LITERARY IMPLICATIONS OF INSTRUCTION IN THE VERBAL ARTS IN FOURTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND

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Although modern scholars have paid close attention to virtually every other aspect of fourteenth-century English life, comparatively little effort has been expended on the basic question of formal literary education. It is taken for granted, for instance, that a well-educated writer of the period would have been conversant with the Latin language and some of its literature, but few modern students have ventured to inquire into the means by which the writer would have been exposed to these influences. Since the fourteenth century saw the gradual replacement of French language instruction in schools, it is perhaps even more remarkable that the literary implications of this pedagogical development have not so far attracted more attention.[1]

Consequently the concern here is with *instruction*—that is, formal classroom instruction in organized schools—in those arts which teach students how to use language. Therefore the term "verbal arts," as used here in relation to fourteenth-century English schools, means any school subject which could have taught verbal skills to a student in the age of Chaucer, Gower, and Langland. Thus it can include grammar, rhetoric, poetry-reading, dialectic or logic, letter-writing, and any other auxiliary discipline that could teach a person how to read, to write, or to speak.

One of the basic problems in this area is that there is no single modern English term which is adequate to describe such instruction in the verbal arts. The term "linguistics" has a very specialised type of modern meaning. Even the word "grammar" means mere syntax and "rules" to the modern mind, although to Quintilian, to John of Salisbury, and to most medieval writers, the term "grammar" included also what we today would describe as the "study of literature."[2] In any case the meaning of the term "grammar" would not include the study of dialectic or logic. And if we use, not a modern English term but a medieval one like "Arts of the *trivium*"—which would include grammar, logic, and rhetoric—it is necessary first to clear up the modern misconception that these arts were everywhere one thing and were consistently and continuously taught throughout the Middle Ages.[3] Richard McKeon and others have attempted to make some distinction between various periods of the Middle Ages in respect to the teaching of the *trivium*.[4] But more generally there has been greater attention paid by literary scholars to statements made by writers like John M. Manly. In his monograph, "Chaucer and the Rhetoricians," published in 1926, Manly makes certain statements which have proved to be extremely influential; they refer to Chaucer, but describe Manly's view of English educational

practices of the fourteenth century. For instance, he says: "What more likely than that the formal study of rhetoric not only was included in his (Chaucer's) curriculum, as one of the Seven Arts, but also occupied much of his thought and reflection in his maturer years?"[5]

And then, in relation to the *Poetria Nova* of Geoffrey of Vinsauf: "The *Nova poetria* was one of the principal text-books in rhetoric and was studied in the schools with a zeal devoted perhaps to few modern school books."[6]

So influential has been Manly's view that more than 40 subsequent studies have been published in support of Manly's position. This theory would be that an English writer of the fourteenth century would have had available to him a formal training in rhetoric, including the study of Vinsauf's book.[7]

The available evidence, however, leads rather to the conclusion that this is not an accurate description of the educational situation in Chaucer's England. It might be useful first to summarize very briefly the arguments previously advanced elsewhere by the present writer, and then to consider some of the literary implications of actual fourteenth-century educational practices.

For the sake of brevity, these arguments may be reviewed as a set of propositions.

PROPOSITION 1. Medieval writing and speaking were taught through the use of four kinds of textbooks: first, ancient rhetoric, like Cicero's *De inventione;* second, medieval *ars dictaminis,* or letter-writing manuals like the *ars dictandi* of Thomas of Capua; third, medieval *ars praedicandi,* like Robert of Basevorn's *Forma praedicandi;* and fourth, four types of grammatical treatises: (1) syntax; (2) metrics; (3) rhythmics; (4) prose-writing.[8]

PROPOSITION 2. Neither ancient nor medieval forms of rhetoric were taught in fourteenth-century schools. The ancient rhetoric of Cicero and Aristotle was not taught in English schools before 1431.[9] The *ars praedicandi* was not taught at all in the classrooms of England, since preaching was learned after completion of formal education. The *ars dictaminis* was not accepted as a formal university subject until 1432 at Oxford, and it is not likely that the *ars dictaminis* was taught in pre-university or other lower schools.[10]

PROPOSITION 3. The most common grammatical works in English lower schools were the *Barbarismus* of Donatus and the *Graecismus* of Evrard of Bethune. Both of these books place heavy emphasis on tropes and figures. University students studied Priscian or the *Doctrinale* of Alexandre de Villedieu.[11] The "arts of poetry"—of which Vinsauf's *Poetria nova* is the most famous—were not taught at all in English schools during the fourteenth century. Further, the fifteenth-century popularity of Vinsauf's *Poetria nova* can be traced to an influential treatise written at Oxford about 1405: the *Regula dictaminis* (or *De moderno dictamine*) of Thomas Merke, Bishop of Carlisle, which quotes Vinsauf 18 times. This work survives in 10 manuscripts.[12]

PROPOSITION 4. Except for the allusions in Chaucer and Gower, there are very few literary allusions which would indicate a widespread English interest in rhetoric during the fourteenth century. The allusions in Chaucer

and Gower can be traced either to ordinary grammatical instruction in the lower schools, or to the reading of specific sources by these authors. Chaucer, for example, may well have learned from Nicholas Trivet's *Annales* the Vinsaufian *planctus* which he satirizes in the Nun's Priest's Tale, while Gower is merely transliterating a passage from Brunetto Latini.[13]

PROPOSITION 5. Dialectic or logic was taught in English universities primarily through two books of Aristotle: his *Topics* and his *On Sophistical Refutations*. It will be recalled that Chaucer's Host chides the clerk for studying some "sophime" as he rides along. Finally, dialectic was not a usual lower school subject.[14]

From all this, it seems fair to conclude that in relation to instruction in the verbal arts, the dominant member of the trivium was the *ars grammatica*, especially in the lower schools. It cannot fairly be said that there was such a thing as a "rhetorical tradition" in fourteenth-century England.

