

INTRODUCTION: THE MANUSCRIPT AND *CLEANNESS*

I. The Manuscript

British Library MS. Cotton Nero A.x. is the only known extant Middle English manuscript containing the anonymous poems, *Pearl*, *Cleanness*, *Patience*, and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. As noted by A.S.G. Edwards, the history of the manuscript before the seventeenth century is unknown (“Manuscript” 198), but it has been suggested that the manuscript was written for the Stanley family of Staffordshire and Cheshire (Wilson, “Sir Gawain” 308-16).¹ Additionally, several scholars have suggested that the manuscript was in some way connected with the Massey family,² and in 1975 William Vantuono argued that the name “J. Macy” appears in the decorative penwork on fols 62v and 114r. Like Edwards (“Manuscript” 198), I cannot discern the name.

The first presumed owner of the manuscript was Henry Savile, of Bank in Yorkshire. According to Israel Gollancz, Savile (1568-1617) was “a great collector who secured rich spoils from the Northern monasteries and abbeys” (*Facsimile* 7). Savile’s ownership of Cotton Nero A.x. is based on a listing in one of Savile’s catalogues (British Library MS. Harley 1879) in which a manuscript containing *Pearl* is described: “An owld booke in English verse beginning Perle pleasants to princes...” (qtd. in Gollancz, *Patience* 3). When later owned by the antiquary Sir Robert Cotton (1571-1631) the manuscript was bound with other unrelated manuscripts. According to the 1696 *Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Cottonian Library*, the first two items include a Latin

¹ A.S.G. Edwards provides a thorough description of the manuscript that is beyond the scope of this edition. See Edwards (“Manuscript” 197-219).

² See B. Nolan and D. Farley Hills (295-302), Peterson (257-66), and Peterson and Wilson (49-56).

oration by Justus de Justis on John Chedworth, and a theological excerpt dated 16 July 1468:

1. Oratio Justi de Justis de laudibus Joannis Chedevortensis, in qua Britanniam ejus patriam quoque laudat. Sequitur
2. Epistola ejusdem ad eundem Joannem Chedworth, Archidiaconum Lincolniensem, qui tunc erat Paduae, data ex Verona, 16. Julii 1468. (Smith 49)

The third item in the catalogue is listed as one ‘old English poem’:

3. Poema in lingua veteri Anglicana, in quo sub insomnii figmento, ad religionem, pietatem, & vitam probam horatur Auctor; interspersis quibusdam historicis, & picturis, majoris illustrationis gratia, subinde additis. (Smith 49-50)

The other portions of the miscellany in the Cotton catalogue of 1696 include various theological excerpts and a note of a funeral oration for Ranulf[us] who was the abbot of Ramesey between 1231 to 1253 (Madden 1):

4. Miscellaneus tractatulus de aff[e]ctione Dei:...
5. Meditationes quaedam piae, ut puto, S. Bernardi, super variis argumentis...
6. Epitaphium Ranulfi, Abbatis de Ramesey. (Smith 50)

Gollancz suggests that Sir Frederic Madden, keeper of manuscripts in the British Museum, may have been the first to observe properly, in the introduction to his 1839 publication of romances concerned with Sir Gawain, that the section listed in the catalogue as item 3 contains four distinct poems (*Facsimile 7*). The manuscript entered the collection of the British Museum in 1753. The section including *Pearl*, *Cleanness*, *Patience*, and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* was rebound without the unrelated Latin

materials (with which it had been bound for Cotton's library) in 1964,³ and is now usually described as British Library MS. Cotton Nero A.x. article 3.⁴

The manuscript is a small quarto volume that measures approximately 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches by 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Seven gatherings of twelve are gathered between an initial bifolium and a concluding gathering of four for a total of ninety vellum leaves (I², II-VIII¹², IX⁴). The manuscript shows signs of cropping, though a date is not known. The manuscript has two sequences of foliation, but both sequences number the entire composite manuscript and predate its 1964 rebinding (Edwards, "Manuscript" 197n.1). The earlier foliation, which this edition uses, is in ink, designating leaves from 37 to 126, while a more recent numbering system, numbering the leaves from 41 to 130, has been made in pencil. The foliation for the four poems is as follows: *Pearl* 39r-55v, *Cleanness* 57r-82r, *Patience* 83r-90r, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* 91r-124v. There are catchwords at the bottom of 50v, 62v, 74v, 86v, 98v, 110v, and 122v. The modern prefatory pages bound with article 3 when the parts were separated in 1964 include a list, written in various hands, of studies concerned with the manuscript and/or its contents, preceded by the statement, "For printed text or notices of this MS see:..." but this list has not been kept up to date. The initial page also displays a piece of vellum with the notation, "The patch of vellum on the facing page was removed from f.86, where it had been used to repair two natural holes, when the MS. was rebound in November 1964."

Cotton Nero A.x. includes twelve brightly coloured full-page illustrations.

Traditional academic opinion has considered the illustrations "of crude workmanship"

³ While this manuscript description is indebted to Edward's description ("Manuscript" 197-219), the physical details included have been confirmed in my visits to the British Library.

⁴ The manuscript is however referred to as Cotton Nero A.x. throughout this edition.

(Gollancz, *Facsimile* 9), and “essentially...clumsily coloured line drawings” (Roberts 172). The illustrations may have been drafted and coloured by separate artists, though this is not certain, but it has been generally accepted that they were added to the manuscript some time after its copying (Edwards, “Manuscript” 213; Horrall 195). Four illustrations appear on folios 37r-38v before *Pearl*, two at 56r and 56v before *Cleanness*, two before *Patience* at 82r and 82v, and three at the end of the manuscript, after *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, at 125r, 125v, and 126r.⁵

The text pages of the manuscript have all been visibly ruled, probably in plummet, for thirty-six lines per page; the text area measures approximately 3 ¾ inches by 5 ¾ inches. Importantly, the motto of the Order of the Garter (founded by Edward III, circa 1348), “Hony soyt qui mal pence” appears at end of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, but it is not clear if the inscription is in the same hand as the main scribe’s, nor if the inscription is original to the manuscript. The name ‘Hugo de’ is visible in the upper margins of 91r, but again the connection, if any, to the original copying or copier is not at all clear. In any case, the Garter inscription does provide the earliest possible date for the transcription of the manuscript itself (Edwards, “Manuscript” 198), though palaeographers have given the manuscript a later dating. The manuscript has been copied in darkish brown ink by a single scribe using a script derived from *textura rotunda*, but

⁵ For detailed descriptions of the illustrations, and black and white photographic reproductions, see Edwards (“Manuscript” 202-217). Sarah Horrall’s study on the manuscript’s illustrations includes helpful descriptions of the illustrations, focussing on dress of the figures and possible dates for the drawing of the pictures. Maidie Hilmo’s 2001 and 2004 studies discuss the manuscript’s illustrations in relation to apocalyptic discourse. Paul F. Reichart’s 1997 study also includes detailed descriptions of the illustrations.

incorporating anglicana features.⁶ The script, which has not yet been identified with that in any other manuscript, was characterised as fading by Morris in 1864 (*Sir Gawayne* xx), and can be dated as late fourteenth century (Roberts 172). A corrector's hand, in darker ink than the original, is evident in some passages throughout the manuscript with some important interventions in the text of *Cleanness*. Forty-eight decorated initials in blue and red penwork, and of various sizes, appear throughout.

