Traditions and Innovations in the Study of Medieval English Literature

THE INFLUENCE OF DEREK BREWER

Edited by Charlotte Brewer and Barry Windeatt

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Unless otherwise indicated, all references to Chaucer’s *Troilus and Criseyde* are to the second printing of the Longman edition by Barry Windeatt (Chaucer 1990), while all references to works by Chaucer other than *Troilus and Criseyde* are to the Riverside edition by L. D. Benson (Chaucer 2008).
One of the distinctive features of Derek Brewer’s criticism was its close and consistent grounding in the details of the texts he wrote about, particularly the denotations and connotations of individual words: the range of meanings carried by words like sovereignty, serve, honour, truthe, for example, or the implications of the use of pronouns of address and of personal names. Throughout his published writings, Brewer drew on definitions and quotations from the OED, and he had a personal connection with that dictionary too – partly through his acquaintance with one of its four original editors, C. T. Onions (Fellow and librarian at Brewer’s undergraduate college, Magdalen), and partly as enthusiastic contributor of many quotations to the twentieth-century OED Supplement edited by R. W. Burchfield, another Magdalen member.¹

Brewer’s college tutor was C. S. Lewis, whose interest in philology and word-study is attested by all his published works and who clearly exerted a great influence on Derek. In particular, Lewis’s Studies in Words is a work that draws on quotations and etymologies to probe and illustrate the meanings of words just as do the OED and MED; published in 1960, it is the product of many years’ reading and study, some of which would have been accomplished during Brewer’s time at Magdalen (see Introduction: 10; Brewer 1979b and 2006a). Lewis would have ensured his acquaintance with the college’s copies of the OED, including the set of original fascicles which Magdalen subscribed

¹ Brewer’s contribution to the Supplement is recorded in Burchfield 1972–86, 2: ix. His studies of words are ubiquitously distributed throughout his publications; a notable example is the seminal essay on class which examines minutely the implications and associations of terms like gentil, gentilresse, churl, degree to elucidate social distinctions in Chaucer (Brewer 1968b; cf. Cannon in this volume).
to from 1884 onwards, when the dictionary first began to appear in individual instalments. The college library also owned a copy of F. H. Stratmann’s Middle-English dictionary, the 1891 edition revised by Henry Bradley (d.1923) – another editor of OED, who had also been a Fellow of Magdalen – while Derek could have consulted Skeat’s and Mayhew’s Concise Dictionary of Middle English (1888) and Holthausen’s Altenglisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch (1934) in the Bodleian. Both libraries, of course, had steadily accumulated the volumes of the Early English Text Society (EETS) from their first publication in 1864 onwards, and it is in these pages that Brewer encountered many of the seminal Old and Middle English texts whose vocabulary would have sent him to dictionaries in the first place – often to illuminate his reading, though occasionally to find them deficient.²

Presumably it was at this time also that he first came across the egregious prefaces by F. J. Furnivall, the textual and lexicographical pioneer whose life’s work he later celebrated in his address to the first meeting of the New Chaucer Society in 1979, remembering the original Chaucer Society which Furnivall had set up 112 years previously in 1867. Brewer himself was a pioneer in the late twentieth-century movement to recover the contexts in which medieval texts were produced, disseminated and read, a movement which has echoed (though with infinitely greater intellectual respectability) some of the Furnivallian principles, or practice, of respect for scribes and for manuscripts (see Pearsall and Edwards in this volume; also Pearsall 1998). As is well known, EETS, an offshoot of the Philological Society, had been established by Furnivall in part to feed into the Philological Society’s newly conceived dictionary, which in turn became the OED. This great word project was lexicographically revolutionary by virtue of being constructed from quotations from all periods of the language from 1150 onwards (reaching back to Old English for words which had originated there): it was reliant on an enormous quantity of textual evidence and linguistic scholarship, as accessible in printed editions of works of (in principle) all kinds, and set out to be an objective and analytic study of the history and development of words and senses in English.

This essay follows up some of the lexicographical and textual interests that characterized Brewer’s scholarship and criticism. It discusses the creation of the medieval portion of the OED, in terms of the accumulation of quotations from the then-available sources, and looks at subsequent OED history to make the

² As Eric Stanley points out to me, Derek would have first read many early Middle English texts in Hall’s Selections from Early Middle English, on which Onions still lectured till 1949 or 1950 (Hall 1920) – and in reaction to which the Nelson’s series edited by Brewer, Stanley and Shepherd was conceived (see Pearsall, Edwards and Stanley in this volume).
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point that we are still largely dependent on that original accumulation today. The digitalization of the second edition of OED in the 1980s enabled quantitative analysis of quotations, so it is now possible to see exactly which sources were most productive of quotations – and begin to see how Old and Middle English scholarship over the twentieth and twenty-first centuries (especially as documented in the MED) will make a considerable difference to the OED’s record of this period of English, which, given this dictionary’s unique status, is still influential today. Quantitative analysis of quotations – how many recorded over what period – is still only half the story, however, where creating a picture of the language is concerned. Here Brewer’s research on the special character of Chaucer’s writing, in particular the connotations of his vocabulary and his linguistic innovativeness, can be contextualized and confirmed by comparison of the substance of OED and MED quotations and definitions, and also by specific searches of the new OED.

The first edition of OED

Medieval vocabulary was fundamental to the creation of the OED, since one of its founding principles was that it should adopt the historical method pioneered by Passow – “that every word should be made to tell its own story” – the story of its birth and life, and in many cases its death’ (Coleridge 1860: 72). That meant catching the earliest recorded occurrence of a word, which in many cases was in Old or Middle English. One of the difficulties of recording medieval vocabulary was that the OED confined itself to printed sources. Editions of Chaucer and Piers Plowman (of varying nature and quality) had long been in print, but many versions of medieval texts by learned societies, such as Percy and Roxburghe, were often produced in limited editions and were difficult for their readers to get hold of. At the very start of the project, therefore, the first editors had issued ‘an alphabetical list of all A.D. 1250–1300 words’, derived from around thirty Middle English works or collections previously published in such sources (e.g. Havelok, Horn and Owl and the Nightingale; see Coleridge 1859), which was to be considered ‘the foundation-stone of the Historical and Literary portion’ of the dictionary, and they asked their volunteer contributors ‘to read among them all the printed books of the … [later] period … 1300–1526, the fourteenth-century literature being taken first’ and supply them with quotations for ‘both the new and the obsolete words’ ([Philological Society] 1859: 5). This did not solve the problem, however, as the editors clearly recognized, for ‘many poems and other pieces, a collation of which would be invaluable for such a work as this, still lie hid in MS’ ([Philological Society] 1859: 7). The
volunteers on whom the project was so crucially dependent – literary enthusiasts of one kind or another, sometimes well known (e.g. Charlotte Yonge) and sometimes not, with the means and leisure to devote a considerable amount of their time to the dictionary project – could do little with such unpublished medieval sources.

Furnivall played a vital role in coming to the rescue here. He became Honorary Secretary of the Philological Society in 1853, six years after he first became a member, and was sole secretary from 1862 until three weeks before his death in 1910; as Brewer reported in his New Chaucer Society address, he kept the minutes in his own hand ('I have looked at these, and marvelled at the regularity of his attendance,' Brewer 1979c: 4). In 1860/61, after Herbert Coleridge’s untimely death (from consumption exacerbated by a chill brought on by sitting in wet clothes in a Philological Society meeting), Furnivall took over the editorship of the Society’s dictionary and began drumming up volunteer readers and sub-editors. Well placed to understand the problems of documenting medieval sources, he had as early as 1858 – only a few months after Trench’s lectures on the deficiencies of existing English dictionaries, which had precipitated the Society’s decision to set about constructing a new dictionary – arranged for the publication of material from MS Harley 2277 and the Vernon MS to fill up vacant space in one of the Society’s annual Transactions volumes. More importantly, as we have already seen, he set up EETS itself in 1864, which was a perfect vehicle for his various entrepreneurial skills and his knack of managing people. Perhaps his greatest achievement in this respect was the successful headhunting of W. W. Skeat, whom he persuaded into EETS’s ranks in October of that very year, overruling his protestations of ignorance and inexperience and setting him to work on an edition of Lancelot (which appeared in 1865 and was quoted in the new dictionary). Skeat, a mathematics lecturer lately returned to Cambridge after an abortive attempt at a career as a priest, had no need of a salary as he was supported by his father; he went on to edit canonical editions of Chaucer and Piers Plowman that between them furnished thousands of further quotations for the dictionary – nearly 12,000 in Chaucer’s case, around 6000 in Piers Plowman’s (see further C. Brewer 1996: chapter 6).

EETS’s very first volume was Richard Morris’s edition of Early English Alliterative Poems from MS Cotton Nero A x, containing Pearl, Cleanness and Patience. Gawain and the Green Knight, the fourth EETS volume, appeared the same year, also edited by Richard Morris (who based his edition on that of Frederic Madden, published for the Bannatyne Club in 1839). Many other volumes were added over the next few years, notably Skeat’s editions already mentioned of the works of Chaucer and Langland, which came out bit by bit between 1866 and the 1890s, and Cursor Mundi, edited again by Richard
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Morris, who brought this work out in seven instalments between 1874 and 1893. Old English works appeared too, for example various works by or attributed to Alfred and Bede. All were combed by readers for quotations, many of which were eventually printed in the dictionary.

