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A

A Commentary, Study, and Diplomatic Reprint of the Pierpont
Morgan Library MS (M4) of John Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes*

by Robert J. Wilson

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in English in
partial fulfillment for the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

2000

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in English in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

In memory of Francis Jerome Markert, CFC:
scholar, teacher, friend

PREFACE

On 14 December 1992 Professor William Coleman of the City University of New York Graduate Center brought his doctoral seminar class, "Editing the Medieval English Text," to the Pierpont Morgan Library. Assisted by William Voelkle, curator of the Medieval and Renaissance MSS collection at the Library, Professor Coleman showed us a few pertinent manuscripts from the collection. I found the last one that he showed, a copy of John Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes* acquired by the Library in 1900, to be particularly intriguing. Despite Lydgate's status as a major fifteenth century English poet, this manuscript (M4 in the Morgan Library collection) had still been unedited. Later in the lobby of the Library before returning home, a few meters from Dickens's holograph of *A Christmas Carol* on display every Christmastime, I first contemplated writing about the Lydgate manuscript.

During the past nine years many people have helped me on the path toward finishing the degree. The late Francis Jerome Markert, CFC, classics professor at Iona College, first encouraged me to attend the Graduate Center, City University of New York. He based his advice upon a colleague's positive experience at the Graduate Center. I can confirm his advice in light of the superb scholar-teachers I have encountered: Patrick Cullen, Angus Fletcher, David Greetham, W. Speed Hill, Richard C. McCoy, Catherine McKenna, Gerald M. Pinciss, and Martin Stevens. I must in particular thank Professor Hill whose rigorous but exciting course first exposed me to the rewards of

textual scholarship. He also made many invaluable comments that strengthened the writing of this dissertation. Professor McKenna's willingness to read this paper is matched by the forbearance she displayed when she was one of the few to listen to me read a paper on *The Wedding of Sir Gawain and Dame Ragnell* eight years ago. Linda Sherwin, Program Assistant for the English department, has been unfailingly kind in leading me through the various steps required for the degree. I fondly recall the previous Program Assistant, the late Lynn Kadison.

Other scholar-teachers from Iona College, Fordham University, New York University and elsewhere who have influenced my academic career include Professors the late Jess B. Bessinger, Jr., John R. Costello, Ray C. Dougherty, Donald P. Dwyer, James W. Earl, the late Robert A. Fowkes, Paul K. Hennessy, the late John M. Egan, P. Sean Moffett, Michael P. Peinovich, George Pepper, Harry Solo. I also wish to acknowledge the continued support of my colleagues past and present at Suffern High School, N.Y.: Barry Bley, William Boyle, John Collins, Doreen Dedrick, Patrick Faherty, Jeffrey Fisher, the late John Patrick Kissane, Helen Lynch, PhD., Cheryl Lyon, Anthony Mastandrea, William Peppiatt, PhD., Barry Ryan, Stuart Schpétner, Richard Terwilliger, Philip Tisi, John Wagner, Glenn Weeks. The members of the English, history, and modern languages departments there have been tremendously supportive. Others such as Travis Jackson, Ph.D., Orrin Sherman, M.D., and Sandra Stotsky, Ph.D. lent encouragement in different ways.

The librarians in the Pierpont Morgan Library reading room, Inga DuPont, Sylvia Merian, and Vanessa Pintado, were exceedingly helpful during my many visits there, as was William Foacan, rare manuscript librarian of the Boston Public Library.

To my mother and my father, my first teachers of the English language, I owe inestimable thanks over a lifetime.

My enduring thanks must go to Professor William Emmet Coleman who nurtured the development of this dissertation with consummate patience and skill during the past seven years. The scholarship of his work and the inspiration with which he fills his students reflect two important qualities of a great teacher.

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Abbreviations

- adv. adverb
- Ar. BL Arundel 119, *The Siege of Thebes*, base-text for E&E
- Art. Article
- AUT MS Austin, University of Texas MS 143, *The Siege of Thebes*
- BL British Library
- Bodl. Bodleian Library
- c. circa
- Ch Oxford, Christ Church MS 152, *The Siege of Thebes*
- cm(m). centimeter(s)
- E&E Erdmann and Ekwall, eds. *Lydgate's Siege of Thebes* Parts I and II (1911, 1930).
- E.E.T.S. Early English Text Society
- f(f). folio(s)
- em. emendation
- HT *Hystoire de Thebes*
- l(l). line(s)
- LALME Angus McIntosh et al., *A Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English* (1986)
- M4 the Pierpont Morgan Library manuscript, *The Siege of Thebes*
- MLN *Modern Language Notes*
- MS(S) manuscript(s)
- mm. millimeters
- n. note
- n.s. new series
- ODEE *The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*
- OED *The Oxford English Dictionary*
- om. omit

o.s. old series

P Cambridge UL, Pepys MS 2011, *The Siege of Thebes*

pl. plural

prep. preposition

r recto

RB Renoir and Benson

RE *Roman de Edipus*

repr. reprint

sb. substantive

sg. singular

ST *The Siege of Thebes*

s.v. *sub verbo* 'under the word'

UL University Library

v verso

vb. verb

PART I
COMMENTARY AND STUDY OF *THE SIEGE OF THEBES*

CHAPTER 1: JOHN LYDGATE AND *THE SIEGE OF THEBES*

John Lydgate is the most prolific English poet of the fifteenth century. His birth is dated from a passage in *The Siege of Thebes* (henceforth *ST*) in which Lydgate responds to a query from the host of the Canterbury pilgrimage:

I answerde my name was Lydgate,
 Monk of Bery, ny₃ fyfty ₃ere of age (92-3)¹

Since the poem was written some time between May 1420 and August 1422 (see below, "Date"), and if one assumes Lydgate was not willfully distorting his age, he was born c. 1371. He also writes in *The Fall of Princes* that he was "born in a vyllage which callyd is Lydgate" (9.3431; qtd. in Pearsall, *John Lydgate* 22). This village in Suffolk is about 5½ miles southeast of Newmarket near the Cambridgeshire border. His mother bore him at Suffolk House (now rebuilt) on the main street. In this house he is depicted wearing a religious habit in the brass on the chancel floor (Eagle and Carnell 157). Although popular road maps such as American Map's *Europa* do not include this small village, they do include Bury St. Edmunds,² six miles southeast in Suffolk where Lydgate entered the monastery at age 15 in 1485. It was built in the early 1200s on the site where an earlier church had been constructed to hold the bones of the East Anglican King Edmund. The new monastery was second only to Glastonbury in popularity, and its library was one of the largest in England. When the teenage Lydgate first arrived, he would have seen two structures that still stand among the ruins despite the Dissolution: the Tower of St.

James, a high Norman tower from 1120-1248; and the Great Gatehouse constructed after 1327 with crenellations, arrow slits, and portcullis. The latter structure is now the entrance to public gardens (Crowl 250, Eagle and Carnell 43).

The earliest known date available for Lydgate's biography comes from his admittance to the Order of Acolyte in Hadham Church 13 March 1389, in the Register of Robert Braybrooke, bishop of London (Pearsall, *John Lydgate [1371-1449]* 53). Lydgate was admitted to the office of sub-deacon on 17 December 1389 according to a register kept by the monastery abbot, William de Cratfield. On 28 May 1393 he became deacon, and on 7 April 1397 was ordained priest by John Fordham, Bishop of Ely, in the chapel of the manor of Downham (Pearsall, *John Lydgate [1371-1449]* 54-56).

Despite Lydgate's status as a vowed religious of the Benedictine order, he was not confined to the monastery. He apparently studied at Oxford at two different times, based on a letter of the Prince of Wales (later Henry V) to the abbot of Bury St. Edmunds (Pearsall, *John Lydgate [1371-1449]* 56-57). At times he stayed at the abbot's town house in London, where he wrote *Gaude virgo mater Christi* according to John Shirley, a bookdealer and collector and transcriber of Lydgate's manuscripts (Pearsall, "John Lydgate" 691). In 1423 he was appointed prior, perhaps as a sinecure, of Hatfield Broadoak in Essex. Lydgate visited France in 1426 as part of the retinue of the earl of Warwick. By at least 1429 he returned to London for the coronation of the eight-year old Henry VI (692). He

probably returned to the abbey on a somewhat permanent basis in 1434.

On 22 April 1439 "Lydgate was awarded a life grant of 10 marks per annum from the Customs at Ipswich" (Norton-Smith xiv-xv; Pearsall, *John Lydgate [1371-1449]* 59-60) due to his *Lives of St. Edmund and St. Fremund* presented to Henry VI upon the king's visit to Bury St. Edmunds. Lydgate received his pension for the last time Michaelmas 1449 (Pearsall, *John Lydgate [1371-1449]* 67). Hence, he is assumed to have died 1449-1450, with burial at the abbey.

Lydgate's work bears an uneasy relationship to that of Chaucer: A. C. Spearing has explored Lydgate's Bloomian anxiety of influence in two articles (discussed below, "ST and the Canon"). Lydgate's *Complaint of the Black Knight*, *A Complaynt of a Loveres Lyfe*, and *The Temple of Glas* find their respective indebtedness to Chaucer's *Book of the Dutchess*, *House of Fame*, and *Parlement of Foules*. While the 4716 lines of *ST* is more than twice the length of the *Knight's Tale* (2250 lines), it does not measure up to Lydgate's longer works, which hover around Homer's 27,000 line combined *Iliad* and *Odyssey*: the 30,000-line *Troy Book* (1412-20), a translation of Guido delle Colonne; the 24,000 line *Pilgrimage of Man* (1426-30), a translation of Deguileville; and the 36,000 line *Fall of Princes* (1430-38), a translation of a French version of Boccaccio's *De casibus virorum illustrium*. Lydgate's best poems, however, are his short ones, especially "God is Myn Helper" and "Holy

Meditation." In all, Lydgate's prodigious corpus runs about 145,000 lines.³

The Argument of *The Siege of Thebes*

Axel Erdmann and Eilert Ekwall (henceforth E&E) provide a running plot summary along the margins of their E.E.T.S. edition (1911, 1930). Both Robert Lovell, in his 1969 dissertation edition of the University of Texas MS of *ST* (xvi-xxx), and Renoir and Benson (pp. 1901-04) give detailed summaries of the plot.

John Lydgate's Contribution to the Medieval Idea of Thebes

The Greek account of Oedipus and Thebes was later transmuted into Statius's *Thebaid* and further into Chaucer's *Troilus and Cressida* and the Knight's Tale. *ST*, presented as a continuation of the *Canterbury Tales*, was the first of the tales that would have been recited on the return from Canterbury to Southwark. Its themes provide background material for the introductory events of the Knight's Tale -- the first of the tales in the journey from Southwark to Canterbury -- when the Theban widows petition Theseus to avenge their husbands' deaths, make war on Thebes, and depose the tyrant Creon. Lydgate takes up the story in an interesting way in his evocation of the foundation of Thebes:

I wol reherce a story wonderful,
 Towchinge the siege and destruccioun
 Of worthy Thebees the mighty Royal toun,

Bylt and begonne of olde antiquite,

Vpon the tyme of worthy Iosue,

Be dyligence of kyng Amphioun,

Chief cause first of his foundacioun (184-190)

First, *story* is used in the sense of history, not fiction; second, Lydgate recuperates the Amphion myth as a device to tell of the fall of princes. In his article "Imaging the City of Thebes in Fifteenth-Century England," Paul M. Clogan makes both these points (160-61). The performance of the Monk in the *Canterbury Tales* fashions his material similarly: witness the Monk's six uses of *story* (more than any other pilgrim) in his recounting of purportedly "historical" falls from high degree into misery. In addition, Lydgate, like medieval historians, juxtaposes Thebes with sacred history when he parallels the foundation myth about Amphion with the Biblical story of Joshua's siege of Canaan (Joshua chapters 1-12). Hence, the story of the city of Thebes allows Lydgate to shine his mirror upon the magistrates of the kingdom of England and to offer advice on the fragile relationship of the king to his people.

CHAPTER 2: THE PIERPONT MORGAN LIBRARY MANUSCRIPT OF *THE SIEGE*
OF THEBES

A diplomatic edition of M4

One might take the position that a good diplomatic edition of a text such as *ST* needs no particular justification. However, it is interesting to note that certain issues raised by textual critics in the past few decades provide arguments for the usefulness of diplomatic editions. One such critical issue is asserted in Donald Reiman's concept of versioning ("Nineteenth Century British Poetry and Prose" 313). Reiman is concerned with presenting a series of primary texts so that the reader can note changes in aesthetic effects as the author revised his or her work. This approach may be deemed problematic in the study of the textual transmission of a work such as *ST*. Its authorial intentions are separated, as in any transmission/transformation, by the disjuncts of time (M4 was copied perhaps thirty years after the Arundel MS, the latter presumably *ST*'s first manifestation) and space (as in the G. Thomas Tanselle's dichotomy of sequential and solid arts [*Rationale* 22 ff.]). In any case, Donald Reiman (174-5) discusses Origen's *Hexapla*, a work which reproduced the various transliterations and translations of the Hebrew Bible in six parallel columns. Despite the Hebrew Bible's status in some Judeo-Christian traditions as a site for a series of transcendent revelatory moments, these versions allow the reader to discover the various ways Scripture has been transmitted.¹ Similarly, the reproduction of M4 is an appropriate avenue for

evaluating the transmission of *ST*, especially since the same scribe transcribed *ST* in both M4 and in the Pepys MS 2011 (henceforth P) located at the Pepys Library of Magdalene College, Cambridge University (Edwards, "Lydgate Manuscripts" [19]; Seymour, Letter [1997]).

A diplomatic edition of M4 is a first step toward a new critical edition because an account must eventually be made of the eight MSS of *ST* unknown to E&E. M4, of course, is one; six others remain unedited;² the eighth was edited in 1969 by Robert E. Lovell. The relationship among these six MSS and of each to the previously known ones needs to be probed. Edwards identifies the scribe of three *ST* MSS as John Dodesham ("Scribal Activity") and examines the ordinatio and decoration for clues concerning the production of the manuscripts ("Beinecke"). A further investigation into these types of connections, starting with my edition of M4 and its connection with P, can enhance the understanding of scribal practices and the production of the medieval book, along with the transmission and reception of the book as well. (See discussion below, "Scribal Activity.")

The little editorial work done on Lydgate has concentrated on the construction of critical editions.³ This is understandable in light of the large number of manuscript copies of many of Lydgate's works (notably the 34 MSS of his *Fall of Princes*, and 23 MSS of his *Troy Book*), and the practical need for a critical edition. However, today's editorial climate resists the notion of the critical edition: that is, an eclectic text that does not exist in any extant version, that

does not recognize a text as a cultural artifact produced from the weft and warp of various tissues, rather than simply from the mind of the privileged author. Despite this negative appraisal in some circles, I think the pragmatism of most teachers and virtually all students will demand a single text that will unify (if not "totalize") the multiplicity of textual problems into a coherent whole. Unfortunately, few people outside of textual students and scholars are willing to read more than two versions of a text, much less thirty different diplomatic reprints, as in the case of *ST*. I do not foresee any time soon when a single critical edition, or at least a single base text, will be superseded for the vast majority of undergraduate and secondary school students and other readers.

Another reason for a diplomatic reprint and evaluation of *M4* is that much of the editorial work on Lydgate's vast corpus is scanty and somewhat out of date. Indeed, a great deal of the editing was done near the end of the 19th century. For example, eleven editions listed in Derek Pearsall's *John Lydgate* (301) were published between 1881 (C. Horstmann's *St. Edmund and Fremund*) and 1920. The two more recent editions are E&E's part II in 1930 (part I was published in 1911) and H. N. MacCracken's *Lydgate's Minor Poems* part II in 1934. Since Pearsall's work appeared in 1970, his final item is J. Lauritis's critical edition of *The Life of Our Lady* in 1961. Edwards ("Lydgate Scholarship") severely criticizes this work's discrepancies in punctuation, lack of textual notes, and paucity of commentary. Qualified praise is reserved for Beverly Boyd's *Legend of Dan*

Joos in 1961 and John Norton-Smith's *John Lydgate: Poems* in 1966. Edwards does not mention R. Lovell's dissertation of the AUT MS of *ST* in 1969 (discussed below, "Robert Lovell's dissertation edition"). J. E. van den Westhuizen's 1974 critical edition of *Alban and Amphibel* is marred by the same problems as those which appear above in Lauritis. In an updated list in his *John Lydgate (1371-1449)* Edwards adds G. Reinecke's 1985 edition (renamed *Saint Albon and Saint Amphibalus*) and J. I. Miller's 1967 unpublished dissertation edition of *Saint Edmund and Saint Fremund* but does not include Pamela Farvolden's unpublished dissertation of an edition of *Fabula Duorum Mercatorum*, completed in 1993.

For too long E&E's E.E.T.S. edition has been the *textus receptus* for *ST* -- eighty-nine years despite the presence of five extant uncollated MSS. A diplomatic reprint of M4 will provide another step towards a hypertext edition that Stephen Reimer foresees for each of Lydgate's works, improving upon the (unfortunately limited-access site) Internet edition of *English Poetry*. I discuss below the problems with this admirable technological tool. Yet it remains unfortunate that *ST* is ill served by E&E's antiquated text.⁴

Microfilm copies of M4 exist. Nevertheless, an editor's careful eye may see more behind the stroke of the scribe and among the follicles of a parchment *in situ* than a photographic plate can. John Elphinston made a transcription of *The Battle of Maldon* in 1724, seven years before the fire at Robert Cotton's library destroyed it and singed the edges of the

Beowulf MS. That epic's invocation of *wyrd* (present on the pages of *The New York Times* thanks to Seamus Heaney's recent translation) reminds one of the precarious nature of M4, in which the remote yet real chance of destruction, loss, or theft loomed before a thorough examination of it was made. I stand on Elphinston's shoulders.

One final reason for an edition of M4 is for its contribution to lexicographic matters. The CD-ROM version of the *OED* contains 71 citations of Lydgate's works, 4 from *ST*: *a* as preposition twice, *about* as adverb and preposition, and *unbrace* as a verb. Its bank of citations would undoubtedly be enriched by any new meanings or words from M4 and subsequently from the other five uncollated MSS (of the thirty manuscripts of *ST* extant). The second edition of the Middle English Dictionary (= *MED*) will also be enhanced by such a project. The first edition, nearly finished, uses the Arundel MS (the base text for E&E's edition) as the source for its citations. A study of the vocabulary of M4 and the other uncollated manuscripts will enhance our understanding of both Middle English and its texts. Although such a linguistic study is beyond the purview of this dissertation, the collation provided here for M4 makes a contribution to that study.

The noted Chaucer scholar Eleanor Hammond first discussed Lydgate's vocabulary and the *OED*. In an article transcribing *ST*'s Prologue she notes a number of words in this section which predate the first citation in *OED*. Although Hammond's article was published in 1912, she was writing it about the same time as

the text of E&E's critical edition was being printed in 1911, to which she makes reference: "An edition has long been announced by the Early English Text Society" (362). The *OED* would have depended upon Stow's 1561 edition until E&E's critical edition was published. Use of a fragile older Stow volume may have led to some oversights on the part of the editorial team who failed to incorporate the following words: *brook* 'to bear (a name) well', *beak* 'human nose'. Hammond correctly cites 1598 as the first appearance of *beak* (where the word appears in Florio's Italian-English dictionary). The next *OED* citation occurs with Thackeray (and is used humorously as in *Lydgate*) in 1854 -- a long semantic silence. The *OED* supplements are similarly silent on these words. More examples undoubtedly exist. It is imperative that a new critical edition be shaped so that *Lydgate*'s work is appropriately incorporated into the *OED*'s present overhaul, due to be finished in 2010. The procedure I describe imitates the impetus for F. J. Furnivall's founding of the Early English Text Society in 1864: to furnish materials for the newly proposed *OED*.

The five manuscripts -- M4 among them -- which do not figure in the E&E edition could possibly improve a new critical edition of *ST*. But an even more serious issue with the reception of *ST* is the errors about the work which can occur even in publications designed for sophisticated readers. The discussion of M4 in the *British Literary Manuscripts series*, for example, contains several basic errors which betray a certain careless disregard about the work.⁵

Shelf Marks

The shelf mark is written in script on the front paste-down endpaper in pen: "Morgan MS no. 4 / Lydgate, John (ca. 1370-1451) / [in pencil] Siege of Thebes[.]" William Voelkle, curator of the Medieval and Renaissance MSS collection at the Pierpont Morgan Library, thinks that both inscriptions are the hand of Belle Da Costa Greene, the director of the library from 1905 to 1948.⁶ The shelf mark below this is inscribed in vertical alignment: "V / 5 / F" (vault, fifth unit, shelf F). The Pierpont Morgan Library's in-house description of this manuscript catalogues it as M4, and the manuscript will be referred to as such below.

Classmark from the *Catalogue of the previous owner, Theodore Irwin*: "[No.] 1829. Lydgate (John). The History Sege and Destrucyion of Thebes [in gothic typeface]. Folio, crushed levant morocco, with morocco case, by F[rancis]. BEDFORD. MS. of the XIV [sic] century on vellum" (Wright 287). Greene again writes on the back inside pastedown (foliated by Voelkle in pencil as 82): "From the collection of Theodore Irwin, of Oswego, N.Y."

The owner of M4 before Irwin was Almon W. Griswold who "bought unbound for £29.10.0" the manuscript (Ricci 1365, who gives no year of purchase). The name "griswold" appears penciled in script on conjugate paper leaf folio 80v at the head, center, in a hand unlike any other in the manuscript,

suggesting that it was written by Griswold himself or an associate.

The names of the first known owners, John Davy and Gilbert North, both in the seventeenth century according to Ricci (1365), are written on the manuscript in various places. Kurt Bühler calls the signature of John Davy "a hand of the XVith century" (1). In a letter (6 March 1998) to William Voelkle at the Pierpont Morgan Library, M. C. Seymour, a scholar working on a catalogue of Lydgate manuscripts, writes: "In CCCO MS. 249 he signs himself 'John Davy of Maldon scolar 1545'." Both names appear on folio 1r: John Davy on the bottom right among some scribbling, Gilbert North on the top right. (The Pierpont Morgan Library in-house description of M4 erroneously gives "Albert Nirts[.]") After the scribe's "Explicit" on folio 77r, ultra-violet light reveals two lines of nearly indecipherable writing with "J Davy" appended directly below, center. According to William Voelkle, someone, probably in the nineteenth century, applied a greasy substance to these lines, hoping that the script would be made clearer, but the process obviously did not work. From what I could observe under ultraviolet light, Davy reveals that he bought the manuscript from a person named Nile or Rilio:

y bowt yt my [.]

w^r yt frm Je Nile [or Rilio]

J Davy

Printed in barely perceptible pencil below 1½ cm from the bottom edge: "yt booke yt myn he John Davy[.]"⁷

Title

As E&E (I.5) note, Lydgate provides the title in his much longer poem *Fall of Princes*:

Al to declare / me semyth it is no nede,
 For in the Sege of Thebes ye may Rede
 The story hoo / and madd ther mencyoun
 (BL Bibl. Harley 1766, folio 49v)

The title *Siege of Thebes* makes its first appearance in the M4 codex on the front paste-down endpaper where it is printed in pencil by Bella da Costa Greene (Voelkle). The title appears three times within M4 as "the sege of Thebes" -- once in the body of the text (4401) and twice in the rubrics (4424b, 4634b). The rubric in Arundel MS 119 (henceforth Ar.), the base text used in E&E, does not appear at 4424. (All rubrics are boldfaced below.) The rubric near Ar. 4634 reads:

**The worthy blood of Grece was distroyed at the siege the
 Cyte fynaly brouht to nought.**

In contrast, M4's rubric 4634a-c spells out the title. It reads (with italics here for ease of comparison):

**Howe all the worthy blode of Grece distroyed
 was at the *sege* of Thebes and the Cite brought
 to *noght* and to *fynall losse* of bothe parties**

Ten manuscripts and two printed texts include a colophon at the end such as Ar.'s "Here endeth the destruccioun of Thebes" (14) -- hence the title on the back of the Arundel volume, *Lydgate's Destruction of Thebes*, probably devised by a bookkeeper at the

British Library (E&E II.42). M4 includes no colophon after *ST*. Our scribe skips a single space and writes the first line of the next selection ("lenvoye") on the next two ruled lines, even though they are the last two lines of folio 74r. Space on valuable parchment was obviously at a premium.

James Simpson argues for the title *Destruction of Thebes* "as required by the poem's action" and its strong presence as a colophon in the manuscript and print tradition (15). Nevertheless, the conventional title may have been established quite early. John Paston III uses it in a letter he writes to his "brodyr" John Paston II 5 June 1472. Paston indicates that his lord the Erle of Arran "hathe a book of my syster Annys of be Sege of Thebes" (Paston I.575). Caxton also uses this title in the Epilogue to his French translation (ca. 1477) of *Jason* (Caxton 106).

Contents

As previously described by Bühler (2), M4 contains four works, the first three of which are authored by Lydgate:

The Siege of Thebes folios 1r-74r

"A lenvoye to all prynces and lordes that be dysposyd to
be lecherous" folios 74v-75v

"Letter to Gloucester" folios 75v-77r

Chaucer's "Compleynt vn to his purse" folio 77r

The "lenvoye" consists almost entirely of extracts of Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*: Bühler (2) details their location in the longer poem. The fragments are eleven stanzas of rime royal.

Similar fragments are appended to two manuscripts which also include *ST*: P and BL 29729 (Bühler 2). The "lenvoye" of P does not include an extra last stanza of M4 (from *Troy Book* 1.2.5510-16 [Bühler 2]).

Bühler (2-4) gives a transcription of "Letter to Gloucester" in order to provide additional variants to MacCracken's E.E.T.S. critical edition (665-7) of the poem. The work consists of eight eight-line stanzas (the so-called Monk's Tale stanza). The poem is included in six other manuscripts, one of which includes *ST*: namely, P (Brown 445).

The text of "Compleynt vn to his Purse" includes three stanzas of the poem in rime royal but excludes the five-line envoy, as do three of the other nine manuscripts in which this poem is preserved (Brown 606).⁸ Bühler (6-7) gives both a transcription and a list of variants that supplements a compilation from Chaucer Society transcripts in Publication 57 and 77, and from MacCracken's edition (*MLN* 228).

Why other works were appended to M4's *Siege of Thebes*

Lydgate clearly saw *ST* as a continuation of the *Canterbury Tales*. The poet accidentally meets the pilgrims as they lodge at the same inn as he in Canterbury. The Host declares, "And ye shal hom ride with us tomorowe" (l. 106). That next morning he implores Lydgate to "Tel some tale" (l. 165). Hence in a few manuscripts *ST* is appended to the *Canterbury Tales* (BL MS Addit. 5140, BL MS Egerton 2864). Stow's 1561 folio edition similarly prints *ST* after the *Canterbury Tales*. *ST* is also appended in

manuscript after Hoccleve's *Regiment of Princes* (BL MS Addit. 18632) and after the romance *Generydes* and his *Troy Book* (Cambridge, Trinity College MS 1283).

The exigencies of manuscript production and reception, however, make for various arrangements of *ST*: sometimes alone, sometimes with other works appended afterwards. E&E do not think that the juxtaposition of *ST* with other works in a manuscript is an important consideration. Although they note when *ST* stands alone, they are either silent concerning the contents of seven manuscripts that include *ST*, or they refer to other works for information on the contents. Perhaps they recognize the vicissitudes of binding. For example, the last thirteen leaves of BL Cotton App. XXVII show damage from the famous 1731 fire at the Robert Cotton Library, the same conflagration that singed the edges of the *Beowulf* manuscript. Hence, Cotton's *ST* manuscript was rebound separately from a larger manuscript at the end of the 1800s (E&E ii.37). The leaves are numbered 14-62, indicating that *ST* appeared after some prefatory piece. In seven other manuscripts *ST* stands alone (Arundel 119, Bodl. 2559, Cambridge UL MS 3137, Cambridge UL MS Addit. 6864, BL 2864, Bodl. 1124, Bodl. 1479, Beinecke MS 661). Arundel 119, the base text for E&E, was obviously produced with exceptional care, even marking the caesura for most lines to facilitate oral performance. Hence, *ST* was also produced as a work in its own right, rather than as a sequel to Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. In M4 the scribe copied and rubricated *ST*, A *lenvoye*, Lydgate's "Letter to Gloucester," and

Chaucer's "Compleynt vnto his purse"; P has the same contents with the exception of Chaucer's "Compleynt." E&E's description of P is somewhat puzzling, claiming that the manuscript (in vellum) "Contains only Lydgate's *Thebes*," but then noting the addition of "A lenvoye" and Lydgate's "Letter" on four back fly-leaves. The description in E&E does not specify whether these fly-leaves are vellum or paper. They are not foliated, as confirmed by my microfilm of P. Yet these four fly-leaves contain letters styled by the same illuminator who worked on M4.

One difference between the formation of the codices is clear: M4 was originally commissioned to include the extra poems; P originally was not. After the scribe in M4 finished *ST* he had a mere three spaces left ruled on folio 74r. He skipped a line and proceeded to write the title of "A lenvoye" on the last two lines. He then began the poem on folio 74v. This spatial disjunct caused by the need to save space on valuable vellum also allowed the illuminator to create two large initials within the poetic space of three lines: one beginning the title on the bottom of a recto, the other beginning the poem on the top of a verso.

In P the scribe ends in the middle of folio 76v, skips three spaces and adds a colophon of two lines:

Here endeth the distruccion off Thebes

Secundū lidgate Monke of Bury

The tendrils of the large initial *S* beginning *Secundū* reach down into the last ruled space. Hence, the two poems on the so-called fly-leaves of P were added at some later point.

Nevertheless, they are constructed with the same care as those in M4, with both large and small initials.

After "A lenvoye" ends in the middle of the page, an explicit, beginning with a large illuminated letter, occurs:

Explicit desolacion of Rome

The explicit (with an allusion explained below) separates the end of "A lenvoye" from the title of P's last inclusion, Lydgate's "Letter to Gloucester." No such explicit exists in M4. P and M4 continue with a rubric introducing Lydgate's letter. The rubric is very similar, except for its initial clause:

This is the copy of þ^e letter that dan Iohn lidgate (M4)

This is the letter that dan Iohn lidgate (P)

Our scribe when copying M4 implicitly concurs with Greg's idea of universal variation: every act of copying introduces new variants (Greetham, *Textual Scholarship* 289-90). Transmission is inevitably accompanied by transformation: the very circulation of a text changes it.

One wonders why certain works were appended to M4 and P, "A lenvoye" and Lydgate's "Letter," which appear on the so-called fly-leaves of P. Perhaps the scribe attached to P these two pieces originally done for another commission. In any case, "A lenvoye" of P does not include the extra last stanza in M4 (from *Troy Book* 1.2.5510-16 [Bühler 2]). Instead, P ends with the rubric "Explicit desolacion of Rome[.]" This rubric (and the last stanza in M4 which P's rubric replaces) echoes the first stanza of the "lenvoye" which warns princes that "in this

worlde ys none abydyngge," and hence that this idea shall settle in their hearts "By ensample of Rome howe all goith to Ruyn" (M4). In *ST* King Amphion is recalled as the chief cause of the "fundacioun" (190) of Thebes, and hence

for which his fame which neuere shal away,
In honure floureth 3it vnto this day,

And in story remembred is and preised[.] (Ar. 191-93)

Yet the foundationalism, or dependence on indubitable knowledge of the permanence of Amphion's fame suggested in lines 190-91, is undermined by the poem's frequent reminders for rulers about the transience of life. Although truth (another important theme to which kings should adhere) and mercy shall "Preserve a kyng" (Ar. 1745),

Allas therfor that eny doublenesse,
Variaunce or vnsicrenesse,
Chaunge of word or mutabilite,
fraude or deceyte or vnstabilete,
Shuld in a kyng han domynacioun,

To causen after his destruccioun. (Ar. 1747-52)

Renoir therefore sees *ST* as a work that offered Lydgate the opportunity to offer advice on royal conduct during war, and hence views the long poem as "an oversized exemplum to be foisted upon the dashing and reckless young King who had led the English at Agincourt" (113). The addition of the "lenvoye" in M4 and P continues this theme of the subversion of monarchical strength by both Lydgate and the patron or scribe who chose to include the "lenvoye" in M4 and P.

Derek Pearsall comes to quite different conclusions about Lydgate's commentary on kingly power. He writes that "Insignificant monks with a taste advancement do not 'foist' things upon those who have the power to make things very disagreeable to any who displease them; they write what they know will be acceptable" ("Lydgate as Innovator" 14). Lydgate writes during a time of peace; he alludes to the Treaty of Troyes when he writes of the eventual settlement of "Pees and quyet concord and vnyte" (Ar. 1. 4703), echoing the Treaty's "Concordia, Pax, & Tranquillitas" (qtd. in E&E I.vi). This treaty of May 1420 established a truce between England and France during the Hundred Years War, and E&E note that by including this reference the end of the poem "resounds with a jubilant note of hopefulness" (I.vii). Hence, Pearsall concludes that "Peace with France was now royal policy, and long poems demonstrative of the disadvantages of prolonged war between neighboring states were now acceptable" ("Lydgate as Innovator" 14-15). Pearsall cannot fathom Lydgate as a subversive critic, as does Renoir, even though such a role would be most appealing to those with postmodernist dispositions and perhaps attract greater critical attention to *ST* from such critics. Rather, he insists upon seeing Lydgate in a new role as "Lancastrian apologist." He notes that poetic entreaties to kings to avoid tyranny are not uncommon, and points out that Gower had already done such in Latin. Indeed, in his review of political poetry of the fifteenth century, V. J. Scattergood calls *ST*'s longest passage of princely advice "a series of

platitudes" (292). However, Pearsall does concede that Lydgate is "at least the first poet writing in English [. . .] to fashion his poems as instruments of royal policy" ("Lydgate as Innovator" 15). Pearsall goes on to say that Lydgate's exhortations against civil war (in *The Fall of Princes* [1.3822] and the prose treatise *The Serpent of Division*) are "advice that his patrons wanted to receive and had intimated to him that he might give" (15), but Pearsall does not specify the source for these intimations. Nevertheless, just as *ST* is appended to the *Canterbury Tales* in both manuscript and print as a sequel, so was Lydgate's "lenvoye" appended to M4 and P as a thematic continuation for the consumption of a patron who wished for the end of civil strife.

If the dating of M4 (and P) is correctly gauged to be near the middle of the fifteenth century (see below, "Date, Place of *The Siege of Thebes* and M4"), the inclusion of "A lenvoye" may reflect Lydgate's endorsement of the peace negotiations of 1443. Although the "lenvoye" superficially concentrates on the personal sin of lechery, its deeper meaning is represented by the rubric included in P below it: "Explicit desolacion of Rome[,] " i.e. England.

The addition of Lydgate's letter to his patron Gloucester for the making of books in M4 and P, and the further addition of Chaucer's related poem "Compleynt vnto his purse" in M4, may simply be the scribe hoping for a greater commission. Bühler transcribes both short poems from M4 and gives a collation for the "Compleynt."

Date, Place of *The Siege of Thebes* and M4

The *terminus a quo* for *ST* is the latter part of 1420, based on external evidence. E&E write:

Lydgate probably began his *Thebes* [sic] in the latter part of 1420. It was finished before the death of Henry V (August 31, 1422). And it seems safe to assume that the poem had been completed so long before that date that copies of it had been made and circulated. For if it had still been in its author's hands when he learnt the irreparable loss his country had suffered, he would certainly have recast the end of it. In writing 'll. 4690-4703, and especially the last lines of this passage:

"An charite . . . shal her bryghte bemes sprede . . . in dyuers nacions Forto reforme atwixe Regions Pees and quyet, concord and vnyte," Lydgate clearly had in view certain terms of the treaty of Troyes concluded in May 1420. (E&E I.vii)

E&E note that the twenty-fourth paragraph of the treaty reads: "Item, ut Concordia, Pax, & Tranquillitas inter prædicta Francia & Angliæ Regna perpetuo futuris temporibus obseruentur . . ." and sees its echo in *ST*'s line "Pees and quyet, concord and unyte" (4703). E&E go on to say, "The whole passage l. 4690 [ff.] of *Thebes* resounds with a jubilant note of hopefulness, and could not possibly have been written or issued after England's hopes of a triumphant peace had been so suddenly blighted by the King's death" (I.vii). Certainly I think E&E

are correct concerning the allusion to the treaty of Troyes, and the general dating, although the phrase "could not possibly have been written" is a bit too strong for Pearsall, who calls Lydgate's allusion as "strikingly reminiscent" to the Treaty of Troyes ("Lydgate as Innovator" 14); and for Scattergood, who refers to "some phrases of which he seems to echo in the conclusion to his poem" (290). James Simpson argues for a date after Henry V's death in light of echoes within the poem of the fraternal conflict between the brothers of the king after his death (15-16).

M4 was probably transcribed near the mid 1400s. This conclusion is based first upon the style of the scribe's hand, a Bastard Anglicana which combined elements of earlier Anglicana and the burgeoning Secretary hand, pointing to the mid fifteenth century (see section "Script"). Second, the bar frame around folio 1r is a type that was frequent in the mid 1400s (Scott 49; see below, "Large Initials"). Third, the text of M4 was produced by a single scribe who did his own rubrics. This setup of a largely independent scribe reflected the book trade of the first half of the 1400s. (See more under "Scribal Activity.")

Edwards in "Lydgate Manuscripts" (19) and Seymour in his letter to the Pierpont Morgan Library (25 Nov 1997) recognize the hand of M4 in P, which includes *ST*. The scribe apparently had access to at least two exemplars. He also had access to capable illuminators as indicated by the decoration of the manuscript, and he offers a standard *ordinatio*, characteristic of a cosmopolitan milieu (Edwards, *Beinecke* 189). These factors

point to London as the center of his trade. It must be said, however, that this generalization of the provenance of the manuscript is made with some tentativeness. Edwards and Pearsall remind us that "we lack firm data, or even clear criteria for the determination of what is and what is not provincial production" (268). Nevertheless, in their census of *ST* manuscripts, Renoir and Benson date M4 as "1425-1475" and P as "?1450-?1500" (2155): their basis for such dating is not specified.

Language

In determining the language of a Middle English manuscript, an important question one confronts is: whose language are we determining? That of the exemplar, of the scribe, or of both? In *A Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English* (henceforth *LALME*) Angus McIntosh answers rarely, commonly, and commonly to these three questions. Rarely does a scribe leave the manuscript unchanged. He commonly makes graphemic, phonological, morphological, and lexical changes based upon his own dialect.⁹ He may also commonly approach a state between these two. Since I later focus on key variants of M4 (and P) from the base text, I assume below that the language I am uncovering is the language of the scribe. Indeed, it is not the spoken but only the written language that can be assessed: i.e., those places where the scribe was in the habit of writing a particular variant of a word (*LALME* I.6). One sees later the same process a half-century later in early printed

works: those which preserve a manuscript's dialectal characteristics were very rare (Beadle 69).¹⁰

The application of *LALME*¹¹ to a text is threefold. First, one devises a questionnaire, a list of words which a) most likely would differentiate dialects of a text, and b) occur with sufficient frequency to determine the dialect with greater certitude. Then a count is made of the items, recorded in a linguistic profile. Finally, the so-called fit technique matches up the form of the most significant items with its location on a map.

Although this technique may sound routine, *LALME*'s amazing panoply of word lists, place lists, and maps can be daunting.¹² The most distinctive words occurred with less frequency than I desired. Moreover, the words I picked might not sufficiently generate the necessary differentiation. As McIntosh concedes, as he must often do in this somewhat speculative enterprise, "it is unlikely to emerge until near the end of the investigation (if at all) whether the best possible questions have been asked of the data" (I.7). McIntosh hopes that the items will comprise four classes of evidence: graphological (*þere* v. *there*), phonological (*hem* v. *them*) morphological (*are* v. *arn*), lexical (*hour* v. *time*). I use these examples because all four of these distinctive features occur in M4.

I chose the following list of words in M4 and P. A thorough checking of M4 was hastened electronically. In the case of a few very high frequency words I examined the first 1000 lines of M4. In P's case, I first checked for items based

on their location given in E&E's glossary. Although E&E rightfully claim that their "Glossary is a great deal fuller than is usual in the publications of the Early English Text Society" (II.161), it admits that locations of high-frequency words are not exhaustive.¹³ Hence, I checked at least the frequency of a particular item in P in at least the first 1000 lines. As expected in two very closely related manuscripts, most of the words in M4 and P show homogeneity. The list is as follows:

THEM: hem

THEIR: her

MANY: many

ANY: any

MUCH: moche, myche

ARE: arte, are

WILL sg.: woll

WILL pl.: woll

THAN: than

THOUGH: thoughe

AGAINST: ayenst

YET: yet

STRENGTH: strenght

LENGTH: lenght

NOR: ne

WORK sb.: werke

WORK vb.: werk

WHEN: whan

BEFORE adv.: aforne, (toforne)

BEFORE prep.: afore, aforne

BUSY: besy

FIRST: furste, (furst)

OWN: owne

WHITHER: whether

Following Biggs, I place in parentheses those words between one- and two-thirds frequency of the main word. In the case of a second word without parentheses, these items occurred nearly as frequently as do the first item. From this list I use the fit technique to match words with the dots on the item maps. These maps of England, Wales and southern Scotland are marked with dots which indicate high frequency usage of a particular variant of a word. One hopes to localize the presence of a particular form by dismissing those areas which do not show a common presence of the relevant items symbolized by the dots.

I started with the *WORK* vb. map in Volume II since the variant spelling *werk* afforded fewer dots on this initial map. Moving on to *BUSY besy* and then *BEFORE afore, aforne*, by trial and error I came to concentrate on an area just west of London, perhaps the easternmost section of Berkshire or a northwest section of Surrey. Remarkably, the significant forms fit this area. This area correlates with my view (see below, "Scribal Activity") that our scribe would need to be relatively close to London in light of his access to at least two exemplars and a capable illuminator. In addition, he used a standard ordinatio employed by urban scribes and illuminators.

One last problem in the application of *LALME* to our scribe concerns the date. McIntosh writes: "since the spread of written Standard English was earlier in the south than in the north, dialectal texts in the south became rare at a corresponding earlier date. For the south, therefore, the 'core' evidence here utilised should be regarded as falling within the period ca. 1325-1425, rather than that ca. 1350-1450 which applies for most of the Midlands and the north" (I.3). Now the date for M4 (and probably P) is probably close to the mid 1400s based on the style of the hand, the bar-frame of folio 1r, and production values that point to the first half of the 1400s. (See more under "Date.") However, I think the date of M4 and P are sufficiently close to each other to produce plausible results.¹⁴

Material

The tan color of the parchment¹⁵ with its relatively brighter flesh side and yellowish grain side reflects the use of a more mature sheep, rather than a younger calf. The parchment of M4 has a grainy finish, especially folios 1-7, which may have incurred some water damage. The particularly soiled nature of folio 1r may indicate that it was used as the cover for the manuscript, or that a cover fell off and was not replaced for a time. The follicles of the hair side are perceptible at folios 35v, 36r: whoever prepared the skins failed to pumice this section carefully. However, his neglect tells us that M4 probably follows the standard hair / hair, flesh / flesh

presentation. The material starting with f. 71 is a particularly inferior parchment.

In only a single instance can one be certain that a hole in the parchment existed before the manuscript was copied. At l. 4542, the scribe avoided the hole between *Theseus* and *entered*. In the case of *faught* 4339, the obliteration of the second minim of *u* strongly suggests that the damage occurred after the copying. The 1 mm. and the 11 mm. holes occur where the page lacks text, so it is not possible to suggest when the folio was damaged.

Format

As previously determined by Bühler (1), the text is made up of 78 parchment leaves, gilded. Ruling but no text appears on folios 77v, 78r-v. Collation: a-i⁸ k⁶. After a free front endpaper are 2 conjugate paper leaves and then one single paper leaf before f. 1; following f. 78 is a single paper leaf and then two conjugate paper leaves before the free back endpaper. The front free endpapers are numbered in lead pencil i, ii, iii in the upper right corner of the head and fore-edge. The seventy-eight parchment leaves are foliated in pencil in both upper (by Voelkle, he estimates in the mid 1970s) and lower right corners of the recto leaf. The serif added to the numeral 7 in the upper right version was the first clue to indicate that two different hands did the foliation. The back endpapers continue both penciled foliations to 81. Voelkle, who

worked on the upper right corner, also wrote 82 on the back endpaper.

On the front paste-down near the head is printed the following, with first two lines in pen and the rest in lead pencil:

Morgan MS no. 4
 Lydgate, John (c. 1370-1451)
 Siege of Thebes
 V
 5
 F

The gold lettering on the black J.P. Morgan seal is pasted in the middle of the front paste-down, with "M4" written in lead pencil directly beneath the seal.

Small quarto: the leaves presently measure 25.5 x 16.5 cm. (Bühler gives 10¼ x 7 inches.) Folios 77v, 78r-v appear with rulings but no text. The leaves of the parchment manuscript are cropped, since no prickings appear. The precise rulings were made with a plummet, a stick of lead.

On folio 1r first appears the name "Gilbert North" printed in black ink, upper right corner. On the bottom right: the signature of "John Davy" along with indecipherable scribblings to the right and below. In a letter to the Pierpont Morgan Library (6 March 1998), M. C. Seymour thinks that the word to the right of the signature is *Esq[uires]*. He notes that in CCC MS 249 Davy signs himself "John Davy Of Maldon Scholar 1545."

As noted by Bühler (1): "John Davy" appears again folio 77r, both in a sixteenth century hand. "Willm Davye" (with bar across the *ll* ascenders) appears folios 43v, 44r. Both signatures on folios 43v and 44r are preceded by the "WD" monogram. Scribbling appears folio 29r. On folio 77r the area is stained brown, apparently meant as a cancel, rendering the writing nearly illegible. Ultra-violet light reveals the name "John Davy" and "J Davy" among them. Two other legible words: "bt my[.]" The cancel may have erased scribal comments at the end of the manuscript.

Both the manuscript's later owners and Bühler missed the only indisputable jotting of the scribe outside the text and rubrics: the catchwords "All be p^e rose" (with long s) on the lower right edge of folio 16v. The descender of the *p* is cut with the cropping of the bottom of the parchment leaf. The scribe preserves the long s of the catch word in his text. However, he replaces the thorn of p^e with *th*, reflecting the unstable orthography of the time. The catchwords appear at the bottom of folio 16v. The scribe may have taken a recess here since for the only time in this manuscript he wrote the catchwords to make easier his resumption of the copying of his exemplar.

On one of the two conjugate paper leaves (before the free back endpaper) foliated 80v, the following jottings appears in lead pencil:

griswold

Irwin =	unbound £ 29.10
\$	binding <u>4.12</u>
	33. 2

Almon W. Griswold, the owner previous to Theodore Irwin,
 purchased the manuscript "unbound for £ 29.10.0" (Ricci 1365).
 Written in script below the computation in brackets:

[should be 34.2.0]

Written in script in lead pencil on folio 81r:

dat[e]d	Unbd £ iu.ns
	bindg <u>h.ni</u>
	£ cc.i = ficui ns

77 leaves + 1 blank

n 1

i 2

c 3

h 4

f 5

o 6
 e 7
 m 8
 u 9
 s 0

The name Irwin on folio 80v refers to Theodore Irwin, the previous owner of the codex. (See section "Provenance" for more on Irwin.) In her article "Theodore Irwin, Bibliophile," Mabel Clare Weaks revealed that Irwin's price was written in code in the final endpapers. She gave a solution to the code as provided by a then unnamed person at the Pierpont Morgan Library (88):

c a t y o g d e n x
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

However, this solution does not apply to the code written on folio 80v which includes letters *i*, *h*, *s*, *u*. Someone wrote a different solution in pencil on folio 81r. Neither hand corresponds with the hand of Irwin, whose script I observed in one of two presentation copies of his Catalogue located in the Pierpont Morgan Library. (I examined the one with a dedication to his friend Henry B. Sturges.)

Written in script in lead pencil near the head of the paste-down endpaper ("foliated" as 82, written in pencil in the corner of the head and fore-edge):

From the collection of

Theodore Irwin, of Oswego, N.Y.

According to William Voelke, Belle da Costa Greene, director of the Pierpont Morgan Library 1904-1948, wrote the inscription above (along with the shelf mark on the front paste-down endpaper: see section above, "Shelf Marks").

Rulings

Determination of the rulings is made easier since folios 77v-78v show rulings but no text. The rulings in ink were made very carefully and line up uniformly. No prickings are visible on the manuscript page: as Barbara Shailor notes, prickings "were normally located along the outer edges of the pages and were trimmed off in binding" (13). The leaves for M4 were ruled after they were folded to form gatherings. The schema is 34 horizontal lines, 33 spaces, each space 5.5 mm. The first two and last two horizontal lines extend past the margin created by the two vertical lines to the edges of the leaf. Two vertical lines run the length of the leaf, with margins of 2.3 cm. on the left, 4.2 cm. on the right. The length of margins on the verso: 4.0 and 2.5 cm., respectively. On both recto and verso this allows for writing space of 10.1 cm., although the scribe and, especially, the limner break this barrier. The scribe usually overlaps the left part of the initial letter beginning the line directly onto the left vertical ruling. This policy helped to ensure that the end of the line would not protrude past the right vertical ruling. The rubricator in three instances was compelled to place on the end of the next line the extra words which would not fit: 580a, 1900a, 2715b. At 1901 he places a

blue paraph between the end of the poetic text and the overflow from the previous line, written directly below. At 1744a he fails to justify the rubricated line and writes the te of *adu^rsite* beyond the margin.

Scribal Activity

C. Paul Christianson applies Graham Pollard's comment about fifteenth-century English bookbinding to much of the trade: "It is a strange world . . . it has no real people in it . . . it lacks the co-ordinates of place and time" (8). However, A. S. G. Edwards, with the confirmation of I. A. Doyle, was able to recognize the hand of Stephen Dodesham (also *Dodersham, Doddesham*) in three manuscripts of *ST*: Boston Public Library, f. med. 94, Beinecke MS 661, and Cambridge UL MS Addit. MS 3137 (*Beinecke* 184). The practice of Dodesham and our anonymous scribe probably reflects the conclusions of Ian Doyle and Malcolm Parkes concerning secular manuscript production in the first half of the fifteenth century: the scribe was the central figure in its production, versus a commercial scriptorium with a well-organized machinery of proofreaders, rubricators, illuminators, and binders. For example, E&E reproduce a facsimile of their base text BL MS Arundel 119 folio 17r in the preliminaries to part II of their critical edition.¹⁶ The rubrics are placed in the margins. Such placement would impede the addition of decorations. Moreover, Arundel's two historiated initials also reflect a more elaborate design. The movement away from these features and toward a more streamlined

reproduction system of secular manuscripts is reflected in three manuscripts which Edwards examined carefully ("Beinecke"). Indeed, with the additional help of Kathleen Scott on the illumination, Edwards offers a general time period for at least the Beinecke MS (early 1430s) based on her linking of the border with other MSS ("Beinecke" 184, 195 n. 37). Although I cannot offer a name for our scribe, M4 shares a number of characteristics with the three MSS. which Edwards examines closely. Hence, I believe M4 shares the same general means of production.

The understanding of these means of production is enhanced by the recognition of Edwards in "Lydgate Manuscripts" (19) and corroborated by Seymour's letter to the Pierpont Morgan Library (25 Nov 1997) that the scribe and illuminator of M4 is also that of P. A microfilm of P allowed me to make some connections between the means of production of these two MSS and the means of production of the two MSS which Edwards described. For example, like Dodesham, our scribe did his own rubrics. This merger of two activities largely separated in a scriptorium is good evidence for private, commercial enterprise in which transcription of the text is attributed to a single person. The location of the rubrics within the textual space clearly ruled rather than the margins also points to a secular commercial venture in which copying could be done more efficiently ("Beinecke" 182).

Our scribe probably also worked in or near London, since he offers a standard ordinatio and had access to capable

illuminators ("Beinecke" 189). I. A. Doyle notes that Dodesham's repeated copying of a secular work "points to paid employment" ("Stephen Dodersham" 101), and the same can be said of the scribe for M4 and P. He probably was not a religious, at least at the times of copying M4 and P. Doyle believes that religious orders would have found *ST* secular content objectionable, although there are examples (particularly on the continent) of monks writing books *pro pretio* (Doyle 101), as Lydgate himself did. Our scribe may be one of the thirty professional manuscript textwriters in London between 1300-1500 that Christianson can distinguish (88). Both Dodesham and our scribe had available multiple exemplars, again pointing to London as the center of their respective trades. The evidence for our scribe's use of two closely related exemplars for M4 and P respectively and its significance can be seen in the list of lacunae in the next paragraph.

E&E's description (II.52) of P shows some interesting similarities to M4. Note the following lacunae:

M4	P
354	
535b	
596	
1100-08	
1157	
1272	
1669-72	1669-72
1754	
	2386
2396	2396
2466	
	3093
	3646
3654	3654
4250	
4345	

4371-76

4434

4631

4662

4662

M4 is missing 32.5 lines. P is missing ten lines. Both manuscripts share seven lines missing (which are boldfaced). One might attribute these seven lines to omissions in a common exemplar, and the extra missing lines in M4 to scribal carelessness. However, in all likelihood the scribe used different (but closely related) exemplars in copying M4 and P. For example, M4 has 33, and P has 32 lines to a page. In light of the steps taken by the scribe to streamline commercial production as described above, he probably would have kept the rulings uniform if he were working from the same original exemplar. As Edwards explains concerning Dodesham, our scribe did not have the inclination or means to save a common exemplar in order to fashion a template from which he could mass-produce copies of *ST*. Hence, his work is based on specific commissions rather than on speculation. For each commission he would have had to acquire a separate exemplar, presumably from a stationer, to whom it would be returned after use. He would then have had to find a decorating shop or a group of decorators to complete his commission. The procedures were probably cumbersome, but unavoidable within an essentially made-to-order trade in vernacular poetic texts (Edwards, "Beinecke" 189).

The stationer was a businessman who received authorized exemplars from the universities on loan.¹⁷ Then the stationer lent out the manuscript to the scribe for a price (Pearsall, "Introduction" 3). I suspect our scribe returned to the same

stationer for his known work on Lydgate, since the second time (?P) he received an exemplar closely related to the first (?M4). As Edwards and Pearsall note, "Scribes themselves, given the nature of their part in the production of manuscript books, are most unlikely to have retained exemplars, or to have noticed the differences between different exemplars in copying the same text" (263). Edwards and Pearsall adduce two copies of Lydgate's *Troy Book* written by the same scribe: one evaluated by the poem's editor as "carelessly written" and the other one characterized as an "excellent MS" (263).

Since the scribe worked with the same illuminator twice, he may have liked his work the first time, or perhaps the selection was a Hobson's choice from the group of decorators. In Dodesham's case, his two Lydgate manuscripts seem to show different illuminators working on the initial borders (Edwards, "Beinecke" 188). Edwards concludes that Dodesham's activities with *ST* were "ad hoc rather than highly organized" (188), and I would conclude the same concerning the procedure of our scribe.

The patron who commissioned M4 must have been a person of means, for book ownership was still a rarity and a luxury. Pearsall notes a Richard de Bury who owned close to 1,500 works, but "eminent churchmen would rarely have owned more than a hundred books, and aristocratic owners, to judge from their inventories, many fewer" (Pearsall, "Introduction" 7). John Paston, a well-known collector whose daughter owned a copy of *ST* (see below, "*The Siege of Thebes and the Canon*") possessed only about twenty books (*Paston* 7), the same number that Chaucer's

Clerk would have preferred ("levere" CT Prologue 294) at the head of his bed.

Both manuscripts share a number of conjunctive errors, i.e., common errors that appear in both manuscripts pointing to a common ancestor:¹⁸ the misreadings *Glasy yen* 34 (Ar. *Glasy Eyed*), *remnont* 3357 (Ar. *surplus*), *kyng* 3412 (Ar. *qwen*), *woundes slayne* 3594 (Ar. *houndes slowe*), *lothe* 3967 (Ar. *sory*), *in the felde* 4264 (Ar. *at good leyser*), *corven* 4490 (Ar. *parted*); the metatheses *honoure glory* and *pⁱce* 46¹⁹ (Ar. *pris honure and gloyre*), *sobbe sighe and wepe* 3380 (Ar. *sighe sobbe and wepe*), the double metathesis *And the cause nowe ys dryven so ferr* 3679 (Ar. *And now the cause dryven is so ferre*); the haplographies *pylgryms* 59 (Ar. *pylgrimes sothly*), *an haggeyse* 100, *P an haggeys* (Ar. *a rounde hagys*), *pollax and with shelde* 3052 (Ar. *pollax speer and shelde*). Both share a line quite different from Ar., E&E's base text l. 1638:

M4 *In euery parte fully ys distended*

P *In euery parte fully to [.]distended²⁰*

Ar. *And so they ben both condescendyd*

Yet both manuscripts also exhibit a number of separative errors, i.e., errors in one manuscript but not the other, pointing to a different exemplar (or to errors made by the scribe himself): M4 *the nobill* 13 (P *that noble*), *sothely* 41 (P *shortely*), *to me* 82 (P *anone*), *in to* 84 (P *vn to*), *bethe syke* 97 (P *be seke*), *troupe*^e 166 (P *Rounsy*), *sodenly* 2834 (P *covertly*), *she oppressed* (P *she suppressid*), *off stone* 3305 (P *of lyme and stone*), *rounden* 3876 (P *began to wexe*), *overlade* 4547 (P

overthrowe), roiall 4625 (P hye). A comparison of two lines from M4 and P is especially striking:

Off all Joye and all wyllfulnes

And restitute of all myrthe and gladnes (M4 3213-14)

Off all Joy and of all gladnesse

And restitute of all hevynesse (P 3213-14)

These small differences might simply reflect the idiosyncratic error that creeps from day to day into scribal copying.

However, substantive noneuphonious differences, along with M4's two fairly large lacunae (1100-08 and 4371-76, discussed below, "Lacunae"), suggest that the scribe probably used separate but very closely related exemplars in copying M4 and P.

The Order of M4 and Pepys MS 2011

M4 seems to have been copied before P, although the evidence is mixed. The scribe in some ways seems more familiar with the text by the time he writes P, although a different (though more closely related) exemplar might simply account for the differences. For example, M4 contains 22.5 more missing lines (see above for missing line count). M4 carelessly repeats certain lines:

Owte of Egipte was to Thebes sent	3830
Wheche beste by recorde of scripture	3831
Owte of Egipte was to Thebes sent	3830a
Whiche beste by recorde of scripture	3831b

In M4 the scribe repeats line 1942 as 1944: *Than all the tresoure of youre region*. He probably confuses *tresoure* with *Ar. richesse* (P *riches*) 1944. The scribe in M4 occasionally uses the long *r* as in *gynner* 3674 and the end-rhyme words *yonder*, *thonder* (4313-14), but rarely if ever in P. The scribe seems less rushed in P: he inserts numerous marks of punctuation, although the resolution of the microfilm I observed cannot distinguish the punctuation added by a later hand. E&E (II.53) note the comma, slanting stroke, and colon used by the scribe based upon a look at the manuscript itself. In contrast, M4 has virtually no punctuation.