The relationship between Cotton Nero A.x. and its exemplar(s) is not known, but “it is not a holograph and is clearly separated by some interval from the original transcription of the poems it contains” (Edwards, “Manuscript” 198). It is generally accepted that all of the manuscript's poems were written by the same author (usually called the *Pearl*-poet or the *Gawain*-poet)⁷, but this conclusion is based largely on internal evidence and does not illuminate the questions of who the poet was, or for whom he was writing for. For example, the poems present enough similarities in their use of alliteration and alliterative diction and their presentation of a common sense of intellectual thought and moral preoccupations – notably truth and humility – that many critics believe a single author must be responsible for their composition. But Andrew and Waldron remind us of “the common nature of alliterative phraseology[,] and that judgements of similarity of thought and attitude necessarily have a large subjective element” (16), and David Lawton characterises arguments for common authorship as “cast in intuitive terms or in frank appeals to critical convenience” (9) – therefore the

⁶ For a detailed discussion and analysis of the manuscript's script and hand, see “II: Palaeographic Description of the Cotton Nero Script,” in the “Preface to the Edition,” below.

⁷ The term *Gawain*-poet is used in this study.

case for common authorship based on evidence of similarities in verse and intellectual interests cannot be considered conclusive.

The comparison of the poems' quality of artistic expression has similarly influenced scholarly opinion regarding the poems' order of composition, which is often thought to have been a different order than that of their appearance in the manuscript (Vantuono, *Edition* xix). Osgood's assertion that "[i]nstead of the order, *Pearl*, *Gawain*, *Purity*⁸ and *Patience*; or *Gawain*, *Pearl*, *Purity* and *Patience*; *Purity* and *Patience*, *Pearl*, *Gawain* seems the more probable, at least considering the art and technique of the poems" (xlix), incorporates the general opinion that *Patience* and *Cleanness* were composed before *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and *Pearl*; however, like the argument for common authorship, opinions on the order of composition based on artistic method, while posited with educated conjecture, rely on interpretations that cannot be unconditionally verified, again leaving questions regarding the manuscript and the textual history of its contents unanswered.

The manuscript contains a significant number of scribal errors that can be categorized as "obvious mechanical transcriptional failures – dittography, minim error, and eyeskip" (Edwards, "Manuscript" 199) – which show that Cotton Nero A.x. is a copy of some kind of exemplar, though from this evidence it is not possible to determine the precise relationship between it and the original poems. In fact, it cannot be certain if the poems were originally composed together or if Cotton Nero A.x., or some other earlier manuscript, brought the poems together to be the "collection of works" as it is now generally thought to be. Diverse suggestions for the manuscript's textual history have

⁸ Some scholars refer to *Cleanness* by the title *Purity*. The title *Cleanness* is used in this study.

been made. For example, Gollancz suggests that *Pearl*, *Cleanness*, and *Patience* may have “derived from one type of MS., [and] it seems likely that *Gawain* may have been copied from a MS. of a different type” (*Facsimile* 8-9). Oakden suggests several separate copying stages for each of the poems, before their materialization in Cotton Nero A.x, after classifying and quantifying the poems’ scribal errors (261-63).⁹ But arguments of this sort that take “types” of scribal errors existing in one poem and not another to be indicative of different scribes are misguided. For instance “it is not unreasonable to think that these [errors] are the result of nothing more significant than chance” (McLaughlin 13n.3), and the errors could very well be equally indicative of a single scribe’s various copying stints, where certain errors were consistently made during each copying session. The difficulty of determining possible copying stints of the Cotton Nero A.x. manuscript was articulated by Murray McGillivray in 2005. Possible relationships between the scribe’s copying behaviour of junctures were examined across the manuscript’s quire boundaries. From a statistical analysis throughout the entire manuscript of the junctures of *b* with *a* following *a*, *e*, and *o*, and of *h* with *a* or *e*, and of *d* with *e*, as opposed to the writing of these letters separately (55), McGillivray hypothesized that the quire boundaries may be related to the “textual divisions in the manuscript” (57), and that the changes observed in writing behaviour may be indicative both of separate copying sessions that may be related to the texts themselves: “One possibility worth considering is that significant time intervened between the copying of *Pearl* and that of *Cleanness* and then again after the writing of *Cleanness* and before *Patience* or between *Patience*

⁹ For a more complete summary of Oakden’s argument, see John C. McLaughlin (13 n.3).

and *Sir Gawain*” (58).¹⁰ Still, the production history of the manuscript and its possible relationship to possible exemplars is still, at the moment, uncertain.

Conclusions from an analysis of the manuscript’s dialect have offered perhaps more concrete information related to the manuscript’s textual history than studies of content or scribal errors. Differences between varieties of Middle English have enabled the contributors to the *Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English* (hereafter *LALME*) to localize the Cotton Nero A.x poems as having a scribal dialect belonging to an area in or near Cheshire in the North-West Midlands (McIntosh III: 36-54). This localization has been accepted largely without protest,¹¹ but despite this localization we are still left with many important questions regarding the actual locale of writing and the production of the manuscript. Additionally, dialect analysis by the contributors to *LALME* shows that scribes copied in various ways: *literatim* copying, where the exemplar is reproduced letter-by letter; copying by translation, where a scribe changes the language of the exemplar into his own; and a third type which manifests in greater or lesser habits of the two previous forms (Smith, *Historical* 29). Paradoxically, dialect localization of the Cotton Nero A.x. poems, while at least seeming to contain some of the questions surrounding the manuscript, has perhaps produced more questions about the manuscript’s textual history: we still are left with the questions “why were these poems written, by whom, for whom, and exactly where were they written?” (Turville-Petre 125).

II. The Poem: *Cleanness* and its Scholarly Treatment

All four poems are written in alliterative verse, and can be therefore be said to belong to the so-called ‘Alliterative Revival,’ those Middle English poems “belonging to

¹⁰ My italics.

¹¹ Though Ad Putter and Myrna Stokes suggest an adjustment.

the native tradition of alliterative composition, which was maintained in the West and North, rather than to the newer continental modes of verse practised by Chaucer and Gower in the court circles of the South-east” (Andrew and Waldron 15). In fact, Cotton Nero A.x. is the only known surviving manuscript that contains solely alliterative verse (Edwards, “Manuscript” 197). Of the four poems, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and *Pearl* have received the most scholarly attention. This range of notice is reflected in the numbers of editions published of each of the poems individually. For instance, between 1839 and 1977 no less than 42 editions and/or translations of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* were published (Andrew, *Bibliography* 21-31). Robert J. Blanch counts 22 editions and/or translations of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* as published between 1978 and 1993 (42-50). No fewer than 16 editions were published between 1993 and 2007. At least another 15 editions (including revised editions and translations) have been published between 2007 and 2011.¹² The edition numbers drop drastically for *Cleanness*. *Patience* was edited 6 times between 1839 and 1977. Only one separate edition of *Patience* was published between 1977 and 1993. Between 1839 and 1977 *Cleanness* was edited as an individual poem three times, (Menner 1920, Gollancz 1921, and Anderson 1977); since, it has only been published as a separate edition twice.¹³

The disparity between the numbers of scholarly articles published about *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and *Cleanness* similarly illustrates the limited critical attention *Cleanness* has received in comparison to its manuscript companions. In the 138 years between 1839 and 1977 there were 594 articles published on *Sir Gawain and the*

¹² My own counts, based on editions (published between 1993-2011 (to date)) available for purchase.

¹³ The 1993 Japanese edition by M. Taguchi and S. Yokoyama and the 2010 critical edition with facing page translation by Kevin Gustafson.

