

Early Modern English

What we'll cover tonight:

1. Blog post guidelines
2. Final paper guidelines
3. Early Modern English overview
4. Great Vowel Shift
5. Reading Early Modern English print materials
6. Blog post #3


Blog Post Guidelines

- See document on our website!

Final paper guidelines

- See document on our website!

Early Modern English

- What are some of the things that make Early Modern English different from Middle English?
- New words, including inkhorn terms
 new words based on Latin or Greek roots, many of which appeared only in print
- New words from America, including Indigenous languages
- Widespread printing & reading = relative spelling standardization
- Vowel pronunciation (Great Vowel Shift)

Long-lived inkhorn terms:

dismiss
celebrate
encyclopedia
commit
irrevocable
irradiation
depopulation

opossum, pecan, raccoon,
woodchuck, squash, caucus,
chipmunk, skunk, caribou,
moose, muskrat, wigwam

The Great Vowel Shift

- A massive transformation in the vowels of English.
- Demarks Middle English from Early Modern English, more than any other factor.
- “The most salient of all phonological developments in the history of English.” (Algeo 2009: 144)

The Great Vowel Shift

Long Vowels		
Late Middle English	Early Modern English	Today's English
[a:] name	[æ:]→[ɛ:]→	[e] name
[e:] feet	[i]→	[i] feet
[ɛ:] greet	[e]→	[e] great
[i:] ride	[aɪ]→	[aɪ] ride
[o:] boote	[u]→	[u] boot
[ɔ:] boot	[o]→	[o] boat
[u:] hous	[əʊ]→	[aʊ] house

Table adapted from Algeo (2009).

Orange cells are pronounced differently today than they were in Early Modern English.

Green cells are pronounced the same today as they were in Early Modern English.

- What had been phonemically long vowels in Old and Middle English – a true length distinction – dropped out of the grammar of English.
- Many long vowels became diphthongs. (In your Intro. to Ling. class, you may have seen [o] and [e] as diphthongs as well, [oʊ] and [eɪ].)
- “The stages by which the shift occurred and the cause of it are unknown.” (Algeo 2009: 145)

The Great Vowel Shift

Stressed Short Vowels		
Late Middle English	Early Modern English	Today's English
[a] that	[æ]→	[æ]
[ɛ] bed	→	[ɛ]
[ɪ] in	→	[ɪ]
[ɔ] on, odd	→	[ɔ] or [ɑ]
[ʊ] but	[ə]→	[ə]

Table adapted from Algeo (2009).

- Most short vowels remained the same from Middle to Early Modern English.
- All but one of these short vowels remained the same from Early Modern English to the English of today.

Orange cells are pronounced differently today than they were in Early Modern English.

Green cells are pronounced the same today as they were in Early Modern English.

The Great Vowel Shift

Diphthongs		
Late Middle English	Early Modern English	Today's English
[aʊ] lawe	[ɔ]→	[ɔ]
[ɔʊ] snow	[o]→	[o]
[æɪ] nail→[a:]	[æ:]→[ɛ:]	[e]
[ɛʊ], [ɪʊ] fewe, knew	[ju]→	[ju]
[ʊɪ] join	[əɪ]→[aɪ]→	[ɔɪ]
[ɔɪ] joy	→	[ɔɪ]

Table adapted from Algeo (2009).

- Middle English diphthongs mostly monophthongized.
- [æɪ] merged with [a:], and then followed the course already described for [a:] with the other long vowels.

Orange cells are pronounced differently today than they were in Early Modern English.

Green cells are pronounced the same today as they were in Early Modern English.

Reading Early Modern English

How the land of England Was fyrst named Albion/ And
By what enclison it Was so named?
In the noble land of Sirrie/ther Was a noble kyng & myghty &
a man of grete renōme/that me callid Dioclesian, that Well & Wor
thely hym gouerned & ruled thurgh his noble chpyualtre/so that
he cōquerd all the londes about hym/so that almost al the kynges
of the World to him Were entendant/Hit befel thus that this dy
oclesian spoused a gentil damisel/that Was wōder fayr that Was
his eynes doughter Labana/and she loued hym as reyon Wold/so
that he gatte vpon hir myghty daughter/

From *The Cronycles of England*, printed by William Caxton in 1482.

- At the cusp between Middle and Early Modern English.
- [Access this document on our course site!](#)

How the land of Englonð was fyrst named Albyon/And
by what encheson it was so named

How the land of Englonð was fyrst named Albyon/And
by what encheson it was so named

How the land of Englonð was fyrst named Albyon/And
by what encheson it was so named

How the land of Englonð was fyrst named Albyon/And
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¶ How the land of Englonð was fyrst named Albyon/And
by what encheson it was so named

¶ How the land of Englonð was fyrst named Albyon/And
by what encheson it was so named

- <¶> is a symbol used to mark off these lines as a heading
- <f> is simply the way <s> was written (except at the end of a word)
- </> is a generalized punctuation mark which mostly sets apart clauses.

- *Albyon* is an old name for England, now spelled Albion
- *encheson* is a Middle English word meaning 'cause,' 'purpose,' or 'reason.'
- Mark off and look up unfamiliar words. OED, Middle English Compendium, even Google if all else fails.

¶ How the land of England was first named Albion/And
why it was so named

In the noble land of Sirrie/ther Was a noble kyng & myghty &
a man of grete renōme/that me callid Dioclisian, that well & wor
thely hym gouerned & ruled thurgh his noble chyualrye/so that
he cōquered off the lande about...

