

OXFORD



From the NORMAN
CONQUEST *to the*
BLACK DEATH

An Anthology of Writings from England

EDITED BY DOUGLAS GRAY

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PREFACE

THIS anthology has a humble objective, to help students of English Literature deal with the transition from 'Old English' to 'Middle English'. When in the past I used to teach this period to undergraduates I observed with some sympathy a certain puzzlement—they often felt that they had to deal with scraps or isolated examples which seemed to exist in a kind of vacuum, until they reached the better documented literature of the later fourteenth century and its great masters, the Gawain-poet, Langland, Chaucer, and Gower. It seemed ironic to me that much valuable 'background' information was hidden away in the notes to the editions they were using. This anthology tries to offer small remedy for this by providing through translations something of the rich treasure house of the literary and semi-literary writing in the period. It is my hope that not only will students come to 'Middle English' with more knowledge, but that some will explore further the riches of Latin and Anglo-Norman through the many good translations available, and that some will attempt to learn these languages and come a little closer in linguistic expertise to their forebears.

For its maker, who has spent most of his academic life exploring the recesses of later medieval literature, it has been an exhilarating journey, revealing all kinds of delights. I have made extensive and grateful use of the work of experts in the fields of Anglo-Latin, Anglo-Norman and Early Middle English.

In the long gestation of this anthology I have had to make a number of important decisions. An early idea, to present examples of Latin and Anglo-Norman with facing translations was abandoned because of a desire to illustrate the richness and variety of the period's literary material as fully as possible; linked with this was a decision to prefer many shorter examples to fewer longer ones. To keep the expense within reasonable bounds I quickly decided not to reproduce existing translations—which are often very good, though sometimes rather free—but to provide my own. Here I have

attempted to offer straightforward close translations. In the case of verse extracts I have not tried to imitate the rhymes or the metrical patterns of the originals, but simply to indicate something of their rhythmic shape by making the lines conform as closely as possible to the number of syllables in those of the originals. My extracts are usually arranged by genres and literary types, but with little concern for 'overlaps' when the material seemed to require them. I wanted literary students of English to see how literature in the English language was emerging, but I have severely restricted the amount of English writing and sometimes deliberately underrepresented it. It has been my desire throughout to produce an anthology which the literary student could read right through rather than with the close study they will need to do with the more specialized Middle English readers they move on to. To this end, besides providing the translations of Latin and Anglo-Norman, Old English, and Early Middle English prose, texts are accompanied by a translation on the page, and verse texts given generous glosses. The EME texts have been given some slight modernizations (especially with the unfamiliar letters ð (eth), þ (thorn) and ȝ (yogh) and the use of u/v); but I have not normally marked the final -ë, which in many words would still have been sounded (and still needs to be in any attempt at reading aloud). Commentary and bibliography have been kept to a minimum. I have been given invaluable help by a number of very patient friends, in particular Ingunn Haugen who has coped with the typing and copy-editing of a number of very messy manuscripts; I am grateful to Dr Jane Bliss, who has helped me enormously with Anglo-Norman, saving me from error and improving the flow of my translations; to Thomas G. Duncan, and to Lucinda Rumsey for much careful reading and most useful comments. I am also very grateful to my editors at OUP, Jacqueline Baker and Ariane Petit, and to the Press's anonymous reader for some very useful suggestions.

ABBREVIATIONS

AN	Anglo-Norman
ANTS	Anglo-Norman Text Society
Bennett	J. A. W. Bennett <i>Middle English Literature</i> (edited and completed by Douglas Gray, Oxford, 1986)
Bennett and Smithers	J. A. W. Bennett and G.V. Smithers (eds), <i>Early Middle English Verse and Prose</i> (Oxford, 1968)
BL	British Library
Bodl.	Bodleian Library
Child	F. J. Child (ed.), <i>The English and Scottish Popular Ballads</i> , 5 vols, (Cambridge, MA, 1882–98)
Dean	R. J. Dean and M. B. M. Boulton, <i>Anglo-Norman Literature. A Guide to Texts and Manuscripts</i> (ANTS, London, 1999)
EETS	Early English Text Society (SS Supplementary Series)
EME	Early Middle English
Fr.	French
Gransden	Antonia Gransden, <i>Historical Writing in England c. 550–c. 1307</i> (2 vols, London, 1974–82)
L.	Latin
Legge	M. D. Legge, <i>Anglo-Norman Literature and its Background</i> (Oxford, 1963)
ME	Middle English
MWME	<i>A Manual of the Writings in Middle English</i> , ed. J. B. Severs, A. E. Hartung et al. (New Haven, 1967–)
NLS	National Library of Scotland
OE	Old English
OMT	Oxford Medieval Texts
PBA	<i>Proceedings of the British Academy</i>

X ABBREVIATIONS

Rigg	A. G. Rigg, <i>A History of Anglo-Latin Literature 1066–1422</i> (Cambridge, 1992)
SATF	Société des anciens textes français

CHRONOLOGY

(Many artistic and literary dates are approximate.)