Green Knight, while only 36 critical studies on *Cleanness* were published (Andrew, *Bibliography* 107-112, 120-206). In the last thirty-four years, at least 651 critical studies on *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* have been published, while only 54 studies on *Cleanness* were published (Blanch 132-142, 153-293).¹⁴ Such counts clearly show that while *Cleanness* remains the least studied of the Cotton Nero A.x. poems, there has been a marked increase in its receipt of critical attention over the past three decades. But while *Pearl* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* have witnessed numerous publications of new editions to support scholarly interest over the last thirty years, only two new editions of *Cleanness* have been advanced, despite the poem's increased literary prominence.

The reasons for *Cleanness*'s traditional limited scholarly treatment are various but not difficult to determine. The poem is largely a narrative comprised of biblical exempla, including Noah's flood, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and Belshazzar's feast, and it has therefore suffered a lack of critical literary attention, in part, due to the conception that these contents make the poem a mere sermon of little interest. This misconception has been compounded by disparaging comparisons of *Cleanness*'s artistic expression and literary "value" to that of its manuscript companions. Clark and Wasserman note that this comparison of artistic expression, especially regarding sense of language, has not only contributed to references to *Cleanness* as one of the poet's "minor" poems where *Pearl* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* are referred to as the "major" poems, but also to *Cleanness*'s traditional treatment as a less skilful poetic

¹⁴ The counts for critical studies between 1978 and 2011 are taken from Blanch, whose bibliography records available studies to 1993, and supplemented by searches on the *MLA International Bibliography (Proquest)* research database for critical studies (including books, book articles, dissertation abstracts and journal articles, but excluding websites) published for each poem between 1993 and 2011 (to date).

attempt than that of its manuscript companions: “[I]n making...claims for the two so-called “major” poems, critics have traditionally treated the *Pearl*-poet’s two earlier works as only rudimentary beginnings or crudely drawn counterpoints to the linguistic sophistication of the later poems” (114). *Cleanness* has also endured a lack of critical appreciation that is related to a desire to avoid what is perceived to be a heavy-handed morality, a perception founded in the poem’s title.¹⁵ Elizabeth Keiser comments that,

Too often the misleading connotations of modern English translations of its title...the sheer number of its biblical narratives and their cumulative length, and its narrator’s announced emphasis on God’s wrath against filth mean that this poem receives, relative to its manuscript companions, a cursory reading. (1)

Keiser’s articulation of the difficulty of the translation from the Middle English “clannesse” or “clene” to Modern English – available translations include “[f]ree from admixture, not dirty, healthy, wholesome, morally righteous, morally pure, innocent, decent, proper, ceremonially pure, clear, transparent, bright, shining, splendid, elegant, excellent, complete, perfect, discerning, or skilful” (Andrew and Waldron 21) – points to the critical dispute over the precise meaning of *Cleanness* that has been the focus of much of the recent scholarship on the poem. Some critics attribute the poem’s lack of popularity to its structure, implying it is problematic. Michael Calabrese and Eric Eliason comment, “those [readers] willing to overlook the poem’s apparent lack of unity and confusing organization have had to confront its judgmental morality” (247). Though moral judgment is easy to determine in the poem, most recent scholars of *Cleanness* do not dismiss the merit of the poem, structural or artistic. For example, in their omnibus

¹⁵ The titles of the Cotton Nero A.x. poems are editorial designations – the manuscript itself contains no titles.

edition of the *Pearl*-poems, Malcolm Andrew and Ronald Waldron are sure to emphasize that though *Cleanness* is structured “in relation to a scriptural text...this is not to say that the poems are only sermons in verse” (17). Additionally, David C. Fowler comments that *Cleanness*’s moral theme is produced by “skilful use of...biblical stories” (331), and A.C. Spearing notes that the poem has a “complicated structure of introductory, connective, illustrative and expository material” (44). Criticism that characterises the structure of the poem as lacking unity or as problematic does so unfairly, especially since the poet himself attempts to avoid any misunderstanding or misconception by concluding the poem with a summary of the poem’s structure and intention. He says:

Þus, vpon þrynne wyses I haf yow þro schewed
 Þat vnclannes tocleues in corage dere
 Of þat wynnelych lorde þat wonyes in heuen,
 Entyses hym to be tene telled vp his wrake. (1805-08)¹⁶

The poet thus offers a succinct synopsis of the intention of his poem, and emphasizes the three Biblical exempla he has used to illustrate his point. Paradoxically, while *Cleanness* has until recently been avoided as the most repellent of the manuscript’s poems, *Cleanness* has begun to receive increased attention because of its capacity for revealing the medieval origins of violence, sexism, racism, and homophobia. It is therefore now regarded among Middle English scholars as increasingly central to Middle English literary study. It is clear that scholars of the poem require an edition that thoroughly considers the substantial amount of work on the poem that has occurred in recent decades, and that also recognizes *Cleanness* as a poem in its own right and not only as a

¹⁶ All citations from *Cleanness* are from my critical edition presented in my 2007 thesis.

manuscript companion to the still more famous and more studied *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and *Pearl*. Towards this end, this diplomatic edition of *Cleanness* provides scholars with a complete and correct diplomatic transcription of the poem that is, unlike any of the editions of *Cleanness* to date, based on the manuscript itself (and further informed by the 2007 high resolution photographs)¹⁷, rather than the 1923 facsimile.

¹⁷ The high resolution photographs (TIFF images) were taken by the British Library in 2007, and contractually provided to the Cotton Nero A.x. team in April of 2011.

PREFACE TO THE EDITION

I. Previous Editions and their Treatment of *Cleanness*

There have been nine previous editions of *Cleanness*: five separate editions (Menner 1920; Gollancz 1921, 1933; Anderson 1977; Taguchi and Yokoyama 1993; and Gustafson 2010) and four editions in which *Cleanness* appears with other poems from the same manuscript (Morris 1864; Moorman 1977; Andrew and Waldron 1978; and Vantuono 1984).¹⁸

The first edition of *Cleanness* – primarily a transcription of the manuscript – was Richard Morris’s 1864 edition, published by the Early English Text Society along with *Pearl* and *Patience*, in a collection entitled *Early English Alliterative Poems in the West Midland Dialect of the Fourteenth Century, Edited from the Unique Manuscript British Museum MS. Cotton Nero A.x.* Morris’s Preface includes an introductory section, where questions concerning authorship and dialect are considered (v-x) and the contents of the three poems are summarized (xi-xx). Morris correctly asserts that the three poems are in the same handwriting and dialect as *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, referring to both his own 1865 edition of *SGGK* and Sir Frederic Madden’s edition of *Syr Gawayn and the Grene Knyzt in Syr Gawayne; a Collection of Ancient Romance-Poems, by Scottish* [sic]

¹⁸ Cawley and Anderson’s edition of *Cleanness* in their 1976 omnibus edition *Pearl, Cleanness, Patience, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, should be considered a modernised (and less precise) precursor of Anderson’s more exhaustive 1977 edition of *Cleanness*. The edition was therefore not considered or its readings noted in my edition. Andrew and Waldron have published a 5th edition of their omnibus edition (2007). Revisions to Andrew and Waldron’s reading of *Cleanness* in its manuscript form are very few in the 5th edition, but are noted in the textual notes in this edition when they vary from previous editions. Andrew and Waldron’s revised 5th edition is based on the facsimile of the manuscript (and the manuscript itself only in places of doubt).

and English Authors, Relating to that Celebrated Knight of the Round Table published by the Bannatyne Club in 1839 (Morris v). Morris notes that the authorship of the manuscript's contents is unknown (vii) and refutes Madden's claim that the author of *SGGK* (and by extension the author of *Pearl*, *Patience*, and *Cleanness*) was Scottish, asserting that the scribe of the poems copied them in his own Midland dialect: "I conclude, therefore, that these poems were not transcribed from the Scotch dialect into any other, but were written in their own West-Midland speech in which we now have them" (ix). Instead, based on a comparison of vocabulary, inflections, and style, Morris suggests that the unknown author of "the Troy Book"¹⁹ is the same as that of the Cotton Nero A.x. poems (ix). Morris's Preface also includes a section entitled *Remarks Upon the Dialect and Grammar* (xxi-xl), and a *Description of the Manuscript Used in the Present Volume* (xli-xliii).

