

Projektleitung: Dr. Katie Long

Book as Text: Language and Material Culture of the Middle Ages

The Media is the Manuscript

Most of our knowledge about the Middle Ages (c.7th – 15th centuries) is mediated through the surviving manuscripts. These material artefacts – both text and image – provide us with not only text but with valuable information regarding book production, writing and reading practices and textual circulation; however, in order to read these texts, a wide range of interdisciplinary skills need to be in place. This course aims to provide students with the necessary palaeographic, linguistic and theoretical skills in order to enable them to understand, decipher and ultimately produce editions of manuscripts themselves.

ILIAS: the Media is E-Learning

Contemporary writing technologies play a vital role in current textual scholarship and this needs to be represented in current teaching methodology and practices. The ILIAS platform facilitates in the following ways:

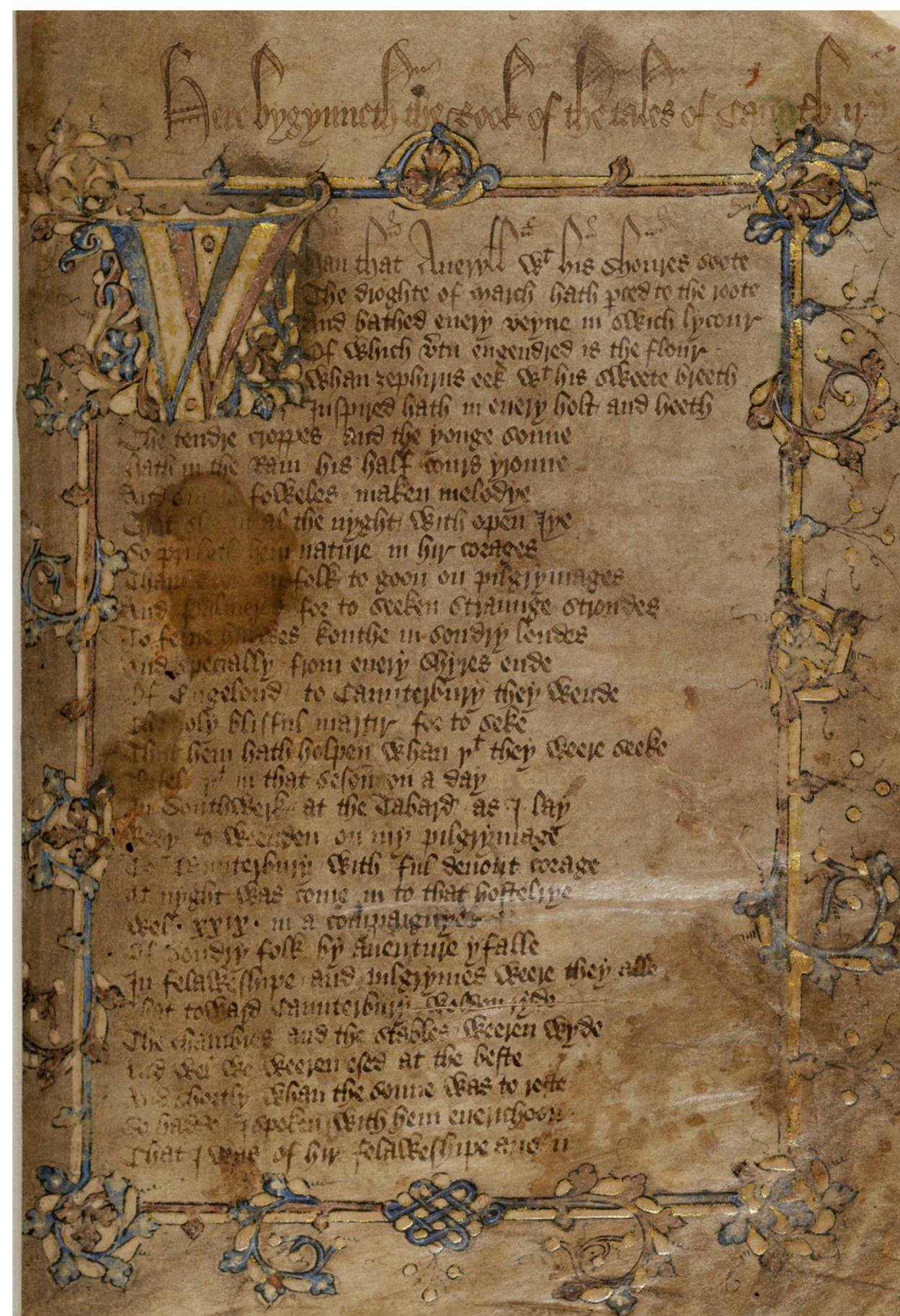
The systematic organization of material in an easily accessible format.

