CHAPTER 4

Authorising

4.1 'Unknowne to us'

Even as they work to perfect medieval manuscripts, early modern acts of correcting, glossing, repairing, completing, and supplementing all recognise a value that is intrinsic to these old books. Behind the choice of readers to improve outdated copies of Chaucer, in other words, is an appreciation of a special cultural status ascribed to them. From their attention to minute linguistic and orthographic details, to lacunae in the manuscripts, and to the completeness of the Chaucerian canon, the transformations made by readers to these volumes intersect, in one way or another, with broader matters of textual, literary, and bibliographical authority. For all Chaucer's apparent ambivalence to the idea of poetic *auctoritas*, his posthumous fate would be to become the pre-eminent English author, and his books were increasingly framed by the signs of this authority. To grant a book or a text such authority might take many forms. It is a quality that could be inscribed not only by virtue of the individual who wrote a literary work, but also by means of other characteristics associated with them: their place in historical memory, their larger body of work, their social or intellectual standing, or the authorities which they invoke in turn.[1]

'The Reader to Geffrey Chaucer', a dialogic poem attributed to 'H.B.' in Speght's editions, locates the ultimate seat of literary authority in the person of the author: 'Where hast thou dwelt, good Geffrey all this while, / Unknowne to us, save only by thy bookes?'[2] This fictive Renaissance reader imagines a Chaucer who is absent, 'save only' for the 'bookes' in which his works have been presented since his death. Chaucer's corpus has been neglected 'all this while', the reader complains, while the

[1] Machan has outlined these varieties of literary authority, and notes the tendency of both editors in the humanist tradition and modern textual critics to equate the authoritative text and the authorial one; see *Textual Criticism*, pp. 18–38, 93–135.

[2] *Workes* (1598), sig. [a]6^v.

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poem's second speaker, a ventriloquised 'Geffrey', responds that this was true, 'Till one which saw me there, and knew my friends, / Did bring me forth'. Given its placement within the preliminaries of Speght's new edition, the poem serves as a paean to the editor, 'who hath no labor spar'd / To helpe what time, and writers had defaced'. The poem thus traces a narrative that begins with Chaucer's temporal exile and concludes with his return in the newly updated and accessible edition the reader holds in their hands. In staging an encounter between a revenant Chaucer and a grateful reader, the edition declares itself to be a new and different kind of book: one that Speght has 'repair'd / And added moe' and one that enables the enlivened Geffrey himself to emerge from its pages before the reader. The desire for the vernacular author to be expressly 'knowne' to readers was still unusual in Elizabethan England. More remarkable still is this interest in the author-figure which is related to but ultimately distinct from an interest in his 'bookes'. Yet this is precisely the dialogue's central premise: Speght's edition repairs not just Chaucer's neglected volumes, but as good as revives the man himself. It is a sentiment expressed in the volume's prefatory epistle, addressed to Speght by Francis Beaumont: 'in the paines and diligence you [Speght] haue vsed in collecting his life, mee thinkes you haue bestowed vpon him more fauorable graces then *Medea* did vpon *Pelias:* for you haue restored vs *Chaucer* both aliue again and yong again'.[3] As Lucy Munro has noticed, Beaumont's reference is to Medea's empty promise that the youth of the ageing Pelias would be restored if he were killed, cut up, and his body parts boiled.[4] At first glance, Beaumont's macabre allusion to this murderous ruse from Greek mythology is tonally peculiar in the context of praise for Speght's new edition. Its message, however, is clear: in contrast to the dead and dismembered Pelias, Chaucer has been reconstituted by the new biography (or 'Life') published under Speght's name. The effectiveness of the conceit relies upon the imagined contiguity of bibliographical and bodily completeness, and adds to them a biographical element. This new book of Chaucer, Beaumont suggests, has gathered up and recomposed both his works and his Life, such that they enable a virtual reanimation and rejuvenation of the poet himself. Beaumont's rhetorical play between 'life' and 'aliue' points to the perceived role of Speght's apparatus in resurrecting Chaucer's reputation, his biography, and his works.[5] Both the reader's dialogue with 'Geffrey' and

[3] *Workes* (1598), sig. [a]4^{v}–5^{r}. [4] Munro, *Archaic Style*, p. 75.

[5] For the early modern desire for Chaucer to live in the pages of his books see Bishop, 'Father Chaucer', 336–8. On the intimately connected relationship between the Life of the author and emergent ideas of

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Beaumont's letter work rhetorically to persuade readers of the edition's merits, and their hyperbole is bolstered by the fact that Speght's paratextual additions broke genuinely new ground in the history of editing Chaucer. The edition gave Chaucer an English-language Life and a glossary for the first time, while its specially commissioned genealogical portrait was a technological novelty and one of the first engraved portraits of an English author. Arguments, lists of authors cited, a Latin stemma of his noble descendants, and glosses on the poet's foreign borrowings are all further additions covered by H.B.'s claim that Speght had 'added moe' to Chaucer's old books. As Speght and Beaumont tell it, such innovations make all the difference between an 'unknowne' Chaucer and a famous one, the one dead and the other 'aliue and yong again'.

This enhanced paratextual presentation has been recognised as pivotal to the 'invention of Chaucer's preeminent, mythic status' in early modern print.[6] As Machan puts it, 'Throughout the Renaissance period, no other Middle English writer is presented with this kind of critical apparatus or the status it imputes', and such a treatment was exceptional for any English author in the sixteenth century.[7] The innovative nature of these editions has long been known, but much less attention has been afforded to the engagement of readers with this apparatus and with the ideas of English authorship that it promotes. Recent work by Megan Cook and Hope Johnston represents an exception in this regard. Johnston's 2015 essay on readers' memorials and commemorations of Chaucer in early editions concludes that 'The ways in which owners of early editions of Chaucer altered their books represent forms of reception that have yet to be considered fully'.[8] This book has been arguing that medieval manuscripts, too, preserve vital evidence of Chaucer's early modern reception, and that they merit consideration alongside the printed editions against whose backdrop they were often read in the early modern period. Accordingly, this chapter looks to medieval manuscripts which passed through the hands of early modern readers and finds evidence that reveals what readers made of the new conventions for presenting Chaucer. It draws attention to readers' striking embellishment of manuscripts with authorising paratexts in the same period that parallel conventions commemorated Chaucer in contemporary prints, and determines that this new presentation of Chaucer the man and of his works in print gave rise

poetic authority in the sixteenth century, see Kevin Pask, *The Emergence of the English Author: Scripting the Life of the Poet in Early Modern England* (Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 9–52.

[6] Machan, 'Speght's "Works"', 161. [7] Machan, 'Speght's "Works"', 154.

[8] Hope Johnston, 'Readers' Memorials in Early Editions of Chaucer', *Studies in Bibliography*, 59.1 (2015), 45–69 (69); Cook, *Poet and the Antiquaries*, pp. 163–97.

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to an attributional and biographical interest on the part of his early modern readers. Inscriptions of the author's name, lists of contents, standardised titles, comments on the canon, snippets of biography, and even imitations of his printed portrait were added to older manuscripts (and sometimes prints) by early modern and eighteenth-century readers who sought to perfect those volumes according to the new standards of literary authority codified in print. Their concerns about Chaucer's name, canon, life, and image reflect a new investment in paratextual expressions of literary authority and furnish direct evidence for print's role in crafting a preoccupation with the author in the early modern book.

4.2 Canonicity and 'Chaucer's goodly name'

Chaucer knew well the value of the author's name and its relation to poetic glory, however illusive such fame might be. Memorably, the *House of Fame*'s Chaucerian dreamer denies that he seeks fame and declines to name himself when asked: 'For no such cause, by my hed! / Sufficeth me, as I were ded, / That no wight have my name in honde'.[9] Ever in pursuit of fame on his own terms, Chaucer nonetheless took care to embed his name into his works.[10] Fifteenth-century manuscripts also reveal a scribal interest in conveying the author's name – not only on the part of well-known figures like John Shirley, who famously added titular rubrics naming Chaucer to his manuscripts, but also by the scribe of the celebrated Ellesmere manuscript, who wrote a colophon identifying the work as compiled by Chaucer, as well as the many others who routinely labelled *Melibee* as *The Tale of Chaucer* in the running titles, incipits, and explicits of surviving manuscripts.[11] These written traces reinforce a point illustrated in studies by Alistair Minnis and Alexandra Gillespie: that the cultural worth of the vernacular author's name and canon was already well recognised by those who copied and commissioned manuscript books in the era before print.[12]

[9] *House of Fame*, ll. 1875–77. [10] See *Canterbury Tales*, II. 47–50 and *House of Fame*, l. 729.

[11] For Shirley's emphasis on attribution, see Lerer, *Chaucer and His Readers*, pp. 117–41 and Margaret Connolly, 'What John Shirley Said About Adam: Authorship and Attribution in Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R.3.20', in *The Dynamics of the Medieval Manuscript: Text Collections from a European Perspective*, ed. by Karen Pratt and others (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2017), pp. 81–100. The Ellesmere colophon (HEHL, MS EL 26 C 9, fol. 232^{v}) describes the *Tales* as 'compiled by Geffrey Chaucer of whos soule Ih*es*u Crist / haue mercy Amen'; online at 'Canterbury Tales', The Huntington Digital Library, https://hdl.huntington.org/digital/iiif/p15150coll7/2829/full/full/0/default.jpg.

[12] For example, Alastair Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988), pp. 160–210 argues that Gower cultivated an *apparatus criticus* 'which the discerning reader had come to expect in copies of many "ancient" works' in manuscripts of his own writings (p. 210). Meanwhile, Connolly,

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In the early modern period too, the claim of his poetic greatness was 'very firmly attached to Chaucer's name'.[13] As Gillespie has shown in relation to Chaucer, medieval authorising traditions were successfully adapted and multiplied in print. Chaucer, whose name had been associated with poetic and rhetorical excellence since the early fifteenth century, was the first English poet to be granted a single-volume collection of *Workes* when Thynne produced his first edition in 1532. Print thus afforded the author more widespread visibility and cultural prominence.[14] On the printed title pages of lyric poetry collections and of professional playbooks as well as in poetic miscellanies compiled in manuscript, the English author's name acquired greater literary weight in the second half of the sixteenth century and into the seventeenth.[15] This growing emphasis on identifying named authors is exemplified by Robert Crowley's address 'The Printer to the Reader' in the first edition of *Piers Plowman* (1550), which opens with the proclamation that the publisher was 'desyerous to knowe the name of the Autoure of this most worthy worke'.[16] Scribes and early readers of *Piers* had long puzzled over the question of the author's name (prompted, in part, by the elusiveness of the poem's authorial voice), but the publication of new books by John Bale and by Crowley in the mid-sixteenth century has been identified as a turning point at which '[a]fter nearly two centuries of anonymity, Langland comes to have a name and a public identity'.[17] This is not, however, a tale of obscurity in manuscript yielding to a new awareness of named authors in print; both the writerly self-awareness that characterises the work of Chaucer and Langland (and their fifteenth-century successors) and the persistence of anonymous writing conventions in the early modern period warn against such a reading. It is more instructive to adopt North's characterisation of the relationship between medieval and early modern conceptions of authorship as

'Compiling the Book', p. 139 identifies CUL, MS Dd.5.64 as a late medieval attempt to assemble the collected works of Richard Rolle. See also Gillespie, *Print Culture*, pp. 27–60.

[13] Helen Cooper, 'Choosing Poetic Fathers: The English Problem', *Medieval and Early Modern Authorship*, SPELL: Swiss papers in English language and literature, 25 (2011), 29–50 (35).

[14] A point also made, for example, in Kelen, *Langland's Early Modern Identities*, pp. 19–22; and Jane Griffiths, 'What's in a Name? The Transmission of "John Skelton, Laureate" in Manuscript and Print', *HLQ*, 67.2 (2004), 215–35 (219).

[15] See, for example, Marotti, *Manuscript, Print*, pp. 223, 329; Lukas Erne, *Shakespeare and the Book Trade* (Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 56–89.

[16] William Langland, *The vision of Pierce Plowman, now fyrste imprinted by Roberte Crowley* (London: Robert Crowley; *STC* 19906), sig. *2^{r}.

[17] Kelen, *Langland's Early Modern Identities*, p. 39.

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a 'recurring echo rather than an evolution',[18] and, where Chaucer is concerned, to observe print's role in amplifying, rather than inaugurating, the cultural emphasis on authorship in the early modern period.

As a Middle English writer who was successfully ushered onto the print marketplace of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, Chaucer's case affords a unique vantage point on the changing understanding of literary authorship and its relation to anonymity, naming, and publication in the period. With the editions of his works produced in the sixteenth century, Chaucer's literary authority was increasingly seen to reside in his name, his works, and eventually his person. While the poet and courtier Stephen Hawes affirmed near the beginning of the century that Chaucer's 'goodly name / In prynted bookes, doth remayne in fame', this had not always been the case. Only with Wynkyn de Worde's edition of 1498 did the *Canterbury Tales* receive its first title page, a feature absent from medieval English manuscripts. Where most fifteenth-century manuscripts and the first printed edition of the *Tales* had not mentioned Chaucer in their opening paratexts, de Worde's 1498 title page proudly declares both author and title: 'The boke of Chaucer named Caunterbury tales'.[19] By the late seventeenth century, Chaucer's name and his works were common cultural currency in England, accessible not just in the most recent 1687 reprint of Speght's editions or in those that had come before, but also in myriad imitations and adaptations. One of these, a Chaucer-inspired jestbook also published in 1687, was titled *Canterbury Tales: composed for the Entertainment of All Ingenuous young Men and Maids* and professed on its title page to be 'By *Chaucer* Junior'.[20] Chaucer's name, then, had come to be well known in early modern England and it was closely associated with his body of work, in particular with the *Canterbury Tales*, which had been given pride of place as the first text in every volume of his works since Thynne. As Machan puts it, the critical apparatus introduced by Speght, in particular, 'solidifies the identification of the *Works* with a specific historical personage and thereby supports both the ideology of a canon and the mediation of literary history through exalted individual writers'.[21]

[18] North, *Anonymous Renaissance*, pp. 35–55 (p. 36).
[19] Gillespie, *Print Culture*, pp. 92–3. Likewise, only two surviving manuscripts of *Troilus* bear Chaucer's name; see *Print Culture*, p. 36.
[20] Chaucer (Junior), *Canterbury tales: composed for the entertainment of all ingenuous young men and maids at their merry meetings* (London: for J. Back, 1687; Wing C455A).
[21] Machan, 'Speght's "Works"', 154.

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The association between the name of an individuated author and a printed oeuvre belied a more complex textual reality, and one of which the early modern editors were keenly aware. Chaucer's name may have become virtually inseparable from the marketing of his printed works but the oldest and most authoritative witnesses often lacked this ultimate sign of authority. Manuscripts of Chaucer's works were usually produced for and by people who already knew the author's identity, or to whom it did not matter; as Gillespie notes, in the context of medieval manuscript production 'traditions of anonymity are evidence of things which did not need to be said'.[22] The immediate interests of patrons, compilers, and scribes of manuscript works typically trumped investment in the author's name, and most of the earliest scribal copies of Chaucer's works do not prominently declare their author. As Chaucer became a dominant cultural figurehead, these volumes without a named author posed new challenges for readers and editors alike. A comment made by Speght following his list of Chaucer's 'Bookes' in 1598 underlines the difficulty presented by old copies: 'Others I haue seene without any Authours name, which for the inuention I would verily iudge to be Chaucers, were it not that wordes and phrases carry not euery where Chaucers antiquitie'.[23] Lacking an authorial ascription, books had to be assessed for inclusion in the collected *Workes* according to other criteria – in this case, a sense of Chaucer's style and the antiquity of his language. As Speght's vacillation demonstrates, however, this was not always a straightforward matter for an editor, and a text 'without any Authours name' could be a source of doubt and confusion.