Cleanness is the second of the poems in the edition, following *The Pearl*. It is worth noting that *The Pearl*, *Cleanness*, and *Patience* were first given these titles by Morris (Morris xliv), as the manuscript itself has no titles. In his Preface, Morris divides the poem into ten sections according to subject matter (not marked in the manuscript): I. The Parable of the Wedding Feast; II. The Fall of the Angels; III. The Wickedness of the Antediluvian World; IV. The Destruction of Mankind by the Flood; V. The Visit of Three Angels to Abraham; VI. The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah; VII. The Invasion of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and the Captivity of Judah; VIII. Belshazzar's Impious Feast and the Handwriting Upon the Wall; IX. The Story of Nebuchadnezzar's Pride and its Punishment, and the Interpretation of the Handwriting by Daniel; and X. The Invasion

¹⁹ See *The "Gest Hystoriale" of the Destruction of Troy*, G.A. Panton and D. Donaldson, eds.

of Babylon by the Medes (Morris xiii-xviii). Additionally, running titles appear at the top of that page, summarizing the details of the poem appearing on each page, and summaries and interpretations of the poem's events are provided in the marginal notes, at a sequence of approximately every four or five lines. The poem itself is presented without stanzaic division, but Morris divides the lines into thirteen sections that correspond to the poem's thirteen decorated initials: I. 1-124; II. 125-192; III. 193-248; IV. 249-344; V. 345-484; VI. 485-556; VII. 557-600; VIII. 601-688; IX. 689-780; X. 781-892; XI. 893-1156; XII. 1157-1356; XIII. 1357-1812.

Morris notes the original folio numbering system, capitalises the beginning of each line, marks expanded abbreviations with italics, adds punctuation, and marks (some) additions to manuscript readings with square brackets. The scribe's use of the tironian nota (abbreviation for *and*) is signified by the ampersand; 'long *i*' is treated as *I* when on its own, but no distinction is made between consonantal or vocalic *i*. Following the manuscript, the symbol ȝ (minuscule yogh) is printed both when it represents the alveolar or velar spirant and when it represents the voiced sibilant. Capitalisation of place names and proper names is not imposed. A very limited number of unclear manuscript readings are noted in the text, and corrected readings are suggested in the marginal notes. Because Morris does not include such suggestions in the text proper, the text is generally a punctuated (sometimes incorrect) transcription of the manuscript; even obvious errors, such as dittography, are not corrected. A limited number of explanatory notes are provided at the back of the edition, but these are mostly restricted to translations of select words or phrases. A glossary is provided following the text.

Of the early editions of *Cleanness*, Robert J. Menner's 1920 edition is unique in its consideration of scholarship and detailed recording of previous editorial suggestions. Menner uses the title *Purity*, after Osgood²⁰ (Menner *Preface*), instead of Morris's title *Cleanness*. The edition proper is preceded by a thorough introduction that includes the following subsections: I. The Manuscript; II. The Works of the Author of *Purity*; III. The Alliterative School and the Poet of *Purity*; IV. Date; V. Sources; VI. Literary Art; VII. Metre and Alliteration; VIII. Dialect and Language. Explanatory notes, often suggesting similarities with other Middle English texts, are included. In addition to his edition, Menner includes a glossary and an appendix that prints relevant passages from the Vulgate.

Menner's edition follows the more recent pencilled numeration system, marking the text as beginning at folio 61a. The text is not printed with stanzaic divisions; rather it has been divided into thirteen titled sections (not marked in the manuscript), that generally correspond to the thirteen decorated initials in the manuscript except that the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth sections are given further divisions, marked a-c: I. Christ's Praise of Purity; The Wedding Feast (ll. 1-124); II. The Punishment of the Man in Foul Clothes (ll. 125-192); III. God's Vengeance on Lucifer and on Adam (ll. 193-248); IV. God's Warning to Noah (ll. 249-344); V. The Flood (ll. 345-484); VI. The Departure from the Ark (ll. 485-556); VII. A Warning of God's Wrath Against Sinners (ll. 557-600); VIII. Abraham Entertains the Three Angels (ll. 601-688); IX. Abraham's Plea for Lot (ll. 689-780); X. Lot Entertains the Two Angels (ll. 781-892); XI. The Destruction of the Cities (ll. 893-1048); XIa. Exhortation to Purity (ll. 1049-1156); XII.

²⁰ Charles G. Osgood (viii).

The Capture of Jerusalem (ll. 1157-1260); XIIa. The Seizure of the Holy Relics (ll. 1261-1356); XIII. Belshazzar's Feast (ll. 1357-1528); XIIIa. The Writing on the Wall (ll. 1529-1640); XIIIb. Daniel's Prophecy (ll. 1641-1740); XIIIc. Belshazzar's End (ll. 1741-1812). The beginning of each line is capitalised, the text is punctuated, and editorial emendation is (usually) marked in the text with square brackets. Abbreviations are expanded silently. Proper and place names are capitalised, as are all synonyms for *God*, such as *Kyng*, *Hym*, or *Lorde*. 'Long *i*' is represented as *I* when on its own, and *J* when a consonant is represented (e.g., *Jues*). There is a distinction made for the symbol ȝ (minuscule yogh) as representative of the alveolar and velar spirant (printed ȝ) and the voiced sibilant (printed z). Textual notes appear at the bottom of the page, noting various palaeographic details and previous editorial commentary between 1864, the publication date of Morris' edition, and 1920. Of the group of authorities cited, Morris's 1864 edition (and its 1869 reprint) in *Early English Alliterative Poems* is the only study that includes the entire text of *Cleanness*; however, Menner is careful to include suggestions for *Cleanness* occurring in four separate studies that focus on the language and alliterative long line poems of the *Gawain*-poet: Knigge (1885), Fischer (1901), Thomas (1908), and Schumacher (1914). Menner's textual apparatus also notes the editorial suggestions about particular lines, published in article form, by Bateson (1918), Gollancz (1919), and Emerson (1919), and the decisions actualized in lines 235-544, 947-972, and 1009-1051 of *Cleanness* as printed in Morris and Skeat's 1872 *Specimens of Early English*; Menner does not consider Morris's earlier individual treatment of these same lines of the poem in his 1867 publication of *Specimens of Early English*.

Israel Gollancz's 1921 edition of the text, with marked emendations, offers more of an edited text than Morris's edition, but many of the editorial decisions are not satisfactorily explained. The text was published under the title *Cleanness*, and followed by the separate 1933 posthumous publication of Gollancz's glossary to the poem, prepared for publication by Mabel Day. The glossary volume also includes "illustrative passages," such as those relevant passages from the Vulgate, *Cursor Mundi*, and Mandeville's *Travels*, considered to have influenced the *Gawain*-poet in writing *Cleanness*. The Preface to the edition immediately discusses the question of division within the poem; Gollancz prints his text in quatrains, suggesting not only that both the author of the Cotton Nero A.x. poems and the manuscript's scribe indicate quatrain divisions in their work (Gollancz ix), but also that by adopting the quatrain arrangement, the "interpretation of the poem from beginning to end is helped forward, and many difficulties are cleared up by the knowledge of the poet's metrical method" (x). The Preface also discusses issues such as date of composition, the poem's structure, and literary sources.