Consequently it is important that we examine carefully the actual nature of fourteenth-century English instruction in the verbal arts. In particular, we might look to instruction in the *ars grammatica*, with special attention to the lower schools which were apparently quite numerous in England. The educational history of grammar may be approached in several ways: first, by discussing the statutes relating to the teaching of grammar; second, by discussing what we know of non-university schools in England; third, by analysing the evidence about actual teaching methods used in the fourteenth century; and finally, by examining the basic fourteenth-century textbooks in grammar.

We know a great deal more about university statutes than those for the lower schools. The university picture is very clear: it was assumed that the student (entering at perhaps 17 to 19 years of age) already knew the basics in grammar, and while he sometimes was enjoined to study the elementary primers of Donatus, the emphasis was obviously on such advanced books as Alexandre de Villedieu's *Doctrinale* and Priscian's *ars maior*. At Oxford, at least, we hear of formal disputations on grammatical subjects. Both Cambridge and Oxford had separate Faculties of Grammar, and both Universities issued licences to masters wishing to teach the subject. Cambridge, like Oxford, had nearby opportunities available to their masters since in both towns there were lower schools which used university masters as teachers of grammar.[15]

These lower schools—the term is used here to designate any type of non-university school—have a long history. Saint Bede tells us about the founding of such a school in the year 631 by the king of the East Angles. Canterbury and York were of course famous all through Anglo-Saxon times. The Lateran Council of 1215, with its famous decree about cathedral schools, did much to encourage the establishment of church-connected schools all over Europe.[16] There were also schools set up by guilds, by monasteries, by town authorities, and by individual citizens.

How numerous were these schools? Half a century ago Arthur F. Leach, the historian of English schools, published evidence to indicate that at least 55 schools founded in or before the fourteenth century were still in existence at the time of the dissolution in 1546 under Henry VIII. Of these 55 schools, 19 had been founded before 1300, and the remaining 36 during

the century itself.[17] (See the Appendix for a list of these schools.) In addition to these known schools, of course, there must have been many more whose records have not survived into our times. King Henry's commissioners found a school flourishing at Bath in 1552, for instance — a very reasonable place to expect one — but Leach did not uncover medieval records of this institution. We might well suppose that such an illustrious town would have had as continuous a school as York did. And the commissioners also discovered that in Crukerne in Somersetshire (to use their own words) "a grammar scole hathe ben continuallie kepte."[18] There is apparently no way for us now to learn what the term "continuallie" really means in a situation like this.

The Victoria County Histories also give us some clues. The Berkshire volume, for example, tells us that there is a record of a grammar school at Abingdon just outside Oxford, at various times: in 1139, in 1325, and in 1372.[19] There is no way of telling whether it is one continuous school.

In any case, there seems good reason to believe that there were numerous lower schools in fourteenth-century England. On one day, for instance —the 15th of June, 1327—the Dean and Chapter of Lincoln appointed masters to no less than six schools: Barton, Partenay, Grimsby, Horncastle, Boston, and Grantham.[20]

One historian of medieval education, Hastings Rashdall, puts it this way: "But it may be stated with some confidence that at least in the later Middle Ages the smallest towns and even the larger villages possessed schools where a boy might learn to read and acquire the first rudiments of ecclesiastical Latin; while, except in the very remote and thinly populated regions, he would never have had to go very far from home to find a regular grammar school."[21] Rashdall notes elsewhere, moreover, that Richard de Bury in his *Philobiblon* mentions rural schoolmasters as possible sources of information in his book-hunting inquiries.

Our information about particular schools is fragmentary, and very often depends upon some accident of record-making. We would not know, for instance, that there was a grammar school at Rudham near Norwich in the year 1240, except that the master of the Norwich grammar school tried to get jurisdiction over the appointment of the masters for Rudham, and the dispute came before the bishop's court. The court's records have survived.[22]

As one might expect, the records of the curricula of these schools are just as fragmentary—even more so, in fact, because very often all that has survived is the mention of the existence of a school, or the name of a master, with nothing at all about what was actually taught.

Nevertheless we can say with some confidence that we know quite a lot about what these lower schools taught during the fourteenth century. There are two reasons for this confidence: first, the strikingly consistent pattern which runs through all the records that we do have; and second, the evidence of the major teacher-training centre in England—that is, the Faculty of Grammar at Oxford.

One general impression emerges from a survey of these lower school records—namely, that their curriculum usually included grammar and "song." It will be recalled that in the Prioress's Tale Chaucer describes "A litel scole of Cristen folk" with three classes of students: there are the

beginners (learning their letters), the song-scholars, and the grammar-scholars. The song-scholars and the grammar-scholars are kept separate. These students learn, as Chaucer says, "As smale children doon in hire childhede." In other words, Chaucer regards it as a typical school. The passage is worth quoting here:

A litel scole of Cristen folk ther stood
Doun at the ferther ende, in which ther were
Children an heep, ycomen of Cristen blood,
That lerned in that scole yeer by yere
Swich manere doctrine as men used there,
That is to seyn, to syngen and to rede,
As smale children doon in hire childhede.

Among thise children was a wydwes sone,
A litel clergeon, seven yeer of age,
That day by day to scole was his wone,
And eek also, where as he saugh th'ymage
Of Cristes mooder, hadde he in usage,
As hym was taught, to knele adoun and seye
His *Ave Marie*, as he goth by the weye.

