Le Morte Darthur

Sir Thomas Malory

A NORTON CRITICAL EDITION

Sir Thomas Malory

LE MORTE DARTHUR

or

The Hoole Book of Kyng Arthur
and of His Noble Knyghtes of The Rounde Table

AUTHORITATIVE TEXT

SOURCES AND BACKGROUNDS

CRITICISM

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First Edition

for Shelli

Preface

Malory's 'hoole book,' it is clear, has undergone major revisions at the hands of successive generations of editors. And, given the lack of an authoritative copy of the work, it is necessary to conclude that the exemplar which lay behind the sole surviving manuscript may be as much the product of editorial intervention as Caxton's or Vinaver's versions. But to acknowledge the differences in the interpretations which these various texts generate, and the extent to which the process of editing itself determines critical judgements, is to alert us to the open-ended nature of the act of reading, and to its shaping by historical and ideological circumstance. And as readers of Malory today, we should recognize that we actively participate in the creation of meaning.[1]

Even if we did have an authoritative copy—presumably a holograph, a manuscript in Malory's own hand—the shaping of its reading by historical and ideological circumstance would still be unavoidable, and there would remain some doubt about the degree to which what Malory wrote represents what he intended; and any plan to share the text in a more "accessible" form (even, say, at the level of deciding upon a typeface) would necessitate an interventionist editorial presence. Any more ambitious editorial attempt to recover the "original" Malory must admit to being part of a project continually, if learnedly, deferred. The present edition, though precluded in its received format from being a "scholarly edition," does stake a claim to being part of such a project insofar as it recovers certain powerful visual and organizational features of the surviving manuscript omitted from previous editions and offers an unabridged original-language text with a number of new and—I believe (in the absence of certainty)—more authentic readings, many of them recommended by the recent published work of several scholars.[2]

1. Carol M. Meale, " 'The Hoole Book': Editing and the Creation of Meaning in Malory's Text," in *A Companion to Malory,* ed. Elizabeth Archibald and A.S.G. Edwards (Cambridge, Brewer, 1996), 17. "Caxton": the first printed editions of Malory by William Caxton, 1485. "Vinaver": the standard scholarly edition of Malory, about which see the next note. Vinaver's edition is based mainly upon the text of the only known surviving manuscript, the Winchester Manuscript, discovered in 1934, sometimes also referred to as the "Malory Manuscript," about which see, p. xxvii, xxxiv, xliv.
2. I am especially indebted to the following: P. J. C. Field, *Malory: Texts and Sources* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1996); Tsuyoshi Mukai, "De Worde's 1498 *Morte Darthur* and Caxton's Copy-Text," *Review of English Studies* 51 (2000): 24–40; Takako Kato, *Caxton's "Morte Darthur": The Printing Process and the Authenticity of the Text* (a Medium Ævum Monograph, forthcoming); Shunichi Noguchi, "Reading Malory's Text Aloud" and "The Winchester Malory," both in *The Malory Debate: Essays on the Texts of "Le Morte Darthur,"* ed. Bonnie Wheeler, Robert L. Kindrick, and Michael Salda, Arthurian Studies 47 (Cambridge: Brewer, 2000), 117–125, 301–314; and Sir Thomas Malory, *Le Morte Darthur: The Winchester Manuscript,* ed. Helen Cooper (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998). The collective implication of much of this work supports Field's assessment that "a reader who wants a version of Malory's book as near as possible to that which Malory intended, should prefer the Winchester text to Caxton's, and should prefer a well-edited modern edition based on the Winchester manuscript to either" (*Malory,* 24). I have accordingly based this edition on Winchester, with emendations from Caxton (for further details, see "Editorial Procedure / Reading the Edition," p. xliii). In addition to the scholarship just mentioned, I am also very much indebted to *The Works of Sir Thomas Malory,* 3rd ed., 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), the standard scholarly edition by Eugène Vinaver and P. J. C. Field, the erudition and logic of whose emendations in the overwhelming majority of cases is unquestionable.

