleeing Troy after the murder of his father, he goes first to Greece. His nobility is recognised by the Greek king who brings Brute to live in the palace, where he is immediately approached by “vij m+ men

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\(^{149}\) E II.1140-1280.
and women of the lynage of Troye that were come of grete lordis and were holden there in
grete sorow and thraldome and all was because of achilles that was betraied and slane at
Troye.”150 Recognising his greatness and ability to lead them out of slavery to a new world,
they make an offer: “Brute, ye be a lorde of oure lynage and a strong man and a bolde, wyll
ye be oure lorde and souereyn? And we wyll be your men and we wyll go fyght with the
kyng Pandras, and with goddys grace overcome hym, and we wyll make you kyng and hold
of you foreuer.”151 These Trojans, who follow Brute out of slavery to a new and wild land,
are the progenitors of the British population. The ideal society Brute establishes is a
country free from oppression, thus a place of justice, a land likened to Eden; although at
first, through the Eve imagery of Albyn and her sisters, the wilderness image is emphasised,
and any beauty overshadowed by the sin they create and release into the world, Eden is first
a garden, a place of plenty, and Brute’s conquest of the land from the women acts as a
redemption of Eden’s innocence.

Richard’s role in legend, in the story of Robin Hood, is not included in the Brut
narrative. Bearing in mind, however, that in this legend Richard is the peerless Lionheart,
the messiah who will return to England and save the country from the tyranny of his younger
brother John, the material which is present in the narrative of the Brut supports his image as
a hero, the ruler of an ideal society. The majority of Richard’s chapter involves his
pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and like Arthur, Richard is a great conqueror: “as moche as the
cristen had loste, he yt conquered saue the holy crosse”.152 His reputation as a warrior is
fierce, and the story goes that he is served with the heads of Saracens at his table, “wherfore
thei [the Saracens] drad him moche.”153 Also like Arthur, in his absence, a relative attempts
to steal the throne. Richard is captured as he returns to England to defend his crown, and is
ransomed, for which the gold of Britain’s churches is melted down:154 Richard is worth all

150 E II. 113-18.
151 E II. 125-30.
152 E II. 2065-66.
153 E II. 2066-68.
154 E II. 2074-75.
the gold in Britain. Richard maintains justice in two ways; by fighting for Christianity in the Holy Land, and in his return to defend Britain from his brother.

Medieval historians utilised a variety of styles which derive from specific rhetorical traditions. Just as symbols indicative of character, which are derived from previous literature, explain a character more fully than the current text does, so writing in a certain style may add a further dimension to what may be assumed. In the case of the associated portrayals of Brute, Arthur and Richard, the *topoi* relate to the characteristics of an epic hero. Such themes typically include a heroic birth involving extraordinary efforts on the part of the mother, perhaps including her death; a difficult childhood, the survival of which proves the “greatness” of the future hero; a specific relationship with the father, and a succession of challenges in one form or other which are all met with unmitigated triumph.

This heroic ethos is easily recognisable by the immediate establishment of characterisation as strong young men and great warriors. Brute at fifteen is described as “a fayre yong man and bolde.”\(^{155}\) This type of expression acts as a “tag” for the hero in the legendary material. This description occurs in the text after he accidentally kills his father, Silven, and is exiled from Troy. Although this is a crime, the action reveals the hero’s maturity and demonstrates his ability to overthrow an established leader. The murder of the father, Silven in this case, is one manifestation of a specific *topos* in the formation of a hero; to allow the future hero to develop without a more powerful, threatening male figure, the father must be “defeated” in some manner, and in fact, the father, often a king in these situations, might never actually appear as a character.\(^{156}\)

Another facet of this *topos* is the challenge the hero must undertake, which may involve his mother’s death, thus necessitating his political survival, and/or physical survival after “exposure to water or wilderness”.\(^{157}\) The narrative of Brute includes both of these challenges. Within the divination of his birth is also the prediction that he will someday kill

\(^{155}\)E l. 17

\(^{156}\)Morse (1991:137)

\(^{157}\)Morse (1991:136)
both his father and mother, "and so it was as thei said for his moder died in childing of hym". His exposure to wilderness comes in two locations. First, an episode which has been removed from E, Brute lands in France and finds his way to an ancient temple of Diana in "an olde Cyte al wasted & forlete, bat nas ber-in nor man ne woman, ne no thing dwellynge." More importantly, when Brute and his followers land in Albion, even though they arrive subsequently to Albyn and her sisters, there are no human inhabitants, only giants. It is "an Iland that was all wildernesse" which Brute conquers, symbolically proving his ability as civilising ruler, and his worthiness to serve as the progenitor of the line of British kings.

Another characteristic of Brute's description in E, which links him with Arthur, is his unmarried parents: "Siluen, whenne he come to the age of xviiij yere, a-quaynted hym with a damsell that was Nece to lamany the Quene and gate here with childe." The text does not emphasise Brute's parentage; like Arthur, his nobility is assured for the reader because his parents are of royal lineage. Brute's portrayal serves as a "thematic introduction" to the text as a whole. It is his foundation of Britain and the establishment of the three areas of England, Scotland and Wales which will become important further in the narrative, but also will determine the "historical value" of the chronicle in future centuries.

Arthur, like Brute, is introduced into the narrative of E at 15, and he too is "hardi and bolde". Like Brute, his parents are noble, but not married; Uther dies while Arthur is young, before he can become a challenge to his son. Although it is not mentioned in E, a significant aspect of Arthurian legend is the circumstance of his illegitimate birth. Since he is not legally heir to the throne of Britain, Arthur traditionally struggles against the regional rulers of Britain to prove his noble blood and particular worth. The manuscript merely

158 E Il. 99-100
159 Brie (1906: I p.8 II.7-9)
160 E Il. 91-95.
161 Morse (1991:137)
162 E I.1143
states that “after the deth of Vter thei made Arthour, his sonne, king”, which skims over this issue of inheritance. It is possible that the Arthurian material in E was adopted from a text which did not include the competition between Arthur and the kings for the throne of Britain. It seems unlikely that it would have been excluded for lack of relevance, since this tradition includes the challenge to the heroic characters.

Although inheriting without challenge, Arthur must still prove himself a noble king; from the fourth line of his chapter, he swears to defeat the Saxons, and aside from only fifteen lines concerning his marriage and the establishment of the Round Table, Arthur spends the rest of his four-page E chapter in battle. He defends Britain from the Saxons, the Scots, the Irish, and he invades and conquers Ireland, France, and several smaller regions, kills a marauding giant in Spain, brings back the head as a trophy, and replies to the demand of the Roman emperor for fealty with a successful invasion of Rome. In these challenges he is equal to Brute, defender of his people, upholder of justice, the leader of a society presented as an ideal.

The role of the heroic king develops with the progression of the text. The relationship of Brute, Arthur and Richard is characterised by the progressive development of the success of the ideal heroic king. Therefore, Arthur as a hero is more developed a character than Brute; while Brute is a noble ancestor, his origins are outwith Britain, as opposed to Arthur who is British, and therefore clearly a British hero. Arthur is also Christian; the monarchy not only evolves from an adopted leader to one of their own, but also from a pagan hero to a Christian one. Arthur’s faith is important, and it is emphasised in the text. As a significant issue in E, faith signifies characteristics such as honour and bravery. This is described in Arthur’s dealings with the Roman emperor, first in the comparison of the armies: Arthur’s men are Christian, but the emperor has raised a combination of “Sarsyns, paynymes, and cristen men”, which suggests the scattered faith of

\[163\] E II. 1141-42.
\[164\] E II. 1252-54
the emperor himself and the insecurity of his cause.\footnote{E II.1259-60.} Additionally, because “the emperor and the Sarsyns trust all in here strenght and not in god”, their force was no more effective than that of sheep against an army of wolves.\footnote{E II.1265-66.} In this battle, Arthur and his army are successful specifically because of their faith, and Arthur’s heroism is further elucidated by his Christian respect for the bodies of his dead knights, who, it is carefully noted, are given proper burial.\footnote{E II.1275-77.} With Arthur, British origin and Christianity become part of the overall heroic topos in E.

Richard I, like Brute and Arthur, is “a strong knyght and a goode,” most famous for his pilgrimage to the Holy Land and battles with the Saracens. In fact, “as moche as the cristen had loste, he yt conquered saue the Holy Crosse, and he wanne the ciete of Acres, and he wold be sirued with Sarzyns heedes at his table wherfore thei drad him moche.”\footnote{E II. 2064-67.} He is a fearsome warrior as well as highly successful militarily, and this aggression, for the sake of Christianity, itself introduced by Arthur, is the addition to the heroic topos in Richard’s chapter. Brute is the representative for the first third of the text, the period before written law. Accordingly, Arthur represent the period of written law, and Richard, the period of mercy. Each era has a “heroic” ruler who signifies the height to which this era can attain. The progression may be seen in terms of Christianity, where Brute is a pagan, Arthur a Christian, and Richard the ideal Christian who leaves Britain on pilgrimage, the ultimate show of faith. Their relationship can be seen in terms of their development as rulers, in particular between Arthur and Richard, both of whom leave Britain in the care of a trusted relative who betrays them. The evolution of man from age to age, from corporal punishment by God to forgiveness, is paralleled by the development of the role of the kingship between Brute, Arthur and Richard.

In addition to the topos of the hero, Brute, Arthur and Richard are connected by a cycle of physical travel, the significance of place being the item of emphasis. The travel
begins with the character’s location in his own country, and develops with regard to his physical location at the end of his chapter, and in what state he leaves his kingdom. Brute begins at home, where he has the right to the throne of Troy, but is exiled abroad, conquers Britain and remains there to found the new ruling dynasty. Arthur begins at home, is crowned king, journeys abroad to conquer successfully, and returns to Britain, but does not regain control of his kingdom. Finally, Richard also begins at home, journeys abroad to great success in the Crusades, and he alone completes the cycle and returns to England to successfully reclaim his throne and continue his reign. This cycle reflects the medieval belief in the cycle of historical events, in the progression of events facilitated by the reference to past events.

The home-away-home cycle also mirrors an important theme in Christianity. Human existence was considered in terms of a journey away from and a subsequent return to one’s native land; it is the soul’s life on earth which is symbolised by a journey abroad, and Heaven which represents the return. Such a “restoration of true community” is reflected in the cycle of the three kings discussed above.¹⁶⁹ The human soul’s journey, from its deliverance from God, to its experience “abroad”, and its final return to Heaven is reflected in this developing cycle of home-away-home of the three great kings. Number symbolism is also applicable to the development of the cycle created by the travel of the kings in the Brut. Humanity exists as an intermediary stage between the soul’s origin in Heaven and its final return; the experience of this completed cycle may be symbolised numerically by a return to the centre point, which, perceivable only by God, thus represents God. In fact, “the figure most often used to explain the soul’s paradoxical nature is the circle, since the circle is the only figure mysterious enough to encompass the soul’s mysteries”.¹⁷⁰ With this in mind, the circular relationship between Brute, Arthur, and Richard may be seen as a symbol for the peregrinations of the soul on its journey through life and back to Heaven. This journey signifies the development of the soul, its learning. When one king, Richard, returns to his

¹⁶⁹Kolve (1984:350)
¹⁷⁰Peck (1980:39)
native land and settles to some extent, his success represents the afterlife to which all Christian souls aspire, to be amongst one’s countrymen, in the house of God.

Chapter Two: Prophecy and Magic, Hagiography and the Character of Merlin in E

II.i. The Role of Magic

The main categories of magic which appear in E are the same as those which appear in medieval hagiography: the physical manipulation of nature, the power of prophecy, which involves the interpretation of God’s will through signs in nature and astrology, as well as a straightforward foreknowledge of events.171 Unlike the use of number symbolism and other pre-established points of reference in the Brut, which form a link between the narrative and events outside the text, magic has a direct role in the narrative itself. Magic is inherited not only from Classical myth, but also from Anglo-Saxon religious practices. Bede’s Ecclesiastical History of the English People quotes a letter from Pope Gregory, which suggests that the most successful means by which the English may be converted to Christianity by Augustine involves the gradual amalgamation, with certain restrictions, of Anglo-Saxon religious practices into early Christianity.172 One means by which the Church hoped to effect this amalgamation was through the construction and use of hagiographies, which incorporate pagan characters such as elves, in the form of demons, and also added the character of the Christian saint, whose spirituality is a reflection of his proficiency as a

171 Enstam (1993:6-10)
172 The letter states: “the temples of the idols among that people [the English] should on no account be destroyed, but the temples themselves are to be aspersed with holy water, altars set up in them, and relics deposited there. For if these temples are well-built, they must be purified from the worship of demons and dedicated to the service of the true God. In this way, we hope that the people, seeing that their temples are not destroyed, may abandon their error and, flocking to their accustomed resorts, may come to know and adore the true God.” A result of this “gradual conversion” is the tolerance which then allowed Christianity to “eventually absorb [...] native art-forms and outlooks.” Bede, transl. Leo Shirley-Price (1990: 1.30, p.365 note 92)
A popular means for the Church to educate the general public in mores necessary for the attainment of Heaven, hagiography served as a cultural common ground between pagan belief in magic and Christian faith solely in God.174

As hagiography bridges the gulf between pagan and Christian belief, so saints, the central characters in hagiographies, act as intermediaries between humanity and God.175 The shared common humanity of saints and mortals provided an earthly connection, and, due to their reputed asceticism, saints were considered to possess a special link with God. This spiritual proximity gives the saint foresight and the ability to prophesy.176 In this role saints took the place of pagan sorcerers as highly valued members of society; in fact the saint of a hagiography is “vested” with many of the traditional magical powers of pagan spiritual leaders, and because his powers derive from an all-powerful God rather than the unpredictable natural world or temperamental deities, they are more reliable as intercessors.177 Therefore the saint as the authority figure represents a distinct improvement upon a magician. In addition to being able to function as astrologer and prophet, the saint in a hagiography would also typically be able to perform miracles which involve the manipulation of nature, and to comprehend the signs present in nature as indications of God’s will. These primary characteristics of Anglo-Saxon magic, categorised as magical powers, were subsumed into the Christian tradition of hagiography, itself a popular literary genre.178

Few recognised saints are discussed in any great detail in E. Aside from Augustine, none have their own chapter. But if we examine the narrative of the Brut for other saints,

173 Enstam (1993:2)
174 Colgrave (1966:203)
175 Enstam (1993:3)
176 Enstam (1993:12-13)
177 Enstam (1993:3)
178 Enstam (1993:1,3) Particularly in early hagiography, saints were endowed with abilities which related directly to the powers of Anglo-Saxon religious leaders, such as healing and the ability to identify evil spirits. It is the overall impression of a magical culture which I wish to indicate in this discussion of the transference to the tradition of legendary material, and the effect of the combination of Anglo-Saxon belief in magic and the Classical mythical literary tradition upon a later medieval chronicle.
using the characteristics established for hagiographies, we find that one character, perhaps surprisingly, fulfils all the criteria and thus may be included in the category of saint in this text, and that is Merlin. Indeed, his reputation as a magician suggests that such a character existed in pre-Christian literature, and has been adapted into the more familiar role of saint, although never explicitly referred to as such. It is Merlin’s hagiographic abilities and characteristics which warrant analysis of his character from this perspective, and which reveal the very function of a saint. Merlin acts as intermediary between humanity and God; he works physical magic upon the natural world, is able to interpret astrological phenomena and, for which he is most famous, Merlin is able to prophesy.

A common characteristic of the medieval saint, and one with which the modern reader must also be familiar in order to penetrate the symbolism of the Brut, is the ability to prophesy. Prophecy in medieval texts is considered to be an ability granted by God. Astrology, associated with prophecy as a method of seeing the future, was an accepted science in the Middle Ages. In addition to astronomy and medicine, astrology is related to the superior abilities of saints; stellar activity was thought to be the visual representation of God’s will to men, but in need of interpretation, as were chapters in the Bible and historical chronicles. Stars are only able to function as signs - similar to the abilities of mythological creatures, they are unable to influence men independently of God. This explains the connection in E between prophecy, earthly visions as well as stellar ones, and the use of magic to interpret them in accordance with the character of a saint, Merlin. Although the Brut as a tradition includes such prophecies and interpretation, it is the presence, or lack of, particular prophecies which distinguishes E as unique.

As the legendary material progresses, the manner of punishment attributed to God, which is initially also a method characteristic of Anglo-Saxon and Classical myth, and which accordingly includes the participation of magic, may be seen to “develop”. Representing a microcosm of history, from the settlement of Britain to the time in which E is

179 Seznec (1953:44-45)
written, the narrative presents corporal, magical punishment in the beginning of the legendary material, which represents the Classical, pagan, period in time. Since God accommodates his punishments for humanity according to their level of moral development, physical punishment is appropriate for people without a Christian sense of morality, and magical acts are necessary when people are not yet aware of God. The punishments accordingly take the form of monsters and wild animals. After the advent of Christianity, the civilising of humanity, this type of punishment disappears.

Magical creatures, also an inheritance from pagan myth, for example, elves transformed into Christian demons, are used to enact punishments attributed to God. In Christian texts, the devil may be seen as such a character, disguised as a man in order to appeal to Albion and her sisters; this temptation of the sisters, and their resulting half-human children is their moral punishment for the collective murder of their husbands. Since it was thought that even though God was in control of events, people still had freedom of choice, then the devil may be viewed as a temptation, but not a character who acts independently, or who might actively compete with God for human souls. People might choose to associate with the devil, but even this temptation may be interpreted as God’s intent and part of his overall plan. In this instance the devil is a participant in the narrative, who acts as the channel for moral judgement, not a distinct threat to human souls.

The chapter on Morwith offers another example of such a creature, which, although less complex than the devil, still acts as the personification of reprisal: the king is described as “full wikked, and therefor God toke vengeaunce, for on a dai as he walked by the see, [...] he mette with a wilde beste that no man sawe never suche another beste. And the beste deuored him and ete him all hole at oon morsell and thenne vanysshed awey, no man wiste whider.” The narrative directly associates vengeance with the creature’s appearance. Its mysterious and prompt disappearance emphasises its sole function and existence as a tool of God. One means by which it is made clear to the reader which creatures are the agents of

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180 Seznec (1953:44)
181 E II. 431-37.
God's will is the use of language. Specific words and phrases may be used, first to convey a sense of mystery, and also to create a connection between events, providing authority for later characters by applying a previous, similar description. The language used to describe the manner of the creature's disappearance is similar to that in a subsequent episode. This sea-monster "vanysshed awey, no man wiste whider", and later, the young man who mysteriously visits Merlin's mother "vanyssched awey, she wist not whiche wey".182 These terms emphasise the unearthly origin of the monster and the young man, and the purpose of their presence as the fulfilment of God's will, whether it be the birth of a great prophet or the punishment of an evil king. The fact that this linguistic connection does not occur in Brie, and thus is not necessarily common to the Brut as a tradition, suggests that it is an individual addition to the reference framework that exists in a particular medieval text, whether conceived by the scribe of E or of its source.

This linguistic allusion to otherworldliness continues in the historical material, the time of Grace. The figure of Saint John the Evangelist appears to two pilgrims, and instructs them to convey to the king a prophecy of his imminent death. Giving them a ring by which the king, Saint Edward, will know his messenger, he "vanysshed awey fro hem".183 The term "vanished" is first used in relation to a monster, an otherworldly creature with a close relationship to God, and therefore later applications echo not only the mythical aspect, but also emphasise the holiness of origin. The language connects the appearance of man, beast and saint to the will of God and his intent for the progression of humanity, and in this connection they are similar to Brute, Arthur, and Richard; since God makes contact with men in a manner appropriate to their state of development, his representatives, monster, mysterious lover, and saint, appear in an order which follows the continuity of humanity's development through the whole of the text.

182 E II.436-37, 977-78.
183 E I. 1947.
II.i.i. Saints in E: Augustine (and Merlin)

Despite the general secularity of E, the text mentions several saints. For the most part, they are cited as part of the genealogy, not singled out as holy men given specific mention. Augustine is the only saint whose chapter is wholly dedicated to religious matters: while Saints Edward the Martyr and Edward the Confessor also have their own chapters, these are primarily secular in focus. Augustine brings Christianity to Britain, and to E, which certainly justifies the religious focus, and the allotment of his own chapter. Aside from these three, most saints in E are only briefly mentioned in the course of the narrative to preserve the genealogy, such as Saint Alban, the first martyr of Britain, Saint Chad, mentioned as a reference in order to date the reign of Kadweleyn, and Saint George, who is invoked by Henry V and subsequently seen by many French soldiers at the battle of Agincourt. Saints such as Helen, John the Evangelist, and Thomas of Canterbury are mentioned with slightly more frequency and detail. Helen, the wife of Constance and mother of Constantine, is described as the woman who finds the holy cross; John the Evangelist appears in connection with Edward the Confessor: as intercessor, in the name of a town and a monastery, and as the namesake for an order of knights. Thomas of Canterbury is cited in similar situations. The majority of saints in E, however, play less of a role than Helen, Alban and Chad, and do not appear within the narrative; they are mentioned once or twice, in connection with their commemoration day, an edifice with their name, or they are recalled in order to date a particular sequence of events.

The chapter of Augustine is a complex one, in the sense that, in contrast to the foregoing material in the legendary section, within this chapter there is no clear delineation of good or bad characters in order to establish a moral point. Rather, it is a straightforward presentation of the means by which Christianity arrives and is accepted in England. It is logical that a chapter involving such significant material should also mark a brief departure from the previous structure of the narrative. Prior to Augustine, and after, none of the

184 E II. 767, 1471, 3350.
185 E II. 690; 1880ff.; 1964,2207,2888 respectively.
religious characters are foregrounded to the extent of having their own chapter. This alerts the reader to a shift in the narration. Although Christianity is a major underlying component of the narrative of the Brut, it cannot be labelled a theological work. Therefore, in and of itself, Augustine’s chapter describing his role as Christian missionary to Britain obviously warrants particular attention. In addition to this, Augustine is not British, which is a revelation usually predicing political or military disaster. Of course, Christianity comes from Rome; but the structure also suggests a symbolic significance. The entrance of Augustine from outside the narrative at this single point recalls God’s periodic interaction with man within the narrative of history in the linear sense. Augustine’s physical presence represents both the presence of Christianity, and also signifies God’s participation in the lives of men. The Life of saint Augustine serves both as a necessary chapter describing the history of the conversion of England, and also as a functional introduction to the rest of the Christian narrative.

Augustine’s portrayal is different from the protagonists of other chapters in another basic sense: although clearly favoured by God, Augustine is not infallible. When Augustine, established in England, attempts to exert his authority over the Welsh, they resist. Their justification is that he represents the English, who “hath euer ben paynymes to now that ye haue converted them, and we haue alwey be Cristen seth Incarnacon and therefore we will obeby the archebischopp of Carlion that isoure lorde and none other.” It is emphasised in both E and in Brie that Augustine represents Roman Christianity. Therefore, an additional reason for the vehemence of the Welsh objection to him is likely to be their own adherence to the Celtic Church. In the E the Welsh explain: “we haue alwey be cristen seth Incarnacion and therefore we will obeby the archebischopp of Carlion that isoure lorde and none other”, and in Brie they are slightly more specific: “And Eai saide Eai nolde but to the Erchebissop of Kerlyoun’ & saide ‘Eai nolde neuer, for no maner Eing, bene obedient

186 Kolve (1966:119)
187 E II. 1422-27.
The Welsh rejection of Augustine is two-fold: not only do the Welsh reject English dominance in principle, but Christianity has existed in Wales since its inception, and the Welsh therefore consider theirs to be the true Church. In this situation, uniquely, it is the “hero” who is at fault - the Welsh refuse Austeyn because of their steadfast faith and the relatively recent and therefore potentially unreliable conversion of the English. Their moral rectitude is supported by their treatment in the rest of the chapter: king Aldebrght and Elfride punish the Welsh too harshly, murdering them as they ask for mercy, and in response Aldebrght and Elfride are themselves both pursued and killed.\(^{189}\)

In a departure from the basically straightforward presentation of characters as either good or evil, the Welsh are not condemned in either the E or Brie’s text for this resistance to Roman Christianity or English rule, despite the clear anglophile bias in both texts, and neither is Augustine presented as infallible, despite his role as missionary. Indeed, the narrative tolerance of the Welsh resistance may be seen as tacit approval for their faith and humility, and objective sympathy for their position, faced with what must appear a very different form of Christianity. In contrast to what might be expected of the Father of British Christianity, while Augustine’s magical power and therefore authority as a chosen representative of God are established earlier in the chapter,\(^ {190}\) his attempt to alter the state of affairs in Wales is a failure, endorsed by the narrator’s implicit support for the Welsh. The chapter of Augustine is unusually complex, involving an ambiguous protagonist. Augustine is neither wholly approved of, despite his holiness, nor totally condemned; this is a completely different representation, and therefore must have a different purpose than the rest of the narrative.

The character of Augustine is not used as an indication of good or evil behaviour for the reader. Additionally, although there are aspects of hagiography present, there is no

\(^{188}\) E ll.1424-27, Brie (1906:98 ll.11-13).

\(^{189}\) E ll. 1447-48.

\(^{190}\) E ll. 1401-07: “Seint Austeyn come to Rochester and preched, and there thei scorned him and caste vppon hum bowellys of schepe and tailles, wherefor yt was sied that Seint Austeyn prayed to God that their childerin myght haue tailles, and so had many of their childerin that were borne long after.”
divine participation or indication of divine approval when Augustine is dealing with the Welsh. This may be interpreted, from the presentation particularly in Brie, as a lesson in humility; the Welsh are already faithful Christians, and Augustine’s mistake is his attempt to “convert” them, unnecessarily, to Roman Christianity. It is also possible that this chapter is simply a survival from the legendary material’s origin as a Welsh text. Particularly when compared to the Merlin material, which paradoxically, more strongly resembles a hagiography, it is clear that the influence of this genre is minimal with regard to Saint Augustine. The purpose of this chapter, rather than the veneration of a saint, appears to be the commemoration of the advent of Christianity into Britain.

A character with attributes more typical of hagiography in E is that of Merlin. He acts as prophet, magician and astrologer, and it is the connection all these require with God which renders him saint-like. Indeed, in the manner of a saint’s Life, his birth and childhood are described, as well as his ability to receive visions and perform miracles. While a hagiography is typically constructed as one cohesive text, the descriptions of Merlin are presented in various chapters both of E and Brie’s Brut. But in fact, the way in which Merlin’s material is adapted into E is consistent with its development as a separate tradition.

There are two prophecies by Merlin in E, which ultimately derive, like the rest of the legendary material, from Geoffrey of Monmouth’s Historia Regum Britanniae. Book VII of the Historia is referred to as the Prophetia Merlini, a text which the English prose Brut did not inherit. The Brut derives from a French adaptation of the Historia which itself did not include the prophecies. The part of Geoffrey’s work concerning Merlin came to

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191 “When al Engeland was baptisede and turnede to God, seynt Austyn went into pat lande pere pat pe Britons were, and forto kepe ham fro Engilisshe-men, pat is to seyn, into Walys [...] And seynte Austeyne turnede po aveyne to Kynge Adelbright, pat was kyng of Kent, and tolde him pat pis folc wolde nought to no man bene obedient but to pe Erchebisshep of Kerlyoun. And when pe Kynge herde pis, he was sore annoiede, and saide pat pe wolde ham destroye”. Brie (1906: I p.98 II.4-6, 20-24). I am not arguing that the scribe is taking a stance in favour of the Welsh over the English, which is also clearly not the case in Brie, but there is clearly sympathy in the narrative for the Welsh in this instance.

192 Enstam (1993:17) A saint is characterised by his “ability to receive visions [...] in the sense of foreknowledge,” and the fact that “it is the Christian God who provides them [saints]with their powers.”
exist independently of the *Historia* in the Middle Ages, developing its own tradition which included the adaptation of individual prophecies to other texts, where they might be directly applied to events in the narrative.\(^{193}\) This is the manner in which three prophecies, that of the red and white dragons, the dragon-star seen by Uther, and the Six Last Kings\(^{194}\) were adapted into the English prose *Brut*. The two prophecies which are presented in *E* involve the red and white dragons, and the dragon-star. Brie’s text also includes the prophecy of the Six Last Kings.

As a seer, Merlin was regarded on a par with biblical prophets in the Middle Ages, able to divine the will of God from mysterious occurrences.\(^{195}\) Thus considered to have a privileged relationship with God, he is granted particular authority within the Christian context of the *Brut*. An illustration of this may be seen in Brie’s text: when Aurilambros, uncle to Arthur, wishes to create a monument to commemorate his victory against the Saxons, he initially approaches the bishop of London for consultation. However, the bishop refers the king to Merlin, establishing the prophet in the text as possessing an authority on God’s will which supersedes that of even highly-ranked men of the Church.\(^{196}\) This significant event is absent from *E*, which relies instead on the demonstration of Merlin’s superiority over currently favoured clerks in the chapter on Vortigern to establish his power.

In addition to his unique relationship as mediator between God and humankind, the description of Merlin’s life and his prophecies are paralleled with those of Christ in *E*. The reader’s attention is drawn to the circumstances of Merlin’s birth, primarily as they are the reason he is brought to court. It is the amount of detail in the description of his conception which draws the reader’s attention in the *E*. The fact that his mother “had neuer a doo with any man” is not only the narrative indication to the soldiers sent by Vortigern that this is the

\(^{193}\) Eckhardt (1982:4-5)

\(^{194}\) The prophecy of the Six Last Kings is Merlin’s prediction, in symbolic terms, of the six kings who will follow Arthur.

\(^{195}\) Eckhardt (1982:9)

\(^{196}\) Brie (1906:61 II.6-8): “ho spake to he king he bishop of London hat me called Ternekyn, hat he shulde enquere after Merlyne, for he coude best telle how his hunting migit bene made.”
child they seek, but this characterisation also recalls the Virgin birth. When asked by the king to explain the birth of her child, Merlin’s mother describes the visits of her lover: “sche ansuerd, wepyng, and seid that sche hadde neuer to do with man, but on a tyme as sche was in hire chamber alone and the durres fast loked, to hire come a faire yong man and lay be hire. But whiche wey he entred in the cambre sche wist notte, and whenne he had lyen be hire he vanysched awey, sche wist not whiche wey, and so he come to hire diuers tymes; ‘and so was Merlyne begoten of my body.” 197 The language used also relates these circumstances to hagiography; initially the story is told from an omniscient point of view, using the third person to describe “past” events, but in the last line the change of person brings the narrative back into the “present”. It effectively leads the reader out of the narrative of the Brut and into a second narrative, that of Merlin’s life. It is a story within a story, which is unique in E, and is related using an approach consistent with a hagiography, describing a birth involving magical beings and occurrences. Thus an immaculate conception, the child of one human and one non-human parent, it is for this reason that “wysest clerkys of that lande” prophesy that Merlin’s blood, literally mixed with building mortar, will solidify the foundation of Vortigern’s castle and calm the tremors which regularly destroy it. 198 Since the primary function of a castle is protection or sanctuary, in this chapter Vortigern’s castle may be read as a symbol of the church, where the potential use for the blood of Merlin is symbolic of the fortification of the foundation of the Church with the blood of Christ.

Merlin refutes this advice given by the court clerks. In E, he does not challenge their opinion, but simply calls them “foles”. In Brie, asked to defend their theory, “alle Pise wise were abasshede, and coul noust ansuere.” 199 The clerks are embarrassed at what appears to be a mistake, but when seen in the context of the rest of the legendary material, their error is in fact the enactment of God’s will. It is significant that although the prophecy

197 E II.971-79
198 E I.948
199 Brie (1906:58 I.3)
concerning the castle is wrong, their earlier prediction of Merlin’s birth is correct. They are not incompetent seers; in fact their mistake functions as a narrative device to introduce Merlin into the narrative. As in a hagiography, in which the saint’s holiness is indicated by a series of events in which his supra-human abilities are made evident, in order for Merlin’s powers to be demonstrated, he must be given the opportunity textually to indicate his expertise. In terms of the narrative, therefore, the clerks’ prophecy is a manifestation of God’s will to introduce Merlin to the narrative and thus to humanity.

Amending the prophecy of the clerks, Merlin advises the king to dig under the foundation of the castle, where he will find two dragons, “-the toone is white and the tother rede - and thei fight togeder on nyghtes, that thei schake doune the werke that was made on daies.” While his foreknowledge of the dragons’ presence is significant, Merlin’s interpretation of the dragons’ struggle is potentially more so. As Caroline Eckhardt states, “In the later medieval period in particular, prophecy was seen as a means of understanding the significance of past and present events. It was also seen as a valid means, in fact the only certain means, of attaining knowledge about the future.” This faith in prophecy is the direct means by which medieval readers might comprehend the cycle of history: the timelessness of prophecy, the act of telling the future in the present, reflects the omnipresence of God and his continual participation in human events. Thus Merlin’s ability to interpret such messages for the current time as well as for the future was regarded as vital, and also as proof of his unique association with God.

In the E version Merlin offers no allegorical solution to the fighting of the dragons, nor does he address the more literal issue of the castle. This lack of a solution for the tale, which also occurs in Brie, suggests that it is the tale itself which is important, and its

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200 E II.989-92. This is an abbreviated version of the prophecy. In the Historia and Brie’s Brut there is first a pool of water under which the dragons fight. In the Historia, it is Merlin who witnesses the dragons and then explains that the red dragon, symbolising the Britons, will soon be banished by the white dragon, which symbolises the Saxons. (Giles 196.) It is presented as a literal victory by the red dragon in Brie (1906:58 II.21-24). For the whole episode, see Brie (1906:58 II.21 to 59 II.21).
201 Eckhardt (1982:2)
function as proof of Merlin’s ability. Indeed, leaving out part of the narrative is acceptable: “from the medieval viewpoint the conclusion merely constitutes one element among others, rather than an essential part of the [...] meaning. The only rigid constraint on this exegetical process is the limits set by Christian doctrine. Whatever conforms to it is valid.”

Instead of concerning the reader with the resolution of individual narrative issues, the establishment of Merlin as an authority in prophecy is the significant point. Even without a conclusion, the material of the story provides enough information to convey a possible moral conclusion relating to the weak foundation of the castle: struggles which weaken the foundations of a building representing the Church imply that strife amongst the peoples of Britain poses a threat to the stability of the Church and Christianity, and the struggles also depict the physical threat the Saxons repeatedly pose to Christianity in the Brut. Merlin explains that the fighting between the red and white dragons is a symbol of the repeated warring between the Britons and Saxons respectively, and predicting the arrival of Aurilambros and Uther, heirs to the throne of Britain, he interprets this vision as a warning to Vortigern and his Saxon allies.

Merlin’s prophetic abilities also extend to astrological displays. Aurilambros is murdered by poison, and at the very moment he dies, his brother sees a vision in the sky: “Vter saw a sterre that was grete, and in the one ende thereof a dragon hede and ij bemes lyke fire comyng outhe of his mouth, the one toward Fraunce and the tother toward Ireland. And outhe of the beme toward Ireland come vij flammes of fire.” This vision is seen by many people related to Uther, but Merlin is summoned to explain its significance: the dragon symbolises Uther himself, and the beams represent his various children and indicate their future. The dragon head, unexplained in E, is the source of inspiration for the dragon pennants and the surname Pendragon, which Uther later adopts in Brie’s Brut.

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202 McGinley (1993:54)
203 E II. 1073-77.
204 Brie (1906:65 II.11-16): “and in remembraunce of pe dragons pat he was likenede to, he lete make ij dragounes one to bene borne bifoire him when he went into bataile, & Pat o’Pere to abide at Wynchestre in the bishoppes cherche; And for Pat enchlesoun he was called euermore after, Vter Pendragoun.”
presence of the star is an indication that Uther is now king; since astrology and stellar activities were interpreted as a means by which God communicates with men, such a vision appearing to Uther, and explicated by Merlin, clearly indicates that he is favoured by God.

Merlin, privy to God’s construction of time, is not only able to prophesy, but his familiarity with time in the past, present, and future allows him to relate to humanity as if all three conditions exist simultaneously. Aurilambros wishes to construct a marker on Salisbury plain to commemorate the British soldiers betrayed at the meeting between Vortigern and Hengist. Great standing stones were known to be in Ireland, and in E, Merlin "promysed the king Aurilambros yf he wolde sende men theder for hem, he wold go thider with hem, and he and his felaschip schulde gete theme hider." Again this is an abridged version of events in comparison to both the Historia and the versions in Brie’s Brut, in which Merlin prophesies that if the stones “were put in his place as pai be bere, here pai wolde endure euermore”. The language he uses suggests the pre-approval of their arrangement at Salisbury - that their transfer to Salisbury is intended by God, which is communicated to Aurilambros through Merlin. In Brie’s Brut, this negates the protest by the Irish king, who attempts to protect stones that had existed in this configuration in Ireland for centuries, and justifies their removal. This suggestion of pre-approval again confirms the medieval theory of the cycle of history.

Although the use of these stones as a monument seems to be a newly conceived idea, these actions in fact reflect a linguistic theory of pre-existing truth; truths always exist, and are placed directly in the minds of men by God, but these truths must be realised. According to this theory, the act of “discovering” a concept is, in fact, a partial recognition of this truth. In a similar sense, the events in this narrative are preordained, and their enaction is the realisation by the human mind of an intent by God which he has placed within the structure of history itself. Aurilambros may interpret, through Merlin, that his

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205 E ll. 1040-43
206 Brie (1906:61 ll.13-14), and ref. to Giles (1848:216)
207 Morse (1991:3)
idea has been approved by God, and a reader may interpret this approval as an indication of the king’s favour with God, but linguistically, Merlin’s prediction of the eternity of the stones embodies Augustine’s theory of Signs.

Another of Merlin’s abilities is the actual manipulation of nature. It is Merlin’s magic that brings the ancient stones to England: “be crafte of Merlyne the stones were goten into shippes and brought to the playne of Salysbury. [...] and was be crafte of Merlyne, for yt couthe neuer haue ben do be strenght of men.”

Like divination and astrology, natural magic is an indication of the superiority of God, and the reliability of Merlin as his messenger. Merlin also uses magical powers to facilitate God’s will in a well-known episode in a story of Uther. The method of his actions is not unlike those of the clerks whose incorrect prophecy brings him to court; however frivolous it may seem for Merlin to use his powers to accommodate Uther’s desire for Igraine, the actual result is the conception of Arthur. Corloys removes his wife from court without permission upon noticing Uther’s affection for her, angering the king, who then follows them to Tintagel and lays siege to the castle. In order that Uther might gain access to Igraine, “Merlyne, by his crafte, made the king to entre into the castell in lykenesse of the erle Corloys, and lay all nyght be Igern while here housbond fought on the walles; and that same nyght he gate vppon here Artour that after was king.”

Like Merlin’s own father, Arthur’s father is not who he seems to be, Disguised by magic, Uther’s visit to Igraine is similar to the mysterious young man who visits Merlin’s mother. Both succeed through magical means ultimately in order that the women might conceive and give birth to children who in turn will have a great effect on the history of Britain.

Interestingly, in the more complete version of this episode in Geoffrey of Monmouth’s Historia, Uther is presented as having a great passion for Igraine, and unable to think of a means of access to her, he complains to his chamberlain, Ulfin, who suggests that

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208 E II.1047-52
209 Enstam (1993:8-13)
210 E II. 1115-20
although "no force will enable us to have access to her in the town of Tintagel [...]"

Notwithstanding, if the prophet Merlin would in earnest set about this attempt, I am of opinion, you might with his advice obtain your wishes."211 Similar to the Bishop of London who, in Brie, suggests Aurilambros seek advice from Merlin with regard to the monument, a trusted advisor recommends that Merlin be sought for his advice. It is a means of seeking out God's own opinion.212 This version of events is much more romanticised than either Brie or E. For example, in the Historia Merlin uses "such arts as have not been heard of in your time," and uses them out of "excessive love" for Uther. But Merlin in E is a separate character from both traditions of the Propheta Merlini and of Geoffrey's Historia; he is not a personal advisor as in the Historia, and he does not appear in E in the arrangement adopted from a separate tradition.

Insofar as prophecy was thought to connect the past to the future, it may be concluded that the prediction of an event is an indication of God's will; the fact that interpretation is required leaves the prediction open to repeated application. It is a measure of God's complexity and omnipresence in history and time that a prediction made centuries earlier may be applicable to a contemporary situation. In this sense, a prophecy may "occur" several times, first upon its pronouncement, then upon its realisation, and then upon each enactment thereafter. Prophecy as such was an integral part of the medieval concept of time as circular. Thus, rather than conceiving of time as solely linear, in which an event occurs once and then never again, medieval thought on the aspect of time which is circular held that only if an event is applicable to more than one period in time is it truly "historical".213 There is clearly a principle of learning from the past in the value placed upon chronicles; their very point is to enable readers to learn by example which actions are good or bad, in order to establish which ones will lead to salvation.214 Prophecy is therefore,

211 Giles (1848:224-5)
212 E II. 1517-25. Also in the episode of Cadwalader, the king consults an angel in order to know God's will. Angels also act as an intermediary between God and humanity, but they exist in a state closer to God than the saints. Enstam (1993:2)
213 Kolve (1966:108)
214 Kolve (1966:107)
perhaps paradoxically, a means by which one may learn from the past, as well as be acquainted with what will happen in the future. The recurrence of a prophecy ties time together; once enacted, it acts as an established frame of reference for the point where a prophecy is “given” anew. With the repeated interpretation, the object of the prophecy must assess his own situation in accordance with that of those who enacted it previously, and learn from it.

Past occurrences therefore function as precedents, in the sense that one may base a “current” interpretation of a prophecy on the results of the past. The most common example of this is the application of Merlin’s “Six Last Kings” prophecy to predict or explain the behaviour of current monarchs. Although this prophecy - a later, independent development from the Prophetia Merlini - is typically included in the Brut, it does not appear in E. Textually, it usually appears following the prophecy of Vortigern’s fate, and predicts the six British kings after Arthur in symbolic terms. In Brie’s Brut, these prophecies recur; the kings themselves, to whom these analogies refer, are described using the same images and language that is previously used by Merlin. For example, the first king described in the prophecy shall be a “lambe oute of Wynchestre bat shal haue a white tong and trew lippis, and he shal haue wryten in his hert ‘Holynesse’.” Regarding Henry III, Brie’s text applies this prophecy, “And of bis Kyng Henry, propheciede Merlyn, & said pat ‘a lombe shulde come out of Wynchestre [...] wiþ trew lippis, and holynesse wryten in his hert.’ And he saide soþ”. 215 Eckhardt states that this verbatim repetition acts as a literal recurrence of the prophecy in the Brut.

In this sense, the combined verbal repetition of a prophecy with its enactment only occurs once in E. Upon the interpretation of the dragon-head vision, Uther is offered divine encouragement by Merlin who, speaking as a prophet, advises Uther to “holde forth your wey to your emmyes, for ye schall ouercome hem.” 216 Thus, given God’s blessing, Uther

215 Brie (1906:72 II.5-7 and 177 II. 14-17)
216 E II. 1091-92
Indeed "went forth and discomfite his enmyes, and slewe Passent and Guillemore".\textsuperscript{217} Although these points of comparison are not identical in meaning, their proximity in the text and linguistic similarity emphasise the progression from prediction to enactment. The repetition of the same wording ties the original prophecy to its fruition; textually this leaves this prophecy open to future application if, for example, a character should see a similar vision. In this it is also similar to the pre-established symbols to which readers may refer for characterisation lacking in the text. It is the creation of such a system of symbols within this text which may serve as a signal in the Brut of the repetition of history, or since the Brut was such a popular text, it may exist transferred to other texts.

According to the "Six Last Kings" prophecy, which occurs in Brie during Arthur's chapter, after these six kings have passed, a ruler from Germany will invade Britain and cause the downfall of the Christian church, after which the seat of the British bishopric will be moved to Canterbury.\textsuperscript{218} In E, where this prophecy does not appear, the narrative nevertheless proceeds in accordance with it: six kings do rule after Arthur, at which point Gormond, a foreigner, invades Britain. This invader "distroied all the Bretanes that were Cristen, and distroied holy chirche and droffe oute the bischoppis and abbotis, [...] And thenne Gormond gaffe this lande to the Saxons" who were resident in Britain, and who assisted in his conquest.\textsuperscript{219} Material in the following chapter, of Saint Augustine, completes the prophecy: the seat of the re-established Church is moved to Canterbury.\textsuperscript{220} The prophecy of the "Six Last Kings", although E does not include it, has clearly influenced the narrative at some stage.

The last prophecy to be associated with Merlin in E is described in the final chapter of the legendary material, of Cadwalader. Because of a great shortage of food, a great number of Britons, including Cadwalader their king, leave Britain for Little Britain.

Cadwalader accepts this tragedy as the fault of the Britons, that for their "'grete synnes, of

\textsuperscript{217} E II.1092-94, emphasis added.
\textsuperscript{218} Eckhardt (1982:18).
\textsuperscript{219} E II. 1361-63.
\textsuperscript{220} E II. 1408-9.
whiche we wolde not amend vs while we had space, [we] ar nowe exiled oute of oure lande of the whiche the Scottes, Saxones, Danes, Romaynes, nor no nacion couth neuer exile vs, but Jhesu that hast put vs in exile for oure synnes, haue mercy vpon vs!"Upon their arrival in Little Britain the "grete deth" ends in Britain, and the remaining Britons send into Saxony for people to emigrate and settle in Britain, to replace those who fled the country with Cadwalader. Seeing the country recovering, Cadwalader considers a return, but first he seeks the advice of God, and "an angell appered to him and seid yt was notte goddis will that euer he schulde come again to Bretane, nor that Bretanes schulde haue any rule there vnto tyme that merlynys prophecy and the prophecy of Sibill were fulfilled, and that schulde neuer be vnto tyme that the Reliques of oure lordis body were broght fro Rome and translate vnto Bretane." The prophecy of Merlin mentioned by the angel does not appear previously in E. The only two prophecies with which Merlin is involved are that of the red and white dragon, and that of the dragon-head star, and both of these have been fulfilled. It seems likely that this "Merlynys prophecy" refers to that of the "Six Last Kings", which, for reasons of either economy or an assumed familiarity of the reader with the material, has been left out of E. In this case, the Angel's statement suggests that only after the reign of the sixth king after Arthur, Cadwelyn, will Britain again be under the control of the British.

The application of magic in E acts as a spiritual link between the characters and God. The act of reading about magic forms a connection between the reader and God, and establishes a basis by which moral instruction may be conveyed. The main point of E being moral instruction, various methods of reading therefore allow the reader to gain access to "truths", of which the interpretation of magic is one method. Although the chapters contrast good and evil behaviour in a variety of plots, there is one point which remains the constant ultimate aim: justice. At this stage, the presence of God is not so obvious; it is the responsibility of humanity, once instructed by God, to maintain justice. Analysis of

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221 E II. 1489-95.
222 E II. 1518-25.
individual characters and their actions in relation to justice, and the use of power to prevent or encourage it, provides a more detailed view of the way in which medieval readers were intended to interpret E.