One of the foremost Chaucerians of the sixteenth century, John Stow, took some of this work of attribution upon himself. Surviving medieval manuscripts that passed through Stow's hands reveal traces of the shift towards Chaucer's increasing prominence in the period, and Stow's own contribution to that shift. It is difficult to overstate Stow's role in promoting the study of medieval England and its literature. Gillespie pegs him as 'easily the most prolific writer of history of the Tudor age and . . . the most widely read', while William Ringler long ago voiced the necessity for a checklist of Stow's literary manuscripts, along with an analysis of his marginalia and commentary on poetry and poets.[24] Stow was an avid scholar and bibliophile with sustained interests in medieval literature and

[22] Gillespie, *Print Culture*, p. 36. [23] *Workes* (1598), sig. c1^r.

[24] Alexandra Gillespie, 'Introduction', in Gadd and Gillespie, pp. 1–12 (p. 2); William Ringler, 'John Stow's Editions of Skelton's "Workes" and of "Certaine Worthye Manuscript Poems"', *Studies in Bibliography*, 8 (1956), 215–17 (215, n. 2). A digital project at the University of Toronto, led by

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history; his work unearthing, collecting, copying, preserving, and interpreting antiquities has in recent decades brought him to greater scholarly attention and seen him credited with no less an achievement than the 'making of the English past'.[25] Despite his undeniable place at the centre of medieval manuscript study in the period, Stow's readerly engagement with his books has been construed as something of an intractable problem. Edwards has characterised Stow's marginalia as 'seemingly cryptic' and has confessed that it is 'not at all easy to determine what features of a work he felt to be significant', while the editor of the Fairfax manuscript containing Stow's annotations (to be discussed) concludes that 'From the disconnectedness of [Stow's] entries it is not possible to say how he used the manuscript', beyond a general interest in certain texts over others.[26] But more particular questions about Stow's taste in medieval literature remain unanswered, in part because his interests skewed more heavily towards the historiographical and the local than towards concerns that might today be considered aesthetic or literary.

Stow's commentary on medieval texts might also seem inscrutable because it is often preoccupied not with the 'features of a work' (as Edwards has it) but with the features surrounding a work. It is these features that I now wish to consider more closely. His notes show that he paid careful attention to paratextual devices such as names, titles, lists of contents, and other framing devices that lend context and authority to a given text. Edwards has observed the 'largely attributional' nature of Stow's annotations in the Fairfax manuscript and in a similar vein, Gillespie has noted that 'characteristic of his literary work is a prevailing concern with questions of authorship and canonicity'.[27] The present discussion assesses Stow's annotations in medieval manuscripts through the lens of his editorial work. The attributional impulse on display in Stow's notes in medieval manuscripts mirrors the emergent interest in early English authors found in contemporary printed books – and for some of which he was directly responsible. The fact of Stow's involvement in the book trade as an editor and contributor to printed books as well as a 'searcher' and reader of manuscripts makes his engagement with Chaucer two-pronged.[28] In some of the cases outlined in what follows, it

Gillespie, takes up Ringler's challenge; see Old Books New Science Lab, 'John Stow's Books', https://oldbooksnewscience.com/aboutobns/lab-projects/.

[25] The phrase comes from the title of Gadd and Gillespie's essay collection on Stow.

[26] Edwards, 'John Stow and Middle English Literature', p. 109; Norton-Smith, *MS Fairfax 16*, p. xvi.

[27] Gillespie, 'Introduction', p. 6; Edwards, 'John Stow and Middle English Literature', pp. 111–14.

[28] On Stow's self-styling as a 'serchar of antiquities', see Gillespie, 'Introduction', p. 1.

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is impossible to determine whether Stow wholly conforms to the print-to-manuscript model of readerly perfecting, whether his interventions in the manuscripts originate in the results of his archival research into England's medieval past, or whether both of those things are true and his notes in fact reflect his own discoveries as mediated through Speght. Whatever their origins, his surviving notes in medieval manuscripts constitute a record of Stow's longstanding preoccupation with authors and their canons. Even if the relationship between their appearance in print and their parallel introduction into the manuscripts by Stow is not a causal one, his annotations express his desire to perfect fifteenth-century manuscripts according to some of the hallmarks of literary authority.

Bodl. MS Fairfax 16 is a miscellany including a large number of Chaucer's lyrics, as well as works by Clanvowe, Lydgate, and Hoccleve, amongst others. Given his interests in Middle English and especially in the works of Chaucer and Lydgate, Stow's interest in Fairfax is unsurprising and his engagement with the book is well documented.[29] However, his annotations have not been fully considered in the context of parallel advancements in the conception of authorship in the sixteenth century and the growing body of accepted knowledge about medieval poets and their oeuvres, in whose compilation Stow had a hand. At several places within Fairfax, Stow added marginal notes pairing authors' names with works initially copied without attribution by the manuscript's medieval copyist. In the list of contents, for example, Stow glossed several works with succinct notes about their matter and titles, and identified the respective authors of three works as Chaucer, Hoccleve, and Lydgate (see Figure 4.1).[30] In one sense, these belated additions bring the titles in line with others in the list of contents copied by the fifteenth-century Fairfax scribe, who had declared the Chaucerian origins of certain texts: 'The goode councell of Chawcer', 'The sendyng of Chawcer to Scogan', or 'The complaynt of Chawcer to his purse'. In another respect, however, the alternative titles, authors' names, and seeming trivia added into Fairfax reveal Stow's abiding preoccupation with the most prominent figures of Middle English literary history. The most

[29] Norton-Smith, *MS Fairfax 16*, pp. xvi, xviii–xix; Edwards, 'John Stow and Middle English Literature', pp. 111–15; Anne Hudson, 'John Stow (1525?–1605)', in Ruggiers, pp. 53–70 (pp. 57, 64).

[30] The four works as listed in the table of contents (fol. 2r), and their accompanying notes by Stow, are: 'The complaynt of a lovers lyve' (Stow: 'the blacke knight'; 'The lett*er* of Cupydge gode of love' (Stow: 'p*er* T. Hocleve'); 'The Temple off Glasse' (Stow: 'lidgate'); and 'A devoute balette to oure lady' (Stow: 'A.B.C. p*er* Chaucer').

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substantial and consequential addition of this type appears on fol. 130r, where the poem titled by its fifteenth-century scribe as 'The booke of the Duchesse' has been glossed with further information in a hand that is now generally regarded as Stow's: 'made by Geffrey

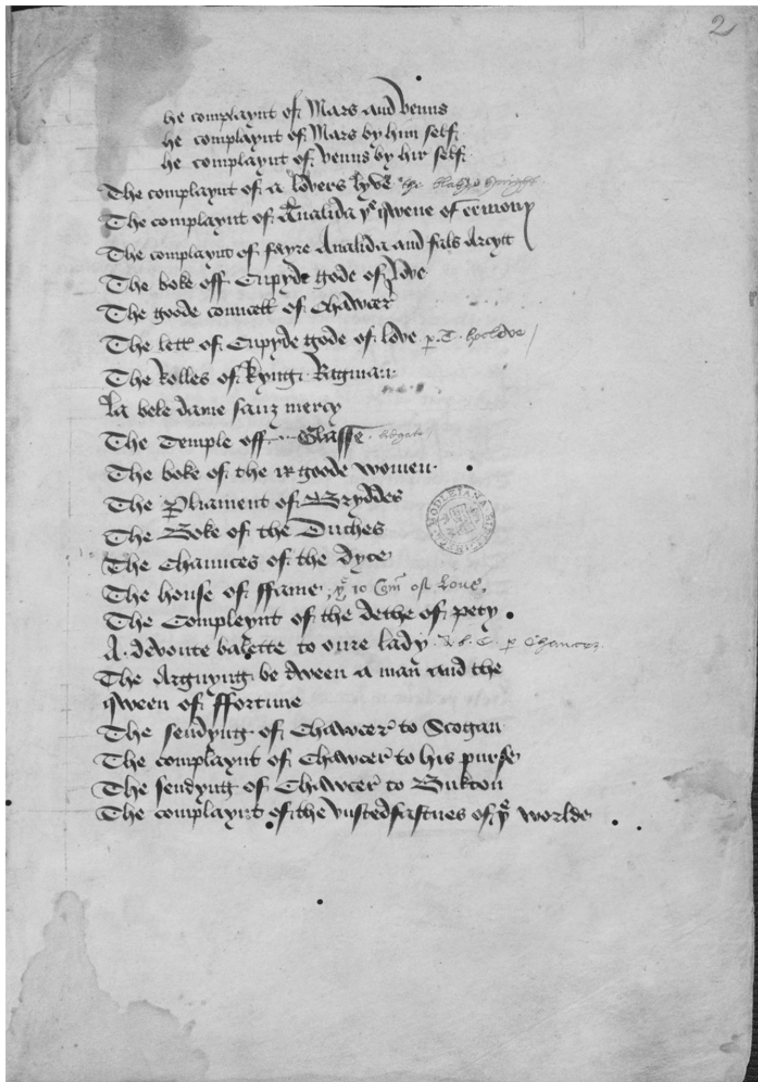
he complaynt of Mars and Venus
he complaynt of Mars by him self
he complaynt of Venus by hir self
The complaynt of a lovers lyve
The complaynt of Analida ye qwene of Ermony
The complaynt of fayre Analida and fals Arcyte
The boke off Cupyde gode of love
The gode councell of Chawcer
The lette of Cupyde gode of love
The kolles of kyng Rygman
La bele dame sanz mercy
The Temple off Glasse
The boke of the ix gode women
The Parlament of Bryddes
The Boke of the Duches
The chaunces of the Dyce
The house of ffame
The Compleynt of the dethe of Pety
A devoute balette to oure lady
The Argumynt be tween a man and the qween of ffortune
The sendynt of Chawcer to Scogan
The complaynt of Chawcer to his purse
The sendynt of Chawcer to Bukton
The complaynt of the unstedfastnes of ye worlde

Figure 4.1 Table of contents and accompanying notes by John Stow. The Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford, Bodl. MS Fairfax 16, fol. 2r.

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Chawcyer at ye request of ye duck of lancastar: pitiously complaynynge the deathe of ye sayd dutchesse / blanche/'.[31] As if to validate this claim, the marginal gloss 'blanche' is also added in Stow's hand at three points within the poem where the whiteness of the lover's dead lady is recalled (ll. 905, 942, 948).[32] This trio of terse notes, in their provision of a layer of historical, biographical, and attributional context, is typical of Stow's marginalia. The antiquary's particular interest in the circumstances around the composition of the *Book of the Duchess* is confirmed elsewhere, in a copy of Stow's 1561 *Workes* which Dane and Gillespie posit once belonged to the editor himself. Inside this copy, Stow's hand has supplied a note which again shows a concern with the occasion of the poem's composition: 'This booke was made of ye death of Blanch Duches of Lancaster'.[33] This persistent pattern affirms Stow's interest in detailing the origins and patronage of the *Book of the Duchess* within an aristocratic circle frequented by Chaucer.

In book historical terms, these additions made by Stow indicate that he saw both the older 1561 edition and the manuscript as deserving further explication of the poem's patronage and, specifically, Chaucer's connection to the House of Lancaster.[34] For Stow, these were facts that merited publication alongside the text. The widely accepted modern view that Chaucer wrote the *Book of the Duchess* 'at ye request of ye duck of lancastar' has its genesis in Stow's note to that effect in Fairfax, and in the corresponding argument on the allegory in Speght's 1598 edition: 'By the person of a mourning knight sitting vnder an Oke, is ment Iohn of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, greatly lamenting the death of Blaunch the Duchesse, who was his first wife'.[35] In all likelihood, this identification may be based on material supplied to Speght by Stow himself, who characterised that edition as 'beautified with noates, by me collected out of diuers Recordes and Monumentes, which I deliuered to my louing friende Thomas Speight'.[36] Stow's handwritten notes on the *Book of the Duchess* have

[31] Hammond, *Bibliographical Manual*, p. 363. For identification of the hand with Stow, see Edwards, 'John Stow and Middle English Literature', p. 114; Gillespie, 'Caxton's Chaucer and Lydgate Quartos', 25 and n. 95.

[32] fols. 141^{v}–142^{r}. [33] Dane and Gillespie, 'Back at Chaucer's Tomb', 95.

[34] In the 1561 edition Stow had listed the work as 'The dreame of Chaucer, otherwise called the boke of the Duches, or Seis and Alcione', but the connection to John of Gaunt was not explicitly made there; see *Workes* (1561; *STC* 5076), sig. ❧3^{r}.

[35] *Workes* (1598), sig. c5^{v}. In the 1602 edition the statement is more speculative: 'greatly lamenting the death of one whom hee entirely loued, supposed to bee Blanch the Duchesse' (sig. 2R1^{r}).

[36] John Stow, *A suruay of London* (London: [John Windet], 1598; *STC* 23341), sig. 2B8^{r}.

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been identified as 'the sole authority' for the poem's Lancastrian connections,[37] but the exact date at which Stow encountered Fairfax is uncertain, and there are several suggestions that he came across it around the year 1600,[38] towards the end of his long life, and at a time when he was still clearly occupied with questions pertaining to Chaucer's life and works. If Fairfax came into Stow's hands around 1600, as seems most likely, then his comments post-date Speght's argument to the poem in 1598, and that edition's assertion about the identity of the 'mourning knight sitting vnder an Oke' assumes priority. This sequence of events would recontextualise Stow's marginalia in Fairfax as having been influenced by Speght (or even by research he undertook on behalf of Speght, who went on to publish it). Whatever the order of this chain of events, it attests to the early modern circulation of certain details of Chaucerian biography in a variety of media – not only in printed books and older literary manuscripts, but also in the historical 'Recordes and Monuments' examined by Stow and in the 'noates' based on them which he delivered to Speght.

Stow's notes on the *Book of the Duchess* in Fairfax thus echo, or at the very least mirror, concurrent and consequential claims about the text which were being made in print, and for whose discovery he may have been responsible. The simultaneous attachment of this information about Blanche to printed and manuscript versions of the text speaks to a broader contemporary interest in the details of Chaucer's life and career. That desire to know the author was one which was fuelled and, in large part, even ignited by Speght's elaborately annotated edition. Stow's annotations in Fairfax and in his own 1561 copy of the *Workes* convey the extent to which the editions published under Speght's name advanced a new model for literary authority in print and transformed the idea of the Chaucerian book. More so than any prior edition, these prints presented Chaucer's texts inside a dense paratextual frame which intertwined biographical, literary, and historical forms of authority. After Speght's edition supplied new knowledge about Chaucer's life and his canon, old books of the poet's works might, by comparison, be viewed as lacking this crucial layer of authority. The extent to which Speght's editions shaped readerly expectations and knowledge about Chaucer and his works is demonstrated by another piece of marginalia in a copy of Thynne's

[37] Edwards, 'John Stow and Middle English Literature', p. 114.

[38] Stow's mention in Fairfax (fol. 82v) of the Gg manuscript as 'Josephe hollands boke' places Fairfax in Stow's hands around 1600, when Holland is thought to have acquired his manuscript; see Caldwell, 'Joseph Holand', 299, n. 38. Norton-Smith, *MS Fairfax 16*, p. xvi suggests that Fairfax may have been in Stow's hands 'some time in the late 1590s' while Hudson, 'John Stow', p. 64, weighs the evidence and suggests that Stow may have encountered the book at two different points in time.