One of the more obvious visual features of the manuscript represented in this edition is rubrication.[3] Helen Cooper finds that its effect in the manuscript "is overwhelmingly to call attention to the *names,* the identities announced to the world of the people they represent—a visual equivalent to Malory's presentation of a . . . knightliness that consists in 'worship,' honor, the glory that accrues to the name."[4] Cooper also finds that "the consistency with which [the rubrication] is done . . . suggests that it may have been a feature of the exemplar." Whether that exemplar so represented Malory's intention we cannot say—perhaps not, as one wonders, for example, whether the rubrication (with capitalization) of *genytrottys* ("genitals," fol. 77ᵛ) is the result of a scribe's misconstrual of the word as a proper name (though the identity of the giant upon whom these reddened parts are sliced apart is violently sexual). Whatever the case, as Carol Meale observes, "this form of highlighting enables a reader to find her or his way around the text more readily" and so "constitutes a form of signposting within the text which is formalized by the introduction of chapter breaks in Caxton's edition."[5] As a practical aid to readers of an edition based on a manuscript that has relatively few major division markers, representation of the rubrication is an obvious advantage; but it is clear also that it reveals levels of contemporaneous interpretive information that have yet to be fully explored.

The same may be said of two other features of the manuscript I have imported into the edition: large capitals and the paraph (¶, tagged for insertion in the manuscript by a double virgule [//] and corresponding in large part to the modern paragraph break). In such features Helen Cooper again sees potential access to greater authenticity, noting the remarkably close correspondence in the Winchester Manuscript of large capitals and double virgules with many of Caxton's frequent chapter breaks: the possibility is that the features as they appear in Winchester "appeared in similar form in Caxton's copy-text" and may "derive from a common exemplar underlying both: and that puts the system of capitalization and the weightier punctuation within reach of Malory himself."[6]

The simple counterargument to this is that Caxton used the Winchester Manuscript itself as his guide for textual division; we know that it was in his printing shop around the time that he was producing his edition of Malory, even though he must have had a second, probably messier, exemplar upon which he depended for Malory's words.[7] A further objection to the claim of authenticity is that the two scribes of the Winchester Manuscript appear to have had different habits of capitalization and paragraphing: Scribe A seems less inclined than Scribe B to use initials over two lines in height, and "seems to have disliked the

3. For a detailed account of the disposition of this and other features in the edition, see "Editorial Procedure/Reading the Edition," p. xliii.
4. "Opening Up the Malory Manuscript," in *The Malory Debate,* 273.
5. "The Hoole Book," 10.
6. "Opening Up the Malory Manuscript," 265.
7. For the revelation that Winchester was in Caxton's shop, see Lotte Hellinga, "The Malory Manuscript and Caxton," in *Aspects of Malory,* ed. Toshiyuki Takamiya and Derek Brewer (Cambridge: Brewer, 1981), 127–141 (revised from *The British Library Journal* 3 [1977–78]: 91–101). For evidence that Caxton's main copy-text was in a condition that hindered the purposes of establishing text divisions, see Kato, *Caxton's "Morte Darthur,"* chap. III.2 ("Caxton's Irregular Setting-Copy").

breaks caused by the diagonal strokes."[8] Be that as it may, I would urge further meditation on Cooper's hypothesis. There is one surviving manuscript of a Middle English romance that we know to be a holograph; extraordinarily, the manuscript preserves in its binding, in the same hand as the manuscript proper, a portion of the author/translator's draft.[9] The draft, though cramped, employs a pattern of paragraphing and hierarchical capitalization that is transferred with some consistency to the fair copy: it serves as perhaps the most apposite reminder available that Middle English authors, and not just scribes, used organizational signs with deliberation in their own copy. If Malory used such features himself, they must have stood a chance of persisting in some form in subsequent manuscript copies, transmitted perhaps through the same kind of care manifested by Caxton.