Chapter Three: The Distribution of Power in E

III.i. The Theme of Power

The application of power functions in E as a central motivation for the actions of the characters. This application of power is visible in the characters’ dealings with justice. Particularly in the legendary material, the constructive use or abuse of power and the resulting effect upon justice, is a primary way in which characters are defined for the reader. Abuses of power are presented as sins, while the just application of power is rewarded by God. The theme of power may be apprehended on two levels, according to the reader’s interpretive effort. The chapters may be read at a basic level, at which the readers’ innate ability to perceive the good and evil will enable him to comprehend the value of each example without necessarily perceiving a pattern, whereas a more accomplished reader may discern a theme, relating one chapter to another. In its availability to more than one level of reader, the narrative of E facilitates “multiple modes” of interpretation: a text which is accessible to readers of differing abilities.223

One means by which justice is illustrated in E is in the general correspondence between one chapter and the next; evil kings are followed by just kings, and those kings who are evil are appropriately punished. Because justice and injustice are presented consistently in tandem, an action which creates injustice within the text may be seen as the disruption of equilibrium. The punishment for the abuse of power re-establishes the balance, and

223 See above chapter one.
facilitates the maintenance of justice. It is this balancing of good and evil, related to the appropriate use of power which makes E an effective tool for moral instruction.

Thomas Aquinas discusses the nature of justice, stating that justice implies both “a right order in man’s act”, or a tendency in humanity to act justly, which is a virtue, and also suggests “a certain rectitude of order in the interior disposition of a man, insofar as what is highest in man is subject to God, and the inferior powers of the soul are subject to the superior, i.e., to the reason”. According to Aquinas, therefore, justice is inherent in the nature of humanity, but is subject to imbalance due to a dual division between superior and inferior aspects. This existence and innate balance of inferior and superior abilities in mankind is reflected in the good and evil actions of characters in E. Since acts of reason are superior to acts of baser quality, of passion, characters motivated by reason are successful. The repeated struggle between characters of E represents the struggle within the individual, and acts as a microcosm for such a struggle between the higher good and baser evil inherent in humankind. The accomplishment of Justice may be seen as the victory of reason within humanity, and also as a successful end to a journey which parallels humanity’s lifetime pilgrimage back to heaven. As one seeks Justice, which as the superior faculty of man is controlled by God, one seeks a unity with God. This desire for unity with God is also the motivation for the lifetime pilgrimage, to be reunited with the single-pointedness that is God’s existence.

In the legendary material, direct association is made between the sin of pride and the abuse of power. Although the narrative presents a variety of secular injustices, such as the violation of hereditary law or a legal agreement, as the immediate reason for a character’s punishment, in most cases pride is the initial motivation for these crimes. An act of injustice in E is an indication of a morally corrupt ruler. The proper use of power, and the justice which this automatically engenders, is represented as the ideal state to be maintained specifically by a monarch, his generosity and concern for his subjects ideally being his

Singleton (1958:58)
motivation and primary concern. A point of crisis occurs in text when the king, motivated by pride, acts in a way which creates an injustice. This injustice usually involves a form of treachery - the betrayal or even murder of one’s lord, whether he is kin or not, or taking advantage of those weaker, which is an example of the king’s betrayal of his responsibility to care for his people. Justice, as the triumph of reason over passion, is embodied in the struggle between royal brothers, the rightful heir to the throne representing reason, and the intended usurper representing passion. Thus the actions of the true heir are supported in the narrative by his association with reason and therefore God, while the usurper, clearly acting out of passion and thus representing the lower qualities of humanity, must be overcome.

The ability to maintain justice is presented as the most important function or quality of a good ruler, and therefore the use of power involved in the enaction of justice within the narrative as a whole is an indication of medieval perception of good character. While the male characters, kings, princes, and great warriors, act to directly influence justice throughout the kingdom, female characters more commonly act to ensure personal justice. It is the application of power, and in the case of female characters, the availability of power, which elucidates the text’s theme of justice. As a text intended to provide examples of imitable behaviour, the social and political relationships between men and women in the Brut express the “ideal” gender roles, defined by their actions with respect to each other. Notably, although significant relationships exist between male and female characters, and between characters of the same sex, both male and female characters are defined primarily by their relationship to men.

III.ii. Justice and Brotherhood

A prominent means by which the author conveys a sense of the misapplication of power and its effect upon justice in E is through the relationship between brothers. The conflict between brothers as heirs to the throne is relatively common in E, and their

225 Le Saux (1994:195)
treatment of each other is used as a narrative device to introduce various forms of injustice. The brother who rightly holds the throne, or rightly controls a region, acts as a conveyor of, and thus representative of justice in the text. The challenge of power occurs when one brother attacks the other, a struggle which may end in either peace, fratricide, or any sort of arrangement falling between the two. It is the action of the rightful heir which determines whether he will be able to defend his kingdom and uphold justice therein: if he is strong enough to keep his throne, thus implicitly retain God’s support, he will be strong enough to maintain justice in his realm. The ability to maintain justice in the kingdom is central to its survival and is therefore emphasised as the primary vital function of a ruler; the king who acts selflessly, out of fairness and generosity toward his citizens, is presented as the moral example. These instances may be read as examples of the concurrent levels of meaning present in E; fundamentally, fraternal relationships provide examples of rewarded fairness and just action, or unsuccessful deceit, and on a more subtle level, the brothers act as manifestations of God’s will on earth.

Fratricide is the result of pride. In E, this act involves the murder of a rightful king by a discontented usurper, who is the brother with whom the realm of Britain is shared, and who either considers his portion of the country to be inferior, or desires to rule over a united country. The disregard for rightful authority and pride, thinking he deserves better, motivates one brother to use his power in the subversion of the inherited order. This action results in both injustice for his brother who is challenged for his own rightful inheritance, and also for the community, for whom such a struggle for power reflects and results in a lack of concern for their welfare. It is the challenge to heredity, which involves the fair division of the country between two brothers, which provides a main form of injustice in E. The value of heredity in this version is further demonstrated in the assurance at the beginning of each chapter that the current king is the son of the previous ruler. The line of heredity is guaranteed, and every king whose name is known is listed, even if only his name is included. The significance of the line of descent in E is particularly apparent in the
chapter of Ferrers and Porrers, in which the termination of their family line serves as punishment of two brothers for their abuse of power and disregard of rightful inheritance.

Similar to the concept of the sea as participant in the elimination of injustice, nature also “acts” on behalf of God to punish the wicked when on land. In one case, wild animals act out God’s will, but in most cases, it is the human characters who avenge injustice and enact punishment on God’s behalf. Similar to the sea which will not allow a guilty man to survive upon it, it goes against nature in general for injustice to exist, and nature, reflecting God’s will for the world, will rectify offences to this order. This tendency is manifest in the structure of the legendary material, in the balancing of one chapter involving an evil king with another which describes a good, redeeming king. Each lesson exists in two periods - within the chapter, and in the following chapter. This allows variation in the demonstration of the consequences of injustice: within the chapter, punishment is clearly applicable to the perpetrator of injustice, and shows what punishment befalls an unjust ruler, while in a following chapter, the effect of injustice is shown to affect later generations.

One example of the representation of the abuse of power and injustice is the relationship between Manypris and Manlyn, the two heirs of Madahan. Manypris exhibits pride in his desire to rule all of Britain, and his intention to circumvent the established order or inheritance is an inappropriate use of power. The text thus presents two possible interpretations: the literal reader will conclude that condemnation of fratricide is the point of the chapter, and the analytical reader will perceive the violation of rightful order of inheritance as the more serious threat. Manypris commits a series of increasingly alarming violations which indicate his capacity for injustice and disregard for rightful authority. Britain is divided between Manypris and his brother Manlyn, but because Manypris wishes to rule the entire country, he murders his younger brother. This first violation of justice leads to worse sins: “and than was he kyng of all the londe. And after he forsoke his wyffe and vsed the synne of Sodome and therefore god toke vengeaunce of hym. For, on a day, as
he went on huntyng in a forest, he left all his men and went vp and doune, crying in the
forest; and thenus came ij wolfes and devoured him".226

In the text, the murder of Manlyn, the abandonment of his wife, and choice of a
male lover are presented as a progression of events, one violation enabling the next. As will
be discussed below, the abandonment of a rightful wife is perceived in E as a violation of
justice.227 This crime therefore compounds his fratricide, and further, the description of his
choice of a male lover as the “Synne of sodome” clearly establishes textual disapproval of
homosexuality, and suggests that an unfortunate change in behaviour is a logical
consequence of the previous violations: his abuse of power leads to further acts of injustice.
As with Albyn and her sisters’ involvement with monsters, Manypris’ death in the forest,
killed by wild animals, is a reflection of his beastly tendencies.228

The pattern of two brothers in competition for the control of Britain, one brother
attempting to control more than is his inherited right, is repeated in the chapter of Belen and
Brenne. Brenne, the younger of two brothers, is allotted the northern part of Britain: “Aftir
this Denebande his ij sonnes Belen and Brenne departed the lande, so that Belen, that was
eldest, hadd the lande of Brutane to Humber. And Brenne had the land fro Humber vnto
Scotland, and forebecause that Brenne had the warse party he was wroth and went into
Norwey to king Elfing and praid him of help”.229 However, the allies are defeated. An
agreement has been made; since “his ij sonnes Belen and Brenne departed the lande”,
presumably Brenne consents to the division, and only later decides he is dissatisfied. It is
the attempt to manipulate a fairly established division of the country which the brothers each
agreed upon which warrants Brenne’s defeat. Belen therefore acts on the side of “right”, in
accordance with nature, in the defense of his kingdom, and justifiably drives his brother
from the country.

226 E II. 196-203.
227 Punishment for the abandonment of a rightful wife is established in the chapter of Lotrin,
Guentolen, and Estrilde, discussed in the following section. See E II.152-86.
228 As was Morwith, as discussed previously, killed by a wild monster. E II.431-37.
229 E II. 349-56.
A further indication within the narrative that Belen uses his power appropriately and justly is his release of the captives detained originally through Brenne’s treachery. A second invasion by Brenne is also overcome, and at this point Corwenne, their mother, intercedes and peace is restored. It is significant that, at the reconstruction of balance, the brothers agree to rule Britain in tandem again: they live in peace for a year in London and then proceed to conquer France, then Rome, and “many of the cuntres in there wey.” The re-establishment of proper order, the fair adherence to contracts, produces success. The brothers are rewarded by successful invasions of foreign countries, and as a result of this, the people of Britain will benefit from the new wealth and resources.

In a chapter involving a similar issue which results in fratricide, the brothers Ferrers and Porrers fight for control of Britain, and Ferrers kills his brother “for Ferrers wold haue hadd all”. Because Porrers is their mother’s favourite, she herself then kills Ferrers in his sleep, “And then was none aftir of that linage that eny man knew.” The direct association of the mother’s murder with the termination of the family line implies that these murders, injustice within the family, is punished by God through the termination of their lineage. It is not indicated in the chapter which brother is the elder; clearly it is not the right of primogeniture that is of primary significance. Rather, it is the abuse of power, the intent to disrupt the just inheritance and distribution of power which is punished.

Another example of the portrayal of punishment for those who perpetrate the abuse of power follows the inheritance of Britain from King Leir. Morgon and Conodag wage war upon Cordell, their aunt, who inherits the country from her father. They kill her and take control of the land, divide it between themselves, and rule together for twelve years. At this point, Morgon desires to rule Britain alone, and he wages war on his brother. But: “Canadag come vppon him with grete people and droffe Morgon into Walles and there slew him”. Canadag then takes control of the whole of Britain and rules for the next 33 years.

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230 E II. 393-94.
231 E II. 317-18. And see below section III.iii. for a discussion of Cordell.
232 E II. 294-96.
In this instance, the fratricide is acceptable: it is Morgon's just punishment for his violation of the balance of power established between himself and his brother. In this chapter, as with all of the chapters involving one brother's attempt to forcibly take control of a sibling's rightful territory, pride may be seen as the ulterior motive, which characterises the motivation of the brother who violates the rightful order.

Pride may also directly serve as a pre-established sign of a character's guilt or innocence to the reader of E. In the case of Gynder, it is clear from the narrative what motivates his actions: "And after him [Kymbaline] regned Gynder and he was proude and he wold not pay the troage to the Emperour of Rome that Cassabylane had graunt Julius Cesar". Since it is his personal pride which motivates his refusal to pay truage to Rome, and not for example, concern for Britain's treasury which would relate to his responsibility to the people of the country, it is clear to the reader that his action is inappropriate. Gynder is killed by a Roman, Humber, disguised as a fellow British soldier, but the rest of Gynder's army rally under Armager, dressed in his brother's armour. Humber is a Roman dressed as a Briton; this act of disguise symbolises the falseness of Gynder, while Armager's taking up of his brother's armour represents his rightful inheritance of the throne, as well as his counteraction of Gynder's misuse of power. Since generosity and concern for his subjects are the necessary characteristics for a good and just ruler in the Brut, Gynder's exaggerated concern with Rome's truage is a moral transgression, which detracts from his defense of his people. The opposite of the ideal, concerned king is one motivated by pride, and is associated specifically with the selfishness of a ruler and the resulting unwillingness or inability to act in the interest of his subjects.

These chapters provide an illustration of the application of power by male characters in E, for whom the narrative is straightforward in presenting events and their results. Male readers presumably identify directly with the male characters, and the message of justice is immediately apparent: betraying one's lot in life, or one's agreements

233 E II. 546-49.
and contracts, is a violation of the proper order of nature, which may be punishable by death, or the death of an entire lineage. This is all quite straightforward. With female characters, however, the narrative is more insidious. Examined as a group, it is evident that the portrayal of queens, mothers and daughters is affected by the aim, not only to present the concept of justice in relation to female characters, but to also present an “acceptable” example for women. In this manner, E acts as a manual for distinct male and female behaviour; while both male and female readers are expected to follow examples in the text with regard to the theme of justice, female readers are also exposed to a construction of justice in which their access to power and general influence in the narrative becomes increasingly ineffectual. Despite chapters which present powerful female characters, the clear application of power in the E as a whole remains primarily within the sphere of the male characters.

III.iii. The Role of Female Characters in E

In comparison to the male characters of E, for whom, as kings, power is an assumed attribute, female characters, as mothers, wives and daughters of kings, appear to lose power as the narrative progresses. Not only do female characters generally appear with less frequency, but they are portrayed with progressively less sympathy, and their characters become increasingly vulnerable as their control of power also diminishes. In the beginning of the legendary material, women appear to be privy to the same legal advantages, supported equally in cases of injustice, and susceptible to the same moral weaknesses as the male characters. In this they act as equivalent conveyers of justice to kings, a moral point of central importance in the E. Women become increasingly presented not as characters in their own right, but as a means of qualifying male characters; they become restricted to use as narrative tools as the text progresses, and are no longer presented as examples of either moral or immoral behaviour.
Specifically, it is the deterioration of their ability to act that demonstrates the decreasing value attributed to female characters. In the first part of the legendary material, the Time of Natural Law, Albyn and her sisters, Guentolen and Estrilde, and the characters of Samy and Ursula are all successful in achieving their own goal, albeit acting in situations determined by a male-centred social structure. They are able to utilise the power available to them in order to redress injustice with regard to themselves, and in doing so, are as active in the portrayal of this major theme in E as the male characters. However, the three characters who follow, in the Time of Moses, Guinevere, Arthur’s queen, Merlin’s mother, and Igraine, Arthur’s mother are unable to enact their own goals, and are further disempowered by a diminished presence in the text. These women act largely as narrative devices, whose participation in events is limited to the definition of male characters: mother, wife, daughter.

Not unexpectedly for a medieval text, female characters in E are defined by their relationship to male characters, most commonly in either their earthly or spiritual marriage. Generally speaking, in this manuscript, while the female characters represent moral rectitude or depravity in a range of situations, as the male characters do, the examples they provide invariably exist in terms of hardships they endure as a result of marriage, in other words, in reaction to being acted upon by the male characters. All the abovementioned characters, Albyn and her sisters, Guentolen, Estrilde, Samy, Ursula, Guinevere, Merlin’s mother, and Igraine are introduced into the narrative as a result of the distress caused them by marriage or a sexual relationship.234 The vulnerability of the female characters, caused by this reliance upon male characters’ action for their definition, intensifies as the legendary material progresses. When the reader encounters Burene Bokerd’s wife, the first female characters in the “historical material”, one finds a woman whose identity is entirely defined by a male action upon her: she is never named, her rape is described in the third person, she

234 An exception to this generalisation is Corwenne, the mother of Ferrers, and Porrerrs, who acts in the narrative on behalf of one of her sons, and is thus does not exist in relation to a mate.
exists in the narrative solely in terms of her rape and description of it, and it is her rape which functions to spur her husband to revenge and justice not for her, but for himself. The ability for women to act has been withdrawn by this point; since she cannot act as example, and therefore cannot act to encourage justice, she cannot defend herself, which is the method of justice acceptable in the earlier narrative, and since she is given no voice, she cannot even act to ask for justice through the efforts of male characters.

In the third period of time, the Time of Grace, women’s attempts to establish justice are just as futile. Women in E neither act as example, nor are they able to create justice for themselves, and eventually, they are unworthy of justice and exist as proof of a male character’s persona. It seems likely that as the narrative approaches the date of E, the inclusion of more recent stories would reflect more contemporary concepts of female behaviour. Powerful female characters in the ancient past are no threat, but a suggestion that women may have an effect on contemporary events would perhaps have been a more alarming prospect.

The presence of the stronger of the female characters deserves attention; they may be seen as examples designed for women to read and emulate – and there is evidence that the Brut had female readers235 – written to appeal to women for their apparent lack of misogyny. As Susan Schibanoff explains, apologies were often included in medieval texts known to be offensive to women, and such apologies were claimed to be attempts to conciliate offended female readers; in fact they act to “justify” the offending text, rather than alter it to be inoffensive.236 In the case of E, the portrayals of the particularly admirable female characters, such as Guentolen and Estrilde, may be seen as a reparation, a lure to women readers, who, in order to accept these women as “true” and as models, also unknowingly accept the male background in which they function. Guentolen and Estrilde are uniquely able to use power to attain their aims: Guentolen raises an army to avenge

235 Matheson refers to inscriptions of women’s names in Brut manuscripts as an indication of ownership as well as a female readership. (Matheson 1998:13)
236 Schibanoff (1994:222)
herself upon her husband who attempts to displace her from her rightful role as his queen, and Estrilde, the woman for whom Guentolen is betrayed, is, despite her inferior position, able to exert considerable control over her own fate. If female readers accept some characters as role models, in order to be consistent, they must also accept the less inspiring treatment of women as the text progresses. It is “safe” for a text to contain characters such as Estrilde and Guentolen, and even Samy, since, even if female readers extract their actions from the narrative, to disassociate them from the remaining female characters, they still exist in a period of history remarkably distant from the contemporary reader. The representations become less independent in the later material. Queen Anne, for example, appearing closer in time to the reader, would create a stronger association between the female reader and these “acceptable” characteristics.

The first female characters, indeed the first characters in the Brut, are Albyn and her sisters. Restricted not only by marriage, but by socially unfavourable marriage, “yt befell that Dame Albyn, the eldest doughter, wex prowde and grete-willed and wolde not be ruled by here housbandle, and in lyke wyse dede all her susters”. Pride is exemplified in the first chapter, and its presence is the key to the moral decline of the sisters. To escape their husbands, the sisters plan to murder them. Their civic punishment for this murder is exile and the punishment for the sin of pride occurs on the island, which is revealed in the animalistic manner in which they survive, and also through their vulnerability to suggestion and seduction by the devil. From one point of view, Albyn and her sisters are strong characters; they are able to resolve the situation without the help of male characters. This is the only instance in which female characters, victims of injustice, are able to independently defend themselves. Significantly, of course, the manner of their revenge is murder,

237 The point that the first characters in the Brut are women is significant, in contrast to Geoffrey of Monmouth’s HRB, in which the first character is Brute. The addition of the story of Albyn and her sisters not only provides the giants for Brute to conquer, but also makes these monsters particularly worthy of him, as the offspring of noble Syrian women.

238 E II.13-17. The marriage of noble women to men below their station as “humiliating and degrading” is a device likely to have been inherited from the Brut’s Anglo-Norman forebears. Weiss (1996:8) This device may also be seen in the chapter of Hauelock and Goldesburgh, EUL II. 1333-41, which was a popular Anglo-Norman lai.
obviously an unacceptable solution, and possibly an outcome which may have indicated to a medieval reader what chaos results when women have charge of their own fate. These events establish a mould for the rest of the narrative in the balance of justice maintained through the appropriate punishment of characters who commit a sin or a crime, but also in the deceptively independent situations of the female characters. The role of women in E as a whole may be examined by means of this recurrent theme; in the beginning of the legendary material, female characters are as capable of upsetting the balance of justice as the male characters, and they are also as likely to act in order to maintain it. Further in this first section, women’s action, or power, is eroded. While no more likely participate in disruption, injustice against women persists, which amplifies their dependence upon male defense in cases of offenses against themselves.

The most conspicuous example of powerful female characters and their participation in the establishment of justice occurs early in the narrative, in the chapter of Lotrine, Brute’s eldest son and King of England. The E does not present a detailed version of this story: the origin of Estrilde, for instance, is not mentioned. Therefore, although this discussion will refer primarily to the E version, in order to provide a fuller description of this story and to facilitate this discussion, reference to Brie’s edition is necessary. The two women in this chapter, Guentolen and Estrilde, are Lotrine’s legally betrothed fiancee and his lover, respectively. They are both influential characters in relation to the actual progression of events - in fact they are the controlling agents. Although as characters, Guentolen and Estrilde are at odds with each other, it is between the two of them that justice is maintained.

If one reads this text, as discussed above, using the medieval approach, focusing not on the literal outcome of events, but on the analysis of events as the means by which the moral point is expressed, the reader may be lulled into disregard of the women’s actual situation. Although they are indeed strong characters, and they do act forcefully, possessing the power to enact their own revenge, Guentolen and Estrilde nonetheless are motivated to these
actions by their legal and sexual relationship with Lotrine, not by an independent desire to maintain justice in Britain, which they do in fact achieve.

The two female characters in this chapter react to developments regarding their marriage; Lotrine is betrothed to Guentolen, the daughter of the king of Cornwall, but wishes to break this engagement and instead marry Estrilde, the captive Saxon daughter of the defeated Humbar. Coryn, Guentolen's father, threatens to kill Lotrine for this violation, a threat which has further implications of internal war. Lotrine proves himself an unworthy king: his desire to breach a political agreement for personal reasons reveals a selfish lack of primary concern for his subjects. In fact it is his mistress, Estrilde, who acts generously and selflessly, interfering between Lotrine and Coryn: "Estrild the maiden went betwene them and acorded hem on this maner, so that Lotryne schuld spouse Coryn doughter, that men called Guentolen. And so he dide". Lotrine's intention to cancel his agreement is unjust, and perversely, it is Estrilde who acts as the champion of justice.

The narrative provides the reader with no indication of Estrild's opinion of this situation; it is from her action alone that motivation may be determined. As peacemaker, preventing immediate war between the two kings, and by remaining as Lotrine's lover, she enables him to fulfil his oath to marry Guentolen and yet also attain his own desire: herself. Obviously this is a confusing and contradictory representation of "exemplary" female behaviour. On the surface, Estrilde acts boldly, mediating between two warring kings and preventing civil war. But this impression of boldness of characters is deceptive: Estrilde's motivation is unlikely to be the preservation of peace in a country foreign to her, nor is her sympathy likely to be with a foreign king who kidnaps her from her father's ship in order to have her as mistress. Rather, Estrilde represents the use of power to uphold justice. As the king's mistress, she is a relatively powerful character, and she uses this power to arrange a meeting between two regional kings and negotiate a compromise which will avoid war. Her behaviour may also be interpreted as a subtle presentation of a woman accepting her

239 E 11. 162-65.
situation; the reader is not aware of any struggle on Estrilde’s part in resistance to her capture, nor of any subsequent protest upon realising Lotrine’s intention for her. While she appears to act as a strong woman acting successfully in the realm of kings, she is also a woman whose actions are determined by her position as a mistress, whose brave and noble actions, in the end, do not save her.

Guentolen may be the only genuinely independent female character in E. When Coryn dies, he leaves Guentolen, now married to Lotrine, vulnerable; Lotrine believes he may safely put her aside and marry his mistress. Estrilde does not interfere this time; instead, it is Guentolen who, inheriting her father’s kingdom, “raised moche people of that cuntre to be avenged on Lotryne, and come and gaffe hym a batell. And there was Lotryne slayne”.

Although again motivated initially in relation to an offense of her husband’s, Guentolen acts to redress the injustice done to herself, and not only is she automatically accepted as heir to her father’s country, and raises an army in her support, but she succeeds in killing a king, otherwise of course, an act of treason.

The relationship between Guentolen and Lotrine may be compared to that of two brothers jointly ruling Britain. In the latter situation, two brothers share the country, and one region may be presented as inferior, but the significant point is that they are intended to rule together, and that it is the honouring of the commitment that is vital. The legal betrothal between Guentolen and Lotrine is similar to this fraternal relationship; each of them inherits a region of Britain and with the betrothal, they agree to rule together. Lotrine’s attempt to violate his betrothal is an attack, an attempt to circumvent Guentolen’s rightful heredity, solidified by the legal agreement, which entitles her to marry him. His later attempt to dispose of her is also a threat to her native land of Cornwall; in marriage, Lotrine presumably would also rule the land she inherits from her father, and also presumably, would not offer it back. Her response is also comparable to that of the offended brother. She raises an army, attacks Lotrine, and, as the character acting to re-establish

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240 E II. 174-77.
justice, she is successful. She drowns Estrilde and her daughter by Lotrine, Abron (for whom the river Severn is named); they may be seen as the physical result of Lotrine’s violation of Guentolen and she is thus justified in their destruction. In addition, as Lotrine’s heir, Abron may have represented a real threat to Madahan, Guentolen’s son by Lotrine. Textual support for Guentolen as the purveyor of justice comes not only in the form of her success in battle. Guentolen also rules as Queen, since Madahan is too young to rule, which is only one of two instances in E in which a woman rules the country.241

It is necessary, in narrative terms, for Guentolen to kill Estrilde and Abron. Despite Estrilde’s likely involuntary removal from her ship and subsequent involvement in British affairs, and despite her heroic participation in the resolution of a potentially disastrous argument, in terms of the theme of justice, Estrilde contributes to the furtherance of injustice by marrying the king. Of course, it is unlikely that Estrilde would be given the opportunity to refuse the king’s offer of marriage, and therefore the extent of blame that can be fairly placed on her is limited. Estrilde’s character is used to further the narrative, and in this chapter the result is inconsistent behaviour on her part. She is the physical manifestation of the point of the narrative, the symbol of injustice, and in her death she symbolises the destruction of whatever force caused the imbalance of injustice in the realm. Guentolen herself becomes queen of England until her son is of age: “and then Guentolen was crouned Quene agane, and whenne Madahan, here sone that Lotryne had goten vpon here, was xv yere olde, sche lette croune him kyng. And thenne went sche into Corwaile and there lyved all here lyfe.”242 At the end of her service to the kingdom, Guentolen returns to her home country. The significance of Lotrine’s actions may be interpreted as more than an insult to his wife: it reveals his unreliability as king, a tendency toward injustice that is unacceptable, and which, more importantly, has implications for the fairness of his dealings with his subjects. This is the first chapter which involves the issue

241 The other female character who rules the country is Cordell. It is significant that while Cordell rules simply because she inherits the kingdom from her father, Guentolen rules because she has killed the king and assumes the throne.

242 E II. 181-86.
of the proper use of power, and the maintenance of justice by a king, a ubiquitous theme in E, and it is female characters who provide a strong example, in this case, of the portrayal of just actions, in which the sex of the avenging character is irrelevant.

Guentolen and Estrilde represent contrasting images of acceptable femininity for a female reader. Estrilde is the more “typical,” self-sacrificing and sacrificed, while Guentolen is the aggressively protective mother and queen. Also to be expected, these two characterisations are mutually exclusive within the framework in which women function in relation to husbands: Lotrine cannot have two wives simultaneously, but in more significant terms, these two women may not co-exist in primary relation to him. Guentolen is the more dominant, obtaining the position of queen instead of the meeker but useful Estrilde, and in her determination to maintain her position, which is the height of “justice” in relation to the “woman’s world,” she must rid herself of her competition. Therefore, despite the possibility for action which is attractive and also deceptive, Guentolen and Estrilde are ultimately confined to a limited conception of appropriate behaviour. Guentolen and Estrilde are the most powerful women in E. Although restrained by certain societal boundaries, they are successful in their action: as examples for female any readers, they act to control their lives by creating justice.

The chapter of Ursula represents one of the predominant medieval classifications of women, that of the “virgin.” Her chapter can be seen, like that of Arthur and Merlin, to have been adapted into the legendary material of the Brut from an independent tradition, in this case, of “virgin martyr hagiography.” In E, Ursula is introduced into the narrative in

243 By this expression I refer to a construct of a “woman’s world” in which female characters were placed, with their primary concerns forever revolving around marriage, the desires of her husband and children.

244 Wogan-Browne (1994:165-68): “In medieval accounts of occupational categories [...] women are seldom mentioned at all. When they are, there are two careers they can have: the biologically active one of wife or the professionally chaste one of nun.” Virginity in this sense is considered a “mode of life”, as opposed to “maydenhede”, the physical condition, and refers to the choice of the woman to renounce human male partnership in lieu of Christ, the “best groom of all”. This attitude is attributed to “virginity writers” of the later middle ages and therefore particularly relevant to this 15th century Brut.

245 Wogan-Browne (1994:163)
relation to her marriage: the king of Brittany, Conan, and his men, are unmarried “bycause that he and his meyny that were Bretanes wolde haue not wifes of the frensche nacon, [therefore] he sent into Grete Brutane to th’erle of Cornwaile, that hight Dionotho, that he schuld sende him xj m+ maidens”. The earl sends for marriageable women from all over the country, gathers them in London, and equips ships to carry them to France. He includes his own daughter, Ursula, “that was the fairest creature in the worlde, and thought that Conan schulde he wedde”. There is a distinction made between the calibre of the women, and only noblewomen are appropriate matches for the noblemen who are settled in France: “this Conan, king of litell Bretane, [...] sent into Grete Brutane to th’erle of Cornwaile, that hight Dionotho, that he schuld sende him xj m+ maidens, that ys to sey iij m+ of grete birthe and viij m+ of other.” Ursula, intended by her father for Conan, king of Little Britain, is correspondingly the most noble of them all. Her beauty and nobility are significant points in relation to her decision to choose God over an earthly husband; her sacrifice of her most valuable life to maintain her virginity is all the more admirable since she is worth so much as an earthly bride.

As is characteristic of Virgin Lives, Ursula chooses a chaste life as an outward indication of her dedication to God. Her dedication is tested to its limit, another feature of this genre, and Ursula is ultimately killed in the successful defense of her virginity. Her virginity is a symbol of her faith; death is preferable to violation according to the Christian ethos, particularly since the true state of “virginity was not possible without martyrdom”. It is interesting to note that while the ship-bound women are unable to defend themselves from brutal attack and murder, they are physically able to resist rape. This indicates the sanctity of the women’s choice to remain chaste for religious reasons - by defending their bodies they are defending Christianity. A further connection may be established between the representation of unbreached faith and the body of Ursula herself. Defending her

246 E II. 732-37.
247 E II. 743-34.
248 E MS II. 732, 735-38.
249 Schulenburg (1986:60)
virginity, Ursula defends the Christian faith: “the boundaries of Christian polity are policed on the bodies of virgins: represented bodily integrity serves as an exclusionary definition of Christian community asserted against the ‘pagan’.”250 From Ursula’s willingness to die for her spiritual devotion, it follows that she will not resist death, in fact she prefers it in this instance, advising her fellow passengers “that thei schuld kepe there virginitie and rather than thei schuld lese theire virginitie for to dye and all the maydens assented there to and seide thei wolde rather suffre deth for the loue of god and thei withstode the king”.251

According to Jocelyn Wogan-Browne,

> The major category of female saint, the virgin martyr, offers exemplary narratives in which the saint’s best demonstration of sanctity is her preference for death over dishonour, and where her ability to pursue and defend her faith is met with savage and spectacular torture by a patriarchy presented as pagan but sharing some behaviour (such as readiness to constrain daughters and to refuse to hear their refusals) with Christian fathers and suitors. 252

Also typical of this genre, and particularly interesting with regard to the usual dependent relationship of female upon male characters in the Brut, Ursula’s resistance causes the ultimate destruction of her aggressors. She and her companions are re-routed by a storm into the Saracen-controlled port of Cologne. The Saracen leader Gowane, having seen the women’s beauty, determines that he and his men will rape them.253 Ursula and her followers agree that “thei wolde rather suffre deth for the loue of god” than allow the Saracens access to their bodies, and it is their resistance which so frustrates Gowane that he orders the women be killed: “thei withstode the king and his meyne and faught with hem. Wherfor the king was wroth and made to slee hem all”.254

Although the description of Gowane’s reaction is curtailed in E, the mass slaughter of young women by soldiers may be

250 Wogan-Browne (1994:177)
251 E II. 758-62.
252 Wogan-Browne (1996:64)
253 Jane Tibbetts Schulenburg provides an interesting discussion of the intentional, often severe self-disfigurement of medieval women, spiritual women in particular, in an effort to specifically discourage rape. It is relevant then, that Ursula’s particular beauty is noted in her chapter, perhaps as an explanation for the Saracens’ determination.
254 E II. 762-64
seen as an unreasonable act by a man unexpectedly frustrated to the extent that he loses all sense. This hagiography clearly progresses in accordance with aggressors in this tradition who are frustrated and react violently: “clearly victims of their own desire [...] the hectic masculinity [...] by which they express their will rebounds on them, and they end up mad”; the slaughter of the virgins may easily be attributed to madness.\(^{255}\)

Like Guentolen and Estrilde, Ursula is primarily defined in relation to “marriage”, in that she chooses to be a “bride of Christ”, and is also chosen to be an earthly bride. Ursula’s self-determination is restricted within the boundaries of the male figure with whom she will identify. However, the illusion of choice itself is significant; it is the power of choice, and the action of making the choice, which allows a female character to appear to have power over her own life. The monastic life seems to offer a legitimate alternative to arranged marriage, and to legitimately free a woman from the “very real fears and dangers of childbirth”;\(^{256}\) the choice of a “virgin” life commits her to a life with a husband who is only spiritually present, and in addition, theoretically provided protection from physical attack. However, to imply that the choice of the spiritual life is an act of independence is to underestimate the extent to which textual representations of society, secular and religious, were completely constructed around male authority.\(^{257}\) The conflict between the action of female power in a male-structured text is reconciled by the fact that it is not truly “action”. The representation of female power is often deceptive in E, as is the implication that the choice of monastic life was a free one, in life as well as in literature. The choice between marriage and monastic life is a choice of commitment to one type of male authority or other, marriage to a man, or “marriage” to Christ and thus subject to Church authority, which is ultimately male.

\(^{255}\) Wogan-Browne (1994:178)

\(^{256}\) Schulenburg (1986:41)

\(^{257}\) “—even the highest ranking, longest-established and economically most secure communities ruled over by abbesses remain essentially sub-cultures, contained within male monasticism, on conceded and partially occluded territory.” Wogan-Browne (1992:27).
Even having joined a monastic community, women were controlled by rules created by their male counterparts, therefore actually existing in another “woman’s world” created by men, not other women. The medieval portrayal of reclusive life for women as nurturing and protective is as much an artificial construct as the concept in E that the female characters act of their own accord, rather than being forced into action by male characters. According to Jocelyn Wogan-Brown, treatises praising monastic life for women offer dire warnings of marriage, providing vivid images of household chaos and drudgery, economic trials, as well as “graphic accounts of violence and sexual harassment within marriage [...] and of the pains of pregnancy”, by contrast, life in the convent is calm and peaceful. Therefore a woman choosing a religious life, believing she is choosing a kind of independence from male governance, may be simply unaware of underlying male authority, and the reader of such a text may be unaware of the subtle construction of the “background” of E, which favours female submission and offers no real alternative to a subordinate life.

Although the woman’s choice to be a “virgin” is inspired by Christian patriarchal values, her actions within this self-determination may yet be seen as more independent than those of secular women, who are more likely to be simply married off. It may be argued that female martyrs, having chosen to dedicate their lives to virginity, are committed to acceptable values and are regarded as “safe”: their actions cannot be threatening and they cannot be interpreted as acting against the predominant paradigm of male authority. Even within this system of male-ordered religion, “the lives [of religious women] offer an important model of resistance [...] these texts, with their heroines’ supernaturally underwritten insistence that when women say no, no is what they mean, can offer serious encouragement to female readers.” Although the choice between subjection to human or godly man may be viewed as merely a choice of two evils, with no real alternative available, and thus no opportunity to truly act in her own interest, it may still be argued that, in comparison to women already married in the E, Ursula is uniquely able to act on her own.

258 Wogan-Browne (1994:170)
259 Wogan-Browne (1994:181)
behalf. She is able to act in her own life at an earlier stage than the married women, to choose her own marriage, which is not an option for any other female character in this Brut. The underlying encouragement, in this tale and in the others in the Brut, for women to exist within a male-organised society, does not completely overwhelm the power of action the reader witnesses when Ursula and her companions decide to retain their virginity, and subsequently resist the attacks by the Saracens.

The significance of Ursula’s choice is notable because it is not made in an attempt to redress an injustice, as is more typical of female characters in E. Unlike the injustice involving female characters in other chapters, which requires redress by means of action, in Ursula’s chapter the action involves a direct choice by the female character, which comes prior to the injustice, and the injustice appears initially to be unavenged. This is a hagiography, and therefore we are dealing with different rules regarding the aim and structure of the story; the inversion of the order of injustice and action results in the martyrdom of Ursula, while the deaths of the Saracens, by Ursula’s potential brother-in-law, provide the anticipated revenge. These conclusions satisfy both the aim of the hagiography and the theme of justice in E.

Ursula is clearly portrayed in a very different manner in her hagiography than male saints, including Austeyn and Merlin in E. One of the tradition of virgin martyrs, she must necessarily die in the maintenance of Christianity, and her “choices” are thus determined by a patriarchal system of values. Unaware of these limitations, since propagandist literature encourages women to join the spiritual life, it is easy for readers to perceive her actions as noble, and as a result of her own choices for her life. And although this is deceptive in one sense, since she is still acting within an acceptable framework of male authority, in another sense the reader should recognise that at least she is not merely reacting to male aggression, as is the case for the rest of the female characters in E. The reader is not informed of Ursula’s motivation for her “vow to live chaste”, only that she makes this vow before she is promised to Conan. The implication, therefore, is that she is destined for religious life.
because of her own innate spirituality, rather than an attempt to escape secular marriage. In a limited sense, therefore, because of her determination to follow her spiritual inclinations, which thereby commits her to male authority, Ursula is permitted to act with a unique confidence.

In the chapter in which Samy appears, the rule of Britain is shared between Belen and Branne, with the eldest, Belen, ruling Britain from the Humber river south, and Branne therefore allotted the area of Britain from the Humber through Scotland. Branne intends to take his brother’s half through force and rule the whole of Britain himself, and so travels to Norway in search of allies. He offers to marry the Norse king’s daughter, Samy, in exchange for military help against Belen, which the king accepts. Samy is then put aboard a ship, like Ursula, intended for an undesired marriage. Also like Ursula, Samy privately has a previous emotional commitment: to Coutlage, the king of Denmark. There is a clear agreement between them, as there is between Ursula and God, as she sends to him for help and he responds. The Danish king rescues Samy from Branne, but their ship, again similar to events in the chapter of Ursula, is driven by a “tempest” to Britain, instead of back to Denmark. Although they are captured, it is by the elder brother Belen, who, having defended himself from his brother, makes a fair pact with the Danish king and allows Samy to return to Denmark with Coutlage.

Samy’s relation to the use of power in this chapter, like Albyn and her sisters, Guentolen, Estrilde, and Ursula, involves her relation to marriage. In addition, Samy’s use of power has a significant political effect; by preventing an unwanted marriage, she effectively obstructs the alliance between her father and Branne, which presents an obstacle for Branne’s attempt at military alliance, eventually resulting in his defeat. Samy’s actions are logical and successful; surrounded by those with whom she has little influence, Samy uses the means available to her. The subsequent chapter of Ursula reveals further loss of independence. Both women are involuntarily committed to an undesired marriage, but Samy, although unable to enact her own justice, is still able to ask for assistance, while
Ursula, following Samy in the narrative, is completely vulnerable to the desires of Conan, her father, and subsequently, Gowan.

As the text progresses, the female characters are deprived of self-definition as well as power. Instead of existing as characters whose action and will is taken into consideration in the narrative, the women in E begin to solely exist in order to function as the embodiment of an ideal within this male-constricted narrative. For example, Rowen, the daughter of Hengist, a Saxon king settling in Britain, is present in the narrative only as a means for her father to obtain land in England. Hengist sends for Rowen, and “whenne she was comen he prayed the king to come dyne with him and se his new castell that he hadd made”.260 The invitation to view the castle is a pretext that will facilitate a meeting between Rowen and the king. Rowen only appears in the narrative to the king, under the most intimate of circumstances: “whenne he [the king] had dyned and sowped and was gone to his chambre toward his bedde, Rowen come forth before the king with a coppa of golde in here hande and kneled byfore the king and seide “Wassaile” [...] And the king drank vnto hire and hir kessed; And he was so anamord on hir that he desired of hir ffader, Engest, that me myght hir wedde”.261

Although part of a ceremony which demonstrates respect to an honoured guest, the situation nonetheless provides the king with an opportunity to view Rowen privately, to appreciate her beauty and to be overcome with desire to marry her, which is clearly Hengist’s intention. Hengist agrees to give his daughter to the king in exchange for the land of Kent. The result of this marriage for Vortigern is disaster: “And the king graunted [the land to Hengist] and wedded Rowen, which was to his grete hurte, ffor Bretones loued him neuer after it”.262 In Brie’s text, the reason for this intense dislike is explained more fully: “and Perfore al De Britouns bicomce so wroP, for enchesoun Pat he hade spoued a womman of mysbileue, wherfore Pat went al from him, and noPing to him toke kepe, ne

260 E II. 861-63
261 E II. 864-69, II.874-78.
262 E II. 881-3.
helpe him in binges bat he hade to done."263 The general displeasure with the king’s marriage to a pagan is revealed in the next chapter of E, when Vortigern is deposed: “And anone after the bretanes did depose Vortigern and made Vortimer, his sonne that he had goten of his first wife, king” 264. It is the alliance between Vortigern and Hengist which motivates the Britons to depose their king: “[the Britons] wolde soffre Vortiger no longer to regne, for enchesoun of Pe alliance bituene Engist and him”.265 Rowen is the physical representation of this alliance, and yet it is not to her that the Britons object. In fact she is of little relevance; it is the marriage that causes Vortigern to be disliked. The marriage is interpreted by the Britons in terms of a relationship between the king and Hengist, not between the king and his wife. The son who inherits from Vortigern is noted in the text as the child of his first wife, presumably a Christian and a native Briton, and thus much more favoured by the British populace.

In this chapter, although existing only as a bargaining tool, Rowen has her own voice, and speaks to the king in greeting in his chamber. Initially, she speaks to Vortigern in her own language, which he cannot understand. Provided a translation by a nearby courtier, the king is granted access to her; he kisses her and then asks for her in marriage. Speech in this instance is a form of power which replaces the ability to act. Speech is unusual in E, which makes it all the more noticeable coming from a female character. Compared to Ursula and Samy, with regard to their arranged marriages, Rowen has even less effect upon the course her father determines for her. She has not made an independent choice in the form of a private vow upon which she may rely to free her from this commitment, and her opinion of the marriage is not noted in either E or in Brie’s text. In fact, her ability to speak may be an attempt to indicate her agreement to the marriage, since her words are a Saxon welcome toast.

263 Brie (1906:52 II.23-26).
264 E II. 888-90.
265 Brie (1906:53 II.9-10)
The character of Guinevere represents further development of the female character in E. Guinevere has a very limited role in E and in the versions of the Brut presented in Brie. There is no mention of her involvement in extra-marital romance, and indeed no mention of Lancelot at all. Guinevere has no substantial role in what is primarily a narrative of military conquest. She is married to Arthur when he has “sett his reame in pese,”266 which immediately establishes her as of secondary importance to military exploit. She is not mentioned again until Arthur’s final battle against Mordred. The presentation of Guinevere’s participation in Mordred’s treachery is worthy of note, since it is her sexual betrayal of Arthur for which she is condemned in most familiar versions of Arthurian material. Her relationship to Mordred is passive: “[he] helde Gyamore the quene as his paramour.”267 The language used suggests that Guinevere has been taken by Mordred, kidnapped and raped, and more importantly, does not portray this arrangement as her betrayal of Arthur.

This interpretation is further supported by her reaction upon receiving the news of Arthur’s fatal wound: “and Arthour was wounded to the deth and whenne Gyamore, the quene, wiste therof sche stale prively awey and went to Carlion, and ther prively toke the abyte of a none and ther duellyd all here lyffe.”268 In contrast to her capture and thus control by Mordred, Guinevere is not forced into the nunnery by Arthur: Guinevere is not taken to the nunnery by a male character, nor is her retreat there portrayed as punishment, self-imposed or otherwise, for betrayal of the king. Instead, she goes to the nunnery under her own power, and seemingly, does so grieving; her departure is described in the narrative immediately after the news of Arthur’s imminent death.

While it is refreshing to see Guinevere escaping the blame for the destruction of Arthur’s empire, her treatment conforms to that of a female character defined by the male participants in her life. Her action is limited in the narrative to, and indeed she is only

266 E II. 1178-79.
267 E II. 1287-88.
268 E II. 1303-07.
mentioned in relation to Arthur or Mordred: she is married, she is captured, and she retreats. And while it may appear that Guinevere’s retreat is the enactment of her own will at last, free from both husband and captor, it is in fact precisely because there is no male secular character left upon whom she can be dependent, that she is placed there. Her action may be interpreted as the escape from the world of men, but it is in fact a retreat to another system of male control.

Guinevere is unique because, unlike most female characters who deny one form of marriage for another, either earthly marriage or virginal dedication to Christ, Guinevere chooses both. She is in a unique position in relation to the representations of male authority in her life. Because the character of Lancelot, traditionally Guinevere’s defender, does not appear in this manuscript, the queen does not have a champion; she is not legitimately “claimed” by Mordred, who thus cannot defend her in any way, and Arthur, who is her rightful champion, returns to Britain to recover his country, not primarily to recover or avenge his wife. In fact there is no mention in the text of Arthur’s concern for her, or attempt to rescue her. As a result, she is left in an awkward position when Arthur and Mordred both are killed. Neither defended by Arthur in life, nor able to defend herself as Guentolen is able to, Guinevere is failed by one system of marriage, and has no choice but to abandon the whole situation for circumstance in which, theoretically, she would not be called upon to defend herself.