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1532 edition now held in Glasgow. Inside the woodcut frame used as an inset title page for 'The dreame of Chaucer' – that is, the *Book of the Duchess* – a contemporary hand has added the poem's alternative titles: 'Or The booke of Duchesse or the death of Blanche as sayeth Mr Speght' (see Figure 4.2).[39] Here is a later reader who, in light of reading Speght, noticed the older book's lack of up-to-date information about the poem's title and occasion and decided to supply them. In that effort to note Chaucer's aristocratic subject matter and the exalted patron who stood behind the work, this annotator meshes the personal with the public and the poetic. Like the contextualising headnotes about Chaucer inscribed by John Shirley into fifteenth-century manuscripts, this biographical snippet supplied by Speght and transcribed by an early modern reader seeks 'to personalize and historicize the act of writing and reveal the living maker behind the poet'.[40] Much had been made of Chaucer's relation by marriage to John of Gaunt in the genealogical portrait and Life of Speght's edition.[41] In all likelihood, that information gleaned from Speght about Chaucer's powerful patron and eventual brother-in-law was also at the forefront of the annotator's mind when they noted the poem's connection to the Duchess.[42] In this sense, it is as much a note about the life of Chaucer as it is about 'the death of Blanche'. It is striking that both Stow and the Glasgow annotator updated older books according to newly available knowledge about the *Book of the Duchess* and the circumstances of its composition. Their annotations demonstrate the crucial and highly valued context for reading Chaucer's works supplied by Speght's new edition. They enable us, moreover, to pinpoint those facets of Chaucer's biography which early modern readers deemed most pertinent.

Stow is best known as a collector of manuscripts but he also collected printed books, and much of his scholarly energy was spent producing work for the press.[43] Just as his lifetime bridges the periods traditionally designated in English history as 'medieval' and 'early modern', so too his work ranged across the parallel worlds of manuscript and print.[44] Stow thus emerges as a figure

[39] Glasgow, Bs.2.17 (*STC* 5068; sig. 3B1[v]). [40] Lerer, *Chaucer and his Readers*, p. 120.

[41] Chaucer's relationship with Gaunt is elaborated in the sections of the 1598 Life concerning 'His Marriage' (sig. b3[v]) and 'His Friends' (sig. b6[v]), as well as in the *Stemma peculiare* of Chaucer's pedigree made by Robert Glover, Somerset Herald (sig. b4[r]) .

[42] In Bs.2.17, the same reader also left notes identifying the 'man in black' (l. 445) as 'John of Gau[nt] duke of Lanca[ster] (sig. 3B4[r]) and his lady ('fayre whyte she hete', l. 948) as '[B]lanche: by [w]home he had [th]e duchie of Lancaster' (sig. 3B6[v]).

[43] See Barrett L. Beer, 'Stow [Stowe], John (1524/5–1605), historian', *ODNB*, https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/26611.

[44] On Stow's role in bridging the medieval and early modern periods, see Gillespie, 'Introduction', p. 6.

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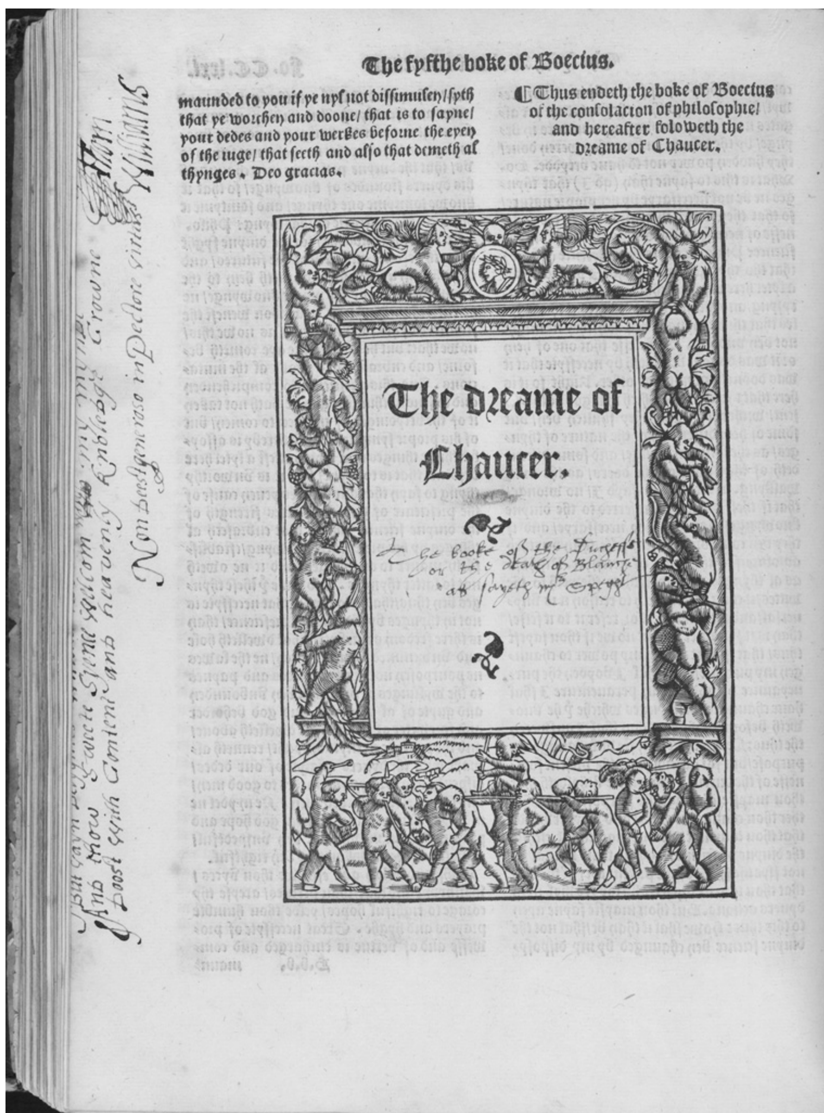

The fyfthe boke of Boecius.

maunded to you if ye nyl not dissimulen/ syth that ye worchen and doone/ that is to sayne/ your dedes and your werkes beforne the eyen of the iuge/ that seeth and also that demeth al thynges. Deo gracias.

¶ Thus endeth the boke of Boecius of the consolacion of philosophie/ and hereafter foloweth the dreame of Chaucer.

The dreame of Chaucer.

Figure 4.2 A reader's addition of alternative titles in a 1532 edition of Chaucer's *Workes*. University of Glasgow Archives and Special Collections, Bs.2.17 (*STC* 5068; sig. 3B1ᵛ).

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invested in print as a vehicle for promoting medieval literature, and via whom the stream of information from older, handwritten books, into updated transcriptions, and even into print may occasionally be traced.[45] In many of these efforts, too, Stow's organisational principle was the figure of the author.

His first certain publication, the 1561 edition of Chaucer, was the expanded sequel to Thynne's folio *Workes*, a book which in 1532 had rewritten the rules of the literary prestige normally accorded to English authors. He was probably also responsible for editing a reprint of the prose *Serpent of Division* (1559), which appears in a manuscript he once owned and which he believed to be by Lydgate.[46] In a revised dedication to his *Summary* (1567), Stow asks for patron Robert Dudley's support so that 'I shall be encouraged to perfecte that labour that I haue begon, and such worthye workes of auncyent Aucthours that I haue wyth greate peynes gathered together, and, partly yet performed in *M. Chaucer* & other I shal be much incensed by your gentlenes to publyshe, to the commodity of all the Quenes maiesties louynge Subiectes'.[47] As Stow relates it, his Chaucer folio was only the beginning. His stated intention to continue to 'publyshe' the 'worthye workes of auncyent Aucthours' affirms that his scholarship was undertaken for the purpose of public dissemination, and that the promotion of medieval authors was a driving motivation for him. Stow would go on to publish an edition of Skelton's *Pithy Pleasaunt and Profitable Workes* (1568) and, as was noted, contributed materials on Chaucer and Lydgate to Speght's Chaucer (1598). These supplements include an extensive list which follows the *Siege of Thebes* in Speght and is titled the 'Catalogue of translations and Poeticall deuises, in English mitre or verse, done by John Lidgate Monke of Bury, whereof some are extant in Print, the residue in the custodie of him that first caused this *Siege of Thebes* to be added to these works of *G. Chaucer*' – that is, Stow himself.[48]

The sixteenth century in England saw an unprecedented awareness of vernacular authorship, one promoted by Stow's editions of Lydgate, Chaucer, and Skelton. Seen in this context, Stow's attributional annotations, with their imposition of authorial names and titles, reflect the work in progress of an editorially-minded reader, and they offer a glimpse into

[45] For a discussion of Stow's manuscript sources and the difficulties of pinpointing his editorial method, however, see Hudson, 'John Stow', pp. 62–8.
[46] Now BL, Additional MS 40831A. See Edwards, 'John Stow and Middle English Literature', p. 116.
[47] John Stow, *The summarie of Englishe chronicles* (London: Thomas Warshe, 1567; *STC* 23325.5), sig. a3^{v}.
[48] *Workes* (1598), sig. 3Z6^{r}.

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the antiquary's motivation as he studied and compiled the materials that would make up future printed volumes of 'worthye workes of auncyent Aucthours'.[49] Stow's discreet attributional annotations in books like Fairfax show him relying on manuscripts for his research, even as he reckoned with their limitations and tellingly, as he updated them by superimposing authors' names and titles of their works. His annotations provide a small but perceptible trace of the shift as it happened – a change whereby manuscript books from the previous century could be retrofitted with paratextual markers such as attributions, titles, and biographical snatches, all hallmarks of the growing recognition accorded to the author in the English book trade.

I have already suggested that Stow's *Book of the Duchess* annotations appear synchronised with the printed editions of Speght in circulation at the time. Another instance of likely influence from print to manuscript, in which Stow's addition to the Fairfax manuscript runs in parallel with his editorial choice in print, is his addition of a gloss 'the blacke knight' to the Lydgate poem listed as 'The complaynt of a lovers lyve' (*IMEV* 1507) on the manuscript's contents page. The poem likewise appears in the editions of Speght and Stow himself as 'The complainte of the blacke knight, otherwise called the co*m*plaint of a louers life'.[50] No surviving manuscript of this poem contains both titles paired as Stow presents them in his edition and in Fairfax. Here too, Stow's scrupulous attention to the makeup of a medieval author's canon, and the way that his gloss echoes a print authority, is emblematic of an emerging cultural interest in the authenticity and canonicity of particular works.[51] Similarly, the emphasis on authorship in the printed editions is echoed by Stow's marginal addition to the Fairfax poem which is titled 'A devoute balette to oure lady' in the manuscript, and which he glossed as 'A.B.C. *per* Chaucer' (fol. 2^{r}) and elsewhere as 'Chawcers A.b.c.' (fol. 188^{v}), a new title that may likewise have been influenced by Speght's printed edition, in which the work is named 'Chaucers A.B.C., called La Priere de Nostre Dame'.[52] Stow's habit of titular correction is evident

[49] For further discussion of Stow's notes on Lydgate, which suggest editorial intentions, see Edwards, 'John Stow and Middle English Literature', pp. 116–17.

[50] *Workes* (1561; *STC* 5076), sig. ❧3r.

[51] The title *The Complaint of the Black Knight* originates with Thynne (1532).

[52] Although the *ABC* survives in seventeen whole or fragmentary manuscripts, it was not printed until Speght's edition of 1602, using the text found in Holland's Gg manuscript. Only one medieval manuscript, Coventry, Coventry Archives Acc. 325/1, refers to this work using the formulation 'ABC', where the title is 'Here biginneth a preiour of oure ladie þat Geffreie Chaucer made affter the ordre of the A.b.c.' (fol. 72ra). Stow might even have seen the poem and this title in Gg itself, where the sixteenth-century scribe has inscribed it in bold blue ink, following Speght (fol. 5^{r}).

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elsewhere in Fairfax too – for example, in his correcting of the title 'the temple of Bras' to 'glas' at the beginning and end of Lydgate's poem (fols. 63r, 82v), or in his addition of a title to Chaucer's *Compleynt unto Pite* (*IMEV* 2756), where its original scribe had titled it simply 'Balade'.[53] Stow's annotations in Fairfax are scattered and generally sparse, rather than methodical, but his interest in correctly attributing and titling works in medieval manuscripts is sustained across numerous volumes.

In a predominantly Lydgatean manuscript miscellany which dates from the late fifteenth century (BL, Additional MS 34360), for instance, Stow made a note correctly assigning to Chaucer the poem now known as *Complaint to his Purse* (*IMEV* 3787), an attribution supported in some manuscripts (including Fairfax) as well as the folio editions of the *Workes* before 1602, where the poet is named in the title as the speaker.[54] Elsewhere in the Additional manuscript, Stow assigned to 'Chauser' the apocryphal poem that he called 'La semble des dames' (fol. 37r, *IMEV* 1528), perhaps following the poem's French title in TCC, MS R.3.19.[55] In the same manuscript, Stow also added the attribution 'The horse the shepe and the Gose, by John Lydgate' to that work (*IMEV* 658, fol. 27r), and supplied a title to the work he there called 'The crafte of love' (*IMEV* 3761, fol. 73v). It received a more elaborate description in his 1561 edition, where it appeared under a heading 'This werke folowinge was compiled by Chaucer and is caled the craft of louers'. In TCC, MS R.3.19, which Stow is known to have used as a source for much of the new material he appended to his Chaucer edition, he likewise added a note 'The Crafte of lovers Chaucer' at the poem's head (fol. 154v).[56] At the conclusion of this text he also added a biographical note about Chaucer, 'Chaucer died 1400',[57] a response in the margins to the narrator's assertion that he heard this dialogue 'In the yere of oure lord a Ml. by rekenyng / CCCC xl. &. viii'. Stow, taking issue with an internal date that post-dated Chaucer's lifetime, emended this to '1348' in his 1561 edition.[58]

Both Stow's surviving medieval manuscripts and the annotations in these volumes thus demonstrate his abiding interest in historiography

[53] The title that Stow adds is 'complainte of the deathe of pitie' (fol. 187r). Chaucer's *Parliament of Fowles* was titled *The Temple of Bras* by Caxton (Westminster: William Caxton, *c.* 1477; *STC* 5091).

[54] fol. 19r. In addition to Fairfax, *Purse* is attributed to Chaucer in Pepys 2006, BL, MS Harley 7333, and New York, Pierpont Morgan, MS 4. In the 1561 and 1598 editions, it is 'Chaucer to his emptie purse' but retitled 'Hoccleve to his emptie purse' in 1602.

[55] This poem was added to the canon by Thynne in 1532.

[56] On Stow and TCC, MS R.3.19, see Edwards, 'John Stow and Middle English Literature', p. 114.

[57] fol. 156r.

[58] *Workes* (1561; *STC* 5076), sig. 3P3v.

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and in the literature of late medieval England. Studied in isolation, his marginal notes may seem trifling or reactive. However, they are collectively underwritten by an attributional and biographical impulse directed towards Chaucer and Lydgate, Hoccleve and Gower, as well as towards figures such as Blanche of Lancaster, Gildas, William de la Pole, and other historical personages.[59] His literary attributions witness a highly developed awareness of the canon and authors of Middle English literature – a canon which he aspired to shape.[60] Such an observation is not new, but the degree to which Stow's notes anticipate, echo, or otherwise correspond to print has not been fully appreciated. The nature of his annotations on *The Book of the Duchess*, *The Complaint of the Black Knight*, *Chaucer's ABC*, and *The Craft of Lovers* in fifteenth-century manuscripts all match framings of these texts in his or other printed versions, and they provide direct evidence for the increasing prominence afforded to authorial figures and their canons in late Elizabethan England.

Stow's manuscript annotations reflect editorial habits of identification, comparison, and correction which persisted far beyond his editing of Chaucer for the press in 1561. They show that he maintained an editorial and readerly sensibility which sought to ascribe authorial agency and to circumscribe literary canons. In his reassigning of the names attached to particular texts in manuscript, Stow attempted to impose new order onto these old books, to map the terrain of Chaucer's oeuvre and, in so doing, to shed new light on the author's life. As Gillespie has shown, preoccupations with the figure of the medieval author may be gleaned from the ways manuscripts and printed books were organised, produced, and received by their makers and early readers; in the case of Stow and his fellow antiquaries, 'the medieval author had become a stable place for the remnants – whether old manuscripts or the learned texts in them – of a vanishing medieval past'.[61] But it was not enough to search and collect old manuscript books. Stow also needed to make sense of them by updating, annotating, and situating their texts historically – for example, by correcting a faulty date, setting the record straight about their proper titles, or providing vital context about their composition. Stow was a reader of old books

[59] For example, see Stow's habit of naming in his annotations on Gildas in BL, MS Lansdowne 204, fols. $22^{r–v}$, 39^{r}, $41^{r–v}$; and on William de la Pole in TCC, MS R.3.20, pp. 25, 32, 35, 36.