The evidence for M4 as the earlier copy, as said above, is nevertheless mixed. One would suppose that a scribe would use abbreviations after becoming more comfortable with a text. The scribe in copying P writes out in full a number of abbreviations and words with superscripts which appear in M4. As would be expected, both MSS share common abbreviations as *p^u*, *p^e*, *p^r*, *p^t*. However, a count of abbreviations in the first 500 lines reveals that M4 contains (or retains from the immediate exemplar) twice as many unshared abbreviations as does P. A few examples from M4 and P respectively will suffice: *w^t* 37 (*with*), *troupe^e* 43 (*trouthe*), *m^rcurious* 206 (*mercurys*), *nep^r* 212 (*nethir*), *p^rverse* 384 (*perverse*), *Capⁱcorne* 391 (*Capricorne*), *p^rforme* 418 (*parforme*), *w^tseyn* 474 (*withseyne*), *ranc^r* 477 (*rancoure*), *c^uelly* 479 (*cruelly*), *wherew^t* 496 (*were with*), *counten^an^ce* 497 (*countenaunse*).

Another factor that may point to P as the first copied lies in the rubrics. The scribe writes the entire line in red. The illuminator, clearly the same person working with the scribe on both MSS., at first employs a paraph in the left margin in notating the rubricated passages in P. This procedure is used forty-two times from 176a-1844a. The scribe then decides for the rest of the poem (1901a-4680a) to leave a space at the beginning of the rubric for a small illuminated letter, rather than a paraph, to begin the rubric. These small initials characterize the beginning of every rubric in M4 (with a single exception).²¹ One could conclude that this more uniform style in M4 reflects the scribe's procedure after his indecision reflected in the middle of P, whatever the time lapse between the copying of the two MSS.

Second point: twice in P the scribe accidentally leaves room for a rubric, only to insert a rubricated regular line from the text, complete with paraph (679) and then a small illuminated letter (3544). On two occasions in P the scribe forgets to leave room for a rubric: once immediately after a Latin rubric (= M4 2552b), another time within the standard text (= M4 3216ab). These kinds of mistakes do not occur in M4, and such mistakes in P suppose a greater familiarity with the text by the time the scribe is engaged with copying M4. If the scribe did write M4 after P, he may have felt rushed in light of the greater number of abbreviations and superscripts in M4, the nearly tripling of missing lines, and the omission of virtually all punctuation and breath marks. If, according to E&E, P is

"on the whole carelessly written" (II.81), then M4, unexamined by E&E, is yet more guilty of scribal sins.

Lacunae

The first gap of 1100-08, unique to M4, can be explained by the parallelism between the respective beginnings of lines 1098-99 *But leve* and *Concludyng* with the respective beginnings of lines 1109-10 *To leve* and *And condiscende*, but that means that lines 1109-10 should have also been omitted through eyeskip.²² In the case of the omission of 4371-76, again unique to M4, the scribe may have finished writing the word *see* 4370 when his eye fell upon *sawe* in the middle of 4377, and he proceeded to make not only the semantic connection but an erroneous eyeskip connection. Both M4 and P share the lacuna 1669-72. This section describes the wedding reception given by Adrastus for his two daughters, Argeia to Polyneices, and Deiphyle to Tideus. Lydgate tells the reader that he cannot recount the activities of the guests during the reception -- and then does, partially, through the rhetorical device of *occupatio*.²³

But to tell all the circūstaunce [. . .]

All this in sothe discryve I ne kan (M4 1663, 1673)

Lydgate then alludes to the sexual heat amplified by the party.

Of iustes roiall and the diuerse daunse

The festes riche and the yeftes grete

The peynfull sighes and the fervent hete

Of loves folke brynnyng as the glede

And diuerse of many sundry wede (M4 1664-68)

However, the scribe(s) of the archetype(s) for the related exemplars which were used as copytext for M4 and P perhaps cannot bring himself to write Lydgate's more explicit description, and hence censors it:

The touches stole and the amerous lookes

By sotyl craft leyd oute lyne and hokes

The Ialous folk to traysshen and begyle

In their awayt with many sondry wile (E&E 1669-72)

The use of the word *lay* meaning 'to have sexual intercourse with' is an Americanism first cited in the *OED* in 1934.

Nevertheless, the fish metaphor (*lyne and hokes*), despite its absolute construction that may refer to the previous or next line, is strong enough to warrant deletion by the (earlier) scribe.

Despite my reading of the justification for these gaps, one must remember Brown and Robbins's caveat that "Scribes seem to have been variously bewildered by and unaware of lacunae in their exemplars" (263). They offer a few examples, one of which concerns two copies of Trevisa's *Polychronicon* by the same scribe which "has a curiously unremarked lacuna, with several chapters of text omitted, but no break in continuity of writing, while the other . . . has the complete text" (263).

Ink

The scribe used a dark brown, nearly black ink for the text of the poems and a red ink for the rubrics. The color of

both inks is uniform throughout the manuscript. An exception to the use of the dark brown ink occurs in four consecutive lines of the poem: the names *plato* and *Socrates* are written in red (ll. 2971), two lines are entirely in red (ll. 2972-73), and *Tullius* in the following line is in red:

For thoughe **plato** and wyse **Socrates**

morall Senek and dyogenes

Allbomasar and p^udent Tholome

And **Tullius** that had the sovereynte (2971-2974)

The illuminator alternated between using a blue and a gold ink to draw the smaller initials. Occasionally he used blue ink to draw paraphs and decorative squares around many of the colored initials. (The significance of this is discussed below, "Ordinatio.") A light copper-colored ink was employed as filler inside the large initials: In 1937 Bühler called the color "pink" (1).

Script

The script generally exhibits a hand typical for a literary work, i.e. a book hand or literary script: less cursive and less idiosyncratic than a charter or documentary script, in which the scribe would attempt to deter forgery. However, the scribe does exhibit a small number of allographs, or variant letters, which will be discussed below.

The script is a Bastard Anglicana: this hand reflected the growing influence of Secretary. This combination was characteristic of university scribes of the 1400s. An example

of this combination is given in Parkes (Plate 17). This manuscript, written in Oxford in 1429, does not have the fluidity of the hand of our scribe. Nevertheless, they both show certain Anglicana features, as discussed by Parkes (xvii-xviii, 17): the pronounced hooks and loops of ascenders (except *d*) and descenders, the bitings and fusions of adjacent loops and adjacent strokes respectively, use of both a compressed *s* and long *s*, and use of both Anglicana long *r* and Secretary *r*. Most interesting is the *y* descender that loops to the right, and the lack of horns characteristic of formal hands of the time. To be sure, there are differences in the script of M4, such as the presence of the headless *a* form, which is common in university scribe script. Another non-Anglicana letter form in M4 is a simpler *d* ascender with no hook.

The text exhibits a number of allographs that represent a grapheme (the abstract minimum distinctive unit of a writing system of a particular language) (Hartmann 9, 100). Typical of the script is the use of a 2-form *r* after rounded letters and lobes, and a continental *r* with straight letters. The scribe alternates between *b* and *th*, with frequent use of the contractions *b^r* and *b^s*. However, the most interesting feature is the script's bastard quality, i.e., the combination of two scripts. In this case the scribe has preserved both Anglicana and Secretary allographs of certain graphemes: compare the somewhat broken quality with the rounded quality of *g*, *k*, *m*, *r*, *s*, *w*. As Parkes points out (xxiv), scribes found this equal status among the hierarchy of scripts disconcerting, and in the

latter half of the 1400s this confusion led to a greater development of personal style, which incorporated a greater use of Secretary. This personal style is already evident in the hand of the scribe with its mix of rounded and a few broken letters, and that is why the hand's date is close to the mid 1400s. A more precise dating is difficult, since "The majority of mixed hands are difficult to date unless one is able to relate sufficient details of the separate ingredients to dated or datable examples of the scripts from which they were drawn" (Parkes xxv).

The most intriguing letter used by the scribe in M4 is the first element of *Pap* (l. 109). The line runs:

Pap well youre hede with clothes rounde abought

Ar. gives *Wrappe*; E&E gloss 'wrap' but note no variants in the collation. The word also appears in Ar. *wrap* (M4 *wrappe*) 1443 and *wrappe* (M4 *wrapp*) 3090. A sharp triangular point occurs at the midpoint of the lobe of *P*, strongly suggesting a wynn. *OED* includes the obsolete *wap* meaning "to wrap, envelop; also, to wrap (a covering) about something." In its first four citations dated 1375, 1420, a mantle wraps; in 1425 "worthy wedes [of the widow]" wrap; and in 1440 "clothys" wrap, as in our poem. If indeed the scribe wrote a wynn relatively early in M4, he may have confused it briefly with a wynn that he had seen repeated in a previous manuscript that he was examining. Hence, through contamination ("the retaining of one version of a text in memory while copying another" [Greetham, *Textual Scholarship* 280]) he produced the unique wynn. It is unlikely that our scribe's

exemplar had a wynn, first, since his copying of P shows *lap*. The *OED* gives *lap* "To coil, fold, wrap (a garment or anything supple)" and notes the use of the verb with, among others, *about* and *around*. A second reason that argues against a wynn is *ST*'s late date. C. E. Wright discusses the decline of this second grapheme that appears in the *Beowulf* MS: "the [wynn] became increasingly infrequent in the thirteenth century and disappeared entirely about 1300, making a very few rare appearances in the Havelok MS (Bodleian, Laud Misc. 108 [before 1272])" (xv).

The scribe of M4 adds calligraphic detail: otiose strokes add decorative flourishes to final *n* and to *v* (especially common in ascenders on the top of the page), and hairlines through the ascenders of *h* and *ll*. These decorative elements, along with the elongated ascenders of the top line of the page, point to a book carefully copied on commission.

Ordinatio

R. J. Lyall's examination of the relative use of parchment and paper in fifteenth century manuscripts reveals two factors concerning the choice of materials: the genre of the work and its audience. Hence, liturgical works and the Statutes were generally made of parchment. Moreover, "manuscripts with monastic connections, whether evidently the work of the religious themselves or commercially produced for a monastic client, are much more likely than other categories to be written on parchment" (13). Yet in England "the proportion of all

manuscripts written on paper rose to about 20 per cent by about 1450" (12). However, generalizations based on parchment or paper choice are hazardous because of the mixed evidence. For example, among manuscripts of *Piers Plowman*, slightly less than two-thirds of the A-Text are on parchment; but virtually all the B- and C-Texts are (14). Hence, I am reluctant to make any generalization other than that the scribe commissioned to do M4 chose parchment for a fairly wealthy client. Yet as I mention in the section entitled "Material," the slightly tan color of the parchment reflects a mature sheep, a less prestigious material perhaps for a client of moderate wealth. Perhaps this was the only decent material available at the time to the scribe.

Kathleen Scott recognizes the ultimate determinant for the type of illuminative format of a manuscript: namely, the patron, its primary audience, not the book designer (42). However, the illuminator, along with the scribe and rubricator (the latter two the same in M4 and P's case), must transmute that vision into a work of art. The process is akin to the creation of a film in which producer, director, actor, and editor and audiences take part in its creation. Hence film is generally known as the democratic art, and this process is similar to the formation of the medieval book -- in ironic contrast to the political realities of the day, namely the rise of absolute monarchies in the fifteenth century.

Large Initials

Decorative framing devices account for about 5% of late medieval texts in England (Scott 31). Folio 1r contains an arabesque bar-frame border of stylized leaves and flowers. (See facsimile of folio 1r in the prefatory matter.) This type of frame has much in common with what Scott calls the everyman's design (49). The three-sided vignette borders all but the right fore-edge. The border is a double vine that touches and runs parallel from line 6 down. The vine shaft to the left is gold; the one to the right is brown in the first half, and then colored blue past an overlapping flower in the middle part of the bar. This corresponds with the coloring of the double shafts I observed in Boston Public Library MS, f. med. 94 and those in the color facsimile of the Hengwrt MS.²⁴ Flowers, possibly of the arum family, are placed at the corners, and are especially prominent around the first large initial *W*. The prominence of the initial is underscored by the flowers and vines that seemingly grow from the grapheme itself. The large initial *W* bulges on the left beyond the justified textual space as a reflection of its fecundity. It drops down into the first five lines (a "drop initial") saving valuable textual space by not resting upon the top baseline, which would be typical of the stick-up initial. This first drop initial of both M4 and P take up five lines (in comparison with six lines in the Ellesmere and Hengwrt MSS). This illumination pattern on folio 1r for both M4 and P is quite similar.

The layout of M4 folio 1r is similar to that of the beginning of the text of the Ellesmere MS (except for the

Ellesmere's dragon that appears at the bottom horizontal zoographic border, and three other small initials). The similarity in the layout is interesting in light of two factors: *ST* is a continuation of the *Canterbury Tales*, and both begin with the same word (with Lydgate affecting the opening astronomical periphrasis), affording the decoration of the initial letter *W* (*Ellesmere Chaucer*).²⁵

The illuminator of M4 decorates an additional twenty-three large gold initials in *ST*. In each case the illuminator follows a few rules: first, he chose the letters according to esthetic spacing based on the double spread. Second, he decorated an initial after a rubric.²⁶ Third, he decorated the initial letters of the three major sections of the poem. These large letters are drop initials, inserted within the boundaries of textual space but narrow enough to ensure that all ruled lines are used for the text. (See facsimile of folio 7r in the prefatory matter.) The only exception occurs at 1047 in which the initial takes up two spaces. This letter begins the second part of *ST*, but the scribe accidentally leaves only two spaces for the illuminator to work. One obvious difference in the illuminator's large initials between M4 and P is that the flourishes in P extend over a greater area of the left margin than those in M4. For example, they extend to 19 lines on the facsimile of M4 folio 7r. Although this letter is not illuminated in P, a letter placed in a comparable position in P at folio 48v extends to 29 lines. Did the illuminator have the time for a more leisurely, expansive approach? Did he feel more

comfortable after presumably working on M4? Or had he simply felt rushed when working on M4?

The scribe can choose syntactically awkward places for the illuminator to insert a large initial. For example, in the following *l* of *lyke* is illuminated and the rubric is boldfaced:

And where þ^t foly hathe dominacion

Wysdom ys put in subieccion

Howe wysdom with owte soportacyon

Avalith full hall or noght

lyke as this bysshop with all his hie p^udense

For cause he myght haue none audiense (2965-68)

The *l* of *lyke* is decorated even though the illumination (and rubric) awkwardly splits its clause from the previous one. Moreover, *like* is a function word which carries grammatical significance (rather than a content word which carries lexical significance). Indeed, almost two-thirds of the large initials produced by the illuminator's pen are function words (*And* 6x, *Whan* 3x, *Where* 2x, *But*, *From*, *The*, *Wheche*, *Where*), while only a few are content words (*Sir(s)*, *Passed*, *Full*, *tolde*). However, the rough iambic pentameter line calls for a lack of stress on the initial syllable, and function words are generally unstressed. The illuminator does devise a large initial at the beginning of part two 1047 and three 2553, telegraphed by the preceding rubric. Beyond this structuring device, the illuminator's criterion is esthetic distance: i.e., he spaces out his letters roughly every one hundred to three hundred lines so that they appear occasionally as one would turn the leaves in

the manuscript. Syntactic awkwardness is irrelevant. He is particularly ambitious at the beginning of the manuscript where (besides the *W* of line 1) four large initials appear within the first four hundred lines. Hence, the reader encounters large initials with some frequency if one remembers that the unit of book design for the illuminator was the double-spread or opening, that is the verso and recto of two facing pages. Later large initials appear within every two hundred to nearly four hundred lines. One exception is the nearly 650 line gap between *And* 3765 and *And* 4415.

The scribe had ample opportunity to place a large initial within this fairly large gap after the following rubrics at 3828, 4034, 4174, 4216, 4282, 4341, 4384. Since for the owner the book is primarily an esthetic object rather than a didactic one, the illuminator presumes that the gaze of the viewer will fall first upon the elaborate bar-frame border of folio 1r, and then proceed to the double-spread as one turns each leaf. The scribe and illuminator in a sense cheat in *M4*, spacing the large initials with less frequency as one leafs through the last quarter of the manuscript in particular, since the viewer examines this later part of the manuscript generally less carefully. To be sure, the illuminator is constrained by time and ambition, remuneration, and materials. Nevertheless, when creating *P* the scribe and illuminator correct this exiguity with the addition of five large initials in this gap in the last quarter of the poem. *P* provides twenty-seven large illuminated initials, only four more than in *M4*. The largest hiatus between

large initials in P is no more than about 350 lines. Besides illuminating the first large initial, and the beginning of parts I (177), II (1047), and III (2553), M4 and P share the same large illuminated initial only nine times: 443,²⁷ 613, 1351, 1569, 1901, 2356, 2967, 4415, 4634. This selection shows that, besides the structural function, the choice of initials was based upon esthetics, specifically on the appreciation for the double spread as a unit of attention. The importance of this principle is shown by the fact that in one case only one line separates two large initials. However, both appear on different openings: the one on the bottom of folio 74r, the other on the top of folio 74v. Since the textually close but spacially distant initials appear on different openings, it is clear that the initials were illuminated to create esthetic balance in the manuscript.

The illuminator did presume that the owner would open M4 to the two other works appended to ST, since he includes a large initial in each double-spread. The one exception occurs in the penultimate double-spread of folios 76v and 77r which includes a large initial on both left and right sides of the double-spread. The illuminator adds his touch of finality to the manuscript on its last section of text, with the same stylized leaves and flowers.

Small Initials

All small initial letters beginning a rubric are colored either blue or gold, generally alternating in color within the

double spread. Since all large initials are colored gold, all small initials preceding and following a large initial are colored blue for contrast. The first small initial of a rubric occurs with the blue *H* of *Here* 176a. On no double spread does a blue follow a blue, or gold follow a gold initial, in *ST*. The small initial is the size of one line, except at 265ab, 302ab, 330ab, and 442ab, where it takes up two spaces. These larger small initials appear among other small initials, even on the same leaf. The rubrics signified by these larger small initials do not seem to have any special semantic significance. Hence, their appearance here near the beginning of *M4* seems idiosyncratic, although the scribe may have made a conscious effort in the rest of the *MS* to limit their size to one space. All small initials in *P*, after they appear two-fifths into the *MS* at 2000a, are one space high.

On a single occasion in *M4* at 2424a the illuminator inserts a blue paraph rather than a small initial to begin a rubric since the scribe forgot to leave a space here for the illuminator's small initial. Previous to 2000a in *P*, paraphs are appended to the rubric. These paraphs and the subsequent small initials in *P* would correspond to the small initials in *M4* with one exception, at 3216a, when the scribe of *P* forgets to leave space for the rubric.

Among the three appended poems a small initial begins only the rubric to the "Letter to Gloucester" folio 75v. Otherwise paraphs begin each stanza, alternating between gold and blue, again with the double spread in mind. Only on one occasion, in

the "lenvoye" and apparently as a slip, does the illuminator offer the same consecutive color (blue) in moving from verso to recto (folios 74v-75r).

Rubrics

As noted above, sometimes the rubric is interpolated in the middle of a clause:

And where þ^t foly hathe dominacion

Wysdom ys put in subieccion

Howe wysdom with owte soportacyon

Avalith full hall or noght

lyke as this bysshop with all his hie p^udense

For cause he myght haue none audiense (2965-68)

Despite this awkwardness, the scribe slavishly follows the placement of the rubric in his exemplar. However, the structure and wording of the rubric are subject to great fluidity. This is because these sections are prose, and in the hierarchy of genres, much more subject to the scribe's alterations.

The scribe, who did his own rubrics, sometimes overestimates the amount of space needed by leaving, for example, two lines blank, continue with his copying, and then return to fill in. He compensates in three ways: break the line-ending prematurely to ensure that enough text were present for the next line; widen the distance between letters and words; add extra text. He does one, two, or all three simultaneously. If he underestimates the amount of space by leaving, for example, only one line blank when he needed two,

he compensates in three ways: break the line-ending when necessary at the right margin and place the extra rubric text directly underneath the last few words of the rubric; narrow the space between letters and words; delete text. He does one, two, or all three simultaneously. For example, lines 580, 580a, 581 run thus, with rubrics in boldface:

M4:

And in the prese of a counter he mette

Howe Edipps sloughe his fader by ignoranse at p^e castell

kyngelayous and c^uelly hym sloughe **off pylotes**

P:

And in the prese of a counter he mette

Howe Edippus sloughe his fader by Ignorauns

at the castell of pilotes

kyngelayous and cruelly hym sloughe

The scribe in M4 compensates for his miscalculation of space by inserting *off pylotes* underneath. There is little space in the MS between *sloughe* and *off*: the typescript here does little justice to the scribe who preserves the symmetry of the page by narrowing the spacing between letters and words, deleting the *u* of *Edippus*, and using a thorn and superscript to represent *the*. Sometimes word or phrases are added or deleted to compensate for space, or merely to contribute to the balance of the page. For example, compare the rubrics 2306ab (the addition in P is underlined):

M4:

Howe ligurgs daughter founde Tydeus slepyng

in the herber all for woundyd

P:

Howe ligurgus doughter founde Tydeus slepyng

in the Erber all For wounded and howe she cōfort hym

In P the scribe does not find attractive the extra spacing one sees in M4, and adds an extra clause not found, at least, in Ar. For good measure, to ensure symmetry he adds a flourish in P after *slepyng* that ends at the corresponding point where *hym* ends below. However, one may look at this in other ways: perhaps the scribe in M4 deletes the clause *and howe she cōfort hym* found in the immediate exemplar of M4; or the scribe in P simply found the clause in his exemplar. Nevertheless, I find the first explanation more persuasive because of the similarity of the respective immediate exemplars for M4 and P. Although only a thorough treatment of the rubrics in all the surviving manuscripts will more distinctly answer these questions, the examination of the rubrics in M4 and P is a first step.

The fluid manner of treating rubricated passages points to the scribe's different treatment of the prose of the rubric versus the verse of the work. For example, the scribe feels free to alter the prose of the rubric in order to conform with the presentation of the text. As explained in the previous paragraph he adds passages concerning the addition of the second clause of 2306b in M4. He adds the clause *full of water* 3070b, not found in Ar. or P. Although passages of a poem can be deleted through error or censorship, as I believe ll. 1669-72 in M4 are, a comparison of M4 and P confirms that rubric prose

passages are also deleted to reflect the visual decorum of the text. For example, after 302, the scribe in M4 leaves four lines blank for the longest rubric of the poem, but leaves only three lines blank in P. Compare these two rubricated passages 302a-d (with relevant passages underlined):

M4:

How the Cuntre of Boece toke furste the name
of a bulles skyn and afftir called Thebes And
howe kynge Cadms was exylyd owte of Thebes
By the manly prowes of kynge Amphion

And called was the Soyle gotyn Inne

P:

How the Cuntre of Boece toke furst his name off
a Bulles skynnne and afftir called Thebes by h^e prowes of
¶ kyng Amphion

And called was the Soyle gotyn In

The scribe in P is forced to delete *And howe kynge Cadms was exylyd owte of Thebes*, a clause also found in Ar. Since the rubric occurs at the bottom of folio 5v, and he has left no space at the top of folio 6r, he is forced to turn over ¶ *kynge Amphion* beneath the last ruling on the page. Despite the unique addition, he lines up the phrase with a paraph neatly underneath for symmetry's sake.

The malleability of the rubrics is also seen in the line endings. In dealing with the line endings in the poetic text of *ST*, the scribe had no options or flexibility. The line endings, as established by the poet, had to be represented in the text

block.²⁸ In dealing with the line endings of the rubrics, however, the scribe could exercise a certain amount of choice. A comparison of M4 and P show that when the scribe leaves two or more blank lines for a rubric, he ends the first line far more often at a different point than in the other manuscript. Rarely do the rubric line endings correspond in both M4 and P as they do at 1932ab, 2847ab, 2966ab, and this phenomenon reflects the relative unimportance of the prose line break.

Provenance

J. Pierpont Morgan purchased *ST* in lot from Theodore Irwin of Oswego, N.Y. on 27 March 1900 for \$225,000 (Weeks 88). The calculations on folio 80v and repeated in code on folio 81r (as explained above, "Format") reveal that Irwin's price code for the *ST* codex was approximately £33 (equivalent to about \$600 in modern currency [U.S. Department of Labor]). This price shows that Morgan received an astonishing bargain.

For comparison's sake, John Wolfson bought the (present) Beinecke MS 661, which contains only *ST*, at Sotheby's in October 1974, lot 1481. Mr. Wolfson told me that it was included in a late sale after most of the other book dealers had left. Moreover, he claims that it was a "mistake" that Sotheby's offered it for £1,600 (equivalent to almost \$15,000 today ["U.S. Department of Labor"]). Although primarily a collector of early English drama, he had wanted a manuscript to enhance his collection, which is based in New York City. When I asked him if he had tried to read the manuscript, he said that he did "the

best I could." He later sold it in the early 1980s to Bernard Quaritch Ltd. for \$30,000 (equivalent to about \$157,500 today ["U.S. Department of Labor"]) in order to obtain funds for an apartment in London. He was unaware that Quaritch had subsequently sold it to H. P. Kraus, who then sold it to the Beinecke Library.

Mrs. Folter, a curator at H. P. Kraus, told me that Mr. Kraus acquired the Beinecke MS at Sotheby's 13 June 1983, lot #9. Kraus sold it in 1985 to Yale. Hence, Kraus is the last American to privately own a *ST* manuscript. Interestingly, Kraus earlier in 1959 acquired the present AUT MS 143 at Sotheby's (lot #209) for £15,200, and shortly afterward sold it to the University of Texas (Lovell lxvi).

For the history of Morgan's purchase of M4, one can consult the Sabin Papers at the New York Public Library. Joseph Frederick Sabin was one of two agents who represented Irwin in the Morgan purchase. Irwin had done business with Sabin and his father for a number of years, and Sabin knew Morgan from cataloguing Morgan's library in 1883 (Weeks 88). A few items of interest are present in this collection: first, a letter of Irwin to Sabin, a typewritten prospectus of the sale to Morgan; second, a memorandum from Sabin to Irwin concerning the deduction of a Gutenberg Bible (Hebrew Bible only) and other particulars to be calculated separately in the sale. Most revealing is Irwin's letter to Sabin dated 29 March 1900, two days after the sale: "Do I understand that my books have gone 'in bloc' [. . .]!" This comment suggests that Irwin was more

concerned about the upcoming exhibition of his Rembrandt etchings at the Grolier Club in April-May 1900: "The print matters [sale to Morgan] will be all right, but we can do nothing until I get back my Rembrandts from the Grolier exhibition." Theodore Irwin, Jr., Irwin's son, wrote a letter to Sabin 20 October 1900 concerning a sale of a print for which Irwin had paid \$400 and which now should be worth more. He adds in a postscript: "Think father . . . is I trust satisfied with his book sale." This sale apparently refers to the Morgan sale.

"Mr. Morgan bought the Irwin collection on the advice of his nephew, Junius Spencer Morgan . . . The nephew had graduated from Princeton College in 1888 and had begun his notable career as a book collector . . . He was a constant adviser to his uncle in the purchase of manuscripts, rare edition, prints and drawings" (Weeks 89).

The first announcement of the sale appeared in *The New York Times* 30 March 1900 and in *Publisher's Weekly* (New York) the next day. Both publications mistakenly claimed that the library was purchased by Frederick K. Trowbridge of New York: corrections were printed 7 and 14 April 1900, respectively (Weeks 89). However, the corrections had not reached the *Chicago Evening Post* which repeats the Trowbridge error 16 April 1900 (Weeks 88).

Before M4 came to the Pierpont Morgan Library, it was housed for over two decades in Oswego in a building constructed in the 1860s and styled after a Rhenish castle. Located on the southwest corner of East Utica and Sixth Streets, Irwin's

library stretched nearly half a city block. "Irenaeus," an anonymous scribe for *The New York Observer* (14 September 1878) writes that the "library, halls and walls are luminous with the works of genius and ancient and modern art" (qtd. in Weaks 97). Nanine Hilliard Greene is a descendant of the son-in-law of Thomas Irwin Jr., Irwin's son. Greene writes that she believes that Irwin Jr. merely had the books dusted and aired every summer, neither buying nor selling any part of the collection between 1901 and 1933, the year of Irwin Jr.'s death (89). Terrance Prior, the present director of the Oswego Historical Society, informs me that the library building was razed after 25-26 September 1936, the date of the final sale of items in the house, and that seven private homes now occupy the site of the former building. "Some of its furnishings are now preserved in various Oswego homes" (Weaks 99).

The inspiration for Theodore Irwin's bibliophilia is not found in his entry for *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* (164-65), which offers no reason for the sale nearly three years before his death²⁹ on Christmas day 1902. He was born in Sodus, N.Y., twenty-five miles east of Rochester, educated at Marion Academy and the Rochester Collegiate Institute, and left for Oswego at seventeen years of age. He started as a clerk with a miller and shipper called Doolittle, Mills and Company. After the dissolution of this company in 1850, Doolittle partnered with Irwin to head what became one of the important flour mills in Oswego. Weaks writes, "After the great fire at Oswego in 1853, the firm became Doolittle, Irwin

and Wright and continued until 1864" when it was dissolved (97). The year 1853 is also significant since Irwin wrote in the preface to his *Catalogue* that in this year he began his book-collecting. If Irwin became aware of the transience of life with the Oswego fire, he may have wished to transcend that evanescence by making a mark with his collection.³⁰ Irwin also noted in his preface that he had hoped that perusal of his *Catalogue* would inspire others to collect books that they may too rise above their anonymous stations in life. Since only one hundred copies³¹ of Irwin's *Catalogue* were privately printed, no one is known to have been inspired by Irwin's hope. Although Irwin began to purchase books in 1853, his first major acquisition was in 1859 at Count Libri's sale in London when he obtained a Book of Hours whose binding had been made for Henry VIII ("American Libraries").

Irwin did not take part in the Civil War (*New York State Men* 20). Like others of comfortable means such as President-to-be Grover Cleveland, he undoubtedly took advantage of the Conscription Act of March 1863 which allowed persons to avoid conscription by paying \$300 to the government or by hiring a substitute.

When his company was dissolved in 1864 Irwin joined with George P. Sloan to manage a grain commission and shipping business. Changing industrial conditions on Lake Ontario led Irwin and Sloan to enter the banking and manufacturing fields. Irwin prospered in these areas and in the railroad business. Despite these numerous interests he served in number of social

positions, among them as a trustee to the Oswego City Library, and a trustee-at-large for Syracuse University (where his son received his medical degree) with a position on the Library Committee from 1894 until his death in 1902.³²

CHAPTER 3: *THE SIEGE OF THEBES*: MS, PRINT, ELECTRONIC FORM

At present thirty manuscripts of *ST* have been identified (Robbins 450). Two copies contain the complete text: Arundel 119, E&E's base text; and Bodl. 1124. Most of the other twenty-eight lack up to thirty to forty lines. The most imperfect is a 26-line fragment.¹

Four manuscripts of *ST* are in the United States: M4; Yale University, Beinecke MS 661; Boston Public Library MS f. med. 94; and Austin, University of Texas MS 143. E&E list (I.ix) and describe (II.36-59, 211) twenty-two manuscripts of *ST*, along with the two earliest printed editions: de Worde (Pantzer's revision of Pollard gives 1497?; Renoir and Benson, 1492; Robbins and Cutler, ?1495) and Stow² (1561). The following list of manuscripts that preserve *ST* is based on Brown and Robbins's (629) plus its supplements Robbins (450) and Hamer (*passim*), along with Edwards ("Beinecke" 193) and Pearsall (*John Lydgate [1371-1449]*). I have preserved Brown and Robbins' numeration. I have also given the numbers corresponding to E&E's "List of The Manuscripts and Oldest Editions" (I.ix) as well as those of Renoir and Benson (henceforth RB) for ease of comparison. One must be careful in using the description of manuscripts in E&E II.36-61 since the arrangement there is (unfortunately) different, due to the placement of the description of the two printed editions at the end. I prefer the Brown and Robbins numeration since it accounts for manuscripts now lost (i.e., "deleted"). A virgule is given when

Brown & Robbins and RB differ. The dates for the manuscripts in the final parentheses are those given in RB.

Census of ST in manuscript:

1. Oxford, Bodl. 1124, ff. 1r-?66r/?68 (= E&E 14) (1400s)
2. Oxford, Bodl. 1479, ff. 227r-254r (= E&E 15) (c. 1459)
3. Oxford, Bodl. 1831, ff. 1r-27v (= E&E 8) (?1425-?75)
4. Oxford, Bodl. 2559, ff. 1r-73v (lacks ll. 1-8 of Prologue)
(= E&E 6) (1400s)
5. Oxford, Bodl. 11914, ff. 5r-78v (= E&E 19) (1400s)
6. Oxford, Christ Church 152, ff. 291r-350r (in E&E Appendix
II.211) (1460-1500)
7. Cambridge UL MS Addit. 3137, ff. 14r-74 (26 leaves lost) (= E&E 7, RB 9) (?1450-1500)
8. Cambridge, Magdalene College MS Pepys 2011, ff. 1r-76v (= E&E 18, RB 11) (?1450-?1500)
9. Cambridge, Trinity College MS 652, ff. 89r-169r/?v (= E&E 22, RB 12) (1400s)
10. Cambridge, Trinity College MS 1283, ff. 191r-211v (= E&E 23, RB 13) (?1450-?1500)
11. London, BL MS Arundel 119, ff. 1r-79r (= E&E 4, RB 14)
(?1425-?30)
12. London, BL MS Cotton App. XXVII, ff. 3r-51v (ll. 1-3408) (= E&E 3, RB 15) (1500s)
13. London, BL MS Egerton 2864 (*olim* Ingilby *olim* Compton Hall) ff. 292v-341r (= E&E 13, RB 16) (?1460-?80)

14. London, BL MS Royal 18. D. ii, ff. 147v-162r (= E&E 20, RB 17) (?1460)
15. London, BL MS Addit. 5140, ff. 358r-423v (ll. 1-4503) (= E&E 2, RB 18) (?1470-?1500)
16. London, BL MS Addit. 18632, ff. 6r-33v (= E&E 1, RB 19) (?1440)
17. London, BL MS Addit. 27929, ff. 17r-83r (= E&E 21 [who like Pearsall (1997) give "29729"], RB 20) (1558)
18. Durham UL Cosin V. ii. 14, ff. 1-68v (= RB 21) (1400s)
19. London, Lambeth Palace Library 742, ff. 1r-68v (= E&E 16, RB 23) (1425-75)
20. [Manchester, Rylands Library Eng. 1. ~~Delete~~ (Robbins and Cutler)]
21. Austin, U of Texas MS 143, ff. 246r-304r (*olim* Deene Park, *olim* Brudinell, *olim* Cardigan) (Sotheby Sale, Feb. 1959) (= RB 24) (1425-75)
22. Cambridge, UL Addit. 6864 (*olim* Gurney 150; *olim* Macro 102), ff. 1r-75v (= E&E 12, RB 10) (1400s)
23. Wiltshire, Longleat House, 257, ff. 1r-48v (lacks f. 28) (= E&E 5, RB 25) (?1450-?70)
24. New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke MS 661 (*olim* Mostyn Hall 258), ff. 1r-61 (= E&E 17, RB 27) (no date in RB)
25. Old Buckenham Hall, Norfolk, ff. 6r-? (= E&E 9, RB 28) (no date in RB)
26. [*olim* Temple (Sotheby Sale, 16 June 1941, Item 153). ~~Delete~~ (Robbins and Cutler)]

27. New York, Pierpont Morgan Library 4, ff. 1r-74r (= RB 30)
(1425-75)
28. Oxford, St. John's College, MS 256, ff. ? (= RB 7) (no year
in RB)
29. Coventry City Record Office MS 325/1, ff. 137r-167v (= RB
22) (1425-75)
30. olim Campbell (Robinson Sale Cat. 74, 1944, no. 268) (= RB
26) (RB give no year) (not in Pearsall)
31. Boston Public Library, f. med. 94, ff. 1r-74v (= RB 29)
(1420-40)
32. Cambridge UL, MS Addit. 2707 (ll. 14-16, 18-21, 54-58, 92-
98, 134-40) (= RB 8) (1400s)

Census of *ST* in print:

1. de Worde *The Storye of Thebes* (1497?) (STC 17031, UMI 192)
(= E&E 11, RB 31)
2. Stow *Chaucer* (1561) (STC 5075, UMI 11693) (= E&E 11, who
have "Thynne"; = RB 32)
3. Kyngston and Wright (STC 5076) (1561)
4. Speght (1598) (STC 5077, UMI 11694); (1602, 1687)
5. Urry (1721)
6. Chalmers *English Poets* (reprints Stow) (1810)
7. Skeat *Specimens* (1887)
8. Wülcker *Altenglisches Lesebuch* (1874, 1879) (Prologue ll. 1-
176 only)
9. Furnivall and Stone *The Tale of Beryn* (for Chaucer Society
1897) (1-212)

10. Furnivall and Stone *The Tale of Beryn* (1897; E.E.T.S. 105)
(1-212)
11. Manly *English Poetry*
12. Erdmann and Eckwall *Lydgate's Siege of Thebes* (1911, 1930)
13. Erdmann (for Chaucer Society)
14. Hammond (1912) (Prologue ll. 1-176)
15. Richmond *Laments for the Dead in Medieval Narrative* (1966)
(ll. 3229-59)
16. Lovell (dissertation, 1969)
17. Edwards "Lydgate's Siege" (1970) (ll. 14-16, 18-21, 54-58,
92-98, 134-40)
18. Dunn and Byrnes *Middle English Literature* (1973) (ll. 66-
193)
19. Klinkenborg (1981) (ll. 372-400)
20. Hopkins (1990) (ll. 1-65 only)
21. Bowers (1992) (ll. 1-193 only)

Census of ST in electronic form

1. Bowers *The Canterbury Tales: Fifteenth Century Continuations
and Additions* (ll. 1-193 only) (from Bowers [1992] in
print above)
2. *English Poetry* (Internet, 1996-98) (from E&E in print above)
3. "The Geoffrey Chaucer Page": *The Siege of Thebes* (ll. 1-212
only)

The Siege of Thebes and the Manuscript Tradition

In their Appendix V entitled "Preservation of Texts" (737) Brown and Robbins (corrected by Robbins [521-22] in 1965) list Middle English verse texts which survive in at least eight known manuscript copies. The corrected list offers a general idea of the relative popularity of certain texts. Assuming that the act of copying of a text meant approval for circulation, one can identify the first two titles in the list -- *The Pricke of Conscience* (117 MSS) and the *Canterbury Tales* (64 MSS) -- as the most popular texts in the fifteenth century. But the proliferation of Lydgate's titles in the list reveals him to be the most copied fifteenth-century English poet. Eight of Lydgate's works appear in the top forty titles. Lydgate's most popular piece is his "Dietary" (ranked third, 55 MSS), followed by *Life of Our Lady* (eleventh, 43 MSS), his Verses on the Kings of England (fourteenth, 41 MSS), and *Fall of Princes* (nineteenth, 34 MSS). *ST* ranks twenty-third, in a tie with Richard Rolle's *Form of Living*. *ST* is followed by *Stans peur ad mensam* (twenty-ninth, 24 MSS), *Troy Book* (thirty-second, 23 MSS) and *Secrees of Old Philosoffres* (fortieth, 20 MSS). No other author than Lydgate is mentioned more than once in the top twenty-five titles of the list. Even Chaucer does not rate a second listing until the appearance of his "Truth" (thirty-second, 23 MSS).

ST was first copied and circulated as a distinct manuscript in its own right. Edwards dates these distinct pieces to the second quarter of the fifteenth century. Eleven of the thirty known copies of *ST* were issued in this fashion. This

includes the earliest known copy and the base text for E&E, Arundel 119. Five manuscripts append *ST* to the *Canterbury Tales*; three manuscripts append *ST* to Lydgate's *Troy Book*; the other ten include miscellaneous items. The volume closest to M4 is P. (See above, "The Order of M4 and Pepys MS 2011.") P also includes the "lenvoy" and the "Letter to Gloucester," although Chaucer's "Compleynt" does not appear, as it does in M4. The same scribe worked on M4 and P (Edwards, "Lydgate Manuscripts" 19, Seymour [1997]).¹

Some Other *Siege of Thebes* Manuscripts Examined

Besides M4, I have examined *in situ* two of the other three MSS of *ST* that are in the United States, those at the Beinecke Library of Yale University and at the Boston Public Library. Although Beinecke 661 is included among the MSS examined by E&E, its interest lies in two factors: that the scribe and illuminator(s) are the same as those who worked on Boston Public Library f. med 94, along with Cambridge UL MS Addit. 3137 (Edwards, *Beinecke* 184), and that all three reflect a similar manner of production. The scribe and illuminator for M4 are different, but the similarity of its *ordinatio* leads me to believe that its production mirrored that of Beinecke 661, Boston Public Library f. med 94, and Cambridge UL MS Addit. 3137. (For more on this point, see above, "Ordinatio.")

Some *Siege of Thebes* in Print: Wynkyn de Worde's edition

E&E provide a bibliographical description of the first two printed editions of *ST* edited by Wynkyn de Worde and John Stow. E&E conclude that both are based on manuscript traditions different from each other. De Worde may already have been Caxton's assistant when Caxton referred to *ST* in the epilogue of his French translation of Raoul Lefèvre's *Jason* ca. 1477. Caxton gives a somewhat confusing account of the circumstances that lead to the discovery of the death of Lugurgus's son, purportedly based on Boccaccio's *Genealogy of the Gods*: then, as a nod to Lydgate, he says that "in the *Siege of Thebes* it is more plainly shewd"³ (Caxton 106). The word *plainly* during Caxton's time means "without embellishment, free from duplicity or ambiguity." The somewhat negative connotation "ordinary, simple" does not emerge until the 1500s (*ODEE*). Caxton's references to *ST* and to Lydgate's other works led N. F. Blake to conclude that Caxton knew Lydgate's poetry well and, in light of Lydgate's translations, "saw his own works as a complement to them. He tried to build on what Lydgate had done and the reputation he had acquired" (276). De Worde would have inherited this attitude about Lydgate from his mentor, and this could explain his decision to print *ST* c. 1492, a year or so after Caxton's death.

In an essay on Oxford, St. John's College MS 256, Gavin Bone proves that this manuscript provided the copy-text for de Worde's print edition of *ST*. Since Fordham University's new Walsh Library now has on microfilm every extant work in Pollard and Redgrave's *Short Title Catalogue*, I was able to examine on

microfilm the British Library's unique copy of *de Worde*, along with the early print editions of *ST* by Stow and by Speght. Two woodcut frontispieces of the work occur in *de Worde*. One is of an armored knight riding on horseback, either Oedipus or Tydeus, and the other depicts workers building the Theban wall. A title below the second (and beginning with a paraph) reads: "This is the Royall Cyte of Thebes." A vibrancy is added especially to the second woodcut by the addition of lines suggesting grass and shrubbery.⁴ In an imitation of the *ordinatio* of a manuscript, a typical strategy of the day, *de Worde* prints the marginal annotations in the left margin of the verso and the right margin of the recto page. This ensures a chiasmic spread that allows the reader the ease of seeing the marginalia consistently near the fore-edge of the printed page, whether recto or verso. The electronic version of *ST* in *English Poetry* is arranged likewise, with awkward results. (See "*Siege of Thebes* in Electronic Form Examined.") Only *ST* appears in the *de Worde* volume. *ST* was not subsequently printed separately until the E.E.T.S. 1911 edition.

John Stow's edition of *The Siege of Thebes*

In his 1561 edition John Stow thought enough of *ST* to place it on the title page: "The workes of Geffrey Chaucer, newli printed, with diuers addicions, whiche were neuer in print before: With the siege and destruccion of the worthy Citee of Thebes, compiled by Ihon Lidgate, Monke of Berie. As in the table more plainly doeth appere." The description of Lydgate as compiler lasts almost 250 years until Chalmers's edition of

1810. Chalmers begins his edition -- a reprint of Stow -- by describing the work as "Compiled by John Lydgate, Monk of Bury" (570). The notion of Lydgate as one who simply assembles his material sidesteps the transformative effect which Lydgate's translation, interpolations, and other sources (like Chaucer!) would have on the original French source for *ST*. This effect echoes Kristeva's idea of the intertextuality of texts as a mosaic of interdependent works (Heath 258).

Stow places the poem not after the *Canterbury Tales* but after the numerous shorter poems of Chaucer that follow. Stow dispenses with the marginal rubrics; the poem is printed in double columns. While Lydgate's prominence is displayed by his very presence in the volume, he is not strong enough, in Harold Bloom's sense, to destabilize Stow's conception of the unity of Chaucer's canon, for *ST* appears at the end, after Chaucer's minor poems, not after the *Canterbury Tales*. ("Three saynges of dan Ihon Lyd" and Lydgate's "balade of good counsaile" do make a brief appearance among Chaucer's shorter verse.) In his Prologue Stow offers an interesting note on his editorial problems:

[T]aking soche delite and pleasure in the workes of this noble clerk as a fore mencioned I have of a long season moch vsed to read and uisite the same, and as bookes of dieurs imprintes came vnto my handes, I easely and withoute greate studye, myght and haue deprehended in them many errours, falsyties, and deprauacions which euidently appered by the contrarietes and alteracions

founde by collacion of the one with the other, whereby I
 was moued astired to make dilgent serche, where I might
 fynde . . . very trewe copies of those workes of
 Geffray Chaucer[.]

Stow is silent on any such sedulous acquisition of true
 copies of Lydgatian manuscripts. Perhaps this is a
 function of Lydgate's own comments upon the instability of
 his texts (see below, "Stemmatics and *The Siege of Thebes*").

Stow's edition is based upon a lost manuscript: this
 inferential witness is described in E&E II.61. It is different
 from the manuscript which Stow himself copied in 1558, now BL MS
 Addit. 27929 (described in E&E II.56). Hammond (Chaucer 456)
 thinks that it may have been copied from Bodl. 1124 (formerly
 Laud 577) which Hammond claims Stow once owned.

The Huntington Library owns a copy of *STC* 5075, which I
 examined on microfilm. It is also printed for Ihon Kyngston and
 by Iohn Wight and is a reprint of Stow's edition with the
 exception of the orthography on the title page: citee for
 Stow's *Cyte*, *doeeth* for *doeth*. Below a shield topped by a
 unicorn, a couplet is set in a rectangle, reminding one that
 Chaucer in a Horatian sense was seen as not merely as one who
 delights but also one who moralizes:

Vertue florisheth in Chaucer still,
 Though death of hym, hath wrought his will.

Thomas Speght's edition of *The Siege of Thebes*

Thomas Speght includes a life of Chaucer in his prefatory material to a volume of Chaucer's works. He mentions Lydgate's commendation of "my master Chaucer" in *The Fall of Princes* (with a margin side-note that Lydgate is "an excellent poet") and in verses upon the Virgin Mary. Like Stow, he ends the volume with *ST* after Chaucer's verses to a scrivener, but with some differences. First, *ST* has its own title page. It is the same one as that for his *Canterbury Tales*, with various monarchs and nobility surrounding an upright rectangular box in the center of the page filled in now with a new title, again all upper-case: "THE STORY OF THEBES: COMPILED BY IOHN LIDGATE, MONKE OF BVRY." Speght continues Stow's view of Lydgate as a compiler (for which see above, "John Stow's edition of *The Siege of Thebes*").

Second, Speght adds annotative material after *ST*: "Old and obscure words of Chaucer, explained"; "The hard words of Chaucer, explained"; "The French in Chaucer, translated"; "Most of the Authours cited by G. Chaucer in his workes, by name declared"; "Corrections of some faults, and Annotations upon some places." However, none of this material mentions Lydgate, and hence Speght sees Lydgate's piece as an interesting although not highly significant sequel.

Other editions until Erdmann and Eckwall's edition

Alexander Chalmers's 1810 edition reprints Stow's 1561 edition, and similarly characterizes Lydgate as a compiler (see above, "John Stow's edition of *The Siege of Thebes*").⁵

Among those who have printed fragments of *ST*, Eleanor Prescott Hammond is of interest. Although her article appeared in 1912, a year after E&E's edition, Hammond composed her article "Lydgate's Prologue to the Story of Thebes" before E&E's edition was published, noting that an edition "has long been announced by the Early English Text Society" (362). She transcribes the Prologue ll. 1-176 using Arundel MS as her base text, along with Arundel's marginal rubrics. She makes a few emendations (indicated in the notes, such as the obvious *tale* for *take* (l. 63) which also occur in E&E. However, differences do exist between Hammond's and E&E's texts: Hammond *honnir*, E&E *honure* (l. 46); Hammond *sugrid*, E&E *Sugrid* 'sugared, honeyed' (l. 52). Hammond adds notes of a historical, literary, and syntactic nature which provide a useful supplement to E&E's notes.

Erdmann and Ekwall's critical edition

As anyone who reads commentary on Lydgatian prosody knows, the poet has been severely criticized for the irregularity of his line. For example, in discussing the prevalence of a line with "a syllable too few at the caesura," Saintsbury writes: "[this type of line] which we are told is 'peculiar to Lydgate,' or at any rate peculiarly Lydgatian, 'more developed in his works than anywhere else,' 'very common,' etc. -- I can only say that the form seems to me incurable, intolerable, hopelessly characteristic of 'a doggerel poet without a sensitive ear for rhythm'" (223-24). The commoner it is, the more fully

developed, the more peculiarly Lydgatian, the clearer is it that Lydgate was a bad metrist" (qtd. in Lovell xliv).⁶ Lovell gets to the heart of the problem of E&E's critical edition: that it is excessively eclectic in matters of prosody. Lovell gives fifteen examples, most of which concerns the addition of final *e* or adding a function word as *with* or *to*. To be sure, some of these variants are supported by other manuscripts, and indeed the scribe of M4 and P support nearly all of E&E's changes which Lovell notes. Lovell writes: "None of these deviations appear to have any effect on meaning; all appear to have been made to satisfy Erdmann's idea of proper meter, and each involves the adding of one unstressed syllable to the line" (xlviii). One could agree with Lovell that these variants have no effect on semantic meaning; the changes seem to be made on the level of accidentals, not substantives. The Arundel MS, like base texts for Lydgate's other long poetic works, reflect the accidentals of rough meter. Hence, it can be assumed that this was an inherent part of Lydgate's written style. E&E's deep-editing style here (echoing Kane and Donaldson, discussed below) assumes a transcendent understanding of Lydgate's poetic line.

E&E admit that "No manuscript preserves Lydgate's original text intact" (II.32). They go on to give examples of Lydgate's metrical liberties. They concede that "In many other cases it is impossible to determine exactly how a line should be read, especially because of the comparative freedom with which a final *-e* may be sounded or not." However, they simply conclude that "In many cases a final *-e* has been omitted by a scribe, which

should undoubtedly be added" (II.32). To be sure, E&E are no Richard Bentleys making unnecessary substantive emendations. They concede that "there are many lines that cannot be altered and must be allowed to stand as they are" (II.32). For example, inserting a *you* before *litil* in l. 1338

To suffre me it shal litil greue (Ar)

would "make the line perfect" (II.33). Indeed, M4 and P, along with four other MSS in the *eta* branch of the stemma (C, T2, E2, Ro: see Appendix) "correct" the line by inserting *but*:

To suffer me hit shall but litill greve (M4).

Certain lines, e.g., "without a thesis at the beginning of the line or after the caesura cannot be interfered with" (II.33) Nevertheless, the systematic recuperation of every final *-e* is questionable. "Correcting" meter is not merely an attempt to reconstruct the intentions of the author. Rather, E&E's reconstruction of a transcendent text has affinities with Plato's concept of the universal. In this case E&E assume the decasyllabic line as a universal. Then E&E reify that norm by forcing Lydgate's unruly line into it. It is a reverse Procrustian-bed process since E&E usually add elements to the Lydgatian line rather than lop them off. Saintsbury echoes this technique when he writes that "a so-called 'critical' text, with its pickings from this manuscript and that, or its reconstruction of a single one according to manufactured rules, may to some extent restore prosodic system, but will always be subject to the doubt whether it in the least resembles what the poet wrote" (qtd. in Lovell xlvi). E&E subject Lydgate's line

to an excessive form of (Ricoeur's) "hermeneutics of suspicion" and (Vinaver's) "mistrust of texts" that question the cohesion of Lydgate's verse.⁷ In addition, they subject Lydgate's text to the deep editing approach of Kane and Donaldson, most notably represented by their treatment of the A and B version of *Piers Plowman*. In this case the practice of the author and of the scribes, the *usus auctoris* and *usus scribendi*, are taken into account in determining a reading. However, the arguments of the deep-editing practitioners are necessarily subtle: Greetham (*Textual Scholarship* 326) gives the example from Kane and Donaldson of the scribal *slepen* as caused by the "rhyming inducement" of the previous *wepen*. However, as Greetham points out, these arguments "depend upon an acceptance of the specific sorts of distinction between authorial and scribal usage that this form of deep editing depends upon anyway" (326). Although Kane and Donaldson's policy purportedly limits editors to say what they think the line says,⁸ ironically Greetham earlier in 1989 ("Textual and Literary Theory") compared it to the *jouissance* or free play of signifier and signified as celebrated by Roland Barthes in his 1973 *Le Plaisir du Texte*.

Robert Lovell's dissertation edition

The only other dissertation devoted to an edition of *ST* is Robert Earl Lovell's "John Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes* and *Churl and Bird* Edited from the Cardigan-Brudenell Manuscript" (University of Texas, Austin, 1969).⁹ The AUT MS was acquired by the university's Miriam Lutcher Stark Library in 1959. E&E

do not include AUT MS in its collation of manuscripts; its existence was apparently unknown (Lovell vi). The manuscript begins with a mutilated *Canterbury Tales* starting at A 153, and a chronological table to the year 1449. Manly and Rickert were the first to describe the manuscript in detail (71-78) and collate it (under its previous appellation, the Cardigan MS) for their edition of the *Canterbury Tales*.

Lovell follows the introduction with a biographical sketch of Lydgate, at the end of which he touches upon the patronage system for which Lydgate produced the *Troy Book*, but does not mention that *ST* is perhaps the only major secular piece for which Lydgate did not receive patronage. Alain Renoir makes this claim concerning *ST* (*The Poetry* 111), although Pearsall suggests that "the lack of a poetic dedication is perhaps a sign that Lydgate's projected patron had died in the interim between completion and publication" (*John Lydgate [1371-1449]* 22).

In his discussion of the date and sources of the poem, Lovell depends (as I do) upon some of the standard connections: for example, E&E on the optimism of ll. 4690-4703 reflecting paragraph 24 of the Treaty of Troyes; Renoir on the immediate source of *ST* as a prose redaction of the Old French *Roman de Thebes*, with perhaps some features taken from the *Ystoire de Thebes*.

After a very useful detailed summary (xvi-xxx) of the plot of *ST* that predates the one in Renoir and Benson (1901-04), Lovell discusses date, sources, and some textual matters of *Churl and Bird*, the work appended to AUT MS. He does not

speculate why *Churl and Bird* appears in AUT MS, but does offer a summary of the poem after noting that the last two rimes royal are missing in the MS.

In his "Critical Commentary on Lydgate's Poetry," Lovell offers a review of the critical reception of Lydgate's poetry in general. The same material is largely found earlier in the first chapter entitled "Opinions About Lydgate" of Renoir's full length treatment of the poet in 1967. However, Lovell adds a perceptive treatment of Lydgate's metrics by E&E, taking them to task for excessive emendation based on metrical grounds. (See above, "Erdmann and Ekwall's critical edition.") Much of Lovell's commentary draws upon Eleanor Prescott Hammond, a brilliant critic who wrote in the first quarter of the twentieth century (and one from whom he picked up the occasional use of the appellation *monk* with some pejoration).

Lovell finishes his section on "Critical Commentary on Lydgate's Poetry" with a tantalizing flourish: that Lydgate was honored by contemporaries and immediate followers because "Lydgate developed themes new to the English -- themes embodying the ideas of the burgeoning nationalism presaging the Renaissance" (liv). However, he does not develop this idea. Twenty-three years later Pearsall does do so, albeit reluctantly, in his "Lydgate as Innovator," where he disagrees with Renoir's view that *ST* is an "exemplum to be foisted upon" Henry V (Renoir 113), since "Insignificant monks with a taste for advancement do not 'foist' things upon those who have the power to make things very disagreeable to any who displease

them; they write what they know will be acceptable" ("Lydgate as Innovator" 14). However, he concedes that Lydgate is probably the first poet writing in English "to fashion his poems as instruments of royal policy" (15). In the case of *ST*, Henry V's Treaty of Troyes in 1420 fulfilled the Thebes story of peace between two warring kings, as ll. 4690-4703 near the end of the poem echo certain terms of the treaty (discussed above, "Date, Place of *The Siege of Thebes* and M4").

Lovell next corroborates Manly and Rickert on the dialect of the two scribes of AUT MS (Central Midlands with a few forms from the West and North for the first scribe, and some Southwestern forms for its second scribe), and on the manuscript's appearance and provenance. He then suitably places the MS in E&E's stemma (see Appendix) within the branch headed by what now is known as BL MS Addit. 18632. Lovell's list of the known manuscripts of *ST* largely depends upon E&E: he makes no mention of Brown and Robbins' 1943 *Index of Middle English Verse* or Robbins and Cutler's *Supplement* which appeared four years before the dissertation.

Lovell explains his editorial method in his "Transcription and Collation Policy" (lxxvii-xciv). He offers a documentary edition which "includ[es] even the most obvious scribal errors." Also, "All letters which are transcribed from abbreviations are underlined and of course the underlined letters are my spellings (e.g., aftur for after)" (lxxxvii). The abbreviated words are spelled out in his collation notes. Lovell's page presentation is an inclusive text which includes brackets, line numerals,

folio placement, underlinings indicating abbreviations, and apparatus. My page presentation in the edition below is similar, but I exclude letters in brackets which suggest elements of a critical edition. (See below, "Editorial Method.")

Lovell mentions M4 once, as one of two known *ST* manuscripts (along with the Coventry City Record Office MS 325/1) that were then uncollated. He refers to Bühler's 1937 article. A quick check of the Robbins and Cutler 1965 *Supplement to Brown's Index*, would have revealed three more uncollated manuscripts (Oxford, St. John's College, MS 256; olim Campbell; Boston Public Library MS f. med. 94).

Lovell's collation notes are useful, but one type is supererogatory. He gives all the other manuscripts (then known) that agree with a particular reading of the AUT MS (which he calls Cn.). For example, his first note reads thus (within my angle brackets): <qm. the (Cn. = T₁. Du. L₁. Lb. M. Ad₁. Ad₂. Ba. E₁. S. T₂. P. E₂.)>. However, an examination of E&E's collation would give this information. In the edition below, I collate the reading of M4 against the Arundel MS, E&E's base text, and I include readings from P (written by the same scribe as M4) in the manuscript notes when pertinent.