Thus hath this wydwe hir litel sone ytaught
Oure blisful Lady, Cristes mooder deere,
To worshipe ay, and he forgat it naught,
For sely child wol alday soone leere.
But ay, whan I remembre on this mateere,
Seint Nicholas stant evere in my presence,
For he so yong to Crist dide reverence.

This litel child, his litel book lernynge,
As he sat in the scole at his prymer,
He *Alma redemptoris* herde synge,
As children lerned hire antiphoner;
And as he dorste, he drough hym ner and ner,
And herkned ay the wordes and the noote,
Til he the firste vers koude al by rote.

Noght wiste he what this Latyn was to seye,
For he so yong and tendre was of age.
But on a day his felawe gan he preye
T'expounden hym this song in his langage,
Or telle hym why this song was in usage;
This preyde he hym to construe and declare
Ful often tyme upon his knowes bare.
(VII. 495-529)

Chaucer's picture of the little school is perfectly consistent with the general picture gained from the school records. Chaucer's "litel clergeon" is described as sitting in the school "at his prymer." Evidently he is studying grammar, for he is not one of the choristers. His "prymer" is very probably one of the two most popular books that the Western world ever produced—the two primers of Aelius Donatus, the fourth-century Latin grammarian who was also the teacher of Saint Jerome. These books became so popular in the Middle Ages that the very term "Donat" or "Donet" was synonomous with "primer" or "first book" in any subject. For instance, Piers Plowman speaks of the art of fraudulent shop-keeping as "going among drapers my donet to learn." In the fifteenth century Reginald Pecock even wrote a book which he called a *Donet of the Christian Religion,* that is, an elementary catechism or primer.[23]

The two short primers of Donatus deserve careful scrutiny. The first is his *ars minor,* dealing only with the eight parts of speech in a question and answer format.[24] Each of the eight parts is defined, its forms and types being exemplified usually by single Latin words. There are very few literary examples until Donatus reaches *praepositio,* when he supplies six examples from Virgil's *Aeneid.* The book is very short—taking up only 11 pages in the Keil edition—and undoubtedly required a great deal of supplementary oral instruction on the part of the classroom teacher.

The second primer of Donatus is his *Ars grammatica,* the so-called *ars maior.*[25] This is more complex, even though it is still an elementary textbook. It occupies 35 pages in the printed edition, as compared to the 11 pages of the *ars minor.* The subject-matter of the book falls readily into three major categories, and medieval manuscripts often indicate that its three parts were treated separately. Indeed, the third part—the so-called *Barbarismus,* named after its opening word—appears all over medieval Europe as a completely independent and separate work.[26]

The contents of the *ars maior* are interesting to the student of English literary history. The first section has six rubrics: *de voce, de littera, de syllaba, de pedibus, de tonis,* and *de posituris.* It may be recalled that in the Squire's Tale, 101, Chaucer praises the knight on the brass steed because he speaks "Withouten vice of silable or of lettre."

The second section takes up in some detail the eight parts of speech, more than half the whole book being taken up with this matter. There are more quotations from the *Aeneid,* and also some from Ennius and Terence.

It is the third section that may be the most interesting, however. For one thing, it is heavily salted with examples taken from the *Aeneid* and from the *Georgics* as well. But its chief literary interest may lie in the fact that it defines and exemplifies 17 figures of speech and 13 tropes.[27] For the trope of *allegoria,* incidentally, Donatus provides seven species. An exposure to Donatus would therefore have acquainted any English writer with the rudiments of the figures and tropes. Virtually every fourteenth-century library catalogue I have seen shows that both of Donatus's primers were available in England.[28]

Another popular elementary grammar text was the *Graecismus* of Evrard of Bethune, an hexameter poem of 4440 lines written about 1212.[29] The work is divided into 15 books, the first three of which present 102 figures which Evrard regards as either permissible or prescribed for good

writing. Evrard divides the figures and tropes into three classes: *permissiva* (metaplasms, schemes, and tropes), *prohibitiva* (barbarisms and solecisms), and *preceptiva* (colours of rhetoric). The remaining 12 books treat etymology, orthography, noun and pronoun forms, and Greek derivatives; the book takes its name from the section on Greek words. The book was so popular in France that Henri d'Andeli in his *Battle of the Seven Arts* names Evrard as one of the modern defenders of Priscianic grammar. Medieval library catalogues reveal that the *Graecismus* was no less popular in England, and it is known for instance that Saint Paul's School in London possessed two copies at a period when Chaucer could have been a student there.[30] Hence the *Graecismus* must be regarded as another possible source which English writers could have used to gain their knowledge of figures and tropes. Grammatical instruction, then, may safely be taken as the key to at least one aspect of the early literary formation of medieval English authors.

Three other books figured in grammatical instruction in this period. The first two are the so-called *Distichs of Cato*[31] and the *Ars poetica*[32] of Horace. Evidence for the use of these books is somewhat obscure, however, and at the moment this should be regarded merely as a possibility and not as a fact. The third book, on the other hand—the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid—is clearly prescribed in several instances, including a statute of the Faculty at Oxford University.[33] It is very useful to have some idea of the books used in grammatical instruction, but what use was made of the books, and what kind of teaching actually took place in the fourteenth-century classroom?

In the year 1357 Bishop Grandisson of Exeter is found complaining that the grammar masters in his diocese rush their students through the learning of prayers so they can more quickly get to "other school-books (*magistrales*) and learn the poets and verse-writers."[34] In Exeter in mid-century, at least, grammar masters apparently went beyond Donatus to take up the actual reading of poetry.