[60] Stow's activities of collecting, transcribing, and editing Middle English works are discussed in Edwards, 'John Stow and Middle English Literature', pp. 109–18.

[61] Gillespie, *Print Culture*, p. 208.

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and a maker of new ones, and his marginalia in Fairfax and other medieval manuscripts record the evolution of a suite of ideas about Middle English authorship. Whether updating manuscript texts to bring them into line with information conveyed in print, or to classify and perfect them with an eye to print publication, Stow's marginalia in medieval books expose some of their perceived limitations in the face of emerging standards of bibliographic authority. The frequent lack of authorial attribution, uniform titles, or relevant historical detail in medieval manuscripts were all shortcomings which Stow sought to redress through the research and editorial work that would ultimately define an early modern canon for Chaucer (and equally for Lydgate).

Stow was extraordinary in his diligent scouring of ancient volumes, but he was not unique in his aim to impose a new order onto old manuscript books. Other readers, too, compared fifteenth-century manuscript volumes with the more recent printed collections, and left notes to suggest that they, like Stow, appraised the older books according to new standards of authority and canonicity as they read.[62] In BL, Additional MS 34360 an early modern hand which may be that of the poet William Browne of Tavistock has furnished a table of contents listing 'A Catalogue of the Poems in this Volume' (fol. 3^{r}).[63] The second item in the list, Chaucer's *Complaint to his Purse*, receives an extended entry:

> 2 An Expostulation with his purse, that proues a
> light mistris: but the same is verbatim in Chaucers
> printed workes fol. 320, & is there exprest to be
> Tho Occleeves making for the 3 first stanzas

Browne also noted the discrepancy in attribution beside the scribally copied text itself (fol. 19^{r}).[64] The later poet's interest in Hoccleve's purported authorship of *Purse* (a curious assignation made in Speght's second edition) manifests his particular preoccupation with collecting and elevating the works of the Privy Seal clerk.[65] That Browne twice took pains to cross-reference the older book with the more recent Hoccleve ascription found in the newer print reflects his attempts to weigh up and reconcile the competing author attributions he observed across the two volumes.

[62] The Oxford antiquary Thomas Allen, for instance, was a sparse annotator but is known to have added titles, lists of contents, and (in at least one case) a note on authorship to his medieval manuscripts; see Watson, 'Thomas Allen of Oxford', p. 296.

[63] Driver, 'Stow's Books Bequeathed', p. 138. [64] See Chapter 1, p. 76.

[65] Pearsall, 'Speght', p. 86 reads the editorial reattribution of the poem to Hoccleve as 'part of the plan to present Chaucer as a "serious" poet' rather than an impecunious one.

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For Browne, a would-be editor of Hoccleve, Speght's choice in assigning the poem would have furnished compelling proof of the clerk's historical importance.

Durham University Library, Cosin MS v.ii.14 is a fifteenth-century manuscript containing Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes* alongside shorter Middle English works including Benedict Burgh's *Magnus Cato* and *Parvus Cato*, and the anonymous *Life of St Alexius*.[66] Notes written in this book by the clergyman and collector George Davenport (d. 1677) similarly show him wondering where Chaucer's oeuvre ended and that of his followers began.[67] Like Browne, Davenport attempted to establish these boundaries using information gathered from printed editions. On fol. iii^r, Davenport wrote a heading under which he assigned not only the *Siege*, but all the manuscript's major works, to Lydgate: 'In this volume are contained these books of Lidgate'. Davenport's table of contents fulfilled the practical aim of identifying the volume's matter and aiding navigation. It also erroneously named 'Lidgate' as the author of all the titles in the list, while another hand later cross-referenced the table against 'Stow's list' of Lydgate's works in Speght's edition.[68] On the verso of the same leaf, Davenport supplied three lines of Lydgate biography collected from John Pits's 1619 Latin life of the poet.[69] Underneath it he added a further note referring specifically to the *Siege of Thebes*: 'This book is printed at the end of Chaucers works'.[70] Such notes reveal the print contexts that ineluctably shaped the experience of reading Chaucer and Lydgate in early modern England, and make explicit the constant reckoning which readers like Davenport and Browne performed when they opened their medieval manuscripts. In imagining his volume as a collection of several 'books of Lidgate', Davenport superimposed a new (albeit misjudged) author-centric order upon the miscellaneous manuscript. Attribution thus proved to be

[66] Respectively, *IMEV* 3955, 854, and 3156.

[67] On Davenport, see A. I. Doyle, 'The Cosin Manuscripts and George Davenport', *The Book Collector*, 53 (2004), 32–45.

[68] This later hand, possibly that of librarian Robert Harrison (1744–1802), singled out 'The life of St Margaret' (*IMEV* 439) as being 'in Stow's list'; for a description based on A. I. Doyle and A. J. Piper, see Durham University Library Archives & Special Collections Catalogue, 'Durham University Library Cosin MS. v.ii.14', http://reed.dur.ac.uk/xtf/view?docId=ark/32150_s1kp78gg42d.xml.

[69] John Pits, *Relationum historicarum de rebus Anglicis tomus primus* (Paris: Rolin Thierry and Sebastien Cramoisy, 1619; *USTC* 6015910), sig. 4K4^v. Davenport's full inscription mentions Lydgate's status as an imitator of Chaucer and as author of the *Siege*. In full, it reads: 'Pitsaeus anno 1440 / Johannes Lidgatus ordinis S. Benedicti monachus in celeberrimo cœnobio Buriensi ad S. Edmundum, multum ornatus patriæ linguæ contulit imitatus in hoc Chaucerum nostrum. scripsit de bello Thebano lib. 3. Quoniam vestra clementia Domini. / This book is printed at the end of Chaucers works'.

[70] fol. iii^v.

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a thorny matter in print as well as in manuscript. The assurance of authorial stability which Davenport constructed around 'Lidgate' in the Durham manuscript quickly crumbles with the realisation that several of these texts are not Lydgatean. In Additional, Browne likewise embraced the reassigning of *Complaint to his Purse* to Hoccleve in 'Chaucers printed workes'. But many early attributions, whether implied or explicit, stood on precarious foundations within the manuscript record. Speght had hinted at the issue when he invoked the problem of manuscript books 'without any Authours name' (which he singled out from 'those bookes of his which wee haue in print'); that is, he too worried about the authorship of anonymous manuscript works which bore no attribution.[71] Working out genuine Chaucerian works from those that might only resemble them was not straightforward, but a matter Speght realised one must 'iudge'. Both Browne's and Davenport's comments, as well as Speght's quibble about those texts 'without any Authours name', signal the emergence of a readership concerned with accuracy of attribution, and who looked to print to supply it.[72] The promotion of a literary corpus went hand in hand with celebration of the author responsible for its creation. What had been true in Chaucer's and Lydgate's own time still held in the era of their print prominence; in Gillespie's words, 'Works must be listed and their authorship declared if writers are to hold onto their place in literary history'.[73] In their promotion of the individuated author and the circumscribed canon, the volumes produced by the early modern book trade engendered a powerful readerly desire to reproduce these paratextual trappings in order to authorise older books which lacked them.

The weighty influence of print on early modern conceptions of Chaucer and his canon may also be gleaned from Bodl. MS Tanner 346, a manuscript anthology copied on parchment and dated to the second quarter of the fifteenth century.[74] The Tanner manuscript contains works by Hoccleve, Lydgate, and Clanvowe, and also reflects an early attempt to collect Chaucer's minor poems. In the late seventeenth century, Tanner was owned by the collector and Archbishop of Canterbury William Sancroft (d. 1693), who amassed a personal library of at least 7,000 volumes, most of

[71] *Workes* (1602), sig. c1^{r}.

[72] Such concerns, Machan has argued, were not universally shared by the poets of the Middle English literary tradition nor by their immediate audiences, since vernacular writers were officially denied the status of *auctor* and the necessity for naming which accompanied it; see his *Textual Criticism*, pp. 93–135.

[73] Gillespie, *Print Culture*, p. 60.

[74] For the facsimile, see *Manuscript Tanner 346: A Facsimile*, ed. by Pamela Robinson (Norman, OK; Suffolk, UK: Pilgrim Books; Boydell & Brewer, 1980).

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which were printed books which he bequeathed to Emmanuel College, Cambridge. The majority of his manuscript collection, however, was sold to Thomas Tanner and subsequently entered the Bodleian Library.[75] Tanner 346 was amongst these volumes, and still bears evidence of Sancroft's engagement with the poet and his works. The date at which the Archbishop acquired the manuscript is not known, but he marked his ownership by inscribing his name, 'W: Sancroft', on the recto of its first leaf (fol. 1^{r}), at the beginning of the *Legend of Good Women*. When Sancroft owned this manuscript, it was around two hundred years old and carried the signs of its long life. Most noticeable, perhaps, were the badly faded words and letterforms on fol. 1^{r}, which either Sancroft or a reader contemporary to him traced over with black ink and in a cursive secretary hand.[76] Despite these markers of the book's age, the fifteenth-century hands of the Tanner scribes, who wrote in a distinctive 'amalgam of Anglicana Formata and Secretary' and in a secretary hand typical for the date, appear to have been sufficiently legible to the Archbishop.[77]

Although there is no direct evidence that Sancroft read the text closely, it is clear that he paid sustained attention to the nature and arrangement of the book's contents. He added to the Tanner manuscript a paper leaf with the heading 'Some of Chaucer's Works', on which he listed all of the volume's texts by title and keyed them to page numbers in the manuscript (see Figure 4.3).[78] The ambiguous heading chosen by Sancroft for his table of contents is worth pausing over. It may indicate that Sancroft believed all of the manuscript's contents to be Chaucer's, or alternatively (if more improbably), that just 'some' of those listed were his. It has been observed by Robinson and others that the titles Sancroft assigned to the Tanner texts match those in Thynne's edition.[79] If (as seems likely) Sancroft turned to Thynne or a later sixteenth- or seventeenth-century Chaucer folio to identify

[75] On Sancroft, see Helen Carron, 'William Sancroft (1617–93): A Seventeenth-Century Collector and His Library', *The Library*, 1.3 (2000), 290–307; and R. A. P. J. Beddard, 'Sancroft, William (1617–1693), archbishop of Canterbury and nonjuror', *ODNB*, https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/24610; Robinson, *Tanner 346*, p. xxvii.

[76] *Legend of Good Women*, ll. 4–6.

[77] Robinson, *Tanner 346*, pp. xxi, xxii.

[78] His table (on fol. iii^{r}) further atomised Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women* by dividing it into an introductory text he called 'The praise of good women' and the individual legends, in almost all of which he included information about the heroines' places of origin – for example, 'The Legend of Hypermnestra of Egypt'. In this, Sancroft was following a pattern which appears sporadically in the incipits of the manuscript and the printed editions, but he also added information he discerned from his own reading, as in the case of Hypermnestra, who is not identified as 'of Egypt' in either Tanner or the prints.

[79] Robinson, *Tanner 346*, p. xxiii; Seymour, *Catalogue*, 1, p. 85. It is also possible that the titles were transcribed from a later edition influenced by Thynne.

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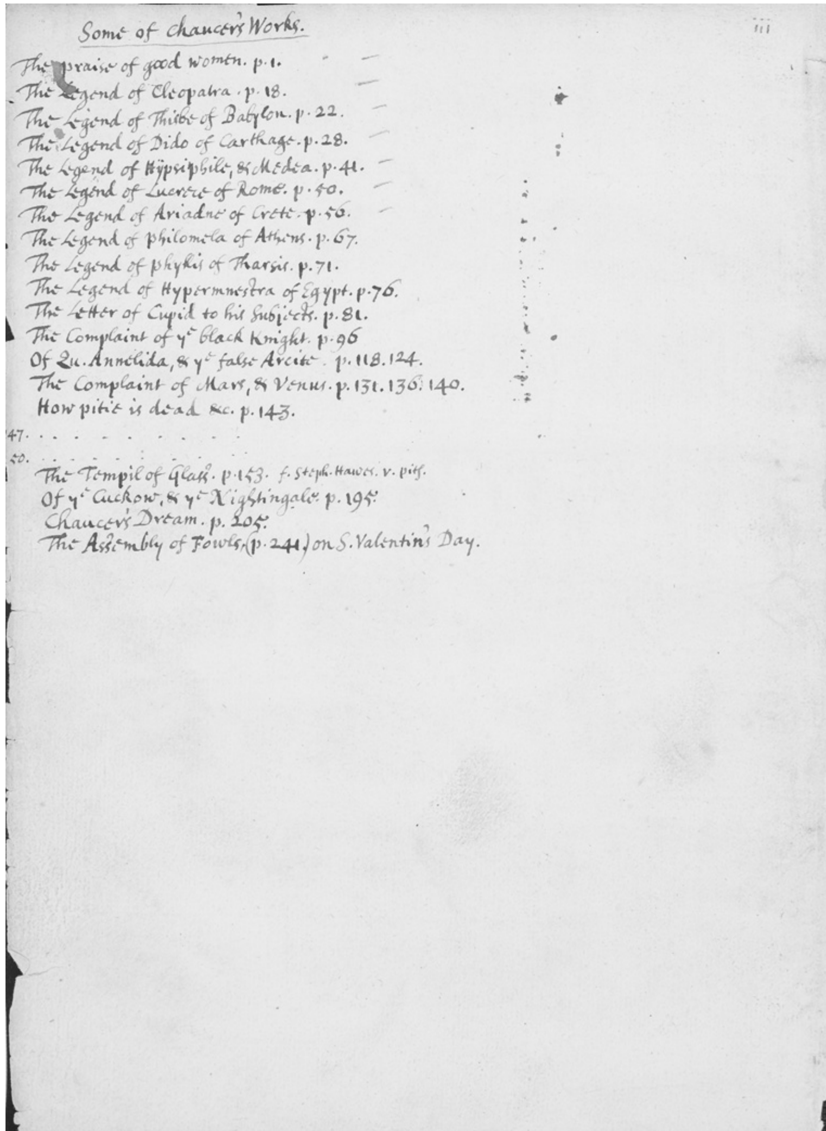

Some of Chaucer's Works.

The praise of good women. p. 1.
The Legend of Cleopatra. p. 18.
The Legend of Thisbe of Babylon. p. 22.
The Legend of Dido of Carthage. p. 28.
The Legend of Hypsiphile, & Medea. p. 41.
The Legend of Lucrece of Rome. p. 50.
The Legend of Ariadne of Crete. p. 56.
The Legend of philomela of Athens. p. 67.
The Legend of phyllis of Tharsis. p. 71.
The Legend of Hypermnestra of Egypt. p. 76.
The Letter of Cupid to his Subjects. p. 81.
The Complaint of ye black Knight. p. 96
Of Qu. Annelida, & ye false Arcite. p. 118. 124.
The Complaint of Mars, & Venus. p. 131. 136. 140.
How pitie is dead &c. p. 143.
147. . . . .
150. . . . .
The Tempil of Glass. p. 153. f. Steph. Hawes. v. pits.
Of ye Cuckow, & ye Nightingale. p. 195.
Chaucer's Dream. p. 205.
The Assembly of Fowls, (p. 241) on S. Valentin's Day.

Figure 4.3 William Sancroft's list of 'Some of Chaucer's Works'. The Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford, Bodl. MS Tanner 346, fol. iii[r].

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the contents of his manuscript, he would have found works such as *The Letter of Cupid* (*IMEV* 828), *The Complaint of the Black Knight* (*IMEV* 1507), *The Temple of Glass* (*IMEV* 851), and *The Cuckoo and the Nightingale* (*IMEV* 3361) assigned not to Hoccleve, Lydgate, or Clanvowe as they generally are today, but clustered without attribution alongside Chaucer's most famous works. As Forni has argued, the version of Chaucer readers encountered in the editions of Thynne and his successors was 'fundamentally different from the earlier manifestations of Chaucer's canon by virtue of the technology of print'. Print, she contends, aimed to present a 'fixed, identifiable, and duplicable body of works' for the poet.[80] Annotations like those of Sancroft show what early modern readers made of those 'fundamentally different' manuscripts in the face of the definitiveness promised by print.