Lovell's transcription will prove most useful to anyone who wishes to edit a critical edition of *ST*. Lovell's manuscript notes, which he says include "items of interest, both scribal and non-scribal" (lxxviii) and which run for nearly nine

pages, will help the editor immeasurably when examining the manuscript *in situ* for the first time.

The Siege of Thebes after Lovell

Since Lovell's dissertation in 1969 only two transcriptions of *ST*, both fragments, have appeared in print. Hopkins *English Poetry: A Poetic Record from Chaucer to Yeats* in 1990 reproduces ll. 1-65 with some modernization, but accidentally deletes l. 42.¹⁰ John Bowers's *The Canterbury Tales: Fifteenth Century Continuations and Additions* (1992) (ll. 1-193 only) includes an Introduction, the Prologue, a few extra verses of part 1, and notes on *ST*. (See below on electronic form.)

The Siege of Thebes in Electronic Form Examined

In the note "About *English Poetry*" the anonymous editor of the Chadwyck-Healey full-text *English Poetry* writes about the selection of editions: "In general texts contemporary with their authors were preferred, and, when available, collected editions. For those poets whose established canon could not be covered by contemporary printings, reliable later editions have been included." Since even Wynkyn de Worde's 1490s *editio princeps* of *ST* extends beyond the boundaries of contemporaneity with Lydgate, the editors opt for E&E's edition.

I have accessed *ST* in the Chadwyck-Healey database in at least three of its manifestations, the first on CD-ROM (1994). The CD-ROM is now obsolete in light of its presence on the

Internet. For example, the CD-ROM text was preceded with the same note as that on E&E's title page in 1911 part I: "Edited from all the known manuscripts and the two oldest editions, with introduction, notes, and a glossary, by Axel Erdmann." Unfortunately the CD-ROM program did not include introduction, notes and glossary. It did place icons near certain lines which, when double-clicked, revealed Arundel's rubrics. These rubrics are placed in the side-margins of the Arundel MS and are marked off with a limned paraph. (The scribe for M4 places the same rubric lines within the poem itself, reflecting a different manner of production: see above, "Ordinatio.") An icon was available that allowed one to see a text-only version with no icons.

The CD-ROM version was problematic. Stephen Reimer outlined some of his concerns in a review of this version that appeared in the newsletter *Computer and Texts* in 1996: claims of transcription errors, the use of incunabular editions rather than modern editions, incomplete coverage of the items in the *New Cambridge Bibliography of English* to 1900, errors of attribution, awkward searching of the database, and of a particular text, and letter / character irregularities. Stephen Pocock, managing editor and head of data conversion, responded to Reimer's attacks in the same newsletter. My own examination of *ST* on the Internet version indicates that a number of Reimer's concerns have been addressed. First, I note no transcription errors. The editors choose to follow E&E. The E&E edition is in need of revision, but the Chadwyck-Healey

editors cannot do that themselves. Reimer's third objection concerning coverage is not relevant here. Fourth, search of the database for *ST* and fifth, search of the text itself has been streamlined tremendously. For example, four separate icons representing the Prologue and the following three sections of *ST* made for awkward and time-consuming switching from one part of the text to another in both the CD-ROM and the initial Internet version. The revised Internet version presents the entire text in a single window, allowing for unimpeded scrolling and easier search function. Every line is individually numbered to the left of the line. Page numbers corresponding to E&E's edition are in red with red brackets. The foliation corresponding to the Arundel MS would prove far more interesting: E&E clearly indicate such in their text. Despite a message suggesting that downloading the text could be time consuming, the operation took seconds. The text begins with the following:

Lydgate, John, 1370?-?1451:[from Siege of Thebes (1911)]

Volume

Lydgate, John, 1370?-1451?:

The Siege of Thebes.[from Siege of Thebes (1911)]

The brackets above along with the lack of space between period and opening bracket appear in the text. The volume numeral is puzzlingly omitted. After a click, the first of the icons (each of which looks like a page) reads: "Some paragraphs in the text are signed by markers. The paragraphs have been captured, but

the markers ignored." These markers refer to the illuminated paraps in the Arundel MS that provide partial housing for the rubrics in the right margin. A second icon (with the title inexplicably repeated a third time between icons) reads: "MS. Mus. Brit. Bibl. Arundel 119." The rest of the icons in the text refer to the marginal rubrics of the Arundel MS which are printed in boldface in the margin of E&E. Sometimes the icons are placed at the end of the line on the right side of the page; sometimes they are inserted between the running line numeral on the left and the first word of the line, causing the line to protrude awkwardly. Bracketed page numerals correspond with the pagination of E&E's edition. The icon appears to the right of a line with an odd-numbered page and to the left of the line with an even-numbered page. This right / left icon placing occurs because the E&E edition prints its marginalia (Arundel's rubrics plus the poem's argument added by E&E) in the right margin for odd-numbered pages, and in the left margin for even-numbered pages. This printing procedure typically allows the reader the ease of seeing the marginalia consistently near the fore-edge of the printed page, whether recto or verso. However, the Chadwyck-Healey transcribers (mis)interpreted this printing procedure to mean that the marginalia actually appear on the right or left margin in the manuscript. Hence, the transcribers take the bibliographic code (i.e. the physical features) of a printed text and transpose it upon an electronic text. This process interestingly reflects the practice in Gutenberg's workshop, where the printed page display carefully imitated the

ordinatio of the manuscript page by leaving room for hand-drawn initials and by cutting a typeface that reflected the script of the time.

I found no transcription errors in a collation of the first hundred lines of *ST* in *English Poetry*. The first word *Whan* is boldfaced to give a sense of its prominence: E&E extend it as a drop initial into the first six lines of their text, as presumably Arundel does. The Chadwyck-Healey typists preserve E&E's punctuation, their diaresis over the letter *é* for *schwa*, grave to represent pronunciation for final *è*, and caesuras for reading (these last E&E preserve from Arundel). In addition, the typists preserve a lower-case thorn, but not yogh (represented as upper- and lower-case *Y*).

Two icons did not work properly: the one marked "text only" should have opened a window to the text without icons (and without line numerals?). Instead, it opened to "Bibliographic details": one for the "Electronic File" and another for the "Source Text[.]" The one for the Electronic File gives an original 1992 copyright date and reminds the reader: "Do not export or print from this database without checking the Copyright Conditions to see what is permitted." This statement apparently leads Popcock, in his response to Reimer, to remark that if the Chadwyck-Healey database had "consistently favoured recent editions [Reimer] may have been breaking the law downloading [Lydgate's *The Pilgrimage of the Life of Man*] that he complains took him over half an hour to generate" (16). Bibliographic details for the Source Text give rudimentary

information about E&E edition part I, but notes "Preliminaries, introductory and editorial matter including introduction, notes and glossary omitted[.]"

Another icon concerning "works by the author" yielded a blank window. However, an icon concerning "works about the author" yielded fifty articles and books. The only two directly related to *ST* are Pearsall's "Lydgate as Innovator" and Rosamund Allen's *The Siege Of Thebes: Lydgate's Canterbury Tale*. The others pertained to *Fall of Princes*, *Troy Book*, and a number of shorter poems.

One other icon gives Lydgate's biography. An initial list of items concerning Lydgate includes, along with birth / death dates, his literary period, his nationality, and his gender. This last point might seem gratuitous to some, but the database allows one to search according to gender. Moreover, some given names are not transparently female or male. For literary period it gives: "Middle English Period, ca. 1350-1500; Medieval Period, 1100-1500." The biography, "Adapted from data developed by the H. W. Wilson Company," is so determined to place Lydgate in a bad light that it misinterprets a comment of John Metham (misspelled "Methane"), a fifteenth-century Norfolk writer of tracts on palmistry and phisiognomy. After quoting James Russell Lowell's estimation of Lydgate's work as a "barbarous jangle," and the claim that "Most of his work is still in manuscript and likely to remain there," it quotes Metham as writing that Lydgate's books were "indicated [indited] with terms of rhetoric, and half-changed Latin, with conceits of

poetry." (Braces rather than brackets are used here by the editors.) Here is what Metham writes in his 2200-line rime royal poem *Amoryus and Cleopes* (1458-59):

Eke Jon Lydgate, sumtyme monke off Byry,,
 Hys bokys endytyd with termys off retoryk
 And halff chongyd Latyne, with conseytys off poetry
 And craffty imagynacionys off thingys fantastyk (qtd. in
 Renoir 1)

Metham actually means the lines as praise, not condemnation. Moreover, most of Lydgate's work is not in manuscript. The printed editions of *Troy Book*, *ST*, and *Fall of Princes* account for close to half his corpus.

One last disadvantage of accessing *ST: The English Poetry* database on the Internet is a limited-access site. It is serviceable through the Electronic Text Center at the University of Virginia Library. It is held under a licensing agreement with Chadwyck-Healey and made available to members of the Virtual Library of Virginia: "a consortium consisting of 39 publicly supported colleges and universities of Virginia. Some private colleges have also purchased access to individual databases" (*English Poetry*). I accessed it at the Forty-Second Street Library. It would be interesting to calculate the number of local libraries that have purchased admittance to this wonderful source of 165,000 poems in English from the British Isles ranging in time from Old English to 1900. One must recognize, however, that such a work will nevertheless simply be a computerized version of the critical edition or even one

version of a genetic text since someone will have to decide which variants appear in the base text. For example, in creating a genetic text one could place an icon at every place a variant exists, and let the reader decide which variant is the best. In this case all information is available since all the variants are in the iconic notes to the text. No variant hierarchy exists: there are no authoritative or rejected readings. Hence, this method stresses process and indeterminacy, rather than product or authority. However, such geneticism probably would not pass muster with the vast majority of readers who would agree with Edmund O. Wilson on such a text's barbed-wire effect on the act of reading.

A Harvard University site entitled "The Geoffrey Chaucer Page" links *ST's* Prologue as an imitation of the General Prologue of the *Canterbury Tales*. It also adds ll. 177-212 with the somewhat awkward heading: "Here is the opening of Part I, or glossing, as a sample of the whole[.]" The page includes numeration to the left of the line for every five lines and glosses to the right of the line (but not for ll. 177-212). For any words still misunderstood the reader is told to check "the Riverside Chaucer for words not glossed here." The site claims that this version of *ST's* Prologue is adapted (with "light regularization and glossing for beginning readers of Middle English") from an edition that highlights another *Canterbury Tales* sequel, *The Tale of Beryn*, edited by Furnivall and Stone in 1897. The web page's end notes claim that the *ST* Prologue is reprinted as (E&E's) E.E.T.S. e.s. 105 in 1909 (should be 1911).

I have not seen Furnivall and Stone's edition, and have been able to track down only a 1887 edition which does not print a selection from *ST*.

John Bowers has placed onto the Internet his Introduction, Prologue, and notes on *ST* from his book *The Canterbury Tales: Fifteenth-Century Continuation and Additions*. The selection from Bowers is part of Western Michigan University's TEAMS site. The site editor makes a common mistake of those who place a section of previously printed material onto the Internet: he forgets to add a Work Cited page that would fill out the bibliographical information of Bowers's parenthetical citations. Print and web code do not always cohere. Bowers writes that the Arundel MS "selected by Erdmann as his copy-text bears the coat-of-arms of William de la Pole (d. 1450), Duke of Suffolk and husband of Alice Chaucer, Thomas's daughter and Geoffrey's only known grandchild. Since this ownership bestows a social authority that complements the textual authority established by the editors" (*The Canterbury*), Bowers, like E&E, decides to use the Arundel MS as his base text. However, the phrase "social authority" strikes me as puzzling. If the Arundel MS was owned by a friend of Lydgate or by a member of his family, one might argue that the manuscript had a certain authority established by social connection. But social authority does not translate into textual authority.

In contrast to the Harvard text on the Internet (described above) Bowers's text provides a heading concerning the location of the text in Arundel (fols. 1a-4a), although he does not

indicate the line breaks for each folio page. Besides a much fuller glossary than the Harvard text, he offers a phrase icon (entitled "see note") that makes connections to the *Canterbury Tales*. This is pedagogically the most useful type of note for the beginning and intermediate student.

Stemmatology and *The Siege of Thebes*

E&E characterize the genealogy of the then twenty-one manuscripts and two oldest editions as "rather complex" (II.62). This assessment is an understatement. According to Robbins and Cutler's 1965 census of Middle English verse manuscripts, only twenty-two other works of the approximately 6,865 tallied would have a more complex genealogy (521). Indeed, the number of possible types of stemma is astounding. Two witnesses leads to three types of stemma; three witnesses, twenty-two types; four witnesses, 250 types; five witnesses, 4000 types, "in quasi-geometrical progression" (Maas 47). Moreover, the phenomenon of what Paul Maas calls contamination must be factored in during the determination of the stemma. Maas writes, "the stemma settles the relationship of witnesses for every passage in the text -- if we have a virgin tradition. No specific has yet been discovered against contamination" (49). If contamination is "the retaining of one version of a text in memory while copying another"¹¹ (Greetham *Textual Scholarship* 280), and this is a common phenomenon in Middle English, then the determination of a heterogeneous (i.e. manuscript-based) stemma is a near impossibility. (E&E's term for contamination is "side-

influence" [90].) Maas concedes: "where texts were much read there is a tendency for contamination to creep in, and where contamination exists the science of stemmatics in the strict sense breaks down" (48).

In "Chaucer's Wordes unto Adam, his Owne Scriveyn" the poet famously admonishes his scribe:

But after my makyng thow wryte more trewe;
 So ofte adaye I mot thy werk renewe,
 It to correcte and eke to rubbe and scrape,
 And al is thorough thy negligence and rape.¹² (ll. 4-7)

Yet Lydgate displays the opposite tendency in some respect. He expresses anxieties about his own poetic limitations:

For wel wot I moche þing is wrong,
 Falsy metred, boþe of short and long.

(*Troy Book* V.3483-84) (qtd. from E&E II.32)

Lydgate's frank admission of his poetic limitations might encourage later scribes to emend his texts. In contrast, Chaucer warns against mechanical variants, as in "Chaucers Wordes unto Adam, His Owne Scriveyn":

So ofte adaye I mot thy work renewe,
 It to correcte and eke to rubbe and scrape,
 And al is thorough thy negligence and rape.

In any case, the task that awaits the stemmator of Lydgate's manuscripts is daunting.

Two very different approaches to editing a text come to similar conclusions about stemmatics: both reject the process. A deep editing approach popularized by Kane and Donaldson in

their edition of *Piers Plowman* claims that the multiplicity of variants indicates that the manuscripts are hopelessly corrupt. Hence filiation is impossible. The deep editor is left to edit each variant separately based on the *usus auctoris* and *usus scribendi*: the practice of the author and of the scribe(s). The problem here is that the editor is forced to assume that the author always writes a perfect line, and that the editor can access that transcendent meaning based on author / scribe practice.

Those of the McGannian school of social textual criticism downplay the importance of establishing a *stemma codicum*. Such a stemma valorizes the Romantic idea of the autonomous author and diminishes the value of examining the social conditions upon which a text is produced and consumed. The problem here is that such a view displays a radical egalitarianism reminiscent of the Kurt Vonnegut short story "Harrison Bergeron." In the story any talent or physical attribute is seen as privilege and hence is diminished to equal that of everyone else. Similarly, while the call for socialization (i.e. historicizing manuscript and book production) is extremely important, I want to take advantage of any insights to be gleaned by tracing manuscripts back to a single author. The best-text critic James Thorpe in his *Principles of Textual Criticism* articulates his problems with the formation of a stemma: the tremendous difficulty of greatly complex stemmas, the recognition that different stemma arrangements can be constructed to explain the same variants, and that such a construction ignores variant explanations.

However, as Greetham similarly experienced in his own editing of Hoccleve's *Regement of Princes* (*Theories* 231), the copying amidst *ST*'s thirty manuscripts, even in light of Lydgate's self-admonition from his *Troy Book* quoted above, has produced little determined variance -- that is, little of substantive matter that might reveal the reception of the text. However, the perception by the scribes that *ST* is a "closed" text, rather than one open for "active transmission" (see Greetham *Theories* 231), allows for matter that reveals the production of the text. As Greetham notes, such revelation is paradoxically made manifest "more in the gaps of the inferred witnesses than in the direct evidence of the extant ones [. . . .] For it is in the gaps that both the author's putative composition and the editor's emulation of it are to be found" (230).¹³ Greetham made a similar connection years before in his important 1989 article "Textual and Literary Theory: Redrawing the Matrix." Just as Iser's implied reader uses one's culture to fill gaps and resolve indeterminacy in reading the text, some editors of critical editions such as E&E use other "authoritative" manuscripts (commonly BL MS Addit. 18632: see above, "Census of *ST* in manuscript") to resolve problems in editing the base text. E&E, for example, depend upon BL MS Addit. 18632 and Beinecke MS 661 to supply a number of emendations.

After thirty-three detailed pages, each of which evince sudoriferous toil, E&E give a stemma (adapted below in an Appendix) marked by the angles indicating the inferred witnesses (II.94). They add in their Appendix (II.213) a branch for the

Oxford Christ Church MS 152 (henceforth Ch). Bühler's article in 1937, the first to discuss M4, places the manuscript in the stemma between Ch and P. I think Bühler may be wrong when he claims that M4 is closest to Ch, and then to P (2). Although he notes the similar textual content of M4 and P, he apparently did not recognize at the time that our scribe also copied P. A common hand neither guarantees nor precludes a greater proximity of M4 and P. However, the frequency of their conjunctive errors does tie them closer together. The following collation of ll. 1-100, including E&E's (incomplete) collation of Ch, should reflect this closer consanguinity:

1. *brijtel om.* M4 P Ch
2. *in to bole] the Bull* M4 P *the bole* Ch
3. *old] olde* M4 P Ch
8. *many] many a* M4 P *mony a* Ch
20. *the] there* M4 P *thaire* Ch
23. *gentillesse] gentylnes* M4 P *gentillesse* Ch
25. *also] eke* M4 P Ch
29. *Aquytte] Aquyte* M4 P *Aquite* Ch
42. *Bothe in] In* M4 P Ch
43. *who] ho* M4 P *whoo* Ch
46. *3oue] yeve* M4 *youe P yeue* Ch
53. *in] the* M4 P Ch
66. *this] in this* M4 P Ch
74. *slender long] longe sclender* M4 P Ch
78. *were logged] logged were* Ch
85. *ne] nor* Ch

97. soul] syke M4 seke P sool Ch

98. to nyght] to night M4 P this nyght Ch

Only in a single instance (l. 46) within the first hundred lines does M4 and Ch reflect a closer proximity. Hence I would place M4 to the right of P in the stemma (see Appendix).

CHAPTER 4: THE SIEGE OF THEBES AND THE CANON

John Paston III refers to *ST* in a letter he wrote to his "brodyr" John Paston II on 5 June 1472. Paston praises his lord the Erle of Arran as "þe most corteys, gentylest, wysest, kindest, most compenabyll, freest, largeest, and most bowntefous knyght . . . the lyghtest, delyuerst, best spokyn, fayirest archer, deuowghtest, most perfyght and trewest to hys lady" (*Paston* I.574-75). He abruptly tells his brother the precise place in which the Earl is lodging where "He hathe a book of my syster Annys of þe Sege of Thebes. When he hathe doon wyth it he promysyed to delyuer it yow" (575). Paston is so eager for the Earl to return *ST* that he implores his brother to have a trusted servant staying at the same inn procure the manuscript: "I prey yow lete Portlond brynge þe book hom wyth hym. Portlond is loggyd at þe George in Lombard Stret also" (575). The paragraph ends here. Apparently the encomiums were partly intended to ensure that Paston has a highly valued manuscript returned to his sister.

Unfortunately, no known letters of Anne Paston survive. However, Anne could presumably read, unless *ST* was read to her. In his "Introduction" to the Paston letters, editor Norman Davis concludes that the women whose letters survive "were not, or not completely, literate" (*Paston* xxxviii). Nevertheless, Paston's imploration seems to be made on behalf of his sister Anne, who prized it for reading or listening material.

Today few people could identify Lydgate from his portrait. *The Winston Dictionary*, a college edition of 1947, contains a

frontispiece with a color facsimile of the upper half of BL Royal MS 18. D. ii, folio 148r. The illuminated page depicts Lydgate riding with five other pilgrims on the pilgrimage. Lydgate wears a pinkish gown and blue hat, riding a white horse with blue accouterments. The illustrator either ignored or was ignorant of Lydgate's self-description:

In a cope of Blak and not off Grene
 On a palfrey longe sclender and lene
 With rusty Brydell not made for the sale
 my man to forne with a voyde male
 Whiche of fortune toke myne Inne anone (M4 73-77)

Lydgate's servant rides ahead of him, one of the five in the portrait. Lydgate's outstretched right hand punctuates the air as he tells his story. The portrait, inserted between the Prologue (l. 176) and part 1 of the poem (l. 177), sits above a rubric which reads: "Here begynneth the Segge of Thebes ful lamentably tolde by John lidgate monke of Bury [. . .]" It is interesting, as an instance of Lydgate's modern invisibility, that the *Winston Dictionary* identifies the facsimile simply as a "page from hand-illuminated book, medieval period[.]" The name *Lydgate* never appears again in the dictionary. (E&E reproduce the illustration as the frontispiece for part II of their edition.)

Somewhat more disappointing is the slipcover for John Gardner's historical novelization entitled *The Life and Times of Chaucer*. Gardner himself probably cannot be blamed. This edition, published by Barnes & Noble, was done "by arrangement

with Joel Gardner and Lucy Gardner Carson" (printer's imprint), apparently because Gardner himself died in 1977. His siblings and / or the jacket designer chose the illustration of Lydgate from BL MS Royal D. ii. However, it is identified thus:

"Jacket art *Pilgrims to the shrine of St. Thomas a Becket at Canterbury*, English manuscript illumination (ca. 1400); courtesy of The Granger Collection, New York." Not only is any reference to Lydgate absent, but the date is incorrect: E&E date the manuscript ca. 1460 (II.55).

At least Gardner mentions Lydgate in a positive light: "Chaucer, Langland, the monk John Lydgate -- for that matter, most of the better English poets -- tell of the cunning and cynicism of society's parasites and of the helplessness and fury of decent men undone by them" (56-59). However, Gardner later modifies his evaluation: "Chaucer had other poetic disciples . . . the monk John Lydgate, too garrulous for great art and too quick to flatter patrons, but an ingenious and talented follower of Chaucer's rhythmical innovations" (225). This balanced view is a long way from Joseph Ritson's view of Lydgate in his 1802 survey of the poet's canon. Ritson famously (among Middle English scholars) calls him initially "a most prolix and voluminous poetaster" (66). (See commentary above on this description, "John Stow's edition of *The Siege of Thebes*"). Ritson recounts Lydgate's various works, and briefly mentions that *ST* is a "continuation of Chaucers [sic] *Canterbury tales*" in "Kingstons edition" (67), i.e. *Nicholas Stow's* edition, printed by Kingston. Ritson finishes his survey with one last

swipe: "This is believed to be the completest list of this voluminous, prosaick, and driveling monk" (87), using Lydgate's profession as a monosyllabic nail to drive in his last point.

The late 19th- and early 20th-century critic Edmund Gosse writes of Lydgate: "It is not probable that the entire works of Lydgate will ever be made accessible to readers, nor is it to be conceived that they would reward the labours of an editor" (qtd. in Renoir 9). Stephen Reimer wishes to prove Gosse wrong. Reimer finds Lydgate interesting enough to do what others would find most daunting: a reexamination of the entirety of Lydgate's huge corpus. Reimer has assembled a database that initially includes Lydgate's presently accepted works -- grounded upon the most recent enumeration of 200 titles in Renoir and Benson's volume 6 of the *Manual of the Writings of Middle English*. Reimer finds this list inadequate since Renoir and Benson is largely based upon Henry MacCracken's much-criticized 1911 list. For example, MacCracken at first disallows Harley 2255 as an unreliable witness although the manuscript was produced at least within living memory of the poet at the poet's monastery, Bury St. Edmunds. MacCracken then accepts this anthology of forty-five lyrics although he "rejects one satirical piece because, in his opinion, Lydgate would never stoop so low, and rejects one very fine religious piece because, in his opinion, Lydgate never rose so high" (Reimer, "A Textbase"). Hence, Reimer also includes another 196 titles that encompass any work ascribed to Lydgate. Reimer plans to compile an annotated bibliography of editions and studies of all 396

works. Second, Reimer will use computer stylistics to evaluate Lydgate's style. Third, he will include all known late Middle English literary manuscripts as a control group against which Lydgate's style can be analyzed, and will make concordances of these texts. Fourth, he will produce the texts themselves ("Lydgate Canon" 248-49).

Alistair Fowler has eminently distinguished six types of canons. Reimer's initial canon seems to fall between two of Fowler's types: the potential canon and the selective canon. Fowler's *potential canon*, which "comprises the entire written corpus, together with all surviving oral literature" (98), is too wide even for Reimer's broad purposes. The *selective canon* comprises those works of a particular author. I would offer that Reimer's body of texts should be called the *possible canon*, suggesting the contingency of some of these works: that is, in some cases an examination of the texts will determine their authority. After Reimer subjects these works to literary and stylometric analysis, he will determine what Fowler calls the *official canon of Lydgate's works* (98-99).

The relevance of *ST* to this discussion of canons is its continued presence in the *critical canon*, i.e. those works which continue to be subject to analysis in books and journals and at conferences. (See below, "Recent Scholarship and *ST*.") The very frequency of the copying of *ST* reflects its presence as part of the *personal canon* of its fairly wealthy patrons. Where *ST* falters, as do the rest of Lydgate's works, is at the edge of the *pedagogical canon*, Wendell V. Harris's term for those "works

commonly taught in high school and undergraduate classes" (113). A number of teachers require examination of the Prologue as reflected in a few syllabuses posted on the Internet. However, I would guess that no undergraduate class in the world studies the full text.

Lydgate nevertheless attracts critical if not pedagogical attention. Why does any particular work attract repeated critical attention? In the case of *ST* a cynic may attribute it to "thesis hunters," as does A. S. G. Edwards ("Lydgate Scholarship" 29). In a now famous article Barbara Herrnstein Smith attributes interest in a text to the way the text satisfies and fulfills the changing needs of individuals and societies. "An object or artifact that performs certain desired/able functions particularly well at a given time for some community of subjects, being perhaps not only "fit" but exemplary -- that is, 'the best of its kind' -- under those conditions, will have an immediate survival advantage" (27).¹ Smith's criterion intersects with the last of four criteria which Harris proffers:

[T]he historical resonance of a text (the degree to which it explicitly relates to other texts), the possible multiplication of its significances (the degree to which it is multivalent), the skill with which it is brought into the critical colloquy (the degree to which it finds fortunate sponsorship), and the congruence between its possible significances and critics' current preoccupations (the degree to which it proves malleable) -- all these

interact to determine how much interest the text can sustain over how long a period. (112)

Harris's first point echoes Julia Kristeva's notion of intertextuality (Heath 258). A text is not merely influenced by other texts -- rather, a text absorbs, is dependent upon, and is transformed by other texts.

E&E (2.6-8) give a thorough overview of those sources of the poem. It is sufficient here to say that the phrasing of *ST* corresponds closest with *le Roman de edipus (RE)*, a prose work first printed in the early 1500s and reprinted in 1858. However, on certain particulars (detailed by E&E) Lydgate agrees more closely with another prose version, *Hystoire de Thebes (HT)* printed in 1491. Lydgate apparently worked from a French manuscript or manuscript tradition from which *RE* and *HT* were derived. Almost two-thirds of *ST* is based upon this French source. Incidentally, both prose versions *RE* and *HT* are ultimately based upon the Old French verse *Roman de Thebes* written ca. 1150 in 10,000 octosyllabic lines.

E&E estimate that the other one-third of *ST* concerns Lydgate's additions. Within these, about one-fifteenth are drawn from Boccaccio's *De genealogia deorum* (for example, Amphion's founding of Thebes in book 1) and *De claris mulieribus*, along with Seneca, Martianus Capella, the Bible, and of course Chaucer. This leaves about one-fourth for Lydgate's own invention.

Lydgate foregrounds all his sources -- except one, his French source(s) from which *RE* and *HT* were redacted. He seemingly alludes to it with the following lines:

As writ myn auctour and bochas both two
Rede her bookes and 3e shal fynde it so

How this kyng thys prudent Amphyoun (Ar. 199-201)

However, E&E point out that Amphion is not mentioned in *RE* or *HT* and that "The reference to 'myn auctour' is wrong" (II.100). E&E overlook here that Chaucer does mention Amphion three times, once in a similar reference to the building of Thebes (*Knight's Tale* 1546), and two other times (in a negative comparison to others' greater ability to sound a trumpet and sing [*Merchant's Tale* 1716, *Manciple's Tale* 116]). Hence, I suppose Lydgate may be referring here to his genius Chaucer. In discussing the meeting of Theseus with the Greek widows who complain of Creon's desecration, Lydgate the pilgrim-storyteller reminds us:

The knyghtys tale reherseth euey del
Fro poynt to poynt 3if 3e looke wel (Ar. 4531-2)

Lydgate surely has a copy of the *Knight's Tale* (or the *Canterbury Tales*) at hand as he writes *ST* since he sometimes follows it almost word for word (for example, compare the *Knight's Tale* 991-92 with *ST* 4562-4).

In an important article, A. C. Spearing evaluates fifteenth-century English literature in light of Harold Bloom's 1973 book *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*. Spearing quotes a key idea of Bloom: "Poetic history, in [my] book's argument, is held to be indistinguishable from poetic

influence, since strong poets make that history by misreading one another, so as to clear imaginative space for themselves" (qtd. in Spearing 333). If Bloom is correct, says Spearing, then the fifteenth century is the beginning of the history of English poetry. Amplifying a similar comment by N. F. Blake, Spearing writes: "Later writers are not usually aware of the work of earlier writers; when they are aware of it, they do not see it as the property of individual precursors; they may incorporate parts of it in their own writing by adaptation or modernization, but without intending to produce recognizable quotation or allusion" (333). Spearing goes on to give a close reading of the poem and points out the various ways Lydgate purposely misreads Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*. In Spearing's view, Chaucer aptly imposes Boethius's ideas, compatible with Christianity, upon a pagan world, while allowing the value of classical myth to emerge. On the other hand, Lydgate falls back too often upon allegory. For example, he calls Amphiorax a "bisshop mytred in his stalle" (l. 4186) who is "confermed and stallyd in his se" (l. 4189), but describes the rites before Amphiorax as being performed "in many uncouth wyse" (l. 4187). Hence Spearing concludes that "for all its reverent imitation of Chaucer, *The Siege of Thebes* is fundamentally unChaucerian in its lack of imaginative openness toward the classical pagan past" (358).

I cite this article at some length not simply because of its persuasive reading of the uneasy relationship between Lydgate and Chaucer, but because of Spearing's own near silence

on the French source of the poem. However, if Lydgate's phrase "myn auctour" (l. 199) refers to Chaucer, as I argue above, and not to the writer of Lydgate's French source, Lydgate has figuratively killed his major inspiration. It is perhaps a particularly fitting death because of the poem's retelling of the Oedipus story. Chaucer also figuratively kills Boccaccio, his major source for the frame-tale genre of the *Canterbury Tales*. In both cases, Bloom might argue, the writers engage in such anxiety over saying anything new beyond their precursors that a reaction formation sets in that represses or denies acknowledgment of the influence of their precursors. This extreme opposite reaction effectively silences and kills the precursors. This strategy disallows a possibly negative comparison so that the artists can grow within the imaginative space thus carved out. More work like that of Spearing needs to be done to explore Lydgate's relation with his other briefly mentioned sources.

Harris's second criterion for inclusion within a sustained canon, that a text will maintain interest and a place in the canon in light of "the possible multiplication of its significances (the degree to which it is multivalent)" (112), intersects with Spearing's rereading of *ST*. Spearing's Freudian reading demonstrates that despite Lydgate's penchant for allegory, which tends to freeze meaning (in E. D. Hirsch's sense of meaning [intention] versus significance [reception³]), Lydgate's texts can be subject, as Spearing does, to the same kind of Bloomian misreadings to which Lydgate subjected Chaucer.

Nevertheless, Lydgate resists misreadings, as Stephen Reimer readily admits. In his clever introduction to a paper delivered in Salzburg in 1995 on the progress of his canon project, he notes that critics today like their medieval authors to be postmodern: "carnavalesque and playful, certainly anti-authoritarian" ("The Canon of John Lydgate"). Lydgate resists this notion as one "unremittingly medieval [. . .] the typical medieval poet; he is altogether too Gothic for us." (Reimer does not specify what makes Lydgate typical, but again I see it primarily as his penchant for allegorizing.) In contrast, we have "misread Chaucer as a contemporary, as 'one of us' [. . .] we have remade Chaucer in our own image[.]" He suggests that Lydgate's otherness makes him a touchstone for truly understanding the Middle Ages. Hence, Lydgate's very resistance to modernism can be useful. Whatever one thinks of the fertility of the idea of Other, critics need to find creative ways in which Lydgate's texts, despite their supposed dogged medievalism, open the way to polysemic (mis)readings.

Harris's third criterion for sustained canon inclusion is "the skill with which it is brought into the critical colloquy (the degree to which it finds fortunate sponsorship)" (112). In *Cultural Selection* Gary Taylor perceives culture as what we remember, mediated by critics who represent people, like politicians. Lydgate would be thankful for critics like Walter Schirmer, Alain Renoir, A. S. G. Edwards, Stephen Reimer, and Lois Ebin, and those of the past like Eleanor Hammond and H. N. MacCracken, all of whom have kept the writer's name alive

despite Ritsonian dismissal. A single example of a more subtle anti-Lydgatania can be repeated from above: editors from Speght to Alexander Chalmers (who in his 1810 anthology includes *ST*) aver a lesser status for its author: "*Compiled by John Lydgate, Monk of Bury*" (Chalmers's ed., 570, my italics). However, Edwards's article, "Lydgate Scholarship: Progress and Prospects," details some of the intriguing ways in which critics have taken up Lydgate despite his nonappearance in the pedagogical canon. In addition, David Greetham writes that in light of the level of contemporary scholarship done by textual and literary Hoccleveans, "There is one rhetorical device which is no longer necessary in Hoccleve studies -- the *apologia*" (60). Derek Pearsall issued an *apologia* of sorts in his "Lydgate as Innovator." Pearsall pointedly disagrees with those critics such as Renoir, Schirmer, and Ebin who see Lydgate as a precursor to Renaissance humanism.⁴ Nevertheless, he concedes a few interesting points. For example, Lydgate did not merely first introduce a number of common words but popularized a number of previously rare words (9). He also makes a case for Lydgate's novel role as a royal (Lancastrian) apologist (see above, "The Three Other Works in M4"), as one willing to respond to a myriad of commissions, and in introducing genres popular in French or Latin but not in English. The work of Pearsall et al. assures Lydgatians that the poet is not merely a *mimos* of the Middle Ages but a significant force in his own right.

Harris's fourth criterion for maintaining canon inclusion is "the congruence between [the text's] possible significances

and critics' current preoccupations" (112). Even a scholar like Reimer, who has devoted his professional career to Lydgate, is frank enough to recognize another disjunct between the readers of past and present. Besides the heavily "medieval" dimension of the work, he claims "a second reason that a modern distaste for Lydgate's verse [exists] is his explicit didacticism, for which we moderns have lost the taste although it was highly prized in his own time and down through the eighteenth century. Walter Pater's 'art for art's sake' is our dominant creed, and for most of this century literary scholars have been trained to treat overt moralizing with scant sympathy" ("The Canon").

Didacticism, however, has always been a factor in canon selection, and its more interesting manifestations can be seen in controversies concerning the pedagogical canon.⁵ I think it is fair to say that critics today ask questions of themselves regarding their current preoccupations: what can this text teach me about race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation? Surely this is a collective concern equal if not greater than the (thorny) criterion of esthetics. Lydgate thought he could change the minds of kings through fiction: he digresses from his translation to give homilies on the relation of a king to the people (ll. 244-85, 1722-75, 2688-722), as explained shortly below.

ST similarly provides fertile matter for analyzing if we see Lydgate as sometimes going against the medievalism he supposedly merely reflects. Commenting on *Amphion*, Lydgate offers a digressive homily on the aspects of a wise king:

Her may 3e See how myche may avaylle

The goodlihed and lownesse of a kyng (244-45)

And yet the strategies of a king to win his people's hearts -- "humble speche, "glad contenaunce" -- simply reinforce his power. A similar digressive homily appears later in the poem:

But in his courte lat hym first devise

To exile scarshed ['stinginess'] and couetise;

Than is he likly with fredam 3if he gynne,

loue of his puple euermore to wynne (2709-12)

Such passages foregrounding power relations between subject and state are open to various readings. They can be read in terms of Wendell V. Harris's congruence between the text's possible significances and critics' current preoccupations.

Recent Scholarship on *The Siege of Thebes*

Despite Lydgate's neglect today, work has been done on the poet: canonical, paleographical, linguistic, historical, bibliographical, as Renoir and Robbins's briefly annotated review of the scholarship shows. A. S. G. Edwards's 1977 review article, "Lydgate Scholarship: Progress and Prospects," surveys some of the very few critics who examine *ST* as a poem in its own right, such as Lois Ebin in "Lydgate's Views" and Joseph Marotta in "Amphion: The Hero as Rhetorician" on the figure of Amphion's thematic importance within the poem. Marotta's earlier 1972 dissertation studies *ST*, along with Lydgate's other major works, in relation to the tradition of medieval rhetoric. Robert W. Ayers writes on moral design as a structuring device

to foreground Lydgate's didacticism. Renoir discusses the influence of Chaucer's character names. Johnstone Parr criticizes Lydgate's horoscopy. However, Parr, Ayers, and Renoir's articles were written in the 1950s. Influenced by Tolkien's article, "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics" (1936), which argues for the importance of examining *Beowulf* as a poem, a few scholars have taken on *ST* in that spirit in the last twenty years. In *John Lydgate* Lois Ebin reflects on *ST* as a mirror for magistrates. John M. Bowers's 1984 article links the recognition of a communal heroism at the end of *ST* with the fate of the English nation and its circular structure with its vicissitudes upon the wheel of fortune. Derek Pearsall's "Lydgate as Innovator" concedes seeing Lydgate in a new role as "Lancastrian apologist" in *ST* (discussed above, "Why other works were appended to M4's *Siege of Thebes*"). Paul M. Clogan continues Ayers's discussion and explores the city as a symbolic vehicle for Lydgate's moralizations on the ideology of kingship within a historical romance-like narrative. A. C. Spearing in two articles discussed above (see above, "John Stow's edition of *The Siege of Thebes*") takes up Bloom's notion of the anxiety of influence. If Lydgate is so irremediably medieval, as Pearsall is wont to affirm even in his "Lydgate as Innovator," then an examination by means of the prevalent critical methods of today can allow us to unfold some of the layers of Lydgate's otherness. Pearsall contributes to that unfolding in his 1997 *John Lydgate (1371-1449): A Bio-bibliography*. Like Martin M. Crow and Clare C. Olson's *Chaucer's Life Records*, Pearsall's

monograph lists thirty documents which relate to Lydgate's life (53-67). Pearsall notes that such materials will offer new historicists a greater opportunity to understand Lydgate within the fifteenth century (10). James Simpson elucidates how *ST* looks back pessimistically to the Knight's Tale and limits the political, military, and historical possibilities that the first tale offers.

Notes to Part I

CHAPTER 1: JOHN LYDGATE AND *THE SIEGE OF THEBES*

1. References to lines from *ST* are taken from E&E unless otherwise indicated.
2. A Blue Guide entitled *Literary Britain and Ireland* tantalizingly notes a church, Clopton Chantry, twelve miles south of the monastery Bury St. Edmunds whose ceiling is decorated with "with verses ascribed to Lydgate" -- but the cicerone, Ian Ousby, never says what those verses might be (Ousby 300). I hope some day to examine these purported lines of Lydgatania, since they may very slightly extend John Lydgate's considerable canon.
3. Lydgate's prolixity led Joseph Ritson in his 1802 catalogue of Lydgate's works to scathingly call him a "driveling monk" (87).

CHAPTER 2: THE PIERPONT MORGAN LIBRARY MANUSCRIPT OF *THE SIEGE OF THEBES*

1. Despite finding some justification for this edition in social textual criticism, I acknowledge an epistemological embarrassment: namely, my ultimate affirmation of the Enlightenment "project." This edition may be a construct, but maps are constructs too. The various names of map projections -- Mercator, equal-area cylindrical, gnomonic, Gall-Peters -- attest to their instability. (See, for example, see Mark Monmonier's *How to Lie with Maps*.) Still, some maps are better than others -- as all of us, lost someplace, will attest, perhaps even the postmodernist relativist in this case. This edition, like a better map, hopefully comes closer to a truth-claim of the ontology of M4, however that truth may be defined. I also recognize that as I think I approach the truth it ever recedes on the horizon. Nevertheless, I hope this work helps form a better map of *The Siege of Thebes* for future scholars.
2. Cambridge UL, MS Addit. 2707 (see Edwards, "Lydgate's *Siege*" 133-6); Coventry Corporation Record Office MS 325/1 (see Doyle and Pace 22-34); Oxford, St John's College MS 256 (see Bone 284-306); Boston Public Library MS, f. med. 94 (see Edwards, "Beinecke" 192); Durham UL, Cosin V. ii 14 (which has not yet been described). Renoir and Benson include in their census "olim Campbell (Robinson Sale Cat. 74, 1944, no. 268)" but they give no year. It was unknown to E&E, and Pearsall does not list the manuscript.
3. For example, *Secrees of Old Philosoffres*, ed. R. Steele, E.E.T.S. e.s. 66 (1894); *The Pilgrimage of the Life of Man*, ed. F. J. Furnivall and K. B. Locock, E.E.T.S. e.s. 77, 83, 92 (1899-1904); *Reson and Sensuallyte*, ed. E. Sieper, E.E.T.S.

e.s. 84, 89 (1901-03); *Troy Book*, ed. H. Bergen, E.E.T.S. e.s. 97, 103, 106, 126, (1906-35); *The Fall of Princes*, ed. H. Bergen, E.E.T.S. e.s. 121-24 (1924-27). See Pearsall, *John Lydgate (1371-1449)* for a list of other modern editions (84-85).

4. Of course a fresh introduction and annotation through the eyes of a careful editor aware of the textual and critical issues of the day can do justice to *ST* and its hypertext possibilities. One must recognize, however, that such a work on the Internet will nevertheless simply be a computerized version of the critical edition or even one version of a genetic text since someone will have to decide which variant appears in the base text. For example, in creating a genetic text one could place an icon at every place a variant exists, and let the reader decide which variant is the best. In this case all information is available since all the variants are in the text itself. No variant hierarchy exists: there are no authoritative or rejected readings. Hence, this project stresses process and indeterminacy, rather than product or authority. However, this type of geneticism probably would not pass muster with the vast majority of readers who would agree with Edmund Wilson (in *The Fruits of the MLA*) on such a text's barbed-wire effect on the act of reading.

5. The importance of editing M4 and dispersing questionable notions of *ST* and its codex can be illustrated by an inspection of the most recent treatment of M4 in print. Verlyn Klinkenborg et al. discuss M4 and display a facsimile page in *British Literary Manuscripts: Series I From 800 to 1800* (6-7). A short bibliographical description of the MS is followed by the *ST* as a continuation of the *Canterbury Tales*, Lydgate's life, a brief evaluation, and the contents. At the bottom of the page in italic is a transcription of two rubric lines of *ST* and then lines 387-400, which constitute the last half of f. 7r. On the facing page the facsimile photograph on f. 7r of lines 372-400 appears in black and white. Although Charles Ryskamp writes in his Introduction that the aim of the book is to present a "popular guide to the subject" (v), Klinkenborg's commentary on M4 makes a few puzzling remarks. First, *ST* extends not to f. 72 but ff. 1r-74r. Second, Klinkenborg calls *ST* "far duller" than any tale in the *Canterbury Tales*. However, one could argue that *The Parson's Tale* or even *Melibee* far exceed *ST* for dullness. Third, Klinkenborg calls Chaucer's *Compleynt* a "minor" poem, but I think it more appropriate to call it a "shorter" poem: The 1993 tenth edition of *The Columbia Granger's Index to Poetry* lists nine citations for *Compleynt*. Klinkenborg erroneously claims that "about twenty-five" MSS of *ST* are extant, rather than thirty.

6. It must be noted that if the script does indeed match her handwriting, her script is quite different from her signature. Professor William Emmet Coleman has shown me a letter dated 5 January 1942 that Greene wrote to Sister Mary Jerome Kishpaugh,

O.P., thanking her for a book donated to the Pierpont Morgan Library. The personal note of thanks (running a single sentence) below the typescript definitely matches the said writing on M4, but the signature seems markedly different. One must take her advanced age at this point into account.

7. I noticed this nearly invisible inscription only after numerous examinations of M4. The inscription does not appear on the microfilm. The importance of studying a manuscript *in situ* cannot be overestimated.

8. Brown (606) fails to note that the "Compleynt" envoy of M4 is missing, although this lacunae is noted among three of the other nine manuscripts listed.

9. But McIntosh understandably says nothing of syntactic change, understandably since word order is fairly uniform even when one compares extreme northern and southern forms. However, a less significant type, metathesis, is common in M4 (but not P: e.g, adverb-adjective metathesis in *plesaunt favourable* 230 for Ar. [and P] *fauorabill plesaunt*). This phenomenon may point to the rushed nature of much of M4, (see section "The Order of M4 and P"), or may reflect that M4 used an exemplar related to but different from P's original. Otherwise, metathesis seems to be an accidental variant rather than a substantive one. For a valuable discussion of other types of scribal changes usefully distinguished as mechanical and determined variants see Greetham, *Textual Scholarship* 279-83.

10. The contrast between a northernism and southernism here disturbs me as much as it does Sheffelde the mercer's waitress in Caxton's famous anecdote (See Caxton 79-80). Line 2040b occurs in a rubric, a place whose relaxed prose (see section "Rubrics") should allow dialect to emerge. Yet, like much of the comparison between these two manuscripts, the evidence is mixed. Perhaps it is simply a reflection of the struggle between these two variants: the initial stop and the voiced medial fricative won.

11. Brendan Biggs's article, "The Language of the Scribes of the First English Translation of the *Imitatio Christi*," was very helpful in making the use of *LALME* less daunting. I found the article serendipitously in the internal file for the manuscript of *ST* at the Boston Public Library since the article notes that Biggs examined the manuscript there.

12. For a respectful but strong critique of *LALME* and a reply by one of McIntosh's co-editors, see Burton, especially 189; and Benskin.

13. E&E's glossary suggests comprehensiveness concerning the occurrence of every word in the poem ("It aims at giving all words used in *Thebes*" [II.161]), but exceptions can be found,

such as roof 3916, past participle of rive. Even E&E could have used a computer.

14. *LALME* actually uses materials after 1450, but they are from the north (McIntosh I.3).

I am still puzzled by one aspect of the language of M4 v.

P:

2040b M4 gaffe] yave P

1402. M4 gavel] yave P

Yet:

2762. M4 gavel] gave P.

15. At least nineteen other manuscripts of *ST* were circulated on parchment. Seven manuscripts are on paper and two on both paper and parchment: see Edwards "Beinecke" (194 n. 9).

16. Curiously, E&E provide merely a partial facsimile of Arundel 119 f. 17r. The rubrics can be understood only from the first few letters at the margins of the reproduction. An emphasis on magnifying the Arundel text itself within the confines of the E.E.T.S. page forces a greater marginalization of a neglected clue to manuscript production of the 1400s.

17. Oxford was particularly associated with the *pecia* system which lent out pieces, i.e., sections, of books for students to copy. See Bischoff (42-3, 226).

18. Maas's influential *Textual Criticism* discusses the difference between conjunctive errors and separative errors.

19. Although the microfilm is not perfectly clear, in Pepys 2011 a later gothic hand has overwritten *pⁱse* 46 with *ffame*. This now rhymes with the previous line 45, in which the same hand overwrites (presumably) *be in my remembraunce with Geffray Chaucer by name*[.]

20. P has some letter, a minim, immediately before the d: it may be crossed out, but I cannot be sure from the microfilm.

21. 2424a is marked off with a blue paraph. When copying the rubric, the scribe included the first letter, forgetting to leave a space here for the illuminator's small initial. The illuminator compensated by inserting the blue paraph to the immediate left.

22. See Greetham (*Textual Scholarship* 279-80) for a useful discussion of eyeskip.

23. This device, neither a trope nor scheme, is used in *ST* 320, 991, 1565, 1663, 1905, 2376, 2426 (to absurd lengths), 3404, 4252, 4565 (again to great length). Lydgate echoes his inspiration -- Chaucer -- especially in the *Knight's Tale*, where it serves as a running joke (e.g., see 2921 ff).

24. The left shaft of Beinecke MS 661 is also gold (much of which has been scraped off or worn off), but the top right shaft is blue.

25. The Hengwrt MS displays a somewhat different pattern on f. 1r, a sharply rectangular structure of vignettes that encases the text. See the color facsimile in Ruggiers's edition *The Canterbury Tales* [iv].

26. The illuminated letters of M4 are: *Whan* 1, *Sirs* 177, *Wheche* 265, *From* 331, *And* 387, *And* 443, *Where* 613, *Passed* 1047, *But* 1091, *And* 1352, *Sirs* 1569, *Sir* 1901, *Whane* 1965, *Whan* 2111, *And* 2267, *Wher* 2356, *Q* *cruell* 2553, *Full* 2683, *Lyke* 2967, *That* 3377, *Tolde* 3649, *And* 3765, *And* 4415, *The* 4635.

27. Both M4 and P begin 443 with a large initial, but each start with a different letter: *And* off the (M4); *Qff* the (P).

28. This was not always the case with manuscript copies of medieval poems. *Beowulf* and other Old English poems were written without line breaks, although some MSS contain dots as metrical punctuation to indicate the halfline. See Julius Zupitza's edition of *Beowulf* for a facsimile by the collotype process, and *Bright's Old English Grammar and Reader* for a facsimile of a page from *Christ and Satan* (296) that employs raised dots to indicate halflines. Nevertheless, the poetic line break was firmly entrenched in late Middle English poetry.

29. Weaks writes "a little more than two years" (98); the obituary in the local Oswego paper which appeared the day following Irwin's death, "About two years ago" ("Theodore Irwin").

30. Irwin would have found the transience topos in some of the medieval work he collected, including ST, notably in this passage (among others):

Edipps [Oedipus] aye devoyde of werr and stryfe
 With Iocasta ledde a mery lyfe
 Till fortune of her Iniquite
 hadde Envie of his prosperite
 For whan he shone moste hie [high] in his renoun
 From her whele [wheel] she plunged hym adowne (M4 885-90)

31. The Pierpont Morgan Library owns two copies, nos. 67 and 68, both presentation copies of Irwin to friends.

32. Mabel Claire Weaks suggests a few sources of Irwin's bibliophilia: his school teacher wife; a cultured pastor of a local Roman Catholic parish, Reverend Dean Barry; the expert book dealers Joseph Sabin and Sons and Bernard Quaritch. As both dealers in prints and amateur etchers, the Sabins probably had the greatest influence on Irwin's collection, which included numerous prints: Horatio Rogers wrote in *Private Libraries of*

Providence that "nowhere in this country is there so large an assortment of engravings to be found" as that owned by the Sabins (qtd. in Weaks 99).

The question remains: why did Irwin unload a good part of his collection in 1900? The anonymous writer for *The Chicago Evening Post* does not speculate: "for reasons sufficient to himself, Mr. Irwin did not choose longer to carry the responsibility of owning" ("Theodore Irwin Has Passed Away"). One can guess, however. Mrs. Louisa Irwin suffered from an unstated illness and lived as an invalid during the last ten years of her life until she died in December 1900 ("Theodore Irwin Has Passed Away"). The difficulties in attending to his wife over the decade, along with his own increasing age, may have prompted contemplation of the sale at some time before Louisa's death.

CHAPTER 3: THE SIEGE OF THEBES: MS, PRINT, ELECTRONIC FORM

1. The fragment includes the following lines: 14-16; 18-21; 54-58; 92-98; 134-140 (Edwards, "Lydgate's Siege" 135-36).
2. In a list of the manuscripts and printed editions of *ST*, E&E (1.ix) erroneously give Thynne rather than Stow as the second printed edition of *ST*.
3. Caxton refers to the section of *ST* beginning at 3024 ff.
4. These lines are remarkably similar to those that appear in Keith Haring's artworks simulating motion.
5. I was not able to examine R. P. Wülker's *Altenglisches Lesebuch* (1879) which reprints the Prologue from Stow (2.105 ff) and adds some notes.
6. Saintsbury is apparently quoting others here, but they are not identified.
7. Srinivasan (469) suggests that the phrase "hermeneutics of suspicion" derives from Ricoeur's *Freud and Philosophy*.
See Levin on the virtual denial of authorship and the strategies (such as enclosing an author's name in quotation marks -- but not "Michel Foucault") that underlie the view of the individual critic (491, 503 n. 1, 11).
In a letter in *Lingua Franca* responding to William W. Kerrigan, who claims about Taylor's *Political Shakespeare* that "there is no more pathetic book in modern criticism" ("The Case" 31), Gary Taylor says with tongue planted firmly in cheek that his own "mistake lay in supposing that greatness might be plural, and 'the invention of the human' a collaborative project" (Letter 7). However, Kerrigan quotes Taylor's own words which suggest not merely pluralism but historical inevitability: "The history of Shakespearotics repeatedly demonstrates that his reputation is a function of larger social

and cultural movements." Hence Kerrigan acerbically adds, "It would take another exchange to learn what the historical forces would tell Taylor to say if asked which of them wrote the pathetic book with his name on the cover" (Letter 7).

8. See David C. Fowler's review of Kane and Donaldson's B version of *Piers Plowman* for an account that devastates the deep editing method.

9. Professor Lovell told me that he had actually examined AUT MS c. 1959 while taking a bibliography course en route to his master's degree. Professor Lovell said that he had heard through the (unreliable) student grapevine that another student working on the manuscript at the University of Texas was tragically killed in an automobile crash. The student's advisor, Professor Martin M. Crow, asked Lovell in 1965 or 1966 to continue the work. Lovell was at that time a student in Crow's Chaucer class. Crow himself at this time had almost finished editing (with Clair C. Olson) *Chaucer's Life-Records*. Lovell felt fortunate at the time to have a dissertation topic handed to him. After finishing the dissertation Lovell spent the rest of his career at Central Missouri State College in Warrensburg, Missouri. He taught Old English, Chaucer, and medieval romance with a focus upon Malory. He used his photostatic copy of AUT MS when teaching paleography as an independent study course. He retired August 1997 and presently lives in Kansas City, Missouri.

10. Hopkins's edition has several other errors. The heading to the fragment, "Chaucer and the 'Canterbury Tales,'" is in error: the excerpt is from *ST*, and the reader finds Lydgate's name only after the excerpt and in the notes. Hopkins includes extensive glosses marked by superscripts, thirty-nine in all. However, his first note indicates a superficial reading of E&E, Hopkins's unacknowledged base text, since he claims that Lydgate's poem "relat[es] the tales told by Chaucer's pilgrims on their return journey" (75), although our poem is cast as a single tale. Moreover, some of Hopkins's statements in his Preface are puzzling. He begins his florilegium with Chaucer in light of the common claim of Chaucer as father of English poetry. He ends it with Yeats because of a "general conviction that the tradition of poetic criticism (though by no means entirely dead) has substantially declined both in quantity and quality over the last century" (x). Even if one could make a dubious Leavisite claim for the matter of quality, surely poetic criticism and its burgeoning dispensations has led to an explosion of criticism over the past thirty years. Although Hopkins states that in his anthology "Parodies and imitations have been excluded" (xi), he admits in one of his notes to the poem that Lydgate's "Prologue is substantially modelled on Chaucer's" (75), implicitly rejecting and accepting the classical principle of *imitatio*.

11. Important words such as *contamination* and *corruption* are often used by textualists and others without clear definitions.

The difficulty of agreeing on these definitions in disparate sources reflects the need for a dictionary of textual scholarship. Professor Greetham concurred with my sentiment in a private conversation April 1993. Indeed, I think his *Textual Scholarship* provides the best starting point for such a lexicon. Although textual scholarship is not (merely) a science, its vocabulary should reflect a certain scientific rigor. For example, are *horizontal variation*, *convergent variation*, or *cross-fertilization* the best hypernyms for the co-hyponyms *conflation* and *contamination*? How does one differentiate (if at all) *O'* from *archetype*, or *contestation* from *negotiation*?

12. The lines are from *The Riverside Chaucer*.

13. Greetham made a similar connection years before in his important 1989 article "Textual and Literary Theory: Redrawing the Matrix." Just as editors of critical editions use the residual authority of the *codicum descriptorum* to fill gaps in editing the base-text, so Iser's implied reader uses one's culture to fill gaps and resolve indeterminacy in reading the text.

CHAPTER 4: THE SIEGE OF THEBES AND THE CANON

1. Smith's criterion here is itself contingent upon a time period dilated enough to make such a claim. See Greetham on Smith in *Theories* (374).

2. In a footnote Spearing writes, "I have deliberately not attempted to relate the *Siege* to its source, because the specific redaction of the *Roman de Thèbes* used by Lydgate has not yet been identified" (360).

3. Hirsch first makes his famous distinction in his 1960 article "Objective Interpretation" and then expands it in his book seven years later, *Validity in Interpretation*. He acknowledges the source of his distinction as that made in an 1892 article by Gottlob Frege, entitled "Über Sinn und Bedeutung."

4. For example, Renoir: "Thus, if we arbitrarily consider only *The Churl and the Bird* and the *Fall of Princes*, we are tempted to say that between 1400 and 1439 Lydgate traveled intellectually away from the Middle Ages toward the Renaissance while possibly remaining unaware of the change" (44). Schirmer writes that *ST* shows "a somewhat nonmedieval attitude toward classical antiquity" (126) and sees it as "a French mediaeval romance translated into an English Renaissance epic" (135). Ebin: "In his vision of the poet and in his assumptions about poetry, Lydgate finally departs from his earlier English 'maisters'" (19).

5. For example, some teachers are withdrawing Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* from the curriculum, while others are

supplementing its allegedly too-subtle approach toward the horrors of slavery for the tendentiousness of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

PART II: *THE SIEGE OF THEBES*: A DIPLOMATIC REPRINT OF PIERPONT
MORGAN LIBRARY MS M4

Presentation of M4 as diplomatic reprint

The diplomatic reprint here presents an inclusive text, with line numerals and folio placement. Underlined letters indicate that the scribe made a short horizontal line in the ascender or descender of the letter. Rubrics are in boldface for ease of comparison. Although this edition is not a type facsimile, I have tried in the diplomatic reprint to reflect the spacing in the manuscript, since study of this edition should be a springboard for the study of the manuscript itself. M4 is then collated against E&E's base text, Arundel 119. The abbreviation *ed.* indicates where E&E emended for their critical edition (oftentimes, but not always, for the sake of meter). Notes on MS M4 follow. An Appendix offers a stemma for *The Siege of Thebes*.

