

*William Caxton and his critics: A critical reappraisal of Caxton's contributions to the enrichment of the English language (Brewster House typographical series) [Curt F Buhler] on blog.quintoapp.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers.*

Before the fifteenth century the manor had passed into other hands, but offshoots of the family appear to have been still settled in the neighbourhood and in Essex. The argument is of little value, however, because the manufacture of cloth was the leading Kentish industry in the fifteenth century, and well-to-do parents invariably endeavoured to apprentice their sons to London mercers. In one Oliver Causton was buried at the church of St. The great printer was settled in Westminster at the latter date, and the William Caxton then buried may have been his father; but nothing is known for certain. His parents, whatever their names and condition, gave Caxton some education. Assuming that he was sixteen years old on becoming an apprentice it is not likely that he would be older Caxton would have been born in Caxton, writing about prologue to the Recuyell, speaks of himself as an old man. Madden and others therefore insist that Caxton could not then have been less than sixty years old, and suggest the date as the year of his birth, but many considerations conflict with this inference. In he became surety in behalf of another English merchant for the payment of 1. On 16 April Edward IV granted the Merchant Adventurers an association of English merchants at home and abroad a new charter for the better government of the English merchants settled in the Low Countries, and permission was given them to appoint a governor at Bruges. His functions were highly responsible. With a small jury of fellow-merchants he decided all disputes among English merchants in the Low Countries; he regulated and personally overlooked the importation and exportation of merchandise, and he corresponded with the English government on commercial matters. But the negotiations proved unsuccessful; the treaty was not renewed, and Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy, excluded all English-made cloth from his dominions, while the English government retaliated by prohibiting the importation of Flemish goods. The English merchants endeavoured to override these new laws by smuggling their merchandise into England, and the Earl of Warwick in ordered Caxton to enforce penalties against the offenders. The death of Duke Philip 15 June and the accession of Charles the Bold placed matters on a better footing. Caxton appears to have found time for travelling and for literary pursuits in these busy years. But this is the last date at which he appears to have been fulfilling the duties of his commercial office. The English princess who had become Duchess of Burgundy in showed Caxton much attention from her first arrival in the Low Countries, and when her brother Edward IV took refuge in Flanders in October from the successful rebellion of the Earl of Warwick, there is little doubt that Caxton was brought into personal relations with him. Before March 1475 Caxton had wholly relinquished his commercial pursuits for the household service of the duchess. Doubtless this change was due to an increasing desire on his part for leisure in which to essay various literary enterprises. This, the first English book printed, gives no indication of time or place, and the date and the exact circumstances of its publication have been, in the absence of precise evidence, the subject of much controversy. At Bruges there lived a skilful caligrapher named Colard Mansion, who set up a press in that city for the first time about 1474. That Caxton and Mansion were acquainted with one another is not disputed. Madden suggests that Caxton and Mansion were fellow-students of the art of printing at Cologne some time between 1465 and 1470, and this is very probable. In 1471 Caxton left Bruges to practise his newly acquired art in his native country, and on 18 Nov. The copy in the Rylands Library supplies the day of the month. It is therefore probable that Caxton brought to Westminster his printing apparatus from Bruges. From 1471 to 1476 Caxton was busily employed in printing and translating. His industry while in England almost baffles conception. He printed in fourteen years more than eighteen thousand pages, nearly all of folio size, and nearly eighty separate books, some of which passed through two editions, and a few through three. It is quite possible that Machlinia and Treveris also early English printers were his workmen, but there is no evidence on the point. In any case his assistants hardly appear to have been numerous or skilled enough to have relieved Caxton of even much mechanical labour. The amount of his work as a translator is even more remarkable. His knowledge of French was very thorough, and the number of Latin books he undertook leaves little doubt that he was also acquainted with that