- Digitization, categorization and description of exemplary medieval manuscripts.
- Ongoing support of online collaboration projects being carried out by students from transcription exercises to editing manuscripts and creating textual apparatus.
- Provides a forum whereby students are able to access and evaluate each other's work to create an extra-curricular space for discussion and interaction. All of the above helps to foster a collaborative approach to research which is vital skill for MA students in the current academic climate

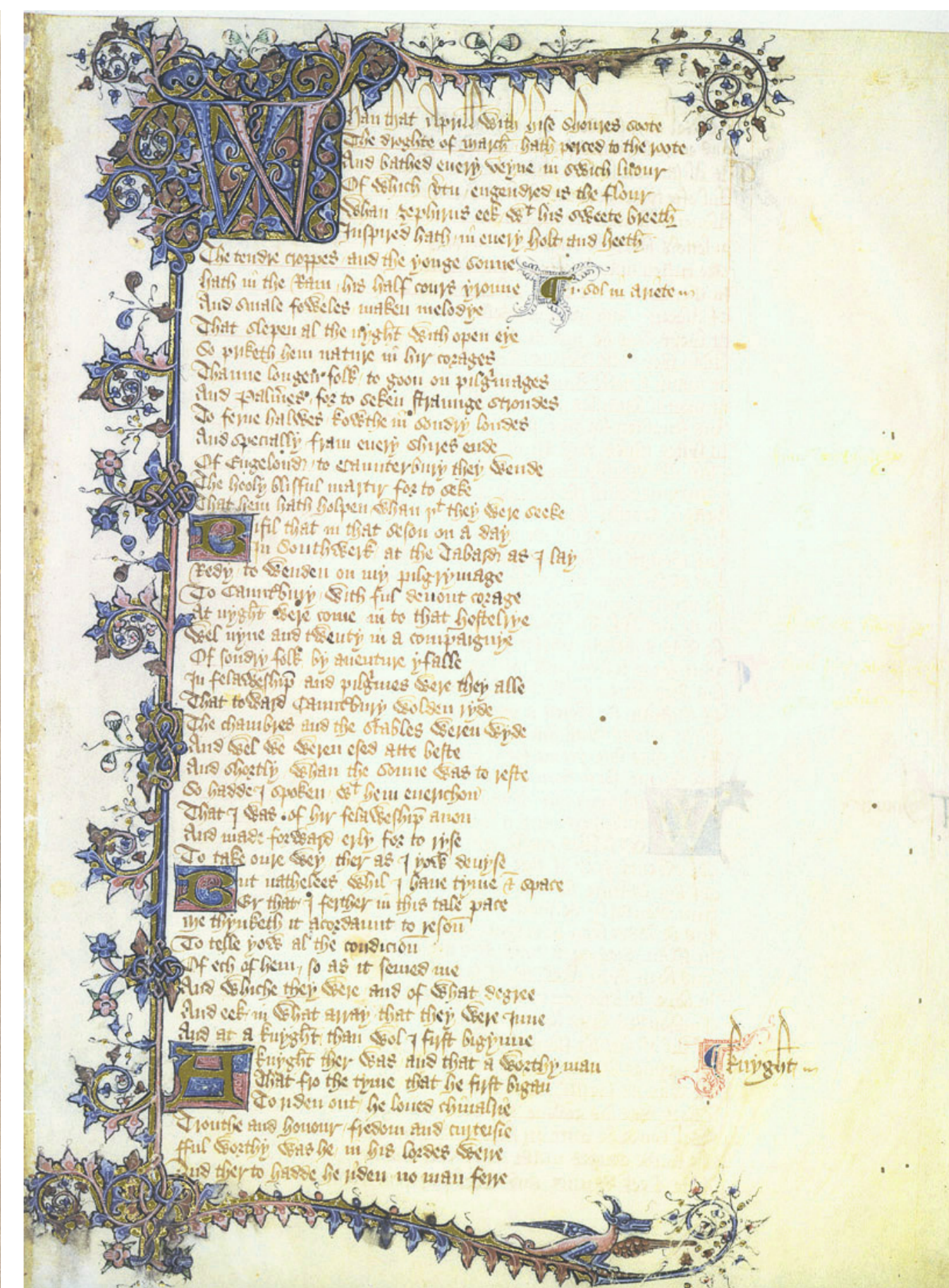
Print and Digital: the Media is the Message

Combining textual scholarship with E-Learning provides students with not only basic palaeographic skills but also with a broad knowledge of the history of writing, and an appreciation of both medieval and modern material production and dissemination of text. To this end, students acquire skills in the following three consecutive learning phases: palaeography, editorial practices and creation of apparatus. These three phases culminate in the collaboration of students on-line to produce their editions where the focus is not only on the finished product, as is often the case, but due to ILIAS, the process through which a manuscript is transformed into an edition is recorded and exposed. Thus, this digitization of the editing process becomes an integral part of the production of medieval manuscripts.

