

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part One: The Old English Period

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. HISTORICAL AND LINGUISTIC BACKGROUND	
OF THE OLD ENGLISH PERIOD	3
Historical Background	5
The Development of the English Language	11
II. ANGLO-SAXON LITERARY CULTURE	17
III. BEOWULF AND THE HEROIC TRADITION	24
Early poems of Germanic Legend	24
<i>Beowulf</i>	27
Religious Heroic Tales	41
IV. ELEGIAc, CAEDMONIAN, AND CYNEWULFIAN POEMS	45
Elegiac Poetry	45
The Caedmonian Poems	51
The Poetry of Cynewulf and the Cynewulfians	56
V. OLD ENGLISH PROSE AND MISCELLANEOUS VERSE	68
Old English Prose	68
Historic Battle Poems	72
Charms, Riddles, and Gnomic Verse	74

Part Two: The Middle English Period

VI. GENERAL VIEW OF THE MIDDLE ENGLISH PERIOD	81
The Norman Conquest	81
Medieval Thought	88
Middle English Literary Conventions	92
VII. THE MIDDLE ENGLISH ROMANCE	95
Arthurian Romance Through Malory	96
Non-Arthurian Romance	109

Table of Contents

CHAPTER	PAGE
VIII. MIDDLE ENGLISH PROSE	120
Religious Prose	121
Secular Prose	132
IX. LYRICS AND FOLK BALLADS	138
Lyrics	138
Folk Ballads	147
X. THE ALLITERATIVE REVIVAL: SIR GAWAIN, PEARL, AND PIERS PLOWMAN	154
The <i>Gawain (Pearl)</i> Poet	154
William Langland	166
XI. DEBATES, DIDACTIC VERSE, AND SATIRE	173
Debates	173
Didactic Verse	178
Satire	185
XII. CHAUCER: MINOR WORKS AND TROILUS	190
Chaucer's Life and Literary Heritage	190
Chaucer's Minor Works	193
<i>Troilus and Criseyde</i>	202
XIII. THE CANTERBURY TALES	209
<i>The General Prologue</i>	212
<i>The Knight's Tale</i>	221
<i>The Miller's Tale</i>	223
<i>The Reeve's Tale and the Cook's Tale</i>	225
<i>The Man of Law's Tale</i>	226
<i>The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale</i>	228
<i>The Friar's Tale and the Summoner's Tale</i>	233
<i>The Clerk's Tale</i>	235
<i>The Merchant's Tale</i>	238
<i>The Squire's Tale</i>	240
<i>The Franklin's Tale</i>	241
<i>The Physician's Tale</i>	243
<i>The Pardoner's Prologue and Tale</i>	243
<i>The Shipman's Tale</i>	246
<i>The Prioress's Tale</i>	247
<i>The Tale of Sir Thopas</i>	248
<i>The Tale of Melibee</i>	249

CHAPTER	PAGE
<i>The Monk's Tale</i>	251
<i>The Nun's Priest's Tale</i>	252
<i>The Second Nun's Tale</i>	255
<i>The Canon's Yeoman's Prologue and Tale</i>	255
<i>The Manciple's Tale</i>	256
<i>The Parson's Prologue and Tale</i>	257
XIV. FIFTEENTH-CENTURY CHAUCERIANS	260
John Lydgate	260
Thomas Hoccleve	261
<i>The Kingis Quair</i>	262
Robert Henryson	262
William Dunbar	263
XV. MEDIEVAL DRAMA IN ENGLAND	267
Tropes and Liturgical Plays	270
Miracle (Mystery) Plays	272
Morality Plays	279
<i>Part Three: Bibliographies</i>	
PREFACE TO OLD AND MIDDLE ENGLISH BIBLIOGRAPHICAL GUIDES	289
XVI. AN OLD ENGLISH BIBLIOGRAPHICAL GUIDE	292
XVII. A MIDDLE ENGLISH BIBLIOGRAPHICAL GUIDE	322
INDEX	383