language. As a voluminous translator Caxton did something to fix the literary language of the sixteenth century. He was never very literal; he interpolated some passages and paraphrased others. Not unnaturally his vocabulary borrows much from the French, but his style is idiomatic and rarely reminds the reader that the work before him is other than an original composition. On 15 June King Edward gave him 20l. Earl Rivers and the Earl of Worcester were not only intimate friends of Caxton, but translated books for his press, and Margaret, countess of Richmond, and Henry Bourchier, earl of Essex, showed him many attentions. William, earl of Arundel, allowed him a buck every summer and a doe in winter. Sir John Fastolf eagerly purchased his books, and many rich mercers were his fastest friends. In the parish of St. He audited the parochial accounts for each year from to There is no entry of his death accessible, but the St. The printer was buried in the church of St. In a stained-glass window was also set up in his honour by the London printers and publishers, and upon it is emblazoned an inscription by Lord Tennyson. Caxton married probably about Maud Caxton, who was buried at St. In the colophons of seven books Caxton describes himself as printing or translating in Westminster Abbey; in other books he merely states that they were printed at Westminster. There is, however, no proof that Esteney showed Caxton any special favour. On the arrival of the sheets at Westminster Caxton added a leaf with his device upon it, and published the work at Westminster in The whole is enclosed in floral borders. Although no other suggestion has been offered, this looks too fantastic to be probable. There is no authentic portrait of Caxton. The print from which it is in both cases inaccurately copied belonged to John Bagford [q. Although Faithorne and Bagford pretended that it was an authentic representation of the great printer, Dr. Dibdin discovered that it was in reality a reproduction of the portrait of an Italian poet, Burchiello, which is prefixed to the edition small octavo of his poems. Caxton printed on paper made in most cases in the Low Countries, and very rarely used vellum. He employed from first to last movable types of the Gothic character, but his type is copied so closely from the calligraphy of his time that many of his books have been mistaken for manuscript. He often renewed his fount, and each fount that he employed differed in some respect from its predecessor. Caxton never mixed his founts in his books. The earliest fount, evidently imitated from contemporary French handwriting, was only used in Bruges. The fifth fount, in use from to , has large Lombardic capitals, and otherwise resembles the third fount. The sixth and last fount, in use from to , is not unlike the first fount. The sign or a coloured capital often indicates the beginning of a new sentence. The semicolon was unknown to Caxton, and commas are only represented by short short comma or long lines. The pages were never numbered, but bore at the bottom a signature, a j, a i j, and so on. The binding usually consisted of a stiff piece of parchment with the edges turned in, and often filled out with waste proof sheets. The same woodcut is often used in different books, and to illustrate different subject-matter. It is evident that Caxton employed several artists. Sure signs of a genuine Caxton are the absence 1 of title-pages, 2 of Roman or italic type, 3 of ordinary commas, 4 of catchwords at the foot of the page. The British Museum has no less than eighty-three Caxtons, but of these twenty-five are duplicates. Lord Spencer has fifty-seven separate works at Althorp. The Cambridge University Library has forty-two separate works, many of them unique, the Bodleian thirty-four, and the Duke of Devonshire twenty-five. Thirty-eight of the works or editions known to have been printed by Caxton are extant only in fragments. Henry Bradshaw was on many occasions equally fortunate, and to his bibliographical genius the Cambridge University Library owes the possession of its many unique Caxtons and unique Caxton fragments. In the four hundredth anniversary of the publication of the first English-printed book in England was celebrated by a festival service in St. The following is a list of the books printed by Caxton. The second edition was reproduced in facsimile by Vincent Figgins in The first edition was reproduced from Mr. A few leaves were facsimiled for private distribution by Mr. Blades Beedham, Caxton Reproductions, p. Reproduced for private distribution by Mr. The second edition was reprinted for the Roxburghe Club. Fabricius, Codex Apocryphus Novi Testamenti, i. The first edition was reprinted by Dr. Furnivall for the Early English Text Society in Queen Anelida and False Arcyte: There seems, however, no doubt that the work was undertaken by William of Worcester [q. A copy of this work at St. It has been reprinted by the Roxburghe Club. This book has been very frequently reprinted, and is still popular as the source of all the numerous English poetic versions of the Arthurian romance. Reprinted by the Early English Text Society in â€”2. Reprinted for the Roxburghe Club in One copy in British Museum is on vellum.

Reproduced in photolithography in The original has not been identified. There is no proof that Caxton was personally concerned in their publication. The following books, often attributed to Caxton, are more probably the work of Wynkyn de Worde, viz.:

Chapter 2 : William Caxton: Bibliography

See more William Caxton and His Critics by Curt F. Buhl [Email to friends](#) [Share on Facebook - opens in a new window or tab](#) [Share on Twitter - opens in a new window or tab](#) [Share on Pinterest - opens in a new window or tab](#).