Leaving aside the question of their authenticity, such signs at the very least remain important descriptors of the earliest known reception of the *Morte Darthur*. And what emerges are frequent reconfigurations of meaning: if one observes the distinctions of Winchester's paragraphing against the usual practices of modern editions, there are, for instance, realignments of dialogues into narrative units rather than speaker-exclusive paragraphs, realignments of episodic boundaries, emphatic isolations of short statements (sometimes within single speeches), emphatic or suspenseful separations of clauses,[1] delineations of parentheses, clarifications of syntax, the visual privileging of certain characters' speeches, the highlighting of rapid-fire exchanges of dialogue, and the signaling of colophonic direction. The relative line height and decorative elaboration of large capitals suggest additional representations of hierarchies, affinities, and distinctions, not the least of which concern some narrative divisions notoriously overridden by Vinaver.[2] Interestingly, such "restored" functions (and no doubt others) are common in the deployments of both scribes, despite their different habits, and with further study (necessarily incorporating a check for correlations in Caxton's increasingly reappreciated witness) may bring us back to the question of authorial nuance.

The items I have chosen for the Chronologies (p. xvii) and the Sources and Backgrounds and Criticism sections are designed to contribute to what I would describe as the contextualizing model of the volume. They represent my concern that readers develop a studious caution about inclinations they may have to mystify or reify Malory at the expense of

8. N. R. Ker, *The Winchester Malory: A Facsimile,* Early English Text Society, Supplementary Series 4 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), xviii.
9. This is *Sir Ferumbras,* written around 1380 and preserved in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Ashmole 33. The standard edition (with a parallel edition of the draft) is by Sidney J. Herrtage, Early English Text Society, Extra Series 34 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1879). For a survey of some of the translator/author/binder's methods, see Stephen H. A. Shepherd, "The Ashmole *Sir Ferumbras:* Translation in Holograph," in *The Medieval Translator,* ed. Roger Ellis (Cambridge: Brewer, 1989), 103–121.
1. For further consideration of the Malorian clause, see D. Thomas Hanks and Jennifer Fish, "Beside the Point: Medieval Meanings vs. Modern Impositions in Editing Malory's *Morte Darthur," Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 98, 3rd ser. (1997): 273–289, esp. 277–278.
2. See Murray J. Evans, "The Explicits and Narrative Division in the Winchester MS: A Critique of Vinaver's Malory," *Philological Quarterly* 58 (1979): 263–281 and "Ordination and Narrative Links: The Impact of Malory's Tales as a 'hoole book,'" in *Studies in Malory,* ed. James W. Spisak (Kalamazoo, Mich.: University of Western Michigan, 1985), 29–52; see also "Opening Up the Malory Manuscript," 258–264.

not seeing his work as mediated, in its creation and its representation, by a variety of histories, discourses, technologies, speculations, and subjectivities (including those of editors). I am uncomfortable about characterizing my choices further. I do make some attempt to qualify their illustrative potential in brief dedicated headnotes and footnotes, but at the same time I do not wish to create the impression that I view those choices—or indeed my comments anywhere else in this volume—as somehow essential to anyone's experience of Malory.[3]

3. In an effort to resist the fixities imposed by its bibliographic form, this volume has a dedicated Web site with additional support materials similar to those that I offer for *Middle English Romances;* it can be reached by following links from the publisher's Norton Critical Edition Web site (www.wwnorton.com/college/english/nce_home.htm).

Acknowledgments

Chronologies

Arthur Before Malory†

409 C.E.	Rome loses control of Britain.
c. 468	Riothamus, King of the Britons, possibly to be identified with the historical Arthur, leads an army against the Visigoths in Gaul.
Late 5th to early 6th century	Various historical records imply that an unnamed British warlord—potentially the historical Arthur—experiences some successes against invading forces of Angles and Saxons.
Late 6th century	Poems by the (Welsh) bard Taliesin and others speak of an Arthur as a famous warrior, sometimes with supernatural associations.
c. 610	The *Gododdin* of Aneirin, a collection of northern elegies preserved in Welsh, evaluates a certain warrior as "no Arthur," thus suggesting the already legendary status of the name.
c. 800	The *Historia Brittonum*, a chronicle attributed to the Welsh monk Nennius, lists twelve victories over the Saxons won by Arthur, *dux bellorum* (leader of battles); Nennius embellishes by noting that Arthur slew 960 opponents singlehandedly in one battle.
c. 960–80	The *Annales Cambriae* (Annals of Wales) place the death of Arthur, and one Medraut (i.e., Mordred), at the battle of Camlann.
c. 1000–1100	Development of a body of Welsh Arthurian tales with much marvellous content, the most important of which is *Culhwch and Olwen*, later to be included among the *Mabinogion* tales, and possibly an indicator of the Celtic origin of aspects of the Grail quest.
c. 1136	The *Historia Regum Brittaniae* (History of the kings of Britain), written by the cleric Geoffrey of Monmouth, produces a combination of features of Arthur's story that will form the basis of much