Furnivall’s connections, and the energy and industriousness of stalwart dictionary contributors like Skeat who were also medievalists, seem to have ensured a steady stream of medieval material into the project over much of Furnivall’s editorship, during which the reading programme for later periods slipped and declined. When James Murray, another Furnivall protégé, took over the editorship of the dictionary from Furnivall in 1879, he immediately issued an appeal pleading for more volunteers and describing how many areas of vocabulary (the eighteenth century, for example) were under-represented in the quotations gathered together so far – but was able to report ‘in the Early English period up to the invention of Printing so much has been done and is being done that little outside help is needed’ (Murray 1879–80).

Accompanying Murray’s Appeal, first published in April of that year, was a ‘list of books for which readers were wanted’, which had fewer items for the fifteenth century and earlier than for any of the later periods. The same was true of the two subsequent editions of the Appeal, published in June 1879 and January 1880 – though at the same time, the lists of medieval material in need of volunteer readers changed between one edition and another. Such fluctuations suggest that readers for the medieval period were not lacking, whether drawn from the lexicographers themselves, their medievalist helpers, or the public (the number of volunteer readers was ‘upwards of 800’ in 1881) and that a reasonably abundant flow of quotations was reaching the editors.3

Quotations were the heart of the matter. As Craigie and Onions described in 1933, when the OED was reissued five years after the completion of the first edition, along with a one-volume Supplement, the quotations were (and are) the basis of this dictionary’s claim to supreme lexical authority on the growth and development of the English language. Explaining that the OED editorial staff and their ‘army of voluntary readers’ had amassed ‘some five million excerpts from English literature of every period’, of which nearly two million had been printed in its pages, they pointed out that ‘Such a collection of evidence … could form the only possible foundation for the historical treatment of every word and idiom which is the raison d’être of the work’ (Murray et al. 1933: Preface): it was quotations that furnished evidence of use, from which the lexicographers

3 The figure of 800 volunteers is reported by Oxford University Press’s in-house journal The Periodical (1928: 7). Facsimiles of Murray’s appeal can be seen on the OED’s website at <www.oed.com>; its details are further discussed in C. Brewer 2000.
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could deduce the proliferation of senses borne by a word and their development over time. But however hard Murray and his editors worked to redress the difficulties of dealing with the medieval period, and however many works were produced by EETS and then quarried for quotations, it is clearly the case that the first edition of the *OED* was necessarily dependent on a state of textual and linguistic scholarship that since 1905 or so (when most of the quotation gathering was complete) has radically changed and improved. *OED*’s picture of the early stages of English, therefore, was within a few decades of publication quite inadequate.

**Reliance of today’s OED on the first edition**

In common with other medieval scholars of his generation, Brewer was well aware of this inadequacy (see e.g. Brewer 1966b: 24–5; 1982: 168.n2). But how much does it matter today that the record of pre-1500 vocabulary to be found in the first edition of the *OED*, dependent as it was on quotations drawn from Old and Middle English scholarship so unavoidably limited by the constraints of the time, presents a partial or distorted view of the language? After all, we now have the *Middle English Dictionary* on the one hand, while on the other, the first edition of the *OED* has been replaced firstly by the second edition of 1989 and secondly, as of 2000, by the ongoing third edition, which is being released online quarter by quarter in an ambitious programme of root-and-branch revision, the first to be carried out since the first edition was completed.

The answer to this question is that it matters more than one might at first suppose. While the *Middle English Dictionary* – as discussed below – has enormously improved the record of Middle English, it is to the *OED* that both scholars and the interested public turn when seeking to understand the place of Middle English in the history of the language (and its literature) more generally. And the *OED* continues, for its pre-1850 content, to be largely dependent on the evidence of the first edition, notwithstanding the fact that this product of Victorian and Edwardian scholarship is now critically out of date.

Today’s *OED*, whether in book or electronic form, is in a confusing state. The latest print copy – the second edition of 1989, with which many libraries have replaced their first edition – simply merged the unrevised first edition with the twentieth-century Supplement which had been published in four volumes between 1972 and 1986 (see further Stanley 1990 and C. Brewer 1993, on the latter of which Derek Brewer gave extensive advice). It did not, except in a tiny number of cases, make any changes to pre-1850 material. So today’s most up-
to-date printed *OED* presents evidence on Old and Middle English in exactly the same form as did the first edition of 1884–1928.

What about *OED* Online, then, at www.oed.com, available by subscription (or free to public library users in the UK)? If possible, this is even more misleading. Online consultation is the only means of access to the revision of the dictionary presently underway in Oxford, which as of June 2012 (the time of writing) has revised something over a third of the entries (dispersed throughout the alphabet range) in the original dictionary. Instead of keeping the revised portions of the alphabet separate from the unrevised, however, thus enabling the user to see the separate status of the two, *OED* Online merges the two-thirds unrevised second edition — that is, where Old and Middle English is concerned, two-thirds of the unrevised first edition — with the one-third revised. Entries in the unrevised portions of the dictionary are labelled ‘Second edition, 1989’, a date which entirely obscures their first edition provenance (as does the additional date recording the annual quarter in which the user has consulted the dictionary, i.e. a date which varies from the present to three months previously). Since 2011, these unrevised first-edition entries have, in some respects, been brought bibliographically in line with the revised portion; but no other changes have been made.

Electronic searches of *OED* Online thus access a mixed database: unrevised with revised *OED*, with no indication to users that this is so, and no means provided for us to differentiate between old and new scholarship. Moreover, the data searched is not stable: every quarter, the identical search will produce a different set of results, as the lexicographers upload a new batch of revised entries to the dictionary and remove the corresponding unrevised ones. So not only does *OED* today continue to be heavily reliant on scholarship that is seventy-five years and more out of date, but its mixed content — two-thirds unrevised entries seamlessly merged with one-third revised — is not apparent to anyone but the most sophisticated dictionary user. This means that, extraordinary as it may seem, all forms of *OED* continue, even today, to be significantly dependent on outdated first-edition scholarship. Hence it is both interesting and valuable to know more about that scholarship and its influence on *OED*. And in this respect, some of the changes to *OED* have been very helpful indeed, especially the transfer to electronic medium in the late 1980s.

**Digitalization of *OED* and consequent benefits**

The 1989 second edition of *OED* may not have involved revision of existing dictionary entries, but it had been created by a process greatly significant in
lexicographical history: digitalizing the two main components of OED existing at that stage, viz. the first edition and the four-volume twentieth-century Supplement (Burchfield 1972–86), and combining them in one continuous alphabetical sequence. This technological advance opened up the dictionary in ways unimaginable by earlier generations. Digitalization offers wonderful opportunities to lexicographical and lexical historians wishing to trace the history of scholarship and it serves the purposes of many other cultural and literary historians besides. In particular, electronic searches have permitted much more systematic study of OED’s record of the growth of the vocabulary, enabling both dictionary users and dictionary editors to observe and quantify variations in quotation numbers and provenance which (in at least some respects) belie the general understanding of this dictionary as unimpeachably authoritative, since these variations clearly reflect Victorian and Edwardian conditions of textual scholarship and/or aspects of accompanying lexicographical bias, error, or mishap, rather than fluctuations in the history and development of the language.

Sadly, owing to a switch of technological ‘platform’, OED’s publishers Oxford University Press withdrew the fully functional electronic version of the second edition from public access in March 2012 (as already explained, OED2 had reproduced the evidence of OED1 in largely unaltered form, so that electronic searching of OED2 had been a perfectly satisfactory substitute for studies of the dictionary’s pre-1500 record, and a very near-satisfactory substitute for studies of its pre-1850 record). OED2’s disappearance is a significant loss to the academic community in general, and in particular to those wishing to understand and investigate the history of OED lexicography. We can still reconstruct some of the characteristics of previous OED editions, however, by drawing on studies made of the fully functional form of OED2 before it was removed. Figures 1 and 2 below, for example, derived from electronic searches of OED Online made in 2005 for the ‘Examining the OED’ project (Brewer 2005–), show the numbers of OED quotations per decade between 1500–1899 and 1150–1499 respectively.

We can see straightaway that the first graph represents a gradual increase in OED quotations which in turn plausibly reflects the increase in available sources and the corresponding increase in the English vocabulary (we can assume, probably, that the heavy quotation from Shakespeare, along with the reduced quotation numbers for the eighteenth century, reflect lexicographical biases of one sort or another; see Schäfer 1980 and C. Brewer 2012: 86–94

4 On the stages of the revision of OED up to 2000 (when work on the third edition started to be published) see C. Brewer 2007b. The first edition of OED has never been available to the public in digital form.
Figure 1: OED quotations per decade 1500–1899

Figure 2: OED quotations per decade 1150–1499
and 2013). But Figure 2's graph, covering the earlier period, suggests a much less certain relationship between quotation evidence and the historical state of the vocabulary. The numerous troughs and peaks point to a number of factors distorting the data and we can readily imagine what these will have been. Many medieval works drawn on by the first-edition lexicographers, existing in manuscript copies written years or decades after original composition, could be only approximately dated, and historians and literary and linguistic scholars would often have chosen to date works at the beginning or end of a century, merely for convenience’s sake (hence the bunchings of quotations around 1200, 1300 and 1400). Such bunchings can also be explained as the result of lexicographers and readers mining a few specific sources: where there was a comparative scarcity of works to quote, disproportionately intensive quotation from these works would be the only option. Examples are Robert of Gloucester's *Chronicle*, dated 1297, which yielded around 3,000 quotations, Trevisa’s translations of *Polychronicon* and *De Proprietatibus Rerum*, dated 1387/1398, which yielded over 6,000 quotations, and most spectacularly the 30,000-line *Cursor Mundi*, assigned a variety of dates around 1300, from which around 11,000 quotations were printed in the dictionary, making it the fifth most quoted source in the entire work; as reported on the dictionary’s completion in 1928, this text’s contents were ‘with incredible assiduity copied out’ by Professor H. R. Helwich of Vienna, who subjected the *Destruction of Troy* to the same treatment (*The Periodical*, February 1928: 7).