Origins[edit] Chaucer as a pilgrim from the Ellesmere manuscript Geoffrey Chaucer was born in London sometime around 1340, though the precise date and location of his birth remain unknown. His father and grandfather were both London vintners ; several previous generations had been merchants in Ipswich. His family name derives from the French *chausseur*, meaning "shoemaker". Career[edit] While records concerning the lives of his contemporary friends, William Langland and the Pearl Poet , are practically non-existent, since Chaucer was a public servant, his official life is very well documented, with nearly five hundred written items testifying to his career. The countess was married to Lionel, Duke of Clarence , the second surviving son of the king, Edward III , and the position brought the teenage Chaucer into the close court circle, where he was to remain for the rest of his life. In 1358, he was captured during the siege of Rheims. Around 1360, Chaucer married Philippa de Roet. It is uncertain how many children Chaucer and Philippa had, but three or four are most commonly cited. His son, Thomas Chaucer , had an illustrious career, as chief butler to four kings, envoy to France, and Speaker of the House of Commons. He became a member of the royal court of Edward III as a valet de chambre , yeoman , or esquire on 20 June 1369, a position which could entail a wide variety of tasks. His wife also received a pension for court employment. He travelled abroad many times, at least some of them in his role as a valet. Two other literary stars of the era were in attendance: Jean Froissart and Petrarch. Around this time, Chaucer is believed to have written *The Book of the Duchess* in honour of Blanche of Lancaster , the late wife of John of Gaunt, who died in 1369 of the plague. Numerous scholars such as Skeat, Boitani, and Rowland [12] suggested that, on this Italian trip, he came into contact with Petrarch or Boccaccio. They introduced him to medieval Italian poetry , the forms and stories of which he would use later. Later documents suggest it was a mission, along with Jean Froissart, to arrange a marriage between the future King Richard II and a French princess, thereby ending the Hundred Years War. If this was the purpose of their trip, they seem to have been unsuccessful, as no wedding occurred. It has been speculated that it was Hawkwood on whom Chaucer based his character the Knight in the *Canterbury Tales*, for a description matches that of a 14th-century condottiere. A possible indication that his career as a writer was appreciated came when Edward III granted Chaucer "a gallon of wine daily for the rest of his life" for some unspecified task. Chaucer continued to collect the liquid stipend until Richard II came to power, after which it was converted to a monetary grant on 18 April 1381. Chaucer obtained the very substantial job of comptroller of the customs for the port of London, which he began on 8 June 1381. His life goes undocumented for much of the next ten years, but it is believed that he wrote or began most of his famous works during this period. He was mentioned in law papers of 4 May 1382, involved in the raptus of Cecilia Champaigne. He is thought to have started work on *The Canterbury Tales* in the early 1380s. He survived the political upheavals caused by the Lords Appellants , despite the fact that Chaucer knew some of the men executed over the affair quite well. It may have been a difficult job, but it paid well: He was granted an annual pension of twenty pounds by Richard II in 1382. The last few records of his life show his pension renewed by the new king, and his taking of a lease on a residence within the close of Westminster Abbey on 24 December 1382. The last mention of Chaucer is on 5 June 1386, when some monies owed to him were paid. He is believed to have died of unknown causes on 25 October 1400, but there is no firm evidence for this date, as it comes from the engraving on his tomb, erected more than one hundred years after his death. A Medieval Mystery â€”that he was murdered by enemies of Richard II or even on the orders of his successor Henry IV, but the case is entirely circumstantial. Relationship to John of Gaunt[edit] Chaucer was a close friend of John of Gaunt , the wealthy Duke of Lancaster and father of the future King of England , and served under his patronage. Near the end of their lives Lancaster and Chaucer became brothers-in-law. Although Philippa died c. 1388, Chaucer retorts that "My frend maystow nat reven, blind goddesse" 50 and orders her to take away those who merely pretend to be his friends. The three princes are believed to represent the dukes of Lancaster, York , and Gloucester , and a

portion of line 76, "as three of you or tweyne," to refer to the ordinance of which specified that no royal gift could be authorised without the consent of at least two of the three dukes. Fortune states three times in her response to the plaintiff, "And also, you still have your best friend alive" 32, 40, 48 ; she also references his "beste frend" in the envoy when appealing to his "noblesse" to help Chaucer to a higher estate. A fifth reference is made by "Chaucer as narrator" who rails at Fortune that she shall not take his friend from him. While the envoy playfully hints to Lancaster that Chaucer would certainly appreciate a boost to his status or income, the poem Fortune distinctively shows his deep appreciation and affection for John of Gaunt. Chaucer seems to have respected and admired sincere Christians and to have been one himself , even while he also recognised that many people in the church of his era were venal and corrupt. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. October Learn how and when to remove this template message

Portrait of Chaucer 16th century , f. This would seem to place the writing of *The Book of the Duchess* between the years and Chaucer wrote many of his major works in a prolific period when he held the job of customs comptroller for London to It is believed that in the early s he started the work for which he is best known – *The Canterbury Tales* , a collection of stories told by fictional pilgrims on the road to the cathedral at Canterbury ; tales that would help to shape English literature. *The Canterbury Tales* contrasts with other literature of the period in the naturalism of its narrative, the variety of stories the pilgrims tell and the varied characters who are engaged in the pilgrimage. Many of the stories narrated by the pilgrims seem to fit their individual characters and social standing, although some of the stories seem ill-fitting to their narrators, perhaps as a result of the incomplete state of the work. Chaucer drew on real life for his cast of pilgrims: The many jobs that Chaucer held in medieval society – page, soldier, messenger, valet, bureaucrat, foreman and administrator – probably exposed him to many of the types of people he depicted in the *Tales*. He was able to shape their speech and satirise their manners in what was to become popular literature among people of the same types. Certainly *Troilus and Criseyde* is a middle period work with its reliance on the forms of Italian poetry, little known in England at the time, but to which Chaucer was probably exposed during his frequent trips abroad on court business. In addition, its use of a classical subject and its elaborate, courtly language sets it apart as one of his most complete and well-formed works. However, it is *The Canterbury Tales*, wherein he focuses on English subjects, with bawdy jokes and respected figures often being undercut with humour, that has cemented his reputation. However, while many scholars maintain that Chaucer did indeed translate part of the text of *Roman de la Rose* as *The Romaunt of the Rose* , others claim that this has been effectively disproved. Many of his other works were very loose translations of, or simply based on, works from continental Europe. It is in this role that Chaucer receives some of his earliest critical praise. Although much of the text may have come from other sources, the treatise indicates that Chaucer was versed in science in addition to his literary talents. Furthermore, it contains an example of early European encryption.