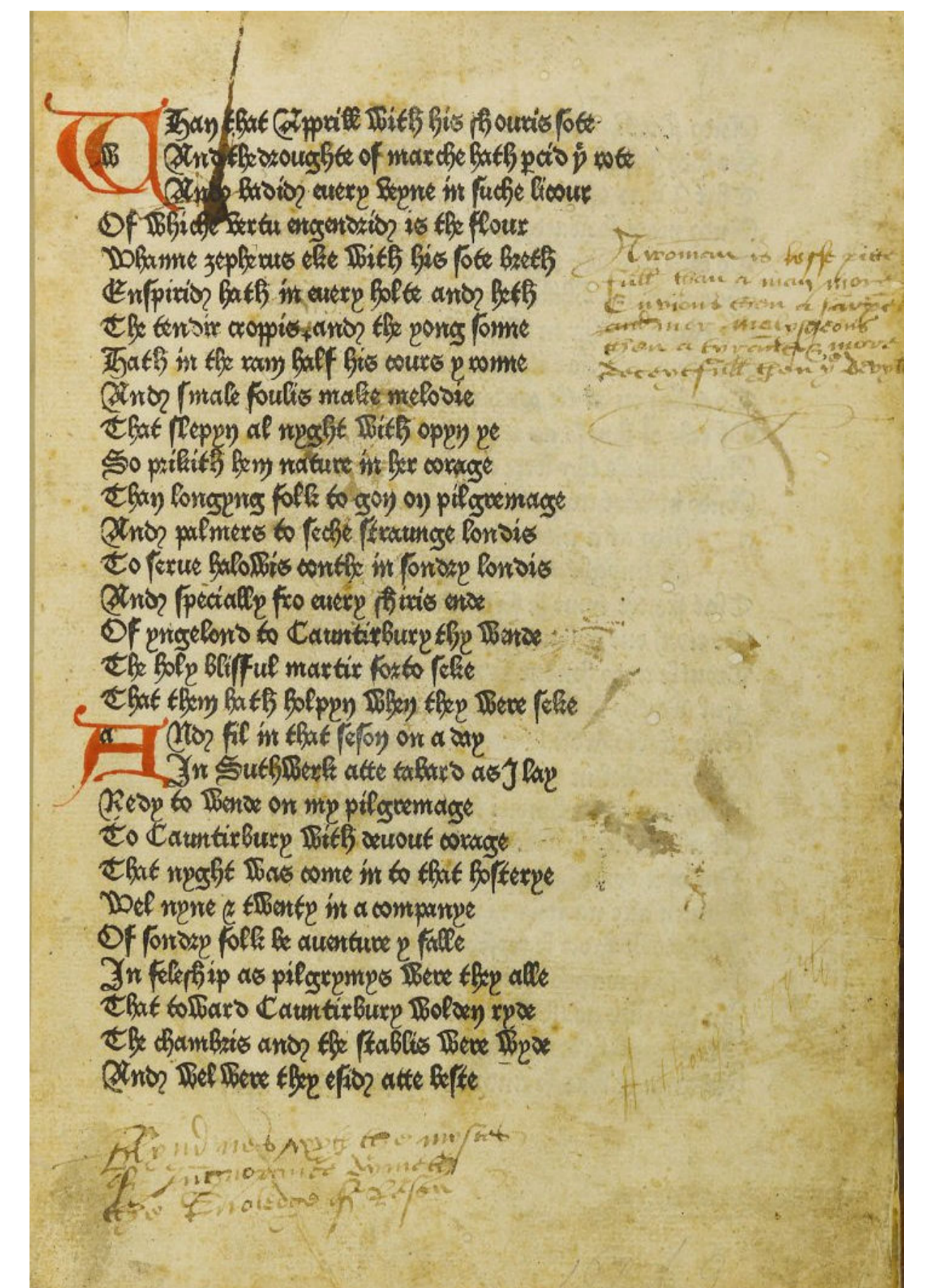
Geoffrey Chaucer (c.1343–1400) *The General Prologue to the Canterbury Tales* in three different versions



c.1405 National Library of
Wales, Aberystwyth,
MS. Peniarth 392 D
(The Hengwrt Chaucer)



c.1405 Huntington Library,
San Marino, California
MS. EL 26 C9
(The Ellesmere Chaucer)



c.1476 William Caxton's
printed edition of the
Canterbury Tales
(Caxton's Chaucer)

Samples of Students' Transcriptions

Her bygynneþ the booke of the tales of cauntbry
Whan that aueryll wt his shoures soote
The droghte of march hath p[er]ced to the roote
And bathed euery veyne in swich lycour
Of which vtū engendred is the flour
Whan zepheris eek wt his sweete breeth
Inspired hath in euery holt and heath

Whan that aprill with hise shoures soote
The droghte of march hath perced to the roote
And bathed euery veyne in swich licour
Of which vtū engendred is the flour
Whan zepheris eek wt his sweete breeth
Inspired hath in eury holt and heath

Whan that aprill with his shouris sote
And the droughte of marche hath pcid þ rote
And badid euery veyne in suche licour
Of whiche vertū engendrid is the flour
Whanne zepherus eke with his sote breth
Enspered hath in every holte and heth