- 1066 EDWARD the Confessor d. HAROLD Godwinson crowned King of England. Invasion by Harold Hardradi of Norway defeated by Harold at Stamford Bridge (25 September). At end of September William, Duke of Normandy crosses the Channel with an army. At the battle of Hastings Harold defeated and killed. In December WILLIAM I crowned (–1087).
- 1068 William conquers western and northern England.
- 1069 William subdues a rising in the North, and drives out Danish invaders.
- 1070 Rising in Ely under Hereward. Malcolm of Scotland invades Northumberland.
- 1070–9 Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury.
- 1071 Normans conquer Bari and Brindisi.
- 1074 Norman barons rebel against William.
- 1077 Rebellion of Norman barons, headed by Robert, William's son.
- 1077–1115 Building of St Albans Abbey.
- 1079 Robert defeated at Gerberoi.
- 1079–93 Building of Winchester Cathedral.
- c.1081–90 Building of Tower of London.
- 1082 Odo, William's brother, Bishop of Bayeux and Earl of Kent, imprisoned (–1087).
- 1083–6 Rebellion in Maine.
- 1083–1189 Building of Ely Cathedral.
- 1085 *Doomsday Book*.
- 1087 William I d.; succeeded by WILLIAM II (Rufus) in England (–1100).
- 1088 Odo of Bayeux rebels against William II in favour of Robert.
- 1089 Gloucester Abbey begun.
- 1091 Treaty of Caen between William II and Robert. Malcolm invades England. Norman conquest of Sicily completed.

- 1093–c.1133 Building of Durham Cathedral.
 1093–1109 Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury.
 1094 Quarrel between William II and Anselm.
 1096 Robert mortgages Normandy to William II. El Cid conquers Valencia.
 1096–1117 Crypt of Canterbury Cathedral built.
 1096–1145 Nave of Norwich Cathedral built.
 1097 Westminster Hall built.
 1097–1100 Anselm in exile in Rome and Cluny.
 1099 William II subdues Maine. Crusaders capture Jerusalem. Moors retake Valencia after d. of Cid.
 1100 William II killed in New Forest; succeeded by HENRY I (–1135).
 c.1100 French *Chanson de Roland* takes shape?
 1103–5 Anselm in exile again.
 1105 Henry I defeats Robert of Normandy, imprisons him at Cardiff.
 1112 Rebellion in eastern Normandy. Henry I imprisons Robert of Belesme.
 1120 Peace between Henry I and Louis VI of France. Henry's sons drowned in the White Ship off Harfleur.
 1125–50 ?Oxford MS of *Chanson de Roland*.
 1128 Empress Matilda marries Geoffrey of Anjou.
 c.1128–33 Vault over the nave of Durham Cathedral built.
 1134–50 West façade of Chartres Cathedral built.
 1135 Henry I d.; succeeded by his nephew STEPHEN of Blois (–1154).
 c.1135–c.1209 Agreement of Durham: David of Scotland acknowledges Stephen as King. Hospital of St Cross, Winchester, founded.
 c.1136 Geoffrey of Monmouth: *History of the Kings of Britain*.
 1137 Successful expedition of Stephen against Geoffrey of Anjou.
 1137–44 Suger builds Abbey Church of St Denis.
 1138 Stephen defeats David of Scotland at the battle of the Standard, near Northallerton.
 1139 Matilda lands at Arundel. Civil war. Geoffrey of Anjou begins conquest of Normandy.
 Before 1140 Gaimar: *Estoire des Engleis*.
 1141 Stephen captured at Lincoln. Matilda proclaimed Queen of England at Winchester. At the end of the year, Stephen exchanged for Robert of Gloucester, and crowned at Canterbury.
 1144 Geoffrey of Anjou created Duke of Normandy.
 1147 Matilda leaves England.
 1148 Geoffrey of Monmouth: *Life of Merlin*.
 1151 Geoffrey of Anjou d.; Henry succeeds to Anjou and Touraine.
 1152 Henry of Anjou m Eleanor of Aquitaine; renews war against Stephen.