In Gollancz's edition, the poem is divided into three main sections: I. The Prologue and The Flood and the Antediluvian World (ll. 1-556); II. The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (ll. 556-1156); III. The Holy Vessels and the Temple (ll. 1157-1812). These sectional titles are Gollancz's; however, the sectional division follows the placement of three larger capital letters in the manuscript itself. The folio numbering follows that of the earlier ink numerator (running from 57a-82a), punctuation is imposed, and proper names, place names, and the first word of each line are capitalised. 'Long *i*' is treated as *I* in all cases. Following the manuscript, the symbol ȝ (minuscule yogh) is

printed both when it represents the alveolar or velar spirant and when it represents the voiced sibilant. Expanded abbreviations are italicised, though the scribe's use of the tironian nota (abbreviation for *and*) is signified by non-italicised ampersand.

Emendations are marked in the text with square brackets, and the dagger, †, marks the omission from the edition of words that are in the manuscript, though I have found this system to be inconsistent. Textual notes summarising such emendations and notes on the manuscript appear at the back of the edition; they are followed by a list of suggested emendations *metri causa* not adopted in the text (most of these involve addition of final *e*), and explanatory notes that discuss the difficulty of particular passages, or their possible relationship to other literary texts. None of the notes shows careful effort to record (or credit) previous editorial suggestion or treatment and Gollancz has therefore been credited by subsequent editors with more original textual work in this poem than he actually did.

In 1977 Charles Moorman published an edition of *Cleanness* in his omnibus edition *The Works of the Gawain-Poet*. The edition of *Cleanness* offers no new interpretations of the poem, and did not even build upon the available editions to date – not all previous editions were consulted. The introduction to the poems contains a description of the manuscript, a discussion of the Alliterative Revival, consideration of *Cleanness*'s author, place and date of composition, a discussion of the nature of each poem including possible literary sources, and a brief discussion of the *Gawain*-poet's language. The poems are not presented in the order that they appear in manuscript (*Pearl*, *Cleanness*, *Patience*, *SGGK*), but rather appear *Patience*, *Purity* (following

Menner's title for the poem), *Pearl*, and finally *SGGK*, an order that Moorman takes to be the chronological order of their composition (5).

Moorman's *Purity* is edited from the Gollancz facsimile, though "cruces" are said to be edited from the manuscript itself; however, readings for which the editor consulted the manuscript itself are not indicated. The text is presented in quatrains, follows the original folio numbering, and reproduces the sectional division of Morris's edition. Capitalisation is imposed for the beginning of lines, names, place names, and *God* or *Kryst* (or *Christ*), but synonyms for God (such as *drztyń*) are not capitalised. The edition follows the manuscript in distinguishing between *u* and *v*, and 'short' or 'long' *I* (therefore 'long' *i* is indicated by *j*, except when the first person pronoun, *I*, is represented). Following the manuscript, the symbol *z* (minuscule yogh) is printed both when it represents the alveolar or velar spirant and when it represents the voiced sibilant. Punctuation is not imposed, and abbreviations are expanded silently. Editorial decisions and processes (emendations and/or their originators) are not made transparent, as emendations are not marked in the text and the textual apparatus at the foot of the page only indicates "MS readings not adopted in the text and what [Moorman] consider[s] to be significant variants adopted by previous editors" (6), without explanation of in what cases a variant reading is deemed "significant." Moorman consulted only Menner and Gollancz's editions – no explanation is given for the omission of Morris's text.

These decisions are unfortunate – some readings in the Menner and Gollancz editions should be credited to Morris, or in the case of Gollancz should be credited to other editors; therefore, Moorman's decision to include only Menner and Gollancz's editions provides an incomplete illustration of *Cleanness*'s editorial history, and in a

sense can be understood to be regressive compared to Menner's attempt at a thorough recording of editorial suggestions in his own edition. Some glossing of difficult words appears in the margin of the text itself, and explanatory notes appear at the bottom of the page – these appear to be, at best, a summary of Gollancz's more thorough explanatory notes. A brief glossary is provided for all four poems at the back of the text, but is of no genuine assistance, in reality, to student or scholar, as etymology, line of occurrence, and parts of speech are not recorded.

J.J. Anderson's 1977 edition of *Cleanness* is a separate (and conscientious) edition of the poem. The introduction to the edition includes a brief discussion of the manuscript, authorship, the structure and intent (meaning) of the poem, and the poem's relationship to the Vulgate. Following the introduction is the Bibliography, which is restricted to works dealing centrally with *Cleanness*, but includes those studies that are cited in the thorough Explanatory notes. The appendix that follows the explanatory notes discusses the poem's language, and a thorough glossary appears after the appendix. The glossary records meanings, etymologies, and occurrences by line number.

The edition was based on the Gollancz facsimile, but was checked against the manuscript, and ultra-violet photographs were used where the ink was thought to be faded (Anderson "Preface"). The edition follows the original folio numbering system, and the text is presented in quatrains, after the scribe's notation in the left-hand margin, at every four lines, a slanting double line (2). Like Gollancz, and following the manuscript's largest capitals, Anderson notes three sectional divisions (at lines 1, 557, and 1157), but unlike previous editors does not impose subtitles on these sections. Punctuation is applied, and first word of a line is capitalised, as are proper names, place

names, and the word *God* (but not its synonyms). ‘Long’ *i* is printed as *i* when vocalic, *j* when consonantal, and *I* when on its own and indicating the first person pronoun. Following the manuscript, the symbol *ȝ* (minuscule yogh) is printed both when it represents the alveolar or velar spirant and when it represents the voiced sibilant. Abbreviations are expanded silently. Emendations from manuscript readings are not marked in the text, but the manuscript reading is recorded at the foot of the page, as are select palaeographic notes. When the manuscript readings recorded in the notes include an abbreviation, the abbreviation is not expanded; rather, typography is used to illustrate the abbreviation itself. Anderson refers to all of Morris’s texts of *Cleanness*, including the *Specimens of Early English* Morris edited with Skeat, Gollancz’s edition, and Menner’s edition; however, previous editorial treatment is not easily discernable as variant readings from previous editions are not all recorded in the footnotes. When a suggestion adopted by Anderson is credited to a previous editor, this is done in the Explanatory Notes at the back of the edition, amongst discussions of difficult words, passages, possible etymologies, and relationships with other literary texts.

Malcolm Andrew and Ronald Waldron offer a critical edition of *Cleanness* with select explanatory notes in their 1978 (rev. 1987, 1996, 2002, 2007) omnibus *The Poems of the Pearl Manuscript*.²¹ A select bibliography for all four poems precedes the introduction to the edition, and a section on the language and metre of the poems precedes the poems. The introduction gives brief attention to the manuscript, questions of authorship, and then discusses each poem in turn – summaries are provided, and their structures and meanings considered.

²¹ See note 18. The edition has been further revised and published in 2002 and 2007. The 2007 edition includes a prose translation on CD-ROM.