A DIPLOMATIC REPRINT OF THE PIERPONT MORGAN LIBRARY MS (M4) OF
THE SIEGE OF THEBES

Whan phebus passed was the Ram f. 1r
 mydde off Aprill and in to þ^e Bull kam
 And Satorne olde with his Frosty Face
 In virgyn takyn had his place
 malincolic and slowe off mocion
 And was also in the opposicion
 Off lucina the mone moyste and pale
 That many a Shoure From heven made avale
 Whan aurora was in the morwe rede
 And Iubiter in the Crabbes hede 10

Hathe take his paleyse and his mancion
 The lusty tyme the Ioly Fresshe Seson
 Whan that Flora the nobill mysty quene
 The soyle hath cladde In newe tender grene
 With her Floures crafftely meynte
 Branche and Boughe with rede and white depeynte
 Fl ynge the Bawme on hilles and on vales
 The tyme in sothe whan Caunterbery tales
 Complete and tolde at many sondry stage
 Off there astate in there pylgrymage 20

Euery man like to his degre
 Sum off disporte som off moralite
 Some off knighthode loue and gentylnes
 And some also off þ^gfite holynes
 And some eke in sothe off Rybaudry
 To make laughter in the company
 Eche admytted for none woll othir greve
 liche as the coke the myller and the reve
 Aquyte hem selfe shortely for to conclude
 Boystylly in her termes rude 30

Whan they had well dronkyn off the Bolle
 And eke also with his pyllyd nolle
 The pardoner Berdeles all his Chynne
 Glasy yen and face of Cherubyn f. 1v
 Tellynge a tale to anger with the Frere
 As opynly the story can you lere
 Worde for worde w^t euery Circnstaunce
 Ecchon y writ and put in Remembrance
 By hym that was yf y shall not feyne
 Floure of poetes thurgh all breteyne 40

Whiche sothely had moste of excellence
 In rethorik and in Elloquence
 Redeth his makynge ho lyste þ^e troupe fynde
 Whiche never shall appallen In my mynde
 But alwey fresshe be in my remembraunce
 To whom be yeve honoure glory and þ^gice
 Off well seyinge furst in oure langage

Chefe regester of this pylgrymage
 All that was tolde foryetynge nocht at all
 Feyned tales nore thynge historiall 50

With many proverbes diuerse and vncoupe^e
 By rehersayle of his sugred mouthe
 Off eche thynge keyynge the substance
 The sentence hole with oute varyance
 voydyng the Chaff sothely for to seyne
 Enlumynyng the trewe pykyd Greyne
 By crafty wrytyng of his sawes swete
 From the tyme that he dyd mete
 Furste the pylgryms euerychone
 At the Tabarde assembled one by one 60

And from Southewerke shortely for to sey
 To caunterbery rydyng on her wey
 Tellyng a tale as y reherse can
 like as the hoste assigned euery man
 None so hardy his Byddyng dysobeye
 And in this while p^t the pylgryms leye
 At Caunterbery well loggyd one and all f. 2r
 y note in sothe what y may hit calle
 Happe or fortune in conclusion
 That me befell to entre in to the towne 70

The holy Seynt pleynely to vysitte
 Affter my sekenes my vowes to aquyte
 In a cope of Blak and not off Grene
 On a palfrey longe sclender and lene
 With rusty Brydell not made for the sale
 my man to forne with a voyde male
 Whiche of fortune toke myne Inne anone
 Where the pylgryms were logged euerychone
 The same tyme her Governoure the Oste
 Stondyng in halle full of wynde and boste 80

liche to a man wonder sterne and ferce
 Whiche spake to me and seyde anon dan perce
 Dan domynyk dan godfrey or clement
 ye bethe welcome newly in to kent
 Thoughe youre Brydyll hathe nep^r bose ne belle
 Besechyng you that ye woll me telle
 Furste youre name and of what cuntre
 With oute more shortely that ye be
 That loke so pale all devoyde off blode
 Vpon youre hede a wonder thredebare hode 90

Well arayed for to ryde late
 I answered my name was lydgate
 monke of Burye nye Fyfty yere of age
 Come to this towne to do my pylgrymage
 As y have hight y haue therof no shame
 Dan Iohn quod he well broke ye youre name

Though ye bethe syke bethe right glad and light
 Prayinge you to soupe with ws to night
 And ye shall haue made at youre advyce
 A grete puddynge or an haggeyse 100 f. 2v

A Franchemoyle a tansey or a froyse
 To be a monke sclender ys youre coyse
 ye haue bene syke y dare myn hede assure
 Or late fedde in a feynthe pasture
 lyffte up youre hede be glad and take no sorwe
 And ye shal home ryde with ws to morwe
 y sey whan ye haue reste youre fille
 Affter slepe slepe woll do you none Ille
 Pap well youre^{hede}with clothes rounde abought
 Charge noppay ale woll make you to route 110

Take a pyllowe p^t ye lye not to lowe
 yf hit nede be spare not to blowe
 To holde wynde by myn oppynyon
 Hit woll engender colles passion
 And make men greven on her ropes
 Whan they haue fyllyd her mawes and croupes
 But towarde night ete som fenell rede
 Agnes comyn or colyandor sede
 And lyke as y haue power and myght
 y charge yow ryse not at mydnyght 120

Thoughe hit so be the mone shyne clere
 y woll my selfe be youre Orligere
 To morwe Erelly whan y se my tyme
 For we will fourthe percase before pryme
 A company parde that shall do you gode
 What loke up monke for by cokkes blode
 Thowe shalt be mery who p^t seith naye
 For to morwe anone as hit ys daye
 And that it gynne in the Este to dawe
 Thowe shalte be bounde to a newe lawe 130

At goynge owte off Caunterbery towne
 And leye aside youre profession
 Thow shalte not chese ne thy selfe withdrawe f. 3r
 yif any myrthe be founde in thy mawe
 like the costom off this company
 For none ys so proude p^t dare me deny
 knight ne knave chanon preste ne nonne
 To telle a tale pleynelly as they konne
 Whan I assigne and se tyme oportune
 And For we woll oure purpose contune 140

We woll homward the same costom vse
 And p^u shalt not platly the excuse
 Be nowe well ware stody well to night
 But for all this bethe off herte right light

Thi witte shall be the sharper and the bette
 yff we were anone to souper sette
 And serued well vn to oure plesaunce
 And sone aftir by gode governaunce
 Vn to Bed goith euery maner wighte
 And towarde morwe anone as hit was light 150

Euery pylgrym bothe bette and worse
 As badde the hoste toke anone his horse
 Whanne the sonne rose in the Este full clere
 Full in purpose to come to dynere
 vn to Osprenge and breke there oure faste
 And we weren from Caunterbery paste
 Not the space of a bowe draughte
 Our hoste in haste hathe my brydill raught
 And to me seyde as it were in game
 Come forthe dan Iohn by youre right name 160

And let ws make som maner myrthe and pleye
 Shitte vp youre portos on twenty devill wey
 Hit is no disporte to pater and to sey
 Hit woll make youre lippes wonder drye
 Tell som tale and make p^r of no Iape
 For by my troupe^e thowe shalt h^t not Ascape f. 3v
 But preche not of none holynesse
 Gynne som tale of myrthe or of gladnes
 And nod not with thyne heuy Bek
 Tell ws some tale p^t draweth to effecte 170

Onely of ioye make no lenger lette
 And whan y sawe hit woll be no bette
 I obeyed vn to his Biddyng
 So as the lawe me bounde in all thyng
 And as y coude with a pale chere
 my tale y began anone as ye shall here
Here ende the prologe and nexte begynnyth the tale
 Sirs quod I sith of youre curtesye
 I entred am in to youre company
 And amytted a tale for to telle
 By hym that hath pouer to compelle 180

I mene our Oste gouvernour and gyde
 Off yow ecchone rydyng here besyde
 Thoghe p^t my witte bareyn be and dulle
 y woll reherse a story wonderfull
 Touchyng the sege and destruccion
 Of worthy Thebes the myghty roiall towne
 Bylte and begonne of olde antiquite
 In the tyme of worthy Iosue
 Be dilligence of kynge amphion
 Chefe cause furste of his fundacion 190

For whiche his name p^t shall neuer away

In honoure floureth yet vn to p^s day
 And in story rememberde ys and p^{ra}yse
 But howe the walles were in haste reysed
 Hit is wonder and mervalous to here
 And yf ye liste I shal you pleyne lere
 The maner hole sothely in centence
 Vnder supporte of youre pacience f. 4r
 As writte myne auctor and bochas bothe too
 Rede her Bokes and ye shal fynde hit soo 200

**Howe kynge amphion was the furste that bylte p^e Cite
 off Thebes by the swetnesse of his songe**

How p^s kynge p^s p^udent Amphion
 With the swetnesse and melodius soune
 And armonye of his swete songe
 The Cyte bylt p^t somtyme was so stronge
 By vertu onely of the warbles sharpe
 That he made in m^rcurious harpe
 Of whiche p^e strenges were nought touched softe
 Whereby p^e walles reysed were on lofte
 with oute crafte of any mannes honde
 full many ayere amydde of grekes londe 210

which ys athinge of poetes tolde
 Neuer y seyne nep^r of yonge nere olde
The exposition off Iohn bokas vpon this derke poysye
 But as bochas lyst to specifie
 Clerely expounyng this derke poysye
 Sith p^t mercury god of Aloquence
 yaue by the myght of hevenly Influence
 vn to this kynge at His natiuite
 Thurghe glad aspectes p^t he shulde be
 moste excellent by Crafte of retoryke
 That in this worlde was noman hym lyke 220

Which signifieth to hem p^t bene p^udent
 The musicall the lusty Instrument
The significacion of the harpe of mercury
 I mene the harpe most melodious
 youen to this kynge by mercurious
 And this songe this auctor can you teche
 was nothyng but the Crafty speche
 Off the kynge called Amphion f. 4v
 Whereby he made the cuntreys environ
 To haue suche luste in his wordes swete
 That were so fauourabill plesaunt and mete 230

**How kynge Amphion by mediacion off his
 soffte speche wan the hertes of the peple**
 In her Eres shortely was there none 231
 Disobeysaunt with the kynge to gone

Where so euer hym liste assigne
 His chere his porte was owtewarde so benynge
 That his sterynge and execucion
 With hym they went to bylde furste this toun
 And forsoke echeman his cuntre
 By one assent to make this cite
 Roiall and riche þ^t like was nowhere none
 And thus the walles made of lyme and stone 240

Were reysid furst be syngynge of this kynge
 like as poetes feyne in her wrytynge
 passynge rich and roiall of entayle
 Here may ye se howe moche may avayle
What avaylith to a kynge or to a prynce to be godely
And berynge of his porte to his peple
 The godelynes and lowlynes of a kynge
 And specially in chere and in spekyng
 To his lieges and to bere hym feyre
 In his aporte and shewe hym debonayre
 And be nat to stronge ne soleyne
 In countenaunse owtewarde by dysdyne 250

Whiche causith offte who can adverte
 Grete hatered in the peples herte
 And theron pleynely wollen rowne
 Whan aprynce doith on hem froune
 and shortely deme for his excellence
 Amonge hemselffe owte off his presence f. 5r
 Euriche conclude like his fantesie
 And thus full offte engenderde ys Envye
 In folkes hertes of solente and pryde
 For suche as liste nat ones to loke asyde 260

To rewarde hem whan they lowe lowte
 And ayeynst kynde hit ys owte of dowte
 That the hede by recorde of the wyse
 Shulde the Fete dysdeyne dyspyse
Howe the pore peple bereth up
the fate of a kynge
 Wheche bereth hym up who can take hede
 and hym susteyne in his moste nede
 As his pylloure and his supovale
 For Fyneally ne were the porayle
 Her Berynge vp and supportacion
 Farewell lordeshyp and domynacion 270

Thurgh owte the worlde off euery highe Estate
 Wherfor me semeth mor ys Fortunate
 Off mercury the swete sugred harpe
 Than marse swerde whette kene and sharpe
 mor aspected with aspectes gode
 Than is this god with his lockes wode
What the godely hede of a prynce avaylith
to wynde the hertes of his peple

For humble speche with gode contenaunse
 may aprynge sothely more avaunce
 Amonge his peple hertes for to wynne
 Of Inwarde love whiche woll not twynne 280

Than gold riches or Tyranny
 Eyther dysdeyne daunger or surquedrye
 For off lordes as Clerkes can reporte
 That but love her Crowne do supporte 286 f. 5v
 I take recorde off kynge Amphion 285
 The Fyne ys nocht in conclusion

Exauple gode of kynge Amphion
 That Bylte Thebes by his Elloquence
 mor off pryde or off vyolence
 Noble and riche p^t like was nowhere none
 And thus the walles made of lyme and stone 290

Were reysid furste by syngynge of this kynge
 like as poetes feyne in her wrytynge
How afftir the oppynyon off some Auctors
kynge Cadym bylte furste the Cite of Thebes
 But yet sothely some expositours
 Groundyng hem vpon olde auctours
 Seyne that Cadmus the famous olde man
 Full longe aforne the Cite furste began
 And the Ground off the Byldynge sette
 And the Boundes owte by compas mette
 With thonge owte kerve off a Bolles hyde
 Whiche environ streight mete full wyde 300

To get in londe a full large space
 Therevppon to bylde a dwellynge place
How the Cuntre of Boece toke furste the name
of a bulles skyn and afftir called Thebes And
howe kynge Cadms was exylyd owte of Thebes
By the manly prowes of kynge Amphion
 And called was the Soyle gotyn Inne
 Whilom Boece off the Bulles skynne
 The name afftir in to Thebes turned
 But Cadymus hath not longe soiornd
 like in story as hit ys Compyled
 For shortly he was from thense exyled
 Never afftir to dwell in this towne
 Be the knighthode of this amphion 310

Whiche vp parformeth ryche for the nones f. 6r
 The cite off Thebes of myghty Square stones
 As y you tolde a litill here before
 And Cadymus thus hath his kyngdom lorne
 Septer and croune and his powere roiall
 Nowe haue y tolde you grounde of all
 That ye well knowe by Enformacion
 Clerkely the pathe and the exposicion
 Off this mater as clerkes can you telle

Hit were but veyne lenger for to dwelle 320

To tary you as in this mater
 Sith my tale whiche that ye shall here
 vpon youre waye will laste a longe whyle
 The space in sothe as y suppose of vii myle
 And nowe ye knowe furste howe Amphion
 Bylte and began this Cite and this toune
 and reygned there afftir longe as y rede
 Off hym nomore for I woll procede
 To my purpose that y furste beganne
 Not tellynge here howe the lyne ranne 330

**How the lyne of Amphion by dysent
 was conveyed vn to kynge layous**

From kynge to kynge by succession
 Conveyinge downe the stok off amphyion
 Curiously by lyne all discent
 But leue all this pleynely of entent
 To tell Forthe in Bokes as y rede
 Howe layous by proces gan succede
Here begynnythe the story off Thebes
 To bere a Croune in this myghty londe
 Holdyng the Septer off Thebes in his honde
 manly and wyse duryng all his lyffe
 And Iocasta called was his wyfe 340

Nowe shall ye here of kynge layous and Iocasta his wyfe f. 6v

Full womanly the story seith Certeyne
 For a tyme thoughe he were bareyne
 Tyll layous in Full humble wyse
 To haue a Chylde he dyde sacrefyse
 furste to Appollo in his chare full bright
 And to Iubiter that hathe so gret amyght
 Besechyng hem with full devoute reuerense
 To graunte onely thurgh there Influence
 That his requeste may executed be
 And specially vn to goddes thre 350

He besought pallas and Iuno
 And dyane for to helpe also
 That he be not defrauded of his bone 353
 That Fyneally thurgh his rightes olde 355
 Even like as his herte wolde
 The quene Iocasta hath anone conceyved
 Which whan the kynge fully hathe perceyved
 He made in haste hym lyste not to abyde
 Thurgh hys kyngdom messangers to ryde 360

From coste to coste the story can devyse
 For dyvynours and philosophers wyse
 And for syche as were Famous Fecysyens
 And well experte Astronomers
 To come in haste to his presence

To fynde owte shortely in centence
 By craffte onely of Calculacion
 The Chyldes Fate and disposicion
 And thervppon to gyff a Iuggement

**Howe p^e Astronomers and philosophers off Thebes
 Called owte all the fate of Edippus
 The rote y take at the ascendent**

370

Truly soughte owte be mynwte and degre
 The selfe owre at his natiuite
 Not forgete the heavenly mancions
 Clerlely serched smale fraccions
 Furste by secondes terce and eke qu^{ar}tes
 On augrym stones and white coartes
 y preued owte be dillygent laboure
 In tables correcte devoyde off all Erroure
 Iustly sought and founde owte bothe too
 The yeres collecte and space also

f. 7r

380

Conciderde eke by gode Inspeccion
 Euery houre and constillacion
 And eche aspecte and lokes eke dyverse
 Whiche were gode and also p^{er}verse
 Whether they were towarde or ell at debate
 Happy wylfull or infortunate

**The Curced Constillacion and disposicion off p^e heven
 in the Nativite of Edipps the kyngs sone
 And Fyneally in conclusion**

They founde Satorne in p^e Scorpion
 Hevy chered malyncolye and lothe
 And wode marse Furious and wrothe

390

Holdyng his Septer in the Capⁱcorne
 The same owre whan the chylde was borne
 Venus deiecte and contrarious
 And depressed in mercurious house
 That the dome and the Iuggement Fynall
 Of these Clerkes to speke inspeciall
 By fatall sorte that may not bewithdrawe
 That with his swerde his fader shulde be slawe
**Howe the Fate off Edipps disposed was to sle
 his owne fader and wedde his owne moder**
 Ther may no man helpe hit ne excuse
 On whiche thyng the kyng gan to muse

400

And caste he wolde on p^t other syde
 Ayenst her dome for hymselfe provyde
 Shape a weye and remedie aforne
 Biddyng the quene when the childe were borne
 With owte mercy or moderly pyte
 That he be dede hit may none op^r be
 And in haste like as he hathe sent
 She obeyed his comaundment

f. 7v

With wofull herte and a piteous loke
And pale face her yonge son she toke 410

Tender and grene bothe of flesshe and bones
To certeyn men ordeynged for the nones
From poynt to poynt in all maner thyng
To execute the byddyng of the kynge
They durste not delaye hit nore abyde
But to a forest that stode there besyde
They took her weye and faste gan hem spede
The kynges wille to pforme in dede
Havyng therof passyng grete hevynes
But whan they behelde the feyrenes 420

Off the Childe and excellent beaute
In there hertes they had grete pite
And pleynely caste amonge hem was no stryfe
That the childe shulde haue his lyfe
And anone hyghe vppon a tree
In a place that no man myght se
They hynge hym up the story gan Reherse
But furste his fete they gan thurgh perse
And on boughes tough tender and smale
They knyht hym up shortely this is the tale 430

Hym to preserve from bestes wylde and rage
And afftir that they toke her vyage
Towarde Thebes in alle the haste they maye
But of Fortune that same daye f. 8r
With her houndes serchyng vp an downe
The huntres went of kynge pollybon
Thurgh the forest game for to fynde
Some aforne and som kam behynde
Ganne serche and eke wonder sore
Amonge the hilles and the holtes hore 440

And as they rengen the trenches by and by
They herde a noyse and a pitous crye
**Howe the huntres of kynge pollybon founde the
Chylde in the forest and presente hym to the kynge**
And of this chylde hangyng on p^e tre
And all attones drewe hym for to se
And lefte not till they haue h founde
And toke hym downe and his fete vnbounde
And bare hym home vn to pollybon
kynge of Archades the famous region
And whan that he furst the chylde gan see
Of his sore woundes he had grete pite 450

To beholde his tender Fete so blede
And called hym Edipps as I rede
Whiche ys to seyne platly this ys no fage
Bored the fete as In that langage
And furste the kynge in his roiall halle

made his men a norysshe for to calle
 This yonge chylde to forstyr and to kepe
 With her milke that he not ne wepe
 And his lieges he charged eke also
 Till he were hole theyre devoyre for to do 460

Fully in purpose for this chylde was feyre
 Affter his day to make hym his heyre
 For cause onely who so taketh hede
 Son had he none by lyne to succede
 And whethir he had a wyfe or none f. 8v
 I fynde hit not and therfor I let hit gone
 But by proces of dayes and of yeres
 This Edyppus amonge his playinge feres
 was of port passyng full of pryde
 That none in pese myght with hym abyde 470

In herte he was so inly surquedous
 malyncolyc and contr^arious
 Full of dyspyte and dysdeyne
 That no wyght shortely durst hym w^tseyn
 Till on a day he gan with one debate
 To whom he hadde speciall herte hate
 Whiche of ranco^r and of hasty tene
 As he p^t myght not his prese sustene
 Gan vpon hym c^uelly to brayde
 And vn to hym thus felly he seyde 480

wherto he seyde arte p^u so proude of porte
 Cont^rary also ever in oure disporte
 Frowarde and fell ever lastyng In one
 As p^u were lorde of ws euerychone
 And p^rsumest fully in workyng
 like as thou were sone vn to the kynge
 And discendid of his roiall blode
 But where so euer p^u be wrothe or wode
 Thou arte nothyng yf p^u lyst take hede
 Apperteynyng vn to his kynrede 490

But in a forest founden and vnknowen
 When p^u were yonge therfor bere the lowe
 And vtterly remembr yf thou lyste
 Thy byrthe and blode are bothe vnwyste
 This ys the fyne shortely of my tale
 wherew^t Edipps gan to wex pale
 And to change also chere and counten^ance
 And gan apoynt in his remembraunse f. 9r
 worde by worde and forgate right nought
 And felly mused in his owne thought 500

And caste he wolde with owte more taryng

The trouthe enquere of pollybon the kynge
 And whan he sighe oportune space
 And the kynge in a secrete place
 he hym besought lowly on his kne
 To his requeste benyngely to see
The Request off Edupps vn to kynge pollybon
 And that he wolde pleynely and not spare
 Off his birthe the trewe grounde declare
 And make hym sure of this thyng anone
 yf he were his verry son or none

510

And pollybon onely of gentylnes
 Whan he behelde the grete feyrenes
 Off Edipps and the wofull peyne
 he gan dyssymule and in maner feyne
 liche as he had bene verryly his heyre
 But more and more he falleth in dispeyre
 And downe ayen effte on his knees gan falle
 Hym coniuryng by the goddes all
 To tell trouthe and nothyng to hyde
 Affermyng eke he woll not abyde

520

lenger with hym but ryde and enquere
 Till tyme he may the verry sothe here
 In every parte of happe or of fortune
 And for that he was so Inportune
 In his desire the kynge with owte abode
 Curyously tolde hym howe hit stode
The answeere of the kynge vn to Edipps
 In a forest first howe he was founde
 vpon a tre the fete y bounde
 And howe he caste in conclusion
 To make hym kynge of that region

f. 9v

530

Afftir his day shortely for to telle
 But Edipps woll no lenger dwelle
 But toke leve and in haste gan ryde
 To a temple faste there besyde
 Off Appollo faste there besyde
 Whose statue stode in a chare of golde
 On wheles foure borned bright as golde shene
 And within a spirit full vnclene
 By fraude onely and false Illusion
 Answere gafe to every question

540

Bryngyng the peple in full grete Errour
 Suche as to hym dyd false honoure
 By right vsed by olde dawes
 Afftir the costom of pagams lawes
 And Edipps with full humbyll chere
 To Appollo made his p^rayer
 Besechyng hym on his knees lowe
 By som synge that he myght know
 Thurgh evydense shortely comprehended

Off what kynrede that he was dyscended 550

And whan Edipps by grete devocyon
 Fynysshed hathe fully his oryson
 The fend anone within Invysybyll
 With a voyse dredefull and horryble
 Bad hym in haste take his vyage
 Towarde Thebes wherof his lyn^age
 ye heren shall and be certyfyed
 And on his waye anone he hathe hym hyed
 By hasty Iorney so his horse constreyned
 day be day till he hathe atteyned 560

Vn to a castell pylotes y called f. 10r
 Riche and stronge and well aboute y walled
 Adiacent by sight of the contrey
 And apperteynent to Thebes the Cite
 kynge layous beyng there present
 For to holde a maner turnement
 With his knights yonge and coragious
 And othir folke that were desirous
 To preve hem selfe shortely for to telle
 Who by force other myght excelle 570

Or gete aname thurgh his prowes
 Eueryche of hem dyd his besynes
 On horse bak and also eke on fote
 All be hit p^t som founde hit full vnsote
 Rather of pleye of werre than of pese
 Where Edipps put hym selfe in prese
 As he that was ay redy to debate
 Enforsynge hym to Entre at the gate
 magre all tho p^t hym wolde lette
 And in the prese of a counter he mette 580

Howe Edipps sloughe his fader by ignoranse at p^e castell
 kynge layous and c^uelly hym sloughe off pylotes
 Though the story tell not howe
 ne no wighte can all the company
 By no sygne hit veryly aspie
 By whose hande the kynge was slawe
 For Edipps gan in haste withdrawe
 And kepte hym kaye of entencion
 Grete was the noyse and pyteous sowne
 In the castell for slaughter of the kynge
 Dole and compleynyng sorwe and wepyng 590

But for they saughe hevynes and thought
 Aynst dethe avaylith litill or noghte
 They ordeyne with rightis full roiall
 For the feste called funerall f. 10v
 And like the costom of the dayes elde 595
 And in a vessell rounde as any balle 597

They closed hym in golde and In metall
 And afftir that dyd her besy cure
 In Thebes to make a sepulture 600

And rychely hem lyst no lenger lette
 The asshes they dyd enclose and shette
 Off this mater there is no more to seyne
 But to Edipps y retorne ayen
 Whiche hym enhasteth as from day to daye
 Towarde Thebes in all that ever he maye
 Brynnyng in herte hote as any fyre
 The fyne to knowe of his fatall desire
 But for p^t he faylid of a gyde
 Owte of his wey he went ferre besyde 610

Thurgh a wylde and a westy cuntre
 By a mounte that stode on the see
**How Edipps passed by the hille where the
 monstre lay that was callyd Spynx**
 Where that munstres of many dyverse kynde
 Were conversaunt in story as y fynde
 Amonge which sothely there was one
 So inly cruell that no man durst gone
 For drede of dethe forthe by p^t passage
 This monstre was so mortall in his rage
 Whiche had also by dyscrypcyon
 Body and fete of a ferse lyon 620

And like a man in sothe was hede and face
 Fell of his loke and cruell to manace
 And odyous of countenaunse and sight
 And as y rede Spynxe that mounstre hight
 Worse than Tygre dragon or serpent
 And y suppose by enchauntment f. 11r
 He was ordeyned in the hyll to abyde
 To sle all tho that passen besyde
 And specyally tho that dyd fayle
 To expoune his myghty dymynayle 630

His probleme in wordes pleyne and bare
 With owte advyce pleynely to declare
 Or with the lyfe he myght not askape
 This ys verry sothe pleynely and no Iape
 And yf that he by clere declaracion
 yave clere there vpon gode exposicion
 He shulde in haste there was none othir mene
 Slene the monstre for all his c^uell tene
 There may of mercy be none othir graunt
 But off all this Edipps was ignoraunt 640

This dredefull hill stondyng on a roche
 Or he was ware full nye gan Aproche
 more perlous platly than he wende
 And sodenly the monstre gan dyscende

To stoppen his way and letten his passage
 Thus abraydyng with a full corage
The wordes of the foule mounstre
 And seyde y haue in my herte inly grete disporte
 That fortune hathe brought to my sorte
 To make a prefe yf þ^u may endure
 The fatall ende of this adventure 650

Sette at a fyne onely by dayes olde
 And by and by all the case hym tolde
 Chargynge hym to be welware and wyse
 Gete the palme and bere away the pryse
 Towchynge the thyng set atwene ws tweyne
 with lyffe or dethe whiche we shall derreyne
 And this monstre with a dyspytouse chere
 Hys probleme gan anone as ye shall here f. 11v
The probleme that the Spynx put to Edipps
 There ys a beste marvoulus to se
 The whiche in sothe at his natiuite 660

ys of his myght so tender and so grene
 That he may hym selfe not sustene
 vpon his fete though he had hit sworne
 But yf that he be of his moder borne
 And afftirwarde by proces of age
 On foure fete he maketh his passage
 And than vpon thre yf y shall not feyne
 And aldirlaste he goith vpright on tweyne
 dyverse of porte and wondirfull of cheres
 Till by lenghte of many sondry yeres 670

Naturelly he goith on thre
 And effte on foure as may none op^r be
 And fyneally this ys the trouthe pleyne
 He retorneth kyndely ayen
 To the mater that he kam froo
 lo here ys all my probleme ys doo
 muse here vppon with owte werre or stryfe
 hit to declare or ell to lese thy lyfe
 Whan Edipps gan this thyng adverte
 Well assured in his manly herte 680

Gan in his wytte serche vp and downe
 And of p^udense caste in his reson
 By grete advyse what thyng this may be
 Seinge also that he may not fle
 And howe there was counsell none ne rede
 To tell trouthe or ell to be dede
 And by full gode delyberacyon
 Than he answereth in conclusion
 Thou Spynx quod he false and fraudelent
 Thou foule monstre thou dragon þ^u serpent 690 f. 12r

That in this hill like as y conceyve

liest in wayte folke to dysseyve
 But truste me well w^t all my sleight wytte
 Thy false fraude shall anone be quytte
 me lyste not nowe nethir wysper ne rowne
 But thy probleme y shall anone expoune
 So opynly thou shalle go ther froo
 lo this it ys take gode hede therto
Howe Edipps expounde p^e problem p^t was put to hym
 That Beste p^u spake of here beforne
 ys euery man in this worlde borne 700

Whiche may not go hys lymmes be so softe
 But as his moder bereth hym on lofte
 In her Armes whan he doith crye or wepe
 And afftir that hebegynnyth to crepe
 On foure fete in his tender youthe
 By experyence as hit ys ofte couthe
 Aforne y rekened his handes bothe too
 And by proces p^u mayste concider also
 With his too fete for all thy fell tene
 He hathe a stafe hym selfe to sustene 710

And than he goith shortely vpon thre
 And aldirlaste as hit muste nedes be
 voydyngge his staff he walketh vpon tweyn
 Till hit so be thurgh age he atteyne
 That luste of youthe wasted be and spent
 Than in his hande he taketh a potent
 And on thre feete he goith ayen
 y dare aferme p^u mayste hit not w^tseyns
 And sone affter thurgh his vnweldy myght
 By Influence of natures right 720

By experyence as every man may knowe
 lyke a Chylde on foure he crepith lowe f. 12v
 And for he may here no while soiorne
 To erthe ayen he muste In haste retorne
 Whiche he kam fro he may hit not remeve
 For in this worlde noman may esshewe
 This ys verry sothe shortely and no doute
 Whan the whele of kynde cometh aboute
 And naturally hathe his course y ronne
 By circued as doith the shene sonne 730

That man and chylde of highe and lowe astate
 Hit geyneth not to make more debate
 his tyme ys set that he muste fyne
 Whan Autropes of malyse doith vntwyne
 his lyves threde by malyse furste compounded
 lo here thy probleme fully ys expounded
 At my metynge as y toke on honde
 To the lawe p^t p^u must nedes stonde
 And in all haste of myne handes dye

But of Reson p^u not withseye 740

And tho this Spynx awaped and amate
 Stode dismayed and desolate
 With chere downe caste as hevy as any lede
 Ad Edipps anone smote of the hede
 Off this fynde stynkyng and vnswete
 And the Cuntre sette holy in quyete
 Wherof he hathe suche a pryde wonne
 That his fame in every coste ys ronne
 Thurgh all the lande that the monstre was slawe
 And lyne right to Thebes he gan drawe 750

Well receyved for his worthynes
 For his manhode and his prowes
 And for they sye he was a semely knight
 Well y favoured In every mannes sight
 And sawe also Thebes the myghty towne f. 13r
 And not they but all the region
 Were destitute of a Gouvernour
 Ayene there foene havynge no socoure
 Hem to defende but the quene allone
 Amonge hem selfe makynge full grete mone 760

For heyre was none as bokes specifie
 The Septer and the Croune to occupie
 For whiche the lordes all by one assent
 Within the towne helde a parliament
 Shortely concludynge yf hit myght bene
 Prudently to trete with the quene
 Namely they that helde hem moste savage
 To condiscende by waye of mariage
 She to be Ioynd to this manly knight
 Passynge p^udent and eke famous of myght 770

moste hole man as they kan discerne
 The worthy Cite to kepe and governe
 And thurgh counceyle of the lordes all
 To her desire pleynely she ys fall
 And acorded with owte more tarynge
 That of Thebes Edipps shall be kynge
 By full assent was none p^t seyde nay
 And tyme sette ayen a certeyn day
 Amonge hem selfe and fyneally devysed
 The weddyng was in Thebes solempnsed 780

Full ryally that nedes muste vnthryve
 Onely for he his moder toke to wyfe
 vnwyste of bothe he was of her blode
 And ignoraunt shortely howe hit stode
 That he to forne had his fader slawe
 For whiche this weddyng was ayen the lawe
 And to fore god ys nethir feyre ne gode
 Ne exceptable blode to touche blode f. 13v

Whiche cause hathe bene of grete confusion
In many a londe and many a region 790

Grounde and rote of vnhapp and myshaunce
The fyne concludynge alwey with vengeaunce
As men haue sene by clere experyence
And holy writ recordeth in centence
howe heraude falsely in his lyfe
By vyolence toke his brother wyfe
For she was feyre and plesaunt to his sight
And kepte her still by force thurgh his myght
All be to her title had he none
And for her sake the holy man Seynt Iohn 800

For his trouthe in prison loste his hede
Wherfor y rede every man take hede
Whethir so he be lorde prynce or kynge
That he beware and esshewe suche weddyng
Or the swerde of vengeaunce hym manasse
leste he lese hap fortune or gr^ace
Takyng Ensaumple in all maner thyng
Off Edipps in Thebes crouned kynge
All be that he wrought of Ignoraunce
Full derke and blynde of his wofull chaunce 810

And yf he vnwyste of Innocence
As he haue herde fill in suche offence
For whiche he was punysshed and brought lowe
What are they worthy that her Errour knowe
And from the knot lyste not to abstene
Off suche spousayle to god and man vnclene
I can not seyne nere more therof devyse
Demeth youre selfe p^t p^udent bene and wyse
And Edipps amonge haue in mynde
And whan the weddyng like as ye may fynde 820

Vnhappy was and passynge odyous f. 14r
Infortuned eke and vngracious
y am wery more therof to write
The hatefull proces also to endite
I passe over fully of Entent
For Emeneus was not there present
Nere lucyna luste not ther to shyne
Ne there was none of the muses nyne
By one acorde to make melodie
For ther songe not by heuenly armonye 830

Nether Clio nere Caliope
None of the Systers in noumbr thries thre
As they dyd whan philolis
Ascended vp hye aboue the skye
To be wedded this lady vertous
vn to her lorde god mercurious
And as marcian y named by kapelle

In his boke of weddyng kan you telle
 There concludynge In his mariage
 The poete that whilom was so sage 840

That this lady called Sapience
 y wedded was to Elloquence
 As hit sate well by hevenly of purvyaunce
 Hem to be ioyned by knot of Allyaunce
 But bothe to sothely of Entent
 At weddyng in Thebes were absent
 That caused afftir grete aduersite
 For the fyneall ende of that solempnite
 Was sorwe and wo and distruccion
 Vttir rwyn of this roiall towne 850

There may no man helpe ne socoure
 For a tyme In ioye thoughe they floure
**The names of the peple beyng at the weddyng
 off kynge Edipps and Iocasta the quene** f. 14v
 But at this Weddyng platly for to telle
 Was Cerberus chefe porter of helle
 And herebus fader to haterede
 Was there present with his hole kynrede
 His wyfe also with here browes blake
 And her dowghters sorwe for to make
 hydous chered and ugly for to see
 megera and Tesyphane 860

Ellecto eke with labour and envie
 drede and fraude and false trecherye
 Treson poverte Indigence and nede
 And c^fell dethe in his rent wede
 wrecchydnesse compleynnyng and eke rage
 Ferefull pale derkenes and Croked age
 Cruell marse as Tygre wode
 Brynnyng Ire of vnkynde blode
 Fraternal hate depe sette the rote
 Saufe onely dethe that there was no bote 870

Assured othes at the fyne vntrewe
 All these folke were at the weddyng newe
 To make the towne desolate and bare
 As the story afftir shall declare
 But Ay in Thebes with his walles stronge
 Edipps reignith many day and longe
 And as myne Auctor writith in wordes pleyne
 By Iocasta he had sonnes tweyne
 Ethiocles and also pollymyte
 And in bokes as sundry clerkes write 880

Doughters too full godely on to see
 Off the whiche one hight Antigone
 And the tother was called Imeyne
 Off her beaute Inly sovereyne

Edipps aye devoyde of werr and stryfe f. 15r
 With Iocasta ledde a mery lyfe
 Till fortune of her Iniquite
 hadde Envie of his prosperite
 For whan he shone moste hie in his renoun
 From her whele she plunged hym adowne 890

Owte of his Ioye in to sodeyn woo
 As she ys wont fraudently to doo
 And namely them that set her affyaunce
 Off hertely truste in his varyaunce
 For whan the kynge passynge of grete myght
 Satte with the quene vpon a certeyn night
 Casuely whan his folke ecchone
 Owte of Chambre sodenly were gone
 Or he was ware Iocasta gan byholde
 The carrectes of his woundes olde 900

vpon his fete wonder depe
 Turnynge her face braste owte for to wepe
 So secretely he myght hit not Asprie
 And she anone fill in to a fantesie
 And in this thyng musynge more and mor
 And in her Bedde began to sighe sore
 And whan the kynge conceyved her distres
 He gan enquere of her hevynes
 Fully the cause and the occasion
 For he wolde wete in conclusion 910

What her Aylith and why she ferde so
 my lorde quod she with owte any wordes moo
 pcell cause of this sodeyn rage
 ys for that in my tender Age
 y had a lorde y named layous
 kynge of this towne right vertous
 By whom y had a son wonder feyre
 lykly to bene his successoure And heyre f. 15v
 But be cause his dyvynors tolde
 At his Byrthe sothely that he shulde 920

yf he haue lyfe by fatall destyne
 Sleen his fader hit shulde none othir be
 For whiche the kynge his fate to esshewe
 Bad me in haste as hym thought due
 To sle the Chylde and haue therof no Roup^e
 And y anone bad with owte slowp^e
 To certeyn men vp peyne of Iuggement
 To execute the Comaundment
 Off the kynge as y gafe hem in Charge
 And forthe they gone vn to a Foreste large 930

Adiacent vn to this cuntre
 Persynge his Fete and hynge hym on a tree
 Not pfourmyng the execucion

On hym they had suche compassion
 leffte hym there and restored home ayen
 Beynge in dowte and in vncerteyne
 At her repeyre as they tolden all
 Off this chylde what afftir shulde be falle
 Sauffe they seyde huntis had hym founde
 Whiche had hym forthe and his fete vnbounde 940

But to what coste they coude not declare
 Whiche pcell ys of myne evell fare
 Grounde and cause of my hevychere
 Concidred eke the woundes that appere
 Vppon your Fete and wote not what they mene
 And othyng aye ys at my herte grene
 my lorde allas but off newe date
 kynge layous slayne was but late
 At a Castell nyghe this Cuntre
 vppon youre Comynge vn to this Cite 950

All this weyed and Rekened into one f. 16r
 maketh myne herte as hevychere as anny stone
 So that y canne counseyle none ne rede
 And with that worde the kynge leffte vp his hede
 And abrayed with sharpe sighes smerte
 And all this thyng by order ganne advert
 Curiously by the advyement
 And by sygnes clere and Euydent
 Conceyveth well and sore gan repent
 Hit was hym selfe that Iocasta ment 960

And whan the Quene saughe hym in man^r pleyne
 By herr goddes she gan hym Constreyne
 To shewe owte the cause of his affraye
 And hit expowne and make no delaye
 Crophe and rote shortely why that he
 Entred furste in to that cuntre
 From whense he came and from what Region
 But he her put in dyllusyon
 As he had done hit for the nones
 Till at the laste he braste owte attones 970

vn to the quene and a processe make
 Furste howe he was in the foreste take
 Wounded in the fete and so forthe euery thyng
 Off his cherysshyng with pollybone the kynge
 And howe the cause why he hym forsoke
 And in what wyse the waye he toke
 Towarde Thebes as Appollo Badd
 And of Fortune howe he was ladde
 Where Spynx kepe the mountayne
 And howe that he also sloughe in certeyn 980

kynge layous at the castell gate
 Towarde night whan hit was full late

And howe to Thebes he ganne hym spede
 To fynde owte of his kynrede f. 16v
 Whiche vn to hym ganne to wex couthe
 For by proces of his grene youp^e
 He founde hit well by rekenynge of his lyfe
 That she was bothe his moder and his wyfe
 So p^t all night swynge on the morwe
 Betwene hem to gan a newe sorwe 990

Whiche vn to me were pytous for to tell
 For there vpon yf y shulde dwelle
 A longe Space hit woll you occupie
 But ye may rede in a Tregedie
Trigida Seneca de Edippo rege Thebas
 Off morall Senek fully his endynge
 Hys dole his myshefe and his compleynynge
 howe with Sorwe and vnweldy age
 This Edipps fyll in to dotage
 loste his wytte and his worldely delyte
 And howe his sonnes hadden hym in dyspyte 1000

Of a dysdeyn toke of hym no kepe
 And bokes seyne his yen owte he wepe
 And as myne auctor liketh to devyse
 As his sonnes rebuke hym and dispise
 Vpon a day in a certeyne place
 Owte of his hede his yen he gan rase
 And caste at hem he can none op^r bote
 And of malyse they tradde hem vnder fote
 Fully devoyde bothe of loue and drede
 And whan Edipps for myshefe thus was dede 1010

Within a pitte made in the erthe lowe
 Off cruelte his sonnes gan hym throwe
 Worse than a Serpent or any tygre wode
 Of curced stok cometh vnkynde blode
 As in story ye may rede here to forne
 All be the rose growe owte of the thorne f. 17r
 Thus Edipps whan he was blynde and olde
 The wrecchyd ende y haue you pleynely tolde
 For whiche shortely for man and chylde y rede
 To be well ware and to take hede 1020

Off kyndely right and of Concyence
 To do honoure and due reuerence
How every man aughte of dewte to do reverence
to his fader and to his moder or ell p^r woll fall vengeance
 To fader and moder off what astate they be
 Or ell certeyn they shall never the
 For who that ys to hem not debonayre
 In speche in porte for to trete hem feyre
 Hem to obeye in honeste and drede
 And hem to cherysshe of what they haue nede

I dare afferme exceptyng none astate
That he shall furste be unfortunate 1030

In all his worke bothe in see and londe
And of what he taketh on honde
Fortune frowarde to hym and contre
Waste of his gode pleynely and appeyre
Fynde plente contacte werre and stryfe
Vnhappy ende and shortenes of lyfe
And g^rceles of what he hathe a do
Hatrede of god and of man also
Therfor no man be herof rekeles
But make youre mirrour of Ethiocles 1040

And of his brother called pollymyte
Whiche in suche thyng gretely were to wyte
As ye shall here of hem howe hit fille
Whan we be descended down this hille
And y passed here this lowe vale
I shall begynne the remnont of my tale
Pars Explicit Prima f. 17v
Passed the throup of Boughten upon ble
By my kalender I gan anone to see
Thurgh the sonne that full clere gan shyne
Off the klok that hit drewe to myne 1050

And sawe also of syluyr dropes shene
Vpon the dewe like perles of the grene
Vapoured vp in to the ayre aloffte
Whan Zepherus with his blowyng softe
The weder made lusty smothe and feyre
And right attemper was the holsom Eyre
The same houre all the hole route
Of the pylgryms rydyng all aboute
In my tale whan I gan precede
Rehersyng forthe as hit was in dede 1060

Whan Edipps Buryed was in Grave
And howe the sonnes p^e kyngdom for to haue
Howe the sonnes of Edipps debate for the Croune
Amonge hem selfe by full mortall hate
For the Croune began for to debate
Whiche of hem Iustely shall succede
And Septer of the towne possede
Auertyng not nethir to right
But eche of hem to make his pty stronge
And his quarell proudely to sustene
Whole hertes were devoyede clene 1070

Of Brotherhode the feithfull allyaunce
False covetyse so made hem at distaunce
Fully werchyng in to distruccion
And ruyn of this nobill towne
So hote brent of hatrede and Envie

Of bothe too thurgh pompous surquedrie
 That nethir wolde pleynty in a poynt
 Other forbere they stode in suche disioynt f. 18r
 like as they had of birth bene foreyns
 Till of the towne the noble Citezeyns 1080

knight barouns with many worthy forde
 Shope away to make hem acorde
 And to sette hem in quyete and pece
 But for his parte this Ethiocles
 Alege gan þ^t he was fyrste borne
 For wheche of reson he aught to go toforne
 And in the Cite to be crouned kynge
 Sithe by the lawe there was no lettynge
 For vn to hym longeth the herytage
 By discent and by title of age 1090

The Contraversy off the to bretherne
 But pollymyte of full hie dysdeyn
 All openly began replie ayen
 And for his parte seyde inspeciall
 Reson was none that he shulde haue all
 Bothe regally and domynacion
 And the lordeship holy of the towne
 And he right nought owte of the Cite
 But leve in exile and in poverté
 Concludynge with owte fere or drede 1099

To leve her stryfe of wysdom and reson 1109
 And condiscende to som conclusion 1110

Whiche to bothe myght moste avayle
 And fyneally thurgh her governayle
The convencion of the Bretherne
 The lordes all beynge tho present
 Have hem brought to bene of assent
 Off one herte as brother vn to brother
 Eueryche off hem to reigne afftir othir
 yere by yere as hit cometh abowte
 So that the tone shall absent owte f. 18v
 Fully that yere and hym selfe gye
 By his manhode and his chevalrie 1120

haunte hym selfe in dedes of marciall
 The while his brother in his see roiall
 Holdeth his Septer the Cite to governe
 And whan the yere his course y ronne
 And ys come owte he shall haue repeyre
 To reigne in Thebes like as a lorde and heyre
 There to resceyve fully his dignitie
 While that the tother voydith the Cite
 Patiently takynge his adventure
 Till he agayne his honoure may recure 1130

Thus entirchaunge every yere they shall
 The tone assende the tother hathe a fall
 They muste obeye of herte and take hit well
 like as the torne resorteth of the whele
 For this was hole the composicion
 Atwene the Bretherne and the convencion
 Fully knite vp by grete avysement
 Before the goddes by othe and sac^rment
 Never afftir to gruche ne to varye
 But accomplisse shortely and not to tary 1140

liche as the acorde enrolled in the towne
 From poynt to poynt and made mencion
 But aldurfurst by reson of his age
 Ethiocles had the avauntage
 To regne aforne and to were the croune
 Pollymyte hym hastynge owte of toune
 durynge the yere hit woll none other be
 While his broþ^r sate in his roiall see
 Full richely vpon fortunes whele
 And rode hym forthe bright armed in stele 1150

This pollymyte sothely as I rede f. 19r
 Hym selfe allone on a roiall stede
 With owte gyde all the longe daye
 Beynge aferde to kepe the hye waye
 In his herte havynge suspesion
 To his brother of malyse and treson
 leste he pursewe thurgh false vnkynde blode 1157
 That he allone myght have possession 1159
 Durynge his lyffe fully off the town 1160

For whiche in haste havynge no Felawe
 Pollymyte asyde gan hym drawe
 By a forest ionynge to the see
 knowynge right nought the sighte of the cuntre
 Full of hilles and of highe mowntaynse
 Craggy Busshes and full fewe pleynes
 Wonder dredefull and lothesom of passage
 And there with all full of bestes rage
 Holdynge his waye of herte nothyng light
 mate and wery till hit drewe to night 1170

And all the day beholdynge Environ
 He nethir sighe castell toure ne town
 The whiche thyng greved hym full sore
 And sodenly the see began to rore
 Wynde and Tempest sodenly to arryse
 The reigne down bete in full grysly wyse
 That man and beste therof was adrad
 And nye for fere gan to wex madde
 As hit semed by the wofull sownes
 Of Tygres bereth Bores and lyons 1180

Whiche for refute hem selfe for to save
 Eueriche in haste draweth to his Cave
 But pollymyte in this tempest huge
 Allas the while fyndith no refuge
 Ne hym to shroude seghe nowhere to socoure f. 19v
 Till hit was paste almoste mydnyght houre
 A large space till that all the sterres Altre
 The Cloude voyde in heven dyd apere
 So p^t this knight owte of p^s foreste large
 Gan approche in to the lande of arge 1190

Seinge a pallyse myght of byldynge
 Off whiche Adrastg called was the kynge
 A manly man a ryche and wonder sage
 And yronne was somdele in to age
 Borne of the Ile p^t called was chyson
 And somtyme sone of the kynge cholon
 And for hit ys write in story as hit ys couthe
 He chosen was in his tender youthe
 Off arge to be crowned kynge
 Chefe of all Grece by recorde of wrytynge 1200

Not by discent be by succession
 But all onely of free elleccion
 He helde of Arge the Septer in his honde
 As moste worthy of all Grekes londe
 loved and dradde for his wysdom and Iustyse
 And as the story pleyntly gan devyse
 This worthy kynge hadde doughte^rs too
 Passynge feyre and right gode also
 Hit were to longe her beaute for to discryve
 And the Elder was called Argyve 1210

Ediphile y named the secounde
 And Adrastus like as hit ys founde
 This worthy kynge hadde sone none
 To succede afftir he begone
 For whiche he was duryng all his lyfe
 Tryste in herte and passynge pensyfe
 But hole his truste and his hope stode
 By allyaunce of som worthy Blode f. 20r
 Brought in by som meane off his daughters tweyn
 That he shall be relese of his peyne 1220

Thurgh ioynynge of som hyghe maryage
 And sothely yet full often in his Corage
 He troubled was by occasion
 And off swemen and of avysyon
The dreame of kynge Adrastus off a wylde
Bore and a Ferse lyon
 Shewed vn to hym vpon a certeyn night
 For as hym thought in his inwarde sight
 while he slepte by clere inspeccion
 A whylde bore and a ferse lyon

Possede shulde thes bestes in her rage
His daughters too by bonde of maryage 1230

In shorte tyme within a certeyn day
whiche brought his herte in full grete affray
But thyng in sothe p^t destyne hathe shape
Here in this worlde full harde hit is to scape
And mervaylous a man to esshewe his fate
And pollymyte of whom y spake late
with the tempeste bete and all be reyned
By g^race onely the Cite hathe atteynynd
Where Adrastus full stately of degre
That tyme helde his roiall fee 1240

The trouble night merke and full obscure
Hathe brought this knight onely by aventure
Thurgh the Cite enclosed with awall
Vn to the Cite chefe and pryncipall
Where as the kynge in his chaumbr alofte
laye in his Bedde and slepte wonder softe
Eke all his folke had her chaumbr take
lyke as fortune p^aventure had ashape
The selfe tyme by cause hit was so late
And casuely no porter at the gate 1250 f. 20v

As hit hade bene right for the nones
And in a porche bylte with square stones
Full myghtely enarched environ
There p^e domes and the places of p^e toune
Weren execute and lawes of the kynge
And there p^s knight with oute more taryng
Wery and mate of his stede alight
Hangynge the reigne in all p^e haste he myght
vpon his arme sure hym for to kepe
And leyde hym downe and gan anone to slepe 1260

As hym semed that tyme for the beste
And while p^t he lay that tyme for to reste
Of aventure p^r come a knight rydyng
One the worthiest of the worlde levyng
Curteyse lowly and right vertous
As seith myne auctor called Tydeus
yrous in armes and manly in workynge
Off his birthe sone vn to the kynge
Off Calydon a londe of grete renoun
And he allas owte of that region 1270

Exilid was for he his brother sloughe 1271
All be p^t he to hym no malyse ment 1273
For on a day as they on huntynge went
In a forest for herte and for hynde
So as he stode under a grene lynde
And casuely lete his Arrowe slyppe

And sloughe his brother called mentalyp
Thurgh mortall shotte his hande was bygyld
For whiche he was banysshed and exylid 1280

As the lawe narwe sette his Charge
And for this cause he come furst in to Arge
In to the porche where pollymyte dyd slepe f. 21r
Off aventure or he toke anny kepe
The same night hedyously beseyn
With the tempest of thonder and reyne
And felte also anoye and grete damage
Thurghe the forest holdynge his passage
As pollymyte had done beforne
In pcell ofte lyke to be lorne 1290

With bestes rage beset on every syde
Till of grace with owte anny gyde
He rode thurghe Arge the grete myghty towne
Streight to the palyse and chefe dongeon
lyke as tolde where pollymyte laye
And at his comynge made grete affraye
For he was blynde thurgh derkenes of the nyght
And hym to guy he ne founde no light
Whan he come in of pryket ne of torche
Till he unwarely entred in to the arge porche 1300

And wolde haue take there his harbygage
But pollymyte sterte vp in a rage
Sodenly awaked as y rede
With the neghynge of his proude stede
And furste of all whan that he behelde
A knight y armed vpon his breste a shelde
And gan the maner of this thyng adverte
Off verry yre vpon his horse he sterte
And cruelly gan Tydeus enquere
Whense he come and what he dyd there 1310

And bad in haste his answeare to devyse
And Tydeus in full humble wyse
Answered ayen of verry gentylnes
And seyde in sothe of hie distres
Off the tempeste and of the derke night
He dryven was lyke an erraunt knight f. 21v
Off nede onely and of necessite
And hym constreyned of grete adversite
To take loggyng where so that he myght
An in p^t courte therfor he allyght 1320

With owte more thynkyng none owtrage
Ne to no wight mevyng no damage
Than pollymyte of malyse and hie pryde
Tolde hym shortely he shulde not abyde
No logge there thoughe he had hit swurne
For y quod he toke hit vp toforne

And y woll hit kepe duryngge all þ^s night
 y sey the platly magre all thy myght
 Quod Tydeus it ys none curtesie
 me to devoyde but rather vylonye 1330

yf ye toke nede þ^t seme a gentyll knight
 And y suppose ye haue no title of right
 To his loggyngge by waye of herytage
 more than haue y for all youre fell rage
 And parde yet hit shall be none dysese
 Till to morwe thoughe ye do me ese
 Of gentylnes onely with youre leve
 To suffer me hit shall but litill greve
 But aye the more Tydeus spake feyre
 Pollymyte was frowarde and contrarye 1340

An shortely seyde hit geyneth not to stryfe
 That of force he shall devoyde blyve
 Or vtterly atwene hem bothe too
 This thyngge to trye he muste have ado
 And Tydeus than seyng no better mene
 Full lyke a knight in stele armed clene
 With owte abode faste gan hym spede
 Wonder lyvely for to be bestryde his stede
 And thus these knights pompous and elate f. 22r
 For litill cause fill at debate 1350

Howe Tydeus and pollmyte stryven for there lynage
 And as they rydyn to geder on horsebak
 Eythir on other her seres brak
 And afftir þ^t full surquedous of pryde
 With sharpe swerdes they to geder ryde
 Full yrously this myghty champions
 In her fure lyke Tegres or lyons
 As they hurtelyd all the palysehoke
 And kynge Adrastus owte of his slepe awoke
 And made in haste Chambrleyns in calle
 And thurgh the courte his worthy knights all 1360

Comaundyngge hem to difende and see
 And to reporte what hit myght be
 This wonder noyse in his courte by night
 And whan they sighe the stronge knights fight
 In plats bright and in thyk mayle
 With owte Iuge they had grete m^rvayle
 And dysmayed of this vncouthe thyngge
 And as they founde hit tolde hit to þ^e kynge
 And Adrastus for derkenes of the night
 from his Chambr with many torche light 1370

In to the courte ys descended down
 All his meyny stondyngge Environ
 Off these knights havynge grete wonder

And of manhode he put hem furst a sunder
 Hem comaundyng like a gentyll knight
 To lefe her stryfe and sese of her fight
 And entred in with a knightly loke
 And furst from hem her swerdes bothe toke
 Affermyng eke as to his fantesie
 Hit was a rage and a grete folye 1380

So wylfull her lyves to Iupard f. 22v
 With owtyng Iuge her quarell to departe
 An specially in the derke night
 Whan nep^r of op^r myght haue sighte
 Chargyng hem vp peyn of her lyfe
 To dissever and stynton of her stryfe
 And Tydeus in all p^e haste he myght
 Full humbely from his stede alight
 And right mekely with chere and countenaunse
 Put hym holy in the governaunse 1390

Of Adrastus in all maner thyng
 And pollymyte made eke no taryng
 To hie also and woll not withsey
 The kynges byddyng to obeye
 So as hym oughte with due reverense
 And as they stode bothe in his presense
 He gan enquere furste of her astate
 The cause also why they were at debate
 Off her cuntreys sothely and her age
 And axed eke touchyng her lynage 1400

By discent of what stok they were borne
 And Tydeus his answeere gave to forne
 Tolde pleynely and made no lisyng
 Howe that he was sone vn to the kynge
 Off Calcydon and rightfull heyre ther to
 And of his Exile he tolde the cause also
 As ye haue harde in the story redde
 And pollymyte with chere and face sadde
 vn to the kynge touchyng his cuntre
 Seyde he was borne in Thebes the cite 1410

And Iocasta the grete famous quene
 Hys moder was withoute anny wene
 But of his Fader whilom kynge and lorde
 For verry shame spake never aworde f. 23r
 Onely for he yf y shall not feyne
 His fader was and brother bothe tweyne
 The whiche in sothe he was full lothe to tell
 And eke the kynge wolde hym not compell
 Off gentylnes but byd with owte blame
 Off his birthe for to haue no shame 1420

For hole the case and maner everydele
 Touchyng his kynne he knewe the gynnyng wele

like as hit was by full clere reporte
 Comforynge hym to do comfort
 With all his myght and his besy peyne
 This manly kynge to these knights tweyne
 And to hem seyde before hym as they stode
 He wyste well p^t of full worthy blode
 They were discended touchyng her kynrede
 And made anone his officers lede 1430

The stroung knights beyng at debate
 Thurgh his palleuse to chaumbr of astate
 Eche by hym selfe for to take his Ese
 And euery thyng in sothe p^t myght hym plese
 Was offred hem like to her astate
 And whan they were dysarmed of her plate
 Cusshens greves and her Sabatons
 Her hneys voyde and her habergons
 Twenty mantell vn to hem were brought
 Fret with perle and with riche stones wrought 1440

Off clothe of golde and veluet Cremesyn
 Full richely furryd with Ermyn
 To wrappe hem in ayen the colde morwe
 Afftir the rage of her nights sorwe
 To take her reste till the sonne aryse
 And whan the kynge in full p^udent wyse
 Furst off all was not rekeles f. 23v
 The knights hertes for to sette in pese
 That euer afftir y dare aferme hit well
 Eyther to other was to other trewe as any stele 1450