We naturally wonder, which poets. Miss Edith Rickert, in her very illuminating article on "Chaucer at School," has shown that school library records—including bequests of books—can be a fruitful source of information in attempting to answer this kind of question.[35] Perhaps a careful scrutiny of local library catalogues from various parts of medieval England would enable us to form a more complete picture of the poets commonly studied during the century. We do, incidentally, have one enlightening bit of news from the third quarter of the century, when the framers of Oxford grammar statutes found it necessary to prohibit by name the teaching of two particular books dealing with love—one is by a certain "Pamphilius," the other is Ovid's *Art of Love*.

It might be expected that a fairly well educated master of grammar, of this or any other country, would use in his teaching whatever books were familiar to him. Consequently it is of the greatest importance that we examine the cultural background of the grammar masters themselves. When William of Wyckeham founded Winchester College in 1382 to teach (in his own words) "grammar, the foundation, gate, and source of all other liberal arts," he also bequeathed an impressive number (240) of books for use by the teachers (and possibly also the students?).[36] The Faculty of Grammar

at Oxford encouraged the teaching of verse-writing, and models must surely have been used in this connection.

Two Oxford statutes may help us to understand the situation. In the year 1306 the grammar M.A.'s were required to pass an examination in the writing of both verse and prose (*de modo versificandi et prosandi*).[37]

One of the most direct descriptions of medieval classroom teaching methods appears in an Oxford statute from about the middle of the fourteenth century. Apparently it dates from just before 1344. It is worth quoting in entirety here; the statute reads as follows:

> Every fortnight they (i.e. the students) must present verses, and compositions (*literas*), put together with fitting words, not swollen or half a yard long, and with *clausulae* concise and appropriate, displaying metaphors, and, as much as possible, replete with *sententiae*; which verses and compositions, those who are given the task should write on parchment on the next free day or before, and then on the following day when they return to school they must recite them by heart to the master, and hand in their writings.[38]

This is a far more arduous programme than most modern scholars would ordinarily associate with fourteenth-century English grammar schools. And perhaps the great outbreaks of the plague during the century so decimated the ranks of grammar masters that this plan of study was not fully realized. Nevertheless it offers some intriguing suggestions as to the possible literary formation of young boys educated by the graduates of the Oxford Faculty of Grammar. For one thing, it implies a sufficient study of poetry to enable the students to write their own verses. It also suggests that prose composition was contemplated as well. And there is certainly a clear statement of standards to be attained in the writing done by the pupils. Especially interesting is the requirement that the prose compositions employ rhythmical *clausulae,* since rhythmical prose is one of the three chief types of writing described in all the major medieval grammatical treatises.[39] Rhythmical prose, moreover, would seem to be a rather complex exercise, with the further implication that some kinds of prose models must also have been studied. (Robert of Basevorn, for instance, who lectured in Theology at Oxford in 1322, describes in his *forma praedicandi* seven kinds of prose style worth imitating.)[40] Nor can we assume that this statute refers merely to the *ars dictaminis,* or art of letter-writing, whose manuals prescribe rhythmical prose of the type known as the *cursus.* The evidence is clear that in Oxford the *ars dictaminis* was not acknowledged by the Faculty of Grammar until 1432.[41] This was so obvious an omission from the grammar curriculum, in fact, that private teachers like Thomas Sampson and John de Briggis made their livings in that university town (c. 1350-80) by teaching the *ars dictaminis* outside the University curriculum.[42]

At any rate it seems reasonable to expect that the fourteenth-century masters of grammar would have been found teaching not only Donatus and his rules, but making applications as well, either to verse models and

prose models or to the actual original compositions of students. Surely they could not have been expected to teach the Latin language in a vacuum. Brother Bonaventure, in a recent issue of *Medieval Studies,* has identified 12 manuscript collections which he believes were used this way in the fifteenth century.[43]

It remains to suggest several implications of what has been noted here. First of all, it seems crucial that, as students of English literary history, we should pay a good deal more attention to the actual educational practices of the fourteenth century. This is still a field governed by generalizations—generalizations which in many cases stem from studies conducted as much as half a century ago. So it might be very profitable to look carefully at individual schools, especially those in areas which have given rise to some of our major literary figures. It is now possible, perhaps, to do for Chaucer or Langland what Donald Lemen Clark has done for Milton in his book, *Milton at Saint Paul's School,* or what T. W. Baldwin has done for Shakespeare in his *Smalle Latine and Lesse Greeke.*[44] In other words, what is needed is a systematic collation of the instructional resources of literary England in the fourteenth century.

For another thing, we have never really assessed in any detail the impact of the universities on the verbal training of English youth. Grammar, of course, was a required subject for bachelors at both Oxford and Cambridge, advanced work being taught by use of Priscian.[45] Even dialectic, in the sense that it deals with the "meaning" of words, may have some importance in this connection.[46] It is reasonable to suppose that the masters in the numerous lower schools must have carried with them some of the cultural background which they themselves gained in their own higher education.

Moreover, the widespread use of the two books of Donatus as grammar texts, together with the ubiquity of the *Graecismus,* would indicate that the figures of speech and tropes were known to even the least-educated student who had passed through a lower school in England. Some pains have been taken, for instance, to show that Richard Rolle must have studied rhetoric,[47] since some of his language is highly stylized and filled with figures and tropes. But apparently he could have learned that whole art in an ordinary English grammar school. The same thing is true of John Gower, and of Chaucer as well.[48] The basic implication here is obvious—that is, the student need not have studied rhetorical *dispositio.* But there is one point further which merits consideration. It is this: if tropes and figures were learned from a textbook like Donatus, and were exemplified or studied in actual poems—whether Latin or vernacular—it would seem likely that new and original productions by writers trained in this way would tend to follow the *genres* represented by the models. This does seem to describe precisely what occurs regularly in medieval English literary art.