† This chronology is selective, concentrating on texts and events that have some demonstrable legacy in Malory. The full range of Arthurian representation in the Middle Ages is vast; for introductions to further study, see "Arthurian Origins" in the Bibliography, p. 947.

	subsequent Arthurian literature: Merlin and his prophecies, the Roman campaign, Arthur's battle with Mordred, and his final repair to the Isle of Avalon.
1155	Wace finishes his Anglo-Norman *Brut,* a poem based mainly on Geoffrey, but introducing the Round Table and "modernizing" Arthur's court into a chivalric institution.
c. 1160–80	Marie de France writes her *Lais,* including two Arthurian poems, *Lanval* and *Chevrefeuil.*
c. 1160–91	Chrétien de Troyes produces arguably the first, the finest, and the most influential of all medieval Arthurian romances, *Eric et Enide, Cligés, Le Chevalier de la Charette, Le Chevalier au Lion (Yvain),* and *Le Conte du Graal (Perceval);* introduction of Camelot, Lancelot, Gawain, and Perceval.
c. 1170	Beroul writes his Anglo-Norman *Roman de Tristan,* an early "noncourtly" rendering of the legend of Tristan and Iseult.
c. 1190	Layamon completes his *Brut,* a translation of Wace, and the first Arthurian retelling in English.
1190	"Discovery" of the grave of Arthur and Guinevere at Glastonbury Abbey (an event advantageous to the impecunious abbey and to Henry II, who was faced with claims by rebellious Celtic peoples that Arthur would return to fight against him).
c. 1191–1210	Robert de Boron produces *Joseph d'Arimathie, Merlin,* and probably the *Didot Perceval;* he christianizes the Grail of Chrétien's *Perceval* and makes it the object of knightly quests.
c. 1210–30	*Perlesvaus (Le Haut Livre de Graal)* composed, with some knowledge of de Boron's *Joseph* and Chrétien's *Perceval.*
	Composition of the French prose Vulgate Cycle, an attempt to represent a full range of Arthurian legend, with a didactic cast: *Estoire del Saint Graal, Estoire de Merlin, Roman de Lancelot, Queste del Saint Graal, Mort Artu.*
c. 1240	French prose *Tristan* renders the story of Tristan and Iseult in a more thoroughly Arthurian context than its predecessors (e.g., Tristan becomes a knight of the Round Table).
c. 1250–1300	Production of *Arthour and Merlin,* the earliest known Arthurian metrical romance in English.
1278	Edward I reinters the (alleged) bones of Arthur at Glastonbury—a gesture in part to demoralize the Welsh (cf. the entry for 1190).

c. 1300–1350	Construction of the Winchester "Round Table" (see n. 5, p. 61)
1348	Edward III founds the Order of the Garter in imitation of the institution of the Round Table.
c. 1350	Composition of the alliterative *Morte Arthure.*
c. 1387–1400	Chaucer writes the *Canterbury Tales;* the "Wife of Bath's Tale" and the "Squire's Tale" feature Arthurian elements.
	Thomas Chestre writes *Sir Launfal,* and possibly *Libeaus Desconus.*
	Composition of the stanzaic *Morte Arthur.*
c. 1400–30	Composition of the *Awntyrs off Arthure at the Terne Wathelyne.*
c. 1450	Production of the earliest English prose romance, *Merlin.*
	Henry Lovelich produces his *History of the Holy Grail,* the first English translation of the *Estoire del Saint Graal.*
1465	Completion of John Hardyng's *Chronicle.*
c. 1469	Malory begins *Le Morte Darthur.*