It thus appears that Guinevere is offered a range of choices and she retreats in peace to the world of women. In fact, Guinevere’s retreat to the nunnery seems more like a convenient way to textually “get rid” of her, since, not having, not deserving a champion, she is without a means of definition, and is assigned the lifestyle of virginity. Her action to enter the convent may be seen as an escape, but also may be interpreted as her own realisation that, with Arthur dying, she must seek another place for herself: “and Arthour was wounded to the deth. And whenne Gyamore, the quene, wiste thereof sche stale prively awey and went to Carlion, and ther prively toke the abyte of a none and ther duellyd all here
lyffe." Guinevere does this in secret, "prively", which suggests that she is ashamed of her forced relationship with Mordred, and perhaps fearing that if her intention was known, it would be prevented. A woman in such a position might well flee secretly to a nunnery in order to avoid re-marriage or re-capture.

In another sense she is unable to act; unlike Guentolen who was able to take the throne until her son was of age, Guinevere is childless and therefore has no claim to retain even her position as queen. Guinevere is consistently denied any means of self-definition and the means to act in her own interests. She does not act, but is acted upon. She has no voice in the text, and in the end, is even bereft of the male characters who may define her, including a son. She is the logical conclusion of a character who exists solely in relation to others; when the others disappear, she is unplaceable.

While Guinevere is childless and therefore devoid of that acceptable means of self-definition, the characters Igraine and Merlin's mother are present solely as the means by which important male children may be born. The incongruity of Merlin involving himself in such a personal scheme as the physical disguise of Uther to deceive Igraine has one worthwhile aim: the conception and birth of Arthur. The entirety of Igraine's existence is defined by her husband, Corloys, her king, Uther, Merlin, and her son, Arthur. Igraine never does anything; in the language of E she is seen, removed, fortified, deceived, impregnated, widowed, re-married, and delivered of two children: "the king [Uther] was anamourde of Igern", which Corloys notices and leaves court "in wrath and toke his wiffe with him"; once disguised by Merlin's magic to look like her husband, Uther "lay all nyght be Igerne", "he gate vpon here Artour that after was king", "the king anone wedded Igern and made hire quene, and after sche was deliuerd of Artour, and also sche hadde a doughter called Anna." It is interesting to note that although Igraine is delivered of Arthur, she delivers Anna; the one instance in which Igraine is given control in the chapter is in the birth of her daughter.

269 E II. 1303-07.
270 E II. 1109-12, 1117-20, 1122-25.
By contrast, Merlin's mother is given the occasion to explain, to prove to the male audience in the narrative the truth of Merlin's immaculate conception. But this apparent opportunity of action is subtly forestalled; the description of the magical lover is told, not in her own words, but in the third person: "sche ansuerd, wepyng, and seid that sche hadde neuer to do with man, but on a tyme as sche was in hire chambre alone and the durres fast loked, to hire come a faire yong man and lay be hire. But which wey he entred in the chambre sche wiste notte, and whenne he had lyen be hire he vanysched awey, sche wist not whiche wey, and so he come to hire diuers tymes; 'and so was Merlyne begoten of my body.'"271 Merlin's mother, never named, speaks one, concluding line, as if to claim the foregoing description: "and so was Merlyne begoten of my body."272 She is allowed to describe the birth of her son, but not the magical visits of her lover so that her character is identified with her childbirth, not her sexuality.

Although most of what she "explains" is reclaimed by the narrator, the ability to speak at all by Merlin's mother requires the reader's attention to be focused upon her solely, which represents a stronger action in the narrative. In accordance with the progression of female characters in E, in which female characters are increasingly unable to perform any sort of action, Igraine, unable to either speak or act, appears in the legendary material after Merlin's mother. In the narrative order of the legendary material, Guinevere is the last of the legendary female characters who has any significant role. Tracing the progression of female characters from Albyn to Estrilde and Guentolen, to Ursula and Samy, Guinevere's character represents the absence of any direct action by women in E, as well as the complete removal of identity in female characters. Each character provides an example of a woman who has been disempowered in some sense: by loss of action, loss of voice, loss of presence, loss of identity. Although some of the constructions of female characters are stronger than others, none of the female characters truly possess the ability to act, because they exist solely in relation to other, male, characters; none of them are introduced in their own right.

271 E II. 971-79.
272 E I. 979.
and however “strong” they are designed to appear, this lack of independence effectively limits their “action” and reaction.

The gradual removal of the capacity to act is developed further in the portrayal of the wife of Burene Bokerd, who appears in the section of E referred to in this thesis as the “historical material.” This character suffers more than all her female predecessors: she lacks a name, a voice, a champion and therefore the ability to inspire action, and an identity separate from her rape. She is only mentioned in relation to her physical abuse: while hunting, king Osbryght happens upon the castle of Bokerd, “And this Osbryght with strenght forlay his [Bokerd’s] wiffe agane hire will”. Bokerd returns home and his wife describes what has happened; she is “wepyng” and “schamed”, and Bokerd approaches the king of Denmark to ask for assistance in his revenge. Bokerd tells the Danish king “of the dispite Pat Osbryght had done vnto him and praided him of help to distroie him”. The narrative clearly describes the wife’s rape and her shame, but it is the insult to himself Bokerd intends to avenge, and the wife is not mentioned again. In Brie, as with most other chapters in the historical material and quite a few in the Legendary, the narrative provides more embellishment, and thus a more emotionally evocative tale: Buerne is a faithful servant of the king, absent from the castle on the day of his wife’s rape, searching the coast, as is his habit, for “beues & robboures, Pat ofte-tymes were wont to come into pe londe to robbe & brenne and slee.” The king is also portrayed as more deceptive, asking Buerne’s wife to accompany him into a private chamber so that he might ask her counsel, and: “Pe lady wiste nou3t wherfore he it dede, til Pat he hade done wiP here his wille.”

Another notable difference in Brie is that the wife of Buerne speaks to her husband of her rape when he returns: “‘Sire,’ quod she, ‘quently and falsely Pe Kyng Osbright me haP done shame and vilonye, a3enes my wille’; and tolde him treuP, How the kyng had her forleyn wiP strengP”, and he replies “‘Faire leef, bistille,’ quod he, ‘for a3enes strengP

273 E II. 1540-42.
274 E II. 1547-49. Emphasis added.
275 Brie (1906:103 II.19-20)
276 Brie (1906:103 II.26-27)
[febleness] is litel worb, & berfore of me shal yow neuer be lesse bene Louede, and namely for yow haste tolde me treuPe. And if Almyghty God grant me lif, y shal be wel avenge.”

This passage emphasises the insult done to the wife, both in her ability to speak to ask for vengeance, and in Buern’s gentle reaction. Initially Buern vows to avenge the wrong done to his wife. But once he leaves her presence, he appropriates the insult, and in three instances the rape is referred to as an insult committed against Buern by the king. Buern raises an army of his friends, complaining of the “despite pat be kyng to him hade done,” he explains to the king of Denmark “of be dispute pat kyng Osbright to him hade done of his wif,” and the Danes are overjoyed to have an excuse to invade England, but also “forto avenge Buern of be despite pat be kyng hade done to his wif”. If Buern’s wife’s ability to speak affects the reader’s perception of her character, giving the impression of a woman who is able at least to ask for and receive defense, it is only within the confines of her castle, and not in the larger context of the E narrative. Once Buern, and thus the narrative, leaves her presence, the story focuses on him.

As a completely impotent character, Bokerd’s wife represents the total disempowerment of the female characters in E. It is interesting to extend the analysis to the remaining noticeable female characters in E: Isabel, the French queen of Edward the II, and Queen Anne, wife of Richard II. Isabel appears only briefly in E; she leaves Britain with her son, the future Edward III, and takes up residence with her brother in France, who observes that Edward II is mistreating them both. Edward II is portrayed as an ineffective ruler - an unpopular king, it is unsurprising to find him in this instance depriving his son of his inheritance, and responsible for an attempt to murder his wife in France: “by subtile yimaginacion of Spencer, he ordained l m+ ti in a barell and sent yt to the grete lorde of ffraunce to put quene Isabell and hire Sonne to deth, or elles to exile them oute of that lande”. The ship carrying this money is intercepted by Zeelanders, men from the

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277 Brie (1906:103-104 II.32-7)
279 E II. 2591-95.
Netherlands, who bring the money to the earl of Hainault, who in turn reveals the plot to the queen.

While the text appears to have originally continued with Isabel’s preparations for war, and proceeds accordingly in Brie’s text, the actual pages which would have contained her attack on Edward II have been removed from E. The narrative seems to be supportive of Isabel’s attack on her husband, and therefore would have made an interesting comparison with other powerful female characters. It is likely that the motivation for the removal of this material was political, rather than having much to do with the actions of the queen herself. Isabel, although portrayed as a wronged queen, and thus justified in her revenge, still represents a female character must be incited to exact revenge, and directed in the procedure with the support of male characters. In E, when her husband’s plot against her is discovered, the earl of Hainault instructs her to use the money sent by the king to pay for her murder and hire soldiers herself, and send them to England: the money is “brought to the erle of Henawde, and when he understode the comittemente, he come to quene Isabell and tolde hire thereof, and gaffe hire the 1 m+ ti and bade here wage hire sawdeours [...] And anone quene Isabell wagede hire sawdeours” [280]. She accompanies the Earl, with her son the future Edward III, the Earl of Kent, and Edward of Woodstock on their invasion of England in her name, but the ensuing events of the narrative have been removed. Isabel is mentioned once more, but the instance is not comparable to events involving other female characters; it is the manipulation by her husband, and his attempt to remove her from her rightful place as his queen which categorises her with the other female characters, and her inability to act independently.

Queen Anne plays an interesting role in the chapter of Richard II. She appears once to marry the king, and once to intercede for Simon of Berkeley, accused of treason by the Parliament of 1387. Queen Anne approaches the Earl of Gloucester, “And quene Anne kneled on here knees to the duke of Goauestr and praiied him that Sir Simon of Berkley

[280] E II. 2598-2601, II.2605-06.
myght be taken to grace, but he wold notte in no wise."²81 Within the same chapter, with the arrest of Gloucester, his own wife begs the king for mercy, but she, like the queen, is denied: "And the king seide to here, "Dame, suche grace as youre housband graunted to quene Anne, whenne sche knelyd to him on hire knees for Sir Simon of Berkeley, hire chamerleyn, suche grace schall he haue and none other."²82 The queen recognises a potential injustice and attempts to redress it, but fails. These last two queens, Isabel and Anne, behave in a manner acceptable for queens at the time of the scribe. Isabel is clearly wronged and is justified in having revenge arranged for her, and Anne is humble and merciful, even though her efforts fail.

Neither of these women is manipulated by the narrative in the same way that female characters in the previous two Times are; the difference is that while still existing a male-controlled society, the actions of Isabel and Anne generate the text, whereas previously female characters are created by the pre-existing text. This does not imply that these latter female characters are intended to be more powerful than their predecessors; it is the transition to the Time of Grace, in which God's plan for humanity is further realised, which gives all the characters in the narrative the power to create history. While the scribe still designs the narrative to present acceptable behaviour for women, this change in approach reflects a certain awareness of the difference between older material and the events occurring in the recent past: an awareness of the development of humanity from the times of Natural Law and Written Law to that of Grace.

III.iv. The Historical Material

The historical material of E has not been addressed to any extent in this analysis. The attempt to redress the hitherto critical focus on the historical material has led to the concentration on legendary material. The delineation of the two sections may be ascribed to a modern definition of "history" as objective truth, free from interpretation or manipulation,

²81 E II. 2987-90.
²82 E II. 3043-47.
even in the interest of teaching - in fact, particularly in the interest of teaching. This is a much more narrow concept of history than that which existed in the Middle Ages, and excludes the legendary material in the first section of the *Brut*. The historical material of E consists of a genealogy of kings from the Northumbrian Osbryght to a partial chapter of Henry VI. There are two particularly noticeable aspects of this section of the text: the clear favour with which Thomas of Lancaster is mentioned, and the presentation of the Scots.

The E version reveals a Lancastrian bias in its portrayal of Thomas of Lancaster, four times described as the “goode Earle Thomas of Lancastr”. The first two instances in which Lancaster is named involve a political dispute in which the narrator clearly believes him to have been mistreated, and which describe his condemnation to death; the third instance involves miracles occurring at his tomb: “God schewed many grete miracles for the love of goode erle Thomas of Lancastre, for blinde men were heled of there sight that dide pilgrmage to him, and many other grete miracles there were schewed”. It is fairly common for *Brut* texts of this period to show favour to Thomas of Lancaster, and therefore while noticeable because the narrative only reveals such favour for this one nobleman, his characterisation has no effect upon the presentation of the rest of the narrative.

The Matter of Scotland

The E also expresses an anti-Scottish bias. Most material regarding Scotland and any characterisation of the Scots is contained in the historical material, in the chapters of Edward I, II, and III. There is also, of course, the “history” regarding the Scots in the legendary material, which “establishes” a lack of evidence for Scottish nationalism, and the subsequent justification of the rule of England over Scotland. The participation of the Scots in E is predominantly in the form of various attacks against the English; the Scots kings and military leaders are presented as defiant, both of the “rightful” authority of the English and therefore of God, and also traitorous and dishonourable. The description of the Scots’

283 E 111. 2501,2508,2551,2575.
284 E 111. 2550-54.
genealogy is significant: the Scots, in E, consist of men from Gascony settled in northern region of Britain, and women brought by force from Ireland. This newly established society is disorganised from the start: “the women vndirstode not there langage nor thei the Iris langage wherefore men called hem Scottys.” Significantly, their origin as a people occurs after Britain is organised into regions controlled centrally by London. As a people the Scots are founded upon confusion and ignorance, and are not a distinct race of people originating in Britain, whose presence in the north, if established, would have created an obstacle to English claims.

The Scots’ raids are first recorded during Arthur’s reign, when he defeats them, but this incident is only mentioned briefly in a list of Arthur’s conquests. The first conflict between the English and the Scots which is described in the narrative occurs in the chapter of Athelstan. Athelstan prays to Saint John, asking him to intercede on his behalf, for “God to schewe for him some miracle that the Scottis schuld obey him.” Athelstan himself later prays to God, that if God intends the Scots to obey him, let this be demonstrated by means of a magical sign: that Athelstan will be able to put a sword in a stone. The king is able to do so, but “nowithstondyng the grete miracle, the Scottys wolde notte obey him but faught with him,” and they are defeated. The Scots are given ample “proof” that God himself intends them to be ruled by Athelstan, but they still refuse to acquiesce, which demonstrates a denial of God’s will, and a certain “godlessness.” Their defeat by Athelstan and his army is further proof of God’s disapproval of their rebellion.

Athelstan’s nephew Edgar is the first king to be described as “king ouer all the kinges of Scotland, Ireland and of all England”. It is after this point that the Scots’ rebellion may be seen as a rebellion against a pre-arranged settlement, and indeed there are several instances in which the Scots attack the English seemingly in spite of their sworn allegiance to England. When William of Normandy invades and settles England,

285 E II. 606-08.
286 E II. 1618-19.
288 E II. 1695-96.
"Mancolyn, king of Scotland, begane to strive with him", but oddly, when William confronts the Scottish king, "Malcolyne was ferd of him and was fayne to become his man and dide him homage." These repeated instances of Scottish kings swearing allegiance to English kings acts as increasing support for the English invasions of Scotland. The "evidence" in E regarding the rule by England becomes increasingly precise; each act of rebellion in the narrative by the Scots is countered with a repetition of their subordinate status, with each king swearing more specifically that Scotland is subject to England. As the conditions gradually become clearer, and the precedent that Scottish kings did accept English rule indisputable, any attempts by the Scots to go against this arrangement may be viewed as treason.

Alexander of Scotland himself does homage to Edward I. Therefore, at his death, since he has no heir, England has a legitimate claim to interfere in the election of a new Scottish king. Further, in the narrative the Scots themselves recognise their allegiance to Edward, and because there is disagreement between the Scottish lords as to who is entitled to rule their country, "the Scottys put yt in jugement of King Edward and anone he made se the coronycles of Scotland, wherbyi fonde that Bailol, a lord of Fraunce, was next heire of blode to Alexander, and also that the lande of Scotlande was holden of the king of england by homage and fealte, wherfore king Edward awarded that Bailol schulde be king." It is the "coronycles of Scotland," which presumably the Scots themselves do not consult, in which Edward I finds the closest heir to Alexander. Interestingly, while the subject of this section of the narrative is the inheritance of the Scottish throne, and it concludes with the accession of Balliol, the narrative is interspersed with statements that emphasise Scotland’s subjugation by England, which is not directly related to the matter at hand. The narrative has already established Scotland’s reliance upon Edward in matters of state, and therefore the statement that Scotland “was holden of the king of England” is not

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289 E II. 2023-24,2026-27.
290 E II. 2311-18.
necessary for proof. However, the fact that it is notably present in the Scottish document constructs a pre-established set of conditions which the Scots will violate by their actions against England. It is also interesting that this assumption conflicts with the fact that it is Edward who consults the Scottish document to start with; the Scots do not consult their own manuscript in the vital matter of the genealogy of their last king, yet they are expected to be aware of material establishing their English overlord.

The Scots now have a king supported by Edward I, but even this seemingly well-defended and settled situation is disrupted, when, the narrative claims, the Scots induce Balliol to attack Edward. Again the Scottish lords are conquered, taken to London, where they swear allegiance to Edward forever. It is at this point in the narrative that the Scottish heroes William Wallace and Robert the Bruce appear, Wallace “a Ribald that was come of nought”, and Bruce described as “claiming” to be the heir of Balliol. Wallace becomes king of Scotland when Balliol leaves the country, realising he has failed as king; the Scots “chase hem a king”, Wallace, who is clearly more interested in defending Scotland. The narrative describes the battle of Falkirk, where Edward I meets the Scots and kills 32,000 of them, whereas only 44 English are killed. The narrative states that Wallace “fled awey” from the battle, and in a subsequent invasion of Scotland, Edward captures him and takes him to London, where he is “hanged and his hede sette vpon London brigge.”

Discounted as an upstart without noble family connections, Wallace is correspondingly given little space in the narrative, which gives the impression that he was in fact very little trouble to Edward I. Robert the Bruce, on the other hand, is descended from a noble family, and his actions against the English throne are presented as more consequential in nature.

After Wallace’s death, the Scots yet again swear allegiance to Edward I. And again, the Scots elect a king, Robert Bruce, whose investiture, as a Scottish nobleman, implies a

291 E II. 2337-41.
292 E II. 2359, 80.
293 E I. 2358.
294 E II. 2369-70.
certain Scottish nationalism; at his election, all the lords give their vote for Bruce except John Comyn, who “seide he wolde neuer be false to king Edward; wherfor Robert Brus him slew in the chirche of the ffreres of Dunfrese”. The murder of John Comyn establishes him as a hero in the manuscript, and Bruce as not only a murderer, but one with no respect for the church. A medieval reader would see this as an abominable crime - one which characterises Bruce as a monster. Further, Bruce “and the Scottys come into Northumbre and distroied the cuntre, and slew prestis and caste doun chirches, wherfore the pope cursed Robert Bruys and enterdited the land of Scotlande.” And later, while Edward II lays seige to Berwick, “the Scottys come into England, and brent townes, and dide moche harme”. Bruce is portrayed as lacking a sense of honour in his battle tactics, unnecessarily cruel, and without respect for the church, traditionally an institution to be spared. His actions allow him and the Scots to be viewed as the vicious enemy, without mercy, which may then be used as propaganda to justify English “retaliatory” attacks upon Scotland.

The struggle of the Scots against repeated claims by the English kings continues until the end of the manuscript, but is presented in the most detail in the chapters of Edward I, II, and III. Further in E, in the chapter of Henry V, a liaison between the Scots and the French becomes evident. They are mentioned as a combined fighting force twice, both times fighting for French causes, the battles of Troyes and Orleans. The participation of the Scots in French battles against the English is not discussed in the manuscript, but it does serve to perpetuate the long-standing enmity between the English and Scots in Britain.

295 E II. 2382-84.
296 E II. 2459-63.
297 E II. 2466-67.
298 E II. 3457-58, 3486-87.
The intended audience for the E text is likely to have included a range of both educated men and women, as well as, perhaps to a lesser extent, an uneducated audience who, familiar with biblical stories would also appreciate the text when read aloud. For men in power, the text provides examples of the proper way to utilise their inherited power; their primary lesson in this respect seems to be the necessity to respect the correct line of inheritance, and not necessarily primogeniture. Educated women, perhaps in positions of some power as heads of noble households, may have benefited from the text for similar reasons, and for them the narrative would also have provided examples of correct behaviour. It is the presence of a pattern involving female characters within the narrative of E which suggests an anticipated female readership. The E may have been read to the general population in the same manner as hagiographies were read, with the intention of instructing the audience in the basic Christian concepts of good and evil.

As such a text intended for a variety of readers, the E needed to be appropriate for a variety of levels of reader. On a basic level, a medieval reader untrained in the symbolism would still have been able to learn from the structure of chapters presented in opposition, from the punishment or reward of the characters with regard to justice. On a more educated level, readers trained in exegesis would divine a more complex representation of the regular presence of God in the life of humanity. The use of magic is appropriate to both the general public for whom hagiographies are written, as well as useful for the perception of several senses of time. Commonly-used Christian symbols would have been familiar from even a basic familiarity with stories from the Bible, and the symbolism of numbers provides an additional layer of meaning, which applies specifically to those scholars aware of the system. In each case, a reader’s lack of awareness does not alter the efficacy of the text. This variation may be seen as the intention to address various audiences, at their respective levels of understanding, an appeal to the varying interest of the wide audience which E
attracted. Because a single text is "edited" by each reader, in order to gain from it, interpreted individually, the three simultaneous levels of symbolism make this text applicable and appealing to the widest possible audience.

In fact this complex structure within E involves differing patterns of symbolism existing simultaneously and within a developing representation of the medieval concept of time. The progression of time, and the paralleled advancement of humanity, provide the impetus for the overall movement of the text. Constructed onto this are several patterns of symbolism which function to establish a connection between God and humanity. These several systems are defined by the degree to which they act within the world of humanity, as opposed to direct relation to Heaven; pre-established references such as numerical organisation and symbols such as water, are defined by God, and exist primarily in the narrative of E to convey the corresponding Christian meaning. The simultaneous, rather than consecutive presence of these structures of symbolism means that, in addition to making reference to pre-established symbols from outside the narrative, symbolism created within the text may be carried from one corresponding period of time to another. Once a reader is aware of a particular association between a symbol and its meaning, this knowledge is thereby absorbed, and provides a background for the interpretation of each chapter's point, concerning the correct use of power and its effect upon justice. Awareness of a tripartite structure and its correspondence with the three ages of time enables the reader to perceive the events in each "period" appropriately, while emphasising the eternity of all actions. The progression and advancement of humanity in E parallels the education and advancement of the individual reader; the macrocosm of humanity and the microcosm of an individual life are presented on a concurrent, linear course of enlightenment. Simultaneously, the three vertical levels of comprehension or symbolism exist in the text, creating a grid upon which each individual reader may locate himself according to level of achievement.

The form which magic takes is the means through which earlier stages of humanity's development are expressed. If the narrative as a whole parallels the
development of humanity, then the earlier material represents humanity’s infancy and childhood, in which magical events occur and are explained by saints and magicians. Unable at this stage to perceive the subtleties that come with maturity and learning, when mysteries may be analysed and revealed by one’s own mature relationship with God, the early stages of humanity are dealt with by God with magical acts, which are not questioned, but believed with faith to be the inexplicable acts of an unapproachable God. Magical events and prophets create a connection to an inaccessible God. As the narrative progresses, paralleling humanity’s maturation, intercessors are less necessary, and finally not at all, at which point they cease to appear in E.

The decrease in the need for the use of intercessors reflects not only humanity’s advancement, but also the success of the primary “lesson” of E. The common thread through the whole of the narrative is instruction regarding the appropriate use of power, and it is through the changing punishment for the abuse of such power that the development of humanity is primarily revealed. The later material represents humanity in a more “enlightened” state, to the extent that characters are expected to be able to anticipate punishment or reward for good or bad acts without the interpretation of holy men. The Biblical, corporal punishment of the first chapters of the legendary material give way to punishments that relate to inheritance or battle, which reflects humanity’s developing interests and awareness, in their continuing efforts to be reunited with God.
Edinburgh University Library Manuscript 184: *The Brut or the Chronicles of England*

Edinburgh University Library Manuscript 184 is a late medieval English Prose *Brut*, which provides a history of England from its foundation by the Trojan Brutus to the accession of Henry VI: the manuscript must therefore post-date 1422. It is written in single, late Middle English hand, which may be roughly dated to the last quarter of the fifteenth century from an analysis of the script and use of marks of suspension and abbreviation. Derek Britton states that “the language is late and lacking in local colour, but there is significant evidence strongly to suggest Norfolk provenance.” This view is shared by Lister Matheson: “Given the sheer amount of copying, combining, and recopying of texts, the lateness of the majority of manuscripts, and the association with metropolitan London, it is not surprising that many of the manuscripts are written in language that is dialectically mixed or ‘colorless’.”¹

Using the characteristics cited by N. Denholm-Young and L.C. Hector as typical of a fifteenth-century hand, the script of EUL M.S. 184 may be classified as “English Vernacular Bastard Script,” itself a product of the fifteenth century. In common with this script, the EUL M.S. 184 hand has ascenders that are hooked, a clear distinction between ⟨y⟩ and thorn, though the ⟨y⟩ is not dotted, the slanted, almost sideways ⟨e⟩, the use of the abbreviation *qd* for *quod*, a “sloping, spiky s”, “a terminal tapering of the perpendiculas which is particularly noticeable in descenders like *p* and *q,*” a looped ⟨d⟩,

¹ Matheson (1998:15)
and a long-stemmed descending \(<\text{r}>\). The use of marks of suspension and abbreviation includes forms common to texts of earlier date than EUL M.S. 184, such as the forms representing per, pro, pre; but of particular note is the use of the “dotted crescent” as a “universal sign of abbreviation”, which could represent the letters \(<\text{m}>\), \(<\text{n}>\), \(<\text{u}>\), or in fact, any contraction. It is in the fifteenth century that the dot appears within the crescent; previous to this the crescent alone alerted the reader to an abbreviation.\(^3\)

The manuscript is written on paper. The pages measure 21 cm across and 28 cm high. The two columns measure, on average, 8.5-9.5 cm across and 25 cm in height. The text is presented in two columns per page, with an average of 34 lines per column. The manuscript consists of 25 leaves and corresponding 50 pages of writing. Three leaves have been cut from the manuscript, therefore the total original number of leaves is 28. The manuscript is paginated in pencil, in a later hand, in the upper right corner of each recto page.

The manuscript is currently being re-bound. Previously the binding consisted of two cardboard covers sewn to the text with thread, with no fastenings. The previous owner, D. Laing, a 19th-Century antiquarian and collector, donated the text to Edinburgh University library upon his death in 1878. The front cover was marked “London Sale.” His name was written in pencil on the inside cover of EUL MS 184. Laing also recorded his purchase of the manuscript from a London Sale, the document then referred to as no. 83, and his date of purchase, February, 1873. Laing does not make reference to previous owners, or the name of a collection to which the manuscript could have belonged, as was his custom with others of his documents.

\(^2\) Denholm-Young (1966:55)
\(^3\) Denholm-Young (1966:69)
The three points at which leaves have been removed from the manuscript are evident from the narrative as well as the system of gatherings. There are missing leaves between the current folios 1 and 2, 15 and 16, and 19 and 20, which correspond to Brute’s arrival in Britain, the monk’s dream and premonition of William Rufus’ death, and the beginning of the chapter for Edward III.

**Notes on this edition**

This transcription is a semi-diplomatic edition. The appearance of the EUL MS 184 manuscript page has been maintained by the transcription of the number of words per line in accordance with the original manuscript. However, capitalisation, punctuation, and word-division have been modernised, this last involving, for example, combining *a gane* or separating *therle* into *th’erle*. All scribal suspensions and abbreviations have been silently expanded and incorporated into the text, therefore there is no indication of this in the transcription. The scribe has corrected all visible mistakes and scribal corrections have been incorporated into the transcription; cancellations are not represented. Numerals written above the line have been placed on the line of text. The *thorn* is the only Anglo-Saxon letter which appears in the manuscript, and it has been maintained in the transcription. The use of [ ] indicates a letter or letters that I have added. This has been done in instances where the end of a word has been lost due to the deterioration of the edge of the page. Words to rhymes or chants have been enclosed in quotation marks in the transcription, as are instances of direct speech. There is additional writing at the end of the manuscript, in a later hand, which is not included in this transcription since it is clearly not a continuation of the narrative.
How this lande was fy rst called Albyon

In the noble lande of Surrey, there was a noble kyng called Dyoclesian, which was a grete conquerour and wedded a maiden that was called Labana, whiche was his emes daughter. And thei hadd togeder xxx daughteris and the eldest of hem was called Albyn, and this kyng Dioclesian maried hem to xxx kyngys. Vpon a day a made a grete feste that lasted xviij dayes and whenne the feste was don iche kyng toke his wyfe home and made here quene of his realme. And after yt befell that Dame Albyn, the eldest daughter, wex provde and grete-willed and wold not be ruled by here housbande, and in lyke wyse dede all her susters, so that this xxx kynges, there housbandes, mette togeder and by one assente wrote lettres of complaynte to Dioclesian, and lette hym haue knowlych of the euell disposicion of his daughteris. And whenne he sawe the lettres he was wroth toward his daughteris and send for them all and also for there housbandes to come to him and made them a grete feste. And whenne thei hadde ben with hym ij dayes he called all his daughteris to hym and rebuked them foule for there evyll condicions, and seide pleyly but yt thei wold amende there condicions he wold neuer loue them nor helpe them, and thei seide to hym thei wold amend. And after, whenne thei were departed owte of his chamber, this Albyn hat was the eldest daughter called here susters into here chamber and seid "Susters -- oure housbandys have compleyned of vs. And as for me I wyll neuer do the better for we that are of so grete byrth, and we schuld be subiectis to oure housbandys that are not so wele borne as we, it were schame. Where-

fore, while we be here with oure fader
and vnder his proteccion, lete ichon of vs

40  take a knyfe with vs to bedd and whenne
oure housbandes ben on slepe, lete vs kytte
there thotys." And all here susters assente there-
to and at nyght iche of them slow there
housbandes. And on the morrow, whenne Dioclesian

herd thereof, he wolde haue brent them all;
but his barons wold not assent thereto, but
conceleed hym to exile them and so he dede.
And put them in a schipp, and no man with
them, and gafffe them vitall for halfe a yere.

50  And thei sailed furth and aryued in this
land, whiche was thenne an iland that was
all wildernesse and no man dwellyng therein.
And dame Albyn that was eldest went ferst
out of the schipp and named the lande Albyon

after here name, and so was yt called to afterwar[de]
that Brute come and conquered it and called yt
Bretayn after hymselfe. And thise wemen lyfde
by erbes and frute and thei slew wylde bestis
and eten the flesche of them, so that thei were

60  wonder fatte and hyght of nature and desire[d]
gretly mannys felawship. And the deuell
saw that and apered to them in lykenes o[f]
a man and gate chylderen vpon them w[ich]
were grete gygantes. And oon of them wa[s]
called Gogmagog and anoDer Langerigan, and
thei dwelled in caves and had all this land
of Albyon in there owne wyll.

Howe Brute was geten

In the noble cete of grete Troye there was

70  a good knyght that was called Eneas. And
whenne the cete of Troye was distroyed
and lefte thorought men of Greke, this noble
knyght Eneas fled fro Troy and come

Iva

to Lumbardy, where Latamy was kyng and lord.

75  And this kyng Latamy hadd an enmy, a kyng
that werred ypon hym that men called
Turocylyn. And whenne kyng Latamy herd
tell that Eneas was come into that cuntre
he praid hym to abye with hym and help hym
in his werre, and so he dyd. And, schortly to
tell, this Eneas slowegh kyng Turocilyn
in plane batell and discomfet all his meany,
and whenne this was don kyng Latamy
seased all Turocilyn landes into his handes
and gaffe theme in mariage to Eneas with
Lamany his daughter. And after Eneas died,
and whenne he was dede Asquanius, his son
that come with hym fro Troy, receiued the
lande and helde yt in pees all his lyfe, and
wedded a wyffe; and gate vpon here a sone
that was called Siluen, the which Siluen,
whenne he come to the age of xvij yere, a-
quynted hym with a damsell that was
neece to Lamany the quene and gate here
with childe. And whenne Asquanius, his fader, yt
wyst, he made clerkes to cawill what childe
sche shuld bryng forth; and thei said a knae
childe that fyrste schulde slee his moder and
affir his fader. And so it was as thei said, for
his moder died in childing of hym, and he was
called Brute. And after Asquanius died, and
Silven, that was his sone and fader to
Brute, was kyng. And on a day, whenne
Brute was xv yere olde, his fader toke hym
with hym on hunttyng, and Brute shote
at an harte and his arow glawnced and
slowe his ffader.

1vb

How Brute was driuen oute of the
lande whenne he had slane his fader

And whenne this mischefe was falen, the people of the
londe wolde not suffre Brute to abide among hem,
wherefore he went fro thens into Greke. And there
he fonde vij m+ men and women of the lynage of
Troye that were come of grete lordis and were
holden there in grete sorow and thraldome, and
all was because of Achilles, that was betraied
and slane at Troye. And Brute was a fayre
yong man and bolde. And whanne kyng Pandras herd tell of hym, he made Brute to dwell with hym. And within a while he was gretly beloued with the kyng and all his people. And after the people that were come fro Troye aquaynted hem with Brute and told hym of here thraldome, and on a tyme seiden to hym all be on assent:

“Brute, ye be a lorde of oure lynage and a strong man and a bolde, wyll ye be oure lorde and oure souereyn? And we wyll be your men and we wyll go fyght with the kyng Pandras, and with goddys grace overcome hym, and we wyll make you kyng and hold of of you foreuer.” And anone Brute hadd pite on hem and assented to them, and anone thei went to woddes and hilles and hide them. And after thei sent to kyng Pandras to gyfe them leue to go outhe of his lande and anone the kyng made his othe that thei schuld all be slayne and assembled a grete power and come to hem. And Brute and his felaschipp slew all the kyngis men and toke kyng Pandras and put hym in prison. And thenne Brute betought hym that, toght he abode still there and were made kyng of the lande, that he schulde neuer have reste of them of Greke, and sent word to Pandras that, and he wold

2ra

1the londe and he swel Albonake, and anone as Lotrine wyst yt, he sent for Camber, his brother, and thei two with moche people went into Albany to distroye Humbar. And so, sodenly, vpon a ryversyde, where Humbar was gone to sporte hym thei come vpon him, and Humbar saw hem come and for fere lept into the riuer and drownyd hymselfe; and anone all his men were taken and slayne. And euer sith that ryver hath ben called Humbar. And then thei fonde a schip and a faire maiden that was

1The missing part of the text describes Brute’s journey to Britain, the defeat of the native giants, the children of Albyon and her sisters. Brute divides Britain into three parts, England, Scotland and Wales, allotting each to one of his three sons, Lotrine, Albonake, and Camber. After Brute’s death, Humbar invades Scotland and defeats Albonake.
Humbar daughter therin, called Estrild. And
Lotryne to here with him and wold haue wedded
here. And sone this tithinges come to Coryn, that
was lorde of Cornwaile. And because that
Lotryne had made couenaunt with Coryn
to spouse his daughter, he wex wonder
wroth and come to Troye. And there with a
suorde wolde haue slayne Lotryne, and but
Estrild the maiden went betwene them
and acorded hem on this maner, so Pat Lotryne
schuld spouse Coryn doughter, that men
called Guentolen. And so he dide; but, neuer-
thelessse, he keped Estrilde to peramour and
gate vpon here a doughter, that was called
Abron. And after Coryn died. And anone
as he was dede, Lotryn forsoke his wyffe
Guentolon and wedded Estrild and made
her quene. And anone this Guentolon in
wrath went into Cornwaile and seised

that lande forbecause sche was as heir vnto
here fader. And anone sche raised moche people
of that cuntre to be avenged on Lotryne, and
come and gaffe hym a batell. And there was
Lotryne slayne when he had regned v yere.
And sche toke Estrild and Abron and caste them
in a ryver and drounyd hem, and therefore
was that river called Abron; Englyschmen
call yt Syvern. And then Guentolon was
crowned quene agane, and whenne Madahan,
here sone that Lotryne had goten vpon here,
was xv yere olde, sche lette crowne him kyng.
And thenne went sche into Corwaile and
there lyved all here lyfe.

Of King Madahan
This Madahan had ij sonnes -- the one was
called Manypris and the other Manlyn -- and
regned xxx yere in pes and then he died
and lieth in New Troie. And anone after his
two sonnes were at debate, for Manypris wold
haue had all this land because he was the elder. And the other wold not suffre him, wherefore Manypris made preuely to sle his brother Manlyn, and than was he kyng of all the londe. And after he forsoke his wyffe and vsed the synne of sodome and there¬fore God toke vengeaunce of hym. For, on a day, as he went on huntyng in a forest, he left all his men and went vp and doune,

2va

crying in the forest; and thenus came ij wolfes and devoured him, when he hade ben kyng xxiiij yere. And anone after Eborake his sone was made kyng.

Of Kyng Eborake

This Eborake was a myghty man and he conquered Fraunce. And whenne he come home oute of Fraunce he made a cite in Britanie and called yt Eborake after his name, that now is called Yorke. And he made the castell of Maidens, that now is called Edenborght. And this Eborake had isshu by dyuers women -- xx sonnes and xxiiij doughteris -- and his eldest sonne was called Brute.

And whenne he had regned lx yere he died and lyeth at Yorke.

Of King Brute sone of Eborake

And after Brute, that was the eldest sonne, was made king, and had isshu a sone that was called Leil. And reigned worschipfully xxx yere and died and lieth at Yorke.

Of Kying Leil

And afterward Leil was made king and he made a faire toune and called yt Carleil. And when he had regned xxij yere he died and lieth at Carleil. And in his tyme Kyng Salamon regned in Ierusalin and made the Temple
Of Kyng Lude Ludebras

After that Leil was dede, Lude Ludebras, his sonne, was kyng and made the cites of Caunterbury and Wynchester, and regned xiiiij yere and died and lieth at Wynchester.

Of Kyng Bladude

And aftir his discese Bladude, his sone, was made king and was a grete nigramanser. And be his nygramansy he made the hoote water atte Bath, and regned xxj yere and died and lyeth at New Troye

Of Kyng Leire

Whenne Bladud was dede, Leire his sone was king. And he made the toune of Leicester and called it Leir. And he had iij daughteris: oone hight Gonorill, another Began, the iij Cordell. And, one a day, whenne his daughteris were of age to be maried, he thought he wolde knowe whiche loued him best, and asked of the eldest how moche sche loued him, and sche saide more then hire owne life. And then he asked the secunde daughter how moche sche lovid him and sche said “More then all erthly creatours.” “Ma fa.,” quod he, “Ye two loue me well.” And in like wise he asked Cordell that was the yongest daughter, and sche saide as moche as ought by reason to loue him. “But,” quod sche, “My sustres done but glose yow; but sire loke how moche ye be worth and so moche schall ye be loued.” And anone he wax wrothe with Cordell and saide sche mokked him, wherefore sche schuld neuer haue goode of him to here mariage. And anone aftir, he had maried the eldest daughter to Manglas King of Scotland and the secunde to Hanemos erle of Cornwaile, and made couenaunt with hem that thei schuld departe the realme aftir his deth and Cordell schuld haue
nothing thereof. And after Agamp king of Fraunce
herde that Cordell was faire and well-
condicioned, and sent word to King Leire to send
him Cordell and he wold nothing aske with
here but here clothing. And King Leire sende
here into Ffraunce, and sche was maried to
king of Ffraunce. And some after, Leire wex
olde, and the king of Scotland and the erle of
Cornwaile and ther wyffes wold no longer
suffre him to be king, but departed the land be-
twene hem and gaffe him a certeyn money and lyvelod.
And anone his daughteris hadd of him dispute
and toke fro him his money and his livelode
and wold not suffre him to be with hem. And
thenne he remembred the wordes that Cordell
said to him. And then he sent worde of his
aduersite to Cordell. And anone, sche and the
king of Fraunce, her housband, with grete power
come into Englonde and destroied thes ij elder
doughteris and there housbandes and restored Leire
to his kingdome. And after that he had regned
ijj yere he died and lieth at New Troye. And
after that Cordell his daughter held the land
v yere and then here housband died.

Of Morgon and Conodag

And thenne Morgon and Conodag that were here
susteris sonnes werred vppon here. And brought
here to deth and departed the lande betwene hem
and so helde yt xij yere. And aftir thei fill

at debate, for Morgon wolde haue hadde all the
lande. And Canadag come vppon him with grete
people and droffe Morgon into Walles and there
slew him; and then Canadag come agayne
and seised all the land. And, aftir he regned
xxxiiij yere, he died and lieth at New Troye.
Of King Reynolde

300 And aftir Conadag regned Reynolde his sone, a wise knyght in whos tyme yt reyned blode iij dayes togeder, and aftir that there fill grete deth emong his people. And whenne he hadd regned xxij yere he died and lieth at Yorke.

305 Of Gorbodian

And aftir him regned Gorbodian, his sone, and hadd isshu ij sonnes, the oon hight ferres and the tother porrers and whenne he had regned xv yere he died and lyeth at Yorke.

310 Of Ferrers and Porrers

And aftir his deth his ij sonnes fell at debate for the lande. For Ferrers wolde haue hadd all and in plane batell he slew his brother Porrers. And aftirward

315 his moder, bycause sche loued Porrers better then him, sche kette his throte vpon a nyght when he was on slepe. And then was none aftir of that linage Dat eny man knew.

Howe iiiij kinges helde

320 the lande of Bretane

And thenne was there grete werre in the lande and thos that were myghty had the reule and opressed the pore. And at the laste iiiij

3va

knyghtys be theire assent helde togeder and thei ruled all the remanent, and by there myght gete all the cuntres aboute theme. One of hem hight Skater and regned in Scotland, the secunde hight Dawale and regned in Brutane, the iij hight Budake and regned in Walles, the iiiij hight Cloten and regned in Cornwaile. And as men saide, that Cloten was nexte eire vnto the twoo bretherin that were slayne.
Of King Denebande

This Cloten hadd a sonne that was called Denebande. And when Cloten was dede, this Denebande undirstode that he was inheriter of the ij brederin Ferrers and Porrers. And he gate him so beloued that wyth strenght he conquered all the landes aforesaid, and slewe Skater and Budake in plane batell, and gourned the lande full worschipfully. And after he made a corone of gold and wered yt on his hede and was the firste kyng that euer was crowned in Brutane. And he made the Toure of Malmesbury and the Vise. And when he had regned xl yere he died and lith at New Troye.

Off Belen and Branne

Aftir this Denebande his ij sonnes Belen and Brenne departed the lande, so that Belen, that was eldest, hadd the lande of Brutane to Humber. And Brenne had the land fro Humber vnto Scotland, and forbecause that Brenne had the warse party he was wroth and went into Norwey to King 3vb

Elfing and praied him of help to conquore the land of Brutane vpon his brother, and he wold take his daughter Samy to his wife. And the king Elfing assented to him and toke him his daughter and a grete oste of men with them. And this Samy hadd loued long tyme the king Coutlage of Denmarke, and prevely sche sent him word how sche schulde be caried into Brutane. And this king Coutlage mette with Brenne on the see and toke here fro him and putte him to flyght. And Coutlage and Samy with a tempest were dryven into Brutane and there were thei taken and brought to Belyn, that was kyng, and he put hem in prison. And anone after Brenne come with
moche people into Bretane and mette with Belyn, his brother, and anone Brenne was dicomfite and flede into Fraunce with xij men with hym, and Belyn come to Yorke. And ther this Coutlege that was king of Denmarke become Belynys man, and to holde the lande of Denmarke of him and of his heris foreuer, and to pay hym a m+ ti of troage. And, whenne he hadd so done and made a composicion; he toke Samy with hym and returned into Denmarke. And that composicion was holden euer aftir vnto the tyme that Haueloke that was king of Denmarke weddede Goldesburght that was heire of the lande of Bretane. And afterwarde this Belyn made waies in Bretane -- that is to sey, Watlyngstrete, Yknestrete, Ffosse and Ffossedike -- and kepte well the lawes. And afterward Brenne wedded a maiden that was heire to the duke of Burgon and hadd all the land of Burgon by here, and come ageyne with moche people to werre vppon 4ra his brother Belyn. And Corwenne, that was moder to them bothe, accorded theim so that thei come togeder to New Troye, and there lyved togeder a yere with moche joye. Then went thei into Fraunce and discomfit the king of Fraunce in plane batell, and so thei went forth to Rome and conquered many of the cuntres in there wey. And aftir thei come agayne into Bretane and Brenne made Bristowe and aftir he went into his owne cuntre. And Belyn made Bellingate and whan he had regned xij yere he died and lieth at New Troye.

Off King Conybatrus

Aftir this Belyn regned his sonne Conybatrus, a goode man and a worthi man. And for the King Coutlage of Denmarke wolde notte pay him his troage of m+ ti he went into Denmarke with a grete oste and slew the king of Denmarke and toke fealtes of the men of the land. And as he come homward agane in the see he mete with xxx schippes of men and women and the king axed what thei were. And an erle that was master of hem,
that was called Irlanyall, ansuerde and seid
thei were exiled oute of Spayne, and besought him
to gefe them some void grounde to dwell in and
thei wold holde yt of him foreuer. And the king
hadd pite on them and gaffe hem an ile wasted
that no man dwelled in and the erle called yt
after his name Irlande. And whan Conybatrus
had regned xxv yere he died and lieth
at New Troye.

4rb

Off King Guentelon

420 And aftir him regned his sonne Guentelon in
pese xxvj yere and thenne he died and lyeth
at New Troye.

Off King Seisill

And aftir regned Seisill his sonne in pese
425 xv yere and then he died and lieth at New Troye.

Off King Kyamore

And aftir him regned Kyamore, his sonne, in
pese xix yere and died and lieth at Harbaldone.

Off King Morwith

430 And after him regned Morwith, his sonne, and
was full wikked, and therefor God toke vengeaunce;
for on a dai as he walked by the see, whenne
he had regned xix yere, he mette with a wilde
beste that no man sawe neuer suche another best.
435 And the beste deuored him and ete him all hole
at oon morsell and thenne vanysshed awey,
no man wiste whider.