Clearly, the lexicographers had to make do with what they had to hand. The most quoted Middle English writer in the *OED* was Chaucer, with just under 12,000 quotations, head and shoulders over his contemporaries – Langland (around 6,000), Lydgate (various works and editions, c.5,000) and Gower (nearly 4,000 from *Confessio amantis*, ed. Pauli in 1857). Other heavily quoted sources not already mentioned were the Wycliffite Bible (around 8,000, cited from Forshall and Madden 1850) and the lexicographically apposite *Promptorium parvulorum* (something over 5,500 quotations, cited from the Camden Society edition of 1843–65). In many cases, intensive quotation from an author coincided with that author being cited as first user of a word, too; of Chaucer’s 12,000-odd quotations, over 2,000 were first citations – leading to the easy inference that he had been responsible for introducing an enormous number of words into the language. On the other hand, as Schäfer first pointed out

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5 Unless otherwise stated, all quotation figures are reported from online searches of *OED2*, as available at <www.oed.com> 2000–10.

6 The *Promptorium parvulorum* and Wycliffite Bible figures are taken from Willinsky 1994: 213, not always reliable; unfortunately I did not make these searches independently.
in 1980 (and as ‘Examining the OED’ studies have consistently confirmed), first quotations in OED correlate with quotations overall: the more quotations gathered from an individual source or for a particular period, the more likely the lexicographers were to find linguistic innovation there.

Additionally, availability in print correlated to a high extent with cultural value – that was why the works had been edited in nineteenth-century (or earlier) editions in the first place. But was the corresponding prominence of these works in the first edition of the OED a genuine reflection of their lexical contribution to the history and development of the language? This was precisely the question raised in rebuttals of Mersand’s influential work on Chaucer’s lexical innovation, discussed further below.

Meanwhile, we should bear in mind that such broad-brush analyses of a dictionary’s quotation evidence are only one way to assess OED’s representation of the language. We look up a word in OED hoping to get information about when it was first used, but also about how it related to contemporary usage. It is contextual information of this sort that supplies us with a sense of a term’s connotations, often vital as a supplement to the bare denotation supplied by definition alone – and it is in analyses of contextual meaning that Brewer particularly excelled. For this, generous contemporary quotation evidence is vital. Here the comparative lack of medieval material available to the OED editors was compounded by the constant pressure on them to reduce the size of the dictionary to something Oxford University Press could afford to publish. Supporting evidence for words and senses had to be kept to a minimum, and often it was later periods, notably the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, which were illustrated with an abundance of quotations.7

The MED

The OED1 lexicographers themselves were well aware that their account of Old and Middle English was unsatisfactory and that more work needed to be done. In 1919, W.A. Craigie, who had joined the dictionary staff in 1897 and become third editor (with Murray and Bradley) in 1901, thought that ‘a complete dictionary of Middle English would be a work of marvellous richness and interest, not merely in respect of the language, but for the light it would throw upon the manners and customs of the time. Such a work can never be undertaken on practical grounds’ (Craigie 1919: 7–8). Craigie was an industrious and unusually

7 Murray initially aimed for one quotation a century (C. Brewer 2007a: 112). For the pressures exerted on the lexicographers by the publishers, see Murray 1977.
productive lexicographer with a sure sense of what would and would not work in dictionary-making, but here he made a misjudgement. As is well known, the Middle English Dictionary project got underway in Michigan in the 1930s, and the lexicographers began their work with the aid of the OED’s own dictionary slips for this period which were passed on to them after Craigie and Onions’s Supplement had been completed in 1933. After an initially bumpy beginning the new dictionary settled down under the editorship of Hans Kurath and (from 1961) Sherman Kuhn, beginning publication in 1952 and passing thence to the editorship of Robert Lewis, who brought it to final triumphant completion in 2001 (see Adams 2002; Lewis et al. 2004). In the interim the Toronto Old English project (comprising a corpus, now completed, as well as a dictionary) had also begun, in the 1970s, and work on this continues.

MED has transformed the record of Middle English vocabulary, and the results can be seen repeatedly when one takes almost any entry in OED and compares it with that in MED. Unfortunately, the search tools on MED do not compare with those on OED Online, so it is very difficult to see, other than in quite crude ways – or simply entry by entry – how MED has built on and improved OED quantitatively (or indeed qualitatively). I attempt a brief analysis of some aspects of such development of OED1 – and of how OED3 has in turn used MED’s evidence – in just a minute. Meanwhile, the most obvious difference between OED1 and MED is the far greater number and density of quotations provided by the latter, which contextualize and further gloss any individual instance of usage (as OED, with its aim to illustrate a word’s usage throughout the history of the language, could not have done).

It was networks of usage and connotation that particularly interested Brewer. Characteristic of his criticism was his wish to understand the past from within, on its own terms: ‘in the spirit of sympathetic social anthropologists’ rather than (e.g. in criticizing Troilus’s gender-related failings) as ‘propagandists for a new social order which the past could not know’ (1998b: 238), thus failing to ‘read each work of wit/ With the same spirit that its author writ’ (cf. Brewer 1966b: 21). So it was important to interpret language, and the meaning of individual words, in the context of its own time, not just of ours: ‘The verbal work of art is carved out of a work of verbal art’, as he put it in his essay on ‘The Archaic and the Modern’ (1982: 2). The work of verbal art – the state of language at the time a text was written – is on display in the totality of contemporary textual evidence: hence the importance of both OED and MED, whose definitions are derived from analyses of words in (synchronic and diachronic) context. And Brewer often focused on specific words which carried with them connotations of social values reaching deep within the cultural or literary phenomena he was exploring in his criticism – for example,
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his study of manhood/manhede in Troilus and Criseyde (Brewer 1998b), which examined how a network of related terms created meaning both in this poem and in Chaucer’s works more generally. What Brewer negotiates here is the way that words change their value culturally as society changes, while lexically their environment changes too, so that to capture their original meanings we need to contextualize them in terms of their original values, as well as our own.

His article on ‘Honour in Chaucer’ (as the present volume makes clear, a topic of pervasive and recurrent interest for Brewer), similarly reviews a cluster of concepts and cultural practices in relation to this central term in Chaucer, which as he points out is closely linked to commendacioun, laude, los, name, preisynges, renoun, reverence, shame, worship (‘the older English word for the same thing which Malory so much prefers’) and worthynesse (Brewer 1973b, rpt. 1982). All these terms are treated in both dictionaries and comparison between the entries is instructive – not least because the sense divisions often vary in quite striking ways, as do the choice and number of quotations. As Brewer noted on its definition of honour, ‘OED is useful, and reveals the range of concepts, but not surprisingly may often be questioned in its allocation of significances of this extraordinarily slippery word’ (1982: 168 n.2). OED’s entry for honour – first published in 1899, and unrevised as of June 2012 – distinguishes five main senses for the noun in use before 1500, along with further sub-senses and four phrasal senses. MED distinguishes seven main senses altogether, but the relationship between these alternative analyses is tricky to anatomize, partly because discrimination of meaning has proceeded along different lines in each (MED’s sense 1, for example, includes phrasal senses classed separately in OED), partly because both dictionaries offer definitions of individual senses that are themselves difficult to distinguish one from another. One clear point of correspondence is OED1’s sense 3a, ‘(Of a woman) Chastity, purity, as a virtue of the highest consideration; reputation for this virtue, good name’, which quotes Gower as first user followed by Spenser, Shakespeare and beyond:

1390 Gower Conf. III. 24 So as she may ... Her honour and her name save.
1596 Spenser F.Q. iv. i. 6 Nathlesse her honor, dearer then her life, She sought to save, as thing reserv’d from stealth.
1610 Shakes. Temp. i. ii. 348 Till thou didst seeke to violate The honor of my childe.
[…]

In MED the equivalent sense (2c, defined ‘feminine repute, reputation for purity’) is illustrated as follows:

(c1390) Chaucer CT.Pri. (Manly-Rickert) B.1654–5: Nat that I may encressen hir [Mary’s] honour, For she hir self is honour.

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(a1393) Gower CA (Fr 3) 6.681: Thogh that his ladi make him chiere, So as sche mai in good manere Hir honour and hir name save.
(c1395) Chaucer CT.Sq. (Manly-Rickert) F530: Myn herte..Graunted hym loue vpon this condicioun That euere mo myn honour and renoun Were saued, bothe pryuee and apert.
a1425(c1385) Chaucer TC (Benson-Robinson) 2.762: Though that I myn herte sette at reste Upon this knyght..And kepe alwey myn honour and my name, By alle right, it may do me no shame.
c1430(c1380) Chaucer PF (Benson-Robinson) 461: But I bere me in hire servyse ... hyre honour for to save, Take she my lif.
c1450(c1375) Chaucer Anel.(Benson-Robinson) 267: I ... was so besy yow to delyte --Myn honor save-- meke, kynde, and fre; Therefor ye put on me this wite.
a1500 ?Ros Belle Dame (Cmb Ff.1.6) 369: Iffe I purpose your honour to defface ... gode and fortune me schende.