Sancroft's consultation of Thynne (or a later edition) in parallel with Tanner accounts for his conviction that nearly all the works in the manuscript were '*Chaucer's* Works' (emphasis added). Sancroft's conception of the 'Works' is itself indebted to a presentation of Chaucer which was particular to print, for it was in Thynne's 1532 edition that this distinction – to be the author of 'works' alongside Virgil or Homer – was first awarded to anyone who wrote in English.[81] While this was not a term used by the compilers of this or any other Chaucerian manuscript, it was one which Sancroft thought appropriate for such a manuscript by the late seventeenth century. Simultaneously, his use of 'some' conveys a perception of the manuscript's incompleteness in relation to the more expansive Chaucer canon which he had encountered in a printed volume. Both halves of Sancroft's formulation 'Some of Chaucer's Works' therefore owe something to a version of the canon which circulated widely in print.

Sancroft's method of improving this manuscript by superimposing a new order in the form of titles adopted from print may be usefully contextualised by his dealings with other medieval books and by the makeup of Tanner itself. During his archiepiscopal tenure, he is known to have overseen the colossal task of disbinding, combining, and reordering the medieval manuscripts in the library at Lambeth Palace.[82] Ker surmises

[80] Forni, *Chaucerian Apocrypha*, pp. 5–6.

[81] On Sancroft's broader interest in matters of authorship and canonicity, and his reading of printed collections of English drama, including Jonson's 1616 *Workes*, see Laura Estill, *Dramatic Extracts in Seventeenth-Century English Manuscripts: Watching, Reading, Changing Plays* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2015), pp. 182–92.

[82] N. R. Ker, 'Archbishop Sancroft's Rearrangement of the Manuscripts of Lambeth Palace', in *A Catalogue of Manuscripts in Lambeth Palace Library. MSS. 1222–1860: With a Supplement to M. R. James's 'Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Lambeth Palace' by N. R. Ker*, ed. by E. G. W. Bill (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), pp. 1–51 (p. 1).

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that one of Sancroft's aims in this work was organisational: 'to eliminate the thinner volumes by binding them up with one another, and to make homogeneous volumes by moving pieces from one volume to another, so that like came to be with like'.[83] The newly reconfigured volumes were listed in a catalogue prepared by Sancroft himself, and he recorded the contents of these manuscripts on their flyleaves.[84] The same urge towards ordering the book is evident in the creation of the Tanner contents list. In this case, Sancroft recognised the volume's Chaucerian content and went so far as to redefine it in terms of 'Chaucer's Works'. At the same time, Sancroft's annotations register his response to Tanner's particularities. As Robinson has noted, the palaeographical and codicological evidence in Tanner suggests a 'lack of coordination among the scribes', 'that each was working independently of the others', but 'no evidence that anyone assumed over-all responsibility for the volume'.[85] She singles out the patchy provision of headings in the manuscript as symptomatic of this lack of overall coherence; only three of the book's fourteen items were assigned headings by the scribes.[86] Given this inconsistency in the manuscript's *ordinatio*, Sancroft's provision of a table of contents and individual titles in Tanner may reflect his intention to lend order to books in which he believed organisation was lacking.

Tables of contents were by no means particular to print.[87] However, they are generally rare in Middle English vernacular manuscripts, and there is evidence of both medieval and later book users having supplied them in order to enhance the navigability of such codices.[88] Sancroft, a seventeenth-century

[83] Ker, 'Archbishop Sancroft', p. 1.

[84] Robinson, *Tanner 346*, p. xxvii; Lambeth Palace Library, 'Research Guide – Library Records 1610–1785, Part B', p. 19, https://lambethpalacelibrary.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/37/2021/06/Research-Guide-Library-Records-1610-1785-part-B.pdf.

[85] This evidence includes the book's arrangement into booklets, the suggestion of simultaneous copying, and the fact that each scribe corrected only their own copy; see Robinson, *Tanner 346*, pp. xxv–xxvi.

[86] Robinson, *Tanner 346*, p. xx. On other inconsistencies in copying, see Robinson, *Tanner 346*, pp. xxv–xxvi.

[87] On tables of contents in late Middle English manuscripts, see Wendy Scase, '"Looke This Calender and Then Proced": Tables of Contents in Medieval English Manuscripts', in Pratt and others, pp. 287–306; Daniel Sawyer, *Reading English Verse in Manuscript c. 1350–c. 1500* (Oxford University Press, 2020), pp. 60–4. Tables of contents were added to some manuscript copies of the *Canterbury Tales* – e.g. Oxford, Christ Church, MS 152, fol. 1^{v} and HEHL, MS EL 26 C 9 (Ellesmere), fol. vii^{v} – during the fifteenth century. On Ellesmere's table of contents, see Sawyer, *Reading English Verse*, pp. 79–80. On tables of contents as part of an authorial strategy, see Connolly, 'Devotional Compilations', p. 138.

[88] For examples, see Siân Echard, 'Pre-Texts: Tables of Contents and the Reading of John Gower's "Confessio Amantis"', *Medium Ævum*, 66.2 (1997), 270–87 (271); Sawyer, *Reading English Verse*, pp. 62–4; Scase, '"Looke this calender"', pp. 297–300.

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reader, belongs to this latter group but what makes him noteworthy in the present context is his use of a print authority to assign titles to works and to compose a table of contents for a medieval manuscript. A reader lacking a comparison copy might have generated titles from their own reading, but Sancroft's reliance on titles found in Thynne suggests the appeal of print's seeming standardisation to an early modern reader and its role in his appraisal of the manuscript's quality. His replication in Tanner of the printed titles furnishes direct evidence of an edition's influence on the early modern conception and framing of Chaucer's works, and demonstrates the authority that readers attached to the paratextual presentation of his texts in print. For Sancroft, the printed table was the benchmark by which he organised his manuscript, and the printed book served as the definitive record of Chaucer's authorship and canon by extension.

As we have seen, the secure attribution implied by their inclusion and arrangement in the *Workes* was, for texts such as *Complaint to his Purse*, a fiction. The stability of the titles attached to particular texts in those volumes was equally attractive, but just as illusory. Forni's research into the dubious basis on which certain titles were assigned to items in the *Workes* in manuscript and early print has exposed the 'shifting titles, attributions, and texts' which are 'often the product of oversight and carelessness but sometimes simply the result of confusion'.[89] In one instance, Sancroft's practice of titling exemplifies the trail of confusion engendered by the vagaries of early editorial choices. In a meticulously documented essay, Forni shows that the poem now called *The Isle of Ladies* was once called *Chaucer's Dreame*, which caused it to be conflated with the *Book of the Duchess*, which was titled *The Dreame of Chaucer* from Thynne onward. The muddling of these two works in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century print undoubtedly account for Sancroft having titled the *Book of the Duchess* as 'Chaucer's Dreame' in Tanner.[90] Such shifts and discrepancies from one edition to the next shatter any assumption of print's stability in relation to manuscript; on the contrary, they emphasise that the absence or inconsistency of titles and attributions in medieval manuscript witnesses had longstanding repercussions for the transmission of such works in print,

[89] Kathleen Forni, '"Chaucer's Dreame": A Bibliographer's Nightmare', *HLQ*, 64.1/2 (2001), 139–50 (148). On the nineteenth-century tendency to retitle, see Victoria Gibbons, 'The Manuscript Titles of Truth: Titology and the Medieval Gap', *JEBS*, 11 (2008), 198–206.

[90] Bodl. MS Tanner 346, table of contents (fol. iii^{r}) but also on fol. 102^{r}. Speght had muddled matters further by titling the *Book of the Duchess* 'Chaucer's Dreame' in 1602. Forni, '"Chaucer's Dreame"', 146–8 traces the process by which the two works were also mixed up with a third, Lydgate's *The Temple of Glass* (*IMEV* 851).

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and that the early editors introduced their share of perplexing variants into a canon with an already complicated textual history.

While readers such as Sancroft could be led astray by printed accounts of the makeup of Chaucer's canon, the discernment of some readers in the face of competing and superseded print authorities should not be underestimated. The Glasgow manuscript of the *Canterbury Tales* (Gl, previously discussed in relation to its unusually large number of scribal gaps) was later owned by the Norfolk collector and antiquary Thomas Martin (1697–1771), who signed his name in the book and professed it was 'Given me Mr John White of Ipswich Surgeon'.[91] Martin's hand, which is markedly larger and more embellished than the annotator who filled in the gaps, features prominently not inside the book itself but on a supplementary paper flyleaf (see Figure 4.4). Here, Martin has drawn up a table headed 'The order of the prologues, & Tales, in this book, (which is Imperfect,) at beginning only. / And beginneth at the 355th Line, as printed in Mr Urrey's Edition being the Frankelyn &c his table &c'.[92] During this comparative exercise, Martin observed some of manuscript's more eccentric features, such as the scribes' splicing of two copytexts which, remarkably, caused two tales to be duplicated or 'Enter'd twice' in this copy, as Martin notes in his list of contents.[93] A committed scholar of Chaucer, Martin also owned copies of Thynne's 1542 and Stow's 1561 editions,[94] but it was Urry's much disparaged 1721 edition that he trusted to make his collations with the manuscript.[95] Martin's engagement with Chaucer thus involved both reading the printed text and evaluating the manuscript book itself. His attention to tale order in the manuscript, his identification of the copying error made by the Spirlengs, and his precise identification of the missing opening lines which made the manuscript 'Imperfect' all show the influence of his having read Chaucer in print. Despite his awareness of the manuscript's textual shortcomings, his appreciation of its age is suggested by his notes beneath the contents list, which observe that the manuscript was 'Written an*n*o 1470' and that 'Chaucer dyed .1400. 25 Octo*be*r'. These

[91] Glasgow MS Hunter 197 (U.1.1), i, fol. 2v. [92] i, fol. 3r.

[93] *The Shipman's Tale* and *The Prioress's Tale* were copied twice in Gl, while the *Clerk's Tale* and *Canon's Yeoman's Tale* were copied after the *Retraction* and *St Patrick's Purgatory*. For a detailed study of Gl and its scribe, see Richard Beadle, 'Geoffrey Spirleng (*c.* 1426–*c.* 1494): A Scribe of the *Canterbury Tales* in His Time', in *Of the Making of Books: Medieval Manuscripts, Their Scribes and Readers. Essays Presented to M. B. Parkes*, ed. by Rivkah Zim and Pamela Robinson (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1997), pp. 116–46.

[94] Johnston, 'Readers' Memorials', 50–3. Martin also owned a copy of the 1606 edition of the *Plowman's Tale* (Glasgow, Co.3.20; *STC* 5101), which he believed to be by Chaucer.

[95] Dane, *Tomb*, pp. 116–21.

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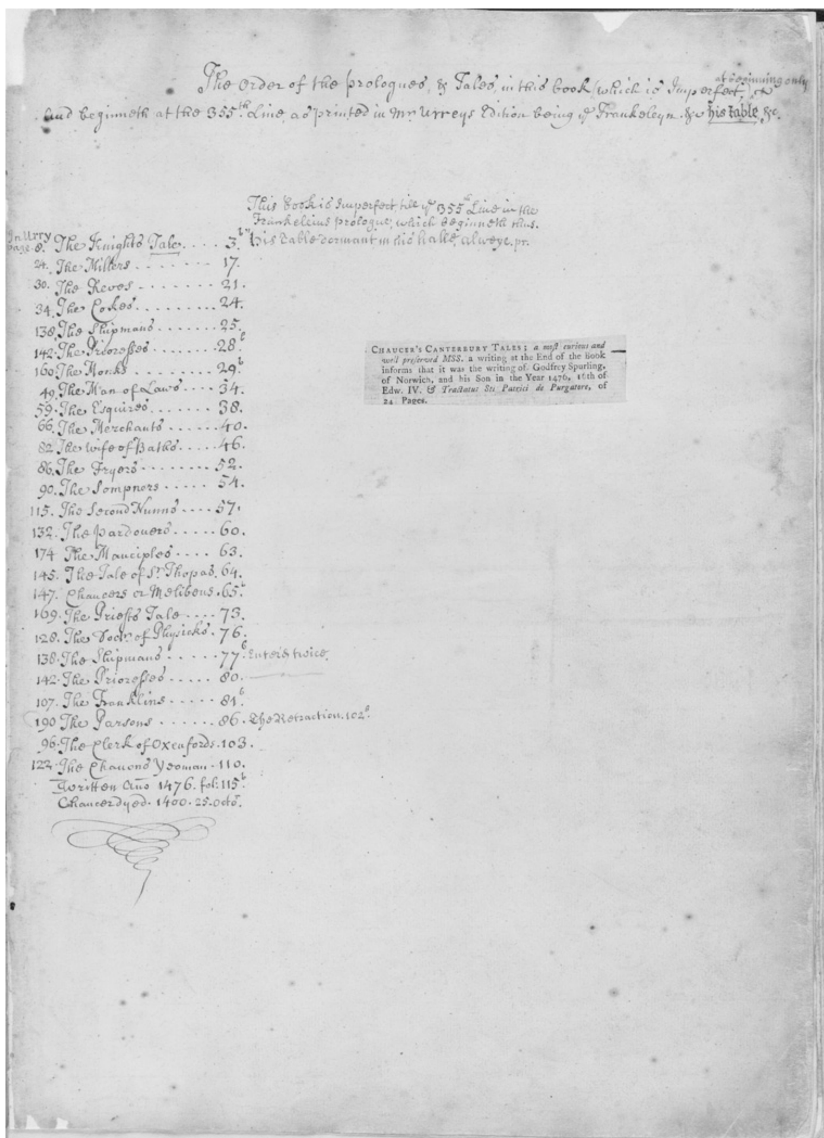

The Order of the prologues, & Tales, in this book (which is Imperfect at beginning only) & and beginneth at the 355th Line, as printed in Mr Urreys Edition being ye Frankeleyn. &c his table &c.

This Book is Imperfect till ye 355th Line in the Frankeleins prologue; which beginneth thus. 1b. his table dormant in his halle alweye. pr.

In Urry page 8. The Knights Tale. . . . 3.
24. The Millers . . . . 17.
30. The Reves . . . . 21.
34. The Cokes. . . . . 24.
138. The Shipmans . . . . 25.
142. The Prioresses . . . . 28b.
160. The Monks . . . . 29b.
49. The Man of Laws . . . . 34.
59. The Esquires. . . . . . . 38.
66. The Merchants . . . . . . 40.
82. The wife of Bathe. . . . . 46.
86. The Fryers . . . . 52.
90. The Sompners . . . . . 54.
115. The Second Nunns . . . . 57.
132. The Pardoners . . . . . 60.
174 The Manciples . . . . 63.
145. The Tale of Sr Thopas. 64.
147. Chaucers or Melibeus. 65b.
169. The Priests Tale . . . . 73.
128. The Doctr of Physicks. 76.
138. The Shipmans . . . . . 77b. Enterd twice.
142. The Prioresses . . . . . 80.
107. The Franklins . . . . . 81b.
190 The Parsons . . . . . . 86. The Retraction. 102b.
96. The Clerk of Oxenfords. 103.
122. The Chanons Yeoman. 110.
Written Ano 1476. fol: 115b.
Chaucer dyed. 1400. 25. octo.

Chaucer's Canterbury Tales; *a most curious and well preserved MSS.* a writing at the End of the Book informs that it was the writing of Godfrey Spurling, of Norwich, and his Son in the Year 1476, 16th of Edw. IV. & *Tractatus Sti Patrici de Purgatore*, of 24 Pages.

Figure 4.4 Thomas Martin's table of contents. University of Glasgow Archives and Special Collections, MS Hunter 197 (U.1.1), i, fol. 3r.

facts anchor the manuscript within a sequence of historical time whose starting point is the end of the author's lifetime. For Martin, assessing the book's authority involved declaring its proximity to (or distance from) a time when Chaucer himself had lived.