Linguistic[edit] Portrait of Chaucer from a manuscript by Thomas Hoccleve , who may have met Chaucer Chaucer wrote in continental accentual-syllabic meter , a style which had developed since around the 12th century as an alternative to the alliterative Anglo-Saxon metre. The poetry of Chaucer, along with other writers of the era, is credited with helping to standardise the London Dialect of the Middle English language from a combination of the Kentish and Midlands dialects. This change in the pronunciation of English, still not fully understood, makes the reading of Chaucer difficult for the modern audience. When it is vocalised, most scholars pronounce it as a schwa. Apart from the irregular spelling, much of the vocabulary is recognisable to the modern reader. Chaucer is also recorded in the Oxford English Dictionary as the first author to use many common English words in his writings. These words were probably frequently used in the language at the time but Chaucer, with his ear for common speech, is the earliest extant manuscript source. Acceptable, alkali, altercation, amble, angrily, annex, annoyance, approaching, arbitration, armless, army, arrogant, arsenic, arc, artillery and aspect are just some of the many English words first attested in Chaucer. Writers of the 17th and 18th centuries, such as John Dryden , admired Chaucer for his stories, but not for his rhythm and rhyme, as few critics could then read Middle English and the text had been butchered by printers, leaving a somewhat unadmirable mess. English[edit] Chaucer is sometimes considered the source of the English vernacular tradition. His achievement for the language can be seen as part of a general historical trend

towards the creation of a vernacular literature, after the example of Dante, in many parts of Europe. Original Text This frere boasteth that he knoweth helle, This friar boasts that he knows hell, And God it woot, that it is litel wonder; And God knows that it is little wonder; Freres and feendes been but lyte asonder. Friars and fiends are seldom far apart. For, pardee, ye han ofte tyme herd telle For, by God, you have oftymes heard tell How that a frere ravysched was to helle How a friar was taken to hell In spirit ones by a visioun; In spirit, once by a vision; And as an angel ladde hym up and down, And as an angel led him up and down, To shewen hym the peynes that the were, To show him the pains that were there, In al the place saugh he nat a frere; In all the place he saw not a friar; Of oother folk he saugh ynowe in wo. Of other folk he saw enough in woe. Unto this angel spak the frere tho: Unto this angel spoke the friar thus: Now, sire, quod he, han freres swich a grace "Now sir", said he, "Have friars such a grace That noon of hem shal come to this place? That none of them come to this place? And unto Satan the angel led him down. Hold up thy tayl, thou sathanas! And every one crept into his arse. He clapte his tayl agayn and lay ful stille. He shut his tail again and lay very still. There are 83 surviving manuscripts of the Canterbury Tales in whole or part alone, along with sixteen of Troilus and Criseyde, including the personal copy of Henry IV. In 1534, John Baron, a tenant farmer in Agmondesham, was brought before John Chadworth, the Bishop of Lincoln, on charges he was a Lollard heretic; he confessed to owning a "boke of the Tales of Caunterburie" among other suspect volumes. October Learn how and when to remove this template message William Caxton, the first English printer, was responsible for the first two folio editions of The Canterbury Tales which were published in 1477 and 1483. Both Caxton editions carry the equivalent of manuscript authority. The collection is actually three separately printed texts, or collections of texts, bound together as one volume. Thynne had a successful career from the 1520s until his death in 1546, when he was one of the masters of the royal household. His editions of Chaucers Works in 1532 and 1534 were the first major contributions to the existence of a widely recognised Chaucerian canon. Thynne represents his edition as a book sponsored by and supportive of the king who is praised in the preface by Sir Brian Tuke. In the 16th and 17th centuries, Chaucer was printed more than any other English author, and he was the first author to have his works collected in comprehensive single-volume editions in which a Chaucer canon began to cohere. As "Chaucerian" works that were not considered apocryphal until the late 19th century, these medieval texts enjoyed a new life, with English Protestants carrying on the earlier Lollard project of appropriating existing texts and authors who seemed sympathetic—or malleable enough to be construed as sympathetic—to their cause. The official Chaucer of the early printed volumes of his Works was construed as a proto-Protestant as the same was done, concurrently, with William Langland and Piers Plowman. Testament of Love also appears to borrow from Piers Plowman. Usk himself was executed as a traitor in 1539. John Foxe took this recantation of heresy as a defence of the true faith, calling Chaucer a "right Wiclevian" and erroneously identifying him as a schoolmate and close friend of John Wycliffe at Merton College, Oxford.

Chapter 3 : William Caxton Facts

Critics of his day had complained about the "ouer curyous termes" used in some of his earlier books, In the Prologue to ENEYDOS, a popular version of Virgil AENEID which Caxton had translated from French into English, the printer-translator responded to these criticisms.

He also translated some 24 books, all but one of which he printed. William Caxton said that he was born in the Weald of Kent, but his exact birthplace is unknown. In he became an apprentice to a prominent London mercer, Robert Large. His success won him an important place in the Merchant Adventurers Company. He became governor of the English Nation, a company of English merchants, at Bruges. Caxton finished his translation during at Cologne, where he also learned the trade of printing. When Caxton returned to Bruges, he and Colard Mansion set up a printing press. There the first book printed in English was made. During his 2 years with Mansion, Caxton also printed his translation of the work of Jacobus de Cessolis, The Game and Playe of the Chesse, a moral treatise on government that he dedicated to the Duke of Clarence. Dissatisfied with his text of the Tales, he issued a second edition about , when he also printed Troilus and Criseyde. About the same time he printed the Confessio amantis by John Gower. One of the most important of these was The Golden Legend, an enormous collection of legends of the saints. As a translator, Caxton had to work with an unsettled medium, the English of his time. Recognizing that "English that is spoken in one shire varyeth from another," he sought, not always successfully, to employ "the common terms that do be daily used. There is a simplified biography by H. Plomer, William Caxton Norman Francis , Caxton: Childs, Edmund Lunniss, William Caxton: Deacon, Richard, A biography of William Caxton: Wynkyn de Worde Society, Painter, George Duncan, William Caxton: Lincoln Cathedral Library, Need a custom written paper? Let our professional writers save your time. Need an original paper?