MED’s proliferation of examples from Chaucer tells us how important this particular sense of honour was in his work and gives a far richer impression of its range of connotations (not least in the provision of a suggestive set of collocates, both nouns and verbs, indicating chastity’s central role in female social identity: honour itself, name, renown, lif, gode, fortune; is, save (four times), kepe, schende). MED also rewrites the significance one might have been tempted to assign to Gower’s usage as attested in OED: whoever was the first to use the word in this sense, Chaucer must have been confident that his audience (presumably the same as Gower’s) would readily have recognized its implications.

Lexicographical biases, in MED and OED, in favour of Chaucer?

Illuminating as these MED quotations are, however, they may raise doubts in the reader’s mind that take us back to similar doubts about OED1. For example, does the intensive citation from Chaucer derive from the availability of his works in a concordance? We may recall that the MED originally grew out of Flügel’s Chaucer dictionary (see Blake 2002; Lewis et al. 2004). Might it also reflect a cultural (rather than linguistic) preference on the part of the MED lexicographers for Chaucer over other sources?

As the search facilities on MED tell us, Chaucer is quoted under 9,753 head words, compared with 9,252 for Lydgate, 6,023 for Piers Plowman and 5,090 for Gower. Altogether, Chaucer is quoted 49,961 times in MED, compared

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8 Entry first published in 1967; the version reproduced here is taken from the online web-site which has updated the bibliographical references (e.g. citing Benson-Robinson rather than Robinson).
with 35,918 times for Lydgate, 15,035 for *Piers Plowman* and 14,325 times for Gower (a ratio of roughly 10:7:3:3). Chaucer would certainly appear to be assigned preference in *MED*, whether on linguistic or other grounds. Reading through entry after entry where several quotations from his texts supply evidence of usage for a single sense, one is sometimes tempted to ask whether all the quotations printed, interesting as they are, really add to understanding of the sense in question – or whether equally valid illustrations might have been taken from other contemporary sources.

On the other hand, in many cases Chaucer has demonstrably earned his right to be cited. In the essay included by Brewer in his 1974 collection *Geoffrey Chaucer: the Writer and his Background*, Norman Davis reviewed the plausibility of claims that, as Brewer had put it in his seminal essay on “The Relationship of Chaucer to the English and European Traditions” (1966b: 26), ‘Chaucer revolutionized’poetic diction’ by ‘augmenting’ his English with a vast number of new words of Latin, French and Italian origin’ (Davis 1974: 22). As Davis noted, Henry Bradley, Murray’s *OED* co-editor, had earlier observed ‘It would be easy to give lists of words and expressions which are used by Chaucer, and, so far as we know, not by any earlier writer’ (Bradley 1904: 226). Bradley was sufficiently intimate with *OED* to know what has since been confirmed, as we have seen, by searches of *OED2*, namely that Chaucer was quoted as the first known source for an extraordinarily large number of entries. Mersand had run a good way with this idea in his book of 1939 – the analysis that had influenced Brewer, though he perfectly understood the qualifications that Davis pointed out, namely that Mersand had made assumptions since rejected, or adjusted, on the date of Chaucer’s various works, and that ‘new information, especially that collected for the *Middle English Dictionary*, supersedes what [Mersand] could learn from the *Oxford English Dictionary*’ (Davis 1974: 73). Cannon wrote a book to show how Mersand’s evidence had been misconceived, pointing out that many words he had assumed to have been introduced by Chaucer had in fact been used by earlier writers whose evidence had not been recorded in *OED* (Cannon 1998). But even by Cannon’s own account, Chaucer is still responsible for a quite extraordinary number of romance ‘inventions’ – 1,102 in total, compared with the 2,718 introduced by all his predecessors combined (Cannon 1998: 58, 61) – though as Davis points out (in a discerning analysis of Chaucer’s word choices in translating Boethius, and in combining romance and native vocabulary both there and elsewhere), different borrowings from Latin

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9 See further the valuable article by Hailey (2007: 16), who shows that ‘even this number [1,102 first citations for words of romance origin] materially underestimates the rate and influence of Chaucer’s lexical innovations.’
Charlotte Brewer

or French may have very different values according to context and meaning: ‘The significance of Romance words varies infinitely. We need to know not only the bare fact of etymology but the associations and status of every word, and whether specific applications of it would seem to contemporary hearers in any way out of the ordinary’ (Davis 1974: 73).

Meanwhile, following up Brewer’s identification, in his 1966 essay, of ‘the English tap-root of Chaucer’s poetry’ (Brewer 1966b: 15), Davis himself used OED as well as MED evidence to identify some very interesting non-romance words which Chaucer had apparently been among the first to use in the language – or the first to use in written language; their colloquial and vigorous character often suggests oral currency: bi-daffed (‘fooled’, first citation in OED; hapax in MED), gnof (‘boor’, first citation in OED; hapax in MED), kiken (‘peep’, first citation in both), pike (‘peek’, first citation in OED, but antedated in MED – published after the date of Davis’s article – with an example from Robert of Sicily, as in the Vernon MS), knakke (‘trick’, first citation in both), knarry (‘gnarled’, first citation in OED; hapax in MED), labbe (‘blabbermouth’, first citation in both) and so on. And Horobin, relying more extensively on MED evidence, has subsequently shown that Chaucer’s lexical innovativeness regularly drew on the native resources of the language (just as Brewer 1966b had suggested) in its exploitation of prefixes such as for- or un-. (Horobin 2009; cf. Horobin 2007: chapter 5).

Naturally, Davis understood ‘how precarious it is to credit Chaucer (or any other) with the “introduction into English” of particular words simply on the evidence collected by the lexicographers. All the words [he identified as described above] are “first found in Chaucer”, but none of them, except perhaps wantrust, can have been new to English, though they may well have been new to works of literary pretension.’ As he would have predicted, writing in 1974, when MED was only up to the end of the letter L, some of his examples of Chaucer’s innovativeness – as of course many of Mersand’s, though none of Horobin’s – were based on OED1 evidence that MED was to correct by discovering earlier examples of usage (e.g. piken, ‘peek’, and newefangel – though not newfangleness, as in ‘The Squire’s Tale’ and Anelida and Arcite, for which Chaucer remains first cited author).

The OED3 revision and its treatment of Middle English

This takes us back to the OED and whether and how it is absorbing the new evidence of MED. As we saw earlier, the so-called second edition of 1989 had left untouched all pre-1850 material, thus preserving all medieval datings,
definitions and quotations whether or not they had been superseded by editorial and scholarly work (including much now on record in MED) appearing over the course of the twentieth century. Recognizing the unsatisfactoriness of this edition, Oxford University Press addressed itself almost straightaway to making good its defects by undertaking what was now long overdue, revision of the OED in its entirety. Under the editorship of John Simpson, this project – OED3 – took shape over the 1990s and began online publication in March 2000. OED3 set out to revise every element of every entry in the original dictionary: spelling, pronunciation, etymology, definitions, identification of senses and sense development, as well as the quotations on which most of the other elements of the entry ultimately depended. The team of lexicographers started at the letter M, and by March 2012 had revised the alphabetical sequence M–R in its entirety, along with many other entries elsewhere in the dictionary (the website in its current state does not provide a list or description of these, but it appears to be extensive: by December 2011, 37% of the original entries had been revised and the original material had doubled in size).  

1150–1499 is the period we can expect to change most significantly in the new version of OED, for reasons made clear above: the original OED lexicographers, working with very restricted access to texts from this earlier stage of the language, were simply unable to do it justice. Just as MED drew on OED1, OED3 is now turning to MED – and to the resources of the ongoing Toronto Old English Dictionary project and the Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue (1937–2002), the latter dictionaries, like MED itself, both identified as desirable by W. A. Craigie in 1919. The deputy-editor of OED3, Edmund Weiner, explained in 2000 that ‘no extensive reading programme [for the current revision of OED] has been undertaken for Middle English, though certain newly available texts are being read’, since ‘in this sphere the OED has to bow to the primacy of the MED, and, to a more limited extent, the DOST’, who have between them ‘already assembled the overwhelming majority of the available lexical evidence. The main effort of the OED project is concentrated on a painstaking comparison between the coverage of each word in these two dictionaries and the corresponding entries in the OED’ (Weiner 2000: 170).  

What are the results so far? To get a broad picture of the changes which the current revision of OED has introduced into the quotation record, we need  

10 According to the 'Recent updates to the OED' section of OED Online, page on December 2011 update; see <www.oed.com/public/simpson1211> (2.08.2012).  
11 Since December 2010, OED entries have linked to corresponding entries in MED (though with occasional glitches). On the 'inter-debtedness' of historical dictionaries, see Simpson et al. 2004.
to isolate the third of the dictionary so far revised, and compare the quotations (and other material) in OED2 and OED3 for this stretch of the alphabet only. As already described, however, this is now impossible: the OED website no longer provides a list of which entries have been revised, while the removal of OED2 has also removed any possibility of comparing the new with the revised entries (except one by one, not a practicable method given the quantity and variety of material involved). This leaves its users unable to assess the progress and character of OED3’s revision. Correspondingly, we are unable to begin the process of understanding the implications of the substantial scholarly research now being conducted by the lexicographers for our picture of the history and development of the language. The ‘Examining the OED’ project did, however, carry out a summary analysis in December 2005, when OED3 had revised the alphabet range M–philandering only, and when OED2 was still publically consultable (C. Brewer 2005–). At that stage, it appeared that the OED3 revisers had concentrated their efforts so far on the later medieval period (1400–99); see Figure 3.