Duryng there lyfe bothe in worde and dede
 vnder a knotte y bounde of brotherhode
 Adrastus the worthy kynge famous
 A feste made riche and plenteuous
 To these knights hym selfe p^r at present
 And afftir mete godely he hathe sent
 This noble kynge for his doughters dere
 Off gentylnes to make hem chere
 To the knightes p^t come from a ferre
 And lyke in sothe as lucyfer the sterr 1460

Gladeth the morwe at his vprysyng
 So the ladies at her in comyng
 With the stremes of her yen clere
 Godely of porte and womanly of maner
 Countenaunse and excellent feyrnes
 To all the courte brought in gladnes
 For the fressshnes of her heavenly cheres
 So agreable was to the straungers
 At her entre that inspeciall
 hem thought hit lyke a thyng celestiall 1470

Enhastyng hem in full knightly wyse
 Ayenst hem godely to arryse
 And as they mette with hounble countenaunse
 Full konnyngly dyd her observaunse
 hem conveyinge to her syttyng plase
 But sothely y haue leyser none ne spase
 To reherse a poynt in remembraunse
 Holly the maner of her dalyaunse
 Hit were full longe for you to abyde
 But well y wote that the god Cupyde

1480 f. 24r

By influence of his myghty honde
 And the fervence of his fyry bronde
 Her metyng furst hathe fortunad so well
 That his arrows of golde and not of stele
 y persed hathe the knightes hertes tweyn
 Thurgh the Breste with suche a lusty peyne
 That there abode sharpe as spere or launse
 Depe y fycched the poynt of remembraunse
 Wheche may not lightly be rased away
 And thus in Ioye they dryven forthe p^e day

1490

In playe and revell for the knightis sake
 And towarde night they her chambr take
 At due houre as her fader badd
 And on her waye the knights hem ladd
 Reverently vp by many a steyre
 Takenge her leve gan anone repeyr
 To her loggyng in to a full stately toure
 Assigned hem by the harbigoure
 And afftir spices pleynely and the wyne
 In Cuppes grete wrought of golde fyne

1500

With owte taryng streight they gone
 Touchyng her reste whether they slepe or none
 Demeth yee louers p^t in suche maner thyng
 By experyence haue full knowlechyng
 For hit ys not declared in my boke
 But as y finde the kynge kynge all night woke
 Thoughtfull in hert the story specifieth
 musyng sore and full of fantezies
 Furste aduertynge the grete worthynes
 Of these knights and the semelynes

1510

Hur luste firste her forse and her manhode
 And howe they were come of roiall blode
 All this he gan to revolve aboute
 Aye in his herte havynge a maner doute
 Bytwene to hangyng in Ballaunse
 Where he shulde make allyaunse
 Atwene his daughters and the knight tweyne
 For othyng on his herte gan resteyne
 The remembraunse off his advysyon
 Off whiche toforne made ys mension

f. 24v

1520

Towchyng the lyon and the wylde bore
 Hit nedeth not to reherse hit more
 Castyng away in his fantesie
 What hit myght clerely signifie
 This derke dreame that was hyd and close
 But on the morwe adrastus arose
 And to the temple the right way toke
 And p^{ra}y gan devoutely on his boke
 To the goddes his dreame to specifie
 And they hym badd homwarde for to hie 1530

And to byholde in the knights shelde
 The fele Bestes payntid in the feldes
 Whiche shall to hym by clere inspeccion
 And full playnly make declaracion
 Of his dreame whiche he had on p^t night
 And Adrastus hafte hym full right
 In her sheldes wysely to be holde
 where as he sighe as the goddes tolde
 In the Sheldes hankyng vpon hokes
 The Bestes rage with her mortall crokes 1540

And to purpose like as writ bochas
 Pollymyte streight enbrased was
 In the hyde of a ferse lyon
 And Tydeus above his haburghon
 A gypon had hydous sharpe and hore
 Wroughte of p^e brystell of a wylde bore f. 25r
 The Whiche Bestes as the story leres
 Were wrought and bete vpon her baners
 Dysplayed brode whan they shulde fight
 Wherfor the kynge whan he had a sight 1550

At his repayre in hert was full glad
 And with a face full demure and sadde
 With his lordes that he aboute hym hadd
 To the tempell he the knights ladd
 And whan they had with all Circumstaunse
 With ryghtes olde done her observaunse
 Home to the courte they retorne ayen
 And in all the haste ryche and well beseyne
 This worthy kynge of herte liberall
 made a feste solempne and roiall 1560

Whiche in deyntes sothely dyd excell
 But hit were veyne every course to tell
 Her straunge sewes and her sotiltes
 Ne howe they sitte like to her degrees
 For lak of tyme y let over slyde
 And afftir mete Adrastus toke a syde
 The knights too and lyke a prudent man
 In secrete wyse thus his tale he gan
Howe Adrastus spake to the knights in the way

of maryage of his too doughters

Sirs quod he I ne doute hit noght
 That hit ys fresshe and grene ay in yo^{ur} thoght 1570

Howe þ^t furste by goddes ordynaunse
 And afftir next by fates purvyaunse
 And by workynge of fortunes honde
 Howe that ye were brought in to this londe
 Bothe tweyne but nowe this laste night
 Of whose comynge y am full glad and light
 Furst in my selfe shortely to expresse f. 25v
 Whan y concider and see the lyklynes
 Off youre psones with the Circumstaunse
 And hole the maner of youre governaunse 1580

Seynge full well wherto shulde y feyne
 ye bethe lykly here afftir to atteyne
 To grete astate and habundaunse of gode
 Thurgh youre birthe and roiall blode
 ye may not fayle but yf ye haue wronge
 For ye are manly and right stronge
 And for to sette youre hertes more at reste
 my purpose y hope for the beste
 So that in you be no varyaunse
 To make a knotte as by allyaunse 1590

Atwene yow and my doughters to
 yf youre hertes acorde well ther to
 And for I am fully in dispeyre
 To succede for to haue an heyre
 Ther for ye shall haue possession
 durynge my lyfe of halfe my Region
 Forthe with in hande and hole aftir my day
 And there ys no man that ther to shall sey nay
 And sothely afftir whan y am in grave
 Eche of you shall his parte have 1600

Off this kyngdom as y haue provydyd
 This ys to seyn hit shall be devydyd
 Bytwene you to eche to be crouned
 youre poure parties by equite compouned
 Egally in every mannes sight
 That eche of you reioyse shall his right
 And by youre wit ye shall the londe amende
 And of manhode knightly hit defende
 Ayenst oure enemyes and oure mortall fone
 And for the dayes passed be and gone 1610 f. 26r

Of my desires and my lusty youthe
 I am full sette for to make couthe
 That ye shall haue like myne oppynyon
 The gou^rnaunse of this my region
 To þ^s entent me semeth for the beste
 ye to governe and I to leve in reste

Fully to folwe þe luste of my desires
 hunte and hauke in wodes and revers
 Whan so euer y have therto plesaunse
 And for to haue none othir attendance 1620

Vn to nothyng but vn to myne ese
 For whiche shortely yf it agre and plese
 That y haue seyde to you þt bene so wyse
 And be accordyng vn to youre advyse
 Delayeth not but in wordes pleyne
 That you semeth yeveth answere agayn
 And whan Adrastus hadde his tale fyned
 Tydeus with hede full lowe enclyned
 As he that was a verry gentill knight
 With his power and his full myght 1630

Full humbely thanked the kynge
 Towchyng his profer of so hie a thyng
 And for his party seyde he wolde assent
 Fully of herte neuer to repent
 To all that euer the kynge hathe seyde
 And pollymyte was also apayde
 In the story as hit is comprehended
 In euery parte fully ys discended
 The kyngs will to fulfill in dede
 From poynt to poynte and therevpon procede 1640

Whether so euer they wynne or lese
 And Tydeus made his brother chese
 Of gentilnes and of curtesie f. 26v
 Whiche þt is moste to his fantesie
 Of the systeme for to haue to wyfe
 And in sothe hathe chose agryve
 Whiche eldest was womanly to see
 And Tydeus toke dephile
 Of her beaute moste souereyn and excellent
 Adrastus thurgh oute his londe hathe sent 1650

For his lordes and his baronage
 To be present at þt mariage
 Of the knights and make no lettyng
 And they ecchone come at his Byddyng
 In godely wyse meke and Benyng
 Ayen the day that he dyd assigne
 And theder come full many a lusty knight
 Fill well beseyne and many a lady bright
 From euery coste and many a fresshe squyer
 The story seithe and many a gode comyner 1660

To be holde the grete roialte
 And the maner of this solemnite
 But to tell all the circunstaunce
 Of iustes roiall and the diuerse daunse

- The festes riche and the yeftes grete
 The peynfull sighes and the fervent hete
 Of loves folke brynnynge as the glede
 And diuerse of many sundry wede 1668
- All this in sothe discryve I ne kan 1673
 But well wote I the newe fame ran
 This mene while w^t full swyfte passage
 Vn to Thebes of this mariage
 And by reporte trewe and not feyned
 The sowne therof the Eres haue attenyed
 myne auctor writ of Ethiocles
 Touchynge the honour and the grete Encrese 1680 f. 27r
- Of pollymyte hyly magnified
 And p^t he newly was allyed
 With Adrastus in the londe of Arge
 The Whiche thyng he gretely gan to charge
 dredynge gretely that p^s mariage
 Shall afftir tyme turne to his damage
 Sore musynge and castynge vp and downe
 The grete power and the hye renoun
 Of Adrastus whiche of grekes londe
 hadde al the powere soget to his hande 1690
- leste p^t he for pollymyte sake
 Wolde vpon hym a newe werr make
 But yf that lyke the convencion
 At tyme sette delyveer vp the toune
 To his brother by bonde of othe sworne
 By couenauntes assured here to forne
 yf ye remembr late as y you tolde
 Whiche he was not in purpose for to holde
 But for his heste caste for to varye
 And there vppon lyst no lenger tary 1700
- liche to his desires to shape remedies
 And furste he sent for his next allyes
 In whom he had moste his affyaunse
 And for his lordes that had gouernaunse
 Of his kyngdom to come to hym anone
 And whan they were present euerychone
 he seyde playnely wenyng for the beste
 That his herte shall never leve in reste
 But in sorwe and in maner drede
 Till his brop^f vtterly be dede 1710
- That in Thebes in his roiall cite
 mighte allone reigne in quiete
 He ment hym selfe shortely and none other f. 27v
 Vnperturbed of pollymyte his brother
 And at his counsell diuerse of Entent
 y fynde writte iii folkes were present

Some in sothe þ^t feitefull were and trewe
 And some also that can change of newe
 And othir eke that betweyxt tweyne
 Covertely coude vnder coloure feyne

1720

Comendacyon of trouthe

The fyrse seyde aboue all thyng
 Trouthe shall longe to a kynge
 Of his worde not to be variable
 But pleyne and hole w^a a centre stabull
**Howe trouthe ys proffered in the boke
 of Esydor aforne kynge wyne and women**
 For trouthe furst with owte any wene
 ys chefe pyllour that may a kynge sustene
 In ioye and honoure for to fede his lyfe
 For trouthe somtyme had a pregoratyfe
 As of Esdrethe boke can specifie
 Recorde y take of p^udent neomye

1730

That worthy kynges for all her grete pryde
 wyne and women bene eke let asyde
 with all her power and domynacion
 Havyngre rewarde in comparyson
 To trouthes myght and trouthes worthynes
 For as Esdre pleyne doith expresse
 Who taketh hede in the same place
 The Influence sothely and the grase
 Off trouthe allone this olde neomye
 Gate hym lycense to radifie

1740

The walles newe of Ir^lm
 whiche ys tresour chefe of every ream
 For Salamon Writith howe þ^t thynges tweyn
 Trouthe and mercy lynked in a cheyne

f. 28r

Trouthe and mercy preserve a kynge from all adu^rsitate
 Preserve a kynge lyke to his degre
 From all myshefe and adversite
 Allas therfor that any dowbylnes
 varyaunce or vnsikirnes
Change ne doubylnes shulde not be in a kynge
 Chaunge of worde or mutabilite
 Frande or disceite or instabilite

1750

Shulde in a kynge have no domynacion
 To cause afftir his distruccion
 Of kinges redeth the story doune be rowe
 Thurgh there falsehede from Fortunes whele
 For vn to god it pleseth never a dele
 A kynge to be double of Entent
 For hit may happe that the worlde ys blente
 Full ofte sith by sleight of her wyrkyng
 But this is trouthe god seeth every thyng

1753

1755

1760

Right as hit is for þ^r may be no cloude
 Toforne his sight trouth for to shroude
 hit may be clypsed and derked by disceite
 By false Engyne lynges in a wayte
 As a serpent for to vnder myne
 But at the laste hit woll cherely shyne
 Who that seith naye and shewe his bright Bemis
 For hit is sothe of kyngdoms and of remes
 His berer vp and conservatryse
 From all myshefe sothefaste mediatrice 1770

To god above who so lyst to see
 To kepe a kynge in prosperite
 On euery syde as y afferme dare
 For wheche the kyngs and sordes be wolware
 youre behestes Iustely to holde f. 28v
 And thynketh vpon Thebes with his walles olde
 Dystroyed was platly this is no lese
 For the doubylnes of Ethiocles
 That with his pepyll sore afftir bought
 Onely for he nought by counceyle wrought 1780

Off hem that were bothe trewe and wyse
 Hym lyst not werke afftir her devyse
 But leffte trouthe and sette his fantesie
 To be governyd by false flaterye
The counceyle of flaterers
 That bad hym thynke howe he was a kynge
 And to holde of Force more than of right
 Duryng his lyfe lordeship of the towne
 And not to lese his possession
 For none bonde ne heste made toforne
 But lette his brother blowe in a horne 1790

Where þ^t hym lyfte or pⁱpe in a rede
 This was the counseyle platly and the rede
 O suche as lyst not to sey the sothe
 But falsely flater with her wordes smop^e
 And whan they had her hole tale fyned
 Ethiocles fully ys enclyned
 Who so euer þat laughe or wepe
 lyke to her counseyle possession to kepe
 Who so sey nay or grucche there agayn
 Any thyng contry hym thought was but veyne 1800

**How the yere was comen owte that
 Ethiocles reignyd in Thebes**
 But in this while hathe þ^e shene sonne
 The xii signes rounde aboute ronne
 Sith Ethiocles by Iuste rekenyng
 In Thebes was crowned lorde and kynge
 Holdyng the Septer and þ^e dyademe f. 29r
 That by reson as hit wolde seme

The tyme was full complete and the space
 Of coven^{ant} he shulde voyde his place
 And polymyte eke his iorney make
 Towarde Thebes possession to take 1810

Off due title but he had wronge
 Whiche thought in sothe p^e yere was wonder longe
 Of his Exile or p^t he come aboute
 And for he had in herte a maner doute
 leste in his brop^r were falsehede y found
 To aquyte hym selfe like as he was bounde
 To Adrastus he gan declare his herte
 Besechyng hym this mater to adverte
 And there vpon to gyf counceyle sone
 Touchyng his right what was left to done 1820

Whethir hit was beste to goo or abyde
 Or like a knight manly to ryde
 Hym selfe allone and make no message
 For to chalange his rightfull heritage
 within Thebes ethir by werr pese or stryfe
 And there vpon to Iupart his lyfe
 Thus was he sette for all his ferse brother
 But Adrastus sothely thought a nother
 Better was to than hym selfe to gone
 leste he were trapped amonge his mortall fone 1830

Havyng his brop^r suspecte in this case
 That by fraude or som fallas
 He wolde worke to his distruccion
 yf he were hardy to entre in to p^e toun
 For whiche he bad hym ententely take hede
 Fully concludyng howe hit were moste spede
 That som other to Thebes were sent
 To perceyve fully the entent f. 29v
 Off Ethiocles owtewarde by som signe
 And whether that he the Croune woll resigne 1840

For that yer like as he made his othe
 And whan he knewe howe his purpose goithe
 Therevpon to wyrke and procede
 And thus Adrastus wysely gan hym rede
**How Tydeus toke vpon hym to do the message
 off pollymyte his Brother**
 And while they trete vpon this matier
 Tydeus with a manly chere
 Seyde vtterly for his brothers sake
 This message he wolde vnder take
 With hole the Emprise of the of the Enbassate
 Were hit welfull or unfortunate 1850

He will not spare what so betyde
 But Adrastus on that othir syde

And pollymyte in conclusion
 Were contry to þ^t opynyon
 And seyde sothely as hem thought right
 Sithe that he was so well preferred knight
 And discended of worthy blode
 That they wolde not for none erthely gode
 For all Thebes with the regallye
 Put his body in suche Iupardy 1860

But all this thyng avaylith hem right noght
 For he woll forthe hou euer hit be bought
 Takyng leve furst of all the states
 And armed hym in mayle and sure platis
 And shope hym forthe on his iorney
 Who made sorwe but dephile
**The grete sorwe that dephile made whan
 Tydeus went towarde Thebes**
 With bittir Teres dewed all her face f. 30r
 Full offte sythes swounyng in the place
 Triste and mornynge in her blak wede
 And whan she sye he toke his stede 1870

So inwardly gan to encrease her mone
 Seyng her lorde so rydyng forthe allone
 vpon his way this worthy Tydeus
 And in all the haste the story telleth ws
 He sped hym so makynge no delays
 That in the space of fewe dayes
 The highe towres of Thebes he gan see
 And entred ys in to that cite
 Wysely enqueryng where þ^e plase stode
 And like a knight theder streight he rode 1880

marked full well in many mannes sight
 lyche mares hym selfe in stele armed bright
 Till he atteyned hathe the chefe dongeon
 Where as the kynge helde his mansion
 And thurgh the paleyse with a knightly loke
 In to the hall the right way he toke
 From his stede whan he light adowne
 Not aferde but hardy as a lyon
 Where as the kynge with his lordes a grete route
 In the hall sittynge rounde aboute 1890

He entred Inne moste manfull of corage
 To execute the fyne of his massage
 And as hym thought convenient and due
 Full connyngly gan the kynge to salue
 Requirynge hym of knightly excellense
 In godely wyse to gyf hym audiense
 And dysdeyn not nep^r in porte ne chere
 Sithe he was come as a messangere
 From pollymyte his owne brother dere
 Gynnyng his tale anone as ye shall here 1900 f. 30v

Howe wysely and howe knightly Tydeus dyd his
 Sir quod he vn to youre worthynes **message**
 my purpose ys brefely to expres
 The effecte holly as in Sentement
 Of the message whi p^t I am sent
 Hit were in veyne longe proces to make
 But of my mater the verry grounde to take
 In Eschewynge of prolixite
 And voyde a wey all supfluite
 Sith youre selfe aught beste to vnderstonde
 The cause fully that we haue in honde 1910

And eke touchynge the entent of my menyng
 yf rightwysnes longe to a kynge
 Furste concider yf that he take hede
 Whan Edipps the olde kynge was dede
 Whowe p^t youre broþ^r and your selfe alyve
 For the Croune contagiously gan stryve
 As mortall fone with full grete hatrede
 Whiche of you to furste shulde succede
 Till that ye were by menes reconsilid
 ye to reigne and he to be exilid 1920

Owte of this town by a yeres space
 And than ayen resorte vn to his place
 To reigne as kynge and ye to voyden owte
 So as youre torne by proces cometh aboute
 Eueriche of you paciently to endure
 The enterchaungynge of his adventure
 Who were put owte or put in his astate
 There vpon to make no debate
 liche to p^e couennt and the convencion
 Enrolled vp by lordes of the toune 1930

Whiche of reson may not be denied
 Sithen ye haue a yere occupied f. 31r
The requeste that Tydeus made in the name
off pollymyte vnder the tytyll of convencion
 Pollymyte requereth you of right
 To aquite you as a trewe knight
 In eschewynge of mortall werre and stryfe
 Sith ye haue had a prerogatyfe
 As eldest Brother for to reigne aforne
 And thenketh howe ye are sworne
 youre othe to kepe and make no tarynge
 Holly advertynge liche a p^udent kynge 1940

That trouthe ys more in comparison
 Than all the tresoure of youre region
 more acceptable vn to god and man
 Than all the tresoure of youre region
 Therfor in haste lat there be no slouthe

Quiteth youre selfe iustely of the troupe
 vn to youre brother voydyng the cite
 And lat hym reigne in his roiall see
 The croune of Thebes a yere to occupie
 Than woll all Grece preyse and magnifie 1950

youre hie renoun they may sey none other
 But p^t aquite you iustely to youre brother
 This is hole the effecte p^t y woll seyne
 Answere expectaunt what ye lyst to sende ayen
 Than Tydeus had tolde his tale
 Ethiocles tryste and wonder pale
 His conceyte in maner hathe refreyned
 Dyssymlyng vnder coloure feyned
 Shewyng a chere in maner debonayre
 To his entent wonder contrayre 1960

Inwarde in herte wode and furious
 Turnyng his face towarde Tydeus
 He gan abrayde and at p^e laste oute brak f. 31v
 An euer thus vn to hym he spak
The Answere of kynge Ethiocles
 Whane grete m^rvayle quod he in my thought
 Of the message wheche p^t p hast brouthe
 That my brop^r as p^u hast expounded
 Desireth so in Thebes for to be crowned
 havynge rewarde to the habundaunse
 The grete plente and the suffisaunse 1970

That he hathe nowe with p^e kynge of arge
 That me semeth he shulde litill charge
 To haue lordeship or domynacion
 In the Boundes of this litill town
 Sithe he reigneth so fresshe in his floures
 Sirmountyng all his prodecessours
 By newe encrease thurgh fortimes myght
 Wherfor in herte I am right glad and light
 Fully trystyng yf y had nede
 To his helpe p^t with oute drede 1980

lyke a brop^r p^t y shulde hym fynde
 To me warde feithfull trewe and kynde
 Supposyng pleynely euer more
 Of this ream he set but litill store
 Ne caste hym not for so shorte awhile
 As for a yere his brother to exile
 To leue in poverte and in grete distres
 He woll not suffer hit of his hie nobles
 Hit were no tokyn of no broth^r hode
 But a signe rather of haterede 1990

To Interupt my possession

Of this litill pore region
 All p^t he spak who p^t coude adverte
 Of verry scorne was roted in his herte
 As hit semeth the story kan you teche
 By the surpluse sothely of his speche
 He myght not lenger hym refreyne
 But pleylnly seyde as by twene ws tweyne
 y mene thus pollymyte and me
 There ys no bonde nore swerte

f. 32r

2000

Nere feith y made that may hym avayle
 As he cleymeth to haue the governayle
 Off this Cite nep^r yere ne daye
 For y shall lette hym sothely yf I may
 That he shall not by title of his bonde
 Reioyse in Thebes halfe a fote of londe
 lat hym kepe p^t he hathe wonne
 For a purpose as y haue begonne
 To reigne in Thebes enforth all my lyfe
 magre all them p^t ageynst stryve

2010

And in dyspyte of his frendes all
 And the Councell p^t hym lyst to call
 lat hym be sure and knowe p^s right well
 Hys manassynges y drede never a dele
 And sekerly as to myne advyse
 Hit sheweth well p^u were not wyse
 But suppressed with a maner rage
 To take on the this surquedous message
 And presume to do so highe afense
 So boldly to speke in my presense

2020

But all in fere avayle shall right noght
 For the Tydynges that p^u haste brought
 Shall vn to hym by dysencrese
 He better ware to haue bene in pese
 Than off Foly and presumpcion
 Aeynst me to lese occasion
 For while y leve and ther to here myn honde
 As I seyde erste he wynneth here no londe
 While the walle of this tounne may stonde
 For pleylnly y do the to vnderstonde

f. 32v

2030

That they shall be Bete doune full lowe
 And all the toures to the erthe y throwe
 Or he in Thebes haue any thyng a doo
 lo here ys all retorne and sey hym soo
 Whan Tydeus sawe the fervent Ire
 Off the kynge with anger sette on fyre
 Full of dispite and of malyncoly
 Conceyvynge eke the grete felonye
 In his apporte lyke as he were wode
 This worthy knight al litill while stode

2040

Sad and demure or he wolde aught seyne
 But at the laste thus he seyde ayen
**Off the knightly answeare that Tydeus
 gaffe ayen to the kynge before his counsell**
 Certes quod he I conceyve of newe
 Aboute the thy counsell ys vntrewe
 y dare hit seyne and vowe h^t at the beste
 Thou arte not feithfull of thy beheste
 Stable of thy worde p^t p haste seyde to forne
 But deceyvable and eke forsworne
 And eke periuryd of thyn assured othe
 But whethir so ys p^u be lefe or lothe 2050

y sey the shortely holde hit for no fage
 All shall turne to thy damage
 Trust hit well and in full c^uell wyse
 All Grekes londe shall vpon the ryse
 To be venged and manly to redresse
 The grete vntrouth and the hie falsenes
 Whiche p^t p^u haste ayenst thy brop^f wrought
 Hit shall full dere afftir this be bought
 And veryly in dede as p^u shalte lere f. 33r
 kynge Adrastus woll medle in p^s mater 2060

And all the lordes aboute hym environ
 That bounden be to his subieccion
 Prynces dukes and many a nobill knight
 In susteynyng of thy broders right
 Shall vpon a day with spere and shelde
 Ayenst the be gaderde in a felde
 knightly to preve all by on assent
 That p^u arte false and double of entent
 Of thy promes ateynt and eke owtrayed
 And leve me well hit shal not be delayed 2070

But in al the haste execute in dede
 like thy deserte p^u shall haue thy mede
 For god above and his rightwysnes
 Suche opyn wronge shall in haste redres
 And of his myght all suche collusion
 Reforme ayen and all suche extorcion
 For this ys the fyne falsehede shall not avayle
 Ayenste troupe^e in felde to holde batayle
 Wronge ys croked bothe halt and lame
 And here anone in my brothers name 2080

As y p^t am his next allye
 In his quarell shortely I the defye
 Fully advysed with all myn hole entent
 And ye lordes all that bene here present
 I you requere of youre worthynes

To sey trouth and to bere witnes
 Whan tyme cometh Iustely to recorde
 Howe youre kynge falsely can discorde
 From his heste of false varyaunse
 And thynke on howe ye on feith and liegeaunse 2090

Are bounde ecchone ye may not go p^r froo
 For to obeye and serve bothe too f. 33v
 This next yer nowe anone folowyng
 As to youre lorde and youre trewe kynge
 Pollymyte thoughe he be nowe absent
 By iuste recorde made in parliament
 At youre devyse whiche sittith here arrowe
 Engrosed vp as hit ys well knowe
 And enrollyd onely for witnes
 In youre Regestres to avoyde all falsenes 2100

That none of you varye may of newe
 For p^t I sey but he be vntrewe
 For whiche I rede youre selfe to aquite
 lat no tyme lenger you respyte
 But attones with owte more taryinge
 Off manly sorte Fette home youre kynge
 magre his fone like as ye are bounde
 And lette in you no slouthe be founde
 But put hym Iustely in possession
 This is my counsell in conclusion 2110

Howe manly Tydeus departed from the kynge
 Whan Tydeus had his message seyde
 like to the charge p^t was vpon hy leyde
 As he p^t lyste p^r no lenger soiorne
 From the kynge he gan his face turne
 Not astonyed ne in his herte aferde
 But full proudly leyde his hande on his swerde
 And in dispite who p^t ys lefe or lothe
 A sterne pase thurgh the hall he goith
 Thurgh the courte and manly toke his stede
 And owte of Thebes faste gan hym spede 2120

Enhastyng hym till he was at large
 And sped hym forthe towarde p^e londe of arge
 Thus let y hym forthe rydyng here awhile
 Whilis that I retorne Ayen to my style f. 34r
 vn to the kynge whiche in the hall stode
 Amonge his lordes furious and wode
 In his herte wrothe and evell apayde
 Of the wordes that Tydeus had seyde
 Specially havynge remembraunse
 On the proude dyspytous diffiaunse 2130

Whilis that he satte in his roiall see
 vpon whiche he wolde avenged be

Full cruelly what that ever be fall
 And in his Ire he gan anone to calle
 Chefe constable of his chevalrie
 Chargynge hym faste for to hie
 With all the worthy choyse of his housholde
 Suche as he knewe moste manfull and bolde
 In all the haste Tydeus for to sue
 To fore or he owte of his londe renewe 2140

vppon peyne off lyfe and lesynge of her hede
 with owte mercy anone that he be dede
**Howe falsely Ethiocles leyde a bussument
 in the way to have slayne Tydeus**
 Off knights fyfty were in noumbr
 myne auctor seith vnwaerly hym to combr
 Armed ecchone in mayle and st thyk stele
 Armed there with all and horsed wonder wele
 Owte at a psterne faste they gan to ryde
 By agayne pathe p^t lay owte besyde
 Secretely that noman coude asprie
 Onely of treson and of felony 2150

They haste hem forthe all the longe day
 Of cruell malyse for to stop his way
 Thurgh a forest all of one assent
 Full covertely to leye a bussument
 Vndir a hill at a streight passage f. 34v
 To fall on hym at the more avauntage
 The same wey p^t Tydeus gan drawe
 At that mounte where p^t the Spynx was slawe
 He nothyng ware in his oppynyon
 Off the compassed conspiracion 2160

But Innocent like a gentill knight
 Rode aye forthe till hit drewe to night
 Sole by hym selfe with owte company
 Havyng no man to wysshe hym ne Gye
 But at the laste lyfftyng vp his hede
 Towarde Even he gan to take hede
 Amydde of his wey right as any lyne
 Thought he sighe ayenst the mone shyne
 Sheldes fresshe and plates burnyd bright
 The whiche environ caste a grete light 2170

ymagynyng in his fantesie
 There was treson or conspiracie
 Wrought by the kynge his Iorney to lette
 And of all that he nothyng sette
 But well assured in his manly herte
 lyste not ones asyde to aduerte
 But kepte his way his shelde vpon brest
 And caste his spere manly in the reste
**Howe worthy Tydeus outrayed 1 knightis
 that laye in a wayte to sle hym**

And the furst platly that he mette
Thurgh the body proudly hym smette 2180

That he felt dede chefe master of hem all
And then all attones they vpon hym fall
On every parte by compasse environ
But Tydeus t^ourgh his hie renoun
Hys bloody swerde he let aboughte hym slyde
Sleeth and kyllith on every syde f. 35r
In his Ire and in his mortell tene
But m^rvayle p^t he myght so sustene
Ayen hem all on every parte beset
But hi swerde was so sharpe whet 2190

That his fomen founde full vnsote
But he allas was made light afote
By forse groundyd in full grete distres
But of knighthode and highe prowes
vp he arose magre all his fone
And as they kam he slough hem one by one
lyke alyon Rampande in his rage
And on this hille he founde a narwe passage
Wheche p^t he toke of full highe p^udense
And lyche abore stondynge at his defense 2200

As his fomen proudly hym assayle
vpon the playne he made her blode to rayle
All newe y ron p^t the soyle wex rede
Nowe here nowe there as they fill dede
That here laye on and there to or thre
So merciles in his cruelte
That day he was on hem founde
And attones his Enemies to confounde
Where as he stode this myghty champion
Bysydes he sawe with water turnyd downe 2210

A large stone huge rounde and square
And sodenly or that they were ware
As hit had leyne there for the nones
vpon his fomen he rolled attones
That x of hem wenton vn to wrake
And the remnount amased drewe a bak
For one by one they went to myshaunse
Thus fyneally he brought to vtteraunse
Hem everychone p^s Tydeus as blyve f. 35v
That none but one leffte of hem alyyve 2220

Hym sylfe yhurte and y wounded kene
Thurgh his harneys bledynge on the Grene
The Theban knights Rounde aboute
In the vale slayne all the hole route
Whiche pyteously ayenst the mone Gape
For none of hem shortely may ascape
But dede ecchone as they have discerued

Save one excepte whiche was reserved
 By Tydeus of this entension
 To the kynge to make relacion 2230

Howe his knightis haue on her Iorney spedde
 Eueryche of hem his lyfe leffte for a wedde
 And at her metynge howe they haue hem borne
 To tell all he assured was and sworne
 To Tydeus full lowly on his kne
 By whiche ensauple opynly ye may see
Howe trouth with litill multitude hath euer
in the fyne vyctory of Falsehede
 Ayenst trouth falsehede hath no myght
 Fy on a quarell not grounded vpon right
 With owte whiche may be no vyctory
 For every man haue p^s in memory 2240

That grete pryde shortely to conclude
 Plente of gode or grete multitude
 Sleight of Engyn forse or felonye
 Arne to feble to holde champartye
 Ayenst trouth who lyste take hede
 For at the ende falsehode may not spede
 To endure longe ye shall fynde hit thus
 Recorde y take of worthy Tydeus
 That with his hande thurgh trouthes excellense
 Fyffty knightes sloughe in his defense 2250 f. 36r

But one excepte as y late tolde
 Sworne and assured with his honde vpholde
 The kynge to Enforme howe they were atteynt
 And Tydeus of bledynge wonder feynt
 mate and wery and in grete dystres
 And over ladde of verry febylnes
 But as he myght tho hym selfe sustene
 He toke his horse stondynge on the grene
 worthe vp and forthe gan to ryde
 An esy pase with his woundes wyde 2260

An sothely yet in his opynyon
 he was alwey afferde of treson
 But angwysshous and full of besy peyne
 He rode hym forthe till he dyd atteyne
 vn to the Boundes of ligurgs londe
 A worthy kynge and manly of his honde
Howe Tydeus all for wounded come in to londe
of kynge ligurgs and leyde hym down in a Erber
 And he full pale onely for lak of blode
 Tydeus sawe where a castell stode
 Stronge and myghty bylte vpon a roche
 Towarde whiche faste he gan approche 2270

Conveyed theder by clerenes of the stone
 That bright ayenst the mone shone

On highe toures with crestes marchiall
 And Ioynynge almoste ayenst the wall
 was a gardeyn let owte besyde
 In to whiche Tydeus gan to ryde
 Off aventure by a gate small
 And there he founde for to reken all
 A lusty erber as vn to his advyse
 Sote and fresshe lyke a paradyse 2280

verry hevenly of Inspeccion f. 36v
 And furste of all he light a downe
 The godely place whan that he behelde
 And from his nek y voyded hathe his shelde
 And drowe his brydell from his horse hede
 And lette hym go and toke no maner hede
 Thurghe the Gardeyn p^t enclosed was
 Hym to pasture on the sote Gras
 And Tydeus more hevy was than lede
 vpon the erbes bothe grene white and rede 2290

He leyde hym downe for to take his reste 2292
 As hym thought p^t Tyme for the beste 2291
 Off werynes desiryng for to slepe
 And none awayte his body for to kepe
 And with dremes grucchyng ever amonge
 There he laye till the larke songe
 With notes hye vp in the Ayre
 The graye morwe rody and right Feyre
 Phebus also castyng vp his bemes
 The hie hilles gylte with the stremes 2300

The syluyr dewe vpon the Erbes rounde
 There Tydeus laye vpon the grounde
 At the vpryste of the shene sonne
 And stoundemele his grene woundes ronne
 Rounde aboute p^t the soyle depeynt
 Off the grene with the rede meynt
Howe ligurys daughter founde Tydeus slepyng
in the herber all for woundyd
 And every morwe for holsomnesse of ayre
 ligurys doughter made her repeyre
 Off costum aye amonge the floures newe
 In the Gardeyn of many diuerse hewe 2310

Suche Ioye had she for to take hede
 On her stalkes for to se hem sprede f. 37r
 In the Alleys walkyng to and froo
 And whan she had a litill while goo
 Her sylfe allone castyng vp her sight
 She behelde where an armed knight
 laye to reste hym on the Erbes colde
 And hym besyde eke she began beholde
 His myghty stede walkyng to and fro
 And she anone fill in a maner fere 2320

Specially whan she sawe the bolde
 Sprad on the grene aboute there stode
 But at the laste she caughte hardynes
 And womanly gan her for to dresse
 Towarde the knight havynge a maner drede
 And grete doute lefte that he were dede
 And off her wille sothely this was chefe
 That she thought for to make a prefe
 Howe þ^t hit stode with this man full offte
 And forthe she goith and towchit hym soffte 2330

Where as he laye with her handes smale
 And with a face dedely bleke and pale
 lyke as a man adawed in a sowghe
 He vp sterte and his swerde droughe
 Not fully vp but put hit vp ayen
 Anone as he hathe the body seyne
 Besechyng her onely of her grace
 To haue pite on his trespas
 And rewe on hym of her womanhede
 For off a fraye he was fall in drede 2340

leste he had assaylyd be off newe
 Off Thebans preved full vntrewe
 For drede of whiche he was so rechylles
 Full humbeley yeldynge hym to the pese
 Tryste in hym selfe that he had passed his boundes f. 37v
 And Whan that she sighe his mortall woundes
 She had routhe of verry Gentylnes
 Off his dissese and of his distres
 And bad he shulde be nothyng dysmayed
 Nore in herte soruffull ne affrayed 2350

Discomforte hym in no maner thyng
 For y quod she am doughter to the kynge
 Called lygurge whiche gretely me delyte
 Every morwe this Gardeyn to vysyte
 Hit ys to me so passynge grete disporte
Howe womanly the lady quit her vn to Tydeus
the gentill knight in his grete distres
 Wher for quod she be the off gode Comforte
 For no wighte here touchynge youre viage
 Shull hynder you ne do yon no damage
 And yff ye lyste off all youre aventure
 The pleyne trouthe to me discure 2360

I woll in sothe do my Besynes
 To reforme youre grevous hevynes
 With all my myght and hole my dyllygense
 That I hope of youre grete offense
 That ye shull haue helpe in youre adversite
 And as ferforthe as hit lyeth in me
 Trustith right well ye shall no foene fynde

And whan he sighe that she was kynde
 So womanly so godely and so benynge
 In all her porte by many dyverse signe 2370

He vn to her by order woll not spare
 His adventurs fully to declare
 In Thebes furste touchynge his message
 And all the hill of the worthy rage
 Off his woundes and off his hurtes sore
 Hit were but veyne to reherse hit more f. 38r
 By and bye he tolde hit everydele
 Whiche in sothe she lykyd never a dele
 But had routhe and som compassion
 Off his myshefe wrought by false treson 2380

Byddyng in haste that he shulde her sure
 And womanly as her thought due
 To a chambr she lad hym vp aloffte
 Full well beseyne therein a Bed right soffte
 Richely abowte apparaylyd
 with clothe off golde all the flore raylyd
 Off the same bothe in lenght and brede
 And furste this lady of her womanhede
 Her women badde as godely as they kan
 To be attendaunt vpon this wounded man 2390

And whan he was vnarmed to his sherte
 He made furste wasshe his woundes smerte
Howe Tydeus was refresshed in the castell of the
 And serched hym well with dyverse instruments lady
 And made fette sundry oynements
 And leches eke the beste she coude fynde 2395
 And every thyng that myght do hym ese 2397
 To swage his payne and his woo to appese
 Was in the Courte and in the castell sought
 And by her Byddyng to her chaumbr brought 2400

And for his sake she hathe afftir sent
 For suche deyntes as were convement
 moste nutrytyfe by physyk lore
 Hem that were syke or wounded to restore
 makynge her women eke to take kepe
 And wayte on hym a nyghtes when he slepe
 And be weleware p^t nothyng asterte
 That was or myght be lusty to his herte
 And with all this she prayde hym abyde f. 38v
 Till he were stronge and myghty for to ryde 2410

In the castell to playe hym and dysporte
 And at leysor to hym ayen resorte
 Whan he myght bewelde hym at his large
 But all for nought he woll home to Arge
 Toke his leve on the next daye
 With owte abode to haste hym on his waye

lowly thankynge vn to her godenesse
 Off her Freedom and bounteous largesse
 So womanly that her luste take hede
 Hym to refresshe in his grete nede 2420

Behotyng her with all his full myght
 He wolde be her seruaunt and her trewe knight
 While he lyveth of what she woll hym charge
 And forthe he rode till he come to arge
Howe Tydeus repeyryd ayen to arge
 In full grete haste and woll no lenger dwelle
 But what shulde y rehearse owther telle
 Off his repeyr the costes or the pleynes
 The craggy roches or the mowntaynse
 Or all the maner of his home comynge
 Off the metynge or the welcomynge 2430

Nore the Ioye that Adrastus made
 Nore howe his systyr ne his wyfe was glade
 Nore howe that they wherto shulde y wryte
 Enbrasyd hym in her Armes white
 Nore the Gaderynge abought hym nere the prese
 Nore the sorwe that pollymytes
 made in hym selfe to se hym so sore wounded
 His grevous hurtes his sores eke vnsounded
 His godely loke and his face pale
 Off all this to gynne a newe tale 2440

Hit were in sothe a maner ydylnes f. 39r
 Nere howe hym selfe in order dyd expresse
 Furste howe that he in Thebes hathe hym borne
 Nore howe the kynge falsely was forsworne
 Nore of the wayte nore treson that he sent
 Whan 1 knightis on the waye hym mette
 As ye haue herde all the maner howe
 With owte whiche my tale ys longe y nowe
 But Adrastus made men to seche
 In every coste for many a dyverse leche 2450

To come in haste and make no ta^ryinge
 vppon peyne by Byddyng of the kynge
 To do her craffte that he were recured
 And of his force in every parte assured
 And theye ecchone so her konnyng shewe
 That in space of dayes fewe
 He was all hole made of his sekenesse
 Tho was there Ioye and tho was there gladnesse
 Thurgh owte the courte and thurgh all the towne
 For every man hathe suche opynyon 2460

In Tydeus for his gentylnesse
 For his manhode and hys lowlynes
 That he was holde the moste famous knight
 And beste beloved in every mannes sight

Thurgh owte Grece in every region 2465
 To tell shortely as in Sentement 2467
 Off that knyghte that Tydeus hathe sent
 In to Thebes onely to declare
 Off the grete myschefe and the Evell fare 2470

Vn to the kynge howe hit ys befalle
 The opyn trouthe of the knyghts all
 Howe Tydeus hathe sleyne hem everychone
 That save hym selfe there ascaped none
 Whiche was reserved from shedyng of his blode f. 39v
 The kynge to tell pleynely as it stode
 And whan he hadde rehersed every poynt
 Ethiocles stode in suche disioynte
Howe Ethiocles was sore astonyed
whan he herde of the dethe of his knyghts
 Off hatefull Ire that he was nye wode
 And in his tene and his fell mode 2480

Off cruell malyse to þ^e knight þ^s spak
 And fully seyde þ^t hit was for lak
 Onely of manhode and thurgh her cowardyse
 That they were slayne in so mortall wyse
 An hanged be he hie by the nek
 That of the dethe of youre slaughter rek
 Outher you compleyne outhir one or all
 Of the myschefe þ^t ys you befalle
 y do no force þ^t none of you asterte
 But fye on youre false cowarde herte 2490

That o knight thurgh his renoun
 Brought you all to confusion
 Full g^{ra}celes and full vnhappy too
 Nay quod this knight hit is nothyng soo
 Hit is thyne vnhappy pleynely and not owrs
 That so many worthy werryours
 Whiche in all her lyfe never had shame
 Excepte this quarell takyn in thy name
 That grounded was and roted on falsenes
 This was cause in verry sothefastnes 2500

Of oure vnhappe y wote well and none op^r
 With thyne vntroupe done vn to thy brother
 And þ^u þ^t were so opynly forswore
 And þ^{cell} cause whi that we were lore
 Was false brekyng of thyne assured othe
 And tho the kynge madde almoste madde for wrothe f. 40r
 In purpose was to sle this knight
 Onely for he seyde vn to hym right
 The whiche allas bothe at even and morwe
 Suppressed was with dedely sorwe 2510

Rynuyng e aye in his remembraunse

With the pytouse and vnhappy chaunse
 Off the grete myshefe and mysaventure
 Touchynge the dethe and discomfiture
 Off his Feres and of hym selfe also
 That the shamefaste and inportabull wo
 So was on hym with suche a mortall stryfe
 That he was every of his owne lyfe
 Thurghe the whiche he hent a swerde a syde and sterte
 And yafe hym selfe even to the herte 2520

The kynge hym selfe beyng the present
 And the rumor and p^e noyse ys went
 Thurgh owte Thebes of p^e newe rage
 By suche as were ioyned by lynage
 To the knights slayne at the hille
 That all attones with one herte and wylle
 They wolde haue reson thurgh the Cite
 vpon the kynge avenged for to be 2528
 But the Barouns and lordes of p^e toune 2530
 Whiche off her dethe were chefe occasion 2529

Full besy were p^s rumor and dissese 2531
 Off his p^udense to styntyn and appese
 Inquiete every thyng to sette
 And afftir that the bodies home they fette
 Off the knightis lyke as ye have herde
 Afforne y slayne with the bloody swerde
 Off Tydeus full sharpe whette and grounde
 And in the felde so as they hem founde
 Onely of love and affeccion f. 40v
 Solemply they brought hem to p^e toune 2540

And in maner of the ryghtes olde
 They were furste Brent vn to ashes colde
 Eueryche buryed lyke to his degre
 lo here the kalender of aduersite
 Sorwe vpon sorwe and distruccion
 Furste of the kynge and all the region
 For lak onely lyke as I you tolde
 That behestes truly be not holde
 The furste grounde and rote off all this Rwyn
 As the story clerely shall determyne 2550

An my tale here afftir shall you lere
 yff that you lyste the remnount for to here
Sunt pars secunda et sequit pars tercia
Here folueth the thirde parte of p^e buke
 O cruell marse full of malyncoly
 And of thy kynde hote combust and drye
 As the sparkle sheweth from so Ferr
 By the stremes of the rede sterr
 In the spere as hit abowte goith
 What was cause p^u were so wrothe

With hem off Thebes thurgh whose fervent yre
The Cite was brente and sette on fyre 2560

As bukes olde well rehearse kanne
Off cruell hate rotyd and begonne
And engenderde the story maketh mynde
Onely of Blode corrupte and vnkynde
By enfeccion called orygynall
Causynge a stryfe dredefull and mortall
Off whiche the myshefe of all grece ranne
And kynge Adrastus alderfurste began
Whiche hathe hym caste a conquest forto make
Vppon Thebes for pollymyte sake 2570 f. 41r

In knightly wyse there to prove his myght
Off full entent to recure his right
And furste off all he sette a parliament
And hathe his letters and messangers sent
Thurgh Grece to many sundry kynges
Hem to enhaste and make no lettynge
And rounde aboughte as made ys mencion
He sente also to many region
For prynces dukes lordes and Barouns
To taken vp in Cites and in townes 2580

And to chesen owte the moste lyklieste
And suche as were proved for the beste
And of manhode and sende hem vp ecchone
And in her hande resseyve her paye anone
With Adrastus to Thebes for to ryde
And the lordes that with hym abyde
**The grete purvyaunse of kynge Adrastus
towards the Cite off Thebes**
In householde still haue her leve take
To ryden home her retenwe to make
In her contreyse as they were of degre
To sustene hem to take vp meyne 2590

And to make hem stronge with knights and squyers
With Speres bowes and areblastars
In all the haste possible p^t they maye
And to retorne in her beste araye
At terme sette full manly to beseyn
To forne Arge to monstre in a playne
The kynges and prynces p^t come to Adrastra
And as y rede full worthy of degre
Theder come furste pthonolope
The whiche was by recorde of wrytynge
Off Arkade sone vn to the kynge 2600 f. 41v

And full p^udent founde in were and pese
There come also the kynge Cylmythenes
As y fynde Full famous of renoun
Theder come eke the kynge ypomedon

An passyngge all of knights and of fame
 And excellent by worthynes off fame
 The worthy kynge callid Campaneus
 Come eke to arge the story telleth thus
 proved full well and hadde reden ferre
 And theder come the kynge melleager 2610

kynge Genor eke p^t helde his roiall see
 myne auctor seith in the lande of Grece
 kynge loers and kyneg perus
 And eke a kynge called Tortoloune
 And renommed in many a region
 There come the kynge callid palenon
 Offte assayed and founde a manly knight
 That with hym b^rought in stele armed bright
 Full many a worthy owte of his cuntre
 And Tydeus moste knightly for to see 2620

That noble man that worthy werryoure
 As he that was of worthynes the floure
 master and myrroure by prowes of his honde
 And hathe also sent in to the myghty londe
 Off Calcedoyne of whiche he was eyre
 That ys a kyngdom bothe ryche and feyre
 Chargynge his counceyle and offisers also
 In all the haste that hit may be doo
 To seken owte the beste werrio^rs
 Of famous knights and proved sowdio^rs 2630

Thurgh all the lande and leyde on hem charge
 with owte abode for to come to arge
 And they obeyed Full lowly his byddyngge f. 42r
 Enhastyngge hem and made no lettynge
 But sped hem faste on her Iorneye
 And from Thebes p^e myghty stronge Cite
 Come doune knights with many a worthy man
 magre the kynge to helpe what they can
 Concidred furste his Falsehode and treson
 Imued onely of trouthe and of reson 2640

pollymyte as they were sworne of yore
 To his croune iustly to restore
 And whan they were at large owte of this toune
 vn to Arge they ne descended downe
 And like her othe and her assurance
 As they were bounde onely of liegeaunse
 To hym they they come in full lowly wyse
 lonly to done what hym lyste devyse
 And whan he had her trouthe full conceyved
 He hathe to g^rce godely hem receyved 2650

Assigned form her place amydde the Oste
 Assembled there from many a dyverse coste

That fyneally in this company
 y gadered was the floure of chevalrye
 y chosen owte of all grekes londe
 The moste knightly and manly of her honde
 That y trouthe sithe the worlde began
 There was not seyne so many a manly man
 So well horsed with spere and with shelde
 To geder assembled sothely ina felde 2660

There men myght se many strange gyses
 Off armynge newe and vncoup^e devyses
 Euery man afftir his fantesie
 That yf y shulde in order specifie
 Euery pece longynge to Armoure
 And there vppon do my besy cure f. 42v
 Hit were in sothe almoste a dayes werke
 And p^e termes also bene to derke
 To reherse hem clerely and to ryme
 y passe over for lak of tyme 2670

And tell y woll forthe of her loggyng
 Howe Adrastus the nobyll worthy kynge
 Hathe every lorde lyke to his degre
 Reseyved well within the Cite
 And there they had lyke to her plesaunse
 Off what nedeth fulsom habundaunse
 For man and horse plenty of vytayle
 comaundyng p^t nothyng fayle
 That all these worthy werryor^s
 Bothe hie and lowe and pore sordior^s 2680

y served were of that they had nede
 For Adrastus prudently toke hede
What avaylith a kynge to pay his peple truly her saude
 Full lyke a knight touchynge the terme daye
 That they to forne were sued to her paye
 He was so fre he lyste nothyng restrayne
 Nere no man had cause to compleyne
 For hunger thryste ne for indigence
 But all thyng was to her presense
 And in a prynce it ys full grete reprefe
 To suffer his peple to leve at myshefe 2690

Hit ys full hevvy and grevous in her thought
 yf he habounde and they haue right noght
 He may not possede bothe gode and herte
 he to be ryche and to see his peple smerte
 He may the body of pore well constreyn
 But her hertes hath a full longe reyne
 magre his myght to love at her large
 There may no kynge on hertes sette a charge f. 43r
 Nere hem coarte from her liberte
 men sey full offte howe thought ys free 2700

For whiche eche prynce lorde and governo^r
 And specyally euery conqueroure
 lat hym beware for his hye nobles
 That bounte fredom plente and largesse
 By one Acorde p^t they his Brydell lede
 leste off his peple whan he hathe moste nede
 He be defrauded whan he ys but allone
 Than hit ys to late for to make his mone
 But in his courte let hym furste devyse
 To exile scarsehede and covetyse 2710

Than ys he lykly w^t fredom yf he gynne
 love of his peple ever more to wynne
 To reigne longe in honoure and contune
 Aye to encrease by favoure of Fortune
 And his Enemyes manly to oppresse
Howe love avaylith a kynge more than golde
 For love ys more than golde or ryches or riches
 Golde faylith offte love woll abyde
 For lyffe or deth by a lordes syde
 And the tresoure shortely of a kynge
 Stondeth in love above all thyng 2720

Farewell lordeship bothe morwe and eve
 Specyally whan love taketh his leve
 And who so lyste a myrroure for to make
 Off knightly Fredom lat hym ensauple take
 Off adrastus the manly kynge Famouse
 So liberall and so bountevous
 vn to his peple at all tymes founde
 whiche made hym stronge his fomen to confounde
 And love onely his enemyes to warry
 All Grece made made his byddyng obeye 2730 f. 43v

Of one acorde knightly by his syde
 All attones to Thebes for to ryde
 For to avenge sithe they were so stronge
 The grete Iniury and inportabull wronge
 vn to his sone and to his nexte Allye
 As ye haue to forne herde me specyfie
 But whilys that Grekes reste a while in pese
 y woll resorte vn to Ethiocles
 Wheche in Thebes waerly hathe aspyed
 By his frendes as he was certyfyed 2740

Off the Grekes holly the ordynaunse
 Her purpose eke and her p^rvyaunse
 And therof hadde in herte a maner drede
 And furste he toke his counseyle and his rede
Howe Ethiocles made hym stronge
ayenst the Comynge of the Grekes
 Off the lordes and the Barounse of the towne

And of the wyseste of his region
 Howe he myght make resistense
 Namely to stonden at defense
 To be stronge p^t there were no doute
 And in the Cuntre Adiacent aboute 2750

And eke also in foreyn regions
 He hathe witholde all the champions
 And therevpon he sent owte his aspies
 And his frendes and his next Allyes
 And all the worthy dwellynge Environ
 yonge fressehe and lusty he gaderde to the toun
 mastawed his walles and his hie toures
 And stuffed hem with many sowdyors
 Round aboute he sette many gonnes
 Grete and smale t som large as the tonnes 2760

In his hasty passynge brynnynge hete f. 44r
 He spent his tresoure and gave yefts grete
 vn to knights and worthy men of name
 And evermore to encrease his fame
 He yaffe vn to lordes Iewell many folde
 Clothes of syluer and damaske and of golde
 To gete hym hertes sothely as yrede
 To helpe hym nowe in his grete nede
 And proudly purveyed hym beforne
 Off Flesshe and Fysshe of wyne and of corne 2770

Sette his capytayns erely and eke late
 with full grete stuffe stondynge at every gate
 And made also by werkemen that were trewe
 Barbycanse and Bulwerkes stronge and newe
 Barreys cheynes and dyches wonder depe
 makynge his vowe the Cite for to kepe
 whilis he lyveth in dyspyte of all his foen
 And by his goddes of metall and of stone
 Full offte he swore bothe of herte and thought
 That hit shall furste be full dere bought 2780

And many a man with pollax swerde and knyfe
 To fore this toun furste shall lese his lyfe
 And there shall eke many sydes blede
 Or that his brother peseably possede
 The towne in pecelike as the Grekes wene
 But at the ende the trouthe shall besene
 lat hym beware and well to forne provyde
 For Adrastus on p^t other syde
 For his parte was not n^cligent
 But on a day helde a parliament 2790

All his lordes syttynge Environ
 To dryve shortely a pleyne conclusion
 And vp to poynte the fyne of her entent
 But some thought full expedient f. 44v

Or they procede to werke by the advyse
 Off one p^t was full prudent and wyse
 And Circnspecte in his werkes all
 A worthy bysshop in to age falle
 And called was sothely by his name
 Amphiorax of whom the grete fame 2800

**Howe the Bysshop Amphiorax was sent for
 to come vn to the Grekes in all the haste**
 Thurgh all the londe bothe Este and Southe
 Amonge Greges passynge was couthe
 Aman in sothe of olde antiquite
 And moste Accepted in Auctorite
 Furste by reson of his hie astate
 And eke for he was so fortunate
 And in his werkes was also secrete
 With the goddes knowynge there pryvyte
 By g^runt of whom as bokes specyfie
 He had a spirit off trewe prophecie 2810

And coude aforne full opynly dyvyne
 Thyngs bygonne howe they shulde fyne
 And eke by Craffte of calculacion
 yeve a dome of every question
 And had in magyk grete experyence
 And fynde coude by hevenly influence
 And by mevyng of the highe sterres
 A Fynall dome of kontekt and of werres
 And wyste well as his goddes tolde
The prophecie of Amphiorax the bysshop
 That yff Grekes forthe her Iorney holde 2820

hit turne shulde platly this no fage
 To grete mysshete and to grete damage
 Off hem ecchone inespéciall
 The moste parte of the blode roiall f. 45r
 Thurgh all Grece hit may not be withdrawe
 In this viage shortely shall ne slawe
 And yf hym selfe with the grekes went
 Who that ever wepte hym o binmte
 This was the fyne and may not be socoured
 Of the erthe he shall be devoured 2830

Quik as he was he knewe hit in certeyn
 And for he sighe p^r was none op^r geyne
 To save his lyfe nore no bette defende
 Than sodenly to with drawe his presence
 p^rayinge his wyfe for hym to provyde
 yf he were sought p^t she shulde hym hyde
 And womanly for to kepe hym close
 And of troupe^e conselynge his purpose
 For all his truste touchynge his grevaunse
 Was fully sette in her purvyaunse 2840

y hope to god þ^t he dare not drede
 Of no disceite in her womanhede
 Shewas so trewe as women be ecchon
 And also close and Inued as a stone
 That she ne wolde as þ^e mater stode
 Discuren hym for no worldely gode
 But fyneally the grekes of entent
Howe the wyfe of amphiorax of conscience
to save her hus othe discured her husbonde
 In all his drede hathe for the bisshop sent
 And soughten longe or they myght hym fynde
 For cause his wyfe was to hym so kynde 2850

That so sewerly hathe lokked vp his corse
 But for she hathe a maner remors
 In her selfe grevyngre her consciense
 Dredynge to failed in grete offense
 leste her soule were in perell lorne f. 45v
 Whan she by othe compelled was and sworne
 They requered yf she coude telle
 Where her lorde þ^e bisshop shulde dwell
 Whiche to discure her herte was full lothe
 Till tyme she gan remembr on her othe 2860

And coude of trouthe of costom not denye
 And had also grete consience to lye
 Wonder hevy with a sorufull face
 magre her luste taught hem to þ^e place
 Where as he was shit vp in a toure
 All alone havynge no socoure
 They fall on hym or þ^t he was ware
 And sette hym vp in a full riche chare
 A fole he was to Iupartre his lyfe
 For to discure his counsell to his wyfe 2870

And yet she was full sory for his sake
 And specially whan she sighe hym take
 But y hope þ^t her hevynes
 Gan to swage full sone by proces
 In shorte tyme whan þ^t he was gone
 There is no tempest may laste ever mo in one
 But this bisshop by verry force and myght
 Vn to the Grekes conveyed was full right
 This hore graye in his chare syttyngre
 And they full glad were of his comynge 2880

Havynge a truste and full opynyon
 Thurgh cause and occasion
 Of his wysdom and his sapience
 And by vertu of his presciens
 They shulde esshewe all maner adversite
 possible to fall as in her iorne

And as the story fully hathe devysed
 Full Circumspecte and right well avysed f. 46r
 He hathe pronounsed in the parliament
 To fore the lordes and the president 2890