The poems are presented in the same order as in the manuscript, and the edition is based on Gollancz's facsimile of the manuscript (the original manuscript was consulted only in places of doubt) and compared with earlier editions of the individual poems. In the case of *Cleanness*, in their revised editions, Andrew and Waldron cite the texts edited by Morris, Menner, Gollancz, Anderson, and Vantuono (1984). Moorman's edition is not referred to, but an additional seven scholarly textual studies are referred to in the textual apparatus, including those by Bulbring (1914),²² Emerson (1915, 1919), Bateson (1918), Thomas (1922), Fowler (1973), and Luttrell (1952). The textual notes below the text record emendations (unmarked in the text itself), provide credit in parentheses, and record the manuscript reading – alternative editorial treatment or suggestion is not recorded. The accrediting system is sometimes incorrect, especially when the editors are misled by Gollancz's omission in his edition of indication that a reading he adopts is not his own. Additional discussion, including interpretation of passages, translations, or suggested literary sources, is in the brief explanatory notes below the textual notes. The text itself is printed in continuous verse (Andrew and Waldron 49) – not quatrains – despite a recognition that the marginal double stroke occurs in *Cleanness* at the beginning of every fourth line (Andrew and Waldron 49); the original ink folio numbering system is followed. There is a distinction made for the symbol ȝ (minuscule yogh) as representative of the alveolar and velar spirant (printed ȝ) and the voiced sibilant (printed z); 'long' *i* is printed as *i* when vocalic, *j* when consonantal, and *I* when on its own and indicating the first person pronoun. The text is punctuated, and abbreviations are expanded silently. The initial word of each line is capitalised, as are place names, proper names, and the

²² qtd. in Schumacher (1914).

word *God* and its synonyms, including *Hym*, *King*, or *Lorde*. A glossary of difficult words recording meaning, part of speech, and occurrence by line number (for some words only), is included after the edition. The appendix, a gathering of Vulgate passages used as sources to the poems, completes the edition.

The first volume of William Vantuono's two-volume omnibus edition *The Pearl Poems* contains *Cleanness* – all texts have facing page translation. The introduction to the edition (vol. 1) has four sections: "History of the Manuscript," "Possible Dates and Order of Poems," "The Poet and His Audience," and "Thematic Unity of *Patience*, *Cleanness*, *Gawain*, and *Pearl*." In editing *Cleanness*, Vantuono consulted six previous editors: Morris (not including either edition of *Specimens of Early English*), Menner, Gollancz, Anderson, Moorman, and Andrew and Waldron. The text is based on an initial transcription from enlarged photostats of the Gollancz facsimile (ix), but difficult readings were compared against the original manuscript in a single visit to the British Library (xi).

Vantuono's edition of *Cleanness* follows the more recent pencil folio numbering system (beginning at 61r instead of 57r), and the text is presented in verse paragraphs of varying numbers of lines, not in quatrains, although Vantuono admits that the marginal double slashes appear regularly every four lines (li). Following the manuscript, the symbol ȝ (minuscule yogh) is printed both when it represents the alveolar or velar spirant and when it represents the voiced sibilant; 'long' *i* is printed as *i* when vocalic, *j* when consonantal, and *I* when on its own and indicating the first person pronoun. Punctuation is imposed, and initial words of lines are capitalised, as are names (proper and place) and *God* and its synonyms. Emendations are unmarked in the text though recorded in textual

notes and are doggedly avoided throughout, even when obvious errors such as dittography occur. There are only twenty-two textual emendations adopted in the whole of *Cleanness*. The textual footnotes record previous editorial suggestions (of the six editors consulted) and MS readings. Further commentary at the back of the edition justifies particular readings (more often than not these notes serve to offer unconvincing justifications for retaining a manuscript reading), expands on other editorial suggestions, and also offers additional discussion on select words or passages. After the commentary is a collection of appendices, offering further discussion on the poems not included in the introduction(s), including a section listing literary sources for *Pearl* and *Cleanness*. The bibliography occurs at the end of the volume.

M. Yaguchi and S. Yokoyama's 1993 edition of *Cleanness* is a separate edition of the poem with a Japanese translation. The Japanese translation and a brief Japanese introduction appear in the appendix to the edition proper. A bibliography follows the edition, which itself is followed by a thorough glossary. The glossary records meanings, and occurrences by line number.

The edition was based on "an enlarged Photostat of a microfilm of the Cotton Nero A.x." (Taguchi and Yokoyama 3). The editors also "consulted" the manuscript itself, (Taguchi and Yokoyama 3), though the extent of and process for such consultation are not indicated. The edition follows the original folio numbering system, and the text is presented in quatrains. Punctuation is applied, and first word of a line is capitalised, as are proper names, place names, and the word *God* (but not its synonyms). The manuscript's spelling system is retained; however, long *i* is printed as *i* to indicate a vowel, and *j* to indicate a consonant. Abbreviations are expanded silently. "Emendations

from manuscript readings are avoided as much as possible” (Taguchi and Yokoyama 3), but are italicized in the edition when they occur. The emendations are listed in the Textual Notes, which follow the edition. The editors provide their manuscript reading, and then provide the readings and emendations from previous editors that differ from their suggestions. A Notes section at the back of the edition includes discussions of difficult words, passages, possible etymologies, and (sometimes) relationships with other literary texts.

Kevin Gustafson’s 2010 student edition and facing page translation is the most recent edition of the poem. The introduction to the edition includes a literary discussion of *Cleanness* as follows: “*Cleanness* in Context: Vernacular Theology”; “Modes of Writing: Allegory and Exemplum”; “Noah and the Law of Nature”; “Sodom, Generation, and the City”; and “Belshazzar’s Feast: Prophecy and Spectacle.” The appendix that follows the edition includes three sections: the first for important Biblical sources; the second for “Other Sources” (this section includes only excerpts from Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun’s *The Romance of the Rose* and *Mandeville’s Travels*); the third includes some “Background Materials” deemed useful, such as an excerpt from Augustine’s *City of God*. A select Works Cited and Further Reading appears at the end of the edition.

The edition is based on the Gollancz facsimile. The edition follows the original folio numbering system, and the poem is printed in continuous verse. Capitalisation and punctuation “are editorial” (Gustafson 35). The manuscript’s spelling system is retained, but *v* and *v* and *i* and *j* are standardized according to modern usage. When the symbol *ȝ* (minuscule yogh) is thought to represent either *y*, *gh* or *w*, *ȝ* is printed. *z* is printed when

the symbol is thought to represent the “tailed z” (Gustafson 35). Abbreviations are expanded silently. Emendations from manuscript readings are marked as footnotes in the text: the manuscript reading is recorded, but despite consultation with “other modern editions, notably those by Menner, Anderson, and Andrew and Waldron (Gustafson 35)” only those readings that differ from the provided suggestion are noted – no credit is provided to editors that have previously suggested the same emendation.

In the nine editions of *Cleanness* available, two considerable problems are apparent: none has thoroughly recorded the editorial scholarship on *Cleanness* in such a way that previous editorial treatment is made wholly transparent and acknowledged; and only the earliest editors have established their entire text from the original manuscript itself, most working from the 1923 facsimile instead and deferring to previous editorial treatment for difficult readings, instead of looking to, and providing, the manuscript reading in the first instance. Although the current diplomatic edition does not record previous editorial conjecture and proposed emendations, it does attempt to scrupulously record both the readings of the manuscript as they were apparent to me in personal inspection and through the new high-resolution photographs, and the manuscript observations of previous editors. Both by making the unedited manuscript reading available in its entirety, and by recording all other available editors' readings of the facsimile or manuscript, I have provided not only an unaltered representation of the manuscript readings based on the manuscript itself and new high resolution photographs, but also a thorough collation of all previous editors' readings of the manuscript or facsimile.