As commented then, the results needed further investigation, but the lack of change to the earlier part of the chronological record was presumably due to the heavy reliance on the MED’s documentation. This can be seen in Figure 4, which presents the same data organized by century:
Words and Dictionaries: OED, MED and Chaucer

The raw figures in December 2005 for total quotations  *M–philandering* over the period 1150–1499 were 26,086 for OED2 and 37,291 for OED3, making a notable (43%) increase of 11,205 quotations overall.

There were also some significant shifts in dating. OED had generally dated medieval works (and indeed many post-medieval works) according to their supposed date of composition. MED, however, introduced a policy of ‘double-dating’, giving first the date of the manuscript witness (as known or estimated), and secondly the known or estimated date of composition (except for a handful of important works – e.g. *The Canterbury Tales, Confessio amantis* – to which it assigned a composition date). OED3 began to follow suit. This means that large numbers of quotations in OED1, though retained in OED3, occupy a different place in OED on our graph. Thus *Patience, Cleanness* and *Pearl*, quoted as we have already seen from Richard Morris’s edition of 1864, and dated by the original OED editors to ‘c1325’, are in OED3 identified by individual title and dated ‘c1400 (¿c1380)’, with the first date being the one picked up in electronic searches.12

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12 Interestingly, in OED2 *Pearl, Patience* and *Cleaness* between them supplied 2,552 quotations, a figure that rose by only 35 to 2,587 in OED in June 2006 (when ‘Examining the OED’ happened to have made the count). Since then, quotations have risen by a further 104 to 2,691 altogether (according to a search made in June 2012) – though since we
Charlotte Brewer

The withdrawal of electronically searchable OED2, along with OED3’s new policy of abandoning sequential alphabetic revision, have both separately and in combination made it impossible to produce any systematic analysis of its progress since 2005. But we can still search the isolated range M–philandering as of June 2012, to see whether OED3 has amassed any new material for this alphabet range in the last seven years.

Figure 5: OED2 and OED3 quotations per decade 1150–1499 over alphabet range M–philandering, comparing OED3 as of December 2005 with OED3 as of June 2012

The variations in troughs and peaks in Figure 5 indicate that OED3 is continuing the process of re-dating its quotation sources, while Figure 6 helps us to see that it is continuing to add new quotations for the period 1150–1499; in fact, the revisers added a total of 3,269 quotations from texts dated 1150–1499 to this alphabet range between December 2005 and June 2012. Since we can no longer search the previous version of the dictionary, we cannot identify where

\[\text{can't search the previous version of OED, we cannot easily discover what it is about the vocabulary of these poems that the OED3 lexicographers, unlike their predecessors, now think is worth recording in the dictionary.}\]

these new quotations are coming from – and this is frustrating. However, we can make educated guesses about the dating changes. The 1390–99 peak in the line for OED3 2005 (Figure 5), for example, and the corresponding deficit in the OED3 line around 1300, will be in large part due to the re-dating of many of the Cursor Mundi quotations from 1300 or so to ‘a1400’ (i.e. the date of the earliest manuscripts), meaning that they now turn up in electronic searches for the decade 1390–99 rather than for the earlier date(s). This re-dating seems to have taken place, albeit not consistently, in the reconfiguration of the OED website in December 2010. Such changes indicate the benefits of online composition of a dictionary for its editors, allowing them to revisit entries after they have first been published and rewrite them, adding new material and/or correcting existing material. For users, however, the dictionary’s volatility vitiates its authority in a most troubling way, especially since the website does not record any of these changes.

Since OED3 tells us so little about its composition and revision processes, it is hard for users to divine exactly how the medieval (or any other) portion of the vocabulary is changing – although the above analyses indicate that the changes

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**Figure 6:** OED2 and OED3 quotations per century 1150–1499 over alphabet range M–philandering, comparing OED3 as of December 2005 with OED3 as of June 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>1490-1499</td>
<td>754</td>
<td>812</td>
<td>4044</td>
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</table>
are fairly wide-ranging. One author we would obviously like to know more about is Chaucer. Is his reputation as word-coiner extraordinaire, as discussed by Mersand, Brewer, Davis, Cannon, Hailey and Horobin (among others), likely to be belied or sustained? OED3’s relaunched website has a powerful new search tool for sources, which makes it clear that Chaucer ranks very high indeed in its list of lexically productive writers. Currently (as of June 2012), he heads the list of top individual sources recorded as supplying first evidence for a word and comes second after Shakespeare in the list of top individual sources supplying first evidence for a sense (not counting newspapers, periodicals, dictionaries and the Bible). So does this mean that, even after all OED3’s new research – or rather, after MED’s new research – Chaucer really does have a claim to being the ‘firste fyndere of our faire langage’? Fascinating as these rankings are, they are difficult to interpret. First and foremost, most regrettably, they are derived from the mixed database I have already referred to: OED Online’s searches deliver an infuriatingly undifferentiated (and undifferentiatable) mixture of old scholarship with new, consisting of two-thirds unrevised entries with one-third revised. However, a more stable point of comparison is the number of total quotations, and the number of first quotations for words, from Chaucer in OED2 – searches the present writer fortunately made before the resource disappeared – with the equivalent in OED3 today.

In OED2 – that is, in OED1 – Chaucer was quoted 11,026 times in all, and of these quotations 2,041 were for words for which he was recorded as first user. Today’s OED has added a remarkable 2,043 quotations to Chaucer’s total, making a new total of 13,069. Of these, 2,009 are first quotations. OED3 has access to a huge quantity of Old and Middle English lexical evidence and will have had ample opportunity to antedate Chaucer’s usages from earlier texts unavailable to the first-edition OED lexicographers. That Chaucer’s first quotations continue to be so high looks to be a strong vindication of the judgements by Brewer and others that he added ‘a vast number of new words’ to the lexicon.

There are many qualifications to be made to such a judgement – in order to nuance rather than dismiss it, however. Setting aside the vexed question of OED’s mixed database, there is the problem that Chaucer’s work, like Shakespeare’s, has been subject to far more intensive scrutiny, both by linguistic and by literary scholars, than that of most other writers. That means that lexicographers (whether in OED1, MED, or OED3) are more likely to identify new meanings in his texts than elsewhere. This applies both to new words outright and to new senses of existing words. And until OED gives us the means to analyse its new entries more easily, we cannot be certain what fresh characteristics, exactly, its
new scholarship will enable us to identify in Chaucer’s innovative usages. Just as importantly, as any literary and lexicographical scholar understands, OED’s citation of a source as first user does not mean, necessarily, that that source really was the first user. Words may have been current in spoken language long before they were written down, while lexicographers may have missed an earlier instance of usage (a first quotation is always potentially antedatable). But we cannot get away from the fact that these lexicographical totals are overwhelmingly high, both comparatively and absolutely.

In his 1966 essay, Brewer made a study of the vocabulary of the Book of the Duchess, using the multi-volume print versions of OED and MED (the latter as so far completed by that date) to identify Chaucer’s introduction of ‘no less than fourteen French words into literary English [in that poem], besides … two new Anglo-French compounds, chambre-roof and maister-hunte’. As he explained, five of the fourteen were taken from Chaucer’s sources: fers, pervers, poune, soleyn and trayteresse; while:

[… of the others, embosed, forloyn, founes, lymeres, rechased, relayes, soures, are connected with hunting. Rayed and tapite are connected with the decoration of a room; like the words to do with hunting, they belong to the courtly life, and were doubtless in normal colloquial use. Fourteen words is a considerable addition to the literary language. There are more to add, if we consider new meanings of words already established in the language […]

(Brewer 1966b: 24)

Where these words have been further treated in MED or in the revised portions of OED, Chaucer’s first usage status has mostly been confirmed: only foun has been antedated (to a1338, a variant in Mannyng’s Chronicle). As Brewer observed in his remarks on Chaucer’s ‘basic English style’, however, the proportion of such French- or Latin-derived vocabulary in the poem is less than 30% of the poem. These observations on Chaucer’s innovativeness, whether in native or romance vocabulary, are strikingly contextualized by the information now available from electronic searches of the new OED. This is that the poem contains a staggering fifty-seven first instances of first recorded usage of a word, along with a further fifty-two instances of first recorded usage of a sense (the ability to search for first quotations for senses, as opposed to words, is a new feature on OED Online). On further examination, sadly, it appears that the majority of these first usages occur in unrevised entries, merged seamlessly, as we have seen, with revised entries. Nevertheless, despite this misleading combination of outdated scholarship with new, the list yielded by the present OED most
usefully identifies a set of lemmas which we can look up in the MED – whose own search facilities do not allow one to identify first usages in this way.¹⁴

Such a comparison reveals the following: that of the fifty-seven first recorded uses of a word in Book of the Duchess, thirty-six retain their status as first recorded usage in MED too – and of these, twenty-one are of romance origin and fifteen non-romance (so Chaucer was far more innovative over the 30% of the poem composed of romance-derived vocabulary than the 70% non-romance). Of OED’s fifty-two first recorded senses, twenty-seven retain this status in MED, of which twelve are of romance origin and fifteen non-romance (see Appendix). OED3 has actually identified two new neologisms in the poem, too: meet, ‘an equal’, l. 46, and overstrew, l. 629. The leap ahead from Brewer’s figures is proof of the value of digitalized, and therefore searchable, dictionaries which have intensely recorded the language of a particular writer or source. It confirms (no surprise here) Brewer’s perception of the jointly important influences of the native and the European traditions on Chaucer’s writing, and it also confirms Chaucer’s lexical productivity – thirty-six (or thirty-eight) words, and twenty-seven senses, are even more of ‘a considerable addition to the literary language’ in one poem than fourteen. Moreover, it indicates that Chaucer’s recorded innovativeness, in both types of vocabulary, is hard to dismiss as altogether a product of culturally biased scholarship. Clearly further research is needed: on OED3’s progress up and down the alphabet and its new evidence on first usages, along with comparative investigation both of Chaucer’s contemporaries and of other lexical innovators such as Shakespeare, Milton, and others, to see how OED’s record of other sources contrasts and compares with that for Chaucer. We can be certain, however, that Brewer’s original research and intuitions on Chaucer remain in this respect as in many others both sound and wise.