Off Grandebodian

And aftir him regnd Grandebodian, his sone,
440 worshipfully and made Cambrige and Grantham
and many other townes and churches, and
had iiij sonnes, that is to sai Artigoill, Hisidur, Higamus and Petre. And whenne he had regne[d] xj yere he died and lieth at New Troye.

445 Off Artogoile

And aftir him regned his sonne Artogoile and become so cruell that the Bretanes did him depose and crowned Hisidur, his brother, king. And he become so merciable that men called him King of Pite. And whanne he had regned v 4va yere he did yelde vp the crown to Artogoile his brother, and Artogoile amend his conditions and regned in pese v yere and died and lieth at Granthame.

455 Off Higamus and Petur

And aftir him Hisidur his brother was made king. But thes ij brether had of him dispute and be myght thei deposed him and departed the lande betwene themme and hilde yt vij yere. And thenne Higamus died and Petur had all the land. And he made Pikering, and in the secunde yere after his brother deth he died and lyeth at Pikering.

465 Off Hisidur that was iiij crowned

And the Bretones toke Hisidur outhe of prison and crowned him kyng and he regned xiiiij yere in pese and died and lieth Carliele.

470 Off xxxij Kings that regned in pese ichon after other

And aftir him regned xxxij kingis, ichon after other in pese. The firste hight Gorbodian and regned xij yere; Morgan ij yere;
Eighuans vj yere; Idwallen viij yere; Rowgho xj yere; Boghan xiiij yere; Karell xv yere; Porres ij yere; Cheryn xviij yere; Sulgens xiiij yere; Esdas xx yere; Andragie xviij yere; Vryn v yere; Elynd ij yere; Eldagan xv yere; Claten xij yere; Durgund viij yere; Marvan vj yere; Bledaph vj yere; Caph j yere; Gon ij yere; Seisill

Off King Lud

And after him regned Lude, his sonne, and duelled moche at New Troye. And he made the walles of the cite and made a gate and called yt Ludgate. And then the Bretanes called the cite Karlude, and aftir yt was called Ludston, and so by chaungyng of lettres it ys called London and dide call the folke of the cite Lundres. And he hadd ij yong childerin, Androgen and Gormace. And, or thei were ij yere olde, Lud died when he had regned xj yere and lyeth at London, fast by Ludgate.

Off Cassabilan

And aftir him the Bretanes, bycaus that the ij childeryn that were Lud sonnes were so yong, thei made Cassabilan, that was brother to Lud, king. And he made moche of the ij childerin, and made the toon of hem erle of Cornwaile and the thother erle of London. And anone aftir come Julius Cesar, emperour of Rome, with grete multitud of Romans into this lande to haue conquered yt, and Cassabilan with help of the king.
of Scotland and the kinges of Northwalles
and South Waillies him discomfite and
droffe him oute of the land. And in the batell

5ra

was Memyon that was brother to Cassabilan
slayne. And sone after ther fill debate betwene
the king and his neveue the erle of London be-
cause of a man of the kingis that was slayne with
the erles meyny. And the erle sent prevely his
lettres to Julius Cesar to come and help him to
distroie Cassabilan, whereof Julius Cesar was
fayne and come with a grete oste of Romaynes. And
the erle mete with him with vij m+ men and
discomfit Cassabilan, so that he was fayne to yeld
to the emperour iij m+ ti by yere of troage foreuer
more. And this Julius Cesar abode at London a
yere and made the Toure of London. And thenne
gent he home and the erle of London went with
him, for he durst not abyde there. And whenne
Cassabilan had regned xvij yere he died and
lyeth at Yorke.

Off King Androgen

And bycause that Cassabilan had non isshu the
lordis of Bretane made Androgen, that was
erle of Cornwaille, king and when he hadd
regned vj. yere he died and lyeth at Yorke.

Off Kymbalyne

And after him regned Kymbalyne, his sonne,
that was a goode knyght, and in his tyme
was oure lorde Ihesu Cryst borne of the vyrgyn
Mary. And this Kymbalyne had ij sonnes,
Gynder and Armager, and when he hadd
regned xxij yere he died and lyeth at London.

Off King Gynder and Armager

his brother

And after him regned Gynder and he was
proude and he wold not pay the troage to the
emperour of Rome that Cassabylane had graunt

5rb

Julius Cesar, wherefor Glaudius, that was
emperour of Rome, was full wroth and came
with a grete oste of Romayns into this land, and
Gynder and Armager, his brother, mette with
him and slew many of the Romans. And anone
oon that was stuarde to the emperour vnamed
him and ariaed him with armour of a Bretane that
was slane, and he come to Gynder and bad
him to be of goode chere for he schulde haue the
victory of the Romans; and when he come
nyght to the king he smote him in the foundment
behinde him that he fill down dede. And
as sone as Armager, his brother, saw that
he was dede, he did on his armour and went
furth into the middys of his oste; and thei
wende he had ben Gynder, the king, and
faught furth with the Romans and discomfyte
hem and the emperour fled to Wynchester. And
the tratore Hamon fled away and Armager
anon folowed him to a water and smote
of his hede and threw him into the water,
wherfor the water is and was called Hamon
And after there was made a faire towne that
is called Southampton, and after Armager
come to Wynchester and toke Glaudius the emperour
and accorded in this maner that the troage of
ijj m+ pownde schulde be releesed and he schuld
no troage haue saue only fealte, and Armager
schuld wedd Gonen, his daughter, and so he did
and the emperour went home agane. And then
was Armager corowned king of Bretane; but
or Glaudius went he made a faire town and
called yt Gloucester. And in the tyme of

5va

Armager seint Peter preched in Antioche and
there he made a noble chirche where he satte
firste in chere and there duelled vij yere; and
thenne he went to Rome and was pope till
Nero, the emperour, did martir him; and thenne
preched the apostles by diuers landis; and
when Armager had regned xxiiiij yere
he died and lieth at London.

590 Off King Westmer

After Armager regned, his sone Westmer,
a good knyght, and in his tyme Redrike, that
was kyng of Gascoyne, come into this land
with moche people and Westmer mette with him
and slew him with his owne handes and toke
his meyny prisoners; and thei besought
him sume grounde to dwell vpon and thei
wolde yt of him foreuer, and he gafe hem a
grounde in the north cuntre, and he that was
capteine of hem hight Beringer. And ther
thei made a faire town and called yt
Berwike; but thei hadd no woman among
hem, for the Bretanes wold not mary with
them, bycause thei were strangers; wher-
for thei went into Irland and fecched
them women and the women undirstode
not there langage nor thei the Iris langage,
wherefore men called hem Scottys. And
afterward Westmer, in remembraunce
of his victory, lete rere a grete stone
of hight and he did graue lettres there in
this wise: The king Westmer of Brutane
in this place slowe Redrike, his enEMY, and
at that stone begynnyth Westmerland, fior
Westmer was the firste that beganne
to belde in that cuntre. And whenne he
had regned xxv yere he died and lyeth
on Carleil.

5vb

Off King Coile

620 And after him regned his sone Coile in goode reste
and pees xj yere and thenne he died and lyeth
at Yorke.
Off King Lucy, the fyreste Crysten
king of Bretane

625 After him regned his sonne Lucy. He sent to Rome
to Ewlynch, the pope, for to crysten him, and anone
he sent to Lucy ij legates, Pagan and Cliban, and
dide baptise King Lucy and all his houshold, and
thei went fro town to town and baptised all the folk
630 of the lande; and that was Cl yere after incarnacon of Criste. And Lucy made ij archebischoppes,
oon at Caunterbury, another at Yorke, and other
diuerse bischeppes that yet be in this lande. And
this legates ordeyned prestes for to baptise childerin
635 and for to make eukaryste, and after thei returned
to Rome. And whenne Lucy had regned xij yere
he died and lyeth at Gloucester.

Off King Astlipades

This Lucy had non heir of his body, that this land
640 was lyere withoute a king, and yche man werred
with other. And thenne come into this lande a grete lord
from Rome that hyght Severy; but he come not for
to werr, but for to take fealte for the emperour. And
the Bretonnes slew him. And whenne thei of Rome
645 yt wiste, thei sent another lorde into this lande
that hight Allec, and he come with grete power.
And for dred of him the Bretaynes chase hem
a kyng that was called Astlipades. And at
London thei mette with Allec and slew him and
650 his felaschipp. And thenne regned Astlipades
till oon of his erles made a toune that hight
Coile and called yt Colcester, wherefore the kyng
was wroth and come vpon him to haue distroyed
him, and he gate him grete felaschipp and slew
655 the kyng in plane batell.

Off Kyng Coile

And thenne was Coil crownde king, and sone
after, whenne thei of Rome herde tell that
Allec was slane, thei sent a grete prince of that lande, called Constance, and come into this land with grete power for to chalange the troage that was wont to be yeven to Rome. And this Coil entreted him faire and said he schuld haue all that reason wold, and so thei were accorded; and Constance wedded faire Elyn, that was Coillis daughter, and whenne he had regned xiiij yere he died and lyeth at Colcestre.

Off King Constance that was a Romane

And bycause that Constance hadd wedded Elyn, that was daughter to King Coil, he was crowned king, and he hadd a sone called Constantine, and he regned in pese xv yere and thenne died and lyeth at Yorke.

Off King Constantine, sonne of Seynt Elyne

And after his deth regned his sonne Constantine, in whos time there was an emperour of Rome that hight Maxence, that destroied all thos that were Crysten and did marter seint Katerine and many other Crysten men and women, so that many of the Romayns fled and come into this lande and tolde King Constantine. And anon he with grete power went to Rome and toke the cite and slew all that were not Cristen; and that tyme this tirant Maxence was in the lande of Greke, and as sone as he herde of thes tithinges, he wex madde and died for angre; and whenne Constantine departed fro this lande, he toke with him his moder, Elyne, that after fonde the holy Crosse, and lefte this lande in the kepyng of the erle of Cornwaile that was called Octovian; and this Octovian, as sone as he herde that Constantine was emperour of Rome, he seased all the land into his handes and held him
self for king; and whenne the emperour wiste there-of, he sent Tabern, his cosyn, with x m+ men for to destroie Octovian; and Octovian mette with him at Portismoth and discomfite Tabern, so that he fled into Scotland and gate him more people, and mette with Octovian on Stanesmore; and there was Octovian discomfit and fled into Norwey, and Tabern seased all the land into his hande. And thenne Octovian come ageyn with grete power and slew Tabern, and was made king and had ysshu a dougther. And whenne he had regned liiiij yere he died and lieth at London.

Off King Maximiane and of the xjti virgines

This Octovian had non isshu but a dougther, wherefore yt was his will that Conan Maradoke, that was his newe, schuld haue wedded here and haue ben king; but the Bretanes wold not assent thereto, wherefore thei sent to Constantine th’ emperour to wyte what his will was; and he sent a knyth that was his vncle sone and hight Maximiane, and praied the Bretanes that he myght wedde Octovian dougther and be king of Bretane; and so he did, and was crowned king. And after with grete power he conquered the land of Marytan and slewe the king, that hight Ymbales, and whenne he had so done he said to Conan Maradoke on this wise: “Conan, yt was the will of Octovian that ye schuld haue ben king of Brutane whiche y letted by my comyng to Brutane. Wherfore y gyffe you all this land of Maritan and y will that ye be king thereof and that yt be called Lytell Brutan.” And Conan thanked him and was crowned king; and Maximian went thens to Rome and there was emperour after Constantine and this Conan, king of Litell Bretane, bycause that he and his meyny that were Bretanes.
wolde haue no wifes of the Frensche nacon, 
he sent into grete Brutane to th'erle of
Cornwaile, that hight Dionotho, that he schuld
sende him xj m+ maidens, that ys to sey iij
m+ of grete birthe and viij m+ of other. 
And th'erle sent all the landes for maidens,
vtnto he had geten a xj m+, and did hem all
come before him at London, and did apparell
shippes for hem. And there he toke his owne
doughter, that hight Vrsula, that was the
fairesst creature in the worlde, and thought
that Conan schulde he wedde, but sche hadd
before that tyme prevely avowed to lyfe
chaste; and put hem all into shippes beside
the stronde, and made Vrsula mastres of
hem all. And thei sailed furth toward
Bretane, and there fell suche tempest on the
see that thei were all dryven into the
hauen of Colyn. And when the king of
the lande that hight Gowane, and was
a Sarsyn, wiste of hem, anone he come
to hem, and whenne he sawe hem so
so faire, anone he saide that he and

6vb

his meyne schuld lye be hem euerychon. And anon
Vrsula werned here felawes that thei schuld kepe
there virginite and rather than thei schuld lese theire
virginite for to dye; and all the maydens assented
thereto and seide thei wolde rather suffire deth for
the loue of God, and thei withstode the king and his meyny
and faught with hem. Wherefor the king was wrothe
and made to slee hem all, and thei lye at Coleyn.
And Gowen anon after come into this lande with
moche people and discomfit and distroied many of the
Cristen people, and he martired Seint Albone that was
the first martir that euer was in this lande, and this
in the yere of oure lorde CC iiij xx vj. And whenne this
tithinges come to Rome to Maximian, that thenne was
emperor of Rome after the deth of Constantine,
he sent hidre a knyght that hight Gracian, with xxiiiij. m+
men with him, and thei slew the Sarsens and droffe
Gowan oute of the lande. And sone after yt befell
that Maximian was slane be treson at Rome, and as sone as Gracian wiste therof, he crowned himself king. And anone he become so cruell that the Bretanes rose ayen him and slew him. And whenne Gowan wiste therof, he come agane with moche people and distroied all that wold not forsake ther Cristendome. And so yt happed that Gosselyne, that was Bischopp of London, escaped and went into Lytell Bretane to the king that hight Alderoy, that was the iiij king of the lande after Conan Maradoke, and compleyned to him how the Sarsens destroied Grete Bretane; and anone he sent Constantine his brother with xij m+ men, and thei mette with the Sarsenis. And Constantine slew Gowan in plane batell with his owne handes and slew all the Sarsenis.

7ra

790 Off Constantine that come ffro Lytell Bretane

And anone aftir, Constantine was crouned king, and he had isshue iiij sonnes - the first hight Constance, the secunde Aurelambros, the thirde Vter. And whenne Constance was xvj yere of age he was made monk at Wynchestr; and after the king Constantine was slane in his chambre by treson. And the ij sonnes, Aureilambros and Vter, were so yong that men thought none of hem myght be king. Wherfor Fortiger, that was erle of Westsex, thought prevely to be king and went to Wynchestr to Constance, the monke, and him counseled to lefe his abyte and to be king, and he wold help him thereto.

Off Constance, the sone off Constantine

And Constance went him and was crowned king and he made Fortiger al his ruler and ruler of all his lande; and this Fortiger thought to be king, and he gate an c knyghtes of the lande to be aboute the king. And Fortiger gaffe hem so grete gifftes that thei seide he wold better seme to be king than Constance. And Fortiger
wolde ofte sey to hem that, and he were king, he wold
gretly avaunce heme. And on a day whemne the

king was outhe in huntyngye, the knyghtes slow
him and brought his hede to Fortiger and Fortiger
lete as he had ben wroth, but he was ffull
fayne in his herte. And he did put the knyghtes
in preson and smote of all here hedes and the

Bretanes went he had ben trewe, because that
he did avenge so his lordys deth, and anone
thei made him king.

7rb

**Off Fortiger**

Whenne Fortiger was crowned, they that had
the keping of the ij childeryn, Aurilambros and Vter,
thei durst not kepe them in this lande for ferde
lest Fortiger wold hem haue slane; but thei ladde
theme into Lytell Brutane and lefte them there
with the king, and he made moche of hem and

kept hem tell thei were strong knyghtes. And after,
tithinges come to the king that many straungers
were aryved in Kent, and anone Fortiger went
to them to wytte what thei wold, and the masters
of hem were bretherin - the toone of hem was called

Engest and the tother Horne. And Engist come to
Fortiger and seide: “Sir, we be of the cuntre of Saxon,
that is called Germane, where there is so moche
people that the lande will no suffice them, where-
for we be yong lordis of the cuntre and come to seke

vs a dwellyng place. And yf yt lyke you that we
may dwell here, we woll do you servyce.” And
Fortiger bethought him that Aurilambros and Vter
were his enimys, and also that the ffrendys of
the C knyghtys that he made to be slane wolde

be avenged of there deth, and was glad of hem
and seid, and thei wolde help to defende him
agane his enimys, thei schulde be welcome. And
thei graunted thereto, and thenne Engest praised
him to giffe him as moche grounde as thei myght

beld on a toune for hem and there meyne to
duell inne. And he said he myght not
soo do withoute his barones. Thenne praised Engest
to giffle him as moche grounde as he couth sprede
with a bull skynne and the king graunt him;
and he toke a bull skinne and kit yt all on

7va

thonges rounde aboute the skynne while yt
wolde laste, and with that thonge besprade as moche
grounde as he made him a faire castell there
on, and yt is called yet Thongcastre. And sone
after, Engist sent to Saxon for Rowen,
his daughter, and whenne sche was comen he
praied the king to come dyne with him and se his
new castell that he hadd made; and the king
him graunted and come thider. And whenne he
had dyned and sowped and was gone to
his chambre toward his bedde, Rowen come
forth before the king with a coppe of golde in
here hande and kneled byfore the king
and seide “Wassaile,” and the king wiste not
what sche said, for he nor none of his peop¬
le couth speke none Englysche, but spake the
same langage that thei do yit in Litell Brutan.
And thenne a knyth ofhis tolde him that
the ansuere therto was “Drink heil.” And
the king drank vnto hire and hir kessed;
and he was so anamord on hir that he
desired ofhir fader, Engest, that he myght
hir wedde and he him graunted on that
condicon that he wold giffle him the cuntre
of Kent for him and his meyne to dwell in.
And the king graunted and wedded Rowen, whi¬
ch was to his grete hurte, ffor Bretones
loued him neuer after it, and this Horne,
that was Engistis brother, made Horncastell;
and Engiste went into Kent with his
meyne and there was strong and myghti.

Off King Vortimer

And anone after the Bretanes did depose
Fortiger and made Vortimer, his sonne
that he had goten of his first wife, king; and Vortimer and the Bretanes assembled moche people to drife Engest oute of the lande and gaffe him iij batell; and there was Horn slane and Engest, and his meyne driven oute of the lande. Wherfor Rowen was full sory and labored prevely to suche as were aboute the king, so that he was poisond the iiiij yere of his regne and he lyeth at London.

Off Engest

And after, the Bretones chase Fortiger king on this condicon - that he schuld neuer suffre Engest come agane. And anone Rowen sent worde to Engest how Vortimer was ded and that Fortiger, hire housband, was king, and bade him come with strong power him to avenge on the Bretones. And he was fayne of thos tithinges and come agane with xv m+ Saxons; and whanne he come into the lande he was ferde to fight with the Bretones. Wherefore he sent to the king and seid he wolde trete with him to haue the cuntre of Kent, as he hadde before, yf he myght haue yt with the loue of him and of the Bretanes. And the king, be the advyse of his Bretanes, apointed him to mete with him besyde Salysbury vpon an hille in pescable wise, and that Engist schuld bryng with him cccc knyghtes, and the king as many and no mo, and that none of hem schuld any maner of wepyn. And so thei did, but this Engest made prevely ichon of his men to put a knyfe in his hose; and whenne he schulde sey to hem "Nyme your Saxons," thenne yche of hem schulde slee a Bretane; and ryght so thei dide, and slow cccc and lx Bretanes, and the remenaunt escaped a full hard way.

And there Fortiger was taken and lad to Thong-Castell and put in preson and the most pert of all the Bretones of the lande fledde into Walles, and
Engest seased all the lande in to his hande and
distroied thoos that were Cristen, and chaunged
the name of the lande, and called yt Engest lande.
And bycause he wolde be strong to holde oute the
Bretanes, he made vij kinges in this lande. The
first was in Kent, where he regned himselfe, and
was chefe king; another was king of Sussex;
the iiij of Essex; the iij of Estalgil that now
is called Norff and Southfolke; the v of Nicolle,
that now is called Lincoln; the sext of Leicestre;
the vij of Oxenford; and devided the land emong
hem. And thenne he suffred Fortiger to go where
he wolde. and Fortiger went into Walles to his
Bretanes, and there he beganne to make a strong
castell to kepe him surely. And as the castell
was in makyng, all that thei couth make be
day yt fill doune be nyght, and so endured long.
Wherof Fortiger merfeld and sent for the
wysest clerkys of that lande to wytte whatte
that betokened. And thei tolde him that he
schulde feche a childe that was born of a woman
that had neuer adoo with any man, and sle the
childe, and with the blode therof temper the morter,
and thenne schulde his worke neuer faile. And anone
Fortiger sent lettres messengers thorow Walles
to seche suche a childe, and as the messangers
come thorow a toune called Carnarden thei
herde ij childerin, aither of hem of the age of

8rb

xiiiij yere, chide togeder; and the toone of hem
hight Merlyne and the tother Denebate. And
Merlyne called Denobate folle, and he anuerd
and seid: “Yf you haue any werthe yt is not of
godde but of the deuell, for no man wotte
who ys thi fader, but thi moder ys well knowen.”
And thenne thes messangers asched men that
stode besyde whoo was Merlyne fader, and
thei seide that a grete gentilwoman of the cuntre
was his moder, but no man couth tell whoo
was his fader. And thenne the messengers
went to the wardens of the toune and told hem
how Fortiger had sent for Merlyne, and thei
lette call Merlyn and his moder, and anone
sent both to Fortiger. And Fortiger asched of
Merlyn moder who was Merlyn fader;
and sche ansuerd, wepyng, and seid that sche
hadde neuer to do with man, but on a tyme as
sche was in hire chambre alone and the durres
fast loked, to hire come a faire yong man and
lay be hire. But whiche wey he entred in the
chambre sche wist notte, and whenne he had
lyen be hire he vanysched awey, sche wist not
whiche wey, and so he come to hire diuers tymes;
“and so was Merlyne begoten of my body.” Thenne
saide Merlyn to Fortiger, “What ys the cause
that ye wolde witte who is my fader?” and Fortiger
saide how clerkes had tolde him how that the
ffoundement of his werlce wolde neuer stonde but
yf the morter wer temperide with the blode of a
childe that hadde no man to his fader. Thenne
saide Merlyn: “Thei that tolde you so were but folle[s].

8va

But syre, y schall tell you what ys the cause
that your worke fallyth doune. There beth ij
dragones vnder the bothome of your werk - the
toone is white and the tother rede - and thei fight
togeder on nyghtes, that thei schake doune
the werke that was made on daies. And yf
ye will gerre digge hem ye schall fynde hem.”
And anone Fortiger gerte digge for hem, and
there the founde the dragones sore fyghting;
and o while the white dragone wolde haue
the better and bete therede into a corner,
another while the rede dragon wolde
bete him. And Fortiger and his meyne had
grete mervyle therof and prayed Merlyn to
tell hem what it signified. “Fforsoth,” quod Merlyn,
“The rede dragon signifieth youreselpe and the
white dragone signifieth the folk of Saxon,
for thei were dreven oute of youre lande, and
after thei come and droffe you and youre people
awey. And now ye stonde in troble and fere, but
ye schall haue more trebill: for the two brederyn
of Constance that ye garte slee, that ys to say,
Aurilambros and Vter, schall come oute of Lytell Bretane and distroye you and many of your Saxones. And Aurilambros schall be king, but he schall be poisouned within schorte tyme after. And therefor fle ye fro this place and saue yourselfe as well as ye may.” And thenne departed Merlyne and his moder, and sone after tithinges come to the Bretanes that Aurilambros and Vter were aryved at Totnes with grete power, and the Bretanes were thereof fayne and with moche joye thei brought hem to London and crowned Aurilambros king. And Aurilambros went in 8vb to Walles for to be avenged, and Fortiger fled to the castell of Tenerth. And Aurilambros caste wildefire into the castell and brent Fortiger and his meyne. And whenne Engest hered hereof, he fled into Scotland; but Aurilambros with him mette in the north cuntre, and slew him and many of the Saxones, and toke Octa, that was Engest brother sone, presoner, and toke him to mercy and gaffe him the cuntre of Galway. And thenne Aurilambros chaunged the name of this lande and called yt Brutane agane, and distroied the paynymes and made the walles of London agane that the paynymes had cast doun. Thenne thought the king that he wolde make some token beside Salisbury, there as the tretty was betwene the Saxones and the Brutanes, in remembraunce of the knyghtis that there was slane with treson. And ther were grete stones in Ireland, vpon the mounte of Kyan, that there were sette with geauntes. And Merlyne promysed the king Aurilambros yf he wolde sende men theder for hem, he wold go thider with hem, and he and his felaschip schulde gete theme hider. Then the king sente Vter, his brother, and xv m+ with him into Ireland and Merlyn went with hem. And Guillemore, that thenne was king of Ireland, faught with hem, but Guillemore was discomfite, and be crafte of Merlyne the stones were goten into
shippes and brought to the playne of Salysbury.

1050 And there are thei sette lyke as thei stode in Irelande, and was be crafte of Merlyne, for yt couthe neuer haue ben do be strenght of men. And thei are called yit the Stonehing. And after that Passent, that was sone to Fortiger,

9ra

1055 that byfore was fled in to Germayne, come with moche people into Bretane to be avenged of his fader deth; but he was sone discomfite, and fled into Ireland and praied King Guillemore of his help. And Guillemore assented therto,

1060 for he was wroth that his stones were caried away with strenght, and come forth with Passent and come into Walles. And thenne herd thei tell that Aurilambros was seke at Winchester, and Passent sent a Sarsyne that hight Coppa to

1065 Winchester, that was arreid like a frere and called him a fesician. And there he gaffe Aurilambros a medecyne where thourght he was poissound, and anone Coppa stalle away and come to Passent and tolde him how he had done. And while Aurila-

1070 mbros ley seke, Vt', his broder, went with grete power into Walles. And as he went yt hapened that, on the same day that Aurilambros died, this Vt' saw a sterre that was grete, and in the thone ende thereof a dragon hede and ij bemes lyke fire comyng oute of his mouth, the thone toward Fraunce and the thother toward Ireland. And oute of the beme toward Ireland come vij flammes of fire, and this sterre was seyne of many men. And Vt' sent for Merlyne and asshed him what yt signified and

1075 Merlyne loked in the sterre and seid: "Alas, Aurilambros ys dede with false poison by treson. And by the hedde of the dragon yt signified youreselfe, that ye schuld be kyng, and by the beme that ryches toward Fraunce is vnderstond that ye schall gete

1080 a sone that schall conquere all Fraunce and schall be the worthiest king that euer was of his kyn. And by the the thother beme is signified that ye
schall gete a daughter that schall be quene of Ireland. And by the vij flammes is signified that ye schall haue vij sonnes and ichon of hem schall be a king. Wherefore, holde forth your wey to your enmyes, for ye schall ouercome hem." Vter him thanked and went forth and discomfite his enmyes, and slewe Passent and Guillemore; and or he come into Bretane his brother Aurilambros was beried at the Stonehing with grete solemniteit.

Off Uter Pendragon

And anone after Vter was crownd king; and bycause of the dragon that was seyne in the sterre, he had a dragon hede borne after him and there¬fore he was called Vter Pendragon. And thenne Octa, that was Engist sone, and Ossa his brother come into the north cuntre with grete power and leide sege to Yorke. And Vter come thider to hem and toke hem prisoners and slew the moste party of theire meyne, and come agane to London and made a grete feste. And thider come Corloys, erle of Cornwaile, and Igern his wyffe, and the king was anamourde of Igern. And that aspied Corloys and deperted fro thens in wrath and toke his wiffe with him. And the king was wroth therewith, and followed him and droffe him and his wiffe into the castell of Tintagell, and there him beseged. And at nyght, Merlyne, by his crafte, made the king to entre into the castell in lykenes of the erle Corloys, and lay all nyght be Igern while here housbond faught on the walles; and that same nyght he gate upon here Artour that after was king.

And one the morow th’erle was slane with a-saute. And the king anone wedded Igern and made hire quene, and after sche was deliuerd of Artour, and also sche hadde a daughter called
Anna. And sone after Vter was seke and thei that were kepers of Octa and Ossa lete hem escape for giftes; and thei went into the cuntre and come agane with moche people. And Vter mette with hem and slew hem both, and thei meyne fled into Scotland and made Colgryne theire capteyne. And after, by crafte of that Colgryne, Vter was poisound, for he sent a man of his to poisoune him; and he aspied that Vter dranke no drinke but water of a welle, and he poisond all the water. And as sone as Vter dranke thereof he died, and so did all that dranke therof. And thenne was Vter borne to the Stonehing and there was he beried the xvij yere of his regne.

Off King Arthoure

And after the deth of Vter thei made Arthour, his sonne, king. Whenne he was xv yere olde he was hardi and bolde, and suare that ther schuld neuer none of the Saxones haue rest in this lande while he schulde be kinge. And Colgryne herd therof and sent to Cheldrike, king of Almayne, to come helpe the Saxons, and he come to Colgryne with grete power. And King Arthour sent in to Lytell Brutane to Hoel, the king, to come help him for to distroie the Saxones. And anone he come to him with grete power, and the king him receved ryally; and furth thei went with here hostes to Lincoln, and ther thei mette with Cheldryke and Colgryne

and theme discomfite and slow many of Saxones. And Cheldrike was yolden to Arthour and suare he wolde neutermore be agane him; and vpon that oth he lette him and his meyne go home. And whenne Cheldryke was on the see he was schamed for to be so discomfite; and he torned agane and come into Cornwaile and distroied moche of the cuntre, and Colgryne that was fled fro the batell at Lincoln come to him. And anone King Arthour
mette with theme at Bath and slew theme both, and
the substaunce of all the Saxones were slane at that batell. And thenne was Hoel, the king of Lytell Bretane, beseged in the cuntre with the Scottes; and anone Arthour come to him and him rescowed, and droffe the Scottes into Scotland and folowed theme thorogh oute Scotlande into an ile that is called Lynoynge, which was a wildernesse; and thenne he retorned agane and come to Glastenbury. And anone tithinges come to Arthour that King Guillemore of Irelande was come in-
to Cornwaile with grete power and distroied the cuntre. And anone Arthour mette with him and discomfit him and droffe him and his meynye into Ireland; and after, whenne Arthour hadd sett hes reame in pese, he wedded Caynor, that was cosyne to Cador, th'erle of Cornwaile. And thenne went he into Ireland with grete power and conquered that lande and tok Guillemore, the king, presoner; and there Guillemore become his man for to holde the lande of Ireland of him and his successours foreuermore. And thenne Arthour conquered the lande of Guthlande and Ireland; and thenne he came agane into this lande and abode here in Pese xij yere, and held the most roiall house of the world, so that knyghtes of all nacyons come to duell with him for his grete nobley. And because he had so many notable knyghtes that he had proved in tornamentys, he made the Rounde Table for the encheson that none of hem schulde sitte aboue another. And thenne Arthour, by the counseil of his baronage, went for to conquere Fraunce that thenne was called Gall by the Romaynes, that were lorde therof and had made a knyght that was called Froll keper thereof. And whenne Arthoure and his men come into Fraunce Froll mette with hem and gaffe hem batell, but Froll was discomfit and fled to Parysch; and Arthour him folowed and beseged the toun. And Froll saw that the people of the toun myght notte kepe yt, for thei had no stuffe of vitail, and sent to Arthour and desired of him that he
myght fight with him for the ryght of Fraunce.
And Arthour assented thereto, and on the morowe aftir thei mette beside the toun, well armed, and fought sore. And Arthour slew Froll with Taburn, his guode suorde. And thenne was all the cite.

yolden to him and so was all the lande of Fraunce; and aftir he passed forth with his oste and conquered Agon, Gascoyn, Peito, Navern, Burgone, Beer, Lo hern, Duryn, Peiters, and many other landes. And thenne he come into Fraunce and duelled there in pese ix yere, and gaffe his knyghtes lyvelod enought in the cuntres that he had conquered. And thenne he came agane into this lande and made a feste, at whiche feste were x kings and xx erles and many good barones and knyghtes, whiche feste lasted xv daies with justinges and tournementes.

And vppon the iij dai of the feste, as Arthour sate at his diner, come messengers fro the emperour of Rome with lettres to Kyng Arthour, him charching by the lettres vppon lyffe and lyme to come to Rome and do his homage, and bryng with him his troage that was graunted by the king Cassabilan of Bretane to Julius Cesar. And Arthour, by the advyse of the kinges and lordes that were at that feste, sent worde to the emperour agane that he schuld nether of him haue homage nor troage, but that he wolde be avenged on the emperour for the dispetefull message that he had him sent. And anone all the kinges that were at that feste promysed Arthour to go with him to werre vppon the emperour, that is to witte, the king of Scotland, the king of Orkeney, the king of Ireland, Guthlande, Denmarke, Almayn, Lytell Bretane, Peito, Boleyn, and Gascoyne. And iche of hem broght to Arthour x m+ men and Arthour himselfe had xv m+ and all his knyghtes of the Rounde Table; and all thei mette togerder at Southampton, and th'erle toke there shippes and toke the see and aryved in Spayne. And anone tithinges come to theme that there was a geaunt in that cuntre that dide
moche harme and raveschid women, and he was so moche that no man durst come ner him, and that he lay in a hell that ys called the Mounte of Seynt Barnard. And anone a nyght King Arthour stale awey prevely fro his oste and to with him Bedwer and Kay, that were knyghtes of the Rounde Table, and went to hill, there as the geaunt was, and slow the geaunt and broght the hedd to the

1255 ote. And men merveled moche thereon, yt was so grete, and spake moche of the worthinesse of Arthour. And thenne went he forth with his oste toward Rome, and the emperour herd of hes comyng and assembled a grete oste of Sarsyns, pay-
nymes, and Cristen men, to the nowmble of iiiij xx and x m+, and another oste behynde hem come with as many. And Arthour mette with hem beside Lucy, and there thei faught strongly, for there was alwey xx Romaynes agane vj of Arthuris men, but th’emperour and the Sarsyns trust all in here strenght and not in God and that was well seyne for, as the story telleth, the Saxones toke no more fusone agane Athurys men then xx schepe agane vj wolfes; and ther was th’emperour slane and the paynymes fled, and Arthure theme folowed and slew so many of hem that mervell was to tell. And there was diuers lordes of Brutane slane and many knyghtes of the Round Table there was slane, and Arthour lette bery them in houses of religion. And Arthour sent the body of th’emperour to the cite of Rome and bad theme that the troage that thei sent to him fore, for thei schuld neuer haue troage of him. And Arthour thoght to pas the Mount Joye and so gone furth to Rome to haue wonne the cite, but tithinges come to him oute of this lande how Mordred, that was neew to King Arthour, and that King Arthoure of grete trust lefte to kepe this lande whenne he went toward Rome, had seased all the lande in to his handes and
held himselfe as king and held Gyamore
the quene as his peramour. And whenne King

10vb

Arthur dressed him into this lande for to be a-
1290 venged on Mordred, he left Hoel, his cosyn, with
half his oste in that cuntre for to kepe yt, and come
to Sandwyche. And Mordred had gadred moche
people and mette with him at Sandwyche, and
gaffe sore batell to Arthour. And there was Gawen,
1295 that was Arthuris nevew, and Anguissell, the
goode knyghtes of the Rounde Table, slane. And
Mordred was discomfit and fled into Cornwaile,
and the king folowed and Mordred assembled
grete people of Cornwaile and gaffe him a-
1300 ther batell. And there was Mordred slane and
many a man was slane on both perties, and all
the knyghtes of the Rounde Table were slane at that
batell, and Arthour was wounded to the deth. And
whenne Gyamore, the quene, wiste therof sche
1305 stale prevely awey and went to Carlion, and ther
prevely toke the abyte of a none and ther duellyd all
here lyfffe. And King Arthour was caried in a lyter
to Abron, for yt was told him that there was
connyng leches, and this was in the xxij yere
1310 of his regne. But he come neuer agane and therefore
many of the Bretanes wene he be on lyve and schall
come agane and conquere this lande; but or he went
he toke the lande to Constantine, his neuew, that
was sonne to Cador th' erle of Cornwaile, and bade
1315 him kepe yt as king to he come agane for Arthour
had neuer isshu of his body and that was full
grete pite and hurt to this lande.

Off King Constantine

And anone Constantine was crowned king, and
1320 the ij sonnes that Mordred had goten had grete
envy at Constantyne and assembled grete oste agane
him; but he mette hem and slew hem both, and when
he had regned iiiij yere he died and lieth at London.
Off King Aldebryght and King Edelfe

1325 And thenne were ther ij kings, that is to sey Aldebryght, that was a Dane and helde him king of Northfolk and Southfolk, and Edelfe, that helde him king of all the north cuntre. And thei werred to-gider, but at the last thei were acorded and loved as breder. And Aldebryght wedded Orwen that was Edelfe his suster and had by here a daughter that was called Goldesburght. And the thirde yere aftir Aldebryght died, but ar he died he betoke Goldesburght to Edelfe to kepe, and whenne sche come of age to mary here and to deliver here his king dome. And Edelfe him promysed that he schulde so do but he thought otherwise in his herte, for whenne Goldesbourght come to the age of xiiiij yere he maried here to a scolyon of his kechyn that was called Haueloke and kepte the lande to himselfe.

Off King Haueloke

And so it happed that Haueloke was ryght heire to the king of Denmarke and went to Denmarke and there was made king; and after he come a-gane with moche people and slew Edelfe and made king of this lande and regned iij yere and thenne he died and lyeth at Stonehing.

Off King Conan

1350 And aftir him regned Conan, his nevewe, xiiiij yere in pese, and thenne he died and lieth at London.

Off Certiffe and Gormond

And aftir him regned his cosyn Certiffe that was behated of all folke. And in his tyme come Gormond that was sone to King Dawfrike, that was a paynyme, and conquered many cuntres. And he conquered Ireland and thereof herd
the Saxons of Northumbirland and sent for
him to come distroie the Bretanes; and anone


11rb

he come, and he and the Saxons distroied all the Bretanes
that were Cristen, and distroied Holy Chirche and
droffe oute the bischoppis and abbotis, and chased the
king Certiffe to Chechester and brent the cete;

and Certiffe escaped and fled into Walles. And
thenne Gormond gaffe this lande to the Saxones,
and went is wey into Fraunce and distroied
the Cristen people. And thenne the Saxones
chaunged the name of Bretane, and bycause of
Engest thei called yt England, and the folk
was called Englysch, and thei devyded the land
in vii perties and made vii kinges as was in Engest
tyme, and of the same schires. But anone the kinges
werred ichon vppon other till thei were all distroied,

and thenne was the lande withoute a king and were
paynymes l yere, to seint Gregory was pope of
Rome; and sawe men of this lande at Rome and had
grete fantasye in them and axed of whatte
cuntre thei were, and the Romayns tolde him that
1380 thei were of England, but thei saide that all the
lande were paynymes and miscreant. “Alas,” seide he,
“Thei haue visages like angell. Yt were pite but
yf thei schuld be crystened.” And anone he sent
Seint Austeyn into England, and xl felowes

with him that were men of holy lyffe, to preche and
teche hem the faith. And this was in the iiiij yere
that seint Gregory had ben pope, the yere after
the Incarnacon of Jhesu Criste v C iiiij xx vij.

Off Seynt Austeyn

1390 And Seynt Austeyn come into the Ile of Tenet and
so furth to Cauterbury, whereas King Aldebrught
ley that was king of Kent, and he him receved
with grete honoure and gaffè him licence to preche;
and gaffè him and his felaschipp a duellyng place

that now is the Abbey of Seynt Austeyn, where-
as he lyeth schryned. And anone, be his prechyng, Aldebright was convurted and was baptized and so was Iva the king of Westsex. And after the same Iva graunted the petir pennes to Rome

1400 to haue licence to holde scollys of clergy in Englande; and Seint Austeyn come to Rochester and preched, and there thei scorned him and caste vpon him bowellys of schepe and tailles, wherefor yt was seid that Seint Austeyn prayed to God that their childerin myght haue tailles, and so had many of their childerin that were borne long after. And Seynt Gregory herde how he convurtede the people, and made him archibischopp of Caunterbury and primate of all Englonde and

1410 he made ij bischoppes of his felawes that come with him fro Rome, the toon hight Mallet and was bischopp of London, and the toher Justyne, that was bischopp of Rochester. And in a while all the lande was convurted and crystened and thenne went Seynt Austeyn into Wailles; there the Bretanes were that were dryven oute of Englond and the byschoppys and abbottes that were dryven oute of England also; and Sent Austeyn told hem Pat

1420 he was primate of Englande and that thei moste obbe him. And thei seid pleyly thei wold neuer obbe him nor no Englyschemen, “For the Englysch hath euer ben paynymes to now that ye haue convurted theme, and we haue allwey be

1425 Cristen seth Incarnacon and therefore we will obbe the Archebischopp of Carlion Pat isoure lorde and none other.” And Seint Austeyn come agane into this lande and tolde King Aldebright how thei wolde not obbe him,

1430 therefore he was wroth and sent Elfride,

11vb

king of North Humbr, to come helpe him to distroie the Bretanes of Wailes and the Archebischop of Carlion, and mette with him at Leiceste. And so yt befill that there was a Bretane that was king of Leicester
that was called Brucyvale, and he was ferd
of the ij kinges at Leicester, but he was discomfyte and
fled oute of the lande and come neuer agane; and the
ij kinges seased all his landes and departed hem be-
twene hem, and aftir thei went toward Wailles.

And the Bretanes herd of hem, and sent men to them
in theire shirtes and barfote, and asked mercy of hem,
and thei were so cruel that thei had of hem no pitee.
but slew hem - that ys to say v c and xij, and then
the Bretanes saw that, thei assembled a grete oste, and
made theire capteyne a baron of Wailles that
was called Bledrike that some tyme was erle of
Dovonschire; and gaffe batell to hem and slew Aldebrght
and Elfride fled into North humbr; and after the
men of the cuntre of Leicester with strenght made
Kadwylyne sone of Brucyvale king of Leicester.

Off King Kadwelyn of Leicester

And after this Kadwelyne and Elfride were acorded,
so that Elfride schulde haue the lande fro Humbr
to Scotland and Kadwlyne all the remenaunt; and
aftir Elfride died and Edwyne his sone was made
king of Northumbr; and after Cadwelyne
died and Cadwelyne his sone was king. And
anone Edwyne and he fell at debate so that
Edwyne with grete power droffe Cadwelyne in-
to Ireland; and after Cadwelyne come agane
and slew Edwyne. And after Edwyne regned
Offrys, his sone, ij yere, and died. And after
him regned Oswald, his sone, that was a
goode man, but Cadwelyne wold not lette him
in pese, but chased him into North cuntre

12ra

and slew him, and he lyeth at the abbey of Berdney,
whereas God hat shewed many miraclesse for him.
And after him regned his sone, Oswey, vpon whom
Peanda, that was brother in lawe to Cadwelyne,
werred, but Oswey slow him; and in his tyme Seint
Chadde was made Byschopp of Lychefeld, in the yere
of oure lorde Jhesu Cryste ccccclv.
Off King Cadwaladre

And after Cadwelyne died and after him reigned

Cadwaldre, his sonne, in whose time was great scarsenesse of corne and catell, that men could buyde no vytaille to selle for gold nor siluer, but theylyved by rotes and erbes; and thenne fill the grete pestilence among hem that euere was sene in this lande,

for dos that went to bery the ded were beried with hem, so that the people fled out of the lande, and this hunGRE and mortalite dured xj yere. Thenne went Calawadre, with a fewe people with him, into Lytell Bretane, taking Alyn his Cosyn, that

he moche loved. And as he seiled in the see he made grete lamentacione to his people and seid: “Dedisti nos domine tanquam oues escarum in gentibus dispersisti nos...” and said: “Alas to vs wrecches, for we, for our grete synnes, of whiche we wolde

not amend vs while we had space, ar nowe exiled oute of our lande, of the whiche the Scottes, Saxones, Danes, Romaynes, nor no nacion couth neuer exile vs, but Jhesu that hast put vs in exile for our synnes, haue mercy vpon

vs!” and whenne thei come into Lytell Bretane the king receyved hem with honoure. And sone after seced the grete deth and thenne the few people that were lefte sent into Saxon for men to come and duell here, and within

a while come grete plente of Saxons hider,

and chaunged the langage of the Bretanies and spake there langage that here ys vsed yit, and called this land England and thei chaunged many names of tounes, and kept the same law

that the Bretanes dide. And thenne come the noble Quene Sexburga oute of Germayne with moch people and inhabite all the lande fro Northumbre to Scotland, for thei founde no bretnes agane hem to haue any rule in this lande. And thenne thei made

in this lande v kinges: the firste of Westsex, the secunde of the Mersche, the thride of Estangle that now ys called Northfolke, the iiij of Kent, the v
of Sussex. And aftir whenne Cadwaladre herd
that the land was replenysched, he thought to
come agane, but firste he praied God to giffe him
some knowlech wheder that yt were his will
that he schulde come to Bretane agane. And
an angell appered to him and seid yt was
note Goddis will that euer he schulde come agane
to Bretane, nor that Bretanes schulde haue any
rule there vnto tyme that Merlyneys prophecy
and the prophecy of Sibill were fullfilled,
and that schulde neuer be vnto tyme that the
reliques of our lordis body were broght
frō Rome and translate vnto Bretane. Where¬
fore Calawadre went to Rome and was
schryven of the pope of his synnes and
there he died in the yere of grace vj C
lxxix; and so yt befill that there was grete
werre emong this v kinges of this lande,
but Ossa, that was king of Northumbre,
brother to seynt Oswald, conquered them
all and was chief king ouer them
all; and after he died the furth
yere of his regne.

12va

Off King Osbrygh of Northumbr

And him regned Osbrygh in Northumbre, and
hit befell so that on a dai he went him to
sporte and come to a lordys place that was
called Sir Burene Bokerd. And this Osbryght
with strenght forlay his wiffe agane hire
will, and whenne Osbryght was gone
home, Burene come hone and founde his
wiffe wepyng and sche tolde him how
that King Osbryght had hire schamed.
And anone Burene went to the king of
Denmark and tolde him of the dispite Pat
Osbryght had done vnto him and praid
him of help to distroie him, and he him
graunted, for Burene was his cosyn. And
the menetyme, men of Northumbre putte
doune Osbryght and chase hem a newe
king that was called Elle; and anone
the king of Denmark dide assemble

1555 grete people and sent his ij brederin, Hengar
and Hubba, with hem into this lande. And thei
come to Yorke and Osbryght gaffe them
batell, but he was sone slane, and Elle,
that was new made king, come agane

1560 thider to hem with moche people and besyde
Yorke he gaffe hem batell and there was
he slane; and the grounde ys yit called Elle-
crofte. And Hengar and Hubba come furth
and conquered all the cuntre of Northumbre,

1565 Kesteuen, Holand, and Lyndesey.

**How Seint Edmunde was martired**

And so thei went furth into Northffolk, wher-
as King Edmunde regned and was Crysten,
and thei droffe him into the castell of Ffrauny-

1570 ngham; and whenne he see he myght not
hold yt he come oute to hem and Hengar
and Hubba had him forsake his Crystendeme

12vb

or thei wolde him sle, but he wolde notte, wherefore thei
dide bynde him to a tree and schott him full of arowes

1575 to he was dede, and so was he martired and lyeth at
Bury. And thenne went the Danes to Reding and
destroyed the cuntre and threwe doune chirches and
destroyed thos that was Crysten; and kyng Elred of Westsex
come to Reding and gaffe him batell and there

1580 was he slane.