Chapter 4 : Golden Legend - Wikipedia

William Caxton and his critics. by Curt F. BÄ¼hler starting at \$ *William Caxton and his critics.* has 2 available editions to buy at Alibris.

What is interesting is the fact that the printer chose to publish his books in English which was only in its infancy as a written language. He was faced with an enormous task of deciding what words, spelling, grammar, and even dialect would be used for his publications. History, however, shows that the businessman turned printer helped to cement our language into the form it has today. Caxton wrote what has become a famous story that exemplifies the tangled history of English. A group of London sailors found themselves ashore in Kent after the wind had died and kept their ship from its journey. One of their group, a man named Sheffield, went to a nearby house and asked for some food and rest. And the goode wyf answered, that she coude speke no frenshe. And the merchant was angry, for he also coude speke no frenshe. But wolde have hadde egges, and she understode him not. And thenne at laste a nother sayd that he wolde have eyren. William Caxton used this story to show his readers how difficult it was to publish books in the English language. He was in a rather unique situation; written English was only just picking up popularity and had yet to be solidified into any regular form. He was faced with a multitude of linguistic choices. It would have been easier to print books in Latin because it was the most widely used written language of the day. No matter the language spoken, Latin was commonly the language written. French as a written language was a distant second. Due to ongoing battles with France, French was dropping out of favor as the language of the English nobility. Caxton surveyed the politics of the time and, with keen business sense, decided to take a chance and print in English. Caxton also had to decide which English to use. There were five main versions of the language at the time: English and How it Got That Way. The dialect that was used in Kent could be written: After the Norman Conquest in , all of the rulers of England spoke their native French. During the parliaments of the 14th century, the argument was raised that a French victory would destroy the English language. Although it was so widely used, English held the ignoble reputation as a low or common tongue. Without guidelines, early written English was cobbled together phonetically. All formal education was done in Latin. There were only Latin dictionaries and Latin spellers. Clerks were taught to write in Latin and French. Religious writings and political briefs were only written in Latin and French. If English was written at all, it was done by a provincial household scribe as best as he could. That written English became popular at all was the product of political maneuvering. To maintain his position, and his head, Henry made considerate overtures to the English commoners. In , there was a sudden increase in the publication of English literature and poetry. He allowed documents to remain in their original English rather than being translated into French or Latin. His defeat of the French at Agincourt in encouraged English nationalism. Henry also used English for all his correspondence between government officials and the townspeople. William Caxton weighed the choices open to him as a new printer. Should he print in Latin for the larger continental audience? Should he try to print for the underserved English? When Caxton opened his press in Westminster, he was in his 50s. He was a business man and had already had a fine professional life. He was born in the weald of Kent in . At age 16, he went to apprentice to a merchant named Robert Large. This was a fortunate event. Besides the wool trade, Brugge was also well known for the trade in manuscripts and paintings. Under her patronage, Caxton translated the French work *Recueil des Histories de Troyes* with the intention of printing it in English. Having finished the translation, he went to Cologne to learn how to print his book. He stayed there from to and returned to Brugge the next year to print his *Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye*. This was the first book ever printed in English. In , Caxton hired a Flemish calligrapher named Colard Mansion. They created a new type called Bastarda or Batarde which Caxton used for all his books. It was a type of cursive, Flemish Blackletter. Here is an example of this type from *The Mirrour of the Worlde*, printed in . His shop was named *The Red Pale*. A note must be made here about his choice of location. Westminster was the home of the Chancery, the center for royal correspondence. The Chancery was also the office of the chancellor and his clerks. The Chancery, employing over clerks, introduced English as the language of administration starting in . Their

vocabulary and spelling form is called Chancery Standard. Caxton had been immersed in this form of writing since it was used for most business documents. Since he was most familiar with the structure of Chancery Standard, he felt no reason to use something else for his published popular literary works. Caxton did make a few small changes in spelling. It was left to later publishers to remove it. Caxton, as a businessman, saw the profit to be made by riding the tide of popular favor toward the English language rather than printing the more common Latin texts. He also liked to publish his own writings. His translations were his best works even though they often contained elements winced at by current literary critics: When faced with untranslatable French words, Caxton would adopt the word, hybridize it between the two languages, or just make up a whole new word to use. Some current historians question whether Caxton was the shaper of modern English that he is made out to be. There is also some debate over whether Caxton even cared about standardizing written English shown by the fact that his prefaces contain more stunted English vocabulary than the actual translated works. To his credit, however, Caxton was just using what was familiar to him. Chancery texts contain the same spellings. It seems more accurate to say that he was a bridge between the old style and the modern way of writing that came later. Most importantly, printing in English had never been attempted before; Caxton had to make it up as he went along. Our often convoluted and tiresome spelling can be laid at his feet. While there have been a number of proposed revolutions in our written language, users of English have balked. No matter whether later printers could have done better with English form and spelling, it was William Caxton who established the shape of our language. He is certainly a figure to be honored within the realm of English history. Works Cited Baugh, Albert C. A History of the English Language. William Caxton and his Critics. The Social Text and the Critical Text. The Emergence of Standard English. University Press of Kentucky. The Story of English. November 1997 April

Get this from a library! William Caxton and his critics: a critical reappraisal of Caxton's contributions to the enrichment of the English language, with Caxton's Prologue to Eneydos in facsimile, and rendered into present-day English.