His clere conceyte in verry sykyrnes
 Not entryked with no dowbylnes
 Her dysmoll dayes and her fatall houres
 Her aventure and her sharpe shoures
 The frowarde sette and vnhappy stoundes
 The compleynt of her dedely woundes
 The wofull wreche and the contryouste
 Off fell mars and his c^uelte
 And howe by mene of his gery mode
 There shall beshad all the worthy blode 2900

Off the Grekes it may not be esshewed
 yf her purpose be execute and swed
 There nys no more this shall be the fyne
 The highe nobles shall drawe to declyne
 Off Grekes blode in myschefe sorue and wo
 And with all this y my selfe also
 As my fate hathe aforne disposed
 Depe in the grounde y shall be enclosed
 And locked vp in the derke vale
 Off cell dethe lo p^s was the tale 2910

That the bysshop to Adrastus tolde
 Hym councelynge his purpose to witholde
 In esschewynge of more myschefe and sorwe
 For all his goddes he toke to borwe
 yff the Thebans and the grekes mete
 The fynes therof shall be vnsote
 That all Grece here Afftir shall hit rewe
 Warnynge hem yf they the myschef shewe
 That shalte folowe whiche no man may lette
 They wolde abstene a sege for to sette 2920

Vn to Thebes and her purpose leve f. 46v
 With whose wordes p^e lordes gan hem greve
 And therin hadde full small delyte
 And everychon of hertely hye dyspyte
 They abrayde and seyde he was vntrewe
 And a contryver of prophecies newe
 And eke also for his longe berde
 A olde dotarde a cowarde and a ferde
 And of Rancour gan to dyffye
 Bothe his Calkynge and his ast^onomye 2930

And shortely seyde they toke p^fof none hede
 Ne wyll nothyngge governe hem by his rede
 This was the noyse and clamoure In every coste
 Off hie and lowe thurghe all the hoste

And specyally of þ^e pore sowdyours
 And of lordes reynynge in her floures
 And off the states effectually y mene
 Whiche of arte were but tender and grene
 That haue not had by martes influence
 Off þ^e verry grete experyence 2940

Here yff ye lyste ye may consider and see
 Off covetyng of grete adversite
 Howe þ^e youthe no perell caste to forne
 Till he in myshefe sodenly be lorne
 There as age provydith every thyng
 Or he begynne to caste þ^e endynge
Howe age and youthe bene of diuerse opynions
 youthe ys governyd by a large reyne
 To rynne forthe and kan hym not refreyn
 But on hede sette on all attones
 As he þ^t hurtillith ayenste harde stones 2950

Breseth hym selfe and vnwarly þbraketh
 But age expert nothyng vndirtaketh
 But he to forne by gode discession f. 47r
 make a dewe examynacion
 Howe hit woll turne to bad or gode
 But youthe as sferre as stered ys the blode
 Taketh Empⁱses of hasty wylfulness
 Ioye at the bygynnyng the ende ys wrecchydnes
 The p^udent in all his governaunse
 Full longe aforne maketh purvyauunse 2960

But youthe allas by counsell woll not werke
 For whiche full offte he stumbleth in the derke
 This ys seelde seyne þ^e trouth to determyn
 That age and youthe draweth by a lyne
 And where þ^t foly hathe dominacion
 Wysdom ys put in subieccion
Howe wysdom with owte soportacyon
Avalith full hall or nocht
 lyke as this bysshop with all his hie p^udense
 For cause he myght haue none audiense
 All his wysdom and his prophecie
 Off the Grekes was holden but folye 2970

For thoughe plato and wyse Socrates
 morall senek and dyogenes
 Allbomasar and p^udent Tholome
 And Tullius that had the sovereynte
 Whilom in rome as of Elloquense
 Thoughe all these shortely in sentence
 Were on lyve moste Cunynge and experte
 And noman lyste her counseyle to averte
 Nore of her sawes for to take hede

What myght avayle and hit come to nede 2980

For where p^udense kan fynde no socoure
 And provydense hathe no favoure
 Farewell wysdom and farewell discession
 For lak onely of supportacyon f. 47v
 For vnsuspected with his lockes hore
 Amphiorax gan sighen full sore
 With hede enclyned with many hevvy thought
 Whan he sighe his counsell stode for noight
 For vtterly the grekes as y tolde
 Have fully caste her iorney for to holde 2990

made hem redy and gon for to haste
 Towarde Thebes the Cite for to warry
 And in Grece woll no lenger tarry
 And forthe with hem Amphiorax they carye
 Sette in his chare with a dolefull herte
 Whan he wyste he myght not asterte
 Off his fate dysposicion
 And hastynge in to the region
 Off ligurys Trekes gan approche
 Off sondy londe with many a Craggy roche 3000

But all the wey sothely as they gone
 For horse ne man water was there none
 So drye were the vales and the pleynes
 For all p^t yere they had no reynes
 But full grete doute as made ys mencion
 And all they serched environ
The grete myschefe that the grekes had for defance
 They nethir founde well ne Rever of water
 Hem to refresshe ne water p^t was clere
 That they allas no refute ne konne
 To Importabull was the shene sonne 3010

So hote on hem in felde where they leye
 That for myschefe men and horse deye
 Gapyng full drye vpwarde in to p^e southe
 And some put her swerdes in her mouthe
 And spere hedes i story as hit ys tolde
 To swage her thruste with the Iron colde f.
 48r
 And off his lyffe many one dyspeyred
 In this myschefe ys home agayne repeyred
 Till on a day worthy Tydeus
 And with hym eke the worthy kynge Campaneus 3020

Off purpose rode thurgh the Cuntre
 yf they myght anny water see
 From coste to coste bothe ferre and nere
 Till of fortune they entred an Erber
 With trees shadowed for the sonne shene
 Full of Erbes and of floures grene

Wonder holson bothe off sighte and Eyre
 Therin a lady þ^t passyngly was feyre
 Syttyng as tho vnder a laurer tree
 And in her Armes a litill chylde had shee 3030

Full gracious of loke and of vysage
 And was also wonder yonge of age
 Sone off the kynge borne to succede
 Called ligurgs in story as y rede
 Whose hertely ioye and wordely dysporte
 All his myrthe plesaunce eke and comforte
 Was in this chylde of excellent feyrenes
 And this lady myrror off semelynes
 All sodenly as she caste vp her sight
 And on a stede stode an Armed knight 3040

Gretly basshed gan anone renne
 But Tydeus gan afftir to swe
Howe Tydeus compleynyd vn to the lady
off the grete defance off water in þ^e hoste
 And seyde Syster bethe nothyng dysmayed
 In youre selfe dysplesid nore affrayed
 For we bethe come onely to this place
 you to beseche of mercy and grace
 Ws to socoure In owre grete nede f. 48v
 Declarynge to you howe hit stant in dede
 Here faste by almoste at honde
 The worthieste off all grekes londe 3050

kynge and prynces bethe logged in the felde
 And many other with pollax and with shelde
 Whiche in myschefe perell and grete drede
 For want of water are lyke to be dede
 Fore there was none of highe and lowe degre
 In all oure hoste nowe passed dayes thre
 That dranke allas exceptyng none astate
 Owre Fate ys so Infortunate
 Prayinge you of womanly pyte
 Benyngely and gracyous to see 3060

Howe of grece all the chevalrye
 Off her lyves stonde in Iupardye
 That ye wolde of womanhode telle
 yff ye knowe rever spryng or well
 Specyally nowe in oure care
 Off gentylnes vn to ws declare
 lo here ys all yf ye lyste to here
 That y woll seye myne owne syster dere
 And whan the lady inly vertous
 The compleynt herde of worthy Tydeus 3070

Off womanly pyte changeth chere and hewe
 And in her hert on his wo gan rewe
 And full godely seinge his distres

Seyde vn to hym in all his hevynes
Howe Curtesly the lady taught
Tydeus vn to a well full of water
 Certis quod she yf y Were at my large
 Touchynge this chylde whiche I haue in charge
 I shulde in haste of all þ^t doith you greve
 To my power helpe to releve
 Onely of Routhe and of compassion
 And leve all othir occupacion

f. 49r

3080

Conveye you and be youre trewe gyde
 To a rever a litill here besyde
 But y dare not so myche me assure
 This litill chylde to put in aventure
 I am so ferde from hit to departe
 But for youre sake yet y shall Iuparte
 my lyfe in dethe of trewe affeccion
 To provyde for youre saluacion
 Toke the chylde and leyde hit in her lapp
 And ryche in clothes gan hit wrapp

3090

And couched it amonge the Erbes sote
 And leyde aboute many an holsom rote
 And floures eke bothe blewe and rede
 And she oppressed with a maner drede
 With Tydeus forthe anone she went
 As she in trouthe þ^t no treson ment
 And on her waye wolde never reste ne dwelle
 Till she hym brought to a right feyre well
 And to a rever of water full habounde
 But who was glad and who was Iocounde

3100

But Tydeus seinge the revere
 Whiche in all haste sent a messangere
 To Adrastus and bad hym not abyde
 But downe dyscende to the revers syde
 with all his hoste recure for to haue
 At this Rever her lyves for to save
 And they enhasted hem makynge none abode
 All attones to the ryver rode
 For to drynke they had so grete luste
 Off Appetyt for to stanche her thruste

3110

And som dranke and founde hit dyd hym gode
 And som were so fervent and so wode
 vponthe water þ^t in sykyrnes
 Thurgh vndiscrete and hasty gredynes
 Owte of mesure þ^e water so they drynke
 That they fill dede even vpon þ^e brynke
 And som naked in to þ^e rever ranne
 Onely for hete of the somer sonne
 To bathen hem the water was so colde
 And some also as I haue you tolde

f. 49v

3120

y mene tho p^t p^udent were and wyse
 The water dronke in mesurabull wyse
 That of the thruste they haue aforne addured
 They were refresshid fully and recured
 The grekes then of hie and lowe degre
 For her profyte and grete comodite
 Compassed the ryver crystallyne of sight
 Off one acorde they her tentes pight
 To reste hem there in relese of her peyne
 Onely the space of a daye or tweyne 3130

And while the grekes on p^e rever laye
 This Tydeus vppon the same daye
 Full knightly hathe do his dyllygence
 This yonge lady with grete reverense
 To Adrastus godely to present
 At whose comynge p^e kynge hym selfe went
 Agayne her she fallynge downe on knees
 All the astates tho present and degrees
 Of grekes londe absent was none
 And in his armes toke here vp anone 3140

Thankynge her of her besynes
 Of her laboure and her kyndnes
 Behotyng her like as he was holde
 yf any thyng pleynely p^t she wolde f. 50r
 That he may done she shulde h^t redy fynde
 An Grekes all the story maketh mynde
 Off the astates beyng the present
 Thanked her with all here hole entent
 For reffresshyng done to many a Greke
 And for her parte behytyng her eke 3150

With her body and godes bothe too
 What her luste comaunde hem for to doo
 To be redy platly and not fayle
 And here myne auctor maketh rehersayle
 That this lady so feyne vppon to see
 Off whom the name ys Isiphile
 To Adrastus tolde as ye may rede
 lyneally the stok of her kynrede
 Whilom howe she a kynges doughter was
 Rehersyng to hym all the hole case 3160

Furste howe p^t she owte of her contre wente
 Shortely for p^t she wolde not assent
 To execute a conspiracion
 made by women of that region
 A thyng contry and ayenst all right
 That eche of hem vpon a certeyn night
 By one acorde shall warely take kepe
 Fader brop^r and husbondes in her slepe

With knyves sharpe and rasors kene
 kutte her throttes in p^t mortall tene 3170

Vn to this fyne as bokes tell can
 In all that londe be not founde a man
 But slayne ecchone to this conclusion
 That women myght haue p^t domynacion
 In p^t kyngdom and reigne at liberte
 An on no party interrupted be
 And for this lady passynge debonayre f. 50v
 To this mater was frowarde and contre
 kepte her fader p^t was no slawe
 But fro the dethe preserved and withdrawe 3180

For wheche Allas she fled the cuntre
 And of pirat takyn in the see
 To kynge ligurgs brought in all her drede
 And for her trouthe and her womanhede
 To her he toke his yonge chylde to kepe
 Whiche in the Erber she leffte allone to slepe
 Whan Tydeus she brought to the well
 And Iason some bokes tell
 That his lady hadde sonnes too
 Whan p^t he and hercules also 3190

Towarde colchos by her cuntre come
 For to complysshe p^e conquest of p^e Ram
 But who p^t lyste by and by to see
 The story hole of ysyphyle
 Her faders name whiche also y want
 Though som men seyne his name was Theont
 And some bokes vormes hym call
 But to knowe the aventurs all
 Off this lady ysyphyle the feyre
 So faythe full aye and inly debonayre 3200

loke on the boke that iohn Bochas made
 Whilom of women with rethorykes glade
 And dyrecte by sovereyn style
 To feyre Iane quene of cecyle
 Redeth there p^e rubryk of Isiphile
 Off her trouthe and her bounte
 Full craftely compylde for her sake
 And whan p^t she her leve hathe take
 Off Adrastus homewarde in her waye
 Tydeus gan her to conveye 3210 f. 51r

To the gardyn tyll she ys repeyred
 But nowe allas my mater ys dyspeyryd
 Off all ioy and all wylfulnes
 And restitute of all myrthe and gladnes

For nowe off wo begynne the sharpe shoures
 For this lady founde amonge the floures

**Howe the chyld was slayne of a se^rpent
 in the Erber whyle the lady was absent**

Her lytill chyld turnyd vp the face
 Slayne of a serpent in the same place
 Her tayle burlyd with syluyr skalys shene
 The venym was so persynge and so kene

3220

So vyolent eke the mortall vyolence
 Caused allas thurgh her longe absense
 She was to slowe homwarde for to hye
 But now can she but wayle wepe and crye
 But nowe kan she but sighe and compleyn
 And wofully wrynge her handes tweyne
 Dedely of loke pale of face and chere
 And gan to rente her gyilty tresses clere
 And offte sythes gan to seye allas
 y wofull wreche vnhappy in this case

3230

What shall y done or whether shall y gone
 For thys ys the fyne yf y here soiorne
 y wote hit well y may hit not askape
 The pytous fate that ys for me shape
 Socoure ys there none ne there may be no rede
 lyche my deserte but p^t y muste be dede
 For thurgh my slouthe and my n^cligence
 y haue allas done to grete offence
 That my gylt y may hit not excuse
 shall to the kynge of treson me accuse

3240

Thurgh my defaute and slouthe bothe too
 Hys sone ys ded and his heyre also
 Whiche p^t he loved more than all his gode
 For tresoure none so nyghe his herte stode
 Ne was so sepe graven in his corage
 That he ys lykly to fall in a rage
 Whan it ys so myne odyous offence
 Reported be vn to his audyence
 So Importable shall be his hevynes
 And well I wote in verry sothefastnes

3250

f. 51v

That whan the quene hath this thyng aspyed
 To myne excuse hit may not be denyed
 y doute hit not there geyneth no pite
 With owte respyte she will avenged be
 On me allas as I have deserved
 That from dethe y may not be reserved
 Nethir by byll ne by supplicacion
 For the rage of my transgression
 Requireth dethe and none op^r mede
 And thus Allas she quaketh in her drede

3260

- None othir helpe ne remedye she ne kan
 But adreynt in sorwe to the grekes ran
 Off hertely woo w^t face and chere dysteyned
 And her chekes with wepyngge all be reyned
 In her Array dystraught and furious
 To fore all she kam to Tydeus
 Fill on knees and gan her compleynt make
 Tolde pleynely that for Grekes sake
 She muste be dede shortely in substaunse
 Rehersyngge hym the grete of her grevaunse 3270
- Furste howe by treynes of a false serpent
 The chylde was slayne whyle she was absent
 And whan p^t he her myschefe vndirstode 3274
 In what perell and hevynes p^t she stode 3273 f. 52r
 vn to her full knightly he be hight
 To helpe and further all that ever he myght
 Hyr pytous wo to styntyn and apese
 And for to fynde vn to her dyssese
 Hasty comforte he went a full grete pase
 To Adrastus and tolde hym all the case 3280
- Off this vnhappy wofull aventure
 Besechyngge hym to do his besy cure
 As he was bounde of equite and of right
 To Adverten and to have a sight
 Howe she quytte her to grekes here toforne
 That were lykly ell to have bene lorne
 The socoure voyde of her womanhede
 For whiche he muste of knighthode take hede
 To remedye this vnhappy thyngge
 And Adrastus lyke a worthy kynge 3290
- To quyte hym selfe the story maketh mynde
 To this lady woll not be founde vnkynde
 Nether for coste ne for travayle
 But besy was in all p^t myght avayle
 To her socoure considerid all thyngs
 And by the advyse of all the worthy kyngs
 Off all grekes londe they bene acorded thus
 Prynces dukes and with hem Tydeus
 To holde her way and all attones to ryde
 To ligurys dwellyngge there besyde 3300
- Off one entent yf they may purchase
 In any Wyse for to ghetre grace
 For this lady called Isiphile
 They wolde assaye yf hit myght be
 And to his palleysse full roially bylte off stone
 The worthy Grekes come rydyngge everychon
 Every lorde Full fressshely on his stede f. 52v
 And ligurys exsaumple of manhode
 Anone as he knewe of her comyngge
 To quyte hym selfe lyke a gentyll kynge 3310

Ayen hem went to mete hem on the waye
 Full welbeseyne and in gode araye
 Reseyvyngge hem with a knightly chere
 And to Adrastus seyde as ye shall here
 Cosyn quod he and gan hym to enbrace
 ye bethe welcom to youre owne place
 Thankynge hertely to youre highe nobles
 That so godely of youre gentylnes
 Towardes me ye lyste yow to aquyte
 your selfe this daye youre cosyn to vysyte 3320

In the castell to take youre loggynge
 That never yet y was so glad of thyngge
 In all my lyfe and therto here my trouthe
 And ever more there shall be no slouthe
 That the chambrys and the large toures
 Shall be delyveryd to youre herberours
 That every lorde lyke as he ys of degre
 vn to hys loggynge assigned shall be
 youre offycers lat hem selfe devyse
 yff the howsynge largely may suffyse 3330

To yowe and youre strecchen and atteyne
 That eny state haue cause to compleyne
 And all youre hoste logged here besyde
 Whiche entenftyfly with you abyde
 lette hem fette by myne Auctoryte
 vytayle y nowe here in my Cyte
 And all p^t may hem socoure and save
 And at a worde all that ever y have
 ys full and hole at youre comaundement
 Quod Adrastus that ys not oure entent 3340 f. 53r

Nore no parte cause of oure comynge
Howe Adrasts and all the states of grekes
prayde ligurgs for the lyfe of ysyphyle
 For we bethe come all for a nothir thyngge
 A certeyne yefte of you. to requere
 Benyngely yf ye lyste to here
 Whiche we dare not opynly exp^rsse
 With owte p^t ye woll of gentylnes
 youre graunt aforne conferme and ratyfye
 Than we were bolde hit to specyfie 3350

Quod ligurgs what thyngge ever hit be
 Not excepted but onely thynges thre
 The furste ys this it touche not my lyfe
 my yonge son pleynely ne my wyfe
 Take all my gode or what ye lyfte provyde
 Off my tresoure owtset this thre asyde
 All the Remnont y counte not amyte
 Than Adrastus astonyed was alyte
 Whan ligurgs in conclusion

Off his sone made excepcion 3360

And whyle they trete thus in fere
 There come forthe one with wofull chere
 Off face and loke pale and nothyngede
 And loude crieth the kyngs sone ys dede
 Allas the whyle þ^t whilom was so feyre
 Afftir ligurys borne to bene heyre
 The whiche allas hathe yolden vp the brethe
 Off a serpent stongen vn to the dethe
 And with hys wounde newe fresshe and grene
 In the Erber lieth þ^t pyte ys to seen 3370

And hathe so leyne almoste all this daye f. 53v
 And whan ligurys herde this affraye
 And wyste his chylde was dede and had no mo
 litill wonder thoughe he were wo
 For sodenly the Importable smerte
 Ran anone and hent hy by the herte
The grete sorne that kynge ligurys made
For the dethe of his chylde And the grete
lamentacion of the quene
 That for constreynt of his dedely peyne
 Thurgh owte he felte corven every veyne
 The rage gan myne on hym so depe
 That he kan not but sobbe sighe and wepe 3380

And with the noyse and lamentacion
 The quene distraught ys dyscended downe
 And whan she knewe the grounde off all this sorwe
 Hyt neded not no teres her to borwe
 But twenty tyme vppon a rowe
 A swowne she fyll vn to the erthe lowe
 And stoundemele for thys myschaunse
 Styll as a stone she lyeth in a traunse
 And whan the chylde in to corte was brought
 To fore ligurys allas y wyte hym noght 3390

Vpon the corse with a mortall face
 He fyll attones and gan ht to embrace
 Sore to grype and gan anone vpsterte
 That whan Adrastus thys thyngede gan adverte
 Off kyngely routhe and compassion
 From hys yen the Tres fyll downe
 Eke kynges dukes þ^t aboute stode
 Onely of pite þ^t ys in gentyll blode
 No power had the Teres to refreyne
 That on her chekes downe began to reyne 3400

But all a day wolde not suffyce f. 54r
 All her sorwes in order to devyse
 Furste off the kynge and the quene also
 To tell all y shulde never haue doo

Not in the space almoste of an oure
 But whan the stormes and þ^e shoures
 Off her wepyng was somewhat over gone
 The litill corse was grave vndir stone
 And Adrastus in the same tyde
 ligurgs toke a lytyll owte asyde 3410

And full wysely with his p^udent speche
 The kynge present gan hym for to teche
 That for ro sorwe avayle may right noght
 To murder hym selfe with his owne thought
 Ayenst dethe may be no recover
 Though he in woo p^utuelly endure
 All helpeth noght Whan the soul ys gone
 And owre lyfe here who taketh hede þ^r tone
 ys but all exyle and a pylgrymage
 Full of Turment and of bytter rage 3420

lyche a see rynnynge to and fro
 Swynge an Ebbe whan the flode ys go
 lytyll space abydyng at the full
 Off whose soioure þ^e pope yeveth no bull
 For kynge ys none duke ne Empoure
 That may hym shroude ayenst his fatall shoure
 Off c^uell dethe whan hym lyste manace
 To marke a man with his mortall mase
 Than geynith not to his saluacion
 Nethir fraunchyse ne proteccion 3430

And litill or nought may helpen in this case
 Saufe condyte nore supsydyas
 For in this worlde who so toke aright
 ys none so grete off power and myght f. 54v
 None so ryche shortely ne so bolde
 But þ^t he muste dye othyr yonge or olde
 And ho in youthe passith this passage
 He ys ascaped all the wode rage
 All sorwe and troubyll of this p^rsent lyfe
 Replenysshed with contek werr and stryfe 3440

Whiche selde or never stondesth in sewerte
 Wherfor beste ys as hit semeth me
 Noman gruche but off hye p^udense
 The sonde of god take in pacyense
 And ye þ^t bene so wyse and manly to
 youre selfe to drowne in Turment and In wo
 For losse of thyng and you lyste to se
 That in no wyse may recovered be
 ys grete foly and vndyscreSSION
 And thus Adrastus hathe quered downe 3450

The substanse hole of þ^t he wolde seye

Tyll þ^t he founde a tyme for to praye
 Convenient for Isiphile
 Besechyng hym for to have pyte
 Off that she hathe offendyd his highenes
 Not wylfully but of rechyllesnes
 Furste þ^t he wolde his domes so devyde
 mercy preferr and set right asyde
 At requeste and p^rayer of hem all
 Off this vnhap and myshefe þ^t ys fall 3460

By hasty rygour not to do vengeaunce
 But thynke aforne on þ^s purvyaunse
 Who to wrecches doith m^rcy in her drede
 Shall m^rcy fynde whan he hathe moste nede
 And sithe he hathe power myght and space
 lat hym take this lady to his grace
 For lak of routhe þ^t she not dye f. 55r
 But the quene gan ayen replye
Howe the quene woll algate haue þ^e serpent dede
 And platly seyde as in this mater
 Avayleth not requeste nore p^ryer 3470

Pyte m^rcy nore remyssyon
 But yf hit be by this condycyon
 That the serpent cause of all the sorwe
 Thurgh his laboure ley his hede to borwe
 Thys ys the fynall and vtter recompense
 To fynde grace for her grete offense
 Or ell shortely shede Blode for blode
 And whan Grekes her answeve vndirstode
 Off one acorde in her beste wyse
 Toke on hem this adventures enpryse 3480

For love onely of Isiphile
 And gan to ryde environ þ^e cuntre
 By hylles valeyse roches and eke caves
 In dyches derke and in olde g^rves
 By every coste serchyng vp and downe
 Till at the laste full famous of renoun
 The worthy knight partonolope
 Was the furste that happenyd for to se
 This hydous serpent by a revours syde
 Grete and horryble sterne and full of p^rde 3490

vnder a roche by a banke lowe
 An in all the haste he bent a sturdy bowe
 And therin sette an Arrowe fylyd kene
 And thurgh the body spotted blewe and grene
Howe prothonolope sloughe the serpent
 Full myghtly he made for to glyde
 And hent owte a swerde hangyng by his syde

Smote off his hede and anone hit hent
 And therewith all began þ^e quene to p^rsent f. 55v
 Where thurgh pcell gan to aswage
 And thus of prowes and of highe corage 3500

This manly man pthonolope
 Hathe reconsylyd fayre Isiphile
 vn to grace fully of the quene
 Her yre voyded and her olde tene
 And by Adrastus medyacion
 kynge lygurgs grauntyd a pardon
 To this lady from all daunger free
 Tho was restored to her liberte
 In his paleyse all her lyfe to divert
 Thoughe Iohn Bochas þ^e contry tell 3510

For this Auctor affermeth owte of drede
 That Whan the chyld was w^t þ^e serpent dede
 She durste not for her grete offense
 Never afftir come in presense
 Off ligurgs but off intencion
 Fledde anone owte of þ^t regyon
 At herte she toke the chyldes deth so sore
 What fyll off her I kan fynde no more
 Than ye haue herde aforne me specyfye
 And the kyngdom yf bokes lye 3520
Nota de ligurgo Rege Tracce

Off ligurgs þ^t called was trace
 And as y rede in a nothir place
 He was the same myghty champyon
 To Atthenes that some with palomon
 Agayne his broþ^r pt called was arcyte
 y lad in his chare with iiii bulles white
 Vpon his hede a wrethe of golde full fyne
 An y fynde eke howe Bachus god off wyne
Bacus deus vini
 With his kynge was whilom at debate f. 56r
 Onely for he was pompous and elate 3530

Dystruccyon dede to hys vynes
 And for he furste set alay on wynes
 meynt Water whan they were to stronge
 And thus bakes for the grete wronge
 Brak hys lymmes and dreynt hym in the see
 Off ligurgs ye gete no more of me
 But the trouth yf ye lyste to veryfie
 Redeth of goddes the genologie
Nota de dudecum arboribus in libro Bochasu
de Genologia deorum
 lyneally her kynrede by degrees
 y branched owte vpon xii trees 3540

made by Bochas decertaldo called
 Amonge poetes in ytayle stalled
 Next fraunceyse petrak sewynge in certeyn
 Nowe vn to grekes y woll retorne agayne
 To tell forthe shortely yf y konne
 Of her iorney þ^t they haue begonne
 Howe Adrastus hathe his leue take
 Off ligurgs with his browes blake
 And departynge With Seynt Iohn to borwe
 made his wardes on the next morwe 3550

So well beseyne so myghty and so stronge
 wonder erly whan the larke songe
 With a Trompet warned every man
 To be redy in all the haste they kan
 For to remeve and no lettynge make
 And so they haue the right way take
 Towarde Thebes þ^e grekes everychone
 That suche a nothir gaderyd in to one
 Off worthy knights never afore was seyne
 Whan they in fere munstred on a pleyne 3560 f. 56v

And they ne stynt by none occasion
 Till they become even afore þ^e toune
 And there pight her tents proudly as y rede
 vnder the walles and in þ^e grene mede
 And whan the Thebans were beset aboute
 The manly knights wolde have yssued owte
 And haue skarmyssed in her hasty pryde
 with her Fomen on the othyr syde
 But by byddyngge of Ethiocles
 All þ^t night they kepte hem selfe in pese 3570

By cause onely þ^t hit was so late
 With grete awayte sette at every gate
 men of Armes all the night wakyngge
 On the walles by byddyngge of the kynge
 leste there were treynes or treson
 And on the toures and chefe dongeon
 He sette vp men to make mortall sownes
 With brasyn hornes and lowde claryons
 Off full entent the wacches for to kepe 3580

In his grekes proudely all þ^e longe night
 kyndelyd fyre and made full grete light
 Sette vp logges vpon every syde
 lyke as they shulde ever there abyde
 Comasse the toune there was no voyde space
 But all byset her fomen to manace
 And whilis they afore the Cite laye
 On every coste they sent vn to þ^e forreye
**The grete Forreys that the grekes made
 in the Cuntrey aboute the Cite of Thebes**

Brent townes thorpes and vyllages
With grete raveyn makynge her pyllages 3590

Spoilyd and robbed and brought home vytayle f. 57r
And all maner store of Bestayle
Shepe and nete and in her cruell Rage
With woundes slayne all p^t was savage
Herte and hynde bothe Buk and doo
The blac Bere and the wylde roo
The fatte swyne and the tusky bore
Carynge home for the grekes store
Whete and wyne for her avauntage
Heye and Otes fodder and forage 3600

With these kalendes as they thought due
The Grekes gan the Thebans to salwe
mnstrynge hem occasions felle
The sege sette shortely for to tell
Off full entente In her hatefull pryde
For lyfe or dethe theron to abyde
Who so ever here w^t be agreved
Tyll they fully her purpose have acheved
There may therof be made no relese
And off all this was ware Ethyocles 3610

Wheche gan in party gretely to mervayle
Whan he saughe the grete apparayle
Off the Grekes the Cite rounde aboute
And in hym selfe had a maner doute
Howe at the poynt what was beste to do
For p^t tyme hit stode with hym so
That to som abydyng in the town
He had in herte grete suspesyon
leste towarde p^t they were founde vnstable
And to his brother in party favourable 3620

The varyaunce in Thebes amonge hemself
For in the Cite there was varyaunse
That vn to hym was grete myschaunse
For in his nede shortely he ne Wyste f. 57v
Vpon whom p^t he myght truste
For they were not all in one content
For whiche he hathe for his counseyle sent
All his lordes and the olde quene
Suche as he dempte were pure and clene
Hole of one herte and not varyable
Off olde experte and alwey founde stable 3630

Requyrynge hem by cause they were wyse
All opynly to tell her advyse
Whethir hit were better pleynely in her sight
with his brop^r to treten or to fight
And som gaffe a full blunt centense

Whiche had off werr none experyence
 Seyde hit was beste and not to bene aferde
 To trye his right manly with his swerde
 And some also p^t were more p^udent
 Spak vn to hym by gode avysement 3640

lyste not spare but her conceyte tolde
 Howe hit was beste his couen^aunt for to holde
 And for to parforme his heste made to forne
 To his brother lyche as he were sworne
 So p^t his worde the worse to make hy fare
 Be not founde varyaunt from the dede
 For no rancoure haterede ne pryde
 And tho the quene toke hy owte asyde
The wordes of the worthy quene Iocasta
vn to Ethiocles her sone
 Tolde hym pleynely hit was vnsittyng
 Suche doubylnes to fynde in a kynge 3650

And seyde hym eke all though he were stronge
 vn to his brother he dyd wronge
 As all the towne woll recorde in dede 3653
 Wherfor late ws shape a nothir mene 3655 f. 58r
 In this mater the whyle hit ys grene
 Or this quarell gone to volunte
 Turne in the fyne to more adversite
 For yf hit be darreynid by batayle
 Who trusteth may lightly fayle 3660

And hit ys foly by shorte avysement
 To put a stryfe in marts Iuggement
 For harde hit ys whan the Iuge ys wode
 To trete aforne hy with owte losse of blode
 And yf we put owre mater hole in marte
 Whiche with his swerde his lawes doith coarte
 Than may hit happe wher ye be glad or wrothe
 Thowe and thy brop^r shall repent present
 Of youre trespas p^t bethe verry Innocent 3670

And many a thousande in case shall compleyne
 For the debate onely of you tweyne
 And for youre stryfe shall fynde vnsote
 And for thowe arte gynne³ grounde and rote
 Off this Iniury and this grete vnright
 To the goddes that herof have a sight
 Thow shalte acunte and a rekenyng make
 For all tho p^t perysshyn for thy sake
 And the cause nowe ys dryven so ferr
 Sodeyn pese or hasty werr 3680

moste fallen anone for p^e fatall chaunce
 Off lyfe and dethe dependeth in balaunse
 And thowe ne may by no crafte restreyne

That vpon one platly of you tweyne
 The sorte mote fall lyk as hit doith turne
 Who so ever therof laughe or morne
 And thowe arte dryven so narwe to p^e stake
 And p^u mayste not mo delayes make f. 58v
 But Fight or trete this quarell for to fyne
 By none engyne thowe kanst hit not declyne 3690

An hasty case as folke seyne p^t bene wyse
 Redresse requyreth by full shorte advyse
 For to trete longe nowe avaylith nought
 For to the poynte shortely p^u arte brought
 Eyther to kepe thy possessyon
 Or in all haste devoyde owte of this town
 Whether p^u therwith be wroth or well apayde
 Nowe note well p^t I have seyde
 And by my counseyle wysely condyscende
 Wronge wrought of olde newly to amende 3700

The tyme ys come hit may be none othyr
 Wherfor in haste trete with thy brother
 And agayne hym make no recystense
 But to thy lordes fully yeve credense
 By whose counseyle sith they be so sage
 let pollymyte reioyse his herytage
 And that shall turne moste to thyne avauntage
 lo here ys hole the fyne of owre counseyle
The tretyse of Ethiocles sent to his Brop^r
 And shortely tho for verry yre and tene
 Thoughe he p^r to frowarde was and wrothe 3710

Acorded ys herynge all the pryse
 yf he algate shall trete for a pese
 Hyt muste be by this condysyon
 That he wull have the domynacyon
 Furst to hym selfe in chefe reserved
 As hym thought he had hit well deserved
 And sole to hym selfe the sovereynte
 And vndyr hym in Thebes the cite
 He to graunt with a ryght gode chere
 pollymyte to reyngge for a yere 3720 f. 59r

Than to avoyde and not resorte ayen
 For more to clayme was but in veyne
 This wolde he done onely for her sake
 And other wyfe wolde he none ende make
 With Grekes what fortune ever fall
 And fyneally amonge his lordes all
 there was not one of highe ne lowe
 That wolde gone on this ambassate
 Owte off the toune for bette ne worse
 tyll Iocasta made sadell her horse 3730

And castes her sylfe to gone on this trete
 To make an ende yf hit woll be
 And this was done the morwe right be tyme
 vpon the houre whan hit drewe to pryme
 And with her went yonge dought^fes tweyne
 Antigon and feyre Imeyne
 Off his meyny full many aboute
 At the gate she was conveyed owte
 And off purpose she made furste her went
 On horse bak to kynge adrastus tent 3740

He and his lordes beyinge all in fere
 And they receyved her with right a glad chere
 Shewynge her lyke to her to degre
 On every halfe full grete humanite
 Pollymyte rysynge from his place
 And hombely his moder gan embrace
 kyssed her and than antigon
 And then Imeyne excellent in beaute
 And for they were passynge feyre
 Grete was p^e pres concourse and repeyre 3750

Off the ladyes For to haue a sight
 And Iocasta procedeth anone right f. 59v
 To Adrastus her mater to purpose
 And gan to hym specyally to dysclose
 The entent and wyll of Ethiocles
 And by what mene he desireth pese
 To hym reserved as she gan specyfie
 The hono^r hole and the regallye
 With septer and croune from hy not devyded
 But hole to hym as he hathe provyded 3760

An pollymyte by this condycyon
 vnder hym to reyng in p^e towne
 As a soget by sufferause of his brop^r
 But the Grekes thoughten all a nother
The knightly answere of worthy Tydeus
 And specyally worthy Tydeus
 pleynely affermyng it shulde be thus
 For they woll have no condyssyons
 But sette asyde all excepcyons
 Nothyng reserved in specyall
 But hole the lordeship regally and all 3770

Pollymyte shulde fully possede
 In Thebes crowned veryly in dede
 As right full kynge put in possession
 lyke p^e couen^aunts and Convencion
 y made of olde assured and asseled
 That shall not nowe of newe be repeled
 But stable and hole in his strenght stonde
 And let hym platly so vndirstonde

And furste þ^t he devoyde hym owte of toun
And delyver the septer and the croune 3780

To his broþ^r and make þ^rof no more
And shortely elles hit shall be bought full sore
Or this mater be brought to an ende
For Grekes ys there none þ^t shall hense wende f. 60r
Or þ^t oure right þ^t ys ws denyed
with lyfe or dethe darreyned be or tryed
We woll not erste from this toune remeve
And yf hym lyste all thyngs to esshewe
And all myschefe styntyn and appese
To ethir party he may do grete ese 3790

Thus y mene for his avauntage
Delyver vp hole the trewe herytage
To his brother for a yere to endure
And grekes shull fully hym assure
By what bonde hym lyste devyse
The yere complete in oure beste wyse
To hym delyver ageyne possession
With owte stryfe or condiccion
And to this fyne Iustely holde ws to
And yf hit fall hit woll not soo 3800

lette hym not wayte but onely afftir werr
The houre ys come we woll hit not deferr
lo here ys all and thus ye may reporte
To hym ayen whan ye resorte
From whiche poynt we caste ws not to varye
And yet to hym Amphiorax contry
Full pleyedly seyde in conclusion
This fyne shall cause dystruccyon
Off hem ecchone yf hit forthe procede
To be performed and execute in dede 3810

But that tyme for his Elloquense
He had in sothe but litill audyense
For whethir þ^t he ment gode or ylle
kyng Adrastus bad hym be stille
And Iocasta as wysdom dede her teche
Humble of her porte with a full softe speche
Gan seche menes In her fantasie f. 60v
yff she myght the yre modifie
Off þ^e grekes to make hem to enclyne
In ony wyse her rancor for to fyne 3820

She dyd her dever and her besy cure
But than befell a wonder aventure
Cause and grounde of grete confusyon
Grekes pturbynge and eke the toune
And it to tell may me not asterte
For wheche awhyle me style y mot diuerte

And shortely tell by dyscripcyon
 Off a Tegr dwellynge in the towne
Off a tame Tegr Beynge in Thebes
 Wheche from a kyngdom besydes adiacent
 Owte of Egipte was to Thebes sent 3830

Wheche beste by recorde of scripture 3831
 Owte of Egipte was to Thebes sent 3830a
 Whiche beste by recorde of scripture 3831b
 ys moste swyfte as of his nature 3832
 And of kynde also moste savage
 And moste cruell whan he ys in his rage
 And as clerkes make mencion
 He of body resembleth þ^e lyon
 And lyke a grehounde þ^e mosell and þ^e hede
 And of yen as any fyre rede
 Eke of his skyn wretyn as y fynde
 lyche as a panter conu^rsaunt in ynde 3840

with all maner hewes and colourse
 And ys offte deceyved with myrroures
 By fraude of hunttes and false apparensse
 Shewed in glas with owte existense
 Whan his kyndelse aren by sleight take
 And he dysseyved may no recorse make
 And lyke a lambe was þ^s Tygre tame f. 61r
 Ayenst kynde myne auctor writ the same
 And this beste mervalous to see
 was sent Imeyne and antigon 3850

That vn to hem dyd grete comferte
 And coude pleye and make gode disporte
 lyke a whelpe þ^t ys but yonge of age
 And to no wyght dyd no damage
 Nomore in sothe than doith a litill hounde
 And it ys worthe many honderde pounce
 vn to the kyng for aye in his grevaunse
 There was nothyng þ^t dyd hym more plesaunse
 That for no tresoure hit myght not be bought
 For whan that he was pensyfe or in thought 3860

Hyt put hym owte of his hevynes
 And þ^t tyme the story doith expresse
 That Iocasta tretyd for a pese
 This tame Tygre in party rechyllese
 Owte of the gates in sight of many a man
 In to the felde wyldely owte ranne
 And casuelly rynnynge to and froo
 In and owte as doith þ^e tame roo
 Grekes wenyng þ^t were yonge of age
 That this Tygre had be saluage 3870

And cruelly besettyng all the place
 Round aboute gan hym to enchase
 Till he was dede and slayne in the felde
 The slaughter of whom whan they behelde
 The proude Thebanse wheche on þ^e walles stode
 They rounden furyous and wode
 Wenynge he had be sleyn of dyspyte
 Takyng her horse with oute more respyte
 Fully purposyd with grekes for to fight
 The tygres dethe to avenge yf they myght 3880 f. 61v

And forthe they rode with owte governayle
 And full proudly grekes gan assayle
 And of hatered and of highe dysdeyne
 Fyll vpon hem þ^t have the Tygre slayne
 And cruelly quyt hem her mede
 That many a greke in the grene mede
 By the force and the grete myght
 Off her fomen laye slayne in this fight
 The Tegres dethe so dere they bought
 So mortally Thebans on hem wrought 3890

That all the hoste in the fylde lyinge
 was astonyed of this sodeyn thyng
 And in this while of rancour rechylles
 Owte off Thebes rode Ethiocles
 And with hym this worthy kynge Tremo^r
 Off his handes a nobyll werryo^r
 That made grekes for to forsake her place
 And to her tents gan hem to enchase
 And mydde the felde as they to geder hent
 On horse bak with sharpe speres whette 3900

Off verry hate and envyous pryde
 Full many one was dede on every syde
 The whiche thyng whan Tydeus aspieth
 Wode as a lyon to horse bak he hieth
 As he þ^t was never adele aferde
 But ran on hem and mette hem in the berde
 And magre hem in his cruelte
 He made hem fle home to her cite
 Hem p^rswyng of full mortall hate
 That many one lay slayne at the gate 3910

Gapynge vpright with her woundes wyde
 That vtterly they durst not abyde
 To fore the swerde off worthy Tydeus f. 62r
 He was on hem so passynge furyous
 So many Thebans he rofe to the herte
 That whan Iocasta the slaughter gan adverte
 Pollymyte she pray gan full feyre
 To make grekes home ayen repayre
 And þ^t they wolde stynt to assayle

For that tyme and Sese her batayle 3920

At whose requeste pleynely and p^rayer
 And at reverense of his moder dere
 Pollymyte her herte to comforte
 Grekes made home ayen resorte
 And Tydeus to styntyn of his chase
 And they of Thebes howghtyng a grete pase
 Full tryste and hevye bethe entred in to p^e toune
 And for the Teger in conclusyon
 As ye haue herde furste began the stryfe
 That many Theban p^t day loste his lyfe 3930

And recurles hathe yolden vp the brethe
 In the avengynge of the Tegirs dethe
 And all this whyle duly as she aught
 The quene Iocasta humbely besought
 kynge adrastus onely of his grace
 Some mene way wysely to purchase
 To make a pese atwene p^e bretherne tweyn
 And trefy so prudently ordeyne
 On ethir party p^t no blode be shedd
 And this Adrastus avysed and right sadd 3940

For grekes parte answer yafe anone
 That other ende shortely gate she none
 lyche as the lordes fully bene avysed
 As Tydeus aforne hathe devysed
 And whan she sawe it may none op^r be
 She leve toke and home to p^e cite f. 62v
 She ys repeyred havynge to gyde
 pollymyte rydynge by her syde
 And Tydeus lad antigone
 And off Archady prothonolope 3950

The worthy kynge dyd his besy peyne
 To be attendaunt vpon feyre Imeyne
 Whose herte she hath to her servyse lured
 And he ayen hathe portreyed and figured
 midde of his breste whiche lightly may not passe
 Holy the fetures of her fresshe face
 Hym thought she was so feyre a creature
 And thought he durste hym not discure
 And in his herte as ferforthe as he kan
 He hathe avowed to be her trewe man 3960

vnwyste to her pleynely and vnknowe
 Howe he was marked with Cupydes bowe
 With his arrowe sodenly warryed
 And to the gate the ladyes conveyed
 Bethe entred in for hit droughe nyghe to eve
 Grekes of hem tho takynge her leve
 Thogh som of hem were lothe to departe

yet of wysdom they durst not iubarte
 vnder a cundyte to entir in to p^e toune
 leste it torned to her confusion 3970

Thoghe som bokes the contry seyne
 But myne auctor ys pleynty there ayen
 And affermeth in his oppynyon
 That Tydeus of highe dyscreSSION
 Off wylfulnes nore of no folye
 In wolde not as tho put in Iupdie
 Nethir hym selfe ne none off his feros
 And the ladyes with her hevenly cheres
 Angelyk of loke and of countenaunse
 lyche as hit is put in remembraunse 3980 f. 63r

At the entrynge fro the grekes in to p^e towne
 Pollymyte of grete affeccyon
 The quene besought p^t she not fyne
 For to assaye yf she myght enclyne
 Ethiocles of concyense and right
 To kepe couen^ante as he hathe by hight
 Full yore agone with surplusage
 leste p^e contry turne to damage
 Furste of hym selfe and many a nothir mo
 And thus from Thebes the Grekes bene ago 3990

To her Tents and reste hem all p^t night
 And lucyna the mone shone full bright
 Within Thebes on the chefe dongeon
 Whan Iocasta made relacion
 vn to the kyng and tolde all the gyse
 Howe p^t Grekes vtterly dyspyse
 His profer made by false collusyon
 Onely excepte the Convencion
 Off olde engrosed by grete p^rvyaunse
 Whiche ys enrolled and put in remembrance 4000

Vpon whiche they fyneally woll reste
 Hym counceylng her thought for the beste
 To conferme hym to p^t he was bounde
 leste in the fyne falsehede hym confounde
 But all her counseyle he set hit at no pryse
 He dempte hy selfe so p^udent and so wyse
 Foe he was wylfull and indurat
 And in his herte of malyse obstynate
 And vtterly avysyd in his thought
 Within Thebes his brop^r gete right noght 4010

And in his Errour thus y lete hym dwell
 And of Grekes forthe y woll you tell f. 63v
 Wheche all p^t night kepte hym selfe close
 And on the morwe whan Tytan vp arose

They armed hem and gan hem redy make
 And of assent haue the felde y take
 With the Thebanse þ^t day with owtyn doute
 For to fighten yf they Issuen owte
 And Adrastus with full godely and Thryfty wyse
 In the felde his wardes gan devyse 4020

As he þ^t was of all dysceytes ware
 And rychely armed in his chare
 Amphiorax kam with his meyne
 Full renomede of antiquite
 And well experte by cause he was holde
 And whyle þ^t grekes as I haue you tolde
 Were besiest her wardes to ordeyn
 midde of the felde befell a case sodeyn
 Full vnhappy lothesom and odible
 For lyche athinge þ^t were Invysible 4030

This olde bysshop with horse and chare certeyn
 Disapered and was no more seyne
 Onely of fate whiche noman kan repell
 The erthe openyd and he went downe to helle
Howe the Bysshop amphiorax went doune to hell
 With all his folke þ^t vpon hym abode
 And sodenly the grounde þ^t they on stode
 Closed ayen and to gheder shette
 That neuer afftir with the Grekes mette
 And thus the devell for all his olde outrages
 lyche his deserte payde hym his wages 4040

For he full lowe ys destended downe
 In to the derke and blak regyon
 Where þ^t pluto ys Crouned and stalled
 With his quene proserpina called f. 64r
 With whom this bysshop hathe made ys mancion
 Ppetuely as for his gwerdon
 lo here the mede of ydolatrie
 Off rights olde and false mawmetrye
 lo what avaylith incantancions
 Off exorcesmes and coniurysons 4050

What stode in stede his nig^rmansies
 Calculacion or astronomie
 What vaylyd hym the hevenly mansions
 Diuerse aspectes or constellacyons
 The ende ys nought but sorwe and myshaunse
 Off hem þ^t setten her affyaunse
 In suche werke supsticious
 Or tryste on hem he ys vng^racious
 Recorde y take shortely for to tell
 Off this bysshop sonken down to helle 4060

Whose wofull ende done in every coste
 Sucha a Rumor^r made in the hoste
 That the noyse of this vncouth thynke
 ys y ronne and come vn to the kynge
 Howe þ^s vengeaunse ys vnwarely falle
 And he anone made a Trompet calle
 All his peple owte of the fylde agayne
 And everychone assembled on a pleyne
 For the kynge and also rounde aboute
 Eueryche man of hys lyfe in dowte 4070

Full pyteously gan to sorwe and loure
 leste þ^t all men wolde deuoure
 And swolowe hem in his derke kave
 And they ne kan no recure hem to save
 For nethir force ne manhode may avayle
 In suche myschefe the valewe of a mayle f. 64v
 For he that was wyseste and coude moste
 To serche and seche thurgh owte þ^e hoste
 Amphiorax whan he leste wende
 To hell ys sonken and coude hy not defende 4080

To hym the tyme vnknowe and vnwyste
 In whom whylom was the grekes truste
 Here hole comforte and her affyaunse
 But all attones for this sodeyn chaunse
 And this myschefe they gone to dyspeyre
 Home to Grece they woll repeyre
 This was the purpose of hem everychone
 And on the walles of Thebes laye her fone
 Reioysynge hem off this vnhappy vre
 Wenynge thereby gretely to recure 4090

And on her Toures as they loken owte
 They on Grekes envyously gan shoute
 And of dyspyte and grete enmyte
 Bad hem foles go home to her cuntre
 Sethe they have loste her comforte and socoure
 Her false prophet and her dyvyno^r
 Wherethurgh her party ys gretely appeyryd
 And in this wyse grekes dysapered
 Dempte pleynelly by tokens evydent
 This case was falle by som enchauntment 4100

By whyche craffte or by sorcery
 Ageynste the whiche may be no remedye
 Trysty defense helpe nere socoure
 And whan Adrastus herde this clamoure
 He besy was ayenst this pturbanse
 To provyde som man chevysaunse
 And to hym calleth suche counseyle as wyste
 For lyfe or dethe þ^t he myght truste
 Requyrynge hem but in wordes fewe f. 65r

In this myschefe her mocyon to shewe 4110

And declare by gode avysement
 What to Grekes were moste expedient
 To remedie and make no delay
 The uncouthe noyse and p^e grete affraye
 That grekes made with clamoure oportune
 And newe and newe ever in one contynwe
 And they p^t were moste manly and wyse
 Shortely seyde hit was a cowardyse
 The hie empryse p^t they haue vndertake 4120
 For drede of dethe so sodenly to forsake

Hit were to hem a perpetuell shame
 And vttir hynderynge to the grekes name
 And better hit were every werryoure
 manly to dye in worship and honoure
 Than lyke a cowarde with lyfe endure
 For ones shamed harde ys to recure
 His name ayen of what estate he be
 And sith Grekes of olde antiquite
 As of knighthode who so lyst take hede 4130
 Bene so famed and so renommed

yf nowe off newe the shynynge of her fame
 Eclipsed were with any spot of blame
 Hit were athynge vncouthe for to here
 Off whose renoun the bemes yet bene clere
 Thurgh all the worlde where as they haue passed
 And be not derked ne defaced
 By no reporte nethir in see ne londe
 Thyngge to forsake p^t they take in honde
 And by ensauple of oure progenito^rs
 That whilom were so manly conquero^rs 4140

To foerne p^t we in to Grece wende
 Off thyngge begonne let ws make an ende f. 65v
 And parte not ne dyssever from p^s toune
 Till hit be brought to dystruccyon
 Walles toures Crestes enbataylyd
 And for werre strongely apparaylyd
 Be furste donne bete p^t nothyngge be sey
 But all to gheder with p^e erthe pleyne
 Be lowe leyde or p^t we resorte
 That afftirwarde men may off ws reporte 4150

That we began and we knightly haue acheved
 vpon oure fone with worship vnreproved
 This was p^e counceyle shortely p^t advyse
 Off the Grekes p^t manly were and wyse
 That neuer afore marked with no blame

And specyally suche as dred shame
 And fully caste what fortune ever tyde
 On her purpose to the ende abyde
 That on no parte her hono^r not enpalle
 And to this counseyle grekes one and all 4160

Bene condyscended and for happy spede
 In stede of hym p^t was so late dede
 Amphiorax buryed depe in helle
 That coude whilom to the grekes telle
 Off thyngys hyd howe hit shulde fyne aforne
 In stede of whom nowe they haue hym lorne
 They casten hem wysely to purchase
 Som p^udent man to occupie his place
 That in suche thynges myght hym moste avayle
 Thurgh mystery of his dyvynayle 4170

By craffte of sorte and of prophecie
 yf any suche they coude owte spye
 Amonge all her purpose to atteyne
 As y fynde they haue chosen tweyn
Howe the grekes chosen hem a newe dyvyno^r f. 66r
in the stede of amphiorax
 moste renommed of hem everychone
 And menalypps called was p^t one
 And Tredims eke p^t other hight
 And for he had moste favoure in her sight
 This Tredims was chosen and proferred
 And in her choyse Grekes haue not Erred 4180

For whom he lerned his emprise
 Off his master Amphiorax the wyse
 And was disciple vnder his doctryne
 And of entent p^t he shall termyn
 Vn to grekes of thyngs p^t shall falle
 As a Bysshop mytred in his stalle
 They done for hym in many vncouthe wyse
 In the Temple to goddes sacrifice
 And thus confermed and stalled in his see
 A Fewe dayes stode in highe degre 4190

Afftir his master with full grete hono^r
 Off Grekes to be chose successoure
 And all this tyme in story as hit ys tolde
 Full grete hunger thryste and colde
 And of Thebans as they ysswen owte
 laye many one slayne in the route
 And on ethir party of fortune as they mette
 Her mortall swerdes were so sharpe whette
 And Tydeus amonge hem of the toune
 From day to day pleieth the lyon 4200

So cruelly þ^t where so ever he rode
 That Theban none afore his face abode
 He made hem thurgh his highe renoun
 So grete slaughter and occasion
 That as the dethe from her swerde they fledde
 And who kam nexte leyde his lyfe to wedde f. 66v
 He quyrt hym selfe lyke a manly knight
 That where he went he put hem to flight
 And magre hem in his c^uelte
 He drofe hem home to her Cite 4210

hem þ^rsuyngge proudely to the gate
 That vn to hym they bare so proudely hate
 That they hym caste by sleight or by som engyne
 To bryngge hym vnwarly to his fyne
 And leyde awayte for hym day and night
 But allas this noble manly knight
Howe peteously worthy Tydeus was slayne w^t a quarell
 vppon aday as he gan hem chase
 And mortally made hem lese her plase
 And sewed hem almoste to the toune
 That cause was of his distruccon 4220

For one allas þ^t on the walles stode
 Whiche all þ^t day vppon hym abode
 With a quarell sharpe heded for his sake
 markyd hym with a bowe of brake
 So cruelly m^akynge none areste
 Till hit was passed bothe bak and breste
 Wherethurgh allas þ^r was none op^r rede
 Nore leche craffte but þ^t he muste be dede
 There may þ^r of be made none delayes
 And yet he was holden in his dayes 4230

The beste knight and moste manly man
 As myne auctor well reherse kan
 For all þ^t there was none defense
 Ayenst þ^e stroke off dethes vyolense
 And Bochas wrytte or he were fully dede
 He was by grekes presentyd with the hede
 Off hym þ^t gaff þ^e laste fatall wounde
 And he was called lyke as it ys founde f. 67r
 menalypps y can none op^r telle
 But þ^t day Thebans wex so felle 4240

vpon grekes þ^t vnder her Cite
 The manly kynge partonolope
 y slayne was even aforne þ^e gates
 And there also armed bright in plates
 The famous kynge called ypomedon

The same day as made ys mencion
 On horse bak manly as he faught
 As the Bry even oppon p^e draught
 Beset with prese casuely was drowned 4249

On every syde p^t vnhappy day 4251
 But all the maner tell y ne may
 Off her fyghtynge ne of her slaughter in sothe
 more to declare than myne auctor doith
 But p^t day y fynde as ye may sene
 Whan phebus passed was p^e merydyen
 From the southe westwarde gan hym drawe
 Hys gylte tresse to bathe in the wawe
 The Theban kynge fell Ethiocles
 Rote of vnreste and cause of vnpese 4260

The slaughter of the grekes whan he behylde
 Armed in stele he cam owte of the felde
 Full desirous in p^t sodeyne hete
 Pollymyte in the felde to mete
 Singellerly with hym to haue a doo
 For in this worlde he hated noman soo
 he sette so nye enprentyd in his herte
 whose comynge owte his brother gan adverte
 vpon his stede in the apposyte
 And had agaynewarde also grete delyte 4270

To metyn hym yf fortune assent
 The envyous fyre so in her herts brente f. 67v
 Whiche hathe encresyd of vnkynde blode
 And lyke to Tygres in her rage wode
 With speres sharpe grounde for p^e nones
 So as they ranne and mete bothe attones
 Pollymyte thurgh plate and mayle and shelde
 Rofe hym thurgh and smote hym in the felde
 But whan he sawe the stremes of his blode
 Rayle aboute in maner of a flode 4280

All sodenly of compassion
 From his corser he light adoune
Howe everyche of p^e Thebans brop^r sloughe other
 And brop^rly with a pytous face
 To save his lyfe gan hym to enbrace
 And from his wounde of newe affeccion
 Full besy was to pull owte p^e tronchon
 Off love onely handelynge hym full soffte
 But o allas whyle he lay on loffte
 Full yrouslly Ethiocles the fell
 Off all this sorwe verry sourse and well 4290

With a dagger in all his peynes smerte
 Hys brop^r rofe vnwarly to^{the}herthe

Whiche all her lyfe haue bene so wrothe
 And thus þ^e Thebans were slayne bothe
 Atte entre even afore the toun
 But Grekes tho bene avalyd doune
 In to the felde the worthy knights all
 And in Thebes loude as any shall
 The Crye arose whan her kynge was dede
 And to the gates armed fote and hede 4300

Owte of the toun kam many a proude Theban
 And som of hem vpon þ^e walles ranne
 And gan to shoute þ^t pyte was to here
 And they with owte of her lyfe in were f. 68r
 With oute comforte or consolacion
 Disapeyred ran home to the toun
 And grekes folowen aftir at the bak
 That many one þ^t day goith to wrak
 And as her fomen proudly hem assayle
 Full many grekes thurgh plate and mayle 4310

were shet thurgh oute pressynge all the walles
 And betyn with grete rounde balles
 That here laye one and a nob^r yonder
 And the noyse more hydous than thunder
 Off gonne shot and of Arblasters eke
 So loude oute ronge þ^t many a worthy greke
 There leffte her lyfe they were on hem so Fell
 And at the gates shortely for to tell
 As grekes prese to enter the cite
 They of Thebes in her cruelte 4320

with hem mette full furious and wode
 And mortally as they ageyn hem stode
 men myght se speres shyver a sonder
 That to be holde it was a wery wonder
 Howe they foyne with daggers and swerdes
 Thurgh the vysor aryvynge at the berdes
 Rsynge also thurgh the rounde maylis
 Rent owte peses of her aventayles
 That nocht avaylith the myghty gesseran
 Thurgh nek and breste þ^t the speres ran 4330

her wepons were so sharpe whette
 In there armoure þ^t they were not lette
 For there laye one troden vndyr fote
 And there a nob^r perced to the herte rote
 Here lieth one dede and there a nob^r lame
 This was the pleye and þ^e mortall game
 A twene the Thebans and þ^e grekes proude f. 68v
 That the swoughes and the Cryes loude
 Of hem þ^t laye and yolden vp the goste