**Off King Alfred**

And after him regned King Alfred, his sonne, that
chassed theme into Devonschire and faught with theme,
and there was Hubba slane and is beried at Hibbelowe.

1585 And King Alfred fled away for he had but fewe
people; thenne went the Danes to Abindone, and
King Alfred raised the cuntre and hem folowed
and gaffe theme strong batell and discomfite theme,
so that in saluacon of there lyffes thei promysed
Alfrede to bring to him ther king of Denmarke
for to be Cristen, and vpon that promisse the king
Alfrede lete them go and toke of hem goode hostages.
And aftir thei come agane and brought with theme
the king of Denmarke, like as thei promysed, and moche
people of Denmarke and come to Wynchester, there as King
Alfrede lay. And there were thei crystened and there
names changed., so that he that was king of the Danes
was called Adelstone. And whenne thei had ben
xij dayes at Wynchestre thei departed and went a-
gane into Denmarke; and whenne Alfrede had regned
xx yere he died and lyeth at Wynchestre.

**Off Edward sone of Alfrede**

And aftir him regned Edward, his sone, in whos
tyne the Danes of Northumbre, that were paynymes,
sent into Denmark and into Ffraunce to gette them
power to distroie the Crysten people; and thei come
with grete power, and King Edward gaffe them

13ra

batell, but he was discomfite and fledde; and
after he died the xiiij yere of his regne and

lyeth and Wynchester.

**Off King Adelstone**

And aftir him regned his sonne, Adelstone, that
gaffe batell to the Danes and droffe Gawfride king
of Denmark and his oste outhe of this lande. And
anone, aftir, the Scottes meved warre agane him
and King Adelstone assembled moche people and
come to Beuerley, and besought seint John to pray
to God to schewe for him some miracle that the
Scotch schuld obey him. And whenne he mette

with the oste of the Scottys, ther come many bisho-
pes and heraldes to trete for pese, and emong
hem all King Adelstone kneled doune and besought
God to gyffe him grace to smyte depe into a
grete stone that stode beside him, yf so were

that the Scottes aught to obey him. And with
his suerde he smote an elle into the stone, and yet notwithstandyng the grete miracle, the Scottys wolde notte obey him but faught with him, but thei were discomfite and many of hem slane.

1630 And thenne retorned King Adelstone to Beuerley agane and thanked Seint John; and after the same sworde was put into the Toure of London, and ther is keped in the kinges tresoure. And aftir the saide Gawfride, king of Denmark, come agane in-to this lande - the iij yere of the regne of King Adelstone the yere of ourde lorde ix c xxvij - with moche people and landed beside Wynchester, and brought with him a geaunt that was called Colbrand, and he was so grete and so long Pat he loked ouer the walles of Wynchestre fro the gyrdell vpward. And Adelstone lay at Wynchestre;

13rb

and the king of Denmark sent vnto him a herold of armes to witte wheder he wolde finde a man to fight with Colbrand for the ryght of the kingdom of Northumbre, that the Danes had clamed byfore by the tytle of Haueloke, that wedded Goldesburgh, the kingis daughter of Northumbre. And Adelstone sent him worde that he wolde finde on to fight with Colbrande, but yt was so that no man wolde take the batell on hand, wherefor Adelstone was full sory and besoght god of his help. And at nyght, when he was on slepe, ther come an angell to him fro heven and bad him go on the morow to the north gate of Wynchestre, and there schuld he mete with a palmer that schulde take the batell on hand; and so he dide and mette with the palmar, and he toke vpon him the batell, and there thei were putte togeder in a lytell island beside Winchester that now ys called the Abbey of Hide, and there the palmar slew Colbrande. And thenne the King Adelstone asked of the palmer what was his name, and he told him in counceyll that he was Gye of Warwyk, and praied him that he wolde not tell his name of a twolmonth aftir;

1665 and the king wold haue had him to duell with him but he wolde not, but went forth on his
pilgrimage. And thenne returned Gawfride and the Danes into Denmark with moche schame. And after King Adelston wedded the emperouris

1670
dogther of Rome, and had with hire an e white stedes trapped in cloth of golde, and a cuppe of golde sette with precious stones, the whiche ys called the Regall of England and is in the Abbey of Westmynster, in kepying, and at tymes of
1675
coronacions, kinges drink thereof, and no tyme ellys; and whenne Adelstone had regned xv yere he died and lyeth at Malmesbury.

13va

Off Edmund brother of Adelstone

And aftir him regned Edmund his brother, by-cause that Adelstone had non isshu; and he regned vij yere and thenne he died and lyeth at Glastenbury.

Off Eldrede, brother of Adelstone

And aftir him regned Eldrede, his brother, in
1685
whos tyme Arnolff, king of Denmark, come into Northumbre with grete power and kept the land of Northumbre ij yere; and thenne Eldrede droffe him oute, and whenne he had regned xij yere and a halfe, he died and lyet at Wyncestre.

1690 Off Edwyne, brother of Adelstone

And aftir him regned Edwyne, his brother, iiiij yere; and thenne he died and lyeth at Wyncestr.

Off King Edgare

And aftir him regned Edgare, his sonne, and
1695
was king ouer all the kinges of Scotland, Ireland, and of all England, and was the worthiest king betwene Arthour and him; and he had isshu be his wiff Edward, that aftir was an holy martir. And his wiffle died; and thenne
was ther a maide that was called Estrild, that was doghter to Orgar, a baron of Devonschire, and the king herd moche tell of hire bewte and sent a knyght of his called Ethelwolde to se hire, to the entent that yf sche were so faire as men said that sche was, that thenne the king wold hire wedd. And when Edilwolde saw hire, that sche was so bewtyvous, he toght to begyle the king and to haue hir himselfe, and spake to hire fader that he myght wedd hire, and he graunted him; and thenne Edilwold come to the king and tolde him that sche was faire of visage, but, he seid, sche had a foule body. “Well,” quod the king, “thenne wyll not I haue hire,” and anon Edelwold went agane and wedded hir, and told the king that he had wedded hire bycause that sche was hire faderis heire, and not bycause of hire bewte; and after he had by here a sonne, and bycause that the king schuld not desire hire, he praiied the king to cristen the child, and so he dide. And aftir, whenne the king herd tell so moche of hire bewte, he thoght that Edelwold hadd begyled him, and went on a dai to se hire, and whenne he saw hire, he toght to sle Edelwold; and sent him on a erand to Yorke and vnknowen men slew by the wey; and as sone as he was dede the king wedded Estrilde. And therfor, Seint Dunstone rebuked the king, because that sche was his gosshep so that he myght nott wedde hire be the lawe, and neuer after that Estrild loved seint Dunstone; and after the king hadd by here a sonne that was called Eldrede, and when Eldrede was vj yere olde, his fader died, the xvij yere of his regne and lyeth at Glastenbury.

Off seint Edward the Martir

And aftir him regned Edward, his eldest sonne, Pat was a goode, holy man; and on a day whenne he was on huntyng, he come fro his meynye all
unto the castell of Corfe to se Eldrede his brother, that there was noryshed with Estrild, the quene. And whenne the quene saw him, sche thought to sle him forbecause that Eldrede, hire sonne, myght be king; and whenne the king dranke, a knyght of the queneis, by hire bidding, with a knyffe smote him to the herte so that he died; and the knyght fled into Ffraunce, and the king was lad into Glastenbury and there he lyeth, for whome God hath schewed many miracles; and this was in the yere of oure lord ix C iiiij xx.

1750 Off King Eldrede and King Swyne

14ra

And after him regned Eldrede, his brother; and Seint Dunstone, that thenne was Archebishop of Cauterbury, him crouned. And after Seint Dunstone assoyled the quene and gaffed hire penaunces for hir synne; and he died and ys schryned at Glastenbury, whereas he was first a monk. And sone after King Swyne of Denmark come with grete people and conquered all this lande, for the people of the lande loved not Eldred, forbycause that goode seint Edward his brother was slane for him; and this Eldrede wedded an Englysche-woman and had by hire a sonne that was called Edmund Irenside, and another that was called Edwyne; and whenne he sawe he couth haue no people to resiste King Swyne, he fled into Normandy and wedded the duke of Normandis suster, and gate vppon here ij sonnes, the toon hight Alfrede, and the thother Edward, that after was Seint Edward the Confessour; and the king and this Swyne regned in this lande xv yere and he died and lyeth at Yorke. And thenne Knowt, his sonne, regned, but Eldred come oute of Normandy with grete power and droffe him into Denmark; and anone after, Knowt come oute of Denmark with grete people and droffe Eldred into London and there Eldrede died the ix yere of his regne, and lieth at Poulles.
Off King Knowt and Edmund Irenside

1780 And aftir him regned Knowt, and anone this Edmund Irenside began to werre vppon him, but thei were sone accorded and departed the realme betwene hem and were sworn bretherin. And aftir on Edrich of Stratton, that was a baron, 1785 thought to haue Knowte king of all the land, and praid Edmund Irenside to dyne with him and so he dide; and at nyght, whenne he schuld go to bedde, there stode an ymage like an archier with a bowe bent in his hand and an arow therin, and the king toched the arow and yt smote him thorow and slow him, and so by that engyne was he slane; and anone the tratour toke the ij sonnes of Edmund Irenside and broght theme to Knowte and tolde him how he had done, bycause that Knowte schuld be king of all the lande, and anone Knowte made to bynde his handys behinde him and caste him in the Temmes and there was the tratour drounned. And the ij childerin were put to the Abbot of Westmynster to kepe, the thon hight Edward, and the tother Edwyne. And aftirward Knowte wedded Emé, that was wiffe to Eldrede, and by counceyl of here, he sent the ij childerin into Denmark by a Dane that hight Walgar and bad him slee them; and he had pite of the childerin, and lefte hem with the king of Hungre to norysch and told that thei were inheritours to the Croun of England, and he kept them. And aftir, Edwyne died, and Edward wedded the kinges daughter of Hungr and his heire - and Englische men called him in their cronicles Edward the Outelawe - and he gate vppon hire a sone that hight Malcolyne. And aftir this, Knowte conquered all Norwey, and thenne he become so proude that he wend he had ben as grete as Godde. And so yt happened that, on a day, he was at Westmynster, and the water of the
Temes folowed so hye that yt come into the paleys; and whenne Knowte sawe that
1820 he toke a yerde in his hande and smote the water and seid, “Y comaunde the water to torn a-
gane,” but for all that the water wolde nott leve, but come vpon him so that he stode in the water on the schoes. Thenne come he a-
1825 wey, and in presence of his people, he kneled 14va

doune and helde vp his handys and seid, “O God, Pat art lorde of all thing and art eternall, and y am a wrecched caytiff and mortall and haue no duracion but be thi sufferaunce, y yeld me to thi mercy.” And anone after, he went to Rome and dide schrife him of his foli, and come a-
1830 gane, and whenne he had regned xx yere he died and lyeth at Wyncester.

Off Heralde the sonne of Knowt

1835 And after regned Herald, his sonne, and he was so lyght of fote that men called him Heralde Harefote. And whenne he had regned ij yere, he died, and lyeth at Westmynster; and he was full evell and exiled his moder with-
1840 oute eny cause.

Off King Hardknowt

And after him regned his brother, Hardknowt, that toke Heralde oute of his graue and smote of his hede and caste yt in a gonge and his
1845 body into Temes, because he had exiled his moder, and fischers fonde his body and keped yt at Seint Clementis chirche. And whenne this Hardknowt had regned v yere, he died withoute issshu and lieth at Winchester and
1850 after his deth, the Englysche lorde by on assent driven the Danes oute of the lande and made suraunce emong hemselfe that neuer non Dane schuld be king of this lande for the grete vylens Pat the Danes dide to Englysche-
1855 men, for but thei made curtesey to the Danes wher so thei mette hem, thei schuld be beten and put in prison, and many other dispytes thei dide them; wherfor the lordis of this land sent in to Normandy for the ij brether, 1860 Alfrede and Edward, to the entent that Alfrede myght be king; but yt hapened that Alfrede was gone in to Hungre to speke with his brother, Edward the Outelawe, and so the messengers brought Alred and aryved

14vb

1865 at Southampton. And the erle Godwyne of Westsex thought that his sonne schulde be king, that he had goten be his wiffe that was doghter to King Knowt, and he mette with Alrede at Southampton and slew him and xij gentilmen that were lorde sonnes 1870 of Normandy that come with Alred. And whenne the lordis herd of this, theiseid that that tratour Godwyne schuld be ded, wherfore he fled in to Denmark and lefte his erledome of Westsex.

How Seint Edward was 1875 crowned king of England

And aftir the lordes of this lande sent into Normandy for Edward, and he was broght hider and crouned and anoyted with grete dignite, and was full of vertues and hated synne and loved well Holy 1880 Chirche, and made goode lawes in this lande that yet ben holde. And aftirward, yt was so whenne that he herde masse of Seint John Euangeliste, bat he moche loved, he come fro the chirche at Haueryng of the Boure, and he mette with a pilgreme that 1885 asked him sume guode for the love of Seint John the Euangeliste. And he toke the ring of his finger prevely, that no man wiste, and gaffe yt the pilgreme, and the pilgreme him thanked and went his wey; and afterward, erle Godwyne, 1890 that was fled into Denmark, herde that Edward was so goode and mercyable and come to him and lowly asked him mercy; and King Edward
wold giffe him no grace withoute assent of his
lordes and the lordes assented that he schuld
haue grace, wherefore the king him pardoned and
restored him agane to his erledome. And after
the king wedded his doghter, but thought hat
he were wedded, yet he lyved chaste and so
dide his wyffe, and whenne sche had ben
queene ij yere, sche died, and he wold neuer hafe
wiffe after. And the king gaffe Harold, that
was sonne to Godwyn, the Eerldome of

15ra

Oxenford; and afterward the duke William of Normandy,
that was suster sone to Seint Edward, and was
bastard - but his fader wedded hire after that he
was born, and so was he mulery by the lawe of the
Chirche - and this duke come in to this lande for to see his
oncle. And Seint Edward praied his lordes that, for
as moche as he had non isshu of his body, that thei
wolde make aftir his descresse Duke William, his
neew, king of this lande, and thei assented well there¬
to. This Seint Edward made the chirche of Westmynster
the secunde tyme, and King Sibar made yt the first
tyme. And after, on Whitsonday, as Seint Edward
herde masse in the grete chirch of Westmynster, and
at the leuacion of Godys body, he toke vp a grete
laughter, wherof many men that were by had
grete mervell; and whenne masse was done, thei
axed of him whi he did so, and he seid to hem how
that “King Swyne of Denmark come vpon the see
with grete power to distroye vs, and I saw him and
all his folk drenche vpon the see, and whenne y
sawe that sight, I couth not forbere laughter,” and
another tyme, the erle Luemch byside him stode at
the leuacion, and saw the forme of brede torne in¬
to likenesse of a yong childe, and lyfte vp his ryght
hande and first blessed the king and after the
erle, and the erle put vpon the king to make him
to se that blessed sight: “Syre Erle,” quod the king, “I
se well inought that ye do se. Wherfore, lette vs
trewly serue that blyssed lorde that scheweth to
vs suche grace.” And after yt happened that
two men of Lodlowe went oute of England to
the Holy Lande, and had done ther pilgremage and
were comyng agane aboute Martymasse, and
whenne thei were ij myle on this halfe Jerusalem, thei mette with a pilgreme that axed of hem

of what lond thei were, and thei seid of England,
whereas guode Edward was king. "Ffare fffrendes,"
quod he, "take this ringe and bere yt to youre king, and
delyver yt to him and sei that the pilgreme
that he gaffe this ringe at Haueryng of the Boure
sent yt him. And tell him that y am John the
Euangeliste, his frende that he moche lovyth, and
that he schall be in Heuen on the xij day next
comyng, ther to duell foreuer more." And whenne
he had so said, he vanysshed awey fro hem, and
thei went furth. And or thei had walked a myle,
thei leid hem doune and fell on slepe, and whenne
thei waked, thei were but ij myle fro Canterbury.
"For soth," seid on of them, "This is not the cuntre
where we were whenne we laid vs doune to
slepe." And axed of the scheppardes what cuntre
yt was and thei seid yt was the cuntre of Kent,
in England, and the pilgremes thanked God; and
anone thei come to King Edward, to Westmynster,
and told him of all there aventour and toke him
the ringe, and he knew well the ringe and gaffe
the pilgremes grete giffes. And after he made
him redy to dye and on the xij even next
after he died at Westmynster, the xiiij yere of
his regne, the yere of our lorde m+ lxv; and after
was he translate and put in schryne at Westmynster
by the noble martir Seint Thomas of Caunterbury.
And in the yere of Seint Edwardis deth, Harold,
the sonne of Godwyne, wold haue gone into
Flaunders but he was by tempest driven into
Normandy and there was he taken and broght
to duke William; and the duke was proposed to
haue slane him for the deth of Alrede, that was
Seint Edwardis brother, that was sonne to
Quene Em, moder of Duke Richard of Normandy,
heire to the duke William; but this Harold suare
to him vpon the sacrament that he wold, after
the discese of King Edward, wedd the doghter
of Duke William, and also that he wold kepe the
lond of Englond to vse of the saide duke
William, and vpon that oth the duke lette him goo.

Off King Harold

And after the discesse of Seint Edward, Harold,
that was sonne to the erle Godwyne, by strenght
of his frendys, croned him king of all Englond,
notwithstondyng the oth that he had made to
Duke William, and therfur the Normayns called
him in there cronicles Harold Pronire. And in the
same yere that he was crouned came Harold,
king of Denmark, and aryved in Scotland with
grete people, and come to Yorke and there he slew
m+ men of armes and c prestes; and Harold,
king of Englond, come to him with grete people
and he slew Harold, king of Denmark, with
his own handes in plane batell and the Danes
were slane, the moste party of hem, and the
remenant fled into Denmark. And whenne
Duke William herd that Harold had crouned
him king, he suore that he wold be avenged
vpon him and assembled grete people and
come into this lande; and anone tithingys
come to Harold how Duke William was aryved
in Englond, and had goten the toure abowt
Hastyng and myned the castell, and anon King
Harold went theder with as moche people as he
couth raise; and whenne he come thidre the duke
put him in eleccon wheder he wold wedd
his daughter, like as he had suorn, and hold
the land of him be troage, or elles he wold
fight for the title therof with him with his
owne handes. Harold trusted more on his

folk then on his own strenght and seid that he
2010  wolde fight with all the ooste, and so he dide, but
2015  Harold was slane sone and his meyne discomfit.
     This batell was ended at Tonbrigge on the
day of Seint Calixte, the secunde yere of the regne
of the said Harold, and then was his body lade
to Waltham and ther he lyeth.

**Off William Bastard, Duke of Normandy**
**and conquerore of Englonde**

And aftir him this duke of Normandy conquered
all the lande and was crowned king at Crystmas
next after, and thenne went he into Normandy
agane and feched Maude, his wyffe, and made hir
quene. And anone after Mancolyyn, the king of
Scotland, begane to strive with him but King
William toward him went with grete power,
and Malcolyne was ferd of him and was fayne
to become his man and dide him homage. And
after this William went in Normandy agane
and werred vpon King Philip of Fraunce. And
he had isshu iiiij sonnes, Robert Curteys,
William Rous, Richard, that died sone after his
birth, and Herry Bewclerk, and a doghter
that hight Mawde, that wedded the erle of Boloynes,
and other iiiij doghters. And thenne fill he seke, and
he assigned all Normandy to Robert Curteys, and
Englond to William Rous, and all his tresoure
to Harry Bewelerk; and whenne he had regned
xxij yere he died and lyeth at Cane in Normandy.

**Off William Rows**

2040  And after him regned his sonne, William Rows,
      whiche was full contrarious and distroied many
      Howses of Religion, and he distroied xxvj townes
      for to enlarge his forest, and of his wikednesse he
      exiled the Archebischop of Caunterbury. And on a
2045  nyght, a monk of Westmynster dremed that this²

²Missing from the narrative here is the monk's dream, as well as William Rufus' own
premonition of his death. Both are present in Brie, and interpreted by the King's men to
suggest that he should not go hunting the following day. The EUL MS is also missing the
16ra

regned xxxvj yere he died and lyeth at Reding, and thenne his fader was king agane. And in his tyme was the citee of Ierusalin distroied with the Sowdene of Babilone, and the Sersens and the Holy Crosse born awey, and all that were Cristen within the citee were put to deth. And whenne Harry fitz Emperies had regned, firste and laste, xxxv yere and v monthes, he died and lyeth at Ffount Euerarde.

2055 Off King Richarde the Firste after the Conqueste

And after him regned Richard, his sonne, a strong knyght and a goode, that in the secunde yere of his regne went into the Holy Lande and with him Baldewyne, Archebishop of Caunterbury, Hubbard, Bishop of Salysbury, Randolfe, th’erle of Glowcestre, and many other lordes of England; and in his wey, he wan Cypry with strenght and went ffurther to Jerusalem, and as moche as the Cristen had loste, he yt conquered saue the Holy Crosse; and he wanne the citee of Acres, and he wold be serued with Sarzyns heedes at his table wherfore thei drad him moche. And thenne come worde to him that his brother John, that was erle of Oxenford, wolde be king of Englond, and thenne he retournd into Englond; but the duke of Ostryche toke him prisoner and lad him to the emperour of Almayne, and after he was raunsomid at C m+ ti and into the payment therof euery other chales in England was broken. And anon, as his brother John herd tell of him comyng, he durst not abyde him but went into Normandy and praied the king of Fraunce to help him, and he said he wold; and whenne reigns of Henry II and Stephen. It resumes with the accession of Henry FitzHenry the son of Henry II.

3Henry FitzHenry.
2080 King Richard come into England, he went to
Wynchester and crowned himself eftsones

king, and thenne went he with grete power
into Normandy to be avenged of his brother
and the king of Fraunce; and John, brother to
2085 King Richard, assembled a grete ooste to fight with
him, but thei were so ferde of him that thei
were fayne to fle into Fraunce; and thenne
King Richard leid sege to the Castell of Gailard,
and there was he slane with a quarell the ix
2090 yere of his regne, and lyeth besyde his fader
at Ffount Euerard.

Off King John

And after him regned his brother John, forasmoche
as he died withoute isshu of his body, and was crowned
2095 at Westmynster of the Archebisshop of Cauterbury. And
anone he went into Normandy and werred with
the king of Fraunce, to he loste al Normandy and
Agone, and thenne he come home agane. And in
the same tyme died Hubard, the Archbischopp of Can-
turbury and the priour, and the convent chosen
2100 on Langton, a clerk that was duellyng in
Rome, to be archebishop, agane the kings wille,
and the pope him admitted, wherfor the king
was wroth, and exiled the prior and chassed the
2105 convent fro Cauterbury, wherefore the pope sent
his letters to the Bischop of London and iij
other bischopes to enterdite this lande, and
and so thei dide. And so all chirche dores wore schut
and no devyne seruice don in hem, wherefore the
2110 king seased the lyvelod of the saide bischopes
and all the goodys that he couth gete of eny
spirituall men, and destroyed there wodes. And after,
the Iresch men moved werre agane the king,
wherfor he sent to the abbotes of the ordoure of
2115 Cistern and bad them ordeyne him x m+ marcs
to help him in his werre agane the Ireschmen.
And thei sent him worde that thei wold not,
wherefor he droffe them fro there houses and
toke from them there godys, so that some of
them fled to Rome and tolde the pope; and
anone the pope sent ij legatys into this
land, Pandolff and Durant, that cursed the
king be name and all that with him dide dele
in eny wise and went agane to Rome. And
whenne the pope saw he wolde not amend,
he sent to the king of Fraunce and praied
him to werre vppon King John, and when
King John herd therof he was ferd,
and sent to the pope to be assoyled and
wold obey the popes award; and the
pope sent Pandolf agane, and he him
assoiled in this forme, that he schulde yeld
vp the lande into the popes handes, and
take yt of him, and yeld him yerly therefor
m+ marc, and that he schuld make ful
restitucon of all that he had taken of Holy
Chirche. And thenne King John knelyd doun
before Pandolfe, in presens of his lorde,
and seid, “Y submitte me to the, in the name
of Pope Innosent the thirde.” And he toke
the croune of his hedde and deliuered yt to
Pandolfe, and he deliuered yt agane vnto
him in the forme abouesaid, so that he and
his successours foreuer schuld pay to the
pope and successours m+ marc yerly, that ys to
say, viij c marc for England, and iij c marc for
Ireland; and after he restored to holy chirch
there godys, and cried mercy of the Archbishop
of Cauterbury and of the covent and thei
him pardoned. And after the lorde of this
lande beginne to werre with the king,

because that he wolde not lette them have there
lawes that seint Edward had stablischt. And the
Archbishop of Cauterbury and the lorde assembled
in a medewe beside Stanes called Ronder Mede,
and thenne the king treted with hem and made
them a chartur of there lawes and ffraunchesies suche as thei desired, and that chartur was called Carta de Rounde Mede; but he hild yt but a while but begane to breke there lawes agane, wherefore the baronage of this lande sent to Philip, king of Fraunce, and praied him to send Lowes, his sonne, into this lande to be theire king; and thei keppe him in London and abode the comying of Lowes. And anone Lowes come with moche people and toke the Castell of Rowchester, and on the morow he come to London and all the lorde that were there dice him homage and fealte. And King John fledde toward Lincoln and come to the Abbey of Swyneshed, and as he sate at mete, he axed of a monk of the howse what suche a loffe was worthe as stode byfore him and the monke seid yt was worth a halfe penny. “Then,” seid the king, “and I may liffe this halfe yere, suche a loffe schall be worth xxd.” Thenne, thought the monke, better yt were that he were dede; and anone he went into his gardine and toke a tode and broched here thorow with a knyffe and let the venome renne into a cuppe with ale, and come byfore the king and seid, “Wesseile, for better ale drank ye neuer,” and the king bad him “Begynne,” and so he dide, and dranke a guode draught, and the king dranke a grete draught therof. And anone the monk went into his dorter and died, and the king rode forth to Newerk and there he died of that poisonne on the morow after, in the xvij yere of his regne, and lyeth at Wynchester; and had isshue Harry that after him was king, and Richard, that was erle of Cornwaile, Isabell, that emperies of Rome, Alianore hat was quene of Scotland.

Off Harry the Thirde

And after him, Harry, his sonne, was made king at ix yere of age by the labour of Sqalo, a legate that the pope sent fro Rome to John the king agane Lowes of Ffraunce. And thenne was there grete
were betwene Lowes and King Harry, and this legate cursed Lowes thercore; and Lowes saw he myght not endure and treted with the king, and thei were so accorded that Lowes schulde haue m+ ti and avoide the lande and neuer come agane, and this a-ward was made at Merton. And thenne went the king and the lordes to London and assembled a parliament and there was made the grete charter in affirmans of the Round Meide and other articles, and also the Charter of the Forest, and Hubard of Burght was made chief Justice in the iiiij yere of his regne. And the same yere was seint Thomas of Caunterbury translate, the I yere after his martirdome. And after the king wedded Alianor, that was suster to the erle of Province, and had isshu by here Edward, that after was king, Edmund, Margarete, that after was quene of Scotlande, and Beatrix, that after was Cunteis of Bretane, and Katerine, that died a maid in religion. And the xlviij yere of his regne begane the werre betwix him and his barones, and on Seint Pancras dai was the Batell of Lowys by-twene him and the barones, and ther was the king taken and put in preson in the castelle of Bar-keley, and Sir Edward, his sonne, also, and many other; and after Sir Edward escaped oute of the warde of Sir Simon of Mountford, and many of the lorde come to him, and at Kenyngworth, Sir Symon Mountfford mette with him, but Sir Simon was discomfte; and he gadered moche people and mette with Sir Edward, and at Evesham, and there was Sir Simond slane, and Hught Spencer, his fader, also, and many mo; and thos that escapad gadred people and fled into the north cuntre but Sir Edward mette with them at Chesterfeld and ther thei wer discomfte, and Robert, erle of Ffrerers, was taken ther. And after Sire Edward bette doun the walles of Leicestre and feched his fader oute of preson and crownd him king agane, wherfor he was called henricus ilim coronatus. And after when the lande was well stablisched Edward and many other lorde went into the Holy Lande, and in the
meanetyme, King Harry died, whenne he had
regned lvi yere and xix wekes, in the yere of
our lorde m+ CC lxxij, and lyeth at Westmynster;
and he made the chirche of Westmynster.

Off King Edward the Firste

Syre Edward was in the Holy Lande and wanne Acres, and dide so grete actes in that cuntre that all the worlde of hym spake; and after he come into this lande, to London, and the citezins caste oute golde and siluer grete plente in reuerens of him, and all the conditis in the cite ranne wyne; and after he was corouned at Westmynster and to coronacon come Sir Alisandre, king of Scotland, and c knyghtes with him riding vpon a c white stedys rychely trapped, and whenne thei come to the palace thei lette there stedis goo and who so toke them had them frely. And after Lewlyn, prince of Waylles, sent into Fraunce to the erle Mountforde, to wedde his doughter, and the erle sent his doughter to him. And a marchaund of Bristow, that come fro Burdeus with iiij schippes charged with wyne, toke hire and brought hire to King Edward, and forasmoche as before that tyme the erle of Mountford had promysed King Edward that he wold not mary here withoute his assent, therfor King Edward kept hire stille and wold not let hire come to Lewlyn; wherfore Lewlyn bygan to werre with the king Edward and diese moche harme to Englyschmen. And the king went into Walles and with strenght toke Lewlyn, so Pat he was fayne to gyffe the king a m+ ti 4 for to haue th'erle Mountford doughter to wyffe, and also bemeide him to come to the kingis Parliament foreuer, and vpon that condicon he hadde the gentilwoman. And after the king somond a Parliament and made many statutes and sent for Lewlyn to come therto, but he wold not,

4 £50,000.
wherfor the king with grete people went into Walles agane and toke him; and he knelled so long before the king and axed him mercy so that he lette him haue his liffe and pardoned his offence. And after, the seid Lewlyn, by the strenght of Dauid Pruys, his brother, begane to werre agane with the king, wherfore the king went in Walles with strong power and brent tounes and slew many Walschmen, and also many of his men were slane in that werre, but at the laste Lewlyn fled, but Sir Roger Mortimer mette with him, and smote of his hede and broght yt to the king; and so conquered he that cuntre, and called himselfe lorde of Wailles as reason was. And thenne the seid Dauid Pruys, brother to Lewlyn, seid that he wold be prince of Walles, and somond a Parliament at Denby, but anone the king him chased and toke him and made to draw him and hang him and set his quarters at four townes in Walles in exemple of suche trators. And thenne all men toke King Edward for prince of Wailles and him dide homage and fealte. And anone after another Walschman, called Ris ap Marecke, meved werre agane the king but he was sone taken and lad to Yorke, and there was he hanged and quartered as a trator. And after the king banyshed many of his Justices and clerkes of his courtes that were ateint of false poyntes, that is to sey Sir Thomas Weiland, Justice, and other; and also, at the request of his comyns, he voided all the Jewes oute of this lande by auctorite of a Parliament. And after, another Walschman called Madok meved were agane the king and anone he was taken and hanged. And thenne fill grete debate in Scotland aftir the deth of Alexandre, king of the lande, for diuers lordes of Scotland and of England clamned to be heire to Alexander. And the Scottys put yt in juggement of King Edward and anone he made se the coronycles of Scotland, wherby thei fonde that Bailol, a lord of Ffraunce, was
next heire of blode to Alexander, and also that the
lande of Scotlande was holden of the king of England
by homage and fealte, wherfore King Edward a-
warded that Bailol schulde be king. And after this,
Sir John Bailol meved werre agane the king by
procuryng of the Scottes, and wold not do his homage,
but distroied townes in the marches, wherfor King
Edward assembled a grete power and come to Berwike
and leid segge thereto and was dryven of iij or iiiij
sawtes wherfore the Scottes made ryme in repreve
of King Edward in this wise: “What wenys thow
Edward with thi long shankes, for to wynne Berwike
all oure vnthankes; gei pike and whenne thow hast

18ra

yt gei dike yt,” but sone after he wanne the toune
and brent and slew all that were therein to the number
of xxij m+; and at the same assawt were slane but
xxviiij of Englischmen, and none of hem was of
reputacion saue Sir Richard of Cornwaile, that was
slane with a quarell. And thenne, on the morow, come
Sir John Bailol and his oste toward Berwike and the
king faught with hem and slew xx m of theme and
toke Sir John Bailol, that was King of Scotland,
prisoner, and many other grete lorde of Scotland,
and ledde hem with him to the Toure of London and
there suare vpon the Sacrament that thei schuld
neuer bere armes agane him, but euer to be trewe
legmenis to King Edward. And then Englisch-
men made ryme in this wyse: “thoos schatering
Scottes holde we for sottys of wrenchens vnware,
that erly in a mornynge with an evyll chevyng
were dryven fro Dunbare” - the batell wasaste
by Dunbar. And thenne the king of Fraunce seised
Gion into his handes and toke thoos that were
gouerenours in the cuntre vnder King Edward presoners,
wherfor King Edward with grete people went thidre
and aryved in Fflaunders, and whenne the
king of Fraunce wiste therof he was ferd and
toke trues for ij yere and delyverd his presoners.
And thereupon King Edward retourenede into
Englond agane. And anone after the Scottys
bygane to werre vpon King Edward and Sir John
Bailol hoped that he might not have his purpose, wherfore he went out of the cuntre and come never agane, and the Scottys chase hem a king, a ribald that was come of nought, called William Walles. And anon King Edward went into Scotland with a ryall ooste and mette with the Scottys at Fawkirke, and slew of them xxxij m+ and William Walles fled awey, and at that batell were slane of Englyschmen but xliiiij. And thenne come King Edward home and wedded Margarete, suster of King Philip of Ffraunce, at London, and thenne went he into Scotland the thirde time and made all the lorde of that lande to become his men, and William Walles was taken and lad to London and there hanged, and his hede sette vpon London Brigge. And thenne made the king Justices of Trailbaston, to enquere of extorcioners, and thei folowed him aboute as he rode; and after he held a Parliament at Westmynster and thider come the lorde of Scotland accordyng to there othes, and all thei helde him for king of Scotland; but sone after Robert Brus, erle of Charrike, by assent of the lorde of Scotland, was made king of Scotland, for he clamte to be heire to Sir John Bailol, and all the lande of Scotland therto assented saue sire John Comyn, that seide he wolde neuer be false to King Edward; wherfor Robert Brus him slew in the chirche of the ffrreres of Dunfrese and he droffe Englyschmen oute of Scotland. And as sone as King Edward yt wyste he went into Scotland with a riall power and mette with the Scottys beside Seint John towne, and the were slane vj m+ Scottys, and Robert Brus fled in Norway, and there were taken the bishop of Baston, the bishop of Seint Andrewe, and the erle Athales, John of Wales, Sir Simon Ffriffill, and ij abbottes and many other; and thei were lad to London and hanged, saue the prelatys, and thei he sent to the pope, armed as thei were, he to chastice hem at his wille.
And after, at Burght vpon Sande in the marche of Scotland, King Edward sekened. And he called to him his lordes and bad theme that after his discese that thei schuld corone Edward of Carnarvan, his sone, king, and that thei schulde neuer suffre Peres of Gascon, that he hadde exiled because of riot that he taught to Edward of Carnarvan, to come into Englond.

And anone after he died in the same place, whenne he had regned xxxv yere, and lyeth at Westmynster, on whos soule god haue mercy.

Off Edward the Secunde

And after him regned his sone, that was borne at Carnarvan. And anone he sent for Peres of Gaston contrary to the will of his fader, and made him erle of Cornwatle, whereof lordes had grete dispite, and by ther labour, he was exiled into Ireland. Aut the king loved him so moche that himselfe laborerd to the lordes Pat he myght come agane, and so he dide, and he was so proud that he sette noght be the lordes, but called them churles, and toke the Rounde Table of golde out of the kingis tresory and many other jewelys that were King Arthuors, and sold hem into Gaston. And after, be the procuring of Thomas, erle of Lancastre, and th’erle of Warwyke, he was slan beside Warwike, and therwith was the king full wroth, and suare that he wold be avenged of his deth. And in this Edwardis tyme were all the Templers distroied in Englond for theire misbelieve and there lyvelod gyven to the Knyghtes of Seint John. And whenne Robert Brues, that the firste Edward dreff out of Scotland, herd that there was vari-ance betwene the king and his lordes,

he come into Scotland and distroied moche of the
cunte of Northumbre; and anone King Edward with grete power went toward him, and mette with
him at Bannokesborne, and there was Kinge Edward discomfite and fled to Berwik, and there
was slane the goode Erle Gylbert of Glare, Sir Robert Clifford, and many other guode Englyschmen.
And thenne made the Scottys ryme and seide:

“Maidens of Englonde, sare may ye mome, ffor tynte ye haue your lemmans at Bannokesborne
with hauelow; what wende the kinge of Englonde for to haue wonne Scotland with Rombelow,”
and thenne come the king to London, and after the
Scottys wanne Berwyke and all the cunte of Scotland. And after, ther was a ryball in
England called John Tanner that seid he was sonne to King Edward the Firste and was born
at Carnarvan, and clamed to be king, wherfore
he was hanged at Northampton and there he
confessed openly that the devell made him to sey so, and promysed him to be king, wherfor
he had sirued him iij yere. And after fell suche derthe in England that a quarter of
whete was at iij marc wherfor the comyns
died faste for hungre, and thei ete dogges and
cattes and stale yong childerin and ete hem,
and that dured more then iij yere. And after Syre Robert Bruys and the Scottys come into
Northumbre and distroied the cunte, and slew prestis and caste doun chirches, wherfore the
pope cursed Robert Bruys and enterdited the land of Scotlanede. And then went King Edward
with grete multitude of people and leid sege to
Berwyke, and while he was at the sege the Scottys come into England, and brente townes,

and dide moche harme; and the Archbischop of York
raised all the cunte, as well men of religion as
other, and mett with hem at Milltton vpon Snaile,
and there were slane many Englyschmen for
thei were husbondmen, and couth lytell skill of
werre, wherfore many of hem were drouned and
slane, and the Archbischop fled to Yorke; and
the Scottys called the batell the White Batell.

2475 This Edward wedded Isabell, the kingis doughter of Fraunce, and whenne King Edward herde thereof, he remeved the sege and come agane into Englund; and then was Sir Hught Spencer sonne made chamberlyn, and he keped the

2480 kingis chamber so well that no man myght speke with the king, but suche as Sir Hught loved; and so ruled he all the lande, wherfore the lorde of the lande had of him grete dispite, and destroied his castelles in the marche of Wailles, wherefore the king was wroth and exiled Sir John Moubray, Sir Roger Clifford, Sir John Damel, and other of there confedracy; but for all that, other lorde wolde not sese but destroied all the landes of Sir Hught Spencer, wherefore the king sent for all the lorde to come to his Parliament at London and thidre thei come with iij batelles, well-armed with bendes of grene and yolowe, wherfore that was called the Parliament of the Bendys.

2490 And the king was aferde of hem, and seide thei schuld haue all there desires resonable, and at theire desire, Sir Hught Spencer and his ffader were exiled foreuer and toke the see at Dover; but within a while after, the king loved hem so moche that he sent for him agane and recevyd theme agane the wyll of his lorde, wherfore the

19rb
goode Erle Thomas of Lancastr, that was the kingis vnkle sone, Humfrey, erle of Hareford, and other lorde and knyghtes that were party to the quarell, assembled grete people toward the North, for ther thei hoped moste socour. And there Sir Andrew Arcla, that was keper of the marche vnder the king, mette with him with moche people, and there was the erle Hareforde slane and the goode erle of Lancastre taken, and many other knyghtes slane, and the erle of Lancastre was lad to Pontfrete. And thidre come the king and Sir Hught Spencer and his sone, and bycause yt was tolde the king that he myght not put him to deth but be his peres, wherfore he ordeyned to be his jugges Sir Hught
Spencer and his sonne, Sir Haymer of Valence, Sir Edmund of Wodstok, and Sir John Malmethorp, Justice, and in the castell of Pontfrete, he was brought before them, and Sir John Malmethorp said to him: "Thomas, our lord the King recordeth that thou art a traitore, and that thou hast raised his people ageyns him, wherfore he forbarreth the of any answere, and as a traitore hanged schall thou be," and anone, without answere, was he lad oute of the castell, and ther was his hede smyten of, for the king pardoned him his hangyng and drawing because he was so nyght of his blode; and the other lordes that were of his affinite were after taken and hanged by the labour of Sir Hught Spencer, and his sonne, and Master Robert Baldok, a pilld clerk that the king was moche ruled by. And the king gaffe Spencer and his sonne there landes and made Master Robert Baldoke Chaunceler of Englond. And after the king wente in to Scotland with c m+ men but the Scottes hid theme and wolde not gyffe theme batell; and with a while, many of the kingis people died for hungre, so that he was fayne to retourne agane. And the Scottys were comen into Northumbre and dide moche harme, and the king toke of thoos Pat were freshest of his oste, to the nombre of xx m+, and mett with the Scottes at the abbey of Beland and there were the Englishmen discomfite and many slane, and the erle of Richmond taken presoner and the king fled. And Sire Andrew Arcla, that the king had sent to reise the cuntre, like as a fals traitore, helde him fro the batell for grete gifts that he had receved of the Scottes, wherfore he was after hanged at Cardoil and quartered. And after God schewed many grete miracles for the love of goode Erle Thomas of Lancastre, for blinde men were heled of there sight that dide pilgrmage to him, and many other grete miracles there were schewed, wherfore Sir Hught Spencer made to schutte the chireche.
dores there as he lay so that of iij yere thei
were not opened, and ordeined xx men of armes
to kepe the hille ther as he was martired; and
after by the labour of Sir Hught Spencer and his
fader, the king seased all the landes of Quene
Isabell, his wiffe, and of Syre Edward, his sone,
and assigned theme xx s a dai for there findyng,
whereby thei myght ryght scarsly lyve, and
whenne the king of Fraunce, that was Quene
Isabell, brother wiste that, he was wroth, and
sent word to King Edward that he schulde
come to him to Parysch and do his homage for
the Duchery of Gion, or elles he wold sease
yt in to his handes, wherefore King Edward
was ferde and sent Quene Isabell into
Fraunce to trete with here brother. And with
here went Sir Haymer of Valence, erle of

Penbrooke, that there was slane in a gonge for
vengeance, that he had demed the guode erle of
Lancastre to be dede. And anone as the quene was
gone, Sire Edward, hire sonne, axed love of his fader for
to go into Fraunce to his moder, and he him graunted,
and anone as he come to the king of Fraunce, he
welcomed him and seid, “Your fader ys ruled be fals
traitors and forbecause that he has taken your
landes fro you, and also fro my suster, thherefore y
gyffe you the Duchery of Gion to holde of me by
homage as yt hath be of olde tyme holden,” and
Sire Edwarde him thankede and wente into Gion and
seasede the cuntre into his handes, and he him a-
lied vnto the erle of Henawde that thenne was the
worthieste knyght of Crystendome, and made him
to wedde his doughter. And whenne Kinge Edwarde
thereof herde, he sent for Quene Isabell and Sire Edwarde
to come to him on peyne of here logeaunce, but thei
wolde notte, wherefor he drade him moche; and by
subtile ymagination of Spencer, he ordeinede l m+ ti
in a barell and sent yt to the grete lordes of Fraunce
to put Quene Isabell and hire sonne to deth, or elles
to exile them oute of that lande, and sent this monye
with lettres by a marchaunt of London called Arnold Spayne;
but as he was in the see he was taken with 
Selanders and brought to the erle of Henawde, and when 
he vnderstode the comittement, he come to Quene 
Isabell and tolde hire therof, and gaffe hire the l 
m+ti and bade here wage hire sawdeours and go in- 
to Englonde to be avengede of the fals traitours Sire 
Hught Spencer and his sonne, “And ye schall haue 
Sire John Henawde, my brother, with you, with D men 
of armes with him.” And anone Quene Isabell wagede 
sawdeours and sche and Sire Edwarde, hire sonne, 
Sire John Henaude, and Sire Edward of Wodstoke, that 
was brother to Kinge Edwarde and erle of Kente, with 
grete power come into Englonde and aryved

2610 “…of the lordes spirituall and temperall, and ar suorne 
to me to helpe me with theire bodyes and goodes.”
And whenne that Mortimer vnderstode yt, he 
was wroth, and schewede yt to Quene Isabell and 
sche suore that sche schulde be avengede opon him;
and anone sche schewede yt vnto hire sonne, the kinge, bat 
thenne was at Wynchestre at the Parliament, and praised 
him on hire blessinge to sende for Sire Edmund and so he 
dide; and Sir Edmund come thidre and or he spake with the 
kinge, he was arestede and brought to the barre byfore 
Sire Robert Hamond and Sire Roger Mortimer, and there this 
lettre was schewed him and Mortimer axede of him 
whedre yt was his lettre and seale, and he said ye, where-
fore thei awardedede that he schulde be dede and anon 
he was ladde withoute the toune, and a gonge fermoure 
smote of his hede or the kinge wiste; and whenne 
he wiste he was full sory for hee hadde thought to 
haue pardoned him. And after yt was tolde the king 
by Sir William Mountagne and other how that Morty-
mer hadd made to flee Sir Edward of Carnarvan, 
and how he lete the Scottes escape in Staunop Parke, 
and of many injuries that he had done to the king 
and the lande, wherefore the king commaunded bat thei 
schulde go take him. And that tyme the king and 
his moder and Mortimer were in the castell of 
Notyngham, and this William Mountagne and 
other come prevely on a nyght and toke Mortimer
in the quenes chambir and Sir Hught of Tippilton, a knyght that was with Mortimer, fought with hem at the chamber dore and was slane, and Mortimer was taken and led to the Tower of London and there was he hanged and quarterd. And after John Bailol, that was king of Scotland, fled oute of Scotlande into Fraunce, and lefte his lande for he wolde not displese Edward the Firste, but

helde him in Fraunce there as he was born; and there he had ishu and died. And this Edward vnderstode that he was heire to be king of Scotland and come into Englonde to Sir Harry Bewmond, his cosyn, that was erle of Angus. And Sir Harry axed leve of the king that Sire Edward Bailol myght go save thorought Englonde into Scotland, and that he myght wage men of Englonde to help him, and so were that he conquered the land of Scotland, he wolde holde yt of King Edward by homage, lyke as yt was byfore. And vpon that condicon, the king gaffe him leve, and anone he waged Englyschmen with him to go, to the nombr of iiij m+ men, and he went into Scotland and there had he ij grete batelle, oon with the erle of Fiffe, another with Robert Bruys and other lorde of Scotland, but Bailol had the better at both batellys and was crowned king of Scotland. And after King Edward of Englonde helde his Parliament at New Castell vpon Tyne and thidre come Sire Edward Bailol and dide his homage wherfore the Scottys were full wroth with him, and whenne he come into Scotland agane, there come a felaschip of Scottes vpon him on a nyght, him to haue slane, but as grace was, he fled thorow a wall and scaped fro hem, and went to Cardoil and there held him. And sent worde to King Edward of Englonde to help him agane his tratores and anone King Edward of Englonde with grete power went to him, and thei both come and leid sege to Berwike, and as thei lei at the sege, ther come doun vpon hem all the chevalry of Scotland, that ys to sey lxv erles and barones, c xl knyghtes, ij m+ men of armes,
lx m+ of comyners, and at Haldoune Hille, beside Berwike, the oostes mette, and King Edward