The forms of paratextual authority supplied in medieval manuscripts by Martin, Sancroft, Davenport, and other readers – attributions, tables of contents, titles of works, and even biographical details – overlap in their fundamental focus on authorship and canonicity. The annotations described here witness not only a burgeoning early modern interest in the print-published medieval author, but also demonstrate readers' use of print to situate medieval manuscripts and their texts within a larger, author-centric literary history. Just as printed editions attempted to furnish standardised titles, to create canons in the form of tables of contents, and to name their authors, Stow and other readers with similar interests in literary history were doing the same for the manuscripts that came into their hands. This phenomenon of inverted textual transmission from print to manuscript, and from new books to old ones, has been described in a comment by Forni: 'commercial titles and attributions are later added to manuscripts and appear to establish authority for the print attributions from which they were derived'.[96] Such an assessment demonstrates some of the tenuous textual foundations on which Chaucer's canon was first built. This evidence confirms the widespread role of early modern printed volumes in shaping the bibliographic expectations which readers brought to medieval manuscripts, and print's contribution to the continued currency of the older books. This chapter has so far been concerned with the relatively small and discreet paratexts which readers often adapted from print and applied to manuscripts with the aim of lending them greater authority. But alongside these relatively inconspicuous signs of print's influence were bolder, more striking additions made to old books by readers who shared the goal of authorising their Chaucers.

4.3 'True Portraiture'

Arguably, the most arresting feature of the early modern editions – and their most visible marker of authorial presence – was a genealogical portrait of Chaucer (see Figure 4.5). In order to understand the uses to which readers put the portrait, its role as an authorising paratext should first be established. To those who first laid eyes on it, the intricate intaglio

[96] Forni, '"Chaucer's Dreame"', 148.

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Figure 4.5 John Speed's engraved Chaucer portrait in Speght's first edition of the poet's *Workes* (1598). Fondation Martin Bodmer copy [without shelfmark]. Digitised and reproduced courtesy of the Bodmer Lab, University of Geneva.

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engraving made by John Speed would have been striking in its novelty. Speed's copperplate Chaucer portrait, made for Speght's first edition of the poet's *Workes* (1598), was advertised prominently on that book's title page, at the head of a list of the new edition's vendible features: 'His Portraiture and Progenie shewed'.[97] While woodcut images had held a monopoly in England until around 1545, the latter part of the century saw the immigration of talented metal engravers from the Continent and the growth of a market for specialist prints.[98] Images printed from cut woodblocks would remain ubiquitous in sixteenth-century England, in bound volumes, and in broadsides, chapbooks, and decorations pasted onto domestic interiors.[99] However, the newly fashionable form of metal plate engraving was ideally suited to transmitting minute, individualised details, and was especially sought for prints of maps and portraits. By the final decade of the sixteenth century, John Harington could still write of the brass-cut engravings in his translation of *Orlando Furioso* (1591) that 'I haue not seene anie made in England better, nor (in deede) anie of this kinde, in any booke, except it were in a treatise'.[100] At the turn of the century, engravings were a desirable print commodity to the book-buying public, as much for their beauty as for their curiosity.

But it was not only its technological newness that made the printed Chaucer portrait remarkable in its own time. For all its novelty, Speed's image is everywhere marked by iconographic and textual statements of Chaucer's historical and cultural authority. The image is titled 'The Progenie of Geffrey Chaucer'. That heading is a misleading one, however, for Chaucer is flanked here by a series of medallions which trace not only the names of his descendants, but also his links back to England's noble and royal families via his marriage to Philippa Roet. It is her father, 'Payne Roet Knight', who appears atop the genealogy as its symbolic figurehead. The base of the image depicts the tomb of Thomas Chaucer and his wife, Maud Burghersh, in the parish church at Ewelme. Speed's engraving of the tomb reproduces its twenty-four shields representing the family's illustrious pedigree. In framing Chaucer, claimed here as the first and 'famous' national poet, this heraldic iconography celebrates incipient Englishness itself.

[97] *Workes* (1598), sig. [a]2^r.
[98] Antony Griffiths, *The Print in Stuart Britain, 1603–1689* (London: Published for the Trustees of the British Museum by British Museum Press, 1998), pp. 13–14; Sarah Howe, 'The Authority of Presence: The Development of the English Author Portrait, 1500–1640', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 102.4 (2008), 465–99 (470).
[99] Tessa Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550–1640* (Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 1–3.
[100] John Harington, *Orlando furioso in English heroical verse* (London: Richard Field, 1591; *STC* 746), sig. A1^r.

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To this work, as to his magnum opus *The History of Great Britaine under the Conquests of the Romans, Saxons, Danes, and Normans* and its accompanying maps, *The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine* (1611–12), Speed brought the genealogist's enthusiasm for order and the antiquary's diligence.[101] His pains to endow the picture with credibility are evident on the printed page. The medallions that cluster authoritatively around the figure of Chaucer confer historicity, and visually sidestep the fact that all of the poet's noble relations were acquired by marriage rather than by a distinguished lineage that was his own. The finely wrought depiction of the tomb is likewise presented as a faithful representation of the monument at St Mary's Church in Ewelme, Oxfordshire. Elsewhere in the *Workes*, Speght writes of the portrait that 'M. Spede . . . hath annexed thereto all such cotes of Armes, as any way concerne the Chaucers, as hee found them (travailing for that purpose) at Ewelme and at Wickham'.[102]

Most telling, though, are Speght and Speed's efforts to authorise the portrait by conveying the verisimilitude of Chaucer's printed likeness itself. The central panel of Speed's engraving features a full-length depiction of Chaucer, standing and holding a rosary.[103] An object that is perhaps a penner (pen-case) hangs from his neck, signifying his status as a man of letters, and connecting the text printed in Speght's edition to its written manifestation as a product of Chaucer's hand.[104] A panel of text positioned underneath the figure of Chaucer announces its provenance:

> *The true portraiture of GEFFREY CHAUCER /*
> *the famous English poet, as by THOMAS /*
> *OCCLEVE is described who liued in his /*
> *time, and was his Scholar. /*

The caption is unambiguous in its staging of the image's authenticity: this is a 'true' representation of Chaucer's likeness, as reported by the poet and clerk Thomas Hoccleve, who knew him well. Speght confirms the image's Hocclevean origins when he notes elsewhere in the edition that

[101] Driver, 'Mapping Chaucer', 241–5. [102] *Workes* (1598), sig. c1r.

[103] According to Arthur M. Hind, *Engraving in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: A Descriptive Catalogue with Introductions. Part 1, The Tudor Period* (Cambridge University Press, 1952), 1, pp. 286–9, Speed may be identified only as the designer, rather than its engraver, who remains anonymous. On the different states of the engraving, see Driver, 'Mapping Chaucer', 246, n. 6. Because my subject is the afterlife of the image first conceived and attributed to John Speed, I refer to this visual tradition as Speed's throughout, while recognising that different and anonymous artisans were responsible for its later material instantiations.

[104] The pendant has also been proposed to be a penknife or a vial of holy blood; see R. Evan Davis, 'The Pendant in the Chaucer Portraits', *ChR*, 17.2 (1982), 193–5.

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> Occleve for the love he bare to his maister, caused his picture to bee truly drawne in his booke *De Regimine Principis*, dedicated to Henry the fift: the which I have seene, and according to the which this in the beginning of this booke was done by M. Spede (sig. c1^{r})

The avowal that Speed used a *Regement* exemplar for his Chaucer engraving is unverified, and unverifiable based on the current evidence.[105] Despite this lack of direct material proof, I do not believe there is good reason to distrust the Hocclevean provenance claimed by Speght, who had the fastidious John Stow and, later, Francis Thynne looking over his shoulder as he produced the editions.[106]

Most importantly, and whatever the model of the 1598 Chaucer engraving, it is clear that Speed and Speght had good reason to align their project with that of Hoccleve. In the *Regement*, a literary petition for the patronage of Prince Henry of Monmouth (and later Henry V) written in 1411, Hoccleve proves his close relationship with the now-dead Chaucer in pictorial form:

> That to putte other men in remembraunce
> Of his persone, I have heere his liknesse
> Do make, to this ende, in soothfastnesse,
> That they that han of him lost thoght and mynde
> By this peynture may ageyn him fynde.[107]

As David Carlson has suggested, Hoccleve supervised the production of presentation copies of the work and the success of his bid to Henry relied on the portrait's 'lyknesse' to Chaucer.[108] Hoccleve's desire is to make not simply an effigial mnemonic aid, but a realistic mimetic portrait of Chaucer's 'lyknesse'. There is novelty here since individualised faces were rarely employed in medieval portaiture when iconography or arms alone could identify a figure. Alongside a few continental examples, Chaucer is therefore regarded as one of the first European vernacular authors to have a portrait attested in copies of his works.[109] As a visual invocation of the

[105] For a discussion which considers (and rejects) BL, Cotton MS Otho A.XVIII and BL, Additional MS 5141 as candidates for Speed's exemplar, see Devani Singh, 'The Progeny of Print: Manuscript Adaptations of John Speed's Chaucer Engraving', *Digital Philology: A Journal of Medieval Cultures*, 9.2 (2020), 177–98 (180–1).

[106] See Pearsall, 'John Stow and Thomas Speght'; Cook, *Poet and the Antiquaries*, pp. 130–62.

[107] Thomas Hoccleve, *The Regiment of Princes*, ed. by Charles R. Blyth (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1999), ll. 4994–8.

[108] David R. Carlson, 'Thomas Hoccleve and the Chaucer Portrait', *HLQ*, 54.4 (1991), 283–300 (287).

[109] These authors include Dante, Petrarch, Guillaume de Machaut, and Christine de Pizan. For more on these portraits, see Jeanne E. Krochalis, 'Hoccleve's Chaucer Portrait', *ChR*, 21.2 (1986), 234–45 (237); Alan T. Gaylord, 'Portrait of a Poet', in *The Ellesmere Chaucer: Essays in Interpretation*, ed. by Martin Stevens and D. H. Woodward (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1995), pp. 121–38 (pp.

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poet's near-forgotten likeness, the Harley image has been most frequently interpreted as an attempt to produce an authentic, individualised portrait of Chaucer.[110]

In this context, Hoccleve's manuscript image of Chaucer recollected 'in sothfastnesse' was the ideal exemplar for a new mode of depicting the poet's 'true portraiture' in print. Where Hoccleve may have reasoned that close affiliation with and instruction under Chaucer would aid his plea for Henry's patronage, Speed relies on the putative intimacy between Chaucer and the clerk to authorise his engraving. And the editor, too, assures the reader that the portrait appears in a book by 'Chaucers Scoller' Hoccleve, testifying to 'hav[ing] seen' it before. Speed and Speght thus vouch for the accuracy of their representation of the Chaucerian 'cotes of Armes' and portrait respectively; like that of Hoccleve, these claims are supported by eyewitness accounts that serve as authenticating credentials for the artefacts they describe. In its printed incarnation, the image echoes Hoccleve's pledge of the portrait's authenticity – and deftly manages to appropriate it. The antiquaries' claim that the printed image is Chaucer's 'true portraiture' is conveniently tethered to the authority of Hoccleve and his book, even as it ventures forth in the fashionable form of metal engraving. In its ability to pivot between exploiting its novelty *and* its antiquity, the image recalls the polychronicity theorised by Gil Harris as a feature of early modern matter. 'English Renaissance writers' (including Stow), he observes, 'repeatedly recognize the polychronic dimensions of matter – the many shaping hands, artisanal and textual, that introduce into it multiple traces of different times, rendering the supposedly singular thing plural, both physically and temporally'.[111] The Chaucer portrait – simultaneously medieval and early modern, hand-drawn and graven, the work of both Hoccleve and Speed – is rendered doubly authoritative by this polychronicity.

As it appeared in 1598 (and in the later edition of 1602 and its 1687 reprint), Speed's portrait of Chaucer was a printed surrogate of a manuscript original – a representation of another, older image that was itself ultimately a 'remembraunce' of Chaucer the man. With each new iteration of his likeness, the poet receded further from both historical view and living memory, but those who reproduced it took care to transfer its authenticating hallmarks and to emphasise their contribution to its continued transmission.

130–3); Derek Pearsall, 'Appendix 1: The Chaucer Portraits', in *The Life of Geoffrey Chaucer: A Critical Biography* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), pp. 285–305 (p. 288). I am grateful to Charlotte Cooper for discussing Machaut's and de Pizan's early portraits with me.

[110] Carlson, 'Thomas Hoccleve', 294; Pearsall, 'The Chaucer Portraits', p. 288.

[111] Harris, *Untimely Matter*, pp. 19–20.

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This narrative is a familiar one in studies of Chaucer's reception, and one that has already been treated in this book's attention to early modern narratives around the comprehensibility and accuracy of his language and the completeness of his canon. As James Simpson has argued, Chaucer's perceived absence provides the linchpin upon which turned the machinery of his early modern prominence, as the dead poet's corpus was recast as a textual monument to be recovered through archaeological and philological work.[112] What was true for the early philological investigations into Chaucer's works and his books also applied to his first engraved portrait, as the recuperation of his physical likeness became a worthwhile antiquarian mission akin to the unearthing and assembly of his Life.[113]

The 1598 likeness of Chaucer is an early and influential example of the engraved author portrait in an English book.[114] In this period, published works of poetry and prose were unlikely to contain portraits of their authors.[115] The portraits of most contemporary poets living and writing at the time, including John Donne, Edmund Spenser, and Sir Philip Sidney, would reach print much later – and posthumously.[116] Before the 1630s, in fact, most poets would only receive a portrait in print if they were dead, a trend which Leah Marcus reads as motivated by an impulse to 'preserve the illusion of human presence within a medium that was vastly expanding the physical distance between writers and prospective readers'.[117] For long-dead *auctores* like Chaucer and Homer, whose works predated print itself, that gulf was wider still. In such cases, the presence conjured by a portrait served

[112] Simpson, 'Diachronic History', pp. 17–30; James Simpson, 'Chaucer's Presence and Absence, 1400–1550', in *The Cambridge Companion to Chaucer*, ed. by Piero Boitani and Jill Mann, 2nd ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 251–69 (pp. 261–7); see also Trigg, *Congenial Souls*, pp. 109–43.

[113] The association between the related genres of biography and portraiture had become explicit in the late sixteenth century, and both paid increasing attention to authenticity; see Peter Burke, 'Reflections on the Frontispiece Portrait in the Renaissance', in *Bildnis und Image: Das Portrait Zwischen Intention und Rezeption*, ed. by Andreas Kostler and Ernst Seidl (Köln: Böhlau, 1998), pp. 150–62 (p. 157). On the relationship between Chaucer's textual corpus and his physical remains, see Thomas Prendergast, *Chaucer's Dead Body: From Corpse to Corpus* (New York: Routledge, 2004), pp. 37–43; Cook, *Poet and the Antiquaries*, pp. 44–72.

[114] The early seventeenth century is generally accepted as the point at which author portraits began to more regularly appear in books printed in English; see David Alexander, 'Faithorne, Loggan, Vandrebanc and White: The Engraved Portrait in Late Seventeeth-Century Britain', in *Printed Images in Early Modern Britain: Essays in Interpretation*, ed. by Michael Hunter (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 297–316 (p. 298).

[115] Tarnya Cooper and Andrew Hadfield, 'Edmund Spenser and Elizabethan Portraiture', *Renaissance Studies*, 27.3 (2013), 407–34 (411), https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1477-4658.2012.00819.x.

[116] Stephen Orgel, 'Not on His Picture but His Book', *Times Literary Supplement*, 2003, 9–10; Cooper and Hadfield, 'Edmund Spenser', 408.

[117] Leah S. Marcus, *Unediting the Renaissance: Shakespeare, Marlowe, Milton* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 199.