Was herde full ferre aboute in many acoste 4340

Howe al the roiall blode bothe of grekes syde

and on p^e Thebans slayne were vpon a daye

And at the gates soylunge of the wall

y slayne was all the blode roiall

Bothe off the toune and of p^e grekes londe

And all the worthy knights of her hande 4344

On grekes syde on lyve were but tweyne 4346

kynge Adrastus and Campaneus

That day to hem was so vng^racious

And for Tytan westred was so lowe

That noman vnnethes myght op^r knowe 4350

Off the toune they shit her gates fast

with barres full rounde made for to laste

In whiche no wyght carve myth ne hewe

And adrastus with Grekes fewe

Repeyred ys home to his tente

And all p^t night he wasted hathe and spent

For his vnhap in sorwe compleynynge

And there in Thebes p^e next day swynge

Her dever dyd and her besy cure

To ordeyne and make a sepulture 4360

For her kynge slayne in the felde

And offer vp his baner and his shelde

his helme his swerde and also his penoun

Therin of golde betyn a dragon

hie in the Temple p^t men myght seen

And Iocasta the Infortunat quene

Her sonnes dethe sore gan compleyne

And also eke her yonge doughter tweyne

Bothe emeyne and antigon

Cryden and wepte p^t pite was to see 4370

f. 69r

But for they sawe and token also gode hede 4377

with oute this that they hadde an hede

In the Cite they may not dure longe

For thoughe the Comyners be stronge 4380

with multitude and haue no governayle

Off an hede for litill hit may avayle

Therfor they haue vn to her socoure

y chosen hem a newe governo^r

Howe Creon the olde was chosen

to be kynge off Thebes

An olde Terant p^t was called creon

Full experte to hem everychone

And crouned hym withowte more lettynge

To reigne in Thebes and to be crouned kynge

All thoughe he had no title by discent

But by fre choyse made in parliament 4390
 And there to hym like as hit ys founde
 By llegeunse of newe they were bounde
 For to be trewe while the Cite stode
 To hym onely with body and with gode
 Thus they were sworne everychone
 And he ageynwarde to save hem from her foene
 And hem defende with all his full myght
 And maynteyn hem in all maner right
 This was the acorde as in centement
 And in p^s while hathe Adrastus sent 4400
 From the sege of Thebes the Cite
 A wounded knight home to his cuntre
 Thurgh all grece pleyndly to declare
 All the slaughter and the evell fare
 Of worthy grekes right as h^t is fall
 And howe p^t he hath loste his lordes all f. 69v
 Atte more myschefe p^t any man kan mouth
 And whan this thyng was in grece couthe
 Furste to Argyve and to deiphile
 And to the ladies eke in the cuntre 4410
 And of provynces aboute adiacent
 They come downe all by one assent
 Worthy quenes and with hem duches
 And op^r eke p^t callyd bethe countesses
**Howe all the ladies off Grece araye hem
 towarde the Cite of Thebes**
 And all the ladies and women of degre
 Bene assembled in Arge the Cite
 lyke as y rede and in clothis blak
 That to be holde the sorwe p^t they make
 hit were a dethe to any man on lyve
 And yf y shulde by and by dyscryve 4420
 There tendyr wepyng and p^e wofull sownes
 Her compleynt and lamentacions
 with offte swounyngs with face dede and pale
 There of y myght make a newe tale
 Almoste a day you to occupie
 And as myne auctor doith clerely ftifie
 Thurgh all grece from all regions
 Owte of Cites and roiall townes
 Come all the ladies and women off estate
 Full hevy chered and disconsolate 4430
 To this assemble to forne as I you tolde
 In purpose fully her iorney to holde 4433
 Towarde Thebes these sorufull creatures 4435
 To aquyte hemselfe in trouth in womanhede
 To her lordes whiche in p^e felde lay dede

As the story liketh to declare
 All this Iorney they went on fote bare
 lyke as they had gone on pylgrymage
 In tokyn off moernynge barbed the vysage

f. 70r

4440

Wympled ecchone and in Burned wedes
 Not in chares drawn forthe with stedes
 Nethir on palfrayse blak nethir white
 The Sely women coude hem not delyte
 To holde her way but barefote they went
 So feithfull everychone they ment
 Thurgh hevynes defaced of her hwe
 And as y fynde they were all trewe
 Nowe was not þ^t awonder thyng to see
 So many trewe owte of o cuntre

4450

At ones gaderyd in to a company
 And feithfull bokes kan not lye
 Bothe in her porte and inwarde in menyng
 vn to my dome hit was a wonder thyng
 Amonge a thousande women or tweyne
 To fynde one coude in herte feyne
 Hit was a m^rvayle not offte seene to forne
 For selde in feldes groweth any corne
 But yf som wede sprynge there amonge
 men alaye wynes whan they bethe stronge

4460

But her trouthe was ment with none allayes
 They were so trewe founde at all assayes
 That they ne stynt vpon her Iorney
 Till they come where they wolde be
 where Adrastus writ as y fynde
 lay in his tent all of coloure ynde
 And gretely m^rvaylyd whan þ^t he behelde
 The noub^r of hem sprad all the felde
 Clad all in blac and barefote everychone
 Owte of his tente he dressyd hym anone

4470

Vpon his hande the kynge Campaneus
 Full tryste in herte and face full pyteous
 Ageyne the Women forthe they went in fere
 And to beholde the hevy wofull chere
 The dolefull Cryes also whan they mette
 The wofull sighes in her brestes shette
 The teres newe dystyllynge on her face
 And the swounynge in many sondry place
 Whan they her lordes alyve not founde
 But in the felde girte with many wounde

f. 70v

4480

lay starke vpright pleynely to endyte
 with dedely yen turnyd vp the white
 Who made sorwe and felte her herte ryve
 For her lorde but the feyre argyve
 Who kan nowe wepe but dephile

Tydeus for she myght not see
 Whose constreynts were so fell and kene
 That Adrastus myght not sustene
 To be holde the ladyes so compleyne
 Wysshynge his herte corven were atweyne 4490

**Howe the olde Curced Creon woll not suffre
 the bodies to be brent ne buryed**
 And yet allas bothe evyn and morwe
 Othyngge þ^r was þ^t doubled all the sorwe
 That olde Creon fader of felonye
 Ne wolde suffer thurgh his tyranny
 The dede bodies buryed nethir brent
 But with bestes and houndes to be rent
 He made hem all vpon an hepe to be leyde
 Wherof the women were evell apayde
 For verry doell as hit was no wonder
 Her herts felte almoste ryve a sonder 4500

And as my master chaucer lyste to endyte
 All cladde in blak with her wymples white f. 71r
 with grete honoure and due Reverense
 In the Temple of the goddes clemense
 They abode the space of fourtenight
 Till Thesius the noble worthy knight
 Duke of Attenes with his chevallyry
 Repeyred home owte off Femeny
 And with hym ladde full feyre vpon tosene
 Thurgh his manhode ypolyta the quene 4510

And her systyr called Emely
 And whan these women gan asprie
 This worthy duke as he cam rydyngge
 kyngge Adrastus hem all conveyinge
 The women brought to his presence
 Whiche hym besought to gyf hym audyense
 And all attones swounyngge in the place
 Full humbely besoughte hym of g^race
 To rewe on hem her harmes to redresse
 But yf ye lyste to see the gentylnes 4520

Off Theseus howe he hath hym borne
 yff ye remembr ye haue h^t herde h^t to forne
 Well rehersed at depforthe in the vale
 In the begynnyngge of the knights tale
**Howe the sege of Thebes ys compendiously
 rehersed in the knightis tale in the boke
 of the tales off Caunterbery**
 Furste howe þ^t he herde hem speke
 For verry routhe he felte his herte breke
 And her sorwes whan he gan adverte
 From his courser doune anone he sterte
 Hem comfortyngge in full gode entent

And in his armes he hem all vp hent 4530

The knights tale rehersynge every dele
 From poynt to poynt yf he loke well f. 71v
 And howe this duke with oute more abode
 The same day towarde Thebes rede
 Full lyke a knight a worthy conquerour
 And in his Oste chyvalry the floure
 And fyneally to speke off this thyng
 with olde Creon p^t was of Thebes kynge
 howe p^t he faughte and slowe hy lyke a knight
 And all his hoste put vn to flighte 4540

And yet som Auctor maketh mencion
 Or Theseus entred in to the towne
 The women with pycoys furst + w^t malle
 with grete laboure beton doune the walles
 And in her wrytyng also as they seyne
 Campaneus was on the walles sleyne
 with caste off stones he was so over lade
 For whom Adrastus suche sorue made
 That noman may relese hem of his peyne
 And Iocasta with her daughters tweyne 4550

Full wofully bene oppressed of her cheres
 To Attenes were sent as prisoners
 what fill of hem more can y not seyne
 But Theseus myne myne auctor writ certeyn
 Owte of the fylde or he from Thebes went
 he bete hit d^oune and the house brent
 The peple sloughe for all her cryng loude
 he made her walles and her toures proude
 Rounde aboute even vpon a rowe
 With the soyle to be leyde full lowe 4560

That no wight was leffte but the soyle all bare
 And the women off her care
**Howe duke Theseus delyverid to the ladies
 the bodies of her lordes**

The bodies off her lordes p^t were slayne f. 72r
 This worthy duke restored hathe ageyne
 But what shall y any lenger dwelle
 The olde rytes by and by to tell
 Ne the obsequyes in order to devyse
 Nore to declare the maner and the gyse
 Howe the bodies were to Asshes brent
 Ne off the Gommes in the flaume spent 4570

To make the eyre swetter of relese
 Off Franke encense myrre alloes
**Ne howe the women rounde aboute stode
 som with mylke and som with blode
 And some of hem with vrynes made of golde**

When the ashes fully were made colde
 To enclose hem off grete affeccion
 And bere hem home to her region
 And howe p^t other full dedely of her loke
 For loue onely of her bones toke 4580

hem to kepe for remembraunse
 That to rehearse every observaunse
 That was done in the fyres bright
 The wake pleyes duryng all the nighte
 Ne of the wastelynge poynt be poynte
 Off hem p^t were naked and anoynte
 howe everyche other lugge gan and shake
 Nere howe the women hathe her leve take
 Off Theseus with full grete humbles
 Thankynge hym of his hie worthynes 4590

That hym lyste vpon her wo to rewe
 And howe p^t he his fredam to renewe
 with the women of his hie larges
 y partyd hathe eke of his riches
 And howe p^s duke Theseus hym forsoke
 And to Atthenes the right way toke f. 72v
 with laurere Crouned in signe of vycory
 And the palme of conqeste and of glorye
 dyd his hono^r duly to marte
 And howe the women wepte whan they parte 4600

Howe kynge Adrastus repeyred ayen to Arge
 With kynge Adrastus home ayen to arge
 To tellen all hit were to grete acharge
 And eke also as ye shall vnderstonde
 At the bygynnyng y take no more in honde
 By my promyse in conclusyon
 But to rehearse the dⁱstruccyon
 Off myghty Thebes and no more
 And thus Adrastus with his lockes hore
 Still abode in arge his Cite
 vn to his ende ye ghete no more of me 4610

Save as myne auctor liketh to compyle
 Afftir that he leved but a whyle
 For he was olde or the sege bygan
 And thought and sorwe so vpon hym ran
 The whiche in sothe shorted hathe his dayes
 And tyme set maketh no delays
 And all his ioye passed was and gone
 For of his lordes alyve was not one
 But slayne at Thebes ye knowen all the case
 And whan this kynge in arge buryed was 4620

Full roially with grete solempinte

hit was counted in bokes ye mowe see

**Some hundreth yere be fore þ^e fundacion of Rome
the Cite and all the Contrey of Thebes was distroyed**

Foure hunderde yere as made ys mencion

To fore the Byldynge and the fundacion

Off the grete Rome so roiall and so large

Whan the ladyes departyd from arge

f. 73r

To her cuntreys full truste and desolate

lo here the fyne of contek and debate

lo here þ^e myght of marse þ^e frowarde sterr

lo what hit ys to begynne a warr 4630

Furst off grekes and sithe of Thebes the Cite 4632

For eyther parte hathe mater to compleyne

And in her stryfe ye may se thyngs tweyne

Howe all the worthy blode of Grece distroyed

was at the sege of Thebes and the Cite brought

to nocht and to fynall losse of bothe parties

The worthy blode of all grece spylte

And Thebes of Amphion eke furste bylte

with owte recure brought vn to ruyn

And with the soyle made pleyne as any lyne

To wyldernesse turned and deserte

And Grekes eke fallyn in poverte 4640

Bothe of her men and of her gode

For fyneally all the gentyll blode

was shad owte there her woundes were so wyde

To losse fynall vn to every syde

For in the werre ys none excepcyon

Off hie estate and lowe condycyon

But as fortune and fate bothe y fere

lyste to dyspose with her dowbull chere

Bellona ys goddes off Batayle

And Bellona the goddes in her chare

Aforne provydith therfor every man beware 4650

vnavysyd a werre to begynne

For noman wote who shall lese or wyne

And harde it ys whan eyther parte lesith

And douteles nouter parte cheseth

That they moste in all suche mortall rage

magre her luste fele grete damage

f. 73v

Hit may not be by mannys myght restreyned

And Werre in sothe was never ordeyned

But for synfull folke to chastyse

And as the Bible truly gan devyse 4660

Howe the Werre furste began in heven by the

highe pryde and surquedre of lucyfer

Hye in heven of pryde and surquedrye 4661

The olde serpent levyatan 4663

was the furste þ^t ever werr began

Whan michaell the heavenly champion
 with his feres venquysshed the dragon
 And to hell caste hym doune full lowe
 The whiche serpent hathe p^e cokyll sowe
 Thurgh all erthe of envy and debate
 That vnneth ys there any state 4670

with owte stryfe kan leve in charyte
 For every man of highe and lowe degre
 Envyeth nowe p^t othir shall stryfe
 And grounde and cause why men so stryve
 ys covetyse and false ambicion
 That everyche wolde have domynacyon
 On op^r and trede hym over fote
 whiche off all sorwe gynnyngge ys and rote
 And Cryste recordeth rede luke and ye may see
 For lak of love what myschefe p^r shall be 4680

Surget gens contra gentem

For o people as he doith devyse
 Ayenste another of hate shall aryse
 And afftir telleth what dyvysyons
 There shall be by twene regions
 Every other besy to oppresse
 And all suche stryfe as he bereth w^tnesse
 kalender bene y take his worde to borwe f. 74r
 And agynnyngge of myschefe and of sorue
 men have hit founde by experyence
 But the venym and the vyolense 4690

Off stryfe or werr of contek and debate
 That maketh londes bare and desolate
 Shall be proscrip^te and voyde oute of plase
 And martis swerde shall no more manace
 Nore his spere grevous to sustene
 Shall nowe no more whetted be so kene
 Nere he no more shall his hauberke shake
 But love and pese shall in herts wake
 And charyte bothe in lenght and brede
 Off newe shall her bright bemes sprede 4700

Thurgh grace onely in dyverse nacyons
 For to reforme atwene regions
 Pese and quiete concorde and vnite
 And he p^t ys one too and thre
 And eke thre in one and sovereyn lorde of pece
 whiche in this exile for oure sake chese
 For love onely oure troubles to termyn
 For to be borne of a pure vergyn
 And lat ws p^raye to hym p^t ys moste gode
 That for mankynde shad his herte blode 4710

Thurgh the besechyng of þ^t heuenly quene
wyffe moder and a maydyn clene
To sende ws pese here in þ^s lyfe present
And off oure synnys perfight amendement
And Ioye eternall whan we hense wende
And of my tale thus y make an ende

4716

COLLATION OF THE PIERPONT MORGAN LIBRARY MS (M4) OF THE SIEGE OF
THEBES AGAINST THE BASE TEXT OF E&E (Arundel MS 119)

1. phebus] bri3te phebus
2. p^e] om.
- ?6. the opposition] thoposicioun
8. a] om.
fro] From
12. the] and
13. mysty] myghty
15. meynte] ymeynt
17. Fl ynge] Fletinge Erasure of letter(s) between l and y.
20. Off there] Of
astate] estatis
in there] in the
21. Euery] Euerich
23. gentylnes] gentillesse
25. eke] also
27. woll] wold
29. for] om.
30. Boystylly] Boystously
34. Glasy yen] Glasy-Eyed
Circnstaunce] circumstaunce
40. thurgh] thorghout
43. ho] who
45. whom] who (ed. whom)
be] ben
remembraunce] memoyre (ed. memorye)
46. whom] who (ed. whom)
yeve] Joue
honoure glory and pⁱce] pris honure and gloyre (ed. glorye)
51. proverbes] prouerbe
53. the] in
58. he] thei
dyd] ded (ed. deden)

59. pylgryms] pylgrimes sothly
61. from] fro
66. in] om.
- ?67. loggyd] louged (ed. logged)
70. befell] byfil
the] om.
72. my] om.
74. longe sclender] slender long
75. not made] mad nat
84. bethe] be
86. woll] wil
88. more] mor (ed. more)
95. haue] ha (ed. haue)
97. bethe]¹ be
syke] soul
98. to] om.
99. haue] han (ed. haue)
advyce] devis
100. an haggeyse] a rounde hagys
102. be] ben
103. bene] be
107. haue reste] rested han
108. slepe]¹ soper
woll] wil
you] om.
109. Wap] Wrappe
with] om. (ed. with)
110. Charge] Strong
make] mak (ed. make)
to] om. (ed. to)
111. to] om.
112. hit] om.
spare] Spar (ed. Spare)
113. Hit] om.

114. colles] collis (*ed.* Collikes)
115. greven] to greven
116. and cropes] and her croppys
118. Agnes] Annys
colyandor] coriandre
119. haue power] pouer haue
124. percase] parcel
before] a fore
127. who p^t] who so that
130. bounde] bound (*ed.* bounde)
132. leye] leyn
youre] thy
134. founde] founden
136. ys] *om.*
140. For] for that
woll oure purpose] our purpoos wil
144. bethe] be
right light] li3t
146. yff] And
we were anon] we anon were
151. bothe] both (*ed.* bothe)
152. the] our
160. right] Cristene
161. and] or
162. Shitte up] Shet
on] a
devill wey] deuelway
163. Hit is] Is (*ed.* It is)
to pater] so to pater
and to] and
165. no] *om.* (*ed.* a)
166. troupe] Rouncey
h^t] *om.*
170. tale] thyng

172. woll] wolde
173. obeyed] obeyde (ed. obeyed)
176. began] gan
177. curtesye] curteseye (ed. curtesye)
179. amytted] admitted
181. Oste] hoste
185. and] of (ed. and)
188. In] Vpon
191. name] fame
p^t] which
shall neuer] neuere shal
194. were in] weren on
haste] heghte
195. to] forto
196. And] But
pleynely] platly
197. sothely] shortly
203. And] In (ed. And)
204. somtyme] whilom
208. on lofte] a lofte
210. many ayere] 3oor agon
amydde] myd
212. nere] nor
214. Clerely] Cler
215. Sith] Seth (ed. Seith)
p^t] om.
216. yaue] 3af
218. schulde] shuld (ed. schulde)
220. noman] non to
224. youen] yove
225. this] his
227. the] this
called] ycalled

230. fauourabill plesaunt] plesaunt fauourable
231. shortely was there] that shortly ther was
233. euer hym] euere that hym
234. owtewarde] after (ed. outward)
235. that his] That thorgh his
236. bylde] byld (ed. bylde)
244. moche] myche
245. godelynes] goodlihed
lowlynes] lownesse
247. bere] bern
249. be nat to] nat to bene to
251. who can] who that Can
253. theron] ther vpon
pleynely] priuely
wollen] wol
254. on] vp on
255. And] om.
for his] for al his
258. engenderde] gendred
260. to] om.
262. ayeynst] ageyn
263. the hede] eny hed
264. Fete] foot
dysdeyne] of disdeyn
265. who can] who so can
266. and hym susteyne] And Susteneth
moste] most (ed. most)
269. Berynge] berer
273. swete] soote
274. whette] whetted
275. aspected] accepted
277. gode] glad
280. whiche] whiche (ed. which that)

281. riches or] rychesse pride or
282. Eyther] Oyther (ed. Outher)
283. as] om. (ed. as)
284. That but] But that
- 285-286. *The scribe transposes these lines.*
285. noght] nat (ed. noght)
- 286a. *Line unique to M4.*
288. mor off] Mor than of
293. yet sothely] sothly 3it
296. aforne the] afor this
298. owte by compas] be compas out (ed. be compas out
mette] he mette (ed. mette)
299. kerve] korve
300. streight mete full] strecche myght (ed. strecche myghte)
302. Therevppon] Wher vp on
303. Soyle gotyn] Soyle þus geten
304. Bulles] bolys
306. not longe] longe not
308. was from thense] from thennys was
309. dwell] dwelle (ed. dwellen)
312. cite off Thebes] Cite Thebes
Square] squar] (ed. square)
313. beforne] to forn
318. Clerkely] Cleerly
pathe] pith
323. youre] oure
laste] lasten
324. in soth] om. (ed. in sothe)
325. knowe] know (ed. knowe)
327. and reyned] Regnyng
afftir longe] long aftere
333. Curiously] cereously

- lyne all] lyne al (*ed.* lyneal)
337. a Croune] the Croune
342. he] she
344. he] *om.*
dyde] did (*ed.* dide)
345. to Appollo] tapollo (*ed.* to apollo)
full] so
346. to Iubiter] Iubiter
347. full devoute] deuout
348. there] her
350. vn to] to
354. *Line om.*
358. perceyved] conceyued (*ed.* perceyued)
360. messangers to ryde] Massageres ryde
363. And for syche] For such
were] weren
364. Astronomers] Astronomyens
365. come] Corve (*ed.* Come)
to]² vnto
366. fynde] (*ed.* fynden)
368. Fate] face (*ed.* fate)
369. And] A (*ed.* And)
370. y take] ytake (*ed.* ytaken)
372. selfe] silf (*ed.* silfe)
374. seched smale] Cerched be smale
376. and white] and on white
379. sought] foght (*ed.* soght)
owte] out of (*ed.* out)
380. collecte] correcte (*ed.* collecte)
space] expanse
382. houre] tour (*ed.* hour)
384. and also] and which also

385. Whether] Wher
ell] ellys
389. malyncolye] malencolik
392. the] this
397. that] which
398. shulde] shal
400. gan to muse] gan sore muse
401. Ayenst] Agayn
403. aforne] to forne
406. hit] that (*ed.* it)
407. in haste] in al hast
416. there] fer
419. grete hevynes] hevynesse
420. whan they] whan that they
behelde] beheelden
422. there] her
425. anone hyghe] anon ful hygh
427. gan] kan
428. they gan thurgh] porgh they gan
perse] to perce
429. tough tender] tendre tough
430. is the tale] is no tale
432. they] *om.* (*ed.* they
toke] token
434. that] thilke
439. Ganne] And gan
eke] seke
440. holtes] haltes (*ed.* holtes)
441. rengen] Reenge
443. And] *om.*
444. hym] *om.*
445. till] to (*ed.* til)
haue] han

h with erasure of its right minim; then an erased, illegible letter
with a loop over the erasure] hym

448. Archades] Archadye

450. sore] om.

453. ys]² om.
fage] phage

455. halle] alle (ed. halle)

456. a norysse] an norys

457. forstyr] foster

459. lieges] leches

460. theyre] her

461. purpose] propoos (ed. purpoos)
this] the

462. to make] to maken

465. whethir] Wher (ed. Whether)
he] that he

466. hit] om.
I]² om.

469. of] in his

470. in pese myght with hym] with hym myght in pees

472. contrious] Contrarious

473. dysdeyne] hegh disdeyn

474. shortely durst] durste shortly

476. speciall] specyaly
herte] grete

478. not his prese] His pride not

479. to brayde] abrayde

480. thus felly] felly thus

481. he seyde] quod he

482. Contry] Contrarie

483. ever lastynge] lastyng euere

485. workynge] wyrchyng

488. euer] be¹

489. and] yf
491. vnknowen] vnknowe
493. vtterly] vntrely (*ed.* vttrely)
494. vnwyste] two vnwist
495. This ys the] This the
496. Edipps] Egippus (*ed.* Edippus)
497. And to change] And change
498. his] her (*ed.* his)
500. mused] musen (*ed.* mused)
504. a] *om.* (*ed.* a)
secrete] sycre
508. grounde] troupe (*ed.* ground)
512. feyrenes] hevynesse
515. bene] be
517. ayen effte on his knees] on knees eft a geyn
520. woll] wolde
521. ryde] ryden
522. here] lere
523. every] eny
526. curiously] Ceriously
hym] *om.* (*ed.* hym)
527. he] it (*ed.* he)
528. the fete] be the fete
535. faste there besyde] in storie as is tolde
537. On] Of (*ed.* On)
as golde shene] and shene
539. Illusion] collusioun
542. dyd] dyden
543. right] Rytys
by] in the
544. the] *om.*
pagams] paganysme (*ed.* paganysmes)

546. made] maked
548. synge] signe
553. The fend] He fond (*ed.* The fend)
555. take] taken
557. ye] he
561. Vn to] Vnta (*ed.* Vnto)
562. y walled] walled
564. apperteynent] perceyment (*ed.* perteynent)
568. folke] folkes
570. other] oyther (*ed.* other)
571. prowes] hegh prouesse
574. hit]¹ *om.*
hit]² *om.*
575. of pleye] a pley
578. to Entre] to entren
580. a counter] of aventure
582. tell] writ
not howe] not the maner howh
583. can all] can of alle
584. hit] *om.*
585. hande the kynge] hond that the kyng
586. gan in haste] in hast gan hym
587. kaye] Coy
588. pyteous] the pitous
590. compleynyngel] compleynt
592. Ayenst] Ageynes
avaylith] vayleth
595. elde] olde
596. *Line om.*
597. any balle] a bal
602. asshes] asshen

- they dyd] dyde they
603. is] nys (ed. ys)
604. y retorne] I wil retourne
605. as] ay
from] fro
611. westy] waast
612. mounte] mounteyn
on] vpon
615. Amonge] Among (ed. Amonges)
617. forthe by] forby
621. man] mayde
624. that] this
627. on] in
628. passen] passeden
629. tho that]] all that
dyd] did (ed. diden)
630. myghty dymynayle] mysty dyvynaile
631. in wordes] ek in wordes
632. pleynely] opynly
to] *om.* (ed. to)
634. ys] *om.*
pleynely] platly
635. clere] *om.*
636. clere there vpon] ther vpon cleer
gode] *om.*
638. the] this
640. was] *om.*
642. full nye gan] fan ful nygh
644. monstre] moyster (ed. monster)
gan] can (ed. gan)
647. And seyde] *om.*
in my herte] in herte
648. broght to] broght the to
649. prefe] preest (preef)

- may] mayst
651. onely] sothely
655. the] this
658. anone] thus
662. hym selfe] hymself (ed. hym silue)
665. afftirwarde] afterwardes
667. And than] After
vpon] on
671. goith on] goth a3eyn on
672. effte] sith
as] it
673. ys] om.
676. ys doo] is I do
678. Hit] It
ell to] ellis
679. Whan] And whan
681. serche] cerchen
686. ell] ellys
688. answereth] answerd
foule] vyle (ed. foule)
691. That in] which on
692. wayte] a waite
folke] folkes
693. me] om.
w^t] for
my sleight] thy sleghty
695. nethir wysper ne] whisper neither
697. shalle go] shalt not go
699. That] Thilke
here beforne] herto forn
700. borne] yborn
701. go] gon
702. on] om.

703. or] and (ed. or)
704. hebegynnyth to] he gynneth forto
710. selfe] seluen
712. aldirlaste] alther last
718. w^tseyns] withseyn
723. here no while] no whyle here
725. remeve] renewe (ed. remewe)
727. is] om.
730. circued] circuete
732. Hit] It
733. ys] om.
735. malyse] Cloto
737. my] oure
740. not] can it ought
741. tho] so
742. desolate] dysconsolaat
743. as hevy as any lede] Muet pale and ded
747. Wherof] Wherby
pryde wonne] pris ywonne
748. ys ronne] yronne
749. was] hath
752. prowes] ri3t prouesse (ed. grete prouesse)
753. sye] segh
754. y favoured] faouered
756. And not they] Not only they
757. Were] Weren
758. Ayene] A3eynst
there] her
762. and the Croune] or crowne
to] forto
764. helde] set

767. they that] that they
savage] sage

770. eke famous] famous ek

771. hole] likly

772. kepe] kepen

778. ayen] ageyn

781. that] which

786. ayen] ageyn

790. a]¹ om.

a]² om.

793. haue] han
sene] seie

795. heraude] herodes

799. her] hur (ed. her)
title had he] he hadde title

802. Wherfor] Therfor

803. Whethir so] Wherso
lorde prynce or kynge] Prynce lorde or kyng

804. beware] war (ed. be war)
and esshewe] teschewe

805. Or] Er
the] that the

806. or] and

811. he vnwyste] vnwist he

812. haue] han

813. punysshed] punished (ed. punished)

814. are] er (ed. ar)

815. from] fro

817. nere] nor

819. amonge haue] hath among

820. And whan] Of whom

827. luste] list

832. None] On
systemers] sustren

833. philolis] philolegye
836. god] þe god
837. And] om.
by kapelle] de Capelle
839. his] this
842. to] vnto
843. of] om.
846. weddyng] the weddyng
848. the] om.
851. helpe] helpe it
ne] nor
858. dowghters] doghtren
865. compleynyng] compleyn (ed. compleynt)
866. and] om.
867. as Tygre] as eny Tygre
870. Saufe] Saue
was] nas
872. were] weren
877. writith] writ
882. Off the whiche] Of the which (ed. Of which)
one] ton
883. the tother] that other
was called] called was
889. hie] riche
892. fraudently] frowardly
893. hem] them
set] setten
894. hertely] erthly
his] her
895. the] this
898. of Chambre] (ed. of his Chambre)
901. fete wonder] fete enprented wonder
903. secreately] secrely

905. And] Ay
in] on
906. began] gan
conceyved] conceyueth
909. the]² om.
910. wolde] wil
wete] wite
912. any] om.
915. y]¹ om.
916. right vertous] a man ri3t vertuvs
922. shulde] may
927. To certeyn] (ed. Certeyn)
928. To execute] Execute (ed. To execute)
930. vn to] to
932. Percen] Persynge
hyngel] hongel
935. restored hom] hom resort
936. vncerteyne] non certeyn
937. her] theyre
938. afftir shulde be] afterward is
939. Sauffe] Saue
had] han
940. had] lad
943. my hevy] myn hevy
946. othyngel] on thyng
my] myn
948. slayne] slayn (ed. slayen)
949. nyghel] nygh by
950. vn to] into
951. weyed] yweied
952. as]¹ om.
anny] a

953. ne] nor
954. leffte] lift
957. Curiously] Ceriously
the] good
961. saughe hym in man^r] in manere segh hym
962. Constreyne] to constreyne
963. shewe] shewen
967. from]¹ fro¹
whense] when
from]² fro²
969. hit] it
970. braste] brak
971. and a processe] and gan a processe
973. Wounded in the fete] wounded the feet
974. cherysshynge] Chershing
975. howe] hool
976. the waye he] he the weye
978. howe he] how that he
979. Where Spynx] Wher that Spynx
980. also sloughe] slough also
982. Towarde] Towards
full] fal (ed. ful)
984. fynde] fynden
owte of] oute the stok of
987. hit] out
989. swynge] and sving
990. Betwene] A twene
hem] ham (ed. hem)
991. pytous] tedious
for to] to
993. woll] wolde
you] om.
994. rede] reden
1000. hadden] had

1001. of a] And of
1002. yen] eyen
1006. yen] eyen
1010. thus was] was thus
1012. gan] han
1013. a] om.
1016. the] a
1017. Thus] Thus of
1018. haue] ha (ed. haue)
1019. for] to
1020. take] taken
1022. honoure] nur (ed. honor)
due] dieu (ed. due)
1023. and] om. (ed. and)
1024. ell certeyn] certeyn ellis
1025. to hem not] not to hem
1028. hem] om.
cherysshe] cherssh (ed. cherissh)
haue] han
1031. in] on
1032. what he] what thyng that he
taketh] take
1033. contre] contrarye (ed. contrayre)
1034. Waste] Wayst (ed. Waast)
plente contecte] plenty of kontek
1037. a] at (ed. to)
1039. rekeles] rekkelees (ed. reklees)
1041. of] om.
1042. gretely] gretlich (ed. gretly)
1044. Whan] And whan
be] ben
1045. this] the

1047. upon] on þe
1048. kalender] chilyndre
1050. drewe] drogh
1051. of] þe
1052. Vpon the] Of þe
perles] perelys (ed. peerlys
of] on
1053. ayre] heire (ed. eire)
1056. Eyre] heir (ed. eir)
1057. hole] hool (ed. hoole)
1058. all] round
1061. in] and
1062. And] *om.*
1064. began] gonne
for to] to
1066. Septer] the Sceptre
1068. his] her
1070. Whole hertes] From whoos hertes
devoyeded] devoyden (ed. devoyded)
1073. werchyngel] worchyng
1075. of] the
1077. forbere] forborn (ed. forbern)
1078. forbere] forbern
1079. lyke as] how as (ed. as thow)
bene] be
1082. hem acorde] hem of accord
1083. and pece] and in pees
1085. borne] yborn
1086. of reson he aught go] he oght of resoun go
1087. And] *om.*
1092. began] gan
1095. Bothe] *om.*

1098. But] *om.* (*ed.* But)
1099. Concludynge] Ful concludyng
- 1100-1108. *Lines om.*
1111. to bothe] both (*ed.* to bothe)
1114. Have hem] They han hem
bene] be
of assent] of on assent
1116. reigne] regnen (*ed.* regne)
1117. cometh] cam
1118. absent owte] absent hym oute
1119. hym selfe] hym silf (*ed.* hym siluen)
1121. of] *om.*
1122. The] *om.*
1124. y ronne] hap ronne 3erne
1125. haue] ha (*ed.* haue)
1126. a] *om.*
1128. that] *om.*
1130. Till] to (*ed.* til)
1132. assende] descendeth (*ed.* ascendeth)
the tother] that other
1136. the] *om.*
1138. Before] To-for
and] of
1139. gruche] groch (*ed.* groche)
1140. accomplishe] a complisshen
to] *om.*
1142. and] *om.*
1145. the] a
1147. the] that
woll] may
1150. bright armed] armed bri3t
1154. hie] heghe

1157. pursewe] pursued
1158. *Line om.*
1164. cuntre] contre
1166. Busshes] Roches
full fewe] but fewe
1170. till] to (*ed. til*)
hit] it
1172. sighe] saugh
1175. sodenly] hidously
1177. was] were
1178. nye] negh
fere] fer (*ed. fere*)
1179. semed] sempte
1181. hem selfe] hem silf (*ed. hem silue*)
1182. draweth] drogh
to] vnto
1184. while] whil (*ed. while*)
1185. seghe] saugh
to socoure] no socour
1187. till] *om.*
all] *om.*
Altre] clere
1189. p^a] the
1190. approche] approchen
1192. Adrasts] Adrastus
1193. a] *om.*
1194. yronne] ronne
1195. p^c] which
was] is
1196. somtyme] whylom
cholon] Chaloun
1197. for hit ys writte] for his witte
hit]² *om.*
1199. arge] alle Arge

1201. by]² om.
1203. He helde] Be holde(*ed.* To holde)
1204. of all] of alle the (*ed.* of alle)
1205. his] om.
1206. gan] can
1209. for to]to
1210. Elder] eldest
was called] called was
1211. Ediphile] Deyfyle
y named] ynamed
1216. and] om. (*ed.* and)
1219. som] om.
1221. Ioynyngel] recomfort
1222. yet] right (*ed.* yet)
offten] high
1224. And off] Of a
of] a¹
1225. vn to] to
1234. hit] om.
scape] eskape
1235. And] Eke
1240. That] Thilke
1241. trouble] troubyly
1244. Cite] paleys
1247. chaumbr] chambres
1248. had ashape] hadde shape
1251. bene] be
1252. with] of
1254. There] wher
the]¹ om.
1257. of] from
1259. sure] surer
for to] to

1261. semed] sempte
1262. that time for to] thus forto
1263. come] cam
1264. One] *om.*
of the] in this
1267. yrou] Eurous
1269. calydon] Calydonye
1271. sloughe] sclowe
1272. *Line om.*
1278. mentalyp] Menalippe
1279. shotte] sort
1280. banysshed] banshed (*ed. banished*)
1282. cause] caas
in] *om.*
1283. dyd] *om.*
1284. or] ere
1286. and reyne] wynde and reyn
1289. done] do
beforne] to forn
1290. pcell] peryl
lyke] lykly
1291. beset] set
1292. owte] outen
1295. as tolde] as I tolde
1296. grete] a gret
1299. come] cam
1300. in to] *om.*
arge] *om.*
1301. haue] han
1304. nyngel] neghyng
1307. this thyngel] his aray
1309. Tydeus] tydinges

1310. come] can
and] or

1313. ayen] ageyn
gentylnes] gentillesse

1314. of] that of
hie] hegh

1315. of]² om.

1316. and of] and (ed. and of)

1318. hym] high
grete] his

1321. thynkyng] thenkyng

1322. mevyng] moving (ed. noyeng)

1323. hie] hegh

1325. swurne] sworn

1327. y] om.
woll] wil

1329. it] that
none] no

131. toke] take

1332. haue] han

1335. none] no

1337. gentylnes] gentillesse

1338. but] om.

1340. contrarye] contraryre

1345. than] om.

1346. armed] (ed. y armed)

1348. bestryde] take

1350. fill] fillen

1351. rydyn] ranne
on] or (ed. on)

1352. Eythir] Euerich
on other] on other first
her] his
speres] spere

1357. As] (ed. And as)

hurtelyd] hurtle
all] that all

1358. And kynge] kyng

1359. Chambrleyns] his Chamberleyns
in]² om.

1362. to] om.

1364. sighe] saugh
stronge] straunge

1365. mayle] male (ed. mail)

m^rvayle] mervale (ed. mervaile)

1367. dysmayed] disamayed

1368. And] om.

hit]¹ om.

hit]² om.

1372. grete] ful gret

1375. knight] kyng

1376. sese] sesen
her] om. (ed. her)
fight] fighting

1378. toke] he toke

1380. Hit] it

1381. Iupard] Iuparte

1384. of op^r myght] myght of other
haue] han
sighte] no sight

1385. Chargynge] Charching (ed. Charging)
vp] vpon

1388. humbely] humbly (ed. humblely)

1389. right] righ (ed. right)

1392. tarynge] taryng (ed. taryng)

1393. hie] ligh (ed. light)
woll] wolde

1394. to obeye] lowly to obey

1395. due] diew (ed. due)

1398. were] weren

1400. axed] I axed
1404. vn] om.
1405. Calcydon] Caledoyn
1406. he tolde the cause] the soth he told
1407. haue] han
harde] herde
1412. withoute] (ed. with outen)
1414. spake] he spak
never] not
1419. gentylnes] gentillesse
1422. gynnynge well] ground full wel
1424. Comfortynge] Enforsyng
to] forto
1426. these] the
1427. before] afor
1429. her] ther
1430. anone] in hast
officers] (ed. officeres)
1431. stroungel] straunge
1432. chaumbr] chambres
1435. astate] estates
1436. were] weren
plate] platis
1437. Cusshens] Cusshewes
1438. voyde] voyded
1439. Twenty] Tweyn (ed. Tweyne)
mantell] mantels
1440. with] om.
1442. Ermyn] hermyn
1445. till] to (ed. til)
sonne] sone (ed. sonne)
1446. whan] than
1450. Eyther] Eche

- to other was] was to other
1451. there] her
1452. y bounde] bounde
brotherhode] brotherede (ed. broperhede)
1453. Adrastus] And Adrastus
1456. godely] ful goodly
1458. gentylnes] gentyllesse
to] forto
hem] om.
1459. þ^t] om.
a] so
1462. the] thoo
1463. yen] eyen
1464. of]¹ om.
of]² om.
1465. Countenaunse] Contenaunces (ed. Contenaunce)
1466. brought] broughten
1468. fresshenes] frocchnesse (ed. fresshnesse)
1469. inspecial] special (ed. in especial)
1472. Ayenst] ageynes
1476. haue] ha (ed. haue)
1477. a poynt] and put
1479. full] to
1483. hathe fortunéd] fortunéd hath
1484. Arrows] harowes (ed. arowes)
1485. hathe] han
1489. be rased] raced ben
1490. dryven] dryve
1492. chambr] chambres
1493. due] dieu (ed. due)
houre] tyme
1494. hem ladd] han hem ladd
1495. a] om.

1496. her] *om.*
1497. a] *om.*
1498. harbigoure] harberioure
1500. golde fyne] golde ful fyn
1501. tarynge streight] taryng to bedde streght
1502. whether] wher thei
slepe] slepte
1504. haue] han
1507. specifieth] specifies
1510. these] this
1511. Hur] Her
firste] 3outh
1512. were] weren
come] y come
1515. Bytwene] A twene
1516. make] maken an
1517. doughters] doghtren
1518. othyng] on thyng
on] ay
restreyne] constreyn
1520. made] I made
1523. away] alway
1526. arose] vp aroos
1527. toke] he took
1528. p^ry gan] gan preie
1531. shelde] sheldys
1534. And] *om.*
1535. on] in
1536. haste] enhasted
1538. as]¹ that
sighe] saugh
1540. crokes] hokys (*ed. lokys*)

1542. streight] ful streght
1544. above] abouen
haburghon] haberiou
1546. brystell] bristels
1554. the] thys
1555. Circumstaunse] circumstaunces
1556. With] Of
1557. retorne] resort
1558. in all the haste] in an halle
1561. deyntes] deyntys (ed. deyntees)
sothely] surly
1564. sitte] sat
1565. let] (ed. lat it)
1568. secrete] sykre
1572. by] thorgh
1574. were] weren
1579. Circumstaunse] Circumstancys
1580. governaunse] gouernancys
1582. bethe lykly] likly be
1583. To] The (ed. To)
1584. and roiall] and 3our Royal
1585. yf] om.
1586. are manly] are bothe manly
1588. purpose y] purpose is I
1591. Atwene] Atwixe
1594. haue] han
1595. haue] han
1596. my Region] this Regioun
1597. Forthe with] forwith (ed. Forthwith)
1598. And] om.
1599. whan y] whan that I

- in] om.
1602. ys] om.
1603. Bytwene] A twen
1605. Egally] So egally
1609. Ayenst] Ageyn
1610. be] ben
1614. my] om.
1620. haue] han
1623. bene] be
1626. yeveth] gif
1630. full] ful (ed. fulle)
1631. thanked (ed. thankede)
1633. party] parte
1636. apayde] wel apayd
1638. In euery parte fully ys discended] And so they ben bothe
condescendyd
1641. Whether so] wherso
1643. gentilnes] gentillesse
1644. is] was
1645. haue] han
systeme] sustren
1646. And] And he
hathe chose] chosen hath
1647. womanly] ful womanly
1648. toke] tok (ed. tok than)
1649. and] om.
1650. Adrastus] And Adrastus
1652. p^t] the
1654. come] cam
1655. and Benynge] and ful benygne
1657. com] cam
many a] many

1658. many a] many
1659. many a] many
1660. many a] many
gode comyner] comunere
1663. Circnstaunce] circumstances
1664. daunse] daunces
1665. yeftes] gyftes
1666. peynfull] pryve
1668. diuerse] devyses
- 1669-1672. *Lines om.*
1673. discryve] descryven
1677. feyned] yfeyned
1678. haue] hath
1681. hyly] heghly
1682. and] and how
1685. gretely] Inly
1686. tyme] *om.*
to] vnto
1688. hye] hegh
1689. whiche] the which
1691. pollymyte] Polymytes
1693. that lyk] that he lik
1694. delyver] delyuered
vp] *om.*
1695. of othe] of both (*ed.* of oth)
sworne] besworn (*ed.* I sworn)
1696. couenauntes] couauntes (*ed.* couenauntes)
1699. for] from
1701. to] *om.*
desires] desire
1704. And] *om.*
1706. were] weren

1707. the] his
1709. in maner] in a maner
1711. That in] That he in
cite] sete
1715. his] this
1716. iii] thre
1721. aboue] (ed. abouen)
all] al (ed. alle)
1722. shall] shulde
1723. to] om.
1724. Wa a] as a (See notes)
1725. with owte] withoute (ed. with outen)
1728. somtyme] whilom
1738. The] (ed. Be the)
1740. radifie] reedifie
1742. whiche ys] Which trowth is
1743. Writith] writ
1749. mutabilite] mutablite (ed. mutabilite)
1750. instabilite] vnstablete (ed. vnstablete)
1751. have no domynacion] han domynacioun
1752. cause] causen
1754. Line om.
1755. there] here
from] for (ed. fro)
wele] wel (ed. whel)
1756. it] om. (ed. it)
1757. be] ben
1760. is] om.
1766. at] a (ed. at)
1767. and] om.
1769. His] Is

1774. the] 3e
1774. be] beth wel
1775. to] forto
1776. And] I (ed. And)
thynketh] think
vpon] how
walles] wal (ed. walles)
1777. is] om.
1778. the] om.
1779. That with] which
sore afftir] after sore
bought] about
1781. were] wern
1782. werke] worchen
1785. kynge] knyght
1786. than of] tha (ed. than of)
1789. none] no
heste] heestes
1790. blowe] (ed. blowen)
a horn] an horn
1791. pipe] pipen
1793. sey] seyn
1795. her hole] hool her
1797. pat] ther at
1798. to] om.
1799. so] that
1800. Any thyng] om.
contry] to contrary
hym] he
1802. xii] twelue
1803. rekenynge] reknyng (ed. rekenyng)
1811. due] dieu (ed. due)
1813. or] er
p^c] om.
he] it

- come] kam
1815. broþ^F] broder
were] ther wer
y founde] found
1819. a] om.
1821. beste] bet
or] or to
1822. manly] manfully
1825. ethir] oyther (*ed.* outhur)
werr] om.
1829. Better] bet
to than] to sende than
1832. or som] or be some
1834. entre] entren
þ^o] om.
1835. ententely] prudently
1836. were] was
moste] mor
1837. be to Thebes] to Thebes were
1838. perceyve] apparceyve
1840. whether] wher
the] his
woll] wil
1841. thilke] that
1843. wyrke] werken
1844. And] om.
1847. Seyde] Sade (*ed.* Saide)
brothers] broder
1851. so betyde] so that betide
1854. contry] cntrarye
1856. preferred] a preued
1858. wolde not] nolde
1860. Iupardy] Iupartie
1861. hem] hym (*ed.* hem)
1862. euer] dere that

1865. on] vpon
1868. sythes] sith
1870. And] *om.*
sye] saugh
1871. inwaerdly] inwardly
gan to encrese] encres gan (*ed.* gan encres)
1872. rydyngel] ride
1874. the]¹ *om.*
1876. the] *om.*
of few] of a fewe
1877. highe] heghe
1878. that] the
1879. plase] Paleys
1880. streight he] he streht (*ed.* streght he)
1882. armed] (*ed.* y armed)
1887. adowne] doun
1888. a] *om.*
1889. his] *om.*
1894. gan] he gan
1895. knightly] kyngly
1896. to] *om.* (*ed.* to)
1897. dysdeyn not] not disdeyne
1898. messangere] massagere
1899. brother] brodere
1903. holly] only
1905. to] forto
1909. aught beste] best ought
to] *om.* (*ed.* to)
1910. haue] han
1911. touchynge] conceyve
1912. yf] Of
longe] longgyng

1913. concider] considred
he] 3e

1915. Whowe] how
youre brop^f and your selfe] your silf and youre brother
alyve] blyve

1917. with] by

1918. furste shulde] shulde first

1921. by] for

1922. vn] om.

1924. cometh] kam

1927. put]² stood

1929. to] om.
the] om.

1930. the] this

1932. haue] han
occupied] y occupied

1933. Pollymyte] Polimytes

1934. as] lik

1936. haue] han

1938. thenketh] thenketh eke
howe ye] how that 3e

1941. That] The (ed. That)

1944. Than all the tresoure of youre region] Than all richesse that 3e
rekne kan (*The scribe repeats line 1942*)

1945. Therfor] Wherefor
in haste lat] in hast and lat

1946. the] youre

1947. voydyngel] avoyding
this] the

1948. roiall see] Ryalte

1951. they] and

1952. p^t] 3e han

1953. is] om.
p^t] of al that
woll] wil

1954. to] om.
1955. Than] Whan
1957. in maner] in a maner (ed. in maner)
1960. wonder] wonderly
1965. Whane] I ha (ed. I haue)
1966. wheche] woch (ed. which)
p] thow
1968. for] om.
1973. haue] han
1975. fresshe] fresshly
1978. Wherfor] wherof
1981. p^t] than (ed. than)
1984. Ream] regne
1987. in]² om.
1988. hie] gret (ed. high)
1989. tokyn of] token as of
broth^f hode] brotherede (ed. brotherhede)
1994. was] om.
1995. semeth] sempte
1997. not lenger] nat no lenger
1998. pleynly] platly
by] a
1999. pollymyte] Polymytes
2000. ys] nys (ed. is)
nore] nor no
2001. Nere] Nor
2002. haue] ha (ed. haue)
2003. nep^f] nowther
2006. of] om. (ed. of)
2007. kepe p^t] kepe all that
2008. a] I

2010. all] of (*ed. al*)
them] hem
ageynst] ther ageynes
2012. And] Or
2015. myne] my
advyse] devis
2016. well p^u] well that thow
2017. suppressed] supprised
2019. afense] offence
2021. in fere] yfere
2022. Tydynges] dyding (*ed. tyding*)
brought] ybrought
2023. by dysencrese] be but disencrees
2024. ware] wer (*ed. were*)
2029. walle] wall (*ed. walles*)
2030. pleynely] Fynaly
to] *om.*
2031. shall be] shal first be
2033. Or] Er
2036. on fyre] a fire
2037. of]² *om.*
2041. he wolde aught] oght he wolde
2042. seyde] spak
2045. vowe] voven
h^t] *om.*
beste] lest (*ed. best*)
2046. Thou] Nor thow
2048. and eke] and falsly ek
2049. periuryd] periur
2050. whethir] wher
ys] be
p^u] that thow
2052. to] vnto
2055. be] ben

2056. hie] hegh
2057. ayenst] ageyn
2060. wol] wil
in] of (*ed. in*)
2062. bounden] bounde
2064. broders] brotheres
2065. vpon] on
and shelde] *and* with sheld
2066. Ayenst] Ageynes
2071. the] *om.*
2072. shall] shalt
haue] ha (*ed. haue*)
2073. and] of
2077. ys] *om.*
avayle] vaile (*ed. availe*)
2078. Ayenste] Ageyn (*ed. Ageynes*)
in felde] *om.* (*ed. in feeld*)
batayle] no batayle (*ed. batayle*)
2079. bothe] bothen
2081. his next allye] his next alye (*ed. next of his alye*)
2082. shortely I] I shortely
2084. ye lordes] the lordes (*ed. ye lordes*)
all] *om.*
here] ther (*ed. her*)
2087. cometh] comp (*ed. comeþ*)
2090. on]¹ *om.*
on feith] (*ed. of feith*)
2095. Pollymyte] Polemytes
2096. recorde] accord
2097. sittith] sitten
2100. avoyde] voyden
2102. For] Fro
2106. sorte] force
Fette] fetteth

2108. no slouthe] slouthe non
2109. Iustely] Iustlyly (ed. Iustly)
2110. is] om.
2112. vpon] on
2113. þ^r no lenger] no lenger ther
2114. From] Fro
2115. ne] nor
2116. his] om.
2117. ys] was
2119. Thurgh] Thorgh out
2123. let] leue
forthe rydyng] ride forth
here] a
2124. to] om.
2128. had] hath (ed. had)
2132. wolde] wil
2133. that ever] euere that
2134. anone] om.
to calle] to hym calle
2136. Chargyng] Charchyng (ed. Chargyng)
2137. choyse] Chooce (Choys)
2138. Suche] which
and bolde] and most bolde
2139. the] om.
for] om.
2140. To fore] To forn
or] ar (ed. or)
renewe] remwe.
2141. vppon] Vp
2143. Off] And of
2144. to combr] tencombre
2145. st (See notes)
2146. Armed] And

and horsed] yhorsed

2147. Owte] *om.*
faste] forth

2148. agayne pathe] a geynpath
a side] besyde

2149. Secrely] Secretely
coude] hem

2154. leye] leyn

2156. the] *om.*

2158. that] thylke
the] *om.*

2160. the] this
compassed] compassed

2161. like] and lich

2162. till hit] to that (*ed. til that*)
drewe] drowe

2164. ne Gye] gye (*ed. or to gye*)

2166. Eue] Even
to take] taken

2167. Amydde] Mid

2168. sighe] saugh
ayenst] ageyn

2170 caste] casten

2172. or] and

2173. to] forto

2174. nothyngge sette] no thyng ne sette

2176. aduerte] dyuerte

2177. vpon brest] vpon his
brest

2180. hym smette] he hym smette

2181. felt] fille
all] *om.*

2184. hie] hegh

2185. he] *om.*
aboughte] about
slyde] glyde

2186. on] vpon
2187. in]² om.
2188. But] om.
m^rvayle was p^t] That mervaile was
2189. on] in
parte] half
2192. light] (ed. alight)
2194. highe] of gret
2195. arose] roos
2197. Rampande] rampaunt
2200. his] om. (ed. his)
2203. newe] enviroun
y ron] om.
2205. there to] there lay two
2207. That] Thilke
on]vpon
2210. Bysydes] Be side
2211. a large stone huge] an huge stone large
2212. or] er
2214. fomen] foon
rollyd attones] rolled it at onys
2215. x] ten
wenton] wenten
2216. drewe] drogh
2218. Thus] And
vtteraunse] outtraunce
2219. p^r] om.
2220. was] om. (ed. was)
hem] ham (ed. hem)
2223. knights Rounde] knyghtes in compas rounde
2224. vale (ed. vale lay)
slayne (ed. slayen)
- hole] om.

2225. ayenst] ageyn
2226. may] myght
2227. haue] han
discerued] deserued
2228. excepte whiche] excepte the which
2229. this] *om.*
2233. her] the
haue] han
2234. tell] tellen
assured] sured
2236. opynly ye] 3e opynly
2237. Ayenst] Ageyn (*ed. Ageynes*)
2239. whiche] woch (*ed. which*)
2240. Therfor] For
every] ech
memorye] memoyre (*ed. memorye*)
2241. pryde] pouer
2242. or grete] nor moche
2244. champartye] Chanpartye
2245. Ayenst] Ageyns (*ed. Ageynes*)
who lyste] who that list
2247. shall] shul
2249. That] which
2251. late] layt (*ed. late*)
2253. were] wern
2257. tho hym selfe] hym silue tho
2259. worthe] Worthed
gan] he gan
2265. vn to] Into
2270. faste he] he faste
2272. bright] be nyght
ayenst] ageyn
2273. highe] heghe
2274. Ioynynge] Ioynneant

- ayenst] to
2275. let] lityl
2276. to] om.
2279. as] om.
advyse] devis
2282. light a downe] alyghte doun
2284. fro] from
y] he
2285. And] om.
the] his
horse] horses
2286. And] om.
2288. sote] grene
2289. was than] than is
2290. bothe] om.
- 2291-2292. *The lines are transposed.*
2293. desiryngel] desirous
for to] to
2295. grucchyngel] grocched
2296. till] to (ed. til)
2297. hye] hegh
Ayre] hayr (ed. ayr)
2300. hie] heghe
the] his
2301. Erbes] herbes
2305. depeynt] (ed. was depeynt)
2307. ayre] heyre (ed. eyre)
2308. made] maked
2311. take] taken
2312. se] sen
2313. Alleys] Allures
2318. eke she began] she gan ek
2319. to and fro] her and ther

2322. on] al
stode] she stood
2325. the] this
2329. with] of
2330. soffte] ful softe
2331. Where] Ther
2334. He vp] Vp he
droughe] he drogh
2335. vp] out
2336. body] lady
2338. haue] han
on] vpon
2341. be] ben
2342. Thebans] the thebans
2344. yeldynge hym] hym 3elding
2345. that] om.
had passed] passed hadde
2346. sighe] saugh
2347. Gentylnes] gentyllesse
2349. be nothyng] no thing be
2350. ne] nor
2351. Discomforte] Disconfort
2355. passynge] passingly
grete] om.
2356. be the] bethe
2358. ne] nor
2360. to] vnto
2367. foene] faute
2368. sighe] saugh
kynde] (ed. so kynde)
2371. woll] wold
2374. all] al (ed. at)
worthy] woode

2375. off]² om.
 2377. hit] her
 2378. Whiche] The which
 2379. som] om.
 2381. sure] swe
 2386. raylyd] yrayled
 2387. lenght] length
 2390. vppon] on
 2392. He] She
 2393. seched] serche
 2396. *Line om.*
 2397. myght] may
 2398. and] or
 2399. in] om. (*ed. in*)
 2400. her] his
 2402. were] wern
 2403. physyk] phisikes
 2404. were] wern
 2412. to hym] hom
 2419. luste] liste
 take] tak (*ed. taken*)
 2421. Behotyng] Beheestyng
 2422. trewe] om.
 2423. woll] wold
 2424. come] cam
 2425. woll] wolde
 no lenger] nowher
 2426. reherse] rehercen
 2428. mowtaynse] hegh mounteyns
 2430. or] nor (*ed. or*)
 2432. systyr] sustre

ne] and
was]were

2433. wherto] Wherfor (*ed.* wherto)

2435. abought] about
nere] and

2436. the sorwe] of the sorwe

2437. se] sen
sore wounded] soor wounded (*ed.* forwounded)

2439. godely] dedly

2442. Nere] Nor

2445. wayte] awayt
sent] sette

2446. l] fyfty

2447. haue] han

2450. a] *om.*

2452. peyne] a peyne

2453. do] don

2456. dayes] a daies

2459. thurgh] thurgh out

2460. suche] swich

2461. gentylnesse] gentyllesse

2466. *Line om.*

2468. that] thilke

2470. Off] *om.*

2475. shedyng] the sheding (*ed.* sheding)

2476. as] how

2479. was] wex

2481. p^r] he

2482. fully] felly

2483. and] *om.*

2484. were] wern

2486. the] 3our

- or of] of
2487. Outher] cythe (ed. Or)
2490. on] vpon
2491. o] on
renoun] hegh renoun
2492. to] in (ed. into)
2494. nothyngel] not (ed. no thing)
2497. in] om.
2500. sothefastnes] sikernesse
2502. With] And
thyne] the
2503. þ^u þ^t] that thow
forsoore] forsworn
2504. And] A
lore] lorn
2506. madde]¹ om.
2507. to] forto
2508. vn] om.
2509. even] eue
2510. Suppressed] Supprised
a dedely] a dedly
2511. Rynuyngel] Renewed
2513. grete] om.
2516. and
2517. was] frat
2519. Thurghe the whiche he] om.
a syde] and a side
and] om.
2520. yafe] rove
2522. And] That
2523. of] and (ed. of)
newe] woode
2524. were] weren
2525. slayne] slayen

2526. with] of
2527. haue] han
reson] ryse
- 2529-30. *The lines are transposed.*
2529. were] was
2531. were] wern
2532. his] high
2535. haue] han
2536. y slayne] yslawe
2540. Solemply] (*ed.* Solempnely)
to p^o] into
2541. in] lik the
the] her
2542. vn to] into
2544. the] *om.*
kalender] kalendys
2548. be] wern
2549. all] *om.*
2550. clerely shall] shal clerly
2555. sparkle] sperkes (*ed.* sperkles)
sheweth] shewen
from] fro
2556. the] pⁱ
2557. the] thy
goith] goth
2558. p^u] that thow
2560. was] *om.*
sette] was sette
on fyre] a fyre
2567. of] thorgh
2570. pollymyte] polymytes
2574. messangers] massageres
2575. Thurgh] thorgh oute
2576. lettynge] lettyngges

2577. aboughte] about
2581. to] om.
2582. were] weren
2583. And] As
sende] savde (ed. sende)
2586. tho] the
2587. haue] han
2589. her] ther
were] wern
2590. sustene] stuffen
to] and
take] taken
2591. to] om.
2592. and] and with
areblasters] ablasters
2594. her] their
2596. to]² om.
monstre] mostren
2598. come] cam
2598. pthonolope] protonolope
2600. Arkade] Archada
vn] om.
2602. come] came
Cylmychenes] Cylmythenes
2603. And] om.
2604. come] cam
ypomedon] ypemedoun
2605. knights] knyghthode
fame] name
2606. excellent] excellynȝ
2607. worthy] noble
2608. Come] kam
thus] vs
2610. come] kam
2611. see] sete

2612. Grece] Crete
2613. loers] Laeris
Perus] of Pyrrus (ed. Pyrrus)
2614. a] the
Tortoloune] Tortolanus
2615. a] om.
2616. come] kam
callyd] ynamed
2618. armed] (ed. y armed)
2619. a] om.
2621. noble] manly
worthy] noble
2622. the] om.
2624. And] om.
2625. eyre] hayr
2631. charge] this charge
2633. obeyed] obeye
Full] shal (ed. ful)
2637. ome] kam
a worthy] another
2640. Iumued] Ymeued
2641. pollymyte] Polymytes
2643. were] weren
this] the
2645. othe] hoth (ed. oth)
2647. come] Cam
2648. louly] Redy
2651. amydde] mydde
Oste] hoste
2652. a] om.
2656. manly] manful
2657. trouthe] trowe
2658. a] om.