20va

2680 and Bailol hadde the felde, for the Scottes had no more poisone that dai agane Englyschmen thenne haue xx schepe agane v wolffes, for there were slane but vij englyschmen, and ther was slane of the Scottys xxxv m+ and vij c. And then thei of Berwike dide yelde vp the town to King Edward and he toke his leve at Bailol and went home into Englond, and this batell was in the vij yere of King Edward the Thirde and in the yere of oure lorde Ihesu Cryste m+ ccc xxxij. And after in the xij yere of his regne, he went into Braban and there he duelled halfe a yere to trete with the duke of Braban for his title of Fraunce, for he clamed to be king of Fraunce after the deth of Karoll, the grete king of Fraunce that was brother to Quene Isabell, moder to King Edward, forasmoche as Karole died withoute isshu; and Philip of Wailles, that was vnclle sonne to the seide Karoll, wrongfully helde him therefro; but the duke of Braban and he couth not acorde, wherefore King Edward come home a-gane into Englond and somond a parliament at London, and there he axed grete taxes of the comyns to helpe him in his werre of Fraunce, that ys to say the v parte of ther meveable goddes, and the wolles ofEnglond of oon yere growyng, and the ix schefe of euery grane, and that euery lorde of euery toune schulde ansuere him therfore, and all was graunted, wher-for the grete love that he had of the comyns before tyme was torned into hate. And then went he with grete power into Fraunce and aryved at Seluse, and there Philip of Wailles mette with him in the haven with grete people,

20vb

but the Frencschmen were discomfite, and xxx
2715 of hem slane and many schippes taken; and thenne went the Englyschmen vpon lande and went to the toune of Seint Hamound and leide sege thereto and there abode tell wynter. And thenne sent he into Englund for money but his messengers deceved him, wherefore he was faine to take a trety with the Frensche king; and come a-gane in to Englund and made Edward, his eldest sonne, prince of Wailles, and after in the xxj yere of his regne he went into Fraunce with a grete ooste of xiiij m+ men, and he aryved at Hogges in Normandy and went furth brennyng and destroyng the cuntre. And whenne he come to Brigges of Cadomy he hadde a grete batell and had the felde and toke vij c presoners, and went furth and passed the water of Seyne and also the water of Some, and a lytell beside Cressy he mette with the Frensche king and his ooste, and with the Frensche king come the king of Beame, the duke of Loreyn, and the erle of Fflaunders, and thei were nombred of the Frensche party a c m+, but the vaward fill vpon hem and slow ij m+ of theme and the remanent fledde. And thenne come king Edward to Caleys and leide sege thereto, and while he was at sege, Dauid Brus, king of Scotland, supposing that ther had ben but smale stuffe of men lefte in Englund, and come into the north cuntre to Nevell Crosse with all the chevalrey of Scotland and destroyed the cuntre as he come; but th'Archbishop of Yorke raised the cuntre, all well men of religion as other, and mette with him Durhame and toke him prisoner and many other lordes of Scotland

21ra

also, and discomfite the Scottes and broght Dauid Brus and the other lordes to the Toure of London to abyde the kings comyng. And after his raunson was sette to a c m+ marc to be paiied in x yere, but he died or yt was all paiied and lyeth at the priory of Bewvale in Notinghamshire. And after thei of Cales yeld vp the toune and come byfore the kyng in their shertes,
with ropes aboute there nekkes, and axed him mercy and
he toke hem all to grace, and come home into Englund.
And after, in the xxiiiij yere of his regne, fill suche
a pestilence in this lande that vnneth the x man was

2760 lefte on lyve. And men that fled for the pestilence
died be the way as thei went, wherfore yt was
seide that tyme in this lande that ther was
"ffleying withoute socour, deth without sorowe,
wedding withoute love," and that deth lasted a

2765 yere. And in the yere afore was the gretest
deth at Rome and thorought oute the world that
euer was seyn byfore. And after, in the xxvij yere
of his regne, Harry, erle of Lancastre, was made duke
of Lancastre, and sone after yt was certefied the

2770 king how that Philip of Wailles, the Frensche king,
was dede, and that John, his sone, was corouned
king of Fraunce, and that this John had geven
Karoll, his sone, the Duchery of Guyon, wherfore
King Edward was wrothe and ordeined that

2775 Prince Edward, his sone, shulde go into Guyen to
kepe yt. And himselfe went into Fraunce with a
grete ooste toward the Frensche king, for the Frensche
king sent him worde that he wolde abyde him
at the toune of Odomar and there gyffe him

2780 but as sone as he herde of the comyng of
King Edward, he fledde away as a cowarde

wherefore King Edward come home agane. And
in meane tyme, the Scottes hadde taken the toun
of Berwyke be a trayn but the Castell was kept

2785 fro hem, and anone King Edward wente to
Berwike and droffe away the Scottes; and Sir John
Bailoll, that thenne was king of Scottes, gaffe
vp the realme of Scotlande, at Rokesburght, to
King Edward, and there was he corouned

2790 king of Scotlande, and thenne retoureno into
Englund with moche worshipp. And then wente
Prince Edward into Guyen with a grete ooste and
come to Burdeux, and fro thens he went into Fraunce
to werre vpon King John for the title of

2795 Englund. And beside Peiters he mette with
King John of Fraunce with a grete ooste, and there,
in plane batell, he toke King John of Fraunce and Philipp his sonne and many grete lordes of Fraunce, and discomfite the remanent of hem and come agane to Burdeux. And fro thens he come agane into Englund and brought with him King John and his sone to Westmynster, to King Edward. This King Edward had isshu v sonnes, that ys to say the foresaide Edward, prince of Wailles, Sir Lyonell, Sir John of Gaunte, Sir Edmund of Langley, and Sir Thomas of Wodstoke; and after, in the xxxijj of his regne, the saide Sir John of Gaunt, erle of Richemond, wedded Dame Blanche, daughter and heire to Harry duke of Lancastr. And after King Edward went into Fraunce and leide sege to Parysch and thenne, by the labour of the lordes of Fraunce was a trety taken for a small pees betwene the ij kinges, and the lordes of Ffraunce suore to abyde suche apoyntement as were spoken of betwene hem.

Wherefore King Edward come agane into Englund, and toke with him King John and Philipp, his sone, to Caleys, and there mette with the lordes of Fraunce, and there was a smal pese made and both the kinges suorn on the sacrament to kepe yt, and so were there sonnes and many other grete lordes of both parties suorn to the same. And anone after the devell appered in many places of Fraunce and berafte many men there wyttes, for he hadde dispite of that small acorde, and in the same yere died Harry duke of Lancastre, and Prince Edward wedded the Countes of Kent, that was wife of Sir Thomas Holand, and in the yere after was Sir John of Gaunt made duke of Lancastre, be reason of his wiffe, and Sir Lyonell was made duke of Clarence, and Sir Edmund, his brother, erle of Cambrige, and thenne was Prince Edward made duke of Guyen, and went thidre to kepe yt. And at the making of pese, King John of Fraunce lefte a c men in plegge for hes raunson, that
was sette at a million of golde;5 and these plegges hadd gentill kepers and on a nyght thei stale away euerychon; and whenne King John of Fraunce wiste thereof he come agane

2840 into England and yelde himselfe presoner to King Edward as a trew knyght. And after he died in Savoie beside London and fro thens he was ledde into Fraunce and lyeth at Seint Denyse. And after Prince Edward had a sonne

2845 that was called Edward that afterward died whenne he was vij yere age; and after he hadde isshu another sonne at Burdeux that was called Richard of Burdeux, and in the xI yere of the regne of King Edward, yt

2850 was ordeined that the peter pennes that

21vb

were paide to Rome, by graunte of King Iva of Westsex, for to haue scoles in Englund, schuld no lenger be paide; and in the same yere fill the grettest pestilence that euer was sen in this lande.

2855 And after Pers, King of Spayne, was put oue of his kingdome by the Bastard of Spayne; and this Pers come and besought Prince Edward to helpe him and Prince Edward agreed thereto, and went with him into Spayne and there mette with the

2860 Bastard, that had with him a c m+ men; and Prince Edward had with him xij m+ of Englyschmen and Gascoynes, and his brother, Sir John of Gaunt, was with him, and thei discomfit the Bastard and made Pers king as was before, and then

2865 seide the Spaynardes, "Gloriosius est regem sacere quam regem esse," and thenne retournd hem to Guyen in the xlij yere of King Edward. And the same yere Sir Lyonell, his brother, wedded the duke doughter of Millen, and in the yere after, the Frenschmen brake

2870 the truse, wherfore Sir Robert Knolles, a guode knyght, was sente thidre with viij m+ men and there he abode longe, and dide many worshipfull actes; and after John, duke of Lancastr, and the erle of Cambrygge wedded ij douthers of the seide Pers that was king of Spayn.

5 3,000,000 gold crowns, Vickers (1926:206).
This King Edward made vp Seint Stephen Chepell at Westmynster and endewed yt with lyvelode, and he founded the abbey of Toure Hell, and the freres of Langley, and the ffrute of the Knyghtes of the Garter at Wyndesore, and Seint Georges feste. And in the xlviij yere of his regne there was a trety taken betwene the pope and him at Burdeux for certen permissiones of benefices of this lande, and there thei accorded that the pope schulde not vse no manner of resiruaciones of benefices in England, and that the pope schulde haue his peter pennes he hed before. And the yere after died the guode prince Edward, the worthiest knyght of the world, and lyeth at Caunterbury faste be Seint Thomas. And thenne Richard of Burdeux, his sone, was made prince of Wailles, duke of Cornwaile, and erle of Chestre, and whenne King Edward hadde regnd liij yere he died at Shene, and lyeth at Westmynster.

Off King Richard the ij

And after him regned Richard of Burdeux, pat was Prince Edward sone, and was corouned king when he was xj yere of age. And Sir Roger Mortimer, erle of Marche, that was Sir Lyonell daughter sone, was borne vpon the erle of Northumbre schulder and offered next King Richard as heire apparrant at the seide coronacon. And after in the iij yere of his regne, at a Parliament holden at Wynchestre, was ordeined that euery man, woman, and childe of the age of xiiij yere schulde paie iiiij d to the king, whiche caused the rysing of Kent, for anone after, the comens of Kent and Essex rose and made theme a capteyne that was called Jakke Strawe, and thei come to Southwerk upon Corpus Christi Dai and lete oute all the prisoners of the kingis benche and of the marshalsy and thei slew all the alienes that thei fonde in the citee; and on the morow after thei come to the Toure of London theras King Richard lay and the king sent to them
the Archbishopp of Caunterbury, Sir Symon Sudlery,

Sir Robert Hailez, prior of Seint Johnz, and a white 
ffere that was confessor to the king, to wytte of 
hem what thei wolde; and anone vpon the Toure 
Hill thei smyten of there hedes alle iij. And 
thenne thei went to all the Innes of Court and 
brenned all the bokes of lawe, and thei brent 
the Savoye that was the duke of Lancastre 
place, and lete oute the presoners of Newgate,

22rb

Ludgate, and the countres, and on the morowe 
thei mette with the king in Smythfelde, to trete with 
him and William Walworth that thenne was 
Maire of London, bycause that Jakke Strawe wolde 
not do of his hoode to the king, slew him with a 
daggar, and Sir Rauff Standisshe smote of his 
hede, and helde yt vpon a point of a suerde; and 
anone all the harlottes fledde. And thenne the king 
made Walworth knyght and vj other men of 
London that chased the rebawdes awey, and after 
many of hem were taken and hanged, and that 
was called the hurvyng tyme. And in the 
v yere of his regne was a grete erdequaue 
toroght all the world. And after, in the same yere, 
Sir Harry Spencer, Bischopp of Norwyche, and a 
nknyght went into Flaunders and had a grete 
batell at Donkirke and discomfite the Flemynge,

and thenne thei leide sege to Ipper but thei 
couth notte gete yt, and therfore thei come a-
gane in to Englond. And in the vj yere of his 
regne, he wedded Anne, doughter to the emperour of 
Almayn, at Westmynster. And in the ix yere of his 
regne, he helde a Parliament at Westmynster and 
there, Sir Edmund of Langley, erle of Cambrigge, and vncle 
to the king, was made duke of Yorke, and his other 
vncle, Sir Thomas of Wodstoke, that was erle of 
Bukingham, was made duke of Gloucestr, and Sir 
Robert le Vere, that was erle of Oxenford, was 
made Marques of Develyn, and Harry of Bolling-
broke, the Dukis sone of Lancastre, was made erle 
of Derby, and Sir Edward, that was the erle of Kentis 
brother, was made erle of Huntingdon, and Sir
Thomas Mowbray, earl of Nottingham, was made Marschall of England, and Sir Michael of Pooell, knyght, was made earl of Suffolk and Chaunceler of England. And at the same Parliament the earl of Marche was proclaimed heir apparent to King Richard, and after the same earl of Marche went into Ireland to see his earldom of Vistre and there was he slain by wild Irishmen. And after them were various lords, that is to say, Sir Thomas of Wodstok, duke of Gloucester, Sir Richard, Earl of Arundell, Sir Richard, earl of Warwick, Sir Harry of Bollyngbroke, earl of Derby, and Sir Thomas Mowbray, earl of Nottingham, and they were of one assent and of one affinite, and proposed to have the rule of the king and the realm and to put away such persons as the king was ruled by and gathered to them great people, wherefore certain persons that were great of the king's counsel, that is to say, Sir Alexander Nevill, Archbishop of York, Sir Robert Vere, Marquis of Develyn, and earl of Oxenford, and Michael of Pooell, earl of Suffolk and Chaunceler of England, fledded upon the sea and came never again. And then those lords made a Parliament at Westmynster and at that Parliament Sir Robert Trevilian, Chief Justice, Sir Nicole Brunbre, knyght and ciztezein of London, Sir John Salysbury, knyght, and other, were atient of treason and hanged; and Sir Simon of Berkeley, Sir John Beauchamp, Steward of the king's house, and Sir John Berners, were judged to be dead at that same Parliament, and there heades were smytten of at the Tour Hill. And Quene Anne knelled on here knees to the duke of Gloucester and prayed him that Sir Simon of Berkeley might be taken to grace, but he wolde notte in no wise. And after that Parliament they made ryal justinges and tornementes as euer was seen in this lande, for the king and his xxiiij Knyghtes of the Garter toke the toon side agane all that wolde come,
and thidre come the erle of Seint Poules and the dukes some of Holand and many other knyghtes of strange landes; and whenne the king and his xxiiij knyghtes schulde come in to the felde, xxiiij ladies lad theme, that ys to sey, euery lady ladde a knyght with a cheyne of golde, fro the Toure to Smyth feld, torought London, on horsebakke. And whenne all was done the strauungers hadde grete rewardes and went home. And after in the xiiiij yere of his regne, Sir John of Gaunt, duke of Lancastre, went upon the see into Spayne, for he clamed to be king of Spayne by his wiffe, and his wiffe went with him, and his iij doughters with a grete ooste, and the king of Spayne schulde wedde the seide duke of Lancastre doughter, and also that he schulde giffe to the seide duke a grete summe of money and euery yere durying the lyffe of the saide duke x m+ marcs to be paide at Baren. And after the same duke maried another doughter to the king of Portiugale and thenne come he and his wiffe home agane into Englonde. And after, in the xv yere of his regne, there was a man of the Bischopp of Salysbury called Romen, and he smote a baker in Fletestrete, and the strete rose vpon him and droffe him into the Bishopp place of Salysbury and the Bischoppes men schette the gates and wolde notte lette hem come in. And anone the Maire come thidre and made the comyns of the toune to go home, and the Bischopp compleyned maliciously to the king of this mater, wherfore the king discharged the Maire and the Sheryffs of theire offys and made a knyght of his Keper of the Citee. And after he remeved all his courtes to Yorke and helde them there halfe a yere and then he brought his courtts ageyne to Westmynster. And thei of the citee of London gaffe the king xx m+ ti to graunte them the ffraunchises that he hadde taken fro hem. And after in the xvij yere of his regne Quene
Anne died at Shene and lyeth at Westmynster. And this King Richard made Westmynster Halle the ijnd tyme.

And after, in the xx yere of his regne, he wedded

3035 Isabell, daughter to the king of Fraunce, at Caleis, the saide Isabell thenne beyng of the age of ix yere; and brought here into Englonde and coroned here quene at Westmynster. And the xv day of August nexte folowyng, for wrath that the king hadde to the

3040 duke of Gloucestre, the king himselfe rode to Plashe. There the saide duke of Gloucestre lay, andarested him. And thenne the dukes kneeld afore the king and besought him that hire housbande myght haue his grace and the king seide to here, “Dame, suche grace as your housband

3045 graunted to Quene Anne, whenne sche knelyd to him on hire knees for Sir Simon of Berkeley, hire Chambleyn, suche grace schall he haue and none other.” And then the king ledde him to the castell of Ledys and fro thens he sent him to Caleis, and anone after, he sent worde

3050 to his kepers to put him to dethe. And thenne the king somond a Parliament at London and sent for all his lorde, and for knyghtes, and esquiers, and especyally for men of Cheeshire to strenght him agane his enmyes, and anone he arrested the erle of Warwike,

3055 the erle of Arundell, Sir John Cobhame, and Sir John Cheyne, and at that same Parliament thei were all iiiij demed to be dede; and the erle of Arundell was lade to the Toure Hell, to the place that Sir Simon of Berkeley was slayne in, and there was his hede smyten

3060 of and the ffreres Austeyne toke his body and beried it in here quere; and the erle of Warwyke and the other ij knyghtes were put in perpetuall presone. And atte this Parliament the king made v dukes, a duches, a marques, and iiiij erles, that is to sey, the

3065 erle of Derby was make duke of Hereford, and th’erle of Rotelande was duke of Awmerle, the erle of Kent was made duke of Surrey, th’erle of Huntaryngdone was duke of Exetir, and Sir Thomas Mowbrey, erle of Notyngham, Marschall of

3070 Englonde, was made duke of Northffolke, and th’erle of Somerset was made marques of Dorset, and the
lorde Spencer was made erle of Gloucestre, and the 
lorde Nevyle of Reby was made erle of Westmerland, 
and Sir Thomas Percy was made erle of Worcestre, 
and Sir William Scrop was made erle of Wylschire, 
and Sir John Montagne was made erle of Salysbury. 
And anone the duke of Hereford apeled the duke 
of Northffolke of treson and thei yowed batell and a 
day sette at Coventre and thidre come the king, 
and whenne the ij lordes were in the felde to do 
there armes, the king toke there mater into his 
hande; and anone he exiled the Bischop Arundell, 
that was Archebischop of Cauterbury, foreuer, and 
thei toke the see at diuers portes, and the duke of 
Northffolke went into Veynys, and there he died. And 
in the yere after died Sir John of Gaunt, duke of 
Lancastre and Laycestre, and was caried to Powles 
at London and there he lyeth by Dame Blanche, 
his wiffe, that was daughter to Harry, erle of 
Lancastre, and his heire. And after King Richard 
purposed to go into Irelande and drade him of 
treson in his absence wherefore he made blanke 
charteres, and made as well spirituel men as laymen, 
that ys to sey, lordes, knyghtes, and esquiers to 
seel them, and wryte there names by the 
seales; and thenne he went into Irelande with a 
grete ooste and made the duke of Yorke his 
Lyeutenaunt of Englund, and while he was in 
Ireland, the erle of Derby that was made duke 
of Hereford come to Caleys and there he mette 
with Arundell the Archbischop, that was exiled, 
and with him, the erle sone of Arundell and his heire, 
the whiche was warded in the castell of Regate, 
and stale awey and come to Caleys. And thei went 
all into a schippe with here meyne and sayled 
northward and landed at Ravenspon besyde 
Brydlington in Yorkeshire, and seide he come 
to clame the duchery of Lancastre after the deth of 
his fader Sir John of Gaunt. And the people of 
the cuntre come faste vnto him and welcomed 
him, and thenne he went to Pontfrete When 
Bussy Scropp and Grene, that were knyghtes
of the kinges counseill, herde that he was comen, thei fledde into the Castell of Brystowe and there come the duke Harry and toke hem oute and smote of there hedes. And thenne he wente to Lodlowe to herkyn of King Richard comyng, and King Richard was al the tyme in Irelande, and there he made Harry, sone to the seide Duke Harry, knyght, and he herde of the comyng of Duke Harry; and anone he come into Walles, to the castell of Flynte with a few meyne, for his men fled fro him for fere of Duke Harry, and many of hem come to Duke Harry. And anone Duke Harry come thidre, and the erle of Northumbrilande and Sir Harry Percy with him, and thei come vnnder saue condite to trete with the king. And thei promysed him that and he wolde be ruled by them he schulde not be put fro his regaly, and thenne thei broght him to London and put him into the Toure, and thei went and toke there counseil togeder and suche as were of the counseil of Duke Harry told him that he schuld neuer haue reste in this land but yf he were king. And thenne went diuers lorde to the Toure, to King Richard, and told him how the lorde seide and the comyns desired to haue Duke Harry king. “Thenne,” ansuerd he and seide, “Yf yt be there wille so to do, I agre therto, vpon thes condicions, that Y may haue x m+ ti yerly, and be vnnder the governauns of a lorde, and haue my detty paide; and whenne Y am dede, to be beryed by Quene Anne, my wyffe; and yf Duke Harry and Arundell the Archbisshop will be suom on a boke to performe these condicions, Y wyll resigne the corone to him.” And on the morne thei were suom byefore King Richard in the toure to performe thes condicions, and then Duke Harry and all the lorde gaff vp ther homage to King Richard; but Sir Harry Percy wold not, nor he wold neuer assent that Duke Harry schuld be king, but he departed in wrath fro him and went into the north cuntre. And on Mychelmasse even, King Richard, in the xxiiij yere of his regne, gaf vp the corone to Duke Harry, and then was
called Richard of Burdeux.

Off King Harry the iiiij th

And on Seint Edwardes dai the Confessoure next after, Harry duke of Hertford and of Lancastre, was coroned king at Westmynster by the auctorite of a Parliament that then was holden at Westmynster, and at that same Parliament the duke of Surrey was degrated of his duchery and made erle of Kent, and the duke of Exestr degrated and made erle of Huntyngdone, and the erle of Gloucestre degrated and made Lorde Spencer agane as thei were before, and Harry, the eldest sone of the king, was made prince of Wailles, duke of Cornwaile, and erle of Chestre, and Arundell was made Archebischop of Caunterbury ageyne, and Sir Roger Walden degraded, Pat was archbishop, and made Bishop of London, and the erle of Arundell sone, that come with the king fro Caleis, was made erle of Arundell. And after the king helde his Crystmasse at Wyndesore, and on the xij even come the duke of Awmerle to the king and tolde him that the dukes of Surrey and Excestr that were degraded, and th’erle of Salysbury, the of Gloucestre, and other of there affinite were accorded to make a momyng to the king on the xij day, and in there revell to sle the king. And the same nyght the king come to London to gete him helpe to destroie thes lordes, and anone as thei wyste that theire conseill was discouerd, thei fled awai; and the duke of Surrey and th’erle of Salysbury and Sir Raufe of Lameley fled to Chechestre, and thei of the toune toke hem and smote of there hedes and brought hem to London to the king, and thei were sette on London Brygge. And many knyghtes and squiers that were of theire affinite were taken and there hedes smyten of, and the erle of Huntyngdon was taken and his hede smyten of and sette on London Brygge, and the Lorde Spencer that was erle of Gloucestre was taken at Bristowe and his hede smyten of and sette on London Brygge, and many a guode knyght and squier were servued on the same wise. And anone after, the king sent Quene Isabell into Fraunce to hire fader, and toke from here hire dury, and that was full
3195 grete pete. And after that King Richard had thus resigned, 
he was ladde to the castell of Pontfrete, and there he 
died for hungyr and was beryed at Langley, and 
there abode his body vnto the tyme that King Harry 
the vth toke him vp and beryed him at Westmynster

24ra

3200 beside Quene Anne, fast beside Seint Edward schryne. 
And after, King Harry went into Scotland with a grete 
people and wanne many tounes; and he went to 
Edinburght and leide sege thereto and as he was at the 
sege wordes come to him that Ewen of Glendore was 
risen in Wailles, wherefore the king come agane in- 
to Englond, and lefte the sege. And anone after, in the 
same yere, Sir Harry Percy hadd a grete batell with the 
Scottys at Humbeldon Hille and there the Scottes were 
discomfite, and th' erle Douglas and th' erle of Fiffe wer 
taken presoners, and many of the Scottes slane; and this 
Ewen of Glendore toke the lorde Gray of Rythin pri- 
soner and raunsond him to x m+ ti. And in the third yere 
of his regne, Sir Roger of Claryngton, knyght, v freres 
minores, the prior of launde, and diuers doctores of diuinite 
had there hedes smyten of for certeyn tresonnes hat 
yimagined; and after Ewen toke sire Roger Mortymer 
that was brother to th' erle of Marche presoner, at the batell 
of Pill Aleyn in Milleneth, and slew a m+ of his men, 
and there were slane m+ Walschemen. And Ewen put 
him in chose of iij thinges, that is to sey, to wedde Ewen- 
is daughter, or to pay him xx ti, or to haue his hede 
smyten of, and he chase to wedde his daughter. And that 
tyme was seen the blasing sterre that clerkes callede 
stella cornata, and in the yere after, Sir John Massy 
of Tacton suore on Goddes body, before Sir Harry Percy 
and many other in Chesshire, that King Richard was 
on lyve in Scotland, wherefore Sir Harry Percy gadred 
mochë people of Chestirschire and other and come 
toward the king; and anone the king gaderd people and 
mette with him beside Shrewsbury, and in the bulfelde, 
vinger a lytell toune called Berwike, was Sir Harry 
Percy slayne, and Sir Thomas his brother fledde and 
after he was taken and his hedde smyten of; and 
therle Douglas was there with Sire Harry Percy, and was 
taken and brought to the king. And at that batell
were slayne on both parties ij m+ ij c, and there was slane th’erle of Stafford that come with the king, and on both parties were slayne ix knyghtes, and th’erle of Northumbre fledde into the north cuntre and kept the castell of Bamburght, and thidre come the king and th’erle yelde him to his grace.

And after, at the Perliament of Coventre, the erle was restored to his landes, and in the same yere the emperour Constantine Noble come to se this lande and taried in this lande halfe a yere on the kinges coste. And afterward the Baron of Graystok and other were taken in the castelle of Berwyke and there hedys smyte of, and in the yere folowyng, Dame Johane Inches of Bretane, was wedded to the king at Winchester and was coroned at West-mynster, and the same yere, Dame Blanche, the kings daughter, was wedded to the dukes sonne of Beer at Coleyne. And in the vj yere of his regne, Sir Richarde Scrop, Archbischop of Yorke, the erle Marschall, and Sir Thomas Plimpton gaderd people in the north cuntre, and anone the king come thidre, and or he come thei were taken and brought to him, and anone he lette a jugge sytte vpon hem and thei were all iij dampted to deth and theire hedes smyte of. And anone after, the king was smyte with the sekenesse of lepre and kouth neuer be hole therof, and after, God schewed many myracles for the saide Bischop Scrop. And in the yere after Sir Edmond Holand, erle of Kent, wedded Lucy, suster to the duke of Millen, and in the same yere, Philipa, the yonger daughter of the king, was wedded to the king of Denmark and of Norwey, atte London in Denmark. And the viij yere of the regne of the seide King Harry, th’erle of Northumberlande and the lorde Bardolf come with moche people oute of Scotlande into the north cuntrey for to destroie the king, but the cuntrey rose vpon hem and toke them beside Wetherby, and smyte of there hedys and sent them to the king. And in the yere folowyng, the kinges sonnes were made dukes, that ys to sey, Thomas was made duke Clarence, John was made duke of Gloucestre, and Sir Thomas Beauforde was made erle of Dorsett, and the duke of Awmerle was made duke of Yorke. And thenne the king proposed to go to Jerusalem therefor to dye, for yt was
prophecyed of him that he schulde dye in Jerusalem. And then he was at Westmynster, and felte himselfe seke that he myght not ryse, and asked how that thei called that chamber that he lay in and thei saide Jerusalem. “For soth,” seide he, “here must y dye.” And so he dide anone after, in the xiiiij yere of his regne, and lyeth beside Seint Thomas schryne at Crysteschurche in Caunterbury.

24va

3285 Off King Harry the fifte

And after him regned Harry, his sone, that was borne at Monmouth in Wailles; and in the fyrste yere of his regne was an assemble of lordes besyde seint Johans, and as thei were in gadering, thei were taken and brought to the king, and after thei were all brent, for thei were alle proposed to haue destroied the king; and the clergy and Sir Roger was of there affinite and therfore was he hanged. And the nexte yere after he sent embassitores to the Frensche dolphyn, that he wolde yelde him his inheretaunce of Normandy and Guyen or els he wolde conquere yt with dente of swerde, with the grace of God, and he sent him worde agane that yt become him better to pley at the tonnes, wherfore he sent him a tonne of tennes balles to pley with; and the king was greved therewith, and by the advyse of his lordes spiritual and temperall, he went with a grete army to Southampton and there th’erle of Cambrigge, that was brother to the duke of Yorke, the lorde Scrop, Tresorer of England, and Sir Thomas Grey, knyght, had there hedes smyte of, for thei had recevyd xx m+ ti of the Frensche men for to sle the king and his brethren, as yt was openly preved. And thenne he went to schipp with his lordes and retene and aryved at Kidcaws in Normandy in the even of the Assumpcion of Oure Lady, in the iij yere of his regne, with a full ryall ordinaunce, and many grete gonnes and gonne stones, for he thought to pley at the tennes with the
dolphyn. And fro thens he went to Harflew
and leide sege therto, and smote downe the
toures and walles with his gonnes, that
thei were fayne to yelde vp the toune, and
the king made his vnele erle of Dorsete
capteyne therof and bade him put oute
all the Frensche people of the toune, both
men, women, and childerin. And he lette
crye in Englonde that what man or
woman wolde come dwell there, thei
schulde haue competent howsyeing

24vb

and pay nothing therfore, and thidre come many Englysch
folke and inhabite the toune; and thenne passed the king
furth toward Parysch, and in the felde of Agincourt was
all the chevalry of Fraunce assembled. And the duke of
Yorke was in the vaward of the Englyschmen, and he
made euery archer to haue a sharpe stake afore him, for
ther was of the Frensche men a c m+, and of Englyschmen
but vij m+, and the Frensche men proposed to haue ouerryden
theme. And then oure king had herde masse and axed
what tyme of the day yt was, and one saide yt was
ix of the clok. “For soth,” saide oure king, “now all the clergy
of oure land praieen for vs, and therfore now ys guode
tyme to go to batell.” Wherfore he praiede euery man,
with a lowde vois, to be of guode chere, for he saide he wolde
rather dye in felde that dai than be taken, for he wold
not put the lande of England in danger for his persone.
And thenne he cryed on hyght “In the name of God and
Seint George, auaunt baner!” And the Frensche men of
armes come faste vpon hem, to haue ouerryden hem,
but what with arows and with stakes, thei and there hors
were ouerdrawen, that thei lay on hepes more thenne
a spere hight, and within an owre thei were discomfite.
And that day the Frensche men saw Seint George
in the felde, in his armes, and euer syth hath his dai
ben halowed in this lande and euer schall; and thenne
come worde to oure king that there was a newe batell
of Freischmen redy to come vpon him, to the nombre
of iiiij xx m+, and anone oure king them worde to voide
the felde and els he wolde slee all his presoners, and
thenne thei departed fro the felde. And the king retorened
to Harflowe with his presoners, that is to sey, the duke of Orliance, the duke of Burben, the erle of Vende, th’erle of Ewe, th’erle of Richemond, Sir Durfigaunt, Marschall of Fraunce, and many other lordes, knyghtes, and squiers, and there were slayne of the Frensch party, the duke of Berrey, the duke of Alaunson, the duke of Braben, the erle of Narven, Constable of Fraunce, and viij other erles, a c barones, and of knyghtes and cote armes, a m+ and moo, and of fotemen x m+; and of Englyschmen were slane the duke of Yorke, th’erle of Suthffolke, Sir Dauid Kam, and Sir Richard of Kighly, and xvj other persones, and no moo. And thenne come oure king, with his presoners, into Englond and come to Canterbury,

and offered to Seint Thomas, and so furth come toward London, and his presoners with him. And on the Blake Heth mette him the Maire of London, the shereffes, the aldermen, and the craftes, in theire best aray; and the king passed forth to Seint Thomas Watering and there mette him the clergy of the cite, as wele seculer as religiouse, and sang “te deum laudamus” with a faire procession and in the Chepe was made a castell of canvas, and that was full of ladies and gentylwomen, and in the same castell were many childerin arrayed like angelles and thei song in this wise, “King Saul slowe a thousand men, but oure king hath slane suche ten,” and pointed toward the king with there king, and an angell come done with avyse, and presented him with a basyn full of golde, and thenne thei lette flee aboute him a m+ smale birdes; and thenne come he to Poules and there mette him xijj bischopes, rowssed and mitered, and iche of them a sensoure of golde in his hande, and thei sang “te deum laudamus;” and whenne the king come to Ludegate and a woman poured a bolle full of whete on his hede, and that lyked him ryght well, and the bowers of London hadde hanged outhere bowers so that, fro Ludgate to Temple Barre, both sydes of the strete hing full of bowes, but that lyked not the Frenshe presoners; and so rode he forth
to his palace of Westmynster. And in the iiiij yere of his regne, came th' emperour of Almayne into this lande to se the king, and the king loged him in his owne palace at Westmynster, and as longe as he was there, he was on the kinges coste, and hadde grete chere. And after, in the v yere of his regne, be the advyse of his lordes, he went upon the see agane and wanne many castellys and tounes, and he leide sege to Cane and wanne yt with strenght, and made duke of Clarence capteyn therof; and so he went forth

25rb

to Roon. And the same yere, Sir John Oldecastell, Lorde Cobhame, was hanged and brent for Lollardrye in Englande and for treson and so were many moo of his secte. And thenne the king sent Sir Thomas Dewforde, duke of Excestre, to the capteyn of Roon, to bede him yelde the citee to the king and he seide he wold not, and anone the king come thidre with his lordes and all his retenew and segid the toune on euery side, both be lande and water. And there was in the citee of Roon ccc m+ men, women, and childerin, of the whiche there was xxx m+ goode haruest men, and daily thei issuied oute at divers yates of the toune and faught full manly with oure meyne, but allwei thei were dryven in agane. And so were keped vn- to thei hadde eten there horses, theire hondes, theire cattes, theire myse, and rattes, and thousands of them died for hungre, and then put thei oute men, women, and childerin into the dikes, but the king wolde not suffre them to passe away, but lete them die for hungre; and there men myght see childerin soke theire moders whenne thei were dede, and men lay in the dikes gnawing grasse and eten childerin, and so dyede in the dikes many thousands, and thenne thei of the citee were full fayne to yelde vp the cite and haue there lyves, and become the kinges legemen and of him to holde foreuer; and after, in the vij yere of his reigne, there was a trety taken betwene the king and the king of Fraunce and yt was so acorded that oure king schulde wedde Dame Katerine, daughter to the
king of Fraunce, and that oure king schulde chaunge his style, that is to sey, whereas he called him in his stile Rex Anglie Fraunce, that he schulde calle himselfe Rex Anglie, heres to regens Frauncie duryng the lyffe of the

king of Fraunce, and after his diocese to calle him Rex Anglie Frauncie, and in like wise schulde his heres kinges of England so be taken and called foreuer. And by the same acording, king Charles of Fraunce was delyverd to oure

king to be vnder his rule, for he was notte full wyse, and so he was vnder the rule of oure king all his lyfe; and after the king wedded Dame Katerine, daughter to King

Charles, atte Troys in Champen, and broght here into Englonde, to Westmynster. And after, the duke of Clarence was slayne in Fraunce, fast by the water of Leire, with the Frenschemen and Scottes, because he wolde not be gouerned by his counsel, and toke his archers with him; and

there were taken the erle of Huntyngdon, th'erle of Somersette and his brother, and iij xx goode knyghtes were slayne with them. And after, in the ix yere of his regine, he went agane into Fraunce, and on Seint Nicholas Dai, was Quene Katerine
delyverd of a prince that was called Harry, and in the x yere of his regne Quene Katerine went upon the see to Harflow to the king, hire housband, and with here went the duke of Bedford. And after in the x yere of his regne he died at Bois de Vincent, and within iij wekes after, King Charles of Fraunce died, and thenne Harry, sonne of the saide King Harry, was called Rex Anglie Frauncie, according to the couenauntes aforseid, and he was then of the age of xxxvij wekes. And anone after the body of King Harry the v te was brought into Englonde and beryed at Westmynster, besyde Seint Edwardes schryne. And the ii nd yere after come divers lordes oute of Fraunce, to doo theire homage to King Harry the Sexte as king of
Englonde and of Fraunce, and the king of Scottes, 3485
that then was in Englund and had ben many  
yeres byfore, dide his homage to him in presens  
of many lordes. And the same yere, the duke  
of Bedforde, that then was Regent of France,  
had a grete batell with the Frenschemen and the  
Scottes at Vernell in Perche, and there were  
many lordes of Fraunce and of Scotlande  
slane, and many other goode men of werre,  
to the nombr of ix m+; and the duke of  
Detforde hadde the victory. And in the said  
yere, King Harry the Sexte was coroned  
at Westmynster. And after, the seide king  
of Scottes wedded the erles daughter of  
Somerset, and after, in the iiij th yere of the said  
King Harry, he was made knygth at the  
Parliament at Leicestre, and so was the  
25vb  

duke of Yorke and many other lordes; and in the  
vj te of his regne was the goode erle of Salysbury  
slayne atte the sege of Orliaunce, with a gonne, that  
was oon of the worthiest knyghtes of the world,  
and was beryed at Burssham.
The Glossary

The glossary attempts to record every form of every word that occurs in the text, with a selection of references sufficient to illustrate each form and to exemplify the principle senses and uses of each word. Where, as is frequently the case, words appear in variant forms and spellings, it is generally the variant that occurs most frequently that appears in listings. However, there are some exceptions to this principle. When variants occur in more or less equal numbers, an alphabetic system of listing has been adopted. Where words, especially verbs, appear in different inflectional forms, listing follows a fixed order. Verbs are given in the infinitive if it appears in the text. Where no infinitive appears, it has not been reconstructed. In this case, listing follows the order which is also adhered to in the listing of inflexional categories in the final part of the entry. That is, by the present tense, indicative, in order of person in the singular, then the plural, the subjunctive, the imperative, the past tense indicative and subjunctive, the present participle and the past participle. Formal distinctions in the past tense between singular and plural are not normally made in the language of the scribe, and therefore in the glossary number distinctions in the past are only specified on the rare occasions were the plural is formally distinguished in the text. There has been no attempt at hypothetical reconstruction of headwords. That is to say, for example, where no infinitive form of a verb appears in the text, the form of the infinitive has not been theoretically derived from the stem in the inflected form.

For convenience of glossing senses, where a weak verb appears in both past tense (p.t.) and past participle (p.p.) forms that are morphologically identical, then past tense and past participle forms are conflated as “p.t. and p.p.” with no separate categorisation.
A Note on Alphabetisation

<i> and <y> where they represent vowels in non-initial position are treated as identical and appear under <i>. Where there are equal numbers of spellings of <i> and <y> in the spellings of a given word, <i> appears before <y>. Where <i> and <y> appear in initial position the <y> forms appear in an alphabetical order after <w>, and <i> after <h>, and where a given word appears with both initial <i> and <y> spellings, they are glossed under the letter under which they are most frequently spelled.
Glossary of Terms

A

a, an indef. art. a 3, 5, 10, 23, 40, 51, etc.
a pron. see he
abbey n. abbey 1395, 1466, 1659, 1673, 2170, etc.
abbot(t) n. abbot 1363, 1418, 1799, 2114, 2393
abide see abide
abode see abide
about, about prep. around 326, 810, 856, 896, 2000, etc.
about adv. around 2373
about see about
abide, abide v. stay, reside (at) 79, 111, 529; await 2750, 2778; remain 2077; keep 2814; p.t. abode 139, 526, 1187, 2164, 2718, etc.
abyte n. religious habit 802, 1306
abode prep. above 1193
abouesaid adj. described above 2143
abuse n. absence 3092
acorde, according n. truce 2825, 3448
ac(c)orde v. reconcile 2700; p.t. and p.p. 163, 389, 664, 1329, 1783; p.t. and p.p. agreed 574, 1452, 2199, 3176, 3438
according to according to 2376
actes n.pl. deeds 2243, 2872
admitted p.t. admitted 2103
adoo see do
aduersite n. adversity 280
advyse n. advice 912, 1227, 3303, 3405
afir see (f)ferd(e)
affinite n. agreement 2528, 2968, 3176, 3186, 3293
affirmans n. confirmation 2203
afir see after
afore adv. previously 2765
afore prep. in front of 3042, 3333
(a)foresaid(e), aforesaid adj. aforesaid 339, 2804, 3474
after, afir adv. afterwards 13, 30, 86, 99, 101, etc.; prep. after 55, 57, 286, 297, 300, etc.; afir 234; after that conj. 229, 1905
after that see after
afterward(e), afterward(e) adv. afterwards 55, 223, 314, 381, 384, etc
afir see after
afterward(e) see afterward(e)
aga(y)ne, ageyne adv. again 182, 296, 387, 394, 406, etc.
agane see ayen
age n. age 92, 244, 795, 954, 1335, etc.
agueyns see ayen
agree v. agree 2858,3138
aither pron. each 954
all(l) quant. all 17,22,25,42,45,etc.; adv. completely 52,435,807
alas exclam. alas 1080,1381,1488
aldermen n.pl. aldermen 3374
ale n. ale 2179,2180
alied p.t. alieth vnto allied with 2585-6
alienes n.pl. foreigners 2911
all(l)wey, allwei adv. always 1264,1424,3422
alone adv. alone 973
also adv. also 22,843,1124,1419,1976,etc.
amend(e) v. amend (behaviour) 27,29,1490,2125; p.t. amend 452
among prep. among 111,303,602,1479,1530,etc; between 937; emong 303,937,1479,1530,1621,etc.
an see a.
anamo(u)rd(e) p.p. enamoured 876,1110
and conj. and 5,7,8,9,11,etc.; if 142,813,846,2174
angell n. angel 1518,1652,3385; /angell 1382
angelles see angell
angelles
angre n. anger 688
any see eny
anon(e) adv. at once, shortly 130,131,134,143,150,etc.
another another pron. another 65,243,434,632,645,etc.; adj. 434
anoyted refl. p.t. became acquainted 93-4,122
ansuer(e) v. answer 874,2522,2523
ansuere,answere n. answer 874,2522,2523
apeled p.t. accused 3077
ap(p)ered p.t. appeared 62,1518,2823
apointed p.t. appointed 913
apoyntement n. agreement 2815
apostles n.pl. apostles 587
apparant adj. heire apparent heir apparent 2900,2959
apparell v. fit out, equip 741
aquaynted refl. p.t. became acquainted 93-4,122
ar prep. before 1333,1490
araied refl. p.t. equipped 555; p.p. araied,arreid dressed 1065,3382
array n. array 3375
archbishop see arch(e)bischop(p)
archbischopp see arch(e)bischop(p)
arcbischopp see arch(e)bischop(p)
archebishop see arch(e)bischop(p)
arce(b)ischop(p) n. archbishop 631,1426,1432,1753,2044,etc. archibischopp 1408 archebissop 2095
archebissop see arch(e)bischop(p)
arcbischopp see arch(e)bischop(p)
arcbischopp see arch(e)bischop(p)
arcbischopp see arch(e)bischop(p)
arested p. t. and p. p. arrested 2619, 3041, 3054
aryued, aryved p. t. and p. p. arrived 50, 832, 1017, 1242, 1864, etc.
aryved see aryued
armed adj. armed 1207, 2395 well armed see wele
armes n. do there armes do battle 3080-1
armo(u)r n. weapons and armour 555, 562
arrow(e) n. arrow 106, 1574, 1790, 3347
arreid see araied
are see be
arte see be
articles n. pl. treatises 2204
as conj. as 37, 405, 896, 910; while 200, 432, 941, 952, 972, etc.; like 910; as if 817; as for me 34; as heir 173, 2900; as longe as 3403; as many 916; as moche as 849, 853; as ought 253, 849; as sone as 561, 686-7, 692, 776, 1136, etc.; as they said 99
asaute, assawt n. surprise attack 1121-2, 2330
ashed see aske
aske v. ask 267; p. t. and p. p. asked, asked 246, 248, 251, 961, 969 assked 1079
axed(e) 407, 1378, 1917, 1937, 1953, etc.
ashed p. t. spotted 1110, 1133
assemble n. meeting 3288
assemble v. raise (an army) 135, 891, 1259, 1298, 1321, etc.
assent(e) v. assent 46, 131, 359, 714, 760, etc. p. t. assente 42
assent(e) n. assent 324, 1893, 2261, 2378; be by on(e)/oon assent(e) unanimously 18, 124, 1850, 2967
ashed see aske
assigned p. t. assigned 2035, 2562
assoiled see assoyled
assoyled, assoiled p. t. absolved of sin 1754-5, 2129, 2132
assumpcion n. Assumption 3313
at(te) prep. at 43, 106, 117, 216, 221, 236, etc. at the last(e) 323, 1329, 2284; in 436
at debate see debate
ateint p. p. convicted 2302, 2982
auaunt see avaunce
auctorite n. authority 2305, 3159
aught see ought
austeyn (ffreres) see ffrere
avaunce v. promote, help on 814; imp. auaunt advance 3345
avenge v. avenge 821, 905; p. p. 175, 845, 1021, 1056, 1231, etc.
aventour n. pl. amazing experiences 1957
avys n. counsel 3386
avoide v. to leave, quit 2200
avowed p. p. had vowed 746
award n. decree 2130, 2200-1
awarded p. t. decreed 2317-18, 2623
away see awey
awey, away adv. away 436, 567, 977, 1006, 1061, etc.
axed see aske
ayen, agane, ageyns, prep. against 778, 847, 1264, 1268, 1321, 2521, etc.