Records place it in the region of 1374, based on the fact that his apprenticeship fees were paid in 1374. Caxton would have been 14 at the date of apprenticeship, but masters often paid the fees late. As other apprentices were left larger sums, it would seem that he was not a senior apprentice at this time. There he was successful in business and became governor of the Company of Merchant Adventurers of London. His trade brought him into contact with Burgundy and it was thus that he became a member of the household of Margaret, Duchess of Burgundy, the third wife of Charles the Bold and sister of two Kings of England: This led to more continental travel, including travel to Cologne, in the course of which he observed the new printing industry and was significantly influenced by German printing. He wasted no time in setting up a printing press in Bruges, in collaboration with a Fleming named Colard Mansion, and the first book to be printed in English was produced in Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye, a translation by Caxton himself. In the epilogue of the book, Caxton tells how his "pen became worn, his hand weary, his eye dimmed" with copying the book by hand, so he "practiced and learnt" how to print it. These books appealed to the English upper classes in the late fifteenth century. Caxton was supported by but not dependent on members of the nobility and gentry. Painter makes numerous references to the year in his book William Caxton: Astor, chairman of the Press Council. He translated a large number of works into English, performing much of the translation and editing work himself. Caxton also translated 26 of the titles himself. His major guiding principle in translating was an honest desire to provide the most linguistically exact replication of foreign language texts into English, but the hurried publishing schedule and his inadequate skill as a translator often led to wholesale transference of French words into English and numerous misunderstandings. Caxton was a technician rather than a writer, and he often faced dilemmas concerning language standardisation in the books that he printed. He wrote about this subject in the preface to his Eneydos. Caxton is credited with standardising the English language through printing—that is, homogenising regional dialects and largely adopting the London dialect. This facilitated the expansion of English vocabulary, the regularisation of inflection and syntax, and a widening gap between the spoken and the written word. Richard Pynson started printing in London in 1494 and favoured what came to be called Chancery Standard, largely based on the London dialect. Pynson was a more accomplished stylist than Caxton and consequently pushed the English language further toward standardisation.

Chapter 6 : William Caxton Biography - Childhood, Life Achievements & Timeline

Get this from a library! William Caxton and his critics: a critical reappraisal of Caxton's contributions to the enrichment of the English language. [Curt F BÄ¼hler].

Science and Its Times: William Caxton British Printer I n the late fifteenth century, as printing presses on the continent were gaining prominence, one man, William Caxton, had the foresight to bring printed works to England. Although his career began in textiles, Caxton retired from the textile business before learning the art of printing. He set up a printing business in Bruges in , the same year he printed the first known book in the English language , Recuyell of the Histories of Troie, which he translated from the French. In Caxton returned to England and set up his printing and publishing business near Westminster Abbey. He learned the export trade in textiles and, around , moved to Bruges, Belgium modern Brussels , where he developed a successful trade business. In Caxton was appointed Governor of the English Nation at Bruges, an appointment for an organization created by the Mercers and the Merchant Adventurers. After some time devoted to diplomatic missions for this organization, Caxton retired from commerce and became secretary of the household of Princess Margaret of York, the Duchess of Burgundy and sister of King Edward IV of England. The Duchess was a noted scholar of literature, and she encouraged Caxton to begin producing fine manuscripts, which he copied by hand, making translations from the French. In Caxton traveled to Cologne to learn the art of printing. He returned to Bruges and in set up a printing business with partner Colard Mansion, calligrapher and bookseller, whom it is thought Caxton taught the art of printing. The same year, the first known book published in the English language , Recuyell of the Histories of Troie by Raoul le Fevre, was produced. The duo also printed, in , The Game and Playe of the Chesse Moralised, before Caxton moved his printing and publishing business to England. In the vicinity of Westminster Abbey , conveniently near the court and members of Parliament he expected to serve, Caxton established his printing and publishing business in In December he produced the first piece of printing done in England, a Letter of Indulgence a collection of rules showing how to deal with the concurrence of religious festivals. In November Caxton produced the first dated book printed in England, The Dictes or Sayengis of the Philosophres, translated from French, which had been translated from Latin. Caxton did much to promote English literature , producing works from Chaucer, such as The Canterbury Tales which he published in and, in second edition, in and Troilus and Creseide, Gower and Lydgate, Malory, and others. Before his death in , when Caxton left his press to his former apprentice and current foreman, the publisher produced about printed works, including 74 books, of which 20 were his own translations from Latin, French, and Dutch he even published a French-English dictionary. Because he adopted the language of London and the court, Caxton had a tremendous impact on fixing a permanent standard for written English. The products of his press, which included many of the first editions of the literary masterpieces of the Middle Ages , hold an eternal place of honor in English literature. Understanding the Social Significance of Scientific Discovery. Retrieved November 09, from Encyclopedia. Then, copy and paste the text into your bibliography or works cited list. Because each style has its own formatting nuances that evolve over time and not all information is available for every reference entry or article, Encyclopedia.