- 1153 Treaty of Wallingford; Stephen recognizes Henry as successor.
 1154 Stephen d.; succeeded by HENRY II (–1189). ‘Peterborough Chronicle’ ends.
 1155 Geoffrey of Monmouth d.; Wace’s *Roman de Brut* completed.
 1162–70 Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury.
 1163 Quarrel between Becket and Henry II.
 1170 Becket returns to Canterbury; is murdered by four knights.
 c.1170 Chrétien de Troyes, *Erec and Enide*.
 1173–4 Revolt of barons against Henry II and invasion of the North by the Scots.
 1173 Becket canonized.
 1174 Henry II does penance at Canterbury. William the Lion captured and does homage to Henry. Choir of Canterbury Cathedral built by William of Sens.
 1174–1226 Laon Cathedral built.
 1174–5? *Chronicle* of Jordan Fantosme.
 Later 12th century Flourishing of Anglo-Norman Literature—*Horn*, *Tristan*, ‘Marie de France’, Bikel’s *Lai du Cor*, Adgar, Denis Piramus. Drama in Anglo-Norman—*Jeu d’Adam*—and Latin—*Babio*. EME *Ormulum*?
 1176 Saladin conquers Syria.
 1176–1209 London Bridge built (and stood until 1832).
 1177? Chrétien de Troyes, *Lancelot*, *Yvain*.
 c.1180 EME ‘Worcester Fragments’; ?Joseph of Exeter’s *Trojan War*.
 1181, 1184 Rebellion of Henry II’s sons.
 1182 Chrétien de Troyes, *Conte du Graal*.
 1185–c.1250 Lincoln Cathedral built.
 1186 Chichester Cathedral rebuilt.
 1187 Richard and John rebel against Henry II, their father.
 1189 Henry II d.; succeeded by RICHARD I (–1199). Richard I acknowledges independence of Scotland; sells Roxburgh and Berwick to William the Lion.
 1190 Richard I on crusade with Philip of France.
 1192 Richard I, returning from the East, is captured by Leopold, Duke of Austria.
 1194 Richard I released.
 1199 Richard I d.; succeeded by his brother JOHN (–1216).
 Early 13th century *Fergus*, *Boeve de Haumtone*, Layamon’s *Brut*.
 1202 War between John and Philip II.
 1204 Philip gains many regions in France.
 1209 John invades Scotland; Welsh princes do homage to him.
 1210–21 North transept of Chartres Cathedral built.

- 1211–41 Reims Cathedral built.
- 1214–35 Nave of Wells Cathedral built.
- 1215 John cedes Poitou, Anjou, and Brittany to France, keeping Guienne and Gascony. John seals Magna Carta at Runnymede.
- 1216 John d.; succeeded by HENRY III (–1272).
- 1218 Amiens Cathedral begun.
- 1219 William Marshal, Regent of England, d.
- c.1219–c.1292 Roger Bacon.
- 1220 Henry III crowned at Westminster.
- 1220–58 Salisbury Cathedral built.
- 1223 Gerald of Wales d.
- 1224 War between England and France. Franciscans come to England.
- 1225 English secure Gascony.
- 1225–30 Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *De proprietatibus rerum*.
- 1225–40 Guillaume de Loris, *Roman de la Rose*.
- 1226 Francis of Assisi d.
- c.1226 *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal* completed.
- 13th century EME texts, 'Katherine Group', *Ancrene Wisse*; (throughout) development of ME romance; *Dame Sirith*, *Vox and Wolf*, *Owl and Nightingale*.
- 1227 Truce between England and France. Henry III declares himself of age.
- 1228 Francis of Assisi canonized.
- 1233 Western façades of Peterborough and Ripon Cathedrals built.
- 1238 Mongols take Moscow.
- 1241 Choir of Reims Cathedral completed.
- 1243 Five years' truce between England and France. Henry III resigns claims to Poitou.
- 1245–70 Choir and cloisters of Westminster Abbey built.
- 1249 Truce between England and France renewed.
- 1253 Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, d.
- 1255 Murder of 'Little St Hugh'.
- 1258 Mongols take Baghdad.
- 1259 Matthew Paris d.
- 1260 Chartres Cathedral consecrated.
- 1262 Llywelin, Prince of Wales, begins border warfare against the English.
- 1263 Scots defeat Haakon of Norway at Largs. Norway cedes Hebrides.
- 1264 Merton College, Oxford, founded. De Montfort defeats Henry III at Lewes.
- 1265 Prince Edward defeats de Montfort at Evesham.
- 1268 Henry de Bracton d.
- 1272 Henry III d., succeeded by EDWARD I (–1307).