Most important, however, is the suggestion that we cast a newly appreciative eye on the use of *florilegia* in fourteenth-century England. From what has been said here so far, it is possible that some of these collections were used as teaching anthologies. Brother Bonaventure, in fact, refers to them as "reading texts." If so, what implications there would be in those which contain Latin and French and English verses!

As a last word, it would seem that the one idea which emerges from all of this is that for too long a time we have allowed ourselves to think of Middle English literature as somehow appearing full-blown in the adult life of its authors—as if any literature could thus appear without a strong foundation of training in the verbal arts of reading, writing, and speaking. We need to know more about these verbal arts in the fourteenth century. For example, even such an excellent study as that of John Lydgate done recently by Walter F. Schirmer is able to devote just three lines to the whole question of that poet's early education, and indeed the whole matter of his formal education is handled in no more than a paragraph.[49] Yet Lydgate grew up within the area served by several grammar schools[50] controlled by the Abbey of Bury St. Edmunds, which he eventually entered at the age of 15 years. It is obviously improbable that he was completely illiterate at the age of 15, so that we might well wonder what his early instruction in language had taught him before entering the monastery. Later the Benedictines sent him to Oxford. What did he learn there about the uses of language? In other words, what *was* John Lydgate's total training in the verbal arts?

This is just one small example of the type of question we can now ask ourselves about English literary figures of the Middle Ages. Until we secure answers to such questions, our picture of medieval English literary training can only be an incomplete one.

Appendix

A PARTIAL LIST OF MEDIEVAL ENGLISH LOWER SCHOOLS

(*The following partial list of English lower schools is given as an illustration of the number of such schools that might be identified from a careful collation of all the available sources.*)[51]

Presented here is a list of British medieval grammar schools which flourished in England from the sixth to the fifteenth centuries. The names of these schools have been arranged chronologically by their founding dates or by the dates of their first historical mention. Most often the date must be attributed to the latter because of the scarcity of founding documents.

This list has been drawn from the studies of medieval schools made by Arthur Leach which were published in the three volumes: *English Schools at the Reformation* (1896), *Educational Charters and Documents* (1911), and *The Schools of Medieval England* (1915). The sources used here have been limited to the materials in the Leach publications because these volumes still form the most complete history of medieval British schools in existence. In fact, after the reports of the Chantry Commissions of Edward VI in 1548, no such history was attempted until Leach wrote *The Schools of Medieval England* in 1915. Even the two British government studies contained in the Report of the Schools Inquiry Commission of 1867 and the reports of the Commissioners for Inquiry Concerning Charities of 1818 to 1837 relied on the dates of medieval foundations found in the Chantry Commissions.[52]

Although Leach himself used the findings of the three commission reports, he went beyond these findings to the original charters and documents kept by the county historical societies and the local religious establishments.[53] The materials Leach gathered in his field work were much more complete and accurate than those which had been gathered previously by the Chantry Commissions, because the Commissions did not delve into the early foundations. As a result, Leach was able to establish ancient foundations for many grammar schools which had formerly been assigned to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries by the Commissions.

An illustration of the additions and alterations made by Arthur Leach to the process of dating English grammar schools can be found in a comparison of two lists of dates presented in the appendix of *English Schools at the Reformation*.[54] The comparison shows that out of the two-hundred-and-four grammar schools attributed to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries by the Chantry Commissions and later the Schools Inquiry Commissions, eighty-three could be reassigned to the period between the Conquest and the fifteenth century.

The dates of the following list have been drawn predominantly from the discoveries made by Leach after he had written *English Schools at the Reformation*. The dates of schools founded before the Conquest are included here which were not included in the Leach publications prior to *The Schools of Medieval England*. There have also been included in this list the indications of changes in the nature of the religious bodies governing certain schools. The great implications of these changes from secular to monastic control of the schools were discussed most fully by Leach in his later writings.

Grammar Schools founded and first mentioned before the Conquest

598	Canterbury	912	Tamworth
604	Rochester	913	Stamford
604	St. Paul's (London)	‡914	Bedford
631	Dunwich	914	Bridgenorth
*634	Lindisfarne	†914	Derley
635	York	914	Warwick
648	Winchester	917	Beverley
‡661	Ripon	†917	Leicester
672	Lichfield	*943	Glastonbury
*674	Wearmouth	*955	Abingdon
678	Hexham	1016	Bury St. Edmunds
*682	Jarrow	‡1060	Waltham
688	Hereford	§1066	Crediton
688	Worcester	§1066	St. David's
†705	Sherborne	§1066	Southwell
907	Chester	§1066	Wimborne

Grammar Schools founded or first mentioned after the Conquest
(1066 - 1400)