Chapter 7 : Assess William Caxton's contribution to the English Language Essay Example | Graduateway

William Caxton and the Shaping of Written English. During the early part of the 15th century, William Caxton took his newly learned trade of printing and set up shop in his native England.

William Caxton, born in the Weald of Kent, was apprenticed to a London mercer. His 1st literary labour was a translation of a French romance, which he entitled *The Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye*, and which he finished in 1400. About this time he learned the art of printing, and, after being in the service of Margaret Duchess of Burgundy, an English princess, returned to his native country and set up at Westminster in his printing press, the first in England. Here was produced the first book printed in England, *The Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers*. Caxton obtained Royal favour, printed from 80 to separate works many of them translations of his own, and died almost with pen in hand in 1491. His style is clear and idiomatic. He was born somewhere in the Weald of Kent, perhaps at Tenterden. The name, which was apparently pronounced Cauxton, is identical with Causton, the name of a manor in the parish of Hadlow, and was a fairly common surname in the 15th century. Blades, however, inferred that in 1400, when he was apprenticed to Robert Large, he would not have been more than 16 years of age. This would place his birth in 1384. He was probably sent direct to Bruges, then the central foreign market of the Anglo-Flemish trade, for he presently entered business there on his own account. In that year he was appointed, together with Sir Richard Whitehill, to negotiate with Philip, duke of Burgundy, the renewal of a treaty concerning the wool trade, which was about to expire. In his diplomatic mission in he had been associated with Lord Scales, afterwards Earl Rivers and one of his chief patrons, and at the Burgundian court he must have come in touch with Edward IV. His disciple, Wynkyn de Worde, says that he was taught at Cologne, probably during a visit there in 1400, recorded in the preface to the *Recuyell*. Caxton ceased to be a member of the gild of St John a gild of illuminators in 1400. His 2nd book, *The Game and Playe of Chesse*, from the *Liber de ludo scacchorum* of Jacobus de Cessolis through the French of Jehan de Vignay, was finished in 1409, and printed soon after. The last book printed by Mansion and Caxton at Bruges was the *Quatre derrenieres choses*, an anonymous treatise usually known as *De quattuor novissimis*. From this time until his death in 1491 Caxton was busy writing and printing. His most important original work is an 8th book added to the *Polychronicon* vol. For the many service-books which he printed there was no doubt a sure sale, and he met the taste of the upper classes by the tales of chivalry which issued regularly from his press. It is based on the lives of the saints as given in the 13th century *Legenda aurea* of Jacobus de Voragine, but Caxton chiefly used existing French and English versions for his compilation. The book is illustrated by 70 woodcuts, and Caxton says he was only encouraged to persevere in his laborious and expensive task by the liberality of William, earl of Arundel. His books have no title-pages, and from onwards are usually adorned with a curious device, consisting of the letters W. The flourishes on the trade mark have been fancifully interpreted as S. This device was first used in an edition of the Sarum missal, printed for Caxton by George Maynial in Paris, and was subsequently adopted with small alterations by his successor at the Westminster press, Wynkyn de Worde. The first of his books containing woodcut illustrations was his *Myrrour of the World*, translated from Vincent de Beauvais, which has diagrams and pictures for the assistance of young students. He had used a woodcut initial letter in his broadside *Indulgence* printed in 1400. Painter makes numerous references to the year in his book *William Caxton: He translated a large number of works into English. He translated and edited a large amount of the work himself. Caxton is credited with printing as many as books, 87 of which were different titles. Caxton also translated 26 of the titles himself. His major guiding principle in translating was an honest desire to provide the most linguistically exact replication of foreign language texts into English, but the hurried publishing schedule and inadequate skill as a translator often led to wholesale transference of French words into English and numerous misunderstandings. Caxton was a technician rather than a writer and he often faced dilemmas concerning language standardization in the books he printed. He wrote about this subject in the preface to his *Eneydos*. In the year before his death he complained in the preface to his *Eneydos* of the changing state of the English language, a condition of things which he did as much as any man to remedy. This facilitated the expansion of English vocabulary, the development of inflection and syntax and the*

ever-widening gap between the spoken and the written word. However, Richard Pynson , who started printing in London in or and who favoured Chancery Standard , was a more accomplished stylist and consequently pushed the English language further toward standardisation. It is asserted that the spelling ghost with the silent letter h was adopted by Caxton due to the influence of Dutch spelling habits. Web, July 1, Chisholm, Hugh, ed George Painter, William Caxton - Biography.