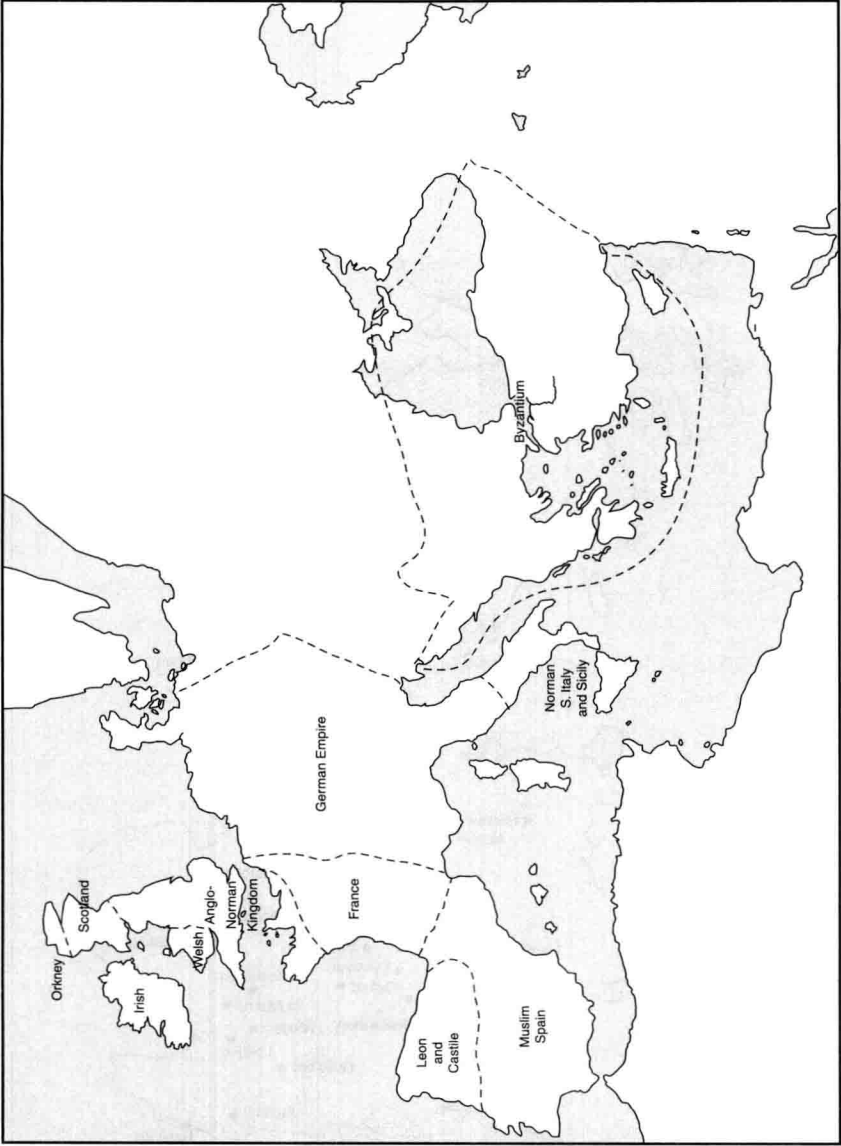
- 1274 Thomas Aquinas d.
1276, 1282 Wars against Welsh.
1279–1368 Mongol dynasty rules in China.
1281 Peterhouse, Cambridge, founded.
1290 Jews expelled from England.
1291–c.1345 Nave of York Minster built.
1294 War between England and France. Rebellion in Wales.
1297 Truce between England and France. Scottish rebellion under William Wallace.
1298 Edward I defeats Wallace at Falkirk.
1302 Anglo-Scots truce.
1304 Wallace captured and (1305) executed.
1306 Robert Bruce, King of Scotland.
1307 Edward I d., succeeded by EDWARD II (–1327)
1314 Robert Bruce defeats Edward II at Bannockburn. Exeter College, Oxford, founded.
1314–21 Dante Alighieri, *La Commedia*.
1321 Dante d.
1322 Octagon of Ely Cathedral completed.
1326 Clare College, Cambridge, and Oriel College, Oxford, founded.
1327 Edward II resigns throne, and is murdered; succeeded by EDWARD III (–1377).
1329 Robert Bruce d.
c.1330 Wyclif and Gower b.
1333 Edward III defeats Scots at Halidon Hill.
1335 Edward III invades Scotland.
1337 Edward III claims French crown.
1339 Edward III invades France.
Early 1340s Chaucer b.
1343 Julian of Norwich b.
Earlier 14th century EME *Cokaygne*; Romances (*Kyng Alisaunder*, *Sir Orfeo*, *William of Palerne*, etc.); *Gamelyn*?
1346 English defeat French at Crécy. Pembroke College, Cambridge, founded.
1348 Gonville College, Cambridge, founded.
1348–9 Black Death.
1349 William of Ockham d., Richard Rolle d.
1350 Trinity Hall, Cambridge, founded.
1352 Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, founded.
1350s? *Wynnerre and Wastoure*, *Joseph of Arimathie*?, Higden's *Polychronicon*.
1354 Henry of Lancaster, *Livre des Seyntz Medicines*.
c.1357 'Mandeville's Travels' (French).