The Wars of the Roses†

Feb. 1399	Richard II seizes the lands of his exiled cousin Henry Bolingbroke, Duke of Lancaster (of the House of Lancaster).
July 1399–Feb. 1400	Bolingbroke (soon to be Henry IV) returns to England and usurps the throne from Richard II. Richard is imprisoned first in the Tower of London and then at Pontefract Castle, where he is secretly murdered (before his death, Richard had unofficially identified Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, as his heir).
1400–09	Henry IV suppresses rebellions of Owen Glendower in Wales and, in England, Henry Percy (Hotspur), the Earls of Northumberland and Worcester, and Richard Scrope, Archbishop of York; King James I of Scotland captured.
Mar. 20, 1413	Death of Henry IV, who is succeeded by his son, Henry V.

† This chronology begins by listing events that led up to the Wars of the Roses proper and generally emphasizes events that may have some resonance with the *Morte Darthur.* The chronology also lists events that continue past Malory's death, but are included to provide some sense of historical contiguity up to and beyond the time of the first printed publication of Malory's work in 1485. For guides to further reading see the Selected Bibliography.

1415	Richard, Earl of Cambridge, plots to overthrow Henry V to place Edmund Mortimer, son of Roger, on the throne; Edmund betrays the plot to Henry; Richard is executed.
Oct. 25, 1415	Battle of Agincourt; Henry V defeats a French army three times the size of his with severe losses among French knights and nobility; Edward, Duke of York is killed, whose title passes to Richard, son of the Earl of Cambridge, thus founding the House of York.
By May 1420	Henry V conquers much of northern France and is recognized as heir to the French throne; he marries Catherine, daughter of Charles VI of France, June 2, 1420.
Aug. 31, 1422	Henry V dies in France, something of a legend in his own time; his son and heir, Henry, is only nine months old.
1428–37	Nation governed by a royal council until the end of Henry's minority; Henry emerges as a sovereign little concerned with secular matters and with a distaste for war; English hold on territories in France wavers. Henry is easily led by a small group of ambitious advisers, especially William de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk.
Dec. 2, 1431	Henry crowned King of France in Paris.
1441	Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, a principal opponent of Henry's ambitious advisers, is discredited when his wife is accused of sorcery (cf. n. 4, p. 17) and forced to endure public penance; Gloucester dies in 1447, imprisoned by his enemies, probably murdered.
1444	Henry marries Margaret of Anjou, niece of Charles VII.
1447	The Earl of Suffolk instigates an attack on the Duke of Brittany, ally of Charles VII; Charles retaliates, and by 1453 all English possessions in France, with the exception of Calais, are lost. Lawlessness and corruption become common traits of local governance throughout England (cf. pp. 759–68).
1450	The Earl of Suffolk executed on his way into exile. Jack Cade's Rebellion arises in Kent in protest at abuses brought about under Suffolk's influence and culminates in murderous riots in London. Richard, Duke of York, heir apparent as well as heir to the Mortimer claim on the throne, returns from virtual banishment in Ireland to challenge the authority of Henry VI's new favorite, and a rival claimant to the throne as grandson of Edward III, Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset.