1066	Pontefract
‡1074	St. George's (Oxford)
1075	Salisbury
1090	Aucher
1090	Hastings
1090	Wymming
*§1097	St. Alban's
‡1100	Dunstable
‡1100	Gloucester
1100	Norwich
1107	Thetford
‡§1118	St. Frideswides (Oxford)
‡§1124	Huntington
‡1125	Reading
‡1131	Dunstable
§1139	St. Martin-le-Grand (London)
§1139	St. Mary-le-Bow (London)
‡1146	Bristol
‡1149	Derby
*1150	Christ Church (London)
‡§1150	Twyneham (Christ Church, Hants)
1175	Wells
‡1180	Durham
1200	Helmsley
1206	Colchester
1209	Cambridge
1212	Elgin
1219	Barton-on-Humber
1219	Lincoln
1230	Northampton
1232	Chichester
1238	Newark
§1238	Southwell Minster
1240	Rudham
1242	Cirencester
1244	Basingstoke
*1248	Lewes
1250	Institution of St. Osmund
1251	Battle
1262	Winchester College School (Salisbury)
1263	Plymton
1264	Merton Grammar School Maldon (moved to Oxford 1270)
*1266	Howden
1269	College of St. Edmund
1274	Penryn
1275	Marlborough
1276	Louth
c. 1280	Arundel
1284	Lancaster
c. 1285	Chesterfield
1285	Peterhouse School (Oxford)
c. 1286	Appleby
1289	Kinoulton
§1291	Carlisle
1291	Darlington
1291	Worchester
1293	Taunton
1298	Bridgewater
1298	Wakefield
1300	Malmesbury
1302	New Shoreham
1303	Bourne
1304	Dalton
1304	Maidstone
1305	Kelks
1309	Strubby
1310	Crewkerne
1311	St. Alphage's
1314	Ashburton
1320	Seaford
§1321	Northallerton
1321	St. Martin's (Canterbury)
1324	Harlow
1326	Yarnescomb
1327	Graham
1327	Grimsby
1327	Horncastle
1327	Partenay
1327	St. Botolph's (Boston)

1332	Gateford	1379	New College School (Oxford)
1337	Ottery St. Mary	1379	Wisbeck
1340	Queen's College School (Oxford)	1380	Launceston
1345	Whitewell	1382	Beccles
1348	Farburn	1384	Henley
1349	Ludlow	1384	Wotton-under-Edge
1349	Tickhill	1387	Ledbury
1351	Doncaster	1388	Maldon
1351	Dunham	1389	Great Baddow
1352	Corpus Christi School (Cambridge)	1389	Rayleigh
1354	Westminster	1392	Coggeshall
1362	Cobham	1392	Dilwyn
*1363	Evesham	1392	Wellingborough
1364	Braintree	1392	Writtle
1364	Coventry (Bablake)	1393	Bredgar College
1364	Kingston-on-Thames	1394	Bromyard
1367	Penkridge	1394	Cockermouth
1369	Bocking	1394	Hemingborough
‡1372	Abingdon (Roysse's)	1396	Boroughbridge
1373	Crofton	1399	Preston
1375	Chelmsford	1400	Bolton-upon-Derne
*1379	Bardney	1402	Stratford-upon-Avon

* School founded by regular clergy and never secularized.
† School founded by secular clergy and re-established under regular clergy before the twelfth century.
‡ School founded by secular clergy and re-established under regular clergy during and after the twelfth century.
§ School probably founded before Conquest, but first mentioned at a later date.

NOTES

[1] The standard works in this area date back half a century or more: Arthur F. Leach, *The Schools of Medieval England* (New York, 1915); Leach, *A History of Winchester College* (New York, 1899); Foster Watson, *The English Grammar Schools to* 1660 (Cambridge, 1908). On the universities, of course, the standard work is Hastings Rashdall, *Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages* (3 vols., new ed. by F. M. Powicke and A. B. Emden, Oxford, 1936). For a revealing insight into the implications of the change from French, see M. Dominica Legge, "William of Kingsmill—a Fifteenth Century Teacher of French in Oxford," in *Studies in French Language and Medieval Literature Presented to Mildred K. Pope* (Manchester, 1939), pp. 241-46.

[2] Haec igitur professio, cum brevissime in duas partes dividatur, recte loquendi scientiam et poetarum enarrationem"; *Institutio oratoria* I. iv. 2. As the *De grammatico* of Saint Anselm demonstrates, this double function of the grammarian was clearly understood in the Middle Ages. See D. P. Henry, "Why *grammaticus*?" in *Archivum latinitatis medii aevi,* XXVIII (1958), 165-80. The survey of Charles Thurot, recently reprinted, is still the best introduction to medieval grammatical history: "Notices et extraits de divers manuscrits latins pour servir à l'histoire des doctrines grammaticales au moyen âge," *Notices et extraits,* XXII (1868), 1-540. For a brief summary, however, see R. H. Robins, *Ancient and Medieval Grammatical Theory in Europe* (London, 1961), pp. 69-90.

[3] One recent study, for instance, makes the flat statement that "Grammar, logic, and rhetoric were the principal subjects" in pre-university studies; see George F. Kneller, *Higher Learning in Britain* (University of California Press, 1955), p.9.

[4] Richard McKeon, "Rhetoric in the Middle Ages," *Speculum,* XVII (1942), 1-32. Similar efforts appear in Charles Sears Baldwin, *Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic* (New York, 1928).

[5] John M. Manly, *Chaucer and the Rhetoricians,* Warton Lectures on English Poetry, XVII (London, 1926), p.6.

[6] *Ibid.,* p.4.

[7] For a general discussion of Manly's theories, see James J. Murphy, "A New Look at Chaucer and the Rhetoricians," *Review of English Studies,* N.S. XV (1964), 1-20.

[8] James J. Murphy, "The Arts of Discourse, 1050-1400," *Medieval Studies,* XXIII (1961), 194-205; also "The Medieval Arts of Discourse: An Introductory Bibliography, *Speech Monographs,* XXIX (1962), 71-78.

[9] James J. Murphy, "The Earliest Teaching of Rhetoric at Oxford," *Speech Monographs,* XXVII (1960), 345-47.