MAPS

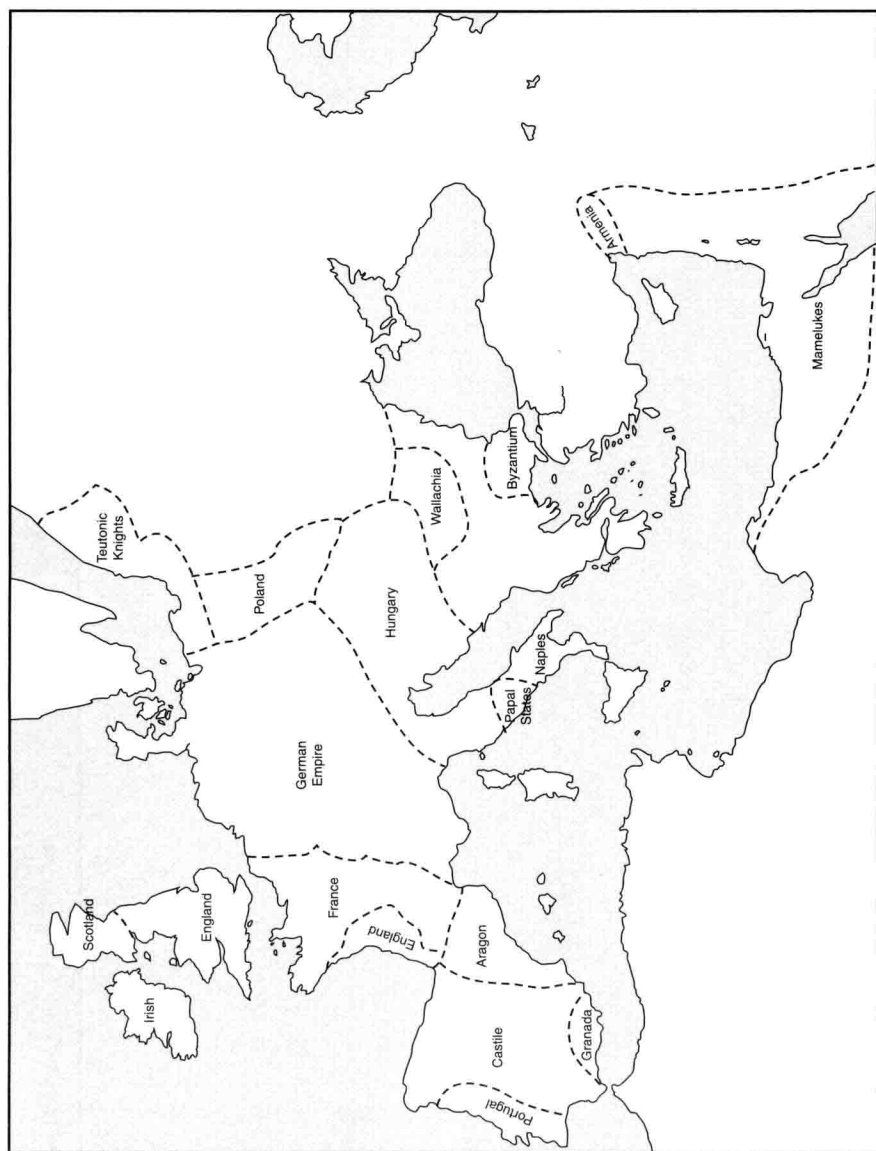
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Map 1: Sketchmap of England, showing some of the places mentioned in the text



Map 2: Western Europe c.1070



Map 3: Western Europe c.1350