Aug. 1453	Henry VI suffers the first of several periods of vegetative insanity; his son Edward (now the new heir apparent) is born two months later: the Lancastrian claim to the throne is revitalized, but many believe that the child is Somerset's (see the entry for Mar. 1454).
Mar. 1454	Richard, Duke of York, appointed Protector of the Realm; the Duke of Somerset is arrested—in the Queen's apartments—and imprisoned in the Tower of London.
Dec. 1454	Henry recovers from insanity; Somerset released; Henry expresses surprise at the birth of his son, claiming he must have been conceived by the Holy Spirit.
Feb. 1455	York dismissed as Protector.
May 22, 1455	First battle of St. Albans, the first major battle of the Wars of the Roses: Yorkists encounter Somerset and Henry VI; Somerset is killed; York, evidently satisfied with the result, renews his oath of alliegance to the King. From this time until 1459 the Queen, Margaret of Anjou, attempts to consolidate Lancastrian control of court and government, to the increasing consternation of the Yorkists.
Oct. 1459	York's forces defeated at Ludford Bridge by an army raised by the Queen; York flees to Ireland, and other Yorkists flee to Calais, including the Earl of Warwick and York's son Edward, Earl of March (soon to be King Edward IV).
June 1460	A Yorkist army from Calais lands at Sandwich; men of the surrounding southeastern counties join with these forces (cf. n. 3, p. 683).
July 2, 1460	Yorkists enter London and besiege the Tower of London with cannon (cf. n. 8, p. 679).
July 10, 1460	Battle of Northampton: partly due to defections from the Lancastrian army, the Yorkists prevail, led by Warwick and the Earl of March.
Sept.–Oct. 1460	Richard, Duke of York, returns from Ireland and advances his claim to the throne (see p. 768); the lords of the realm reject the claim, but reinstate Richard as Protector and recognize him as heir to the throne, thus disinheriting Henry VI's son Edward; Henry is detained in London; the Queen flees north.
Dec. 30, 1460	Battle of Wakefield: forces assembled by the Queen rout forces led by Richard, Duke of York; Richard is killed, and his head, wearing a paper crown, is spiked on the gates of York.

Feb. 2, 1461

Battle of Mortimer's Cross: Edward, son of Richard and now Duke of York (aged eighteen) defeats a large Lancastrian force. Before the battle Edward's army sees in the sky what appear to be three suns that merge into one; Edward takes the vision as a sign of the Trinity's favor of his cause.

Feb. 17, 1461

Second battle of St. Albans: forces of Queen Margaret, pillaging their way toward London, defeat Yorkists led by Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick (the Kingmaker). Margaret arranges for her seven-year-old son, Prince Edward, to order the executions of several captured Yorkist leaders. Henry VI is recovered from his captors; nevertheless, in the following two weeks Margaret and her forces fail to gain entry into London and turn northward to Yorkshire.

Mar. 1, 1461

Edward, Duke of York, is acclaimed King of England (as Edward IV) and is so proclaimed at Westminster Abbey on March 4 (he is crowned later, June 28).

Mar. 29, 1461

Battle of Towton (Palm Sunday Field, the bloodiest battle ever fought on English soil, with more than twenty thousand dead—for a contemporary account, see p. 772): the Lancastrians are decisively routed; Henry, Margaret, and Prince Edward escape to Scotland; Edward IV's claim to the throne is effectively secured.

By 1464

Edward IV acts swiftly to eliminate Lancastrian resistance (cf. his Act of Attainder, p. 774); Margaret of Anjou returns to France with Prince Edward; Henry remains a fugitive in the north. Lancastrian strongholds in Northumberland, such as Bamburgh, Dunstanborough, and Alnwick, are repeatedly won and lost (Malory was at the 1462 sieges with the Yorkists; see p. xxvi).

May 1464

Edward IV marries Elizabeth Woodville, widow of a Lancastrian knight, much to the consternation of the ambitious Kingmaker Richard, Earl of Warwick, who was in the process of arranging the King's marriage to a French princess.

July 1465

The fugitive Henry is captured in Lancashire and imprisoned in the Tower of London, where he remains for the next five years.

1468

Having been embarrassed and rejected by Edward IV in frustrating his various diplomatic efforts in France, Richard, Earl of Warwick, reinvents his role as Kingmaker and rebels in favor of George, Duke of Clarence, the King's brother.

1469

Warwick the Kingmaker orchestrates uprisings in the north and lands with an army from Calais;

Edward IV is captured, but subsequent local unrest forces Warwick to reconcile with and restore Edward.

Spring 1470 — Warwick orchestrates new rebellions in Lincolnshire and Wales, which Edward successfully suppresses; Warwick and Clarence flee to France and by July form an alliance with Margaret of Anjou to support the Lancastrian cause.

Sept. 1470 — Warwick arranges a diversionary rebellion in York and lands in the south, gathering much local support; Edward IV, unable to return to London, flees to the Netherlands.