¹⁴ A methodology evidently indebted to Cannon 1998 – though Cannon, with a much less functional electronic version of OED2 to hand at that date, was unable to search its record in the same way.
Appendix: *OED*’s record of *Book of the Duchess* vocabulary

All searches of *OED* Online were made in June 2012. At that date, *OED* Online quoted *Book of the Duchess* 256 times altogether, in 57 instances for ‘first quotation in entry’ and 109 instances for ‘first quotation in entry or sense’. The invaluable list in Cannon 1998 (226–416) has been consulted for help with identifying the equivalent lemmas in *MED* and for occasional points of comparison (see footnotes).
Table 1: First in entry in OED; romance origin

30 words of romance origin in this poem were originally identified by OED as first usages. Of these, 21 have been confirmed by MED and 5 antedated, leaving 4 uncategorized.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>lemma (as in OED Online)</th>
<th>sense (where given)</th>
<th>definition (as in OED Online)</th>
<th>source</th>
<th>MED evidence</th>
<th>quotation (as in OED Online)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>1</td>
<td>The ’neck-bone’ …</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 943 Hyt [her neck] was white smothe streght, and pure flatte Wythouten hole or canel-boon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>counter, n2</td>
<td>1a</td>
<td>One who counts ...</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms¹</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 436 Thogh Argus the noble counter [v.r. countour] Sete to rekene in hys counter [v.r. countour].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>craze, v</td>
<td>1a</td>
<td>To break by concussion or violent pressure …</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 324 With glas Were all the windowes well yglased...and nat an hole ycrased.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>distrouble, v</td>
<td></td>
<td>To disturb, trouble greatly.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>first in sense (1a) in MED though not in entry</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 524 I am ryght sory yf I have oughte Destroubled yow out of your thoughte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emboss, v2</td>
<td>1a</td>
<td>Of a hunted animal: To take shelter in, plunge into, a wood or thicket.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 352 [The hunters recounted] how the hert had vpon lengthe So moche embosed [v.r. enbosed, enbosid] I not nowe what</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Cannon identifies sense as MED countour n1 1a; in fact this Book of the Duchess example is quoted s.v. MED n1 1b.
entune, n  Tune; song; melody, music.  OED2  confirms

envy, v2  1b  To vie with, seek to rival.  OED2  confirms

fawn, n1  2  A young fallow deer, a buck or doe of the first year.  OED2  antedates

fers, n  1  The piece now known as the queen.  OED2  confirms

forloin, n  2  A note of recall.  OED2  confirms

fortune, v  3a  Of events, etc.: To happen, chance, occur.  OED2  confirms

hallow, v2  1c  To call or summon in, back, etc. with shouting.  OED2  confirms

Hercules, n  1a  A celebrated hero of Greek and Roman mythology ...  OED2  confirms

limer, n1  A kind of hound.  OED2  confirms

c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 309 So mery a sowne, so swete entunes.
c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 406 As thogh the erthe enuye wolde To be gayer than the heuen.
c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 429 Of founes, soures, bukkes, does Was ful the wode.
c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 654 She stal on me and took my fers And when I saw my fers awwwye Alas! I couthe no lenger pleye.
c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 386 Therwith the hunte wonder faste Blew a forloyn at the laste.
c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 288 Swiche meruayles fortuned than.
c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 379 Be hert found is I-halowed and rechased fast long tyme.
c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 1058 Thogh I had hadde...al the strengthe of Ercules.
c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 362 There ouertoke I a grete route Of hunters and eke of foresters, And many relays and lymers.

The only quotation for this word in OED2; there are 2 further examples from Lydgate in MED.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>lemma (as in OED Online)</th>
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<th>source</th>
<th>MED evidence</th>
<th>quotation (as in OED Online)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pawn errant s.v.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>In chess, a travelling pawn, one that has been advanced from its original square.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 661 Fortune seyde..‘mate’ in mid pointe of the chekkere With a powne erraunt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>errant, adj</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rechase, v2</td>
<td>1a</td>
<td>To chase (a deer) back into a forest.</td>
<td>first in entry in OED2</td>
<td>confirms</td>
<td>a1450 (1369) Chaucer Bk. Duchess (Tanner 346) (1871) l. 379 Within a while þe hert founde is I-halowed and rechased fast long tyme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>solein, adj</td>
<td>1a</td>
<td>Unique, singular.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 982 Trewly she was to myn eye. The soleyn Fenix of Arabye. For there lyueth never but one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sore, n2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Hunting. A buck in its fourth year.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>Not in MED?</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 429 Of fawnes, sowers [v.r. sowres], buckes, does Was ful the wodde.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suffisance, n</td>
<td>5b</td>
<td>A source of satisfaction.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 1038 She was, that swete wife. My suffisaunce, my luste, my lyfe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suing, adj</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Regular, proportionate; even, uniform.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>Not in MED?</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 959 I knewe on hir noon other lakke That al hir lymmes nere pure sywynge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>surmount, v</td>
<td>1a</td>
<td>In quality, attainment, etc.: To excel, be superior to.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 826 So had she Surmountede hem al of beaute.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Example</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tantalus, n</td>
<td>Name of a mythical king of Phrygia ...</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>Not in MED?</td>
<td>C1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 709 I haue more sorowe than Tantale.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tapet, v</td>
<td>To hang with tapets' or tapestry; to adorn with tapestry.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms</td>
<td>C1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 260 Hys hallys I wol do peyne with pure golde And tapite hem ful many folde.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tartary, n</td>
<td>The country of the Tartars.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms</td>
<td>C1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 1025 Ne sende men..into Tartarye..ne in-to Turkye.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>term-day</td>
<td>A day set as a term (term n3); a day appointed for doing something ...</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates</td>
<td>C1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 730 He had broke his terme day To come to hir.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>text, n1</td>
<td>That portion of the contents of a manuscript or printed book, or of a page, which constitutes the original matter, as distinct from the notes or other critical appendages. In first quot. [this one] fig.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms³</td>
<td>C1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 333 And alle the wallys with colouris fyne Were peynted, bothe text and glose.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>traitoress, n</td>
<td>A female traitor; a traitorous or treacherous woman (or being personified as a woman).</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates</td>
<td>C1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse (Fairf. MS,) 620 Fortune..The trayteresse [v.r. traitores] fals and ful of gyle That al behoteth and no thyling halte.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

³ Though sense 3, this is the earliest quotation in the OED2 entry. Chaucer is quoted 16 times in the MED entry (s.v. 3b).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>lemma (as in <em>OED</em> Online)</th>
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<th>quotation (as in <em>OED</em> Online)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The land of the Turks.</td>
<td><em>OED2</em></td>
<td>antedates</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 1026 Ne sende men in-to Walakye...To Alisaundre, ne in-to Turkye.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vary, v</td>
<td>1a</td>
<td>Of things: To undergo change or alteration ...</td>
<td><em>OED2</em></td>
<td>confirms</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 802 For al my werkes were flyttyng That tyme, and al my thought varyeng.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2: First in sense in OED; romance origin

20 senses of romance origin in this poem were originally identified by OED as first usages. Of these, 12 have been confirmed by MED and 7 antedated, leaving 1 uncategorized. MED identifies a further first usage of sense s.v. countrefete; see counterfeit below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>lemma (as in OED Online)</th>
<th>sense (where given)</th>
<th>definition (as in OED Online)</th>
<th>source</th>
<th>MED evidence</th>
<th>quotation (as in OED Online)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>account, v</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>With of. To estimate, value, esteem (in the manner or to the level stated); to think little (also much, nothing, etc.) of. Freq. in negative contexts.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms</td>
<td>a1450 (1369) Chaucer Bk. Duchess (Tanner 346) (1871) l.1237 God wote she acounted not a stre Of all my tale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>authentic</td>
<td>3a</td>
<td>Entitled to acceptance or belief, as being in accordance with fact, or as stating fact; reliable, trustworthy, of established credit.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms</td>
<td>1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 1086 Though her stories be autentike.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carol, v</td>
<td>2a</td>
<td>To sing, orig. in accompaniment to a dance.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 848 I sawe her daunce so comely, Carol and sing so swetely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lemma (as in OED Online)</td>
<td>sense (where given)</td>
<td>definition (as in OED Online)</td>
<td>source</td>
<td>MED evidence</td>
<td>quotation (as in OED Online)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comprehend</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>To lay hold of all the points of (any thing) and include them within the compass of a description or expression ...</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 903 I have no wytte that kan suffyse To comprehende hir beautie.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>countenance, n</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Demeanour or manner.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 1022 She wolde not fonde To holde no wight in balaunce, By half word ne by countenaunce.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>counter, n3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>A table or desk for counting money ...</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 436 Argus Sete to rekene in hys counter [v.r. countour].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>counterfeit, v</td>
<td>9b</td>
<td>To represent, portray.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms¹</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 1241 I can not now well counterfete Her wordes, but this was the grete Of her answere.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Cannon’s list refers only to MED countrefeten v3a (antedated in MED); this Book of the Duchess instance is in fact quoted s.v. sense 1(b), and is the earliest there cited. MED identifies a further first quotation from Book of the Duchess s.v. 5(a): ‘To simulate (a feeling, quality, etc.) ...; B of D 869: Hyt nas no countrefeted thynge; Hyt was hir owne pure lokyng.’
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Sense</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Dictionary</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>envy, n</td>
<td>3b</td>
<td>In the phrase to envy, to such a point as to excite envy; to the heart's content; to admiration; to perfection.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>Not in MED?</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 173 They had good leyser for to route To envey, who might slepe beste.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fee, n2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>A tribute or offering to a superior.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms²</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 266 This.. god..May winne of me mo fees thus Than ever he wan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>join, v</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>To put or bring into close contact.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 393 A whelpe..Hylde doun hys hede and ioyned hys erys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>master-hunt s.v.</td>
<td></td>
<td>A head huntsman.</td>
<td>OED3</td>
<td>confirms³</td>
<td>c1450 (1369) Chaucer Bk. Duchess 375 The mayster-hunte anoon, fot-hot, With a greth horn blew thre mot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>master n1 and adj</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>OED3</td>
<td>antedates</td>
<td>c1450 (1369) Chaucer Bk. Duchess 660 Therwith Fortune seyde Chek her! And 'Mat!' in myd poyn of the chekker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mate, n1 and int.</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>As an exclamation made upon putting an opponent's king in inextricable check: 'You are mated'; = checkmate int.</td>
<td>OED3²</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