Chapter 8 : William Caxton - Biography

William Caxton and his critics: a critical reappraisal of Caxton's contributions to the enrichment of the English language, with Caxton's prologue to Eneydos in facsimile, and rendered into present-day English Syracuse Univ. Press

Silvester is said of sile or sol which is light, and of terra the earth, as who saith the light of the earth, that is of the church. Or Silvester is said of silvas and of trahens, that is to say he was drawing wild men and hard unto the faith. Or as it is said in glossario, Silvester is to say green, that is to wit, green in contemplation of heavenly things, and a toiler in labouring himself; he was umbrous or shadowous. That is to say he was cold and refrigate from all concupiscence of the flesh, full of boughs among the trees of heaven. The correct derivation is alluded to in the text, but set out in parallel to fanciful ones that lexicographers would consider quite wide of the mark. Even the "correct" explanations silvas, "forest", and the mention of green boughs are used as the basis for an allegorical interpretation. Medieval view of Muhammad[edit] The chapter "St Pelagius, Pope and the History of the Lombards" begins with the story of St Pelagius, then proceeds to touch upon events surrounding the origin and history of the Lombards in Europe leading up to the 7th century when the story of Muhammad begins. Agatha to supernaturally repel an eruption of Mount Etna: And for to prove that she had prayed for the salvation of the country, at the beginning of February, the year after her martyrdom, there arose a great fire, and came from the mountain toward the city of Catania and burnt the earth and stones, it was so fervent. Then ran the paynims to the sepulchre of S. Agatha and took the cloth that lay upon her tomb, and held it abroad against the fire, and anon on the ninth day after, which was the day of her feast, ceased the fire as soon as it came to the cloth that they brought from her tomb, showing that our Lord kept the city from the said fire by the merits of S. Barbara , a virgin who turned to Christianity against the will of her pagan father, is mostly known from the Golden Legend. Many of his stories have no other known source. A typical example of the sort of story related, also involving St. Silvester, shows the saint receiving miraculous instruction from Saint Peter in a vision that enables him to exorcise a dragon: In this time it happed that there was at Rome a dragon in a pit, which every day slew with his breath more than three hundred men. Then came the bishops of the idols unto the emperor and said unto him: O thou most holy emperor, sith the time that thou hast received Christian faith the dragon which is in yonder fosse or pit slayeth every day with his breath more than three hundred men. Then sent the emperor for S. Silvester and asked counsel of him of this matter. Silvester answered that by the might of God he promised to make him cease of his hurt and blesure of this people. Silvester put himself to prayer, and S. Peter appeared to him and said: Our Lord Jesus Christ which was born of the Virgin Mary, crucified, buried and arose, and now sitteth on the right side of the Father, this is he that shall come to deem and judge the living and the dead, I commend thee Sathanas that thou abide him in this place till he come. Then thou shalt bind his mouth with a thread, and seal it with thy seal, wherein is the imprint of the cross. Then thou and the two priests shall come to me whole and safe, and such bread as I shall make ready for you ye shall eat. Peter had said, S. And when he came to the pit, he descended down one hundred and fifty steps, bearing with him two lanterns, and found the dragon, and said the words that S. Peter had said to him, and bound his mouth with the thread, and sealed it, and after returned, and as he came upward again he met with two enchanteres which followed him for to see if he descended, which were almost dead of the stench of the dragon, whom he brought with him whole and sound, which anon were baptized, with a great multitude of people with them. Thus was the city of Rome delivered from double death, that was from the culture and worshiping of false idols, and from the venom of the dragon. Perception and legacy[edit] Legenda Aurea, Editions and translations[edit] Saints Primus and Felician , from a 14th-century manuscript of the Golden Legend The critical edition of the Latin text has been edited by Giovanni Paolo Maggioni Florence: In , the Caxton version was updated into more modern English by Frederick Startridge Ellis , and published in seven volumes.

Chapter 9 : Biographies on William Caxton | Research papers on William Caxton

William Caxton's date of birth is unknown, and his parentage is uncertain. He was born somewhere in the Weald of Kent, perhaps at Tenterden. The name, which was apparently pronounced Cauxton, is identical with Causton, the name of a manor in the parish of Hadlow, and was a fairly common surname in the 15th century.

William Caxton Quotes The first English printer, William Caxton , printed a total of about different works. He also translated some 24 books, all but one of which he printed. William Caxton said that he was born in the Weald of Kent, but his exact birthplace is unknown. In he became an apprentice to a prominent London mercer, Robert Large. His success won him an important place in the Merchant Adventurers Company. He became governor of the English Nation, a company of English merchants, at Bruges. Caxton finished his translation during at Cologne, where he also learned the trade of printing. When Caxton returned to Bruges, he and Colard Mansion set up a printing press. There the first book printed in English was made. During his 2 years with Mansion, Caxton also printed his translation of the work of Jacobus de Cessolis, The Game and Playe of the Chesse, a moral treatise on government that he dedicated to the Duke of Clarence. Dissatisfied with his text of the Tales, he issued a second edition about , when he also printed Troilus and Criseyde. About the same time he printed the Confessio amantis by John Gower. One of the most important of these was The Golden Legend, an enormous collection of legends of the saints. As a translator, Caxton had to work with an unsettled medium, the English of his time. Recognizing that "English that is spoken in one shire varyeth from another," he sought, not always successfully, to employ "the common terms that do be daily used. There is a simplified biography by H. Plomer, William Caxton Additional Biography Sources Blake, N. Norman Francis , Caxton: Childs, Edmund Lunness, William Caxton: Deacon, Richard, A biography of William Caxton: Wynkyn de Worde Society, Painter, George Duncan, William Caxton: Lincoln Cathedral Library, Encyclopedia of World Biography. Copyright The Gale Group, Inc.