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to recall, rather than to bridge, the temporal chasm between author and reader and made way for the author's philological recovery in print. Accordingly, some of the earliest English books to contain printed author portraits are translations: Harington's Ariosto (1591), Florio's Montaigne (1613), and Chapman's Homer (1616).[118] These books bear portraits of their contemporary translators instead of (or in the case of Homer, in addition to) images of their original authors. The translator portrait is a reminder of reading as a mediated experience, and one made possible by the translator's efforts. Although the *Workes* was not a translation, Speght is implicitly framed as an 'interpretour' akin to contemporary translators of classical poets and of du Bartas, Petrarch, and Ariosto, by virtue of the editor having 'made old words, which were unknown of many, / So plaine, that now they may be known of any'.[119] The visual rhetoric of Speed's Chaucer portrait, like that of contemporary translations, thereby reinscribes a sense of the work's inaccessibility, save for the editor's or translator's intervention. The stylised portrait could confer a formality befitting its distant subject and foreground the labours of those responsible for its recovery – in this case, Hoccleve, Speed, and Speght. In these early years of the market for engraved portraits, Chaucer was the ideal subject and Speght's edition was a suitable medium for its transmission.

In printed form, Speed's Chaucer portrait vastly exceeded the reach initially anticipated by Hoccleve when he commissioned multiple manuscripts containing the poet's likeness. With this wider distribution and the ability to achieve new levels of realism in portraiture, Speed's engraved portrait could eventually unseat Hoccleve's as the definitive representation of how Chaucer looked. In its claim of a Hocclevean provenance, the printed image also takes on the authority of the older manuscript tradition, and it summons the hallmarks of manuscript authenticity – what Siân Echard has called 'the mark of the medieval' – to do so.[120] As the following discussion illustrates, later generations responded enthusiastically to this printed image of Chaucer, which, alongside its technical novelty, could nonetheless claim to be 'true'. With this dual layer of authority, the Speed Chaucer portrait enjoyed the status of a vendible and prized paratext not only in Speght's editions, but in a wide and revealing range of Chaucerian books. The remainder of this chapter traces the extraordinary reception of Chaucer's printed portrait and argues that Speght's editions introduced

[118] Respectively, *STC* 746, 18042, and 13624.
[119] *Workes* (1598), sig. [a]5^{v}; [a]6^{v}. See Chapter 1, p. 52.
[120] Echard, *Printing the Middle Ages*, pp. vii–xvi.

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new readers to a compellingly simple idea that would later spread through the seventeenth-century English book trade: that books needed pictures of their authors. These copies supply evidence of the transmission of an iconographic tradition from manuscript into print and back again. More broadly, they show the role of newer printed volumes of Chaucer in determining the conventions by which older books, both manuscripts and prints, would be measured and even perfected.

4.4 Chaucer's Absence, Chaucer's Presence

Speed's plate furnished an archetypal image of Chaucer and successfully co-opted Hoccleve's narrative in order to promulgate it in the printed editions of 1598, 1602, and 1687. However, the starting point for my work on the Chaucer portrait was the observation that several of the copies I have examined are missing their Progenie leaves.[121] Like the holes left in places where illuminated initials have been excised from manuscripts, the absence of the portrait in some copies of Speght could signal its high cultural value for enthusiasts and collectors who envisaged other uses for it. Even when intact within copies of Speght, the plate may survive in a range of positions. In copies I have seen, it is most frequently positioned facing the poetic dialogue 'The Reader to Geffrey Chaucer' by the anonymous 'H.B.'. This placement is especially apt in the 1602 edition, where the portrait would directly precede the verses titled 'Vpon the picture of Chaucer', composed by Francis Thynne for the updated publication.[122] Inserted plates generally seem to have had a standard position within books and in his editions, Speght refers to Speed's plate as being in the 'beginning of this booke'.[123] But the plate often appears elsewhere within Speght, too, and even in copies with early bindings.[124]

[121] For example, BL, 641.m.19 (1602 Speght); TCD, R.bb.24 (1602 Speght); TCC, VI.3.65 (1598 Speght); TCC, VI.3.66 (1598 Speght); TCC, VI.5.17 (1602 Speght); TCC, Munby a.2 (1602 Speght); Cambridge, King's College, L.1.39 (1602 Speght); Oxford, St John's College, HB4/Folios.5.5.13 (1598 Speght). The discussion of individual copies that follows is indebted to the insights and invaluable help of the following archivists and librarians: Sarah Anderson, Gareth Burgess, Helen Carron, Sarah Cox, Michael Edwards, Tim Eggington, Petra Hofmann, Lucille Munoz, Sandy Paul, Christopher Skelton-Foord, Mark Statham, and Stephen Tabor.

[122] Thynne, who had been preparing his own edition of Chaucer when Speght's was published in 1598, had an active role in the 1602 edition. See Cook, *Poet and the Antiquaries*, pp. 143–62.

[123] Roger Gaskell, 'Printing House and Engraving Shop: A Mysterious Collaboration', *The Book Collector*, 53 (2004), 213–51 (227–8).

[124] In one copy of the 1598 edition (Oxford, Balliol College, Fragments 525 b 9), the portrait serves as a frontispiece to the book, and faces a *Canterbury Tales* title-page border (normally found later in the same edition) which has been repurposed as the volume's main title leaf, where the original is wanting. In copies of the 1602 edition at The Queen's College in Oxford (Sel.b.202) and at the

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In this respect, the Speed plate exemplifies some of the characteristics of what Remmert has called the 'itinerant frontispiece', a term that demonstrates the material separateness of this paratext.[125] Far from being confined to their original bibliographical contexts, such plates travelled from book to book, and out of books and into new contexts. As we shall see, this travel radiates outward in several directions where Chaucer's portrait is concerned: movement of the plate and imitations of it to different locations within individual copies of Speght's works; back in time, into medieval manuscripts and prior editions like those of Caxton, Thynne, and Stow; and forward in time too, as they were rendered anew by later collectors in the medium of manuscript. Both within and beyond copies of Speght, such survivals of the portrait and its copies in varied positions prove it to have been a highly mobile artefact whose popularity as an authorising paratext is amply attested by its reception at the hands of early modern and later readers. The portrait's appearance in new contexts therefore shows the success of Speght's *Workes* in creating new visual standards for the authority of the Chaucerian book.

The antiquary and amateur herald Joseph Holland is the architect of perhaps the best-known appropriation of Speed's Chaucer portrait. To CUL, MS Gg.4.27, the fifteenth-century manuscript containing many of Chaucer's collected works which was repaired and supplemented by Holland around 1600, he also added a copy of Speed's plate. The details of the whole page – including the background, individual medallions bearing the names of Chaucer's relatives, the poet's smock, and, importantly, the shields of those depicted in the genealogy and on the later Chaucers' tomb – were enlivened with careful illumination, with the arms gilded and tinctured. The effect of the image is a memorialising one, for Holland paired it with several passages (on the facing page) about Hoccleve's portrayal and remembrance of Chaucer, themselves derived

Bodleian Library (Bodl. A. 2.5 Art. Seld), the Progenie leaf appears between leaves [a]2 and [a]3; that is, between the title page and the dedication to Sir Robert Cecil. A 1602 copy at Gonville and Caius College in Cambridge (L.17.45) in a contemporary binding has the portrait between leaves b1 and b2, facing the page titled 'The Life of our Learned English Poet, Geffrey Chaucer' while another 1602 copy at HEHL, #99594, contains an inlaid plate (which appears to be a later imitation of Speed's original) between leaves c6 and b1, facing Francis Thynne's verses on Chaucer's picture.

125 Volker R. Remmert, '"Docet Parva Pictura, Quod Multae Scripturae Non Dicunt." Frontispieces, Their Functions, and Their Audiences in Seventeenth-Century Mathematical Sciences', in *Transmitting Knowledge: Words, Images, and Instruments in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Sachiko Kusukawa and Ian Maclean (Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 239–70 (p. 268); Luisa Calè, 'Frontispieces', in Duncan and Smyth, pp. 25–38 (pp. 28–9).

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from Speght's Life, which quotes the *Regement* in turn.[126] This treatment of the poet is in keeping with other authorising paratexts that Holland added to his medieval copy of Chaucer's works following Speght. These include a series of stirring panegyric addresses: from Lydgate's praise of Chaucer to the praise of 'divers lerned men', such as Ascham, Spenser, Camden, and Sidney, who 'of late tyme haue written in commendation of Chaucer'.[127] Holland also supplemented the manuscript book with a cluster of short texts in the poet's voice: the *Retraction*, 'Chaucer to his emptie purse', and 'Chaucers words to his Scrivener'. This triad of works performs the textual equivalent of what the freshly embellished and tinctured portrait does visually: they superimpose a unifying authorial frame onto a book which, to its early modern owner, appeared to need one.[128] In this way, Holland's supplements collectively recognise and amplify the Chaucerian character of the manuscript, with the effect of signalling the importance of the author, the book, and even its heraldically learned owner.

As Johnston has documented, the plate intended for Speght's edition was also added into other Chaucerian books, and survives in copies of John Stow's 1561 Chaucer edition in at least three cases.[129] The portrait leaf also appears as a frontispiece to a seventeenth-century manuscript of Sir Francis Kynaston's complete Latin translation of the five books of *Troilus and Criseyde*.[130] Like that used to embellish Gg, the copies of the plate added to no fewer than three copies of Stow's edition reflect a retroactive attempt to imbue these older books of Chaucer's works with an authorial presence. In Kynaston's fair copy of the Latin *Troilus*, meanwhile, the inserted plate forges an iconographic link between the new translation and the medieval author who first penned it. In purely chronological and technological terms, the medieval manuscript Gg, Stow's edition, and Kynaston's contemporary manuscript might seem to occupy divergent poles within the history of the Chaucerian book, but these copies are united by the desire of readers to authorise them. In each case, Chaucer's portrait, along with the

[126] The *Regement* lines are quoted in Speght in the order 4992–8, 1958–74, 2077–93, 2101–7 (*Workes*, 1598, sig. c1^{v}–c2^{r}); they appear in Gg.4.27(1), fol. 2^{v}, in the order 4992–8, 2077–9, 1958–66. For a transcription and further discussion, see Cook, *Poet and the Antiquaries*, pp. 170–4.

[127] Holland's selection of contemporary commendations condenses Speght's one and a half folio pages (sig. c3^{r-v}) into twelve lines.

[128] This trio of texts is also discussed in Chapter 3, pp. 138–40, 166–72.

[129] The copies are CUL, Keynes S.7.9, HEHL, #84667, and New York Public Library (*KC + 1561). Johnston, 'Readers' Memorials', 66 finds more than a dozen cases of versions of Chaucer's portrait by Speed as well as later artists used to extra-illustrate early editions of Chaucer's works.

[130] Bodl. MS Additional C.287.

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authority and historicity that it represents, assumes a visible place within these new bibliographical contexts.

Just as the material paper leaf bearing Speed's engraved portrait could be enlisted to authorise printed and written copies (as well as a manuscript translation) of Chaucer's works, so too were manuscript representations of the same image. Skilled replicas of Chaucer's portrait, strongly suggestive of Speed's and made in the early modern period and beyond, appear as an authorising image in a number of Chaucerian volumes. A nearly perfect copy of Caxton's first edition of the *Canterbury Tales* held at the British Library now has as its frontispiece an eighteenth-century painted portrait of Chaucer, in the same orientation and style as Speed's, and surrounded by a coloured and gilded foliate border evocative of the illuminations found in fifteenth-century English manuscripts.[131] An edition of Thynne's 1542 *Workes* now at Columbia University likewise has a later watercolour rendition of the portrait inserted as a frontispiece.[132] This version, however, also features Chaucer's arms, which are borne on a shield resting on a rock in the image's background. In Takamiya, MS 32, formerly known as the Delamere manuscript, appears another modern variant, this time with Chaucer's arms displayed in the top left-hand corner of the leaf. A final example of a Speed-style manuscript portrait appearing in a printed copy of Chaucer's *Workes* comes in an edition of Speght (1602) at Trinity College in Cambridge, where the Progenie leaf is missing but where a facsimile tracing has been inserted in its place, complete with the genealogy, heraldic shields, and familial tomb as originally rendered by Speed (see Figure 4.6).[133] In all but the lattermost case, it is impossible to prove that these manuscript portraits were based on Speed's Progenie page rather than on another exemplar. What is indisputable is that all of these manuscript imitations cater to a desire to locate the author's image in printed and manuscript copies of his works. As Hoccleve's *Regement* makes clear, this is a phenomenon older than print, but I am arguing that in Chaucer's case, Speght's editions both popularised the portrait and facilitated its further spread.

To these Speed-style manuscript portraits in copies of Chaucer may be added two iconographically similar items in contexts outside of Chaucer's books: an undated manuscript fragment at Stanford University and a drawing of Chaucer used as an example of medieval clothing in the antiquary John Aubrey's *Chronologia Vestiaria* (see Figure 4.7).[134] The Stanford fragment is on

131 The copy is BL, 167.c.26; see Seymour de Ricci, *A Census of Caxtons* (Bibliographical Society at Oxford University Press, 1909), no. 22:1.

132 New York, Columbia University, Phoenix P017.En1 B64 1542C.

133 TCC, Munby a.2.

134 California, Stanford University, MSS Codex M0453; Bodl. MS Top.Gen.c.25.

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Figure 4.6 A facsimile inserted in place of Speed's engraved portrait in a copy of Speght (1602), Munby.a.2. The Master and Fellows of Trinity College, Cambridge.

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vellum and features a coloured miniature of Chaucer in the pose and configuration that Speed made famous. It is damaged and difficult to date, but appears older and less skilfully executed than the painted portraits in copies of his works described previously, and has been suggested to be a copy of Speed's plate.[135] The portrait in Aubrey's history of costume, by contrast, is clearly derived from Speed and dates from the 1670s, when the *Chronologia Vestiaria* is estimated to have been written.[136] Here, Chaucer's portrait shares a page with other figures drawn from English church monuments – for example, Sir Thomas de Littleton, who, Aubrey carefully notes, 'is pourtrayed in this Habit in his Monument in the Cathedral church at Worcester: in brasse: he was a Judge. / Lived in the reigne of Edw. 4'.[137] Aubrey's Chaucer appears at the foot of the same page but is rotated ninety degrees to the left in order to fit. The image might be a tracing from Speed and, in Aubrey's characteristic mode, appears crammed in to save space on the page. Aubrey has also transcribed from Speed's plate the caption concerning Hoccleve's status as Chaucer's Scholar. Sometime later, perhaps, he added to it a further short note about Chaucer's dates of birth and death, which appears in a different ink. It is striking that Aubrey treats Speed's portrait with the same reliability as the church monuments he documents elsewhere on the page. Its credibility might have rested on a putative memorial description in an unspecified copy of Hoccleve's *Regement*, rather than on tangible evidence carved in stone or brass, but Aubrey's faithful recording of Speed's portrait and its caption alongside other graven monuments suggests that he took its truth-claim seriously.

Thus stand two intertwined traditions of Chaucer portraiture, in print and in manuscript. Apart from Aubrey's drawing, the origins and motivations behind most of these Speed-style manuscript portraits are shrouded in obscurity. These hazy origins, together with the uncertainty surrounding Speed's exemplar, make the exact relationships between the engraving and its hand-drawn counterparts speculative. It is possible that an image like the Stanford fragment might be a (now lost) copy of another early Chaucer portrait, an early modern copy of Speed's plate, or could even have served as Speed's exemplar. If there is no compelling candidate for Speed's exemplar currently known, as was suggested earlier in this chapter, it is also the case that the models for most of the surviving manuscript renditions are equally hard to pinpoint with certainty. Nonetheless, the

[135] David A. Jordan, 'An Object Lesson in Collecting: Stanford's Inscrutable Portrait of Chaucer', *ReMix*, 15 December 2011, http://hosted-p0.vresp.com/260487/835711a532/ARCHIVE.

[136] Kate Bennett, 'Shakespeare's Monument at Stratford: A New Seventeenth-Century Account', *Notes and Queries*, 47.4 (2000), 464, https://doi.org/10.1093/nq/47-4-464a.