II. Palaeographic Description of the Cotton Nero A.x. Script

The two English scripts most relevant for discussion of the Cotton Nero A.x. hand are *textura rotunda* and *anglicana*; however, the Cotton Nero A.x. script is particularly difficult to characterise. Doyle attributes at least part of Cotton Nero A.x.'s difficulty to its conventionality of forms, "The main text-hand in the majority of its forms, because they are so traditional, tells one little..." (92). The Cotton Nero A.x. script can perhaps be most accurately described as being derived from *textura rotunda* but incorporating *anglicana* features. *Textura*, more properly termed *littera textura* or Gothic *textualis*,²³ is "typically compressed and upright, and its ascenders and descenders are [short]" (Roberts 140). In general, the script has a very formal appearance with minims set closely together:

At their most extreme, in liturgical manuscripts of the thirteenth century and later, these practices could result in a dense lattice-work of strokes (the so-called picket-fence effect), where the individual letter-forms, particularly of the minims in *i*, *u*, *m*, *n*, were subordinated to the desire for uniformity and equalization of spacing. This *littera textura* (or "woven writing") had completely forgotten the Caroline desire for clarity and legibility. (Greetham 196)

Additionally, the dense nature of *textura* results in a high frequency of joined letters (or biting and fusions), such as *de*, *do*, *pp*, or *bo*, where curves of two adjacent letters appear back to back and fused into one, forming a ligature. *Textura* was used from the late twelfth to the sixteenth century in England – "four types of are distinguished, and are

²³ Petti simply refers to *textura* scripts as 'Text' scripts (13).

graded according to how minims are made”): *precissa*,²⁴ *quadrata*; *semi-quadrata*; and *rotunda* (Roberts 141). The following plate provides a useful guide to the four realizations of *textura*:

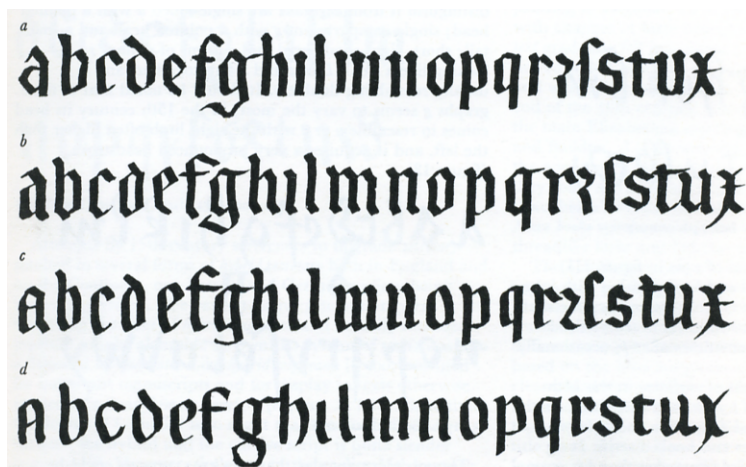


Fig. 1a-1d. *textura precissa*, *textura quadrata*, *textura semi-quadrata*, *textura rotunda*, from Anthony G. Petti, *Literary hands from Chaucer to Dryden* (London, 1977) 13.²⁵

In essence, *textura precissa* and *quadrata* are more formal in appearance than *semi-quadrata* and *rotunda*. Figure 2a demonstrates the levelled appearance of the minim feet in *textura precissa*, and the presence of two forms of *r*, (standing *r* and the ‘Arabic-2’ shaped *r*), and two forms of *s*, (long-*s* and short-*s*) common to gothic scripts.²⁶ Figure 2b illustrates the lozenged serifs common to *textura quadrata*, “also known with more descriptive accuracy as *fracta* or *fractura*” (Petti 13). According to Roberts, *textura semi-quadrata* can also be viewed as a formal script (141), and usually has its lozenged serifs only at the top of the letter-forms, as shown in figure 2c. Finally, figure 2d illustrates the type of *textura* most relevant for the Cotton Nero A.x. script – *textura rotunda*. *Textura rotunda* is the least formal of the four types of *textura*, and is what

²⁴ Sometimes called *sine pedibus*.

²⁵ Reduced to 75% of original.

²⁶ While Figure 1 does not include some letter-forms used by the *Gawain*-scribe, such as *k*, *z*, and *þ*, the letter realizations provide helpful examples by which to distinguish the four forms of *textura*.

Roberts calls “a decent plain everyday style...termed *rotunda*, obviously from its more rounded aspect” (141). Here there are no lozenges, and minims are rounded. Roberts lists the following letter-forms as “showing noteworthy changes” in *textura rotunda*:

a closed, making two compartments...the round **r** which in Protogothic appeared mostly after **o**, is found after many bowed letters; round **s** replaces straight **s** finally. Round **d**, already generalized in Protogothic documentary scripts, becomes general in Gothic *textualis*, and single as well as double **i** may be given the tick that is the forerunner of to-day’s dot. The ampersand **&** gives way to the Tironian sign **ʒ**, which takes on a bar. (141)²⁷

While, as in many scripts, there are sometimes deviations from the norm in *textura*, the Cotton Nero A.x. script is characterised as deriving from *textura rotunda* because it has these forms and a rounded aspect. Certainly, the Cotton Nero A.x. script is undoubtedly “closest in category to *textura rotunda*” (Petti 49), but the script also displays some features influenced by *anglicana*.

Parkes notes in his *English Cursive Book Hands 1250-1500* that in the mid twelfth century, in answer to an increasing demand for texts and concerned with increasing the “speed and ease of writing” (Parkes xiii), scribes began to develop different scripts for different kinds of books:

For finer-quality manuscripts, such as liturgical books in which the appearance of the book was a most important consideration, the scribes developed an elaborate, highly calligraphic ‘display’ script known as ‘Textura’. It gradually became more

²⁷ Roberts’ description of a *textura rotunda a* as closed contradicts the representation of *a* provided in Figure 2d. This is a useful example of the inconsistencies between palaeographic descriptions of scripts.

artificial, less affected by practical considerations, and in consequence less used, as time passed. But for more utilitarian volumes, the increasing demands upon the time and energy of the scribes and the need to conserve space led to the development of smaller, simpler hands both to keep books within a manageable format and to accelerate the process of production. (Parkes xiii)

The script that developed from such production demands was the cursive *anglicana*, called such by Parkes because “the several varieties of this script are peculiar to manuscripts produced in England during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries” (Parkes xvi).²⁸ Because cursive scripts incorporate a more curved duct than the straight, set, strokes used in *textura* scripts, they could be written quickly and as a consequence of few pen lifts, virtually every movement of the pen was recorded, even those which continued to form a following letter, resulting in the looped ascenders of graphs such as *b* and *d*, as evident in Figure 2a and 2b:

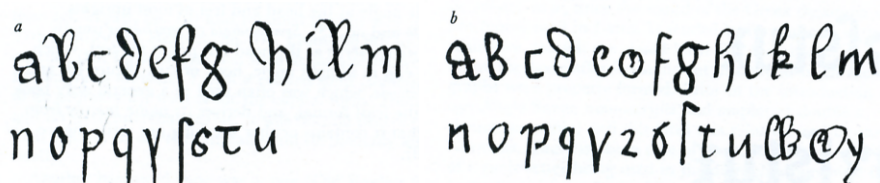


Fig. 3a. *anglicana* late 13th century. Fig 3b. *anglicana* late 14th century, both from Anthony G. Petti, *Literary hands from Chaucer to Dryden* (London, 1977) 14.²⁹

Figure 3a nicely represents the *anglicana* script common to documents of business or correspondence in the late thirteenth century, while the script’s distinctive changes occurring by the late fourteenth century are illustrated in Figure 3b. Most significant

²⁸ Parkes credits Ker (xi) as the first to suggest the name, but notes that Ker restricted the term *anglicana* to the more formal varieties of the script, and therefore used it only in connection with books. Parkes prefers to use the term for both documents and books, and designates terms to indicate differing levels of formality (Parkes xvi n.7).