² Cannon identifies sense as MED fee n2 1(d); this Book of the Duchess instance is in fact quoted s.v. sense 6(b), and is the earliest there cited.
³ ¤not in OED2.
⁴ ¤not in OED2.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>lemma (as in OED Online)</th>
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<th>quotation (as in OED Online)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mirror, n</td>
<td>2b</td>
<td>A model of excellence; a paragon.</td>
<td>OED3; same in OED2</td>
<td>confirms(^5)</td>
<td>c1450 (1369) Chaucer Bk. Duchess 974 She wolde have be..A chef myrour of al the feste.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>point, n1</td>
<td>8c</td>
<td>One of the squares of a chessboard.</td>
<td>OED3</td>
<td>confirms(^6)</td>
<td>c1450 (1369) Chaucer Bk. Duchess 660 Fortune seyde‘Chek her,’ And‘Mat’, in myd poyn of the chekker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>record, n1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>A statement; an account; a comment, a reply.</td>
<td>OED3</td>
<td>confirms(^7)</td>
<td>a1450 (1369) Chaucer Bk. Duchess (Tanner 346) (1871) l. 934 Her simple recorde Was found as trew as any bonde.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scarcely, adv</td>
<td>2b</td>
<td>[Originally used to express a restrictive qualification …] With pleonastic negative, or in an implied negative context.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 289 Ne [coude] nat scarcely Macrobeus..I trowe arede my dreames even.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^5\) Cannon does not record this sense; see MED s.v. mirour 3b, where it is the only example cited.

\(^6\) OED2 identified Lydgate as first example; this sense (MED pointe n1 14(b)) is not listed in Cannon.

\(^7\) Not quoted in OED2 (which analyses the word differently); this instance (MED recorde n, sense 2a) is not listed in Cannon.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Usage</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>solemn, adj</td>
<td>3a</td>
<td>Performed with, accompanied by due formality or ceremony; of a formal or ceremonious character.</td>
<td>OED2 confirms</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 302 Everyche [bird] songe in his wyse The most solemne seruyse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suffice, v</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Contextually, of a quality or condition: To provide adequate means or opportunity; to allow or admit of a certain thing being done.</td>
<td>OED2 antedates</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 1094 As my wytte koude best suffyse..I besette hytte To loue hir yn my beste wyse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the ferses twelve, s.v. fers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>According to Prof. Skeat, all the men exc. the king (the bishops, knights, and rooks, being counted as one each).</td>
<td>OED2 confirms</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 723 Thogh ye had lost the ferses twelve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upon the condition, s.v. condition</td>
<td>1b</td>
<td>On condition that.</td>
<td>OED2 confirms</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 750 I telle hyt the up a condicioun That thou shalt hooly, etc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8 MED solemne 1(c); this sense is not listed in Cannon.
Table 3: First in entry in *OED*; non-romance origin

27 words of non-romance origin in this poem were originally identified by *OED* as first usages. Of these, 15 have been confirmed by *MED* and 7 antedated, leaving 5 uncategorized.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>lemma (as in <em>OED</em> Online)</th>
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<th><em>MED</em> evidence</th>
<th>quotation (as in <em>OED</em> Online)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bagge, v</td>
<td>To look askew, or obliquely; to leer, ogle, or glance aside.</td>
<td>OED2 antedates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 623 The traytesse false and ful of gyle. That baggeth foule and loketh fayre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bear, n4</td>
<td>A case or covering for a pillow.</td>
<td>OED2 confirms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 254 Many a pillow and every bere, Of cloth of Raines to slepe on soft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>breck, n</td>
<td>A breach, blemish, failing. Obs.</td>
<td>OED2 confirms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 940 Swiche a fairenesse of a nekke..that boon nor brekke Nas ther non seen that mys satte.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comelily, adv</td>
<td>In a comely manner ...</td>
<td>OED2 confirms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse (Fairf.) 847 I sawgh hyr daunce so comelyly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comeliness</td>
<td>Pleasing appearance ...</td>
<td>OED2 antedates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 827 So had she Surmountede hem al of beaute Of maner and of comelynesse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>down, n2</strong></td>
<td>1b</td>
<td>The fine soft covering of fowls, forming the under plumage, used for stuffing beds, pillows, etc.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 250 Of downe of pure doves white</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>dreadless, adj and adv</strong></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Without doubt or apprehension of mistake; doubtless.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 1272 Dredelesse I mene none other ways.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>dulness, n</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Gloominess of mind or spirits.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 879 Dulnesse was of hir a-drad.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>fattish, adj</strong></td>
<td>a</td>
<td>Somewhat fat; fairly supplied with fat.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 954 She had..armes ever lith, Fattish, fleshy, nat great therewith.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>fleshy, adj</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Well furnished with flesh; fat, plump.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 954 Armes ever lith, Fattish, fleshy, nat great therewith.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>gere, n</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>A sudden fit of passion, feeling, transient fancy, or the like.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 1257 Forwhy I loved hir in no gere</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>glaze, v1</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>To fit or fill in (a window, etc.) with glass …</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 323 With glas Were all the wyndowes well yglased.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 As Brewer (1966b: 24) noted, with this word and the next Chaucer is translating Machaut’s *grasset*. 
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>lemma (as in OED Online)</th>
<th>sense (where given)</th>
<th>definition (as in OED Online)</th>
<th>source</th>
<th>MED evidence</th>
<th>quotation (as in OED Online)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>glazing, n</td>
<td>1b</td>
<td>Glazier’s work; glass fixed in windows or frames.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 327 Al the storie of Troye Was in the glasing y-wroght thus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>half-word, n</td>
<td></td>
<td>A word or speech which hints or insinuates something, instead of fully asserting it ...</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms²</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 1022 She wolde not fonde To holde no wight in balaunce By halfe worde ne by countenaunce.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hoodless, adj</td>
<td></td>
<td>Without a hood ...</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 1038 That he Go hoodlesse into the drie see.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knack, v2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>A trick ...</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 1033 She ne used no suche knakkes smale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lustihead, n</td>
<td></td>
<td>= lustiness n. in its various senses: pleasure, delight; vigour; lustfulness, libidinousness.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 27 Defaute of slepe and heuynesse Hath slayne my spyrte of quicknesse, That I haue loste al lustyheed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

² Not listed in Cannon (see MED half adj, sense 4).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>meet, n 1</td>
<td>An equal.</td>
<td><em>OED3</em> (only quotation; not recorded in <em>OED2</em>)</td>
<td><em>c1450</em> (1369) Chaucer Bk. Duchess 486 Of al goodnesse she had no mete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overstrew, v 1</td>
<td>To strew or sprinkle (something) with a covering of something else.</td>
<td><em>OED3</em> (<em>OED2</em>'s first quotation is dated 1570)</td>
<td><em>c1450</em> (1369) Chaucer Bk. Duchess 629 She is the monstres hed ywrien, As fylthe over-ystrawed [v.r. ouer ystrowed] with floures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seeming, n 1b</td>
<td>To all appearance.</td>
<td><em>OED2</em> confirms</td>
<td><em>c1369</em> Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 944 Wythouten hole or canel boon As be semynge had she noon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tongued, adj</td>
<td>Having or furnished with a tongue or tongues.</td>
<td><em>OED2</em> confirms</td>
<td><em>c1369</em> Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 927 Ne trewer tonged, ne scorned lasse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>well-faring, adj 1</td>
<td>Of handsome or well-favoured appearance ...</td>
<td><em>OED2</em> antedates</td>
<td><em>c1369</em> Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 452 Than founde I sytte euen vpright A wonder welfaryng knyght.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>well-founded, adj</td>
<td>Built on a good and solid base. lit. and fig.</td>
<td><em>OED2</em> Not in <em>MED</em>?</td>
<td><em>c1369</em> Chaucer Bk. Duchesse (Fairf.) 922 And which a goodeuly softe speche Had that swete...So frendely, and so wel y-grounded, Vp al resoun so wely-founded [Fondée sur toute raison].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lemma (as in OED Online)</td>
<td>sense (where given)</td>
<td>definition (as in OED Online)</td>
<td>source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>well-grounded, adj</td>
<td>Of immaterial things: Based on good grounds, firmly founded, having a good basis or foundation.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>not in MED³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>well-set, adj</td>
<td>Skilfully, fittingly, or happily placed, fixed, settled, arranged, or adjusted.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>MED (s.v. wel-set(te (ppl.)) antedates as first in entry but confirms as first in sense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wildly</td>
<td>Without order, irregularly ...</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ygrounded, adj</td>
<td>Grounded.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>Not in MED?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