[10] Peter of Blois and Gervase de Melkley treated *dictamen* briefly in thirteenth-century treatises; Thomas Sampson (fl. 1350) and John de Briggis (1380) both made their living in Oxford by teaching the subject privately outside the ordinary university curriculum. See Murphy, "Rhetoric in Fourteenth Century Oxford," *Medium Aevum,* XXXIV (1965), 1-20.

[11] Brief descriptions may be found in Thurot, *op. cit.*

[12] See Murphy, *ibid.* By the third quarter of the fifteenth century the anonymous author of *The Court of Sapience* (c.1470) is found referring to Vinsauf as "Galfryde, the poete lawreate" (l.1916). And Stephen Hawes uses Vinsauf as the basis of his discussion of Lady Rhetoric in *Passetime of Pleasure* (1509).

[13] Murphy, "John Gower's *Confessio Amantis* and the First Discussion of Rhetoric in the English Language," *Philological Quarterly,* XVI (1962), 401-11.

[14] Only three scattered instances of dialectic in English lower schools have come down to us: Southwell Minster in 1248, Bury St. Edmund in 1290, and Warwick in 1316; see Leach, *Schools of Medieval England, passim.* Aristotle's two books of logic, incidentally, deal with language as well as with argument: see Murphy, "Two Medieval Textbooks in Debate," *Journal of the American Forensic Association,* 1 (1964), 1-6.

[15] Richard W. Hunt, "Oxford Grammar Masters in the Middle Ages," in *Oxford Studies Presented to Daniel Callus,* Oxford Historical Society, New Series, XVI (Oxford, 1964), pp. 164-93.

[16] This and other important documents may be found in Leach, *Educational Charters and Documents, 598 to 1909* (Cambridge, 1911). A very brief sketch of the different types of medieval schools is given by Richard B. Hepple, *Medieval Education in Britain,* Historical Association Leaflet No. 90 (London, 1932).

[17] Leach, *Schools of Medieval England.*

[18] Leach, *English Schools at the Reformation,* 1546-48 (Westminster, 1896), p.192.

[19] See *The Victoria History of Berkshire,* ed. P. H. Ditchfield and William Page (4 vols., London, 1906-24).

[20] Leach, *Schools of Medieval England,* p.192. Leach cites this incident as a "striking proof of the ubiquity of grammar schools at this time," since the records survive only by accident and it may be safely presumed that similar

appointments were regularly made in other dioceses as well. In fact the Lincoln records indicate the existence of still another school—that at Stamford—for the Dean and two canons sitting as an annual appointment commission for these schools noted four years later (1331) that the master of the Stamford school was absent without sending any excuse.

21 Rashdall, *Universities,* III, 350.

22 Leach, *Schools of Medieval England,* p. 168. The earliest reliable record of Salisbury school, for instance, is found in a grant made in 1138 to a schoolmaster, but Leach notes that a thirteenth-century document at that Cathedral purports to contain the actual "Institution of St. Osmund," which in the year 1091 set forth the duties of the schoolmaster. Osmund was chancellor under William the Conqueror. Text in Leach, *Educational Charters,* pp. 72-75. Also see Leach, "Some Results of Research in the History of Education in England; with Suggestions for Its Continuance and Extension," *Proceedings of the British Academy,* 1913-14 (London, 1915), 433-480.

23 A useful summary of Donatus's works and influence may be found in Paul Abelson, *The Seven Liberal Arts* (New York, 1906), pp. 36 ff.

24 Text in Henry Keil (ed.), *Grammatici latini* (4 vols., Leipzig, 1864), IV, 355-66.

25 *Ibid.,* IV, 367-402.

26 A convenient summary of medieval library catalogue listings appears in *Handschriften antiken autoren in mittelalterlichen Bibliothekskatalogen,* ed. Karl Manitius, in *Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen,* LXVII (Leipzig, 1935).

27 The medieval history of the doctrine of *figurae* remains unwritten. As Donatus shows, it is clear that two separate traditions or streams of influence were carried over from ancient times—these two being the grammatical and the rhetorical respectively. The standard rhetorical figures and tropes, popularized by the ubiquitous pseudo-Ciceronian *Rhetorica ad Herennium,* totalled 64 in number. The grammarians, however, not only tampered with this list but added others of their own; Donatus, for instance, expands the 10 tropes of ancient rhetoric into 13 tropes with a total of 28 species. By the thirteenth century the list of tropes and figures had increased to more than 100. See Thurot, *op. cit.,* 458-84; also Leonid Arbusow, *Colores rhetorici: Eine Auswahl rhetorischer Figuren und Gemeinplatz als Hilfsmittel für akademische Ubungen an mittelalterlichen Texten* (Gottingen, 1948). Some preliminary classifications of ancient figures occur in Heinrich Lausberg, *Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik* (2 vols., Munich, 1960). For charts revealing the use of the *ad Herennium* list in some of the medieval *artes poetriae,* see Edmond Faral, *Les arts poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1924) pp. 52-54.

28 Ernest A. Savage, *Old English Libraries* (London, 1911), presents summaries of various medieval catalogues.

29 *Eberhardi Bethuniensis Graecismus,* ed. Iohann Wrobel (Vratislavae, 1887).

30 Edith Rickert, "Chaucer at School," *Modern Philology,* XXIX (1931), 257-74.

31 The sum of 2d. was expended at Merton College Grammar School in 1308, for instance, for "a Cato"; see Leach, *Educational Charters,* p. 221; *Schools of Medieval England,* p. 174.

32 The expense of repairing a book or Horace (*in debili libro oracii*) is noted in 1349, again at Merton; *ibid.,* p. 196. Rickert notes that St. Paul's School also possessed a copy of *veterem poetriam* (i.e. Horace).