B

bad see bede
bade see bede
baker n. baker 3017
bauer n. banner, standard 3345
banysched p.t. banished 2301
baptise v. baptize 628, 629, 634, 1397; p.p. baptized 1397
baptized see baptise
barell n. cask 2593
barfote adj. barefoot 1441
baronage n. nobles 1194, 2161
baron n. baron 46, 852, 1219, 1445, 1701, etc.
barre n. court 2619
bastard adj. illegitimate 1905
bastard n. bastard 2016, 2856, 2860, 2863
basyn n. circular dish 3386
batell n. battle 176, 514, 1162, 1166, 1200, etc. batells(p) l. 893, 2658 batelles pl.
battalions 2491 plane batell "open field", fair fight
82, 313, 340, 392, 655, etc.
batelles see batell
be v. be 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, etc. inf. 15, 36, 126, 127, 135, etc.; 1 s pres t indic. am 1828, 3141;
2 s pres t indic. art(e) 1827, 2520 be 125, 126, 256, 727; is 210, 212, 382,
442, 488, etc. ys 496, 737, 960, 980, 987, etc.; 1 p pres t indic. are 35 be
836, 839; 3 p pres t indic. beth 988 ben 41 be 836, 839; 2 s pres t subj. be
728; 3 s pres t subj. be 255, 1311, 2175, 3138, 3140; 1, 3 s pt indic was
1, 3, 4, 6, 8, etc.; 2 s, 1-2 p pt indic. were 30, 59, 64, 114, 151, etc.; 3 p pt indic
was 1037, 1578, 2972 were 2108; 3 s pt subj. were
37, 140, 813, 984, 1382, etc.; pres part beyng 3036; pp be 1424, 2583 ben
24, 152, 203, 364, 713, etc.
be prep. see by
because, bycause conj. because 116, 157, 193, 315, 503, etc.
become v. become 2027, 2368, 3435; p.t. become 374, 447, 449, 777, 1183, etc.; yt
become him, it became him 3299
bed(e) n. bed 40, 866, 1788
bede v. to command 3414; p.t. bad(e) 556, 904, 1277, 1314, 1653, etc.
befell, befall p.t. occurred 14, 774, 1433, 1529, 1538
befell see befell
before, byfore adv. before 1055, 1645, 2655, 2767, 2864, etc.; prep. 746, 2259; in the
presence of 741, 867, 868, 2138, 2172, etc.; before tyme before that time
2710
beganne see begynne
begoten p.p. begotten 979
begyle v. deceive 1708; p.p. 1723
begynne v. begin 2181; 3p. pres. begynnith 614; p.t. began(n)e 615,940,2151,2160,2214,etc. bygan 2263
begynnith see begynne
(be)hated p.t. and p.p. hated 1355,1879
behinde, behynde prep. behind 560,1261,1797
behynde see behind
beld(e) v. build 616,850
beloued adj. beloved 120,338
beme n. beam of light 1074,1076,1083,1087
bemide p.t. ordered 2269
benche n.; the kingis benche, the Court of the King's Bench 2909
bendes, bendys n.pl. bands 2492,2493
bendys see bendes
benefices n.pl. benefices, lands held in feudal tenure 2882,2884
bent adj. bent 1789
beraft p.t. bereft 2824
bere v. bear away 1940; p.p. borne 1101,1138,2050,2899
bere armes v. fight 2340
bery v. bury 1275,1480; p.p. beried, beryed 1096,1139,1480,1584,3142,etc.
beseged p.t. and p.p. besieged 1115,1167,1201
beside, besyde, byside prep. beside 747,1624,1924,2090,2423,etc; near 913,962,1034,1207,1263,etc.
besyde see beside
beso(u)ght p.t. beseeched 410,596,1617,1622,1651,etc.
best see goode
best(e) n. beast 58,434,435
bete v. defeat 997,999; p.t. bette doun beat down 2231
beten adj. beaten 1856
beth see be
bethought see betought
betoke p.t. entrusted 1333
betokened p.t. betokened 946
bet(h)ought refl. p.t. considered 139,842
betraied p.t. betrayed 116
bette (doun) see bete
better as n. the better 34,997,2661
better comp. adv. see well
better comp. adj. see good(e)
betwene, bytwene prep. between 162,273-4,291,459,516,2216-7,etc.
bewtix prep. between 2215
bewte n. beauty 1703,1718,1722
bewtyvous adj. beautiful 1707
bidding n. bidding 1744
birdes n.pl. birds 3388
birth see byrth
bischehoppes see bischeppes
bischeppes,bischopp n.bishops 633,782,1363,1412,1413,etc. bischehoppes 1410
bischehoppes 3019 byschopp 1417-18,1471
bischopp see bischeppes
bischoppes see bischeppes
bycause see because
byfore see before
byrth,birthe n. ancestry, lineage 35,738
byschopp see bischeppes
byside see beside
blanke charteres adj. “blank” documents 3092-3
blasing adj. blazing 3223
blessed p.t. blessed 1927
blessed,blyssed adj. blessed 1929,1931
blessinge n. blessing 2617
blinde adj. blind 2552
blyssed see blessed
blode n. blood 301,949,984,2315,2527
body n. body 639,979,1276,1316,1524,etc.
boke n. bible 3144
bokes n.pl. books 2920
bolde adj. daring, bold 118,126,1143
bolle n. bowl 3393
born(e) p.p. born 540,947,1406,1906,2409,etc
borne (carried) see bere
both(e) det. both 389,969,1129,1164,1301,1322,etc.
bothome n. foundation 989
bowe n. archer's bow 1789
bowes n.pl. ribbons 3397
bowellys n.pl. intestines, bowels 1403
bowers n.pl. bowers 3394-5; dwellings 3395
brace see breke
brede n. bread 1925
breder see brother
brederin see brother
brederyn see brother
breke v. break 2160; p.t. brake 2869; p.p. broken 2075
brent p.t.and p.p. burnt 45,1023,1364,2282,2329,etc; pt brenned 2920; pres.part brennyng 2726
Bretane(s),bretones n.pl. natives of Britain 447,466,494,503,555,etc.
Bretane n. Britain 320,370,381,382,395,etc. britanie 209
brether see brother
bretherin see brother
brigge n. bridge 2371
bring,bryng v. bring 97,915,1225,1590; p.t.and p.p. bro(u)ght 290,368,816,1019,1049,1238,etc.
bryng see bring
broched p.t. pierced 2178
brought see bring
broken see breke
brother n. brother 144,196,314,357,371, etc. gen brother 463; brother in lawe 
brother-in-law 1469; pl. breder 1330 brederin 337,1555; brederyn 1007; 
brother 457; bretherin 332,834,1783. 
brother in lawe see brother
brought see bring
Brutane see grete Brutane 
bulfelde n. bull-field 3230
bull skinne see bull skynne
bull skynne, - skinne, n. bull-skin 854,855
but conj. but 46,165,254,273,579, etc.; adv. only 254,2340; prep. only 986,1585, 
1950,2159,2330, etc.; prep. except 268,710,1134,1829; and but except that 
161 but yf unless 27,983-4,1382-3,3134
by, be prep. near, beside 432,501,757,3088,3142, etc.; by means of, through 
16,58,213,235,253,324, etc.; be on assent by one assent 124 
byfore see before
bynde v. bind 1574,1797

call v. name 2,4,6,8,55, etc.; summon 25,32,181,497,968
came see come 
canvas n. canvas 3379
capteine, -teyne, n. the leader of a group 600,2907,3322; military leader 
1131,1445
capteyne see capteine 
caried p.p. taken 363,1060,1307,3087
carta n. charter 2159 
cast(e)p.t. cast 178,1022,1402,1797,1844, etc.; cast(e) doun, tear down 
1033,2461 
castell n. castle 211,858,863,925,941, etc.
catell n. cattle 1476 
cattes n.pl. cats 2457,3425 
cause n. reason 980,987,1840 
caused p.t. caused 2905 
caves n.pl. caves 66 
cawill v. predict by casting lots 96 
caytiff n. wretch 1828 
certefied p.p. made known officially 2769 
certe(y)n adj. certain 274,2881,2971,3215

c
cete, cite(e) n. city 69,71,209,230,493,1209, etc.
chalange v. challenge 661
chales n.chalice 2075
chamber, -re,-ir,-r n. private room, bedroom 31,32,797,866,973,976,2637, etc.
chamberley, chamberly n. chief attendant in a royal chamber 2479, 3046
chambir see chamber
chambr(e) see chamber
charching n. charging 1223
charged p.p. charged, loaded 2257
chartur n. charter, deed 2157,2158,2203,2204 Carta 2159
chartur see charter
chase p.t.sg. chose 647,900,1552,3222; p.t.pl. chosen 2100
chas(s)ed p.t. pursued 1465,1583,2292
chas(s)ed p.t. drove 1363,2104,2932
chaste adj. chaste 747,1898
chastice v. chastise 2396
chaunceler n. Chancellor 2534,2957,2976
chaungyng vbl.n. changing 496
chaung v. change 928,1030,1369,1501,1503, etc. pp changed 1597
cheve, chief adj. chief, superior 933,1533; Chief Justice Chief Justice 2205-6, 2980
chevell n. chapel 2875
chere n. frame of mind, spirits 557,3341,3404
chere n. cathedra, seat of a bishop 584
cheval(e)y n. mounted soldiers 2676,2743,3331
cheyne n. chain 3000
chide v. wrangle 955
chief see chefe
Chief Justice see chefe
child(e) n. child 95,96,98,947,949,1720, etc.; with childe pregnant 95; pl.
    childerin 498,506,634,954,1405, etc.; childeryn 504,825; chylderen 63
childerin see child(e)
childeryn see child(e)
childyng vbl.n. giving birth 100
chirche see churches
chylde see churches
chose n. put ... in chose, offer (someone) a choice 3220
chosen see chase
chirch(e), churches n. church 441,583,1362,1577,1847, etc.
churles n.pl. churls 2418
 cstern n. Cistercian 2115
cite(e) see cete
citez(e) in n. citizen 2245,2981
clame v. claim 3108, etc.; p.p. 1645,2311,2380,2449,2693
clergy n. clergy 1400,3292,3338,3376; Scollys of Clergy see scoles
clerk n. learned man, scholar 96,945,982,2101,2301, etc.; priest 2101; scribe 2301
clok n. of the clok o'clock 3338
cloth n. cloth 1671
clothing n. clothing 268
comande v. command 1821,2632
come v. come 23,149,520,741,839,etc.; p.t. came 202 come 56,73,88,92,136,etc.; p.p. come(n) 78,114,122,861,2539 pres.part. comyng 1935,1946,2076
comen see come
comyng n. coming 726,1258,2165,2750,2780,etc.
comittement n. plan, intention 2599
comyners n.pl. citizens 2678
comens,comyns n.pl. commoners 2304,2455,2702-03,2709,2906,3021,etc.
competent adj. adequate, competent 3327
complaynte n. complaint 19
compleyned p.t. and p.p. complained 33,785,3022
composicion n. treaty, truce 377,378
concealed,counselled p.t. counselled, advised 47,802
conditioned p.p. conditioned 266
condicions n.pl. personal character, disposition 26,28,452-3
condicions n.pl. conditions (of an agreement) 3139,3144,3147
condicon n. condition 879,901,2270,2655
condite n. safe conduct 3126
conditis n.pl. conduits 2247
confedracy n. confederacy 2487
confessed p.t. confessed 2451
confessor n. confess 2916; Edward the Confessor 3157
connyng adj. wise, skilful 1309
conquere see conquer
contrarious adj. perverse, hostile 2041
contrary adj. contrary 2411
converted(e) p.t. and p.p. converted 1397,1407-8,1414,1424
coppe,cuppe n. drinking cup, chalice 867,1671,2179
corne n. corn 1476
corner n. corner 997
coronac(i)on n. coronation 1675,2249,2901
corone,crown n. crown 342,451,1807,3145,3154
cronicles see cronicles
cronycles see cronicles
crowned see crouned
cosyn(e) n. kinsman, kinswoman 696,1179,1290,1354,1484,etc.
coste n. expense 3245,3404
cote armes n.pl. persons entitled to bear heraldic arms 3365
counseil(l),counseyl(l) n. advice 1194,1803; confidence 1662; council 2972,3113,3131,3132; plan 3180
counseyl(l) see counsel(l)
counselled see conceived
courtes,courtts n.pl. (the king and his) court 2302,3026,3027
couth(e),kouth _p.t._ could 853,871,942,964,1052,3260,etc.
couth _p.t._ knew 2471

couenaunt _n._ covenant 158,262,3474

covenant _n._ body of monks 2100,2105,2149
cowarde _n._ coward 2781
craffe _n._ occult art 1047,1051,1116,1131; craft guilds 3374

creatours see creature

creature _n._ creature 744 creatours 250

cried see crye

cristendome,crystendeme,crystendome _n._ christendom 781,1572,2587

crye _v._ call out, cry 3324-5 _p.t._ cried, cryed 2148,3344; _pres._part._crying_ 202

crysten,cristen _adj._ christian 623,680,681,685,767,928,etc.
cristen,crysten _v._ baptise 626,1383,1415,1596,1720 _p.p._ crysten 1591

crystendeme see cristendome

crystendome see cristendome

crystmas(se) _n._ Christmas 2020,3172

cronics,coronicles,coronycles _n.pl._ chronicles, official records of events 1811, 1985,2313

Crosse _n._ Cross 690,2050,2065
cro(u)ned,crown(n)ed,corowned _p.t._ and _p.p._ 182,344,448,465,467,579,776, 1982,etc.
crown(n)ed see crowned

cruell _adj._ cruel 447,777,1442
cunteis _n._ countess 2213
cuntre _n._ country 78,175,326,393,396,etc.; _district, area_ 599,616,910,1024, 1587,etc.
cuppe see coppa

cursed _p.t._ cursed 2122,2197,2462

curtesey _n._ made _curtesy_ did obeisance 1855

D

daggar _n._ daggar 2928
dai see day
daily _adv._ daily 3420
dame _n._ woman of rank, lady 14,53,2809,3044,3088,etc.
damsell _n._ damsel 93
dampned _p.p._ condemned 3257
Dane _n._ Dane 1326,1804,1853
danger _n._ danger 3343
day,dai _n._ day 11,25,103,200,243,etc. _upon a day_ one day 10 _on daies_ by day 992
debate n. quarrel, dispute 516,2309; at debate quarrelling 192,293,311-2,516,1458

deeved p.t. deceived 2720

ded n. dead 1480

dede adj. dead 87,169,229,240,335,etc.; demed to be dede: see demed
dede v. see do

defende v. defend 846

degrate p.p. stripped 3161,3162,3163,3168,3174

dele p.t. dealt with 2123
deliuerd, deliver, delyver v. give up 1335,1941,2141,2142,2352; p.p. taken to

3449; p.p. gave birth to 1123,3465
deliver see deliuerd
delyver see deliuerd
demed p.p. demed to be dede sentenced to death 2574-5,3057
dente n. with dente of swerde by force of arms 3298
departe,-erte v. divide (possessions, property) 262,273,291,350,458; to leave,
depart 688,1111; p.p. 30
deve adj. deep 1623
deperte see departe
depose v. emove from office 448,458,888
derthe n. famine 2454
descesse see discesse(s)e
desire n. wish 2495,2496
desire v. desire 60,1719; p.t. asked 877,1204,2158,3136-7
destroie see distroye
destroyng see distroye
deth n. death 263,291,303,311,463,etc.
dettys n.pl. debts 3141
deuell, devell n. devil 61,959,2451,2823
devell see deuell
devided, devyded p.t. subdivided 937,1371
devyded see devided
devyne adj. divine 2109
devored see devo(u)red
devo(u)red p.t. devoured 203,435
dicomfite see discomfet
did(e) see do
died see dye
digge v. dig 993,994
dignite n. stateliness 1878
dike v. surround with trenches 2328
dikes n.pl. defensive ditches, trenches 3427,3431,3432
diner n. dinner 1222
discesse(s)e, deserce n. death 234,1910,1975,1980,2400,3445
discharged p.t. relieved 3023
discofit see discomfit(e)
discomfet, -fit(e), -fyte p. t. and p. p. rout in battle 82, 391, 513, 524, 565, etc.; p. p. discomfit 2011 dicomfite 371
discomfit(e) see discomfet
discomfyte see discomfet
discouerd p. p. discovered 3180
dispetefull adj. insulting 1231
dispite, -pute n. contempt, disdain 275, 457, 1547, 2413, 2483, etc. dispytes insults 1857
displise v. displease, offend 2644
disposicion n. a frame of mind, attitude 20
dispute see dispute
distroe see distroye
distroye, destroie, distrioie v. destroy, lay waste 71, 146, 282, 521, 653, etc.; ger. destroyng 2727
diuerse(e) see dyuers
divinite n. doctores of divinite scholars of theology 3214
die, dye v. die 86, 100, 101, 168, 225, 760, etc.
dye see die
dyd see do
dyne v. eat, dine 862, 865, 1786
dyuers, diuers(e) adj. diverse 213, 587, 633, 978, 1273, etc.
do v. do 34, 841, 852, 872, 1224, etc.; put on (an article of clothing), don 562, 2927; 3

p pres t. done 254; p. t. did(e), dyd
80, 165, 447, 497, 922, 1137, etc.; p. p. do(n), done 12, 83, 377, 722, 1052, etc.;
neuer to a/do with never associated with 948, 972
doctores see divinite
dogges n.pl. dogs 2456
dolphins n. dauphin 3295, 3317
do(n)(e) see do
dore n. door 2108, 2556, 2639; pl. durres 973
dorter n. dormitory 2184
dos see tho(o)s
daughter n. daughter 7, 8, 14, 20, 22, etc.; dougther 167, 705, 710
dougher see dougher
doune, down adv. down 201, 560, 943, 988, 991, etc.
down see doune
drad(e) p. t. feared 2068, 2591; drade him refl. feared 3091
draght see draught
dragon(e) n. dragon 989, 995, 996, 998, 1002, etc.
drank(e) see drink
draught, draught n. draught 2182, 2183
draw v. draw (behind a horse) 2293
drawing vbl. n. drawing 2526
dred n. fear 647
dreff see drife
dreemed p. t. dreamed 2045
drenche v. drow 1922
dressed refl. p.t. proceed 1289
dreven see drife
drife v. chase, pursue 892; p.t.s dreffe 2429 droffe 295,514,773,1005; p.t.pl. driven 1851; p.p. dreven, driuen, driven, dryven 108,366,751,894, 1004, etc.
drink v. drink 1675 p.t. drank(e) 875,1134,1136,1137,1743, etc.
drink heil v. toast 874
drinke n. drink 1134
driuen see drife
driven see drife
dryven see drife
droffe see drife
droun(n)ed p.t. and p.p. drowned 150,179,1798,2472
duchery n. duchy 2568,2582,3161
duches n. duchess 3042,3064
duelle see dwell
duellong see dwellyng
duke n. duke 385,1767,1903,1907,1910, etc.
duracion n. length of existence 1829
dured p.t. lasted 1482,2458
dury n. dowry 3194
durying prep. during 3010,3444
durres see dore
durst p.t. dared 529,826,1246,2077
dwell, duell v. dwell 66,119,411,414,491,597, etc.; pr.p. dwellyng 52,2101
dwellyng (living) see dwell
dwellyng, duellyng n.; -place, place to settle 840,1394

eftsones adv. immediately after 2081
eire, heir(e), heres n. heir 173,331,381,385,639,3447, etc.; pl. heris 375
eldest see olde
elder see olde
elecon n.; put... in elecon offered... a choice 2004
elle n. an ell's depth (45 inches deep) 1626
elles see ellys
ellys, elles, els adv. else 2006, 2568, 2594, 3297, 3356
ellys adj. other 1676
els see ellys adv.
embassitori n.pl. ambassadors 3295
emes n.pl. uncles 7
emong see among
emperies n. empress 2190
dom n. emperor 509, 525, 548, 550, 554, 643, etc.
encheson n. reason 1192
ende n. end 1073
endewad p.t. endowed 2876
endure v. continue 943, 2198
engyne n. a mechanical contrivance 1792
inglysch n. The English 1422
englysch(e) adj. English 1371, 1850, 3328
englyschmen n.pl. Englishmen 180, 1422, 1854-5, 2265, 2331 etc.
englyschwoman n. Englishwoman 1762-3
eny, any adj. any 318, 917, 948, 958, 1509, etc.
enlarge v. enlarged 2043
en(y)my n. enemy 75, 613, 843, 847, 1092, etc.
enmy see en(y)my
enought adj. enough 1215
enquer v.; enquere of investigate 2372
entent n. intent 1704, 1860
entered v. interdict 2107, 2462
entre v. enter 975, 1116
entreted p.t. negotiated with, parleyed with 663
envy n. envy 1321
erand n. mission 1725
erbes n.pl. plants 58, 1478
erdequaue n. earthquake 2935
erle n. earl 261, 271, 408, 414, 507, etc.
erledome n. earldom 1873, 1896, 1902, 2962
erly adv. early 2344
erthly adj. earthly 250
escape v. escape 782, 923, 1127, 1365, 2220, etc. p.t. escapad 2227 scaped 2669
especially adv. especially 3052
esquiers n.pl. squiers 3052, 3094
ete p.t. ate sg. 435 pl. 2456, 2457 p.t.pl. eten 59, 3432; p.p. 3424
etn see ete
eternall adj. eternal 1827
euer adv. ever 151, 344, 379, 768, 1086, etc.
euerychon pron. each and every one 757, 2838
Eukaryste n. eucharist 635
euell, eyll, evell, adj. evil 20, 26, 1839, 2344
evell see euell
even n. evening or day before 1960, 3153, 3172, 3312 xij even Twelfth Night 1960
euyll see euell
exemple n.; in exemple of as a warning 2294
exile v. banish 47, 410, 1491, 1493, 1839, etc.
exile n. exile 1494
extorcioners n.pl. extortioners 2373
(f)father n. father 38, 95, 99, 102, 104, 107, etc.
fail v. fail 950
fayne see fayne
fayre see fayre
fair adv. courteously 663
fairest see fayre
faith n. faith (Christian) 1386
fayre, fayre, fayre adj. beautiful 117, 153, 224, 265, 571, etc.; just 1939 superl. fairest 744
failen see fill
fallyth see fill
fals(e) adj. wicked 1081; unfaithful 2382, 2602; false 2502, 2546, 2579
fantasie n.; had grete fantasie in felt a great liking for 1377-8
fast adv.; fast(e) be by near 500, 2345, 2888, 3200, 3456; securely 974; quickly 3346
fatte adj. healthy, well-fed 60
faught see fyght
fealty n. fealty 405, 576, 643, 2168, 2297, etc.
fetch v. bring back, fetch 605, 947, 2022, 2232
felawes, felowes n.pl. companions, fellows 758, 1384, 1410
felaschip see fela(w)schip
fela(w)schip n. fellowship 61, 137, 650, 654, 1042, 1394, 2667
feld n. field, meadow 2998; field of battle 3080, 3330, 3342, 3351; hadde the feld was victorious, gained the victory 2680, 2729
fell see fill
felowes see felawes
felte refl.p.t. felt 3278
ferd(e) adj. afraid 908, 1435, 2026, 2086, 2128, etc. aferde 2494
ferd(e) n. fear 149, 826, 1006, 3123
ferd(e) adj. see (f)ferd(e)
ferst see fyrst
fesician n. physician 1066
feste n. feast, banquet 10, 11, 24, 1108, 1217, etc.
fewe adj. few 1483, 1585
ffare see fayre
ffleying vbl.n. fleeing 2763
fforsoth, forsoth adv. truly, indeed 1001, 1951, 3281, 3338
ffound(e)ment see f(f)ound(e)ment
fraunchesies, fraunchises n.pl. special rights or privileges 2157, 3030

(f) frende n. friend 843, 1939, 1944, 1982

fренре, фрeres n. friar 1065, 2384, 2877 фрeres austeyne Augustinian friars 3060

fренres minores Franciscan friars 3213–4 white фрere Cistercian friars 2915–6

фро see фро

фруте see фруте

фуll see фуll

fьght see фьght

fill, fell p.t happened 302, 516, 750, 1478, 2308, etc.; p.p. фalen 110 fill, fell p.t fell 560, 943, 1949, 2034, 2736 фallyth 3s pres t falls 988 fell (at) debate had a dispute 311–2, 516, 1458, 2309 fell asleep 1949 fell rich 2034 attacked 2736

фinde see фыnde

финдying n. livelihood 2562

фингer n. finger 1886

фire n. fire 1074, 1077

фirt(e) see фyrste

фыхт, фьght v. fight 127, 908, 990, 1205, 1644, etc.; p.t. фаught 565, 763, 1046, 1118, 1263, etc. фought 1208 pres.part. фyghting 995

фыnde, финде v. find 993, 1476, 1643, 1648; p.t. фонде 113, 153, 690, 1846, 2314, etc.

фыrst, фyrst(e) adv. first 1, 98, 584, 1515, 1757, etc.; ферst 53; adj. 343, 473, 615, 623, 768, etc.

фischers n.pl. fishermen 1846

фламmes n.pl. flames 1089; ...of fir a tongue of fire 1077

фled see фле(e)

фледе see фле(e)

фледде see фле(e)

фле(e) v. retreat, flee 1013, 2087, 2629; to fly 3387; p.t. флед(de), фледе 73, 371, 566, 567, 682, 699, 926, etc. p.p. фленде 1162; imp. фle 1013

флементес n.pl. Flemish 2939

флесче n. flesh 59

флыght n. flight 365

фоисоне see фусоне

фолес n.pl. fools 986

фоли n. foolishness 1831

фолk(e) n. people 497, 629, 1003, 1355, 1370, etc.

фолле n. fool 957

фолеед p.t. pursued 568, 1113, 1169, 1201, 1271, etc.

фолеедыng adj. next, following 3039, 3248

фонде see фыnde

фор prep. for 22, 26, 34, 49, 144; on account of 149

(ф)фор conj. because 35, 99, 192, 199, 293, 614, etc.

форасмоche conj. seeing that 2093, 2259, 2696

фобарретх 3sg.pres.ind. prohibits 2522

фобекаус, фобекаус conj. because 173, 353, 1742, 1760, 2580
forbere v. refrain (from) 1923
forbycause see forbecause
foresaid see (a)for(e)said
forest n. forest 200,202,2043,2205
foreuer adv. forever 130,375,412,525,598,etc.
foreuermore adv. henceforth 525-6,1185,1946
forlay p.t. committed fornication with 1541
forme n. physical shape 1925; manner 2132,2143
forsake v. abandon 780,1572; p.t. forsoke 169,197
forsoke see forsake
forsoth see fforsoth
forth see furth
fote n. foot; light of foot 1836
fotemen n. foot soldiers 3366
fought see fyght
foule adv. ugly 1713
foule adv. harshly, severely 26
founded p.t. founded 2878
(f)find(e)ment n. foundation 559,983
foure adj. four 2294
fraunchises see ffraunchesies
frelly adv. willingly, openhandedly 2253
frende see (f)frende
Fren sche adj. French 734,2721,2770,2777,3308,etc.
freres see ffrere
freshest adj.sup. most vigorous, least timid; to fight 2541
f(f)ro adv. (away) from 73,88,112,122,276,etc.
f(f)ru te n. fruit 58; best of 2878
(f)full adv. completely, fully 341,431,550,817,895,etc.
fullfilled p.p. fulfilled 1522
furth,forth adv. forward, onward, forth 50,97,393,563,565,etc.
furth adj. fourth 1534
fusone n. success, headway; toke fusone were successful 1268; had no more fusone had no more success 2681

G

gadering n. assembly, meeting 3289
gad(e)red p.t. and p.p. mustered 1292,2224,2227,2970,3227,etc.
gadred see gad(e)red
gaf(f)e see gyff(e)
gardine n. garden 2177
garte see gerre
Gascoynes n.pl. natives of Gascony 2862

gate n. street 493

gate, yates n. gate 1654, 3019, 3421

gate p.t. see get(t)(e)

geaunt n. giant 1039, 1244, 1252, 1253, 1638, etc.

gefe see giffe

gei see go(o)

gentill adj. kind 2837

gentilmen n.pl. gentlemen 1869

gentilwoman n. woman of noble birth 963, 2271; pl. gentylwomen 3380

gentylwomen see gentilwoman

gerre v. go 993; p.t. garte 1008 gerte 994

gerte see gerre

get see get(t)(e)

gete ee get(t)(e)

geten see get(t)(e)

get(t)e v. beget (a child) 1084, 1088; gather 326, 654, 2111, 3179; get 1043, 1605; capture 2941; p.t. gate begot (a child) 63, 90, 94, 167, 1119, etc.; gathered 654, 699, 809; ...him so beloved got himself so beloved (by s.o.) 338; p.p. geten begotten 68; gathered 740; goten begotten 183, 890, 1320, 1867; captured 2000; put in 1048

geven see gyf(f)e

giffe see gyf(f)e

giff(f)tes n.pl. gifts 1959; bribes 811, 1127, 2547

giftes see giff(f)tes

gyfe see gyf(f)e

gyf(f)e, giffe, gefe v. give 133, 411, 726, 849, 853, etc.; p.t. gaf(f)e 49, 85, 176, 274, 413, 598, etc.; p.p. geven 2772 yeven 662; youed batell 3078

gygantes n.pl. giants 64

gyrdell n. belt 1641

glad adj. glad 845

glawnced p.t. struck a glancing blow 106

glose v. use deceptive words, flatter 254

gnawing pres.part. chewing 3431

god(de) n. God 199, 431, 782, 959, 1266, 1405, etc.

goddess poss. see goddis

goddis, goddesses n.poss. God’s 1519, 3225

gody, godys see goode n

gold(e) n. gold 342, 867, 1671, 2418, 3000, etc.; currency 1477, 2246, 2836, 3387

gone see go(o)

gonne n. cannon 3315, 3319, 3500

gonne stones n.pl. cannon balls 3315

go(o), gei v. go (and do sth.) 127, 938, 1041, 1158, 1653, 2327, etc.; go out 133;

lette... goo release 1592, 2252; imp. gei 2327, 2328; p.t. went

53, 112, 131, 145, 162, etc.; p.p. gone 147, 865, 1280, 1542, 1862, etc.
goode n. benefit 258,1885; pl. goods, belongings 2111,2611; pl. goddes 2705
gody 2119,2148
good(e), guode adj. good, strong 70,557,1209,1219,1737, etc.; beneficial 620,1592; respectable (in quantity) 2182; honorable 401,539,592,1296,2438, etc.; comp. better better 315,811,2176,2180,3300; sup. best best 245,3375

gosshlep n. godparent 1729
goten see get(t)(e)
gouerenours n.pl. governors 2348
gouerned p.t. and p.p. ruled 341,3458
governauns n. governance, rule 3140
grace n. grace, favour 128,1528,1623; mercy 1893,1895,1932,2668,2757, etc.
grane n. crop of grain 2706
grasse n. grass 3431
graunt n. official permission 2851
graunt p.t. and pp see graunt(ed)
graunt(ed) p.t. and p.p. permitted, allowed 548,848,854,878,881, etc.
graue v. engrave 611
graue n. grave 1843
greke n. Greek 72,686
grene n. green 2492
grete adj. large 294,321,509,610,1624, etc.; mighty 5,64,69,136,235, etc.; elaborate 10, 24, 811, 1108; noble 35, 114, 641, 659, 738, etc.; much 115, 281, 302, 321, 1000, etc.; significant 646, 661, 1073, 1299, 1320, etc.; grete of important in 2972; sup. most significant grete 1478-9 gre(t)est 2765, 2854
grete Brutane n. Great Britain 735, 785
gretest see grete
grete willed see wyll n.
gretly adv. greatly 61, 120, 814
greved adj. aggrieved 3302
grounde n. (portion of) land 411, 597, 599, 849, 853, etc.
grete deth n. the plague 1497
growyne n. growth 2706
guode (benefit) see goode n
guode adj. see good(e) adj

H

had see haue
hafe see haue
halfe n. half 49, 1291, 1936, 2174, 3027
halfe penny n. halfpenny 2173
halle n. hall 3033
halowed p.t. hallowed, kept as holy 3352
hand n. hand 84,595,694,703,789,1650, etc.
hang v. hang 2293; p.t. hing 3397; p.p. hanged 2300, 2308, 2370, 2394, 3395
hanged see hang
hanging n. hanging 2526
hapened see happed
happed, hap(p)ened p.t. happened 781, 1072, 1343, 1816, 1861, etc.
happened see happed
hard adj. difficult 923
hardi adj. fearless, strong 1143
harlottes n.pl. scoundrels 2930
harme n. harm 1245, 2265, 2467, 2540
harte n. male red deer 106
haruestmen n.pl. harvest men 3420
hast see haue
hate n. hate 2710
hated p.t. hated 1870
haue, have v. have 7, 19, 24, 33, 45, etc. inf. 19, 45, 141, 155, 161, 827, etc. 1 s
pres. t. indic. haue 1828; 2s pres. t. indic. hast 1493, 2327, 2521; 3s pres. t. indic. hath 152, hat 1467; 3p. pres. t. indic. have 33 haue
1382, 1424; 2 s. pres. t. subj. have 958; 3 s. pres. t. subj. have 2407; imp.
haue 1494; p.t. hed 2886; pt and pp had(d)(e) 7, 24, 66, 75, 130, 293, etc.
hauen, haven n. port, haven 752, 2713
have see haue
haven see hauen
he 3sg. pronom. he 21, 25, 28, 45, 47, etc. a 10; his poss. his 7, 12, 13, 20, 22, etc. hes
1178, 1258, 2835 is 1367; him, hym 3s. pronom. obl., him
19, 23, 24, 25, 29, etc.; reflexive 93, 139, 148, 155, 1289, etc.
 hed(e) see hed(d)e
hed(d)e n. head 343, 569, 816, 819, 1074, 1253, etc.; heedes pl. 2067
heed(e) see hed(d)e
heir(e) see eire
heled p.p. healed 2552
hell see hill
help n. relief 356, 511, 1059, 1549, 1651
help(e) v. help 28, 79, 520, 803, 846, etc.
hem see thei
hepes n.pl. piles, heaps 3348
her see sche
heraldes, herold n.pl. heralds 1621; herold of armes 1642
herd(e) p.t. and p.p. herd 45, 265, 658, 687, 693, 3336, etc.; herd(e) tell (of) heard
about 77, 119, 658, 1062-3, 1702, 1721, etc.
here see thei
here adv. here 38, 841, 1187, 1499, 1502, etc.
here (her) see sche
here (their) see thei
heres (heir) see eire
herof adv. of this matter 1024
heris see eire
herkyn v. to hear about 3117
herold see heraldes
herold of armes see heraldes
herte n. heart 818,1337,1745
heuen see heven
heven, heuen n. Heaven 1653,1945
hid(e) refl.p.t. to hide 132,2536
hider see hidre
hidre,hider adv. hither 772,1043,1500,1877
hight n. height 611,3349; on hyght loudly 3344
hight p.t. see hyght.
hild(e) see hold(e)
hill(e),hell n. hill 132,914,1247,1252,2558,etc.
him see he
him (himself) see himselfe
himself(e),hymself pron.refl. himself 57,150,776-7,932,1239,1287,etc. him refl.
555,1067
hing see hang
hire see sche
his see he
hye see hyght
hyght,hight p.t. called (himself) 242,307,327,328,329,642,etc.
hyght adj. high (temperament) 60; high (height) 1818,3344 hye 1818
hym see he
hymself see himself
hold(e) v. take charge of, maintain 129,374,412,1183,2005,etc; hold
115,1091,1826; uphold 379,1881; control 459,1571,2159; consider 2343;
hold Parliament 2374,2902,3160; holde out keep out 930; holde Scollys
hold classes 1400; held him stayed 2670; p.t. held(e)
89,286,292,319,324,etc; hild(e) 459,2159; p.p. holde(n)
115,379,1881,2316,2583,2902,etc.
holden see hold(e)
hole adj. whole 435,3260
holy adj. holy 690,1362,1385,1699,1737,etc.
(the) holy lande n. The Holy Land 1934,2059,2236,2242
homage n. a pledge (money, goods, or service) of allegiance
1225,1230,2027,2168,2296,etc.
home n. home 12,208,528,578,1158,etc.
homward adv. homeward 406
hondes n.pl. hounds 3424
honoure n. honour 1393,1496
hoode n. hood 2927
hoote adj. hot 236
hoped p.t. hoped 2356,2505
horncastell n. Horncastle 884
bors see horses
hors(es) n.pl. horses 3347,3424
horsebakke n. horseback 3001
hose n. leggings 919
hostages n.pl. hostages 1592
hostes see (o)oste
housband(e),-ys n. husband 16,17,23,33,36,etc. housband 1118
housbandys see housband(e)
houses n.pl. houses 2118; house(s), howse(s) of religion housing for clergy 1275,2042,2171; court 1188; howse 2171 howses 2042
houshold n. the king's household 628
how(e) interrog. how 1,68,108,246,248,255,319,etc.
howse(s) see houses
howsyng n. housing 3327
hungyr see hungre
hungre,-gyr n. starvation 1482,2456,2538,3197,3426,etc.
hungre n. Hungary 1806,1862
in/on hunt(t)ying n. hunting 105,200,815,1738
hurt(e) n. damage 882,1317

I

I, Y pron. 134,725,726,727,987,etc.; poss. pron. ma, my my 250,254,979,981, 2581,etc.; me pron. obl. me 34,250,1829,2139,2582,etc.
iche, ichon, yche pron. each 39,43,471,472,918,etc.; det. 12,471,472,640,1374
ichon see iche
Il(land), Il(e), Island n. an island 51,413,1170,1390,1658
Ile see Iland
in(ne) prep. in 3,16,48,50,62,etc.
incarnacon n. incarnation 630-1,1388,1425
inhabite p.t. inhabited 1507,3329
inheretaunce n. inheritance 3296
inheriter n. heir 336 pl/ inheritors 1807
iniuries n.pl. insults 2631
inought adj. enough 1930
into prep. into 32,78,84,112,145,etc.
Iresch,-men n. Irish 2113,2116
Ireschmen see Iresch
Irishlangege n. the Irish language, Gaelic 607
 issohu(e), ysshu n. children 213,219,307,533,705,793,etc.
issuèd p.t. issuèd oute came out 3421
it, yt pron. it 13,37,55,56,89,etc.
yche see iche
ys see be
ysshu see isshu(e)
yt see it

J

jewelës n.pl. treasures 2419
Jewes n.pl. Jews 2305
joye n. joy 391,1019
jugged p.t. condemned 2985
juggement n. judgment 2312
jugge n. judge 2514,3257
justices n.pl. Justices 2301,2372
justinges n.pl. jousting 1220,2991

K

keçhy n. kitchen 1340
kept v. keep 166,758,826,1340,1633, etc.; uphold 384,1504,2820; look after
830,1334,1808,2479; protect 941; control, rule
1203,1284,1291,1315,1686,etc. p.t. kept(e) 384,830,1340,1504,1808,etc.;
p.t. and p.p. kept(e) 166,1633,1846,2479,3423
kepered see kepe
keeper n. guard 1126,1197,2506,2837,3025,etc.
kepyng,keping,kepyng n. charge 691,825,1674
kept(e) see kepe
kessed p.t. kissed 875
kette see kytte
king see ky(i)ng
kingdome n. kingdom 284,1335-6,1644,2856
kit see kytte
ky(i)ng,king n. king 4,9,10,12,17,75,187,222,etc. kyngis pl.poss. 137
kyn n. kin 1087
kyng see ky(i)ng
kyngis see ky(i)ng
kylte v. cut 41; p.t. kette 316 kit 855
knaue n.; knaue childe boy 97
knees n.pl. knees 2987,3046
kneled,-yd p.t. kneled 868,1622,1825,2137,2275,etc.
kneyd see kneyled
knew see knowe
knyfe see knyf(f)e
knyf(f)e n. knife 40,919,1744,2178
knyght n. knight 70,73,301,324,539, etc. knyth 716,873
knyth see knyght
knowe v. know 245; p.t. knew 318 vnknowen see vnknowen; wele knowen see wele p.p. 960
knowlech see knowlych
knowlych,-ech n. knowledge 20,1516
kouth see couth

L

labored see labore(r)d
labore(r)d p.t. labored to exerted influence upon 895,2415
labour,labo(u)re n. labour 2193,2413,2529,2559,2812
laboure see labour
lad see lad(de)
lad(de) p.t. led 827,2072,2299,2999; p.p. lad(e) 924,1746,2014,2370,2394,etc.
   p.t. and p.p. led(de) 2338,2640
lade see lad(de)
ladies n.pl. noblewomen 3380
laid,leid refl.p.t. laid 1949,1952; p.t. leid(e) segge (there)to laid siege to
   1105,2088, 2313,2464,2674,etc.
lamentacione n.; made grete lamentacione, lamented 1486
lancaster n. Lancaster 2508,2551,2575,2768,2769,etc.
land(e),londe n. country 1,3,51,54,66,111,etc. and see (the) holy lande
landed p.t. landed 3106
langage n. language 607,872,1501,1502
   laste n.; at the laste, in the end 323,2053,2284
lasted p.t. lasted 11,857,1220,2764
laughter n. laughter 1923; toke vp a grete laughter, burst out laughing 1917
law n. law 384,1504,1730,1880,1906,etc.
lay see lye
laymen n.pl. laity 3093
leches n.pl. physicians 1309
lefe v. leave (an occupation) 802; p.t. left(e) left behind 72,201,1873,2643, 2835, etc.; p.t. left(e) left in care of 690,828,1284,1290,1806 p.p. lefte remaining 1498,2741,2760

left(e) (leave p.t.) see lefe

legate n. papal legate 627,634,2121,2193,2197

legemen see legmenis

legmenis,legemen n.pl. liegemen 2341,3435

leid see laid

lemmans n.pl. sweethearts 2441

lenger adv. longer 272,2853

lepren n. leprosy 3259

lept p.t. lept 149

lettres n.pl. letters 18,21,496,520,951, etc.

lese v. lose 759

lest conj. lest 827

let(t)e v. leave 1464; p.t. let(t)e let 19,3324; behaved 814; allowed 1126; as aux. let(t)e 39,41,1930; as causative let(t)e 184,610,968,1275

lete see let(t)e

letted p.t. prevented 725

leuaion n. elevation (of the consecrated Host and chalice in mass) 1916,1925

leue,leve n. permission 133,2649,2656; toke leave at took leave of 2686

leve v. leave 1823

leve n see leue

ley see lye

lyen see lye

licence n. permission 1393,1400

lieth see lye

life (life) see lyf(f)e n.

like see lyke adj.

likenesse see lykeness(se)

linage see lynage

lith see lye

livelode see lyvelode

lye v. lie (down) 1070,3280,3348,3431; dwell 1947,3041; be buried 191,216,221,225, 232, etc. lie with, have intercourse with 757,977,1117; 3s.pres.t. lieth, lyeth 191,216,221,225,232, etc. lieth 347; 3p.pres.t. lye 764; p.t. lay 975,1117,1247,1641,2913, etc. ley 1070; p.p. lyen 977

lyen see lye

lyeth see lye

lyeutenaunt n. deputy 3098

lyfde see lyff(f)e v.

lyfe n see lyf(f)e n

lyfe v see lyff(f)e v

lyff(f)e, lyfe n. life 89,186,247,1224,1307, etc.; on lyve adj. alive 1311,2760,3227

lyff(f)e, lyve, liffe v. live 746, 2174,2563; p.t. lyfde 57 lyved 186,390,1477,1898; on lyve alive 1311, 2760, 3227

lyfte p.t. lifted 1926
lyght adj.; lyght of fote, light-footed 1836
lyke,like adj. same 16,251; adv. like 1065,1074; adv. lyke as as (if) 1050,2654
lyke v. please 840,3394,3397
lykens(see), likenesse n. likeness 62,1117,1926
lyme n. limb; vppon lyffe and lyme on pain of death 1224
lynage, linage n. lineage 113,125,318
lytell adj. little, small 1658,2731,3231; lytell Brutan(e), lytell Bretane Brittany
728,783,791,828,1009,etc.
lyter n. litter 1307
(on) lyve see lyf(f)e n
lyved see lyf(f)e v.
lyvelod(e), livelode n. soldiers and supplies 274,276,1215, 2110,2427,2876,etc.
loffe n. loaf 2172,2175
logaunce n. allegiance 2590
loged p.t. accommodated 3401
loke v. consider 255; look 1080,1640
loked p.p. locked 974
lollardrye n. Lollardy 3411
londe see land(e)
long adj. tall 1639; long 2326; long tyme for a long time 361; as longe as, see as conj.
long(e) adv. (for) a long time 943,1407,2276,2871
lord(e) n. lord 74,114,125,126,157,etc. Lord Christ 540,769,1472,1524,1636, 1749,etc.; lordis,lordys gen.sing. 821,1524,1539; lorde gen.pl. 1869
loste p.t.and p.p. lost 2065,2097
loue,love n. love 762,1885,2551,2576,2709 agreement 912
loue v. love 28,245,246,249,250,253,etc.; p.t. and p.p. loued 256 loved 1329,1485
lovid 249; 3 sg.pres. lovith 1944
love see loue
loved see loue
lovid see loue
lovyth see loue
lowde adj. loud 3341
lowly adv. humbly 1892

M

ma see I
madden adj. mad 687
made see make
maide n. maiden, girl 1770
maiden, mayden n. maiden, girl 5,153,162,211,385,760, etc.
maire n. mayor 2926,3020,3024,3373
mayden see maiden
make v. make 13,129,134,140,158, etc.; organise 10,23; build, found
209,211,224,227, 230, etc.; as causative 96,119,195,764,1928, etc.; p.t.
and p.p. made 10,13,23,96,140; pres.part. makyng 942
makyng vbl.n.; in makyng being constructed 942
maliciously adv. maliciously 3022
man n. man 48,52,63,118,125, etc.; liegeman 374; manys gen.sg. (generic) of
man 61; pl. men 72,113, 372,407,681,961, etc.; people (in general)
76,164,331,405,449, etc.; liegemen 127; retainers, soldiers
72,137,150,201,360, etc.; men of armes armed soldiers 1989,2557,2604-
5,2677
maner see man(n)er
manly adv virilely 3422
man(n)er n. manner, way 163,574; type 917,2884
mannys see man
many adj. many 393,441,553,680,681, etc.
 marc n. mark 2115,2135,2145,2146,2455, etc.
 marciaunt n. merchant 2596
marche n. border (area) 2321,2397,2484,2506,2808, etc.
mariage n. marriage 85,258
maried see mary
mary v. marry 603,1335,2261; p.t. and p.p. maried 9,244,259,269,1339,3012
marques n. marquis 2951,2974,3064,3071
marschall n. marshall 3360
marter see martir pt and pp
martir n. martyr 768,1699,1735,1964
martir,-ter v. martyr 586,680 p.t. and p.p. martyred 767,1566,1575,2558
martirdom n. martyrdom 2208
martymasse n. Martinmas 1935
masse n. mass 1882,1915,1918,1935,3336
master n. leader 408,833; Master 2530,2533
mastres n. leader, mistress 748
mater n. affair 3023; dispute 3081
may v may 841,1014,2440,3139
me see I
meanetyme see meneteyme
meany see meyne
meyne,meyny(e) n. company, retinue 519,596,733,757,763,1158, etc. meany 82
 meyne 274,276
meyny(e) see meyne
medecyne n. potion 1067
medewe n. meadow 2155
men see man
men of armes see man
meney see meyne
menetyme, meanetyme n.; (in) (the) me(a)netyme meantime 1551, 2237, 2783
merciable, mercyable adj. merciful, forgiving 449, 1891
mercy n. compassion, mercy 1028, 1441, 1494, 1830, 1892, etc.
mercyable see merciable
merveld see mervel(e)d
mervel(e)d p.t. marvelled 944, 1255
mervell see mervyle
mervyle, mervell n. marvel, amazing thing 1000, 1272, 1918
message n. message 1231
messengers see messengers
messengers, messangers n.pl. messengers 951, 952, 961, 965, 1222, etc.
mete n. at mete at table 2170
mete v. assemble 18, 913; p.t. met(t)e engaged in battle 364, 370, 523, 552, 594, etc.;
     p.t. met(t)e happened upon, encountered 406, 433, 1655
mette see mete
meveable goddes n.pl. moveable goods, personal property 2704-5
meved, moved p.t. meved/moved warre/wer(r)e made war
     1615, 2113, 2298, 2307, 2319
middys n. midst 563
million n. million of golde a million pieces of gold 2836
miernes (freres) see ffrere
miracle n. miracle 1467, 1618, 1627, 1748, 2550, etc.
misbeleve n. heresy 2427
mischefe adj. misfortune 110
miscraent adj. infidel, non-Christian 1381
mitered p.p. mitred 3390
my see I
mychelmasse n. Michaelmas 3152
myght, myght p.t. could, might 718, 799, 849, 851, 877, 1709, etc.
myght n. strength, military might 325, 458
myghty, myghti adj. strong, capable 207, 322, 886
myghty, myghty adj. strong, capable 207, 322, 886
myght see myghty
myle n. mile 1948 pl. myle 1936, 1950
myned p.t. dug under the foundations of 2001
myse n.pl. mice 3425
mo see mo(o)
mo(o) n. more 916, 2227, 3369
mocche adj. much, many, a great quantity of 145, 174, 370, 387, 391 etc.; huge 1246
mochu n. much, a large part of 1161; made moche of treated well 506, 829; so
     moche so much 1246
mochu adv. greatly 246, 248, 252, 255, 1485, etc.; to a great extent 492
moder n. mother 98, 100, 315, 388, 689, etc.
mokked p.t. mocked 257
momysing n. mummer’s play 3176
mony, mony n. money 2595, 2719, 3010
monk(e) n. monk 795, 801, 1757, 2045, 2171, etc.
monthes n.pl. months 487,2053
money see monye
more adj.comp. more 699,1007,1268,2681; adv.comp. more 247,249,2008,2458,3348,etc.
morne n. morning 3146
mornynge n. morning 2344
morowe see mor(r)ow
mor(r)ow, morowe n. morrow 44,1121,1206,1653,2167,etc.
morsell n. bite, mouthful 436
mortalite n. loss of life 1482
mortall adj. mortal 1828
morter n. cement, mortar 949,984
most(e) adj.supl. greatest 925,1106,1188,1993,2505
most adv. most 1188
moste p.t. must 1420 must 3281
mounte n. mountain, hill 1039,1248; mount joye 1280
mourne v. to mourn 2440
mouth n. mouth 1075
moved see meved
mulery adj. legitimate 1906
multitud(e) n. host, army 509,2464
must see moste

N

nacon see nac(i)on
nac(i)on, nacyons n. nation 734,1189,1493
nacyons see nac(i)on
name n. name 55,210,415,929,1030,etc.
named p.t. named 54
nature n. constitution 60
nece n. niece 94
nekkes n.pl. necks 2756
ner prep. near 1246
neuer adv. never 28,34,141,258,434,etc.
neuermore adv. nevermore 1157
neuerthelesse adv. nevertheless 165-6
neuwew see neveue
neveue, nevwew, neuwew n. nephew, or kinsman 517,712,1283,1313,1350,etc
newew see neveue
new(e) adj. new 863,1552,3353
new adv. newly 1559
next(e) adj. next 331,2315,3157,3294
next(e) *adv.* next, immediately 1945, 1960, 2021, 3039
next *prep.* next to 2900
Saint Nicholas Dai *n.* St. Nicholas’ Day 3464
nigramanser *n.* necromancer, diviner 235
nygh *adj* see nygh(t)
nyght *n.* night 43, 943, 1115, 1119, 1249, etc.; *upon a nyght* one night 316; *on nyghtes* at night 991
nyght see nygh
nygramansy *n.* necromancy, divination 236
no *adj.* no 48, 52, 414, 434, 602, etc.; *non* 533, 639, 710, 1680, 1852, etc.
no *adv.* no 272, 916, 1268, 2681, 2852, etc. not 838
noble *adj.* noble 3, 4, 69, 72, 583, etc.
nobley *n.* nobility 1190
noght see no(u)ght
nombre see no(w)mbre
nombre see no(w)mbre
nombred *p.p.* numbered 2735
non *adj.* see no
none *pron.* none, no one 317, 799, 870, 916, 1144, etc.; no 871
none *n.* nun 1306
nor *conj.* nor 28, 607, 870, 1230, 1422, etc.
norysch *v.* bring up 1806; *p.p.* 1740
Normayns *n.pl.* Normans 1984
not see not(te)
not(te) *adv.* not 15, 36, 46, 111, 194, etc.
notable *adj.* well-respected, famous 1191
nothing *pron.* nothing 264, 267, 3328
notwithstanding *prep.* notwithstanding 1627, 1983
no(u)ght *pron.* come of nought come from nothing 2359; *sette nought be* had no faith in, 2417
now(e) *adv.* nowadays 210, 212, 934, 936, 1395, etc.; at this moment 1006, 1423, 1490, 3338, etc.
no(w)mbre, nombre *n.* to the nombre of amounting to 1260, 2329, 2541, 2657, 3354, etc.