²⁹ Reduced to 75% of original.

among these changes were the departure from the very pronounced forklike descenders on graphs such as *p*, *q*, *r* and ‘long-*s*’, and “the altering of the pen angle from oblique to almost upright position...resulting in a greater uniformity in thickness of the pen strokes” (Petti 14). Despite the changes in duct occurring between these periods, certain letter-forms are particularly helpful for distinguishing anglicana (see Figures 3a and 3b): the double lobed *a* (whose upper lobe often extends above minim height); the looped ascender of *d*; the ‘8-shaped’ *g*; the elaborate form of *w*; and the difficulty in determining between *c* and *t*, especially when the cross-stroke of *t* is not clearly made.

The cursive variety of anglicana was essential for the fast production of documents and as a “cheap book hand” (Parkes xvi); however, this script was not suitable for more lavish productions – it lacked what Parkes calls “that element of dignity required in books” (xiv), therefore anglicana was adapted to a more formal version that could be used in such instances:

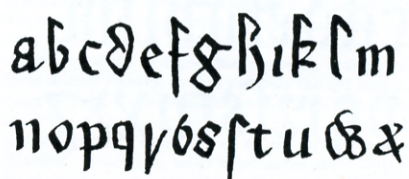


Fig. 3. anglicana formata, from Anthony G. Petti, *Literary hands from Chaucer to Dryden* (London, 1977) 14.³⁰

As evident in Figure 4 the formal version of anglicana, termed anglicana formata, is based to some extent on textura and therefore employs separate minim strokes for graphs such as *m* or *n* (instead of a continuous stroke as in cursive anglicana – see Figure 4), and often serifs are evident off the top of ascenders. As the *u* in Figure 4 illustrates, minim strokes in anglicana formata are often footed. Additionally, ascenders and descenders

³⁰ Reduced to 75% of original.

could be quite short, and *e* was formed by a lobe and single curved stroke in place of the circular form common to cursive anglicana (compare Figure 3).

The gothic features of the Cotton Nero A.x. script are illustrated by the rotunda (rounded) aspect of its textura-like script, as we should expect in a canonical textura rotunda script. Additionally, typical of a textura script, biting is evident (especially when *d* and *e* are next to each other), and *d* is particularly rounded when not in ligature. Minims are written separately, though we might expect this detail in a hand aiming for anglicana formata as well as textura rotunda. Certainly details such as the form of *w* and short *s* cannot be attributed to a textura script – these details show strong influence from anglicana.

II. Introduction to the Diplomatic Transcription

The diplomatic transcription provides an unaltered representation of the manuscript readings based on the manuscript itself and new, high-resolution photographs.³¹ It is intended to represent *Cleanness* in a form as close as possible to that of the manuscript without any of the intervention common to critical editions; therefore, original spacing is preserved, punctuation is not imposed, abbreviations are not expanded, and errors are retained. Typographic equivalents are provided for the glyphs used by the scribe.

Folio numbers are indicated for recto sides (as they are in the manuscript) in the upper right-hand corner of the page. The manuscript's earlier numerator assigned *Cleanness* folios 57 through 82 in ink, while a more recent numerator, (usually) striking these numbers out, assigned the poem folio numbers 61 through 86 in pencil, though the

³¹ See note 18.

more recent numeration is not always visible in the facsimile. The diplomatic transcription records this system, and therefore two folio numbers for each recto are recorded. Sequential line numbers have been added in the far right margin.

Palaeographic notes are presented at the bottom of the page in the following sequence: line number, lemma, note. Previous editors' manuscript readings that differ from the present reading are also provided. Each folio of the poem (usually 36 lines) is represented on one page of the edition, with exception to the first folio of the poem (due to space constraints), with the textual notes presented below.

The basis for the diplomatic transcription of *Cleanness* is the transcription scheme first designed by Murray McGillivray and Marta Juzwiak, and refined by Murray McGillivray and me in a series of meetings in January 2004 and then again in January and February of 2011. Each glyph (graphic symbol or formatting symbol used in *Cleanness*'s scribal scheme) was initially assigned a transcription equivalent according to the parameters of the project.³² I did the initial transcription of folios 57r-68v and 76r-82r from the 1923 facsimile using the project's scheme, and proofread the remaining folios of transcription (69r-75v)³³ against the facsimile. I then proofread the entire transcription of *Cleanness* against the facsimile, noting particularly difficult or unclear readings. In July 2004 I visited the British Library and checked my complete transcription against the original manuscript, making the necessary changes to the transcription, and paying particular attention to those readings I had difficulty with when

³² As *The Cotton Nero A.x. Project* is aimed at producing an electronic edition of all four of the Cotton Nero A.x. poems, the initial transcription scheme includes XML entities appropriate for an electronic file. See <http://www.ucalgary.ca/~scriptor/cotton/>.

³³ I am indebted to all those who contributed early transcription work on *Cleanness* via *The Cotton Nero A.x. Project*, including: Samantha Barling, Marta Juzwiak, Murray McGillivray, and Katherine Yancey.

working from the facsimile. From this visit, I compiled another list of unclear readings (this time readings unclear in the original manuscript) for verification against the facsimile. These were checked against the facsimile, and in February 2006 I again verified my corrected transcription against the entire poem in the original manuscript, and studied those readings still unclear with ultra-violet light;³⁴ from this a final transcription was compiled, which was verified once more against the facsimile and my notes from the visit to the British Library, in the construction of the facing page edition presented in my 2007 doctoral thesis. In April 2011, the Cotton Nero Project received high-resolution images (TIFF images) of the manuscript. The entire transcription of *Cleanness* was again verified against these images.

In order to present the transcription in a character set recognisable to readers, yet representative of the scribe's writing system, the initial transcription entities have since been converted to a typographic transliteration scheme that allows representation of *Cleanness*'s alphabetic letters, junctures or joined letters, and abbreviation system.³⁵ The *Cotton Nero A.x. Project Transcription Policy* (Olsen, Kenna and Murray McGillivray) available at *The Cotton Nero A.x. Project*'s website³⁶ provides the guide to the symbols used in the diplomatic edition for minuscule letterforms, majuscule letterforms, ligatured or joined letterforms, abbreviations and formatting symbols, and word symbols.

³⁴ I would like to thank the staff of the Manuscript Reading Room in the British Library, especially Justin Clegg, for allowing access to the Cotton Nero A.x. manuscript and for providing assistance with the ultra-violet lamp.

³⁵ Using the Junicode font (version 6.17) designed by Peter Baker. See <http://junicode.sourceforge.net/>.

³⁶ see <<http://people.ucalgary.ca/~scriptor/cotton/>>

X. Other Abbreviations used in the Diplomatic Edition

An = Anderson, 1977.

AW = Andrew and Waldron, 1978 (rev. 1987, 1996, 2002).

AW⁵ = Andrew and Waldron, rev. 2007

Ba = Bateson, 1918.

Em = Emerson, 1919.

Fi = Fischer, 1901.

Gz¹ = Gollancz, 1919.

Gz = Gollancz, 1921, 1933.

Kn = Knigge, 1885.

Me = Menner, 1920.

Mm = Moorman, 1977.

Mo¹ = Morris, 1864 (only noted when the reading differs from Mo, 1869).

Mo = Morris, 1869.

Mo² = Morris, 1867.

MoSk = Morris and Skeat, 1872.

MS(S) = manuscript(s)

Sch = Schumacher, 1914.

Th = Thomas, 1908.

TG = Taguchi and Yokoyama, 1993.

Vn = Vantuono, 1984.