2661. may] myght
2670. for] only for
2671. woll] wil
2674. the] his
2678. fayle] ne fayle
2679. worthy] noble worthy
2681. were] weren
2683. knight] kyng
the] her
2684. sued] serued
2685. he] hym
2686. Nere] And
2687. ne] nor
- 2688-2689. (See notes.)
2688. But . . . presense] And in a prince it is ful gret offence
2689. And . . . full] As clerkes seyn and a
2690. to]¹ om.
to]² om.
leve] lyven
2692. haue] han
2693. possede bothe] both possede
2694. to see] seen
peple] puple
2695. pore] power
2696. hertes] herte
2697. love] louen
2699. Nere] Nor
coarte] coherten (ed. coarten)
2700. howe thought] how that thouht
2703. hye] hegh
2708. hit] om.
2716. ryches] gret richesse

2717. love] gold (ed. loue)
2720. above] aboue al (ed. abouen)
2730. obeye] to obeye
2734. inportabull] the inportable
2735. vn] Don
to]² om.
2736. haue to forne] to forn han
2737. whilys] while
that] om.
2738. woll] will
vn to] to (ed. vnto)
2739. Wheche in] with Inne (ed. which in)
2745. the]² om.
2747. make] maken
2748. Namely] Manfully
2750. Cuntre] contrees
2756. to the] into
2757. hie] heghe
2760. t] and (See notes.)
the] om.
2761. In] And in
brynnynge] feruent
2762. yefts] giftes
2764. evermore] ouermore
2765. yaffe] 3af
vn] om.
Iewell] Iuellis
2766. syluer] Veluet
and]¹ of²
2769. proudly] prudently
beforne] to forn
2770. of wyne] and of wyne
of]² om.
2772. stondynge] strong

2774. strong and] om.
2775. Barreys] Barreris
2776. vowe] Vouh
2777. Whilis] Whil
in] om.
2780. be full dere] ful dere be
bought] about
2782. furste shall] shal first
2784. that] om.
2785. the] om.
2793. her] ther
2795. by the advyse] be thavice
2796. wyse] right wyce
2802. Amonge] Among (ed. Amonges)
2807. And] om.
secrete] secre
2808. there] her
2814. yeve] 3if (ed. 3iue)
2817. highe] heghe
2818. kontek] Contek
2821. ys] om.
2823. inespéciall] and in especial
2828. binmte] bymente
2830. shall] shulde
2832. sighe] saugh
2833. no] to (ed. no)
defende] diffence
2834. sodenly] vttrely
to with drawe] withdrawen
2836. shulde] wold
2838. conselynge] conselen
2841. dare] thar

2843. be] ben
2844. Inued] mwet
2845. mater] matier
2848. hathe] hath (ed. han)
the] this
2849. And soughten] Thogh it was
or] er
2851. so] ful
2852. hathe] hadde
remors] of remors
2853. grevyngel] gervyng (ed. grevyng)
2854. in grete] in ful grete
2856. othe] both (ed. oth)
2857. requered] requeryng
2860. remempr] remembren
2861. of] a
2864. hem] hym (ed. hem)
2865. shit] shet
2869. Iupartel] Iupard
2872. And] om.
sighe] saugh
2874. to swage] asswage
2876. mo] om.
2878. the] om.
2880. were] wern
2882. That] om.
2884. presciens] hegh presence
2885. maner] om.
2890. To fore] to forn
2894. aventure] auenturys
2895. vnhappy] (ed. the vnhappy)
sette] soort

2896. compleynt] compleyntes
2897. wreche] wrath
the] om. (ed. the)
2898. and] in
2901. be] ben
2903. nys no] is no
2909. derke] dirke
2914. to] vnto
2916. fynes] fyn
be vnsote] be so vnswete
2917. here] om.
2919. shalte] shal
2923. full] but ful
2924. hye] hegh
2926. contryver] controover
2928. A] An
2929. gan] (ed. gonne)
2932. by] after
2933. noyse and clamoure] clamour and noyse
2934. hie] hegh
thurghe] porgh out
2935. pore] om.
2938. arte] age
2939. haue] ha (ed. han)
2940. verry] werre
2942. covetynge] conceytes
of] ful
adversite] diuersyte
2943. p^o] that
to forne] a forn
2944. in] om. (ed. by)
lorn] born (ed. lorn)
2945. There] Wher

2946. caste] casten
2949. on] of
2950. hurtillith] hurtleth
ayenste] ageynes
2951. Breseth] Broseth
and vnwarly] vnwarly and
2955. woll] wil
turne] tourne oyther (ed. tourne outhether)
2956. sferre] fast (See notes)
2958. bygynnyngel] gynnyng
2959. The p^udent] The olde prudent
2961. woll] wil
werke] wyrke
2962. derke] dyrke
2963. This] Thus
ys seelde] selde is
determyne] termyne
2964. draweth] drawe
a] o
2967. hie] hegh
2968. haue] ha (ed. haue)
none] no
2970. holden] halden (ed. holden)
2973. Albomasar] Albumasar
2974. the] om.
2977. on lyve] a lyve
2978. averte] aduerte
2979. take] taken
2980. come] cam
2982. hathe] haueth
2983. and] om.
2985. vnsuspected] vnsupported
2986. gan sighen] sighen gan
2987. with]² and

hevy] evyl

2988. Whan he] whan that he
sighe] sauhe

2990. Have] han

2991. gon] gonnen
for to] to
haste] hosteye

2992. for to] to

2993. woll] wil

2997. dysposicion] the disposicioun

3000. Off] A
a] om.

3001. as] þat

3002. ne] nor

3303. were] weren

3004. had] hadden had

3006. they] the londe]
serched] Cerchyng

3007. nethir] nowther
ne] nor

3010. To] So

3012. deye] gan deye

3013. þ^e] om.

3014. put] putten

3015. spere] sperys
hit] om.

3017. many] ful many

3018. ys] and

3020. worthy] om.

3021. thurgh] þorgh oute

3026. Erbes and of floures] floures and of herbes

3027. Eyre] hayr (ed. ayr)

3028. þ^t] which

3032. yonge] tendre
3033. to] forto
3035. wordely] worldly
dysportel] ek disport
3036. eke] om.
3040. a] his
stode] sauh
3041. basshed] abashed
renne] remwe
3042. gan afftir] after gan
3043. Syster] sustir
3045. bethe] are
3046. grace] of grace
3048. to] om.
stant] stont
3049. at honde] at the hand
3051. and] om.
bethe] ly (ed. be)
3052. pollax and with] pollex speer and
3054. lyke] likly
3055. and] nor
3057. Fate] viage
3060. gracyous] graciously
3062. stonde] stont
Iupardye] Iupartie
3063. womanhode] wommanhede
3064. knowe] knewe (ed. knowe)
3065. in oure] in al oure
3068. seye] seyn
syster] suster
3069. the] this
3071. womanly] verrey
3072. on] vpon

- his] her
3075. my] *om.*
3076. whiche] of which
in] *om.*
3077. doith] doth
3078. helpe] helpen
3079. of]² *om.*
3082. a]² but
3085. ferde] ferdful
3086. yet] that (*ed.* yet)
3088. saluacion] sauacioun
3091. Erbes] herbes
3092. an] *om.*
3094. she] *om.*
oppressed] supprised
3097. reste ne] *om.*
3100. was Iocounde] was tho Iocounde
3102. a] his
3104. revers syde] Ryver syde
3107. enhasted] enhast
3108. rode] bood (*ed.* rood)
3110. stanche] staunche
3111. dronke] dranke
hym] hem
3112. were] wern
3117. ranne] ronne
3120. haue] ha (*ed.* haue)
3121. were] wern
3122. dronke] drank
3123. aforne] to forn
addured] endured
3125. hie] hegh

3126. her] high
3127. Compassed] Compas
3131. while] whylys
the] om.
vpon] on
3133. do] don
3136. hym selfe] hym silve
3137. Agayne] Ageyns (ed. Ageynes)
3138. tho] om.
3139. none] nat on
3148. her] hir
her] here
3149. a] om.
3150. behytyngel] beheght
3156. ys] was
3160. to] om.
all the hole] hooly al the
3161. howe] why
3162. p^t] om.
3164. by women] by the wymmen
3165. contry] contrayr
ayenst] ageyn
3167. take] taken
3168. husbondes] husbond
3170. kutte] Kytt
3174. haue] han
3175. and] to
3178. mater] mordre
3179. p^t was] pat he was
3181. cuntre] contre
3182. of pirat] of a pyrat
3183. brought] brouht

3186. Erber] herber
she leffte allone] allone she left
3188. And Iason] And by Iason
3189. his] this
3191. cuntre] contre
come] Cam
3194. ysyphyle] (ed. this ysyphyle)
3195. whiche] of which
want] wente (ed. wante)
3196. men] om.
his name] he named
Theont] Thoante
3197. vormes] vermes
hym] ek hem (ed. ek hym)
3203. by sovereyn] be ful souereyn
3204. quene] the queen
3206. her bounte] her hegh bounte
3208. her leve hathe] hap her leve
3211. To] Til (ed. To)
tyll] to (ed. to)
3212. ys] om.
3213. and all] and (ed. and of alle)
wylfulnes] welfulnesse
3214. restitute] destitut
all] om.
gladnes] alle gladnesse
3215. begynne] gynne
3218. same] selue
3219. syluyr skalys] skalis siluer
3221. vyolent] perilous
3224. wayle wepe] wepe wayle
3225. But] om.
she but] she nouht but
sighe] sighen
3228. rente] rende

3229. sythes] sith
seye] seyn
3230. y] O
3231. whethir] whider
shall] may
gone] tourne
3232. ys] om.
here] ther (ed. her)
3233. hit] right
3235. there] om.
ne] nor
no] non²
3236. muste] mot
3238. to] so
3243. þ^t] om.
3245. graven] graue
3246. fall] fallen
3250. I wote] woot I
3251. quene] king (ed. quene)
3256. from dethe] fro the deth
reserved] preserued
3257. Nethir] Nowther
by]² om.
3260. quaketh] quaking
3261. she ne] om.
3262. adreynt] dreynt
3263. w^t] om.
3265. Array] affray
dystraught] distracte
3266. To fore] To forn
3267. Fill] And fille
3269. muste] mot
shortely] and shortly
3272. slayne] slawe
- 3273-3274. *The lines are transposed.*

3273. perell and hevynes] disioynte and peril

3279. comforte] confort

3282. do] don

3283. of]² om.

3284. To] And
have] han

3286. That] whan they
ell] om.
to] forto
have] ha (ed. haue)
bene] be

3288. muste] most
take] taken

3289. remedye] remedien

3292. woll] wille

3293. ne] nor
travayle] no travaylle

3297. all] om.
bene] be

3298. with hem] worthy

3299. to] om.

3305. roially] ryal

3306. come] cam

3308. manhode] manlihede

3312. in gode] in ful good

3313. a knightly] a ful kyngly

3314. shall] shul

3315. Cosyn] Cosy (ed. Cosyn)

3316. bethe] be

3318. gentylnes] gentillesse

3323. In] An (ed. In)

3324. ever more] ouermore

3328. assigned shal] shal assigned

3329. hem selfe] hym silf (ed. hem silf)

3330. largely may] may largely

3332. eny] non
haue] ha (ed. haue)

3334. entenftyfly] in Tentys
with] vpon

3337. hem socoure] socour hem
and] or

3341. Nore no] Nor on no

3342. bethe] be

3343. yefte] gift

3346. yf] that (ed. 3if that)
we] 3e
not] nat ne

3348. woll] wold
gentylnes] gentillesse

3350. we were] wer we

3351. thyngge ever] euer thyng

3354. ne] nor

3356. owtset] and sette
this] pies

3357. Remnont] surplus
amyte] at a myte

3361. while] whilis
trete] entreten
yfere] in fere

3362. come] cam
with wofull] with a wooful

3364. kyngs] kyng (ed. kynges)

3366. to] forto

3368. stongen] stonge
vn] om.

3372. And] That

3373. had] hath

3375. thoughe he] thogh that he

3376. hent] rent (ed. hent)

3379. on] in
3380. sobbe sighe] sighe sobbe
3383. the] *om.* (*ed.* the)
3384. neded] nede (*ed.* neded)
not] *om.*
her] *om.*
to] forto
3385. vppon] by vpon (*ed.* ny vpon)
3386. erthe] ground
3387. myschaunse] hegh meschaunce
3388. a] *om.*
lyeth] lyggeth
3389. to] into
corte] the courte
3392. embrace] embrace
3393. to] *om.*
gan anone] ageyn
3394. thys thyng gan] gan this thyng
3396. yen] eyen
3398. þ^t] which
3399. Teres] water
3403. and the] and of the
3404. tell] tellen
haue] ha
3406. shoures] sharp^te shour
3408. grave] grauen
3412. kynge] qwene
3413. for] so
3415. Ayenst] Sith loos of
may be no] no man may
recover] recure
3416. gone] go
3418. taketh] take (*ed.* taketh)
þ^F tone] ther to

3419. all] an
3422. go] do
3425. For] Nor
none duke] (ed. non nor duk)
ne] nor
3426. ayenst] ageyn
his] þe
3429. saluacion] sauacioun
- 3430 ne] nor
3432. nore] or
3434. power and] power nor of
3435. ne] nor
3436. But þ^t] That (ed. But)
muste] mot
othyr] oither (ed. outhur)
3437. ho] who
3440. Replenysshed] Repleveshed (ed. Repleneshed)
3441. stondeth] stont
3442. hit] om.
me] vnto me
3443. gruche] grucch (ed. gruche)
hye] hegh
3344. god] goddis
3447. and] that (ed. 3if that)
you] 3e
3448. That] which
recovered] recured
3450. quered] conveyed
3454. have] han
3457. so] to (ed. so)
3459. At request] (ed. At the request)
3463. doith] doth
3467. not dye] nat ne dye
3468. But the] But tho the

3473. the] þis
 3474. his]¹ her
 3475. the] om.
 3477. ell] ellis
 3479. Off one] Al of
 3480. adventures] adventurous
 3482. cuntre] contre
 3483. valeyse] vales
 3487. partonolope] parthonolope
 3488. happenyd] happed
 for to] to (ed. for to)
 3489. revours syde] Ryver side
 3492. the] om.
 3493. an Arrowe] a narowe (ed. an arowe)
 3495. made for to] made it forto
 3496. And] om.
 hent] Rent (ed. Hent)
 3498. began] gan
 to] om.
 3499. pcell] her sorowe parcel
 3500. highe] hegh
 3504. voyded] avoiden (ed. avoided)
 3510. contry] contrarie
 3512. w^t] by
 3514. come] comen
 3518. her] hur (ed. hir)
 kan fynde] fynde can
 3519. haue] han
 3520. yf] but 3if
 3521. þ^t] om.
 called was] was ycalled
 3522. a nothir] an other

3524. come] kam
3526. y lad] Lad
iiii] foure
3529. his] this
3530. was] om.
3531. dede] dide
3534. thus] this
3537. to] om.
3538. Redeth] Rede
3540. xii] twelue
3543. sewynge] swyng
3547. leve] lief (ed. lieve)
3555. remeve] remwe
3556. haue] han
take] I take
3557. nothir] nombre
3559. afore] afor
3560. mustred] monstred
3563. there] om.
3564. and] om.
p^o] a
3565. the Thebans] Thebans (ed. the thebans)
3566. have] an (ed. han)
yssyd
3567. haue] ha (ed. haue)
skarmysshed] scarmosshed
hasty] lusty
3570. p^c] thilke
3576. and chefe] and in the Chief
3582. kyndelyd] kyndle (ed. kyndled)
3588. vn] out
3590. her] theyr

3591. Spoylyd] Spoyle
robbed] robbe
3592. store] soortes
3594. woundes] houndes
slayne] slowe
3595. hynde] ynde (ed. hynde)
3597. tusky] trusshy (ed. tusshy)
3598. home] al hom
3601. these] þis
they thought] hem thynke
3602. The] om.
3603. mnstrynge] Mynistring
occasions] (ed. occisiones)
3606. theron] ther vpon
3607. here w^t] ther with
3609. made] maked
3610. all] om. (ed. al)
was] ful
3611. Wheche] om.
3612. Whan he] whan that he
3616. þ^t] thilke
3619. leste] list
towarde þ^t] toward hym that
founde] om.
3622. That] which
grete] a gret
3624. truste] triste
3625. in] of
3628. Suche] which
were] that were (ed. were)
3632. tell] tellen
advyse] avis
3633. Whethir] Wher
were] was
better] bet

3637. to] om.
3638. his] be
3641. Lyste] And list
her] their
3643. for] om.
parforme] parform
3644. were] was
3645. fare] spede
3646. fro] from
3647. no] non
rancoure hatred] hatred rancour
ne] nyther
3648. hy] hym
3649. vnsittyngel] ful vnsittyng
3650. fynde] fynden
3652. vn] om.
he] how he
3653. woll] wil
3654. *Line om.*
3656. the whyle] whil that
3657. to] of
3660. may] most may ful
lightly] likly
3663. the] a
3665. put owre mater] puter (*ed. put our mater*)
3666. his] the
3667. wrothe] lothe
3670. bethe] ben
verry] om.
3671. a] om.
3673. vnsote] ful vnsote
3674. gynne3] gynnyng
3676. have] han

3677. acounte] accountys
3679. the cause nowe] now the cause
ys dryven] dryven is
3680. or] oither (ed. outhur)
3681. moste] Moot]
fallen] folwe
3683. thowe] om.
ne may] no man may
3684. one] om. (ed. on)
you] this
3686. therof] om.
morne] ellys mourne
3687. dryven] dryve
3691. An] And
bene] be
3692. advyse] avys
3693. to] om.
3694. shortely] sothly
3695. Eyther] Outher
3697. Whether] wher
3698. p^t] al that
have] ha (ed. haue)
3704. yeve] 3if (ed. 3iue)
3706. let] late
3707. avauntage] avail
3709. and tene] wroth
3710. wrothe] loth
3711. pryse] prees
3712. a pese] pes (ed. a pes)
3714. have] han
3715. to hym selfe in chefe] in chief to hym silf
3716. hit] om.
3717. sole] saue
selfe] hool

3720. pollymyte] Polymytes
3721. to avoyde] avoyde (ed. tavoyde)
3722. was but] was nat but
3724. wolde he] he wil
3725. Grekes] the Grekys
3727. ne] nor
lowe] lowgh estat
3729. toune for] toune nouthur for
3731. castes] cast
on] for
3732. woll] wolde
3734. drewe] droh
3735. yonge] hyr 3onge
3736. and feyre] and the feyr
3737. his] hyr
many aboute] many on aboute
3741. in fere] yffere
3742. receyved] receyve
right a] a right
3743. to]² om.
3745. Pollymyte] Polymytes
from] fro
3747. antigon] Antigone
3748. then] ek
excellent] excellyng
in] of
3749. for they] for that they
were passynge] passyngly were
3751. haue] han
sighet] sight
3754. specyally to] opynly
3762. reyngel] regnen
3766. shulde be] shuld nat be
3767. they] he

- woll] wil
3769. reserved in] reservid as in
3771. Pollymyte] Polymytes
shulde] it
possede] to possede
3776. That] which
3778. platly so] so platly
3782. bought] bouht
3783. be brought] brought be
3784. Grekes] Grek
there] *om.*
3785. p^t] which
3786. or] and
3787. woll] wil
erste] arst
from] fro
3788. thyngs to] this thyng
to] *om.*
3790. party] part
3795. bonde hym] bonde that hym
3898. condiccion] contradiccioun
3799. holde] hald (*ed. hold*)
3800. hit]² that he
woll] wil
3802. woll] wil
3804. whan ye] whan that 3e
3805. poynt] apoynt
3806. yet] 3it
contry] contrarye
3808. cause dystruccyon] cause a destruccioun
3811. that] thilke
3813. whethir] wherso
p^t] euer
3814. be stille] to be stille

3816. a] om.
3822. than] tho
3824. and eke] and also ek
3826. me] my
style] stell
3829. from] fro
3831. Wheche] the whiche
- 3830a. *Line 3830 is repeated.*
3831a. *Line 3831 is repeated.*
3838. yen] eyen
fyre] fyret
3839. wretyn] wryten
3842. ys offte] is ful oft
3844. with owte] with outen
3845. aren]arn
take] (ed. ytake)
3846. recorse] rescus
3848. Ayenst] Ageynys
3850. sent] (ed. sent to)
3851. That] which
comforte] confort
3852. gode] gret (ed. good)
3856. ys] was
3858. p^t] om.
3862. p^t] thilke
3863. tretyd] treded (ed. treted)
3865. of] at
3867. rynnynge] rennyng
3868. p^e] a
3870. saluage] sauage
3874. whan they] whan þat they
3876. rounded] ronne
furious] doune ful furious

3879. purposyd] in purpos
 3880. to avenge] tavengen
 3881. forthe] out
 3883. of]² ful
 3884. have] han
 3885. quyt] qwitten
 3886. a] om.
 3889. bought] aboughte
 3890. mortally Thebans] mortally Thebanys (ed. mortally the Thebans
 3895. with hym] with hym ek
 this] the
 3896. hands] hond
 3897. for] om.
 3899. hent] mette
 3900. sharpe speres] speres sharpe
 3901. envyous] (ed. of envious)
 3902. every] outhur
 3903. aspieth] espeth (ed. espieth)
 3904. a] om.
 3908. fle] flee
 3909. mortall] dedly
 3911. vpright] vprights
 3913. worthy] this
 3915. Thebans] theban
 to] vnto
 3916. slaughter] slauhtre
 3917. Pollymyte] Polymytes
 3917. pray gan] gan prey
 3919. wolde] wolden
 stynt] styntyn
 3920. that] thilke

Sese] cessen

3923. Pollymyte] Polymytes
comforte] confortē

3926. howghtynge] hasting

3927. bethe] ben
p^e] om.

3929. haue] han
the] this

3938. And trefy] And the trefe

3939. shedd] shad
3940. avysed] avise

3941. yafe] gaf

3942. gate] getys (ed. gete)

3944. As] Than
aforne hathe] hath aforne

3945. sawe] saugh

3947. to gyde] to hyr Guyde

3948. pollymyte] Polymytes

3952. be] ben

3956. fresshe] fresshly

3958. thought] though that

3959. And] 3it

3960. be] ben

3964. gate] 3ate

3965. Bethe] Ben
droughe] droweth (ed. drow)
nyghe] om.

3966. tho takynge] taking tho

3967. lothe] sory

3968. iubarte] iuparte

3969. cundyte] conduit
entir] entren
p^e] om.

3971. contry] contrarye

3972. pleynly] platly
3976. In] Ne
not] om.
3977. Nethir] Nowther
feros] ferys
3979. of]² om.
3981. the]¹ her
the]² om.
þ^e] om.
3982. Pollymyte] Polymytes
3983. besought] bysouhte
þ^t] this (ed. thilke)
she] nyght
3987. surplusage] the surplusage
3988. contry] contrayre (ed. contrarie)
3990. from] fro
the] om.
3995. tolde all] told hym al
4001. woll] wil
4002. thought] thouhte
4003. conferme] conforme
4004. falsehede] falsnesse
4007. and indurat] and he was indurat
4009. thought] þouht
4010. noght] nouht
4011. lete] lote (ed. lete)
hym] hem (ed. him)
4013. selfe] silue
4016. hae] han
4017. with owtyn] out of
4018. Issuen] yssen
4019. with] in
godely and] om.
4020. feld] felde

4022. armed] armyd (ed. I armyd)
4025. holde] olde
4031. horse and chare] char and hors
4032. was no more] no mor was
4034. went] fille
downe] om. (ed. down)
4036. þ^t they] om.
stode] which he stood
4038. with the Grekes] Grekis with hym
4039. all] om.
4040. deserte] decert
4043. pluto] Plyto (ed. Pluto)
stalled] ystallyd
4044. called] I callyd
4045. ys] is (ed. his)
4048. and] (ed. and of)
4049. avaylith] auayllen
4051. in] hym
nig^rmansies] Nigromancye
4055. nought] nat
myshaunse] meschaunce
4056. affyaunse] outre affiaunce
4061. done] about
4062. Sucha] Swich
made] hath maked
4063. thynke] thyng
4064. vn] om.
4066. Trompet] trumpet
4069. For] To fore
4070. Euryche] Euery
4071. sorwe] frowne
4072. þ^t all men] the grounde hem alle
wolde] wil

4073. swolowe] Swalowen
4075. nethir] nouthen
4078. seche] seke
owte þ^o] out al the
4079. whan he] whan that he
4081. vnknowe] vnknowen
4082. truste] trist
4083. comforte] confort
4085. gone] gan
to] hem to
4086. they] that they
woll] wil
4089. vre] eure
4091. Toures] tours (*ed.* toures)
4094. go] gon
cuntre] contre
4095. Sethe] Sith
have] han
socoure] her socour (*ed.* socour)
4097. ys gretely] gretely is
4101. by]² *om.* (*ed.* by)
whyche craffte] wichcraft (*ed.* wichecraft)
sorcery] fals sorcerye
4102. Ageynste] Ageyns (*ed.* Ageynes)
the] *om.*
4103. nere] nor
4105. ayenst] ageyn
4206. man] maner
4107. as wyste] as he wiste
4108. truste] tryste
4112. were] was
4113. remedie] remedyen
4115. oportune] inportune
4116. contynwe] contune

4117. were] wern
and wyse] and most wise
4118. was] were
4119. hie] hegh
haue] han
4120. to] om.
4122. to the] vnto
4125. with lyfe] with the lyf
4130. famed] famous
4135. haue] han
4136. be] ben
not derked] not 3it dyrkyd
4137. nethir] nouthur
in] on
4138. take] tok
4139. ensauple] example
4140. were] wern
4141. To foerne] To forn
4143. ne] nor
dyssever] Seuere
4144. brought] brouht
4145. Crestes] Crestyd
enbataylyd] and betailed
4147. sey] seyn
4151. haue] han
4153. þ^t advyse] and thavis
4154. were] wern
4155. afore] afor
marked] wer markyd
4159. enpalle] apalle
4161. for happy] for mor happy
4165. shulde] shal
fyne] falle

4166. haue] han
4169. hym] hem
4172. coude] couden
spye] espye
4173. Amonge] And among
4174. haue] han
4176. menalypps] Menolippus
p^t one] the ton
4177. Tredims] Terdymus
4180. her] in her (*ed.* in her)
haue] han
4179. Tredims] Terdymus
proffered] preferred
4181. whom] whilom
4185. of] *om.*
4186. And as] As (*ed.* As)
4187. They done] Don (*ed.* They don)
hym] hem (*ed.* him)
4189. confermed] conformed (*ed.* confermed)
4190. highe] his
4192. to be chose] chose to be
4193. hit] *om.*
4194. grete hunger] gret meschief of hungre
thrust] thrust
4195. ysswen] issen
4196. slayn] slayn (*ed.* slayen)
4197. And] *om.*
ethir] outhier
party] parte
4200. From] Fro
4201. p^t where so] wher so that
ever] *om.*
4202. afore] afor
4203. made hem] made of hem

4204. occasion] occasioun (*ed.* occisioun)
4205. fro] from
4207. lyke] so lik
4208. to flight] to the flight
4210. to] into
4212. proudly] dedly
4213. hym] hem
by]² om.
4214. bryng] bryngyn
4216. But alas] But O. alas
4217. aday] a day
chase] enchace
4221. one] on
4228. leche craffte] lech craft (*ed.* leche craft)
muste] mot
4229. made] maked
4230. he was] was he
4233. For] But for
there was] was there
none] no
4234. Ayenst] Ageyn
4235. or] er
4237. p^a] his
4239. menalypps] Menolippus
4240. p^t] thilke
4242. partonolope] Parthanolope
4243. Islayen] Islayn (*ed.* Islayen)
aforne] afor
4248. Bry] brigge
4250. *Line om.*
4251. p^t] thik (*ed.* thilk)
4252. tell] tellen
4253. ne] nor

of] om.

4255. p^t] thilke

4256. passed was] was passyd (ed. passyd was)
p^e] om.

4257. From] And fro

4258. tresse] tressys
bathe] bathen

4261. the] om.
whan he] whan that he

4262. of] in to

4264. Pollymyte] Polymytes
in the felde] at good leyser

4265. Singellerly] Syngulerly
haue] han
a doo] ado

4267. enprentyd] emprented

4272. in] om.

4273. Whiche] with
hathe] haate
encresyd] Cankered

4277. Pollymyte] Polymytes
plate] platys
and]¹ om.

4278. thurgh] thorgh out
smote] smette
in the] in to

4282. light] alighte

4284. embrace] embrace (ed. vnbrace)

4286. owte] om. (ed. out)

4287. full] ryght

4288. on] om.

4292. rofe] smoot

4293. bene] be

4294. slayne] yslowe (ed. yslawe)

4295. Atte] At the
afore] afor

4297. In to] Out of
4298. loude] land (ed. loud)
4301. a] om.
4305. comforte] confort
4306. ran] room (ed. ronne)
4310. grekes] Grekys (ed. Grek)
plate] platys
mayle] thorgh maylle
4311. all] at
4312. betyn with] betyn of with
4314. more hydous] hydousher (ed. hydouser)
4315. and of] and (ed. and of)
Arblasters] Arblastys
4316. a] om.
4317. leffte] lost
her] his
were] wern
4319. enter] entren
4322. hem] ham (ed. hem)
4323. se] sen
4324. wery] verray
4325. swerdes] with swerdys
4326. aryvyngel] hamyng (ed. amyng)
4328. her] ther
4329. noght] nouht
4329. gesseran] Geseran
4330. nek and breste] brest and nekke
4331. were] wern
sharpe whette] sharpe grounde and whete
4332. they] ther
were] was
not] no
4334. there] 3onde (ed. 3onder)
a noþ^r] on

4337. the] om.
4338. swoughes] swowys
4340. acoste] cost
4341. soylyngel] and sayllyng
4342. Islayn (ed. Islayen)
4343. þ^e] om.
4345. *Line* om.
4346. on lyve] alyve
4350. vnnethes myght] myght vnnethys
4351. Off] Tho off
they] om.
shit] shet
4352. full] om.
made] maked
4353. carvel] kerve
myth] may
ne] nor
4354. with Grekes] with a grekys
4355. to] vnto
4358. there] they
4359. dever] devoyre
besy] bysy
4361. slayne] yslayn (ed. yslayen)
4362. offer] offred
4364. betyn] I betyn
4366. Infortunat] infortuny
- 4371-4376. *Lines* om.
4377. gode] om.
4378. that] om. (ed. that)
4380. thoughe the] though so be
Comyners] Comownerys
4382. for] ful
hit] om.
haue] han

4385. Terant] Tyraunt
was called] callyd was
4386. experte] acceptable
4388. be] ben
crouned] her
4390. by] om. (ed. by)
choyse] Ioys (choys)
4392. By llegaunse] By her lygeaunce
4395. sworne] sworn and suryd
4402. cuntre] contre
4407. p^t] pan
4409. to] om.
4410. cuntre] contre
4411. aboute adiaçant] aboute hem adiaçant
4413. duches] ek duchessys
4414. bethe] were
4415. women] wymmen
4419. on lyve] alyve
4421. p^e] ther
4421. compleynt] complayntys
4423. with] her
swounyngs] swounyng
face] facys
4426. ftifie] certifie
4427. Thurgh] Thurgh oute
all] om.
regions] þe Rigiouns
4428. roiall] of Royal
4429. Come] Cam
women] wymmen
4431. to forne] afor
4432. to] forto
4433. these] thys
4434. Line om.

4435. in trowth] of trowth
4437. As] And as
4440. moernyngel] mournyng
4441. Burned] burnet
4443. Nethir]¹ Nor
Nethir]² nowther
4444. women] wymmen
4445. barefote] barfote forth
4446. feithefull] feithfully
4447. hevynes] hevnesse (ed. hevynesse)
4448. were] weryn
4449. thyng to] forto
4450. o] a
4451. to] om.
4452. feithfull] feithful alle
4454. a wonder] an vncouth
4455. women] wymen
or] outhur
4456. one] noon
coude] that kowde
4457. to forne] aforne
4459. spryngel] spryng vp
4460. alaye] laye (ed. allaye)
bethe] be
4464. they]¹ that they
come] kam
where] per
they] as they
4465. writ] wrytyn
4467. And] om.
m^rvayle] amervaylyd (ed. mervaylyd)
4468. sprad] sprad thorgh
4471. Campaneus] Companeus (ed. Campaneus)

4472. full] right
4473. in fere] yfere
4474. hevy wofull] wooful hevy
4475. dolefull] wooful
4476. wofull] sorful
4477. face] facys
4478. place] placys
4479. not founde] not ne founde
4480. girte] thorgh girt
4481. vpright] vpri3t (*ed.* vpri3tes)
4482. yen] eyen
4486. myght not] ne myghte
4487. constreynts] constretys (*ed.* constreyntys)
4490. corven] parted
atweyne] on tweyne
4491. bothe] both (*ed.* bothen)
evyn] eve
the] her
4495. nethir] nowther
4497. to] *om.*
4498. women] wymmen
were] trist *and*
4499. doell] dool
4501. to] *om.*
4503. due] dieu (*ed.* due)
4507. Attenes] Athenys
4511. systyr] suster
4512. gan aspie] gonne first espye
4515. brought] brouht
to] vnto
4516. gyf] 3ive
4518. besoughte] preide (*ed.* preiden)

4520. gentylnes] gentyllesse
4521. hath] han
4522. haue] han
h^t] om.
4525. herde] whan he herd
4526. he] om.
4532. From] Fro
he] 3e
4534. rede] rood
4535. a knight] in soth
4536. Oste] hoost
chyvalry] of Chyualrye
4537. speke] spekyn
4539. slowe] slough
4540. flighte] the flyght
4541. And] om.
yet som] 3it as some
Auctor] auctours
maketh] make
4542. the] om.
4543. with pycoys furste] first with pikkeys
+] and
4544. beton] bete
4547. Stones] ston
4548. sorue] a sorowe
4549. may] myght
4551. bene] om.
4552. Attenes] Athenes
4555. fylde] feld
from] fro
4558. he] om.
4560. leyde] lade (ed. laide)
4561. no wight] nou3t
4562. women] women in reles

4563. bodies] bonys
4570. flaume] flaumbe
4571. eyre] hayre (ed. ayre)
4572. alloes] and Aloes
4573. Ne] Nor
4574. som] some also
4576. were] weren
4578. bere] bern
to] into
4580. her] the
4581. remebraunse] a remembraunce
4585. Ne] Nor
wastelynge] wrastlyng
poynt] to telle poynt
4586. were] wern (ed. weren)
4588. hathe] han
4590. hie] om.
4593. hie] hegh
4595. hym] ek
4600. women] wymmen
parte] (ed. departe)
4602. hit] om. (ed. it)
4604. bygynnyng] gynnyng
take] took
in] on
4607. Thebes] Thebes shortly
4610. ghete] gete
4613. or] er
bygan] gan
4616. maketh] deth makeþ
4622. counted] acountyd
mowe] may
4624. the]² om.

4625. the] *om.*
4626. departyd] partyd (ed. departyden)
4627. cuntreys] contres
truste] trest
4630. to] for to
begynne] gynne
4631. *Line om.*
4632. sithe] next
Thebes] *om.*
4633. eyther] owther
compleyne] conpleyne
4636. of Amphion eke] ek of Amphion
4638. any] a
4640. fallyn] falle
4644. every] outhur
4649. Bellona] Belliona (ed. Bellona)
4650. therfore] whwefor
every] ech
4654. parte] of hem
4656. fele] felyn
4658. ordeyned] first ordeyned
4659. synfull] synne
folke] folkis
4660. gan] kan
4661. Hye] Hegh
4662. *Line om.*
4663. levyatan] he levyathan
4664. began] gan
4670. vnneth] vnnethys
any] non
state] estat
4672. lowe] lough
4673. shall] shulde
stryfe] thryve

4676. have] han
4677. On] Ouer
over] vndyr
4679. luke] bok (ed. luk)
4682. Ayenste] Agayn
4684. by] om.
twene] atwixe
4685. Every] Eueriche
other besy] bysy other
4686. bereth] berth
4687. kalender] Kalendys
4688. agynnyngel] a gynnyng
4691. or] of²
4693. voyde] voyded
4697. Nere] Nor
4698. shall in herts] in hertys shal
wake] awake
4699. lenght] length
4702. atwene] a twixe
4704. one] both on
too] and two
4705. And] om.
4710. That] Which
4711. the] om.
4712. moder] and moder
maydyn] Mayde
4714. perfight] parfit
4715. hense] hens (ed. hennes)
4716. And] om.

Notes on MS M4

13. mysty] The descender of y^2 is obliterated by the (?water) damage that affects 1r.

17. Fl ynge] The scribe blotted the ascender of the l. He may have then erased the beginning of a following t, since he omitted the e (P *Fletynge*), but then lacked the space to insert the et.

19. complete] Only left side bar of p and a few millimeters of the beginning of the lobe are distinguishable. P *Complete*.

109. Pap] A sharp triangular point occurs at the midpoint of the lobe of P, strongly suggesting a wynn. Yet in P the scribe clearly writes an l. See section on script.

182. ecchone rydyngel] Within the space the scribe erased rydyn. After the n is a thickened x crossing out, perhaps a mistake for a following g. The space here indicates that the scribe probably made the erasure after already inscribing the following present rydyngel. P *ecchon rydyngel*.

287a. Exaample] The scribe at first wrote a long r and then placed a diagonal (almost a horizontal) line through the r to give an appearance of x. P *Exaample*.

292b. The scribe placed (only here) a dot in the k of kyngel between the upper ascender and upper oblique, perhaps indicating that this k should be regarded as upper case. A period is also placed in other upper-case letters such as O, C, and occasionally H. No dot in P kyngel which is lineated on the previous line 292a.

312. Square] The top part of the s-curve is blotted. The S may be lower case. P *square*.

445. h foundel] An h, then a curve and overdot (like a fermata as in 1278, 2848) above an erased but faintly visible epsilon e, indicates deletion of both h and e. The scribe may have corrected his dittography of the previous word haue. The scribe erased only the second stem of the h, leaving the letter with the appearance of an l. Did the scribe feel that undue erasing was marring the parchment? In addition, the appearance of the unique epsilon is puzzling. P *hym foundel*.

497. countenaunce] The superscript a represents an a similar to the one given in Cappelli (1), second line, sixth character, except that a horizontal bar is drawn atop the stems. Also occurs 556, 1808, 3986. P *countenaunse*.

546. p^rayer] The superscript is constructed of an r ligatured to an a, whose loop is closed by a barely discernible line. Also 3459, 3921. P p^rayer.

556. lyn^age] See 497. P lynage.

665. A rhetorical breath symbol, probably in the scribe's exemplar, is preserved here between *afftirwarde* and *by*. The scribe's decision to generally eliminate it confirms that one of the purposes of M4 was a private rather than public reading. No virgule here in P, but numerous virgules appear at the end of lines, I suspect with a later hand. An examination of the manuscript would answer this question.

683. this] The loop of the script s is inked in.

730. circued] Faint r appears above i as if scribe toyed with placement of an r superscript and then changed mind. P *circued*.

806. g^race] See 546. P g^race.

816. spousayle] The scribe, after the first minim of the first u, re-inked his nib and formed this dittography? P *spousayle*, although the u has the flourish of a terminal n.

887. Iniquite 898] The examples of the respective lower-case i are dotted to distinguish them from the other minims in the word. P *Iniquite*.

1224. swemen] (Ar. *sweven*). This word epitomizes the scribe's problematic representation of both u/v and minims. Without the accidental extra minim of m, the seeming n would be transcribed u, as is common in this manuscript. P *sweuen*.

1238. g^race] See 546, 806.

1278. mentalyp] An overdot with a loop over it (like a fermata) over the p: see 445. P *mentalyp* also with an overdot and loop over the p. In P the p of the previous line's *slyp* (but not M4's *slype*) also includes this mark.

1379. Affermynge] Dark dot over the m accidentally from the scribe's pen. Apparently not a dot indicating deletion of the letter below. For seemingly purposeful dots see 1641, 2345. P *Affermynge*.

1409. vn to] Inexplicable rectangular brown stain on to may make it appear to be crossed out in reproductions.

1496. gan] A flourish over final n, typical of the scribe, but so pronounced here that it almost seems like a macron. No such flourish in P *gan*.

1496. repeyr^r] Instead of an expected repeyre to rhyme with steyr^e 1495, the final superscript *r* is perhaps mere scribal error, since such *rs* appear frequently, although not near this part of the manuscript. P repeyre.

1570. yo^ur] Puzzling superscript directly above *o*; almost a ligatured *oc*. P *my*.

1598. that] The scribe begins writing a *t*, which he alters to a. The lobe for a is barely distinguishable. P *p^t*.

1641. .] Either an end-stop or an erroneous dot (as in 1379, see above). Another end-stop, more a punctus elevatus, appears at 2345. Both precede the word *And*. End-stop in P also, although P is rich in punctuation marks. The microfilm prevents one from determining if such marks were added by a later hand.

1724. hole ^w a a centre] A caret indicates a *w* representing *with* is inserted. After the scribe initially wrote a letter (perhaps *q*), he erased it, and wrote a^[2] over it. However, no *q* is nearby. Perhaps the second *a* is eyeskip from a *kynge* 1722?

1765. As a] Accidental horizontal line of rubric connects the *s* and *a*.

1808. coven^ant] See 497. P cou^anant.

1944. The scribe accidentally repeats 1942: line dittography due to eyeskip, from confusing the synonyms *Tresoure* 1942 with (Ar.) *richesse* 1944. The mistake is not made by our scribe in P (*riches*).

1966. p^t p] A double dot (like a diaeresis) appears above the lone thorn. Since sometimes scribes placed a single overdot above a thorn ("In a number of places *thorn* is dotted" [OED s.v. *wen²*]), the extra dot indicates a deletion. The superscript letter ^t should be a ^u: cf. P *p^u*. The double dot also occurs 2047.

2047. p^t p] See 1966. P *p^t p^u*.

2145. st] The scribe at first missed *thyk* due to eyeskip. Hence he wrote *st* of *stele*, then stopped to write *thyk stele*.

2178a. l] A dot at mid point after the *l* indicates that the number is not merely a stray letter. The *Beowulf* scribes do the same. P ·l·.

2345. .] Perhaps a punctus elevatus. See 1641. P has a solidus here, as is common in the manuscript, and may be a later hand.

2640. Imued] The scribe's seven straight minims here make for difficult transliteration. P *Imued*.

2781. A macron (not a paraph) puzzlingly appears over the x of *pollax*.

2848. bisshop] An overdot with loop (like a fermata) over p, as also in P: see 445.

2861. Stray vertical rubric line appears before *And*.

2947. *youth* *ys*] Hole in the manuscript between *youth* and *ys*. It measures 1.5 mm long, 1 mm. wide, and is clearly avoided by the scribe. On the recto side it is 17 cm. to the right of *grekes mete* 2915.

2956. *Ferre*] Obs. form (s.v. OED) of *far*? P *Ferre*, Ar. *fast*.

2971-4. The scribe uses his rubric red for the poetic text of *Thebes* only here: *plato* 2971; 2972-3; *Tullius* 2974. In P these names appear with raised dots before and after, as with numerals (see 2178a), rather than rubric red.

3006b. A paraph is placed immediately before the rubric of **water** to indicate its separation from line 3007, since it appears on the same line. In P, same formation but no paraph.

3376. *hy*] The scribe wrote a *b* (eyeskip from the adjacent *by* in his exemplar) but then wrote an *h* over it with a horizontal bar through the ascender. P *hym*.

3459. See 546.

3675. A barely discernible *h* appears before *and*, perhaps due to eyeskip from the phrase *herof have* 3676 in the scribe's exemplar.

3921. See 546.

3986. *coven^ant*] See 497.

4214. *brynge*] Damage due to partial (and unnecessary?) erasure. Loop of *r* has almost disappeared; *n* almost intact; outline of *g* and *e* faintly visible. P *brynge*.

4215. *leyde*] Like *brynge* above, damage due to partial erasure. The *e*¹ has virtually disappeared, and may be an *a*. P *leyde*.

4248. Bry] Erasure, with faintest outline of final e, which is possibly preceded by a v and yet another indistinguishable letter. P *brygge*.

4277. Pollymytel] a larger P begins the line, but as in the Pepys MS, no dot appears inside the lobe.

4368. doughter] After the final r the scribe wrote another r and then erased it. P *doughters*.

4395-4405. Some damage at the beginning of these lines at 69r due to offset from 68v.

4414b. Stray rubric line appears as a dash after *Thebes*.

4426. ftifie] *f*¹ has a blotted, oblique horizontal bar. P *certifie*.

4509. tosene] The scribe avoids here the first of four holes on 71r. It is under the first e, and the scribe writes *ene* almost as a superscript in order to avoid it. The three other holes do not interfere with the text of 71 r, although they impinge upon 71v: see notes to lines 4539, 4542, 4546.

4539. faughtel] The *u* is barely visible, obscured by a hole in the manuscript.

4542. Theseus entred] The scribe purposely avoided a hole between these two words by starting *entred* well to the right of it.

4546. Campaneus] The scribe avoids a hole by raising the *u*.

4543. +] Although the mark looks like a plus sign, closer inspection reveals it to be an ampersand, unique here in the manuscript. P *and*.

4706. in this exile] A caret between and beneath *in* and *exile* points to this word inserted mostly above *exile*. P *in this Exile*.

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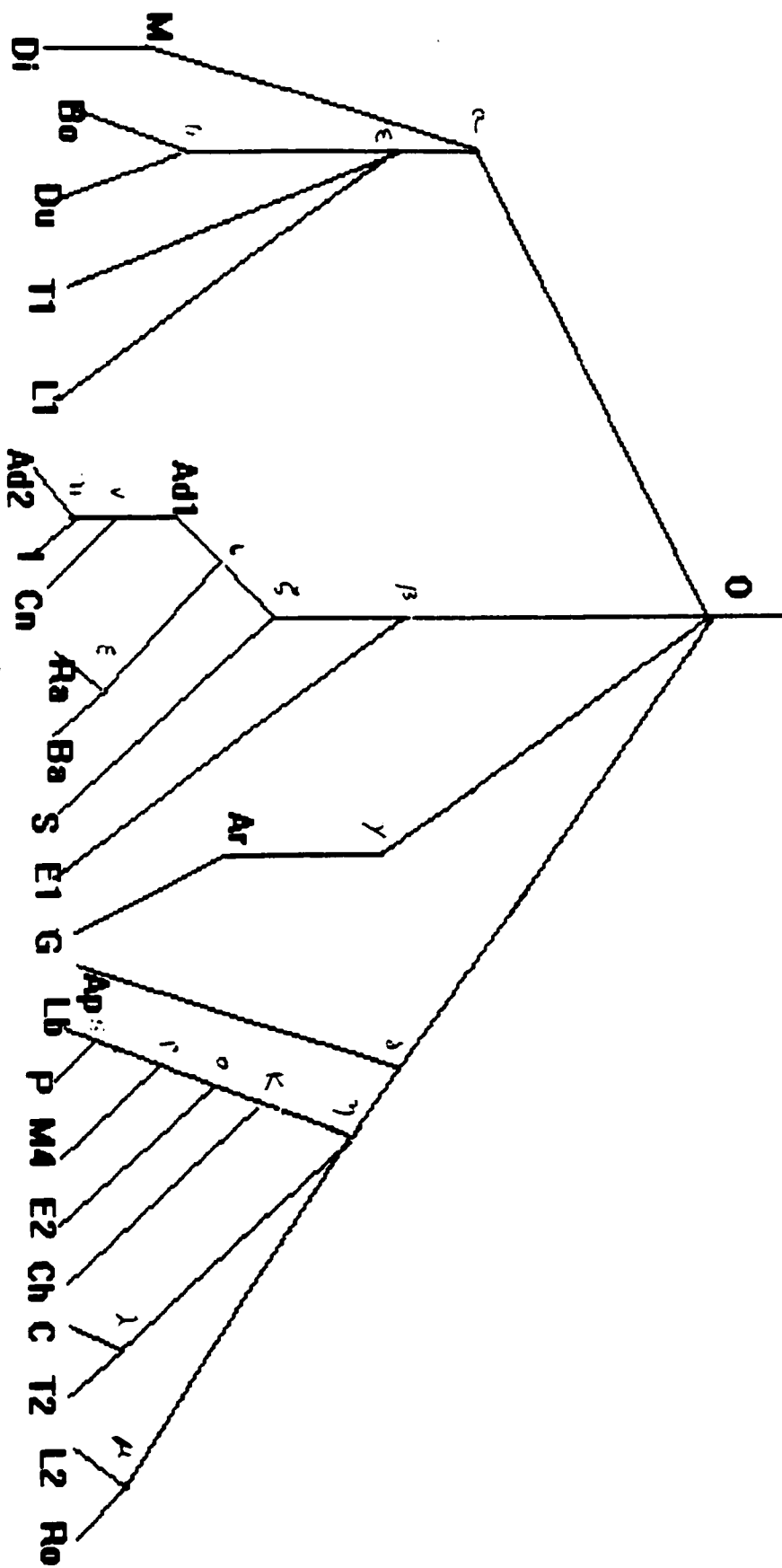
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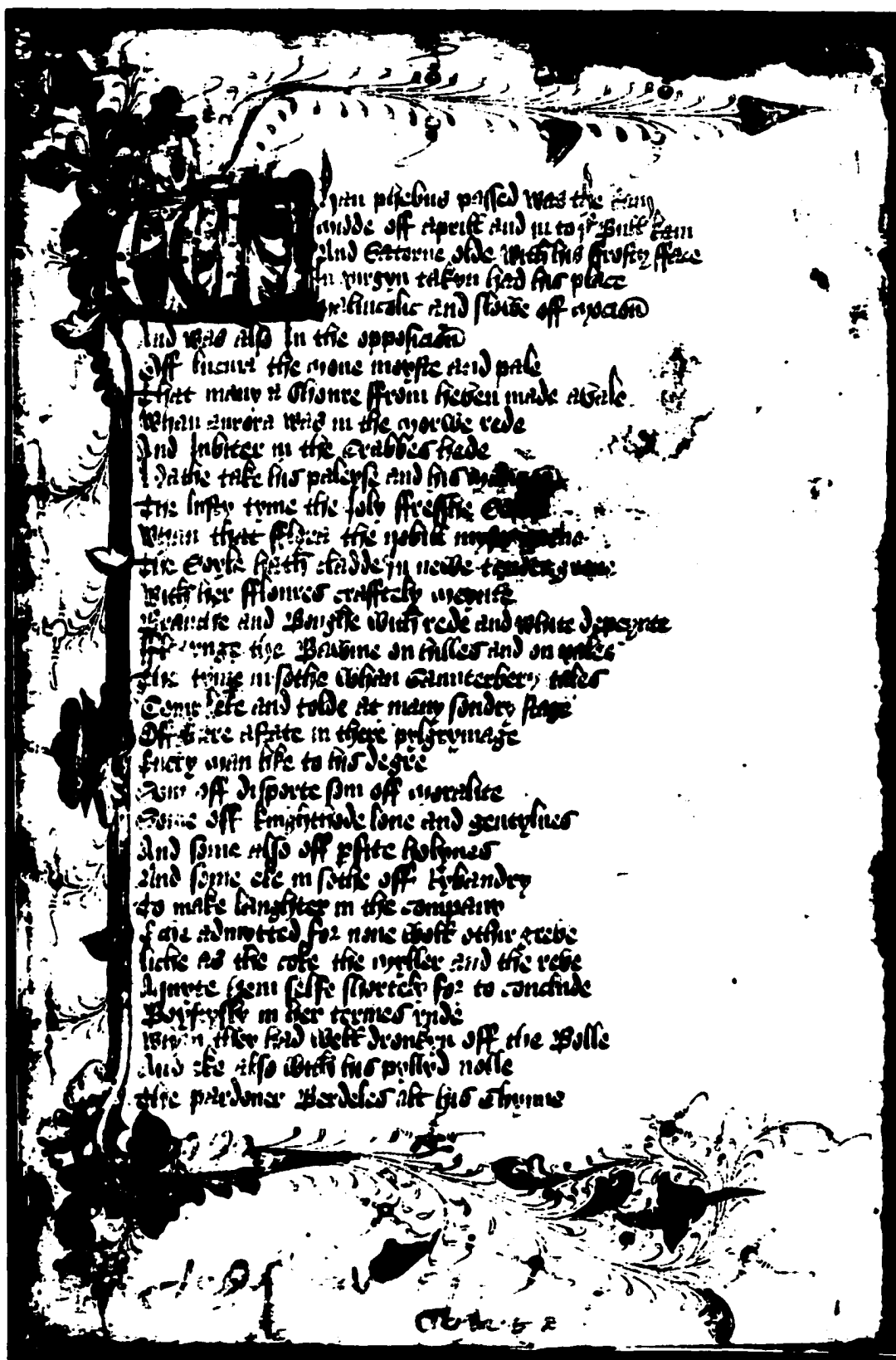
APPENDIX: A STEMMATA OF THE SIEGE OF THEBES

The Appendix is based upon Robert Lovell's stemma (lxxvii) which in turn is based upon E&E's stemma (II.213). An inferential witness (as determined by E&E) is indicated by a Greek letter. I have preserved the abbreviations used by these scholars. The following list provides a key to the abbreviations. The numerals preceding the manuscript correspond to those listed above in "Census of ST in manuscript."

Ad1	16. London, BL MS Addit. 18632
Ad2	15. London, BL MS Addit. 5140
Ap	12. London, BL MS Cotton App. XXVII
Ar	11. London, BL MS Arundel 119
Ba	23. Wiltshire, Longleat House, 257
Bo	4. Oxford, Bodl. 2559
C	7. Cambridge UL MS Addit. 3137
Ch	6. Oxford, Christ Church 152
Cn	21. Austin, U of Texas MS 143
Di	3. Oxford, Bodl. 1831
Du	25. Old Buckenham Hall, Norfolk
E1	(print) 1. de Worde <i>The Storye of Thebes</i>
E2	(print) 2. Stow <i>Chaucer</i>
G	22. Cambridge, UL Addit. 6864
I	13. London, BL MS Egerton 2864
L1	1. Oxford, Bodl. 1124
L2	2. Oxford, Bodl. 1479
Lb	19. London, Lambeth Palace Library 742
M	24. New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke MS 661
M4	27. New York, Pierpont Morgan Library 4
P	8. Cambridge, Magdalene College MS Pepys 2011
Ra	5. Oxford, Bodl. 11914
Ro	14. London, BL MS Royal 18. D. ii
S	17. London, BL MS Addit. 27929
T1	9. Cambridge, Trinity College MS 652
T2	10. Cambridge, Trinity College MS 1283

Lydgate's Original MS





The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York. MS M.4, f. 1r.

The wise were at his name
 Not forgete the hebenly manans
 Elected sacred small fractions
 Furne by secondes force and the first
 On angym stones and white coctes
 y prebed othe by dylygent labour
 In tables correcte dedyde off all errors
 In such sought and founde othe bothe too
 The yeres collecte and the space also
 Considerde eke by gode inspection
 Every honre and consulation
 And eke aspects and lokes eke dyverse
 Whiche were gode and also pverse
 Whether they were towarde or eke at rebate
 In happy or fult or infortunate
 These eke consulation and dysposicion off the
 In the dysposicion of Edippus the kynge
 And fynally in conclusion
 They founde Saturne in dysposicion
 In such eke dysposicion and loche
 And made wyse fractions and wrote
 In dolyng his septer in the capone
 The same othe when the chyld was borne
 He was delecte and consolation
 And depressed in operations hant
 That the dome and the judgement small
 Off these clerkes to speke inpreant
 By small forte that may not be subdrate
 That whiche his fader his fader shude be stable
 In the state off Edippus dysposicion was to ste
 His owne fader and wode his owne mode
 There may no man helpe hit ne excuse
 On which thyng the kynge gaid to wyse

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