[137] Bodl. MS Top.Gen.c.25., fol. 202r.

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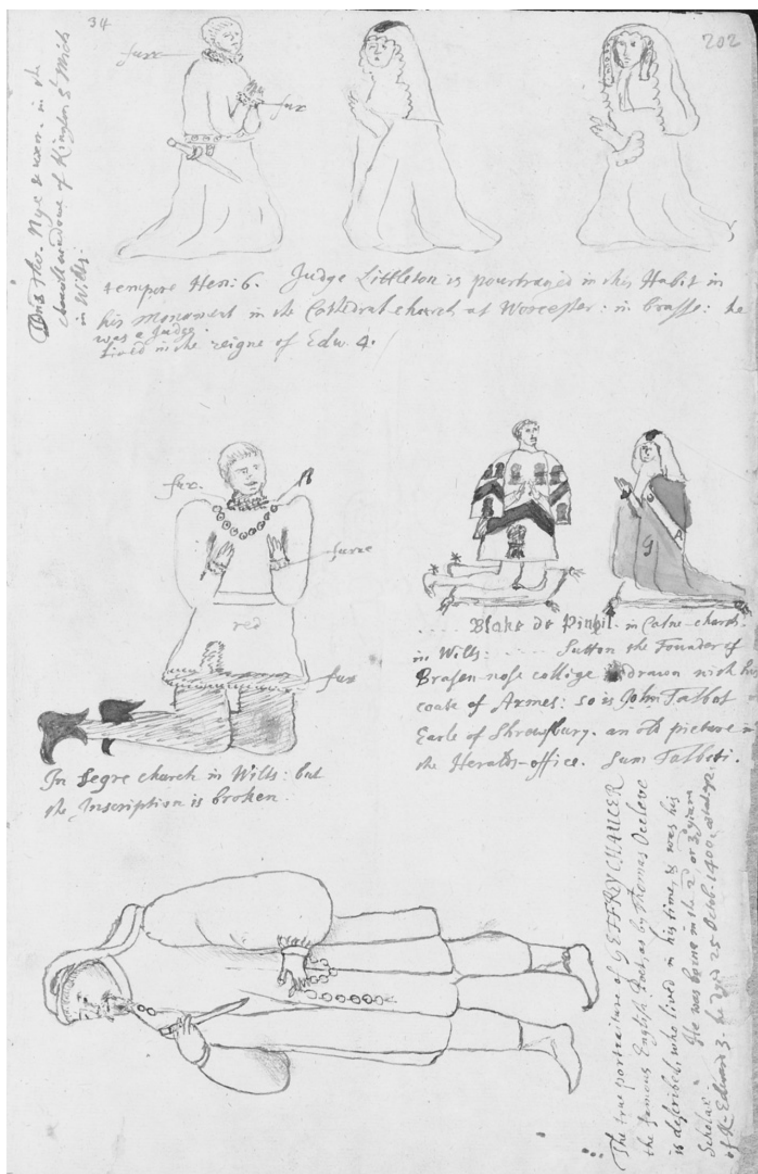

Figure 4.7 A drawing of Chaucer from Speght used as an example of medieval clothing in John Aubrey's *Chronologia Vestiaria.* The Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford, Bodl. MS Top.Gen.c.25, fol. 202r.

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existence of these pictures proves that this particular version of Chaucer's likeness – the full-length portrait, with Chaucer standing and holding rosary and penner – enjoyed an atypical mobility and multiplicity in the seventeenth century and beyond. The dizzying range of later lookalikes of Speed's Chaucer, the tendency of readers to affix the image to all sorts of Chaucerian books, and the image's accelerated and unprecedented circulation in print, all suggest the strong likelihood that the manuscript portraits are copies of the plate originally intended for Speght's Chaucer.

It has been argued by Siân Echard that the print reception of medieval texts is characterised by an 'impulse to facsimile', a desire by later cultures to replicate the physical forms and material details of the medieval book.[138] The evidence surveyed here confirms that medieval images, and author portraits in particular, prove to be attractive candidates for this type of replication, in manuscript as well as in print. In Echard's analysis, such images and their analogues might be regenerative, and in their new incarnations, they 'participate in a process by which an image comes to stand in for a text, a tradition, and sometimes both'.[139] Speed's plate, itself a copy of a medieval image, amplified that impulse for subsequent generations of readers, who multiplied the portrait for a range of new and unforetold uses. Adorning these new works and in these new contexts outside of Speght, Chaucer's portrait took on the role of an authorising image. In its depiction of the venerable medieval poet, the many incarnations of the portrait came to stand in not only for Chaucer the man, but also for all the cultural baggage that came with him: his status as an author, his canon of works, the broader history of English literature, and of historic England itself.

Like Speed's Progenie plate of Chaucer, which relies on Hoccleve having 'lived in his time', many of the manuscript images invoke the poet's ancient status, even if all but one of them (the Trinity tracing) exclude the genealogical tree and the later Chaucers' tombs. Yet these manuscript portraits take care to inscribe Chaucer's historical stature in other ways. To the portrait in the Takamiya manuscript someone has added the word 'Chaucer' and the date '1400' in black ink on either side of the figure's feet, in a script imitative of black letter. The Stanford miniature, although not securely dated, has text on its verso which reads 'Chaucer's portrait – S. xiv', which is written in faded red pencil, and BL, Additional MS 5141, the fragment sometimes posited as Speght's exemplar, dates from the early

[138] Echard, *Printing the Middle Ages*, pp. xi, xv, 6–20, 198–216.
[139] Echard, *Printing the Middle Ages*, p. 19.

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modern period but bears the year 1402. There is no evidence to suggest that any of these objects has medieval origins. Still, each announces its ancient associations with Chaucer and 'his time'. While they do not explicitly pose as medieval artefacts, their manuscript form and their foregrounding of a storied past allow them to obscure their own histories and instead to embody an authority which Speed's portrait could only ever claim to represent imperfectly in the medium of print.[140]

It was early modern print culture in general and Speght's edition in particular that created the conditions for the remarkable spread of these images across a range of media and into new contexts. By the middle of the seventeenth century, advances in technology enabled engravers to produce larger quantities of prints from a single metal sheet, and eventually spawned a trade in collecting so-called 'portrait heads' intended to be bound with similar images in one volume.[141] Later in the century, a vibrant trade in printing, recycling, and collecting images gave rise to the 'itinerant frontispieces' previously discussed: some images were reprinted from existing plates made for other volumes; other prints were produced to be inserted into books that had already been published, or in anticipation of future editions, some of which might never see publication; and others still were printed to serve as the frontispieces to books, but might be sold separately as a single print.[142] Around 1700, Samuel Pepys compiled such engravings into a set of three albums, in which Speed's plate also makes an appearance amongst a group of 'Poets, Comedians, & Musicians'.[143] Already by 1700, and like numerous other plates published

[140] This ambiguity – about whether the dates refer simply to Chaucer's time or to the age of the artefacts – has fuelled the speculation that BL, Additional MS 5141 is a medieval leaf removed from the Cotton manuscript; it also contributed to the inflated value of the Stanford fragment in the 1930s, when that university successfully bid $450 for it in the midst of the Great Depression; see Jordan, 'An Object Lesson in Collecting'.

[141] Watt, *Cheap Print*, p. 142; Griffiths, *The Print in Stuart Britain*, p. 21.

[142] Alexander, 'Faithorne', p. 299. During the eighteenth century, the consumer-driven practice of extra-illustration was increasingly commercialised. Bespoke illustrated copies of Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion* (1702) and its later reissues were produced by printsellers and publishers, and in 1760, much to the delight of zealous collectors, James Granger published *A Biographical History of England, from Egbert the Great to the Revolution*, combining images with prose accounts of the lives of notable English figures, spread over four quarto volumes. See Lucy Peltz, 'Facing the Text: The Amateur and Commercial Histories of Extra-Illustration, *c.* 1770–1840', in *Owners, Annotators, and the Signs of Reading*, ed. by Robin Myers, Michael Harris, and Giles Mandelbrote, Publishing Pathways (New Castle, DE; London: Oak Knoll; British Library, 2005), pp. 91–135 (pp. 97, 109).

[143] *Catalogue of the Pepys Library at Magdalene College, Cambridge. Vol. III Part 2: Prints and Drawings Portraits*, compiled by Eric Chamberlain (Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 1994), 2980/201. The version in Pepys's album is identified in Chamberlain's catalogue as a copy of Speed. In Pepys's copy of Speght's edition (1602; Cambridge, Magdalene College, Pepys Library 2365), the plate is intact.

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for printed books, the Chaucer portrait first made by Speed for the *Workes* had become a collector's item.

As Gillespie has demonstrated, Chaucer's status as an author was an especially valuable commodity to the early English printers, and one actively constructed in the wares they made.[144] The subsequent volumes edited by Speght represent the apotheosis of that author-centric vision, and the evidence showing that readers imitated and adapted the conventions of print testifies to the venture's success. The copies gathered in this chapter show that the printed image of Chaucer made by Speed was included in and adapted not only for use in fifteenth-century manuscripts such as Gg and Takamiya, but also for printed books of Caxton, Thynne, Stow (and Speght too, when it was missing), for early modern manuscripts of Chaucer's works such as Kynaston's *Troilus*, and for other historical and creative uses which remain to be fully recovered.

4.5 Monuments to Chaucer

From the unmistakable adaptation of Chaucer's portrait to the unassuming addition of titles to his works, the additions made by these later readers converge on concerns about the author: his name, works, life, and likeness. Simpson has powerfully argued that the production of textual monuments in print from Caxton onward was enabled by conditions of authorial absence which permitted the philological recovery of Chaucer's works. This printed corpus aimed to eliminate 'false readings and spurious works',[145] the unauthorised Chaucerian texts that were promulgated both in manuscripts and earlier printed editions. Moving in tandem with this philological project was a biographical one. The humanist quest to recover and preserve Chaucer's works was accompanied from its outset by a critical attention to the author's life and death, which saw him entombed in the literary past so as to be venerated in the present. In Simpson's words, 'Biography, too, is the product of that textual monumentalization: the textual project's correlative is the reconstitution of the exceptional authorial life'.[146] That philological interest in the dead Chaucer, as Lerer has identified, was first marked in print with Caxton's publication of Stephano Surigone's epitaph to the poet in the 1478 *Boece*, and was subsequently elaborated in the folios of collected *Workes*.[147] Over time, and culminating

[144] Gillespie, *Print Culture*, pp. 104–43. [145] Simpson, 'Chaucer's Presence and Absence', p. 266.
[146] Simpson, 'Chaucer's Presence and Absence', p. 255.
[147] Lerer, *Chaucer and his Readers*, pp. 147–75.

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in Speght's editions, the printed Chaucerian book became a storehouse of information about the author as well as his works. The availability of these new textual authorities spurred those who owned and read older books to supply them with features which they perceived as wanting. Placed alongside the imposing folio volumes that declared Chaucer's name on a title page and a table of his works inside, old books, and manuscripts in particular, could be viewed as faulty, incomplete, or disordered representations of the corpus. Authorising paratexts adapted from print – the author's name, a list of contents, standardised titles, biographical details, or even portraits – lent the semblance of coherence and order to such books. The desirability of these stamps of authority in books which did not initially contain them signals the growing cultural importance of authorship, and the instrumental role of Chaucer editions in promoting the idea of the author within copies of vernacular literary works.

As this book draws to a close, it is worth noting that the monuments designed to commemorate Chaucer were material as well as textual and pictorial. The case of the Latin epitaph attached to Chaucer's marble tomb at Westminster in 1556 supplies an instructive case study of a text which circulated in competing forms and varied media during the early modern period. Its 'error-plagued' appearance in Speght's printed editions of 1598 and 1602 is only one of several variant versions known today, and its documented movement from stone to manuscript and then to print and again to manuscript should challenge any impression that the medium of print was the sole or ultimate authority on Chaucer in the period.[148] While this study has asserted the value of honing in on particular types of transmission from print – principally print to manuscript, and in this chapter, print-to-print too – as a means of measuring the unprecedented

[148] One pair of readers appears to have gone straight to the source at Westminster and copied the verses into a copy of Thynne (HEHL, RB #99584; *c.* 1550; *STC* 5072). Another reader of a Stow edition now at the Harry Ransom Centre, Texas, likewise copied verses relating to Chaucer's death into that book (Austin, Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas, Ad C393 C56L sa (sig. 3u8^{v}) – verses which Dane and Gillespie determine to be 'derived from a text circulating during the later sixteenth century, probably from the collections of John Stow', and in manuscript form. They suggest that Speght, too, may have relied on manuscript notes of a similar provenance for the making of his own edition. See Dane and Gillespie, 'Back at Chaucer's Tomb', 89, 94, 98; Dane, *Tomb*, p. 17. Additional research has so far turned up a total of thirteen early Chaucer editions into which the epitaph, or a text purporting to be his epitaph, has been transcribed; for these, see Johnston, 'Readers' Memorials', 47; Wiggins, 'Printed Copies of Chaucer', 17–20; Arnold Sanders, 'Writing Fame: Epitaph Transcriptions in Renaissance Chaucer Editions and the Construction of Chaucer's Poetic Reputation', *JEBS*, 14 (2011), 105–30; and Devani Singh, 'An Unreported Chaucer Epitaph in English', *Notes and Queries*, 68.1 (2021), 51–9. To these may be added an early modern repair in Glasgow, Dr.2.1, a copy of the 1542 Thynne *Workes* in which a printed epitaph has been patched and rewritten where torn (sig. 2T6^{r}).

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cultural reach of the newer technology, it has also emphasised that print did not have the last word on Chaucer's early modern reception. The copies studied in this chapter show that readers were prone to reframe, question, and adapt the narratives and visual markers of authority promoted in copies of the poet's *Workes*. Readers used printed editions as a model for how a Chaucerian book should look and what it should contain, but they sometimes doubted the reliability of such authorising paratexts. Their critical engagement with the narratives about the author's life and works which they found in printed books – the authorship of the *Complaint to his Purse*, for instance, or the question of which works belonged in the Lydgate canon – are a testament to the early modern preoccupation with the questions of authority and canonicity which the prints raised but could not always resolve.

That readers of Chaucerian books admired, studied, and adapted the authorising paratexts they found in print reflects their investment in a literary genealogy that positioned Chaucer as the first and pre-eminent English author, and conveniently situated celebrated contemporary figures such as Spenser and Sidney at its end.[149] The literary authority enjoyed by Chaucer in the early modern period therefore legitimised his works and those of his successors who, like their poetic father, wrote in the English tongue. The printed books and their paratexts surveyed here, which foregrounded the life and works of the author himself, trumpeted this pre-eminent status. This chapter has argued that the full extent of their cultural impact emerges in the often unassuming marks of reading left behind in manuscripts and other old books: in titles and tables of contents appended to once anonymous or untitled texts, in laudatory and biographical snippets, and in portraits of the poet added to old books where they were thought to belong.

The central focus of *Chaucer's Early Modern Readers* has been on the readers of Chaucer's old manuscript books in an age of his print prominence. It has argued that the manuscripts preserve vital evidence of his reception in the period; that is, that acts of glossing, correcting, repairing, completing, supplementing, and authorising carried out by readers according to printed models show the early modern pursuit of correctness, comprehensibility, completeness, and authority in the Chaucerian book. These were ideals promoted by the printed books in which most early modern readers of Chaucer first encountered him. Such readers were keenly attentive to these characteristics within the poet's oeuvre, and

[149] On the discourse of literary paternity, see Cooper, 'Choosing Poetic Fathers', 29–50.

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sought to close the gap between medieval manuscripts and the early modern printed copies which appeared to embody these bibliographical standards. Rather than hastening the obsolescence of the old volumes, the printed copies enabled readers to remake manuscripts according to the newly desirable features they found in print. The evidence gathered here attests to the belief of Chaucer's early modern readers that his medieval manuscript books could be perfected, and that they were worth the effort of that remaking.

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