In the noble land of Sirrie/ther was a noble kyng & myghty &
a man of grete renōme/that me callid Dioclisian, that well & wor
thely hym gouerned & ruled thurgh his noble chyualrye/

- & = <&>
- r = <r> after some letters, including <o>

In the noble land of Sirrie/ther was a noble kyng & myghty &
a man of grete renōme/that me callid Dioclisian, that well & wor
thely hym gouerned & ruled thurgh his noble chyualrye/so that

- <u> and <v> were interchangeable
- <~> over a vowel indicated a following nasal, <n> or <m>

In the noble land of Sirrie/ther Was a noble kyng & myghty &
a man of grete renōme/that me callid Dioclisian, that Well & wor
thely hym gouerned & ruled thurgh his noble chyualrye/so that
he cōquered off the lande about ...

In the noble land of Sirrie/ther was a noble kyng & myghty &
a man of grete renōme/that me callid Dioclisian, that well & wor
thely hym gouerned & ruled thurgh his noble chyualrye/so that

- *Sirrie* = Syria
- *renōme* is *renomme*, a Middle English word meaning 'renown'
- *Dioclisian* is *Diocletian*, the Roman emperor
- *thurgh* is *through* (metathesis moved the /r/ over time)

In the noble land of Syria / there was a noble king & mighty &
a man of great renown/ that I called Diocletian, that well & wor-
thily he governed & ruled through his noble chivalry/so that

Unusual characters

- <§> is a punctuation mark which can be used to set off a heading
- <f> is how <s> was written except at the end of a word
- </> is a punctuation mark which can be used to separate clauses
- & is the same as <&>
- r̄ is the same as <r>, and usually follows <o> or other round-looking vowels
- <~> over a vowel means either <n> or <m> follow it

Unusual spellings

- <u> and <v> are interchangeable
- <y> is often used in place of <i>



In Primis that one father
Rosimonde, dwellyng in
Farneham Parishe, be-
yng a widower, and also
a daughter of his, are both
Witches or Inchanters,
which Rosimōd she saith
hath and can transforme hymself by Diuelishe
meanes, into the shape and likenesse of any
beaste whatsoever he will.



2 Item, that one Mother Dutton dwellyng
A.v. within

I

n Primis that one father
Rosimonde, dwellyng in
Farneham Parishe, be-
yng a widower, and also
a daughter of his, are both
Witches or Inchanters,
which Rosimōd she saith
hath and can transforme hymself by Diuelishe
meanes, into the shape and likenesse of any
beaste whatsoever he will.

Reading Early Modern English

- Good news – not all Early Modern printing was done with a blackletter typeface.
- Many of the orthographic conventions remained.

A Relation of a terrible Monster

called a Toad-fish, &c.

GOD sheweth his wonders in the deep, (saith the royall Prophet) but those wonders are never without wonder, when once they leave their wonted stations, and come (upon what message God knows) to visit us in an unknowne world: their shapes being as miraculous to us, as our element unnaturall unto them. But to the purpose. *Friday morning, July 15.* between 4. and 5. of the clock in the morning, a little above *Wollage*, one *Thomas West*, casting his net upon the coming in of the tide, for Salmon, upon the drawing in of the net, (whose weight and difficulty in dragging portended to him good tidings) on a sudden he found a strange alteration: he sees in the net a Fiend, not a Fish; at the least a Monster, not an ordinary creature. Had not his companion had a better resolution, he would rather have been rid of his net, then troubled with his guest, so deeply was he struck with the odious shape of it. I now proceed to its shape and dimensions. It is by the vote of divers Gentlemen of great quality that went to see it, such a monstrous creature as scarce can be beleaved ever to have been seen: this morning brought alive into *Glove-Alley* in *Kings street*. It is called a *Toad-fish*, and with good reason; for the head and eyes, when it lyes upon its belly, doe perfectly resemble a *Toad*. But here lyes the wonder, turne him up, or but a little raise his head, and you shall behold the perfect breast and chest of a man: nay you may evidently tell

Workshop

In groups, choose one of the following readings on our course site:

1. The Shyppe of Fooles (1509)
2. The Examination and Confession of Certaine Wytches (1566)
3. A Rehearsall Both Straung and True (1579)
4. The Widowes Treasure (1588) ←
5. A Briefe and True Relation (1602) ←
6. A True Relation (1608) ←
7. A Relation of a Terrible Monster (1642)
8. The Witches of Huntingdon (1646)
9. The Discovery of Witches (1647)
10. The Dukes Desk Newly Broken Vp (1661) ←

Titles in green here are printed in blackletter.
Titles shown in black might be easier to read.

This has healing recipes.

These two are early descriptions of Virginia.

This has healing recipes.

1. Read through one or two pages of the document. (Skip the prologues, where applicable.)
2. Make note of unfamiliar words and of stumbling blocks.
3. Tell us about the document – what is it about?

Blog Post #6

You will choose one of the Early Modern texts discussed in class on Wednesday, 21 October, and with it, complete the following five steps:

- (1) Choose a passage of about 75 words in this text.
- (2) Take a screenshot of that passage, and include that screenshot in your post.
- (3) Transcribe that passage (i.e. retype it) in the body of your post. Do not modernize spellings or punctuation, but retype it with historic spellings intact, with the exception that you should replace the long s, <f>, with <s>. Include a citation below this transcription.
- (4) Underline or **bold** any unfamiliar words in the transcription. Try to find their definitions in the Oxford English Dictionary online or another reputable source, and include your findings below your transcription.
- (5) List your references, i.e. the source for your passage and any dictionaries that you used. (I included the citations to use for each text on our website.)

Due by 11:59pm on Wednesday, 28 October.

For an example of how to do this, see our *Blog Post Guidelines*, on our class website!