O

o *indef.art.* one 996
o see o(on)
obey see obbey
ob(h)ey *v.* obey 1421, 1422, 1426, 1429, 1619, etc.
of *prep.* of 3, 8, 13, 18, 20, etc.

244
of adv. off 569
offence n. crime 2278
offered p.t. and p.p. proposed 2900; made a religious offering 3371
offys n. office 3024
ofte adv. often 813
olde adj. old 104,184,271,499,1143, etc. comp elder 194,282 superl. eldest
8,14,31,53,214,218, etc.
on pron see on(e)
on adj see o(on)
on(e) adj. see assent n.
on(e) prep. on 44,103,130,175,364,1121; upon 243,413,432,700,750,814, etc.; in
163,618,3192,3344; on hurttyng see hurt(t)yng; on lyve see lyf(f)e n.; on
slepe see sleep n.
on lyve see lyf(f)e
on slepe see sleep n.
oncle n. uncle 1908
on(e),oon(e) pron. one (person or thing) 64,188,242,307,326,1784,1951, etc.;
someone 3337
one pron. see on(e)
on(e) adj. see o(on)
only adv. only 576
o(on),on(e) adj. one, a single 18,124,436,1850 and see also assent(e) n.; o while
see while
oon see o(on)
on(e) pron. see on(e)
opened p.p. opened 2557
openly adv. openly 2451,3310
open see vp(p)on
opressed p.t. oppressed 323
or conj. ere, before 499,580,1095,1312,1948, etc.; or 2006,2323,2568,
2594,3221, etc.
ordained see oderyne
oderyne, oderined v. organise 2115,2557,2592 p.t. ordained 634; p.t. and
p.p. decreed 2514,2774,2850,2903
ordinaunce n. battle array 3314
ordlour n. religious order 2114
oste see (o)oste
(o)oste, hostes n. army, host 360,404,522,551,563,1153,2361, etc.
oth(e) n. oath 134,1157,1978,1983,2376
other pron. other 189,194,471,473,641, etc.; thother, toher the other 308,508,
835,1412,1076, etc.
other adj. other 441,632,681,1087,1213,1427, etc.; tother 2749
otherwise adv. otherwise 1337
ouer prep. over 1533
ouercome v. conquer 128,1092
ouerdrawen p.p. drawn across 3348
ouerryden p.p. trampled over (in battle), crushed 3335,3346
ought, aught p.t. was due 253; ought 1625
oure pron. our 33, 36, 38, 41, 125, etc.
oute see owte
outelawe n. outlaw 1812, 1863
owne adj. own 67, 247, 396, 595, 742, etc.
owre n. hour 3349
owte, oute adv. out 30, 54, 108, 133, 209, etc.

P

paie see pay
payment n. payment 2074
payynme n. pagans 1031-2, 1033, 1259-60, 1270, 1357, etc.
palace see paleys
paleys, palace n. palace 1819, 2252, 3399, 3402
palmar see palmer
palmer,-mar n. pilgrim 1655, 1657, 1660, 1661
pardoned p.t. and p.p. pardoned 1895, 2150, 2277, 2525; p.p. 2627
parliament n. parliament 2202, 2269, 2272, 2291, 2306, etc. parliament 3242
parte see perte
party n. part 354, 1107, 1993; side 2735, 3362; party 2503
pas see pas(s)
pas(s) v. pass by 1279, 3428, cross 2730; p.t. passed forth furth proceeded 1211, 3329, 3375
pay, paie v. pay 376, 402, 547, 2144, 2904, etc.; p.p. paid 2751
pe(e)s, pese n. peace 89, 190, 421, 424, 428, etc.
pennaunce n. penance 1755
people n.pl. people 110, 121, 122, 303, 767, etc.; soldiers 145, 174, 295, 370, 387, etc.
pepe see pope
peramour n. lover 166, 1288
peres n.pl. peers 2513
performe v. carry out 3144, 3147
parliament see parliament
permisiones n.pl. permissions 2882
perpetuall adj. perpetual 3062
persone n. person 2970, 3343, 3368
perte, parte n. part, portion 925, 1301, 2704
pes see pe(e)s
pese see pees
peseable adj. peaceful 914

246
pestilence n. pestilence 1478-79,2759,2760,2854
pete see pite(e)
peter pennes see petir pennes
petir/peter pennes n.pl. Peter's pence 1399,2850,2885
peyne n. on peyne of here logeaunce as demanded by 2590
pike v. dig 2327
pilgramage,pilgremage n. pilgramage 1667,1934,2553
pilgremage see pilgramage
pilgrimes n.pl. Peter's pence
pilled adj. tonsured 2531
pite see pite(e)
pite(e),pete n. pity 130,413,450,1317,1382,1442,3195,etc.
place n. place 613,840,1013,1394,1539,etc.
playne n. plain 1049
plane adj. in plane batell in regular open battle 82,313,340,392,655,etc.
pley v. play 3300,3301,3316
pleynlyy adv. plainly 27,1421
plegge n.; in pleggge as a pledge 2835; pledges 2837
plente n. abundance 1500,2246
pointe n. point 2929
pointed p.t. pointed 3384
poison see poison(ne)
poisond see poisoune
poison(ne) n. poison 1081,2186
poisound see poisoune
poisoune v. poison someone 1132,1133,1135; p.p. poisound 897,1012
poissound see poisoune
poyntes n.pl. accusations 2302,2303
pope n. Pope 585,626,1376,1387,1527,etc. pepe 1376; popes poss.sg:2130,2133
pore n. poor 323
portes n.pl. ports 3084
poured p.t. poured 3393
power n. army 136,281,646,661,684,etc.
pownde n. pound (currency) 575
praid see pray
praied see pray
praen see pray
pray v. petition 1617; pres.pl. praien 3339; p.t. praied 79,356,717,848,852,1548,etc. prayed 1000,1404
preche v. preach 582,587,1385,1393,1402
prechyn g. preaching 1396
precious adj. precious 1672
prelatys n.pl. prelates 2395
presence see presens
presens n. presence 2138,3483 presence 1825
presented p.t. presented 3386
preson see prison
presoner see prisoner
prestes, prestis n.pl. priests 634, 1989, 2461
prestis see prestes
preuley, prevely adv. privately 195, 362, 519, 746, 800, 918, etc.
preved see proved
prevely see preuly
primate n. ecclesiastical primate 1409, 1420
prince n. prince 659, 2254, 2290, 2296, 2723, etc.
prior see prio(u)r
prio(u)r n. prior 2100, 2104, 2915, 3214
priory n. priory 2753
prison, preson n. prison 138, 369, 467, 819, 925, etc.; imprisonment 3062
prisoner, presoner n. prisoner 596, 1028, 1106, 1182, 2072, etc.
procession n. procession 3378
proclaimed p.t. proclaimed 2959
procuring see procuryng
procuryng, -ring vb.l.n. procuring 2320, 2421
promise n. promise 1591
promised p.t. and p.p. promised 1040, 1233, 1336, 1589, 1594, 2260, etc.
prophecy n. prophecy 1521, 1522
prophecyed p.p. prophesied 3277
proposed p.t. proposed 2968, 3276, 3335; p.p. resolved, determined 1969, 3292
protection n. protection 39
proud(e) see prowde
proved, preved p.t. and p.p. proven 1191, 3310
prowde, proud(e) adj. proud 15, 547, 1815, 2416
purpose n. intention 2356
purposed p.t. intended 3091
put v. put 48, 138, 368, 747, 818, etc.; give as charge 1799; putte him to flyght, put to flight 365; putte doun, defeat 1551-2; put vpon suggest 1928; put...in eleccon, put...in chose, give a choice 2004, 3219-20

Q

quarell n. bolt for a crossbow 2089, 2333; dispute 2503
quarter n. quarter, measure (8 bushels) of grain 2454; pl. the four parts of a quartered body 2294
quartered p.t. quartered 2300, 2549, 2641
quene n. queen 13, 94, 171, 182, 1088, etc. quenis gen.sing. 1744
quere n. choir (of a church) 3061

248
quod p.t. said 250,253,1001,1713,1929,etc.

R

raiced see raise
raise, reise v. rouse, stir up (for the purpose of assembling an army)
174,1587,2468, 2546,2745,etc.; muster 2003; p.p. raiced 2521
raised see raise
ranne see renne
renne v. flow 2179; p.t. ranne 2247
rather adv. rather 759; preferably 761,3342
rattes n.pl. rats 3425
raunsomid, raunsond p.t. and p.p. exchanged for ransom 2073,3212
raunson n. ransom payment 2750,2835
raunsond see raunsomid
raveschid p.t. ravished 1245
real(l)me n. realm 13,263,1178,1782,2788,etc.
reame see real(l)me
reason n. reason 253,664,2288,2830
rebawdes see ribald
rebuked p.t. rebuked 26,1728
receiued, receved, -yved, -vyd p.t. and p.p. accepted 88,2548,3308; welcomed
1152,1392, 1496,2499
receved see receiued
recevyd see receiued
receyved see receiued
recordeth v.3s.pres.t. testifies 2520
rede adj. red 990,997,998,1002
redy adj. ready 1960,3354
regall n. regalia 1673
regaly n. kingship 3129
regent n. regent 3485
regnd see regned
regnd, re(i)gned p.t. and p.p. reigned 177,190,215,220,225,439,etc.
re(i)gne n. reign 897,1139,1310,1535,1609,3436,etc.
reigne see re(i)gne
reigned see regned
reise see raise
reyned p.t. rained 301
relesed p.p. issued 575
religion n.; men of religion, monks, 2468,2745; in religion as a member of a
religious order 2214
religiouse adj. religious 3377
reliqués n.pl. relics 1524
remenant-,menaunt n. remnant 325,923,1454,1994,2737,etc.
remembrance n. remembrance 609,1036
remembréd p.t. remembered 278
remenaunt see remenant
removed p.t. removed 2477,3026
replenysched adj. replenished 1514
repreve n. reproof 2324
reputacion n. good reputation 2332
request n. request 2304
rere v. raise 610
rescowed p.t. rescued 1168
resigne v. resign 3145,3195
resiruaciones n.pl. withholding of the services of the Church 2884
resiste v. resist 1766
resonable adj. reasonable 2495
rest(e) n. peace 620,1144,3133; have reste of, be free of 141
restitucion n. restitution 2136
restored p.t. and p.p. restored 283,1896,2147,3242
retene see retene(w)
retene(w) n. reteneue 3311,3417
retene new see retene(w)
retenewen see retene(w)
retorened see retourne
retourne v. return 635,2071,etc.2538; refl. 2866; p.t. retorened 3357 returned
1172, 1630,1667 returned 378
reuerens n. reverence 2246
reule n. rule 322
rewardes n.pl. rewards 3002
revell n. revelry 3177
riall see r(o)iall
ribald n. scoundrel 2359 rebawdes 2932 ryball 2446
riding v. pres.part. riding 2250; p.t. rode 2185,2374,3040,3398
ring(e) n. ring 1886,1940,1942,1958
riot n. debauchery 2403
risen see ryse
riuer,ryver n. river 149,152,179,180
ryal see r(o)iall
ryall see r(o)iall
ryally adv. royally 1152
ryball see ribald
rychely adv. richly 2251
ryches v.3s.pres.t. reaches 1083
ryght adv.; ryght so they did, they did just that 921; ryght scarcely, barely 2563;
ryght well very well 3394
ryght n. entitlement 1205,1644
ryght adj. just 1343; right (as opposed to left) 1926
ryme n. rhyme 2324,2342,2439
ryse v. stand up 3279; p.t. rose rebelled, revolted 778,2906,3017,3269; p.p. risen 3205
rysing n. uprising 2905
ryver see riuer
ryverside n. riverside 147
rode see riding
r(o)iall, ryal(l) adj. royal 1188,2361,2387,2991,3314
romaynes see romans
romayns see romans
romans,romayn(e)s n.pl. Romans 510,522,551,553,558,etc.
ropes n.pl. ropes 2756
rose see ryse
rotses n.p.l. roots 1478
rounde adj. rounde table Round Table 1192,1240,1251,1274,1296,etc.
rounde aboute adv. on all sides 856
rowssed p.p.l shriven 3389
rule n. rule 1509,1521,3450,3451 Rule of the king 2968
ruled p.t. and p.p. ruled 16,325,2482,2531,2579,etc.
ruler n. ruler 807

S

sacrament see sacrament
sacrement,sacra- n. sacrament 1974,2339,2820
sai see sey
said(e) see sey
sailed,sayled p.t. sailed 50,749,3105
saluacion n. salvation 1589
same adj. same 1072,1119,1373,1504,2958,etc.
sang, song p.t. sang 3377,3382,3391
sare see sore
sarsens see sarsyn(e)
sarsenis see sarsyn(e)
sarsyn(e) n. Saracen 754,1064 sarsens 773 sarsenis 787 sarzyns 2067 sersens 2049
sarzyns see sarsyn(e)
sat(t)e see sitte
saue v. save 1013
saue prep. except for 576,2065,2332,2394
saue save adj. safe 2651,3126
save see saue
Savoye n. Savoy 2921
saw(e) see se
sawdeours see saw(e)deours
saw(e)deours n.pl. soldiers 2601,2606
sawtes n.pl. surprise attacks 2324
saxon(e) n. Saxon 836,907,920,1027
say see sey
sayled see sailed
scaped see escape
scarsenesse n. scarcity 1475-6
scarsly adv. scarcely 2563
schake v. shake 991
schall v. shall 255,987,993,1007,1009,etc.
schame n. disgrace, dishonour 37,1668
schamed adj. ashamed 1159
schamed p.p. shamed 1545
schatering adj. destructive 2342
sche 3sg.fem.pron. she 97,173,174,178,184,etc.; her,here,hire 3sg.pron.fem.obl., her 13,90,94,155,171,875,etc.; as possessive, her 16,17,32,42,56,etc.; sche 3sgfem.pron., sheaf 2706
schepe n.pl. sheep 1269,1403,2682
scheppardes n.pl. shepherds 1953
schette see schut
s(c)hewe v. (make) manifest, reveal 1467,1618,1748; 3sg.pres. scheweth 1931
scheweth see s(c)hewe
schip(p),shippes n. ship 48,54,153,406,742,etc.
schires n.pl. shires 1373
schoes n.pl. shoes 1824
schorte adj. short 1012
schortly adv. concisely 80
schott see shote
schrife refl.v. shrieve 1831; schryven p.p. 1527
schryne n. shrine 1963
schryned adj. enshrined 1396,1756
schryven see schrife
schuld(e) p.t. should 35,97,98,135,141,etc.
schulder n. shoulder 2899
schut v. shut 2555; p.t. schette 3019; p.p. schutte 2108
schutte see schut
scoles see scollys
scoles see scollys
scoles see scollys
scoleyon n. scullion 1339
scollys,scoles n.pl. schools 2852 Scollys of Clergy schools of learning 1400
scorned p.t. scorned 1402
scottes see scottys
scottys,scottes n.pl. Scots 608,1167,1615,1619,1625,etc.
se v. see 21,148,434,755,862,etc.; witness 1479, 2854; visit 1704,1723,1739, 2961,3244, etc.; realise 62,561,1202,1570,1765,etc.; ls.pres.t. se 1930; p.t. saw(e) 21,62,148,434,561,etc. see 1570; p.p. seyne 1078,1100,1267
sen 2854 sene 1479
seale n. seal 2622,3096
seased,seised p.t. seized 84,172,297,694,702,etc.; p.p. 1286
seed see sese
seche see seke
secte n. sect 3413
seculer adj. secular 3377
secunde num. second 248,260,327,462,794
see n. sea 364,406,432,751,1159,etc.
seel v. seal 3095
seg(e) n. siege 1105,2088,2323,2464,2465,2477,etc.
segid p.t. besieged 3417
sei see seye
seid(e) see seye
seiden see seye
sailed p.t. sailed 1485
seint,seynt(e) n. saint 582,676,680,767,1376,1384,etc.
seised see seased
seyde see seye
seyne see se
seynte see seint
seke,seche v. seek 839,952
seke adj. sick 1063,1070,1125,2034,3279
sekened p.t. sickened 2398
sekenesse n. sickness 3259
selanders n.pl. men from Zeeland 2598
selle v. sell 1477; p.t. sold 2420
seme v. seem 812
sende v. send 268, 519,627,645,659,etc.; send a message 133,625; sent for summoned 22,144,944,967,1359,etc. sent word(e) to informed 142,266,279,362,902,etc. p.t. send(e) 22,268 p.p. and p.t. sent 133,142,144,266,967,etc.
seene see se
sensoure n. censer 3390
sent see sende
sersens see sarsyn(e)
serue v. serve 1931; p.p. serued served 2066 sirued 2453; treated 3192
seruice see seryuce
seryuce,seruice n.; do..., to become a liegeman 841; devyne seruice public worship 2109
sese v. cease 2488 p.t. seced 1497
seth see sith
sett(e) p.t. and p.p. settle...in pese established peace 1178; sette noght be, had a low opinion of, had little faith in 2417; sette (with) erected (by) 1039, 1050 set about with 1672
sext(e) num. sixth 936,3480
seysai,say,sei v. say 382,442,488,737,813,920,1941,etc.; p.t. said(e) 97,99,247,249, 252,etc. seid(e) 27,29,32,409,761,etc. p.t.pl. seiden 124
seyde see sey
seyne see se
shankes n.pl. legs 2326
sharpe adj. sharp 3333
shereffes see sheryffs
sheryffs, reffes n.pl. sheriffs 3024, 3374
shertes see shirts
shewe see s(c)hewe
shippes see schip(p)
shirtes, shertes n.pl. shirts 1441, 2755
shote, schott p.t. shot 105, 1574
sight n. spectacle 1923; sight 2552
signified see signifieth
signifieth v. 3s.pres.t. signifies 1002, 1003 p.t. signified 1001, 1079, 1082, 1087, 1089
siluer n. silver 1477, 2246
sir(e), syre n. sir 254, 836, 987, 1540, 1929, etc.
sith, seth conj. since 151, 1425
sitte, sytte v. sit 1193; sit in judgement 3257; p.t. sat(t)e 583, 1222, 2170; satte in chere occupied the bishop's throne, ruled 583
sydes n.pl. sides 3396, 3418
synne n. sin 198, 1489, 1494, 1527, 1755, etc.
syre see sir(e)
sytte see sitte
skill n. knowledge, training 2471
skynne n. skin 856
slan see sle(e)
slayne see sle(e)
slan(e) see sle(e)
slepe n. on slepe asleep 41, 317, 1652, 1949
slepe v. sleep 1953
sle(e) v. slay 98, 195, 764, 921, 948, etc.; p.t. slew(e) 58, 137, 143, 296, 314, 339, etc.
slow(e) 43, 107, 613, 815, 922, etc. slowegh 81; p.p. slane 109, 117, 556, 659, 775, etc. slayne 135, 151, 161, 177, 332, etc. slan 2422
slew(e) see sle(e)
slow(e) see sle(e)
slowegh see sle(e)
smal(e), small adj. small 2741, 2813, 2819, 2825, 3388
small see smal(e)
smyte v. strike 1623; p.t. and p.p. smyte 3270, 3307; p.t.sg. smote
559, 568, 819, 1626, 1744, etc.; p.t.pl. smyten 2918 p.p. smyten
2525, 2986, 3059, 3187, 3188
smyten see smyte
smote see smyte
so(o) adv. so 37, 47, 55, 80, 852, etc.; so that conj. see that; 17, 59, 389, 524, 681, etc.; such 35, 811; so...as 37; who so see who
socour n. support 2505; refuge 2763
sodenly adv. suddenly 146
sodome n.; synne of sodome, sodomy 198
soke v. suck 3430
solempnite n. ceremony 1097
some det. see sume
some quant. some 411,1516,2119
some d. summoned 2271,2291,2701,3051
son(e), sonne n. son 87,90,102,183,188,192,etc.
some adv. soon 156,270,516,561,692,etc.
song see sang
sonne see son(e)
sore adv. fiercely 995,1208,1294; sare intensely 2440
sorow(e) n. sorrow 115,2763
sory adj. sorry 895,1651,2626
sotys n.pl. sots 2343
soule n. soul 2407
souereyn n. sovereign 126
sowdene n. sultan 2049
sowped p.p. supped 865
space n. time 1490
spaynardes n.pl. Spaniards 2865
spake see speke
speke v. speak 871,1862,2481; p.t. spake 871,1256,1502,1709,2244,etc.; p.p.
spoken 2815
spere n. spear 3349
spiritual(l),spirituel adj. spiritual 2112,2610,3303
spirituel see spiritual(l)
sporte refl.v. take one’s pleasure, take recreation 147,1539
spouse v. espouse 159,164
sprade see sprede
sprede v. spread 853; p.t. sprade 857
squier n. squier 3185,3191,3361
stablischt, established p.p. established 2153; brought into order 2235
established see stablischt
stake n. stake 3333,3347
stale see stall(e)
stall(e) p.t. stole 2457; stall(e) away/away withdrew stealthily 1068,1249,1305,
2838,3104
statutes n.pl statutes 2272
stedes, stedys, stedis n.pl. steeds 1671,2251,2252
stedis see stedes
stedys see stedes
sterre n. star 1073,1078,1080,1100,3223
stile see style
still(e) adv. still 140,2262
stode see stonde
stonde v. stand 983; p.t. stode 962, 1050, 1624, 1788, 1823, etc.; stonde in be in a state of 1006
stone n. stone 610, 614, 1038, 1048, 1060, etc.; pl. jewels 1672; and see gone stones
story n. legend 1267
strange adj. foreign 2997
strangers see stra(u)ngers
stra(u)ngers n.pl. foreigners 604, 831, 3002
strenght n. strength 338, 1052, 1061, 1266, 1449, etc.
strenght v. strengthen 3053
strette n. people of a particular street 3017; street 3397
strive v. quarrel with 2024
stronde n. shore, bank 748
strong adj. strong 125, 830, 886, 905, 930, etc.
strongly adv. strongly 1263
stuarde n. steward 554, 2983
stuffle n. supplies 1203; body, group 2741
style, stile n. title 3441, 3442
2005, 2610, 3144, 3146
subjectis n.pl. subjects 36
submitte v. refl. to submit 2139
substaunce n. majority 1165
subtile adj. subtle 2592
successours n.pl. successors 1184, 2144, 2145
suche adj. such 434, 750, 952, 1932, 2158, etc.; pron. such persons 896, 2481, 3132
suerde see suorde
sufferaunce n. indulgence 1829
suffice v. suffice 838
suffre v. allow 111, 194, 273, 277, 901, etc. suffer 761, 938
sume, some det. some 597, 1618, 1885
sumne n. sum 3010
suerde, suorde, sworde n. sword 161, 1209, 1626, 1632, 2929
suore see suare
suorne p.p. see suare
suorne adj. see sworn
supposing pres.part. supposing 2740
suraunce n. solemn pledge 1852
surely adv. surely 941
suster n. sister 17, 32, 33, 42, 1331, etc. sustres 254; susteris sonnes nephews 290
sustres see suster
sworde see suorde
sworn adj. sworn 1783
table n. table 2067; and see Rounde Table
tailles n.pl. tails 1403,1405
take v. take 12,40,104,155,178,etc.; capture 138,151,367,924,1968,etc.; accept 1649,1655,2134; take to wife marry 358; take fealte(s) take an oath of fealty 404,643; take a treaty make a treaty 2721,2813,2880,3437; toke/taken to grace granted clemency 2757,2989 p.t. toke 12,104,138,178,199,etc. to 155,1250 toke vp a grete laughter to burst out laughing 1916; imp take 1940 pres.part. takyng 1223,1484 p.p. taken 151,367,924,1968,2813, etc.
taken see take
taried p.t. tarried 3244
taught see teche
taxes n.pl. taxes 2702
tech v. teach 1386; p.t. taught 2403
tell v. tell 81,987,1001,1272,1664,etc.; determine 964; 3sg.pres. telleth 1267; p.t. and p.p. told(e) 123,683,873,964,982,etc.
tell see till
telleth see tell
temper v. temper 949; p.p. temperide 984
temperall adj. temporal 2610,3303
temperide see temper
tempest n. tempest 366,750,1967
temple n. Temple 227
templers n.pl. Knights Templar 2426
tennes,tonnes n. tennis 3300,3316
tennes balles n.pl. tennisballs 3301
than see then
thanked p.t. thanked 729,1093,1631,1888,1955,etc.
that conj. that 14,78,139,265,331,etc.; afterwarde that after 55-6; aftir/after that 229,284,286,302,1054,etc.; because that because 503,533,670,1716,1719,etc.; forbecause/forbycause that because 353-4,1742,1760,2580; so that so that 17,59,163,350,389,etc.
that det. that 78,151,175,180
that rel.pron. who, which 6,11,31,35,36,etc.
that dem.pron. that 62
the def.art. the 3,8,11,14,20,etc.
the pron. thee, you 2139; thi poss.pron. thy 960,1829,2326
theder see thider
thei pron. they 7,24,27,29,30,etc.; their(e) here their 123,324,759,1107,1405,etc.; ther(e) their 17,23,26,27,42,43,etc.; here their 123,819,1153,1266; them.them 22,23,26,28,43,etc.the 2388; hem them 8,9,111,130,136,etc.
their(e) see thei
them see thei
then, than conj.; (no) more than 247, 249, 1269, 2009, 2458; better then 316; rather than 759, 3342
then(ne) adv. then 51, 139, 152, 181, 185, etc.
then(u)s adv. thence 112, 202, 730, 1111, 2793, etc.
theos see this(e)
there pron. there 3, 69, 302, 321, 750, etc.
ther(e) adv. there 112, 115, 140, 160, 176, etc.
ther(e) pron see thei
therefor(e), therfur adv. therefore 179, 198-9, 431, 1013, 1310, 1984, etc.
therfur see therefore
ther(e)in adv. therein 52, 154, 1790, 2329
ther(e)of adv. thereof 45, 264, 728, 776, 779, etc.
ther(e)to adv. thereto 42-3, 46, 761, 803, 848, etc.
therewith adv. therewith 3302
therin see ther(e)in
therof see ther(e)of
therto see ther(e)to
thes (these) see this(e)
thes (this) see this
thi see the pron.
thider, theder adv. there 864, 1041, 1042, 1105, 1108, etc. thidre 2003, 2349, 2491, 2510, 2618, etc.

thidre see thider
thing n.pl. things 1827
thinges n.pl. stipulations 3220
thirde, thride num. third 794, 1332, 1511, 2140, 2191, etc.
this, thes det.s this 1, 9, 31, 50, 66, 72, etc.; pl. this(e) these 17, 57, 156, 634; thes
282, 457, 687, 961, etc. theos 2518 dem.pron. this 83, 768, 1309, 1386, 1748, etc.
thought see thought
thon(e) see too(n(e)
thonge n. thong 856, 857
thoos see tho(o)s
thorought, thought adv. by means of 72, 1067; thorow through 951, 953, 1791, 2178, 2669
thorought out see thorough
thorought adv. throughout, everywhere 2651 thoro(u)ght out 1170, 2766 toroghth 2936 toroghth 3001
thoro(u)ght out see thorough
thos dem.pron. see tho(o)s
thos det. those 906
tho(o)s, dos det. those 322, 679, 928, 1480, 1578, etc. dem.pron. tho(o)s 906, 2347
thorow see thorought
thother see other pron.
thought, t(h)ought p.t. and p.p. thought 245, 744, 799, 800, 808, 1708, 2626, etc.
thought see thorought
thousand num. thousand 3383; thousands 3425, 3433
thousandes see thousand
thraldome n. slavery 115,123
throw(e) p.t. threw 569; threwe doune tore down (a building) 1577
thride see thirde
throte n. throat 316 pl. throtys 42
throtys see throte
till, tell conj. until 585, 830, 1374, 2718
tirant n. tyrant 685
tithinges, tithingys n.pl. tidings, news 156, 687, 770, 831, 906, 1998, etc.
tithingys see tithinges
title see tytle
tyme n. reign 226, 301, 539, 581, 592, etc.; time 379, 746, 1012, 1446, 1521, etc.;
incidences 978; on a tyme, one day 124, 972
tynte p.p. lost 2441
tytle, title n. title 1646, 2007, 2692, 2794
to prep. to 10, 19, 23, 25, 29, etc.; with 1704, 1861; inf. part. 23, 47, 79, 80, 96, etc.; until
55, 1423, 1575, 2097; as 166
to p.t. see take
touched p.t. touched 1790
tode n. toad 2177
togeder,-gider adv. together 7, 18, 302, 324, 390, 1328-9, etc.
toght see thought
toght conj. though 139
togider see togeder
toher see other pron.
toke see take
token n. token 1034
told(e) see tell
tonne n. ton 3301
tones see tennes
toon(e), thon(e) pron. the one (of two) 507, 834, 955, 990, 1073, 1800, etc.
torn v. turn (away) 1821; p.t. returned 1160; p.t. turned into 2710
tornamentes see tornamentys
tornamentys,-tes n.pl. tournaments 1191, 1220 tornammentes 2991
torought see thorough
torought see thorough
tother pron. see other
tother see other
town(e) n. town 224, 241, 441, 571, 580, 651, etc.
toure n. tower 345, 2000, 3000, 3319
tournementes see tornamentys
toward prep. toward 21, 749, 866, 1075, 1076, etc.
town(e) see toune(n)
trailbaston n. part of a series of proclamations intended to curb the abuses of
sheriffs and bailiffs, established in 1305 by Edward I 2372
traitour(e) see tratore
translate p.p. translated 1525, 1963, 2207
trapped p.p. attired 1671,2251
tratore,-tour n. traitor 567,1793,1798,1871,2295,2522,etc.; traitour(e) 2520,2580,2601
traitour see tratore
trayn n. weapon 2784
tree n. tree 1574
treson n. treason 775,797,1037,1081,2982,etc.
tresorer n. treasurer 3306
tresory n. treasury 2419
tresoure n. treasury 1633; treasure 2036
trete v. make a treaty 909,2156,2198,2691,2924,etc.; entreat 1621,2571
trety n. treaty 1035,2721,2812,2880,3437
trew(e) adj. true 820,2340,2841
trewly adv. truly 1931
trouage n. truage, money given as part of an oath of allegiance 376,403,525,547,574,etc.
trobill see trouble
trobile,-bill n. trouble 1006,1007
trues,truse n. truce 2352,2870
truse see trues
trust see trust(ed)
trust(ed) p.t. trusted 1266,2008
trust n. trust 1284
two see two(o)
two(o) num. two 145,192,250,332,1007,etc.
twolmonth n. year 1664

U

vunarmed p.t. assisted in removing armour 554
vncle n. uncle 2946,2948,2948,3321 vncle sone cousin 716,2502,2697
vncle sone see vncle
vnder prep. under 989,3140,3231,3450,3451; under (protection) 39,3126; subordinate to (a king) 2348,2506
vnderstode see vndirstode
vnderstood see vndirstode
vndirstode,vnderstode p.t. understood 336,606,2599,2612,2646; p.p. vnderstood 1084
vknownen adj. unknown 1725
vnneth adj. only 2759
vnthankes n. unthanks 2327
vnto prep. unto 173,331,875,1525,1548,etc.; until 353,379,740,1521,1523,etc.
veware adj. unexpected 2343
vp adj. up 201; held up 1826, 1926
vpon see vp(p)on
vp(p)on,apon prep. upon 10, 63, 76, 90, 146, 2614, etc.
vpward adj. upward 1641
vs see we
vse v. use 198, 1502, 2883
vse n. use 1977

V

vanysched see vanysshed
vanysshed, -sched p.t. vanished 436, 977, 1947
variaunce n. strife 2430-1
vaward n. front lines 2736, 3332
vengeance n. vengeance 199, 431, 2574
venome n. venom 2178
vertues n.pl. virtues 1879
victory n. victory 558, 610, 3491
virgines n.pl. virgins 709
virginite n. virginity 759, 760
visage n. face, facial appearance 1382, 1712
vise, vyse n. spiral staircase 346, 3386
vitall see vitall
vitall, vitaille n. food 49, 1203; supplies in general 1477
vylens n. violence 1854
vyrgyn n. Virgin 540
vytaille see vitall
void adj. empty 411
voide v. empty 2305, 3355
vois n. voice 3341

W

wage v. hire 2601, 2605, 2652, 2656
waies see wey
waked p.t. awakened 1950
walked p.t. and p.p. walked 432, 1948
wallle n. wall 492, 1032, 1119, 1640, 2231, etc.
walschman n. a Welshman 2297,2306
walschmen see walsch(e)men
walsch(e)men n.pl. Welshmen 2282,3219
wan see wan(ne)
wan(ne) p.t. won 2063,2066,2242,2328,2445,etc.
warde n. custody 2221
warded p.p. kept in custody 3103
wardens n.pl. wardens 966
warse adj. worse 354
was see be
wassaile,wesseile n. toast 869,2180
wasted adj. wasted 413
water n. water 569,1134,1135,1820,1821,etc.; body of (spring) 236; body of (river) 568,570,1817,2730,3457
way see wey
we pron. we 35,37,38,127,129,836,etc.; vs obl. us 34,39,40,41,840,etc.
wedd(e) v. marry 5,90,155,380,718,etc.
weddyng n. wedding 2764
wekes n.pl. weeks 2238,3471,3475
welcome adj. welcome 847
welcomed p.t. welcomed 2579,3110
wele,well adv. very much 251,384,1014,1879,1911; well armed well-armed 1207,2492; wele borne, well-born 37; well-conditioned well brought-up 265-6; well known well-known 960; well seyne seen by many 1267; well stablisched well-established 2235
wele borne see wele
well armed see wele
well-conditioned see wele
well known see wele
well stablisched see wele
well (adj.) see wele
welle n. well 1135
wemen see woman
wend(e) see wenys
wene see wenys
wenys v.2s.pres.t. think 2325; 3p.pres.t. wene 1311; p.t. wend(e) 564,1815,2442
went 820
went see wenys
went see go(o)
wepyn n. weapon 917
wepyng pres.part. weeping 971,1544
were see be
wered p.t. wore 343
werk(e) see worke
werned p.t. warned 758
we(r)re,warre n. war 80,321,1530,1615,2113,2196,etc.
werr v. make war 76,290,387,640,643,etc.
werthe see worth(e)
wessile see wassaile
wex p.t. became 14,159,256,270,687
wey,way n. pathway 1367,1726,2761; manner 923,975,978,1889; will, intent 1091; along the way 394,2063; pl. waies streets 382
whan(ne) see when(ne)
what(te) interrog. what 96,407,715,833,870,etc. rel.pro. who 407,2442
wheder adv. whether 1516,1643,2004
when(ne) conj. when 11,21,24,30,177,etc. whan(ne) 118,397,415,450, 907; rel.pro. whenne 658,814,1178,1513,1652,etc.
wherby adv. whereby 2314
where conj. where 938; rel.pro. 74,147,583,837,932,etc.
wher(e)as rel.pro. at/in which 1391,1395-6,1756-7
whereas adv. whereas 1391,1467,1939,3441
wherefor(e) adv. wherefore 37-8,112,195,257,549,etc.
wher(e)of adv. whereof 521,944,1917,2412
whero see wher(e)of
whete n. wheat 2455,3393
whi interrog. why 1919
which(e) rel.pro. who 4,6,63,2041; which 51,245,725,1171,1218,etc.
whiche interrog.adj. which 245,975,978
the which rel pron. which 91,1491,1672; who 3103,3419
whider adv. which way 437
while conj. while 38,856,998,1069,1118,etc.
while n. while 120,998,1414,1500,2160,etc. o while at one time 996
white adj. white 990,996,1003,1670,2251,etc.
white ffreere see ffreere
whitsondai n. Whitsunday 1914
whynne see when(ne)
who see who(o)
whom(e) rel.pro. whom 1468,1747
who(o) interrog. who 960,962,964,970,981,etc. who 2253
whos rel.pro. whose 301,678,1475,1603,1685,etc.
wikednesse n. wickedness 2043
wikked adj. wicked 431
wilde see wyde
wildefire n. wildfire (inflammatory substances used in warfare) 1023
wilderness n. wilderness 52,1171
wife see wydf(e)
wiff(e) see wyf(f)e
will(e) n. see wyll
will(e) v. see wyll
wise n see wyse.
wise,wyse adj. wise 301,3451 superl. wysest 945
wist(e) see wist(e)
with,wyth prep. with 24,38,40,48,79,338,etc.
with childe see childe
within adv. within 120; prep. 1012
without prep. without 640,852,1375,1893,2763; adv. outside 2624
withstode p.t. withstood 762
witte see wytte
wyfe see wyff(e)
wyff(e) wife, wiff(e) n. wife 12,90,169,197,272,358,734,1112,1698, etc.
wylde, wilde adj. wild 58; ferocious 433,2962
wyll, will(e) n. will 67,711,715,724,1516,2102, etc. adj. grete willed wilful 15
wyll, will v. will 34,126,127,129,838, etc.; desire 727 wold 841; p.t. wold(e) would
15,27,28,29,45, etc.
wyne n. wine 2247, 2258
wynne v. capture 2326; p.p. wonne 1281, 2443
wynter n. winter 2718
wyse, wise n. manner 16, 251, 612, 723, 914, etc.
wyse adj see wise
wysest see wyse
wyst(e) see wotte
wyth see with
wytte, witte v. know 715, 833, 945, 981, 1643, etc.; to witte, specifically 1235
wyttes n.pl. wits 2824
wod(d)es n.pl. woods 132, 2112
wodes see wod(d)es
wold(e) see wyll v.
wolfes n.pl. wolves 202, 1269, 2682
woll see wyll v.
wolles n.pl. woolens 2705
woman n. woman 602, 947, 2903, 3326, 3393; pl. wemen 57 women
113, 213, 407, 606, 681, etc.
women see woman
wonder adv. very 60, 159
wynne see wynne
wont adj. accustomed 662
word(e) n. notification 142, 266, 279, 362, 902, etc.; words 278
worke, werk(e) n. work 950, 983, 988, 989, 992
world(e) n. world 744, 1188, 2244, 2887, 2936
worschipp n. respect 2791
worschipfull adj. respectable 2872
worschipfully adv. respectfully 220, 341, 440
worth(e), werthe adj. worth 255, 958, 2172, 2173, 2175
worthi adj. worthy 401 superl worthiest 1086, 2587, 2887, 3501
worthihest see worthi.
worthiness n. worthiness 1256
wotte v. 3s.pres.t. knows 959 p.t. wyst(e), wiste knew, realised
96, 144, 437, 645, 695, 2386, etc.
wounded p.p. wounded 1303
wrath n. wrath 172, 1111
wrecched adj. wretched 1828
wrecches n.pl. wretches 1488
wrenchens n.pl. tricks, guile 2343
wryte v. write 3095; p.t. wrote 18
wrongfully adv. wrongfully 2698
wrote see wryte
wroth(e) adj. angry 21,160,256,355,550,etc.

Y

y pron see I
yates see gate
yche see iche
ye exclam. yes 2622
ye,yow pron. you 125,126,250,254,255,etc. you 840; poss.pron. your(e) your
127,920,1004,1005,1010,etc.
yeld(e) v. yield (sth.) 451,524,2132,2134,2685,etc.; surrender (s.o.) 1829,2840,
3241; to yield up 451,2685, 2754
yerde n. yard 1820
yere n. year 49,92,104,177,184,etc.
yerly adv. yearly 2134,2145,3140
yet,yit adv. still 633,859,872,1053,1502,etc.
yeven see gyf(f)e
yf conj. if 840
yit see yet
ymage n. likeness 1788
ymaginacion n. cunning 2592
ymagined p.t. plotted 3216
yolden p.p. yielded 1156,1210
yolowe adj. yellow 2492
yong adj. young 118,498,504,798,839,etc.; superl. yongest 252
yongest see yong
you see ye pron.
your(e) see ye pron.
your(e)selfe pron. yourself 1002,1014,1082
yourself see your(e)selfe
youed see gyf(f)e
yow see ye
ys see be
ysshu see isshu(e)
yt see it
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