³ MED ‘technically’ antedates – in terms of the use of the prefix wel (s.v. wel, adv, 4b.a) – but does not treat well-grounded as an independent lemma.
Table 4: First in sense in *OED*; non-romance origin

32 senses of non-romance origin in this poem were originally identified by *OED* as first usages. Of these, 15 have been confirmed by *MED* and 15 antedated, leaving 2 uncategorized. *MED* identifies an additional first cited sense of setten, not spotted by *OED*, and adds two additional first cited senses to *OED*’s list (wel-set and a particular sense of the adjective *whole*).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>lemma (as in OED Online)</th>
<th>sense (where given)</th>
<th>definition (as in OED Online)</th>
<th>source</th>
<th>MED evidence</th>
<th>quotation (as in OED Online)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aside</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Sidewise, obliquely.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 558 With that he loked on me asyde, As who sayth nay, that wol not be.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clothe, v</td>
<td>5a</td>
<td>To cover (anything)</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 252 A fether bed..right wel dled In fyne blacke Sattyn doutremere.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dark, n</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>fig.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirms1</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 609 To derke is turned all my lighte.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dead, adj</td>
<td>2b</td>
<td>Of persons: death-like, insensible, in a swoon.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 127 She.. Was wery, and thus the ded slepe Fil on hir</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 This example is the sole quotation in *MED* (s.v. *derk* n sense 2(b); Cannon misidentifies as sense 1(b)); OED2 quotes only one other example, from Thomas Wyatt.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>lemma (as in OED Online)</th>
<th>sense (where given)</th>
<th>definition (as in OED Online)</th>
<th>source</th>
<th>MED evidence</th>
<th>quotation (as in OED Online)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>draught, n</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>A ‘move’ at chess or any similar game.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates²</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 653 At the chesse with me she gan to pley, With hir fals draughtes dyvers She staale on me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>draw, v</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>To move (at chess).</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirmed³</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 682 Whan she my fers kaught I wolde have drawe the same draught.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fall, v</td>
<td>14b</td>
<td>Of the complexion: To grow pale.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirmed</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 564 That maketh my hewe to fal and fade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>freshly, adv</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>With undiminished intensity, purity, distinctness, etc.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 1228 And love hir alwey freshly newe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good, n (to can one’s good)</td>
<td>5e</td>
<td>To can or know one’s good: to know how to behave.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>Not in MED?</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 390 A whelp that..coude no goode.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

² Cannon does not record this sense (it is MED 3(b)).
³ Cannon does not record this sense (MED drauen v sense 2a(e)).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Sense</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Lexicon</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>great, n</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>The chief part; the main point; the sum and substance; the general drift or gist (of a story).</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>Not in MED?</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse (Fairf. MS.) 1242 I kan not now wel counterfete Hyr wordys, but this was the grete Of hir answere.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hand, n 1</td>
<td>29e</td>
<td>In expectation or suspense (with hold, keep).</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 1019 Hyr lust to holde no wyght in honde.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hoarse, adj</td>
<td>2b</td>
<td>[Having a hoarse voice or sound] Of inanimate things. (Chiefly poetic.)</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 347 Tassay hys horne, and for to knowe Whether hyt were clere, or horse of sovne.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jeopardy, n</td>
<td>1a</td>
<td>Chess, etc. A problem.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirmed⁴</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 666 But god wolde I had ones or twyes Y-kond [Skeat y-koud] and knowe the Ieupardyes That kowde the Greke Pictagoras, I shulde haue pleyde the bet at ches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loss, n 1</td>
<td>4a</td>
<td>An instance of losing.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirmed⁵</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 1302 That was the losse..that I had lorne.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overshoot, v</td>
<td>1b</td>
<td>[To shoot beyond.] With the destination, point, etc., as object.</td>
<td>OED3</td>
<td>confirmed</td>
<td>c1450 (1 369) Chaucer Bk. Duchess 383 The houndes had ovenshote [vrrr. ouershette, ouershet, ouyrshotte] hym alle And were on a defaute y-falle.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⁴ Cannon misidentifies sense – see this Book of the Duchess instance quoted MED s.v. jupartie 4(a).
⁵ Cannon misidentifies sense – see this Book of the Duchess instance quoted MED s.v. los n1 sense 5(b).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>lemma (as in OED Online)</th>
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<th>definition (as in OED Online)</th>
<th>source</th>
<th>MED evidence</th>
<th>quotation (as in OED Online)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>set down, s.v. set, v1</td>
<td>2a</td>
<td>To bring low, debase ...</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates⁶</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 635 That is broght up she set al doun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sleeping, adj</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Inducing sleep; soporific.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirmed</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 162 A few wellys. That made a dedly slepynge soun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>smart, adj</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Of pain, sorrow, wounds, etc.: Sharp, keen, painful, severe.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 507 Hym thought hys sorwes were so smerte.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>smite, v</td>
<td>20a</td>
<td>To strike (an hour); to announce or notify by sounding a bell.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirmed</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 1323 In the castell ther was a belle, As hyt hadde smyte oures twelve Therewyth I a-wooke my selve.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>steal, v1</td>
<td>9c</td>
<td>Of a hunted animal: To leave its lair unperceived and gain a start of the pursuers.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 381 And so, at the laste, This hert Rused and staale away Fro alle the houndes a prevy way.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⁶ Note that MED identifies a new first usage for a form of this verb in Book of the Duchess, however, s.v. setten 1i 9 (past participle): c1450(1369) Chaucer BD (Benson-Robinson) 828: So hadde she Surmounted hem alle of beaute. Of stature, and of wel set gladnesse.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>strength</td>
<td>(To hunt) with strength: by way of regular chase.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirmed7</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 351 And al men speke of huntynge How they wolde slee the hert with strength.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>summer</td>
<td>Of or pertaining to summer ...</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 821 As the somerys sonne bryghte.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>therewith</td>
<td>With that (word, act, or occurrence); that being said or done; thereat, thereupon, forthwith.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirmed</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 275 Y fil aslepe, and therewith evene Me mette so ynly swete a swevene.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>true</td>
<td>C2a</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 927 Of eloquence was neuer founde So swete a sownynge facounde, Ne trewer tonged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wake</td>
<td>To rouse from sleep or unconsciousness.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 294 I was waked With smale foules a grete hepe That had affrayed me out of my slepe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>welfare</td>
<td>A source of well-being or happiness.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirmed8</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 1040 For certes she was..My worldes welfare and my goddesse.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 MED identifies this as a specialist hunting sense s.v. 1(h).

8 Cannon lists as antedated but MED quotes this Book of the Duchess instance as first usage s.v. wel-fare 1(d).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>lemma (as in OED Online)</th>
<th>sense (where given)</th>
<th>definition (as in OED Online)</th>
<th>source</th>
<th>MED evidence</th>
<th>quotation (as in OED Online)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>welkin, n</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>The upper atmosphere; the region of the air in which the clouds float, birds fly, etc.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>antedates</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 343 Ne in al the welkyn was no clowde.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>well-set, adj</td>
<td></td>
<td>Skilfully, fittingly, or happily placed, fixed, settled, arranged, or adjusted.</td>
<td>OED2⁹</td>
<td>MED (s.v. wel-set(te) (ppl.)) antedates as first in entry but confirms as first in sense</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 828 So had she Surmountyd hem all of beaute..Of stature and of well set gladnesse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whole, adj</td>
<td>6b</td>
<td>Of will, intention, affection: Full, complete, perfect.</td>
<td>OED2</td>
<td>confirmed¹⁰</td>
<td>c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 1224 With hool herte I gan hir beseche.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⁹ In OED2, this Book of the Duchess example is the first quotation in the entry (see s.v. Table 3 above).

¹⁰ MED doesn’t quote this instance but it clearly belongs as earliest usage s.v. hole adj2 sense 7(b). MED also identifies an additional first use of sense (hole adj2 sense 7a): ‘Of qualities, conditions, attributes: full, complete: c1450(1369) Chaucer BD (Benson-Robinson) 554: I wol do al my power hool.’ Neither sense is listed in Cannon.
| wound, n | 5b | A plague. | OED2 | confirmed | c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 1207 That was the ten woundes of Egypte. |
| wry, v2 | 2c | fig. To deviate or swerve from the right or proper course; to go wrong, to err. | OED2 | confirmed | c1369 Chaucer Bk. Duchesse 627 An ydole of false purtraiture Is she, for she woll sone wrien [v.r. varien]. |

1Further note: Brewer’s suggestion (1966b: 6) that Chaucer may have been the first to use the phrase by this light (Book of the Duchess l. 1) is borne out by MED, whose first example for this phrase (s.v. light 2c) is from the c1380 Ashmole copy of Sir F timbras.
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