33 Henry Anstey (ed.), *Monumenta academica oxoniensis* (2 vols., London, 1868), II, 437. The same statute warns that the students must be kept away from such unsuitable books as *Ovidii de arte amandi et Pamphili.*

34 "We daily see among the masters and teachers in our diocese of boys and illiterates, instructing them in grammar, a preposterous and useless, yes, and a superstitious method of teaching, more like that of heathens than of Christians; that as soon as the pupils have learnt even imperfectly the Lord's Prayer with the Angel's Salutation, the Creed, Matins, the hours of the Virgin, and the like, which are connected with the faith and their soul's salvation, they make them pass on prematurely to other school-books (*magistrales*) and to learn the poets and verse writers"; *Grandisson's Register,* II, 1192; text in Leach, *Educational Charters,* pp. 314-17.

[35] See especially her discussion of the books bequeathed to the school by Tolleshunt (1328) and Ravenstone (1358) for the use of the boys (*ad usum puerorum*); Ravenstone also left a special chest for keeping the books in the boys' room. See above, note 30.

[36] The books are listed in Savage, *Old English Libraries*, p. 272.

[37] And the same statute that forbids Ovid and Pamphilius makes it clear that poetry was a regular staple in the curriculum, for it requires the use of "librum sive libros regulas et naturam grammaticales principaliter pertranctes vel aliter pertranctem, aut moralia vel metaphoras sive poesias honestas"; Anstey, *Monumenta academica*, II, 441.

[38] "Item, tenentur singulis quindenis versus dare, et literas compositas verbis decentibus non ampullosis aut sesquipedalibus, et clausulis succinctis, decoris, metaphoris manifestis, et quantum possint, sententia refertis, quos versus et quas literas debent recipientes in proximo die feriato vel ante in pergameno scribere, et inde sequenti die, cum ad scholas venerint, Magistro suo corde tenus reddere et scripturam suam offere"; Anstey, *Monumenta academica*, II, 437-38.

[39] Jean de Garlande, for instance, wrote a major treatise entitled *De arte prosayca metrica et rithmica*. For classifications of types of medieval discourse, see Murphy, "The Arts of Discourse, 1050-1400," *Medieval Studies*, XXIII (1961), 194-205.

[40] Robert of Basevorn, *Forma praedicandi*, ed. Th.-M. Charland in *Artes praedicandi* (Ottowa and Paris, 1936), pp. 233-323. Cap. vii suggests imitating Christ, Paul, Augustine, Gregory, Bernard, the mode of Paris and the mode of Oxford. The medieval *florilegium*, or anthology of separate excerpts or works, would have made a useful tool for such study of various models.

[41] Strickland Gibson (ed.), *Statuta antiqua universitatis oxoniensis* (Oxford, 1931), p. 240.

[42] It is also interesting to note that both Sampson and De Briggis relied heavily on Italian *dictamen* theory. Sampson's *Modus dictandi brevis et utilis* survives in B.M. MS Royal 17 B XLVII, ff. 42-48, while the *Compilatio de arte dictandi* of De Briggis is extant in Oxford Bodleian MS Douce 52, ff. 82-89. Cf. Noel Denholm-Young, "The Cursus in England," in *Collected Papers on Medieval Subjects* (Oxford, 1946), pp. 26-55.

[43] Brother Bonaventure, F. S. C., "The Teaching of Latin in Later Medieval England," *Medieval Studies*, XXIII (1961), 1-20.

[44] Some previous efforts in this direction may be more misleading than revealing. George A. Plimpton, *The Education of Chaucer, Illustrated from the Schoolbooks in Use in His Time* (Oxford, 1935), for instance, holds a commonly-held assumption that rhetoric was taught in the schools, and pictures the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* as one of Chaucer's schoolbooks.

[45] Beginning with the detailed Oxford statute of 1267, for example, the universities are careful to specify required books by name. See Leach, *Educational Charters*, pp. 190-95.

[46] John of Salisbury, for instance, had noted in 1149 that Aristotle's *On Sophistical Refutations* "subjoins a list of forms of refutory argumentation that depend on wording. These include ambiguity, amphiboly, combination, division, accent, and figurative speech"; *Metalogicon*, trans. Daniel D. McGarry (University of California Press, 1955), p. 239. Indeed, as Richard Hunt has pointed out (see Note 15 above), the university disputations on the grammar of Priscian gave rise to the *grammatica speculativa*, which is a forbear of modern semantics.

[47] Gabriel L. Liegey, "The Rhetorical Aspects of Rolle's *Melos contemplativorum*," Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1954.

[48] See above, Notes 7, 8, and 13.

[49] Walter F. Schirmer, *John Lydgate: A Study in the Culture of the XVth Century*, trans. Ann. E. Keep (London, 1961).

[50] In nearby Ingham, for instance, the religious of the Order of the Holy Trinity may well have had a school. The congregation of 13 religious was established there in 1355 with the aid of Miles de Stapleton, a knight of Norwich. The fifth prior, John de Blakeney (fl. 1439) is the author of a treatise on writing, *Tractatus de modo inveniendi ornata verba*, which survives in B.M. MS Royal 12 B XVII, ff. 53-57.

[51] This list of schools was prepared with the assistance of Miss Frances Cornell. See also P. J. Wallis, *Histories of Old Schools: A Revised List for England and Wales* (Department of Education, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, 1966).

[52] Arthur F. Leach, *English Schools at the Reformation* (Westminster, 1896). pp. 321-323.

[53] Leach, *The Schools of Medieval England* (London, 1915), Bibliography, pp. vii-ix.

[54] Leach, *English Schools at the Reformation*, pp. 322-323.