Oct. 3, 1470 — Henry VI restored to the throne (the Readeption); Warwick swears alliegance, but is now the practical ruler of the nation.

Apr. 11, 1471 — Edward IV, having landed in Yorkshire with an army of mercenaries, and now having the support of Clarence, evades opposing forces and enters London.

Apr. 14, 1471 — Battle of Barnet Heath: Lancastrian forces are routed; Warwick is killed. Margaret of Anjou returns from France with Prince Edward and begins a march toward Lancastrian strongholds in Wales; Edward IV marches to intercept.

May 4, 1471 — Battle of Tewkesbury: Edward IV decisively defeats Margaret's forces; Prince Edward is slain and Margaret captured and thence imprisoned in the Tower of London (she is ransomed five years later by her father).

May 21, 1471 — Edward IV returns to London; Henry VI (now held in the Tower of London, separately from Margaret) is murdered.

Feb. 18, 1478 — The Duke of Clarence, having continued in treasonous nuisances, is executed, reputedly by drowning in a butt (cask) of wine.

To 1483 — Edward secures peace and order for the realm and relieves the Crown from the debtor habits it had assumed under Lancastrian rule. He becomes friend and patron to William Caxton, first printer in England. Edward also gains notoriety for indulging his tastes for wine, women, and song.

Apr. 9, 1483 — Edward IV dies, having appointed his brother Richard, Duke of Gloucester, as Regent during the minority of his eldest son, Edward V, then twelve years old.

June 22, 1483 — Richard has Edward IV's marriage declared invalid and his sons illegitimate (Edward V and his younger

	brother, Richard, who have been held in the Tower of London, are soon murdered there).
July 6, 1483	Richard crowned as Richard III.
Autumn 1483	Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, Richard's principal co-conspirator in his move to claim the throne, rebels after allying with the exiled Henry Tudor, earl of Richmond, surviving head of the House of Lancaster; Richard suppresses the rebellion and Stafford is executed.
Aug. 22, 1485	Battle of Bosworth Field: Henry Tudor invades with an army of French mercenaries, and his forces meet Richard in open battle; Richard is unhorsed and killed (the last English monarch to die in battle); Tudor is proclaimed Henry VII.
Jan. 18, 1486	Henry VII marries Princess Elizabeth of York, daughter of Edward IV, thus uniting the two houses; all subsequent sovereigns of England can be identified as descended by blood from this union.
Sept. 20, 1486	Henry's eldest son, Arthur, Prince of Wales, is born; Henry arranges for him to be born in the legendary Arthurian capital of Winchester (cf. n. 5, p. 61) and chooses his name to commemorate the unification of England that the child embodies; Arthur dies fifteen years later, eight years before the death of his father.

Malory: Life Events†

c. 1415–1417	Thomas is born into a Warwickshire gentry family, the son of Philippa Chetwynd and John Malory (who died 1433/4 and was at various times sheriff, Member of Parliament [M.P.], and justice of the peace for Warwickshire).
Oct. 8, 1441	First record describing Thomas as a knight.
Oct. 10, 1443	Malory accused of having insulted, wounded, and imprisoned Thomas Smythe of Spratton, Northamp-

† The chronology is that of Sir Thomas Malory of Newbold Revel, Warwickshire; several other men of the same name have been put forward as candidates for the author of *Le Morte Darthur,* but current scholarly consensus is that the Newbold Revel candidate is the most feasible. That said, given the fragmentary, often contradictory, and sometimes fraudulent nature of 15th-century records, there is no guarantee that all of the events listed here actually pertain to the same man; no claim to an authoritative "biography" can be made. Details of this chronology are abstracted mainly from two works by P. J. C. Field: *The Life and Times of Sir Thomas Malory* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1993) and "The Malory Life-Records," in *A Companion to Malory,* ed. Elizabeth Archibald and A. S. G. Edwards (Cambridge: Brewer, 1996), 115–130. Further information about Malory's time in Newgate is taken from Anne F. Sutton, "Malory in Newgate: A New Document," *The Library* 7th ser., 1 (2000): 243–262.