Wynkyn de Worde’s Malory [1498]:
A Comparison with Caxton’s Edition (Books XX & XXI)

Tsuyoshi Mukai

Henry Tudor defeated Richard III at the battle of Bosworth and brought to an end the feudal anarchy during the Wars of Roses. It was 22 August 1485, just twenty-two days after Caxton’s publication of *Le Morte Darthur*. The political and the literary event, which then seemed quite irrelevant to each other, were to be twined into the seed of dispute among historians in the Tudor dynasty. Henry VII, weak in his hereditary right, realized the value of the popular Arthurian legend and put it to political use in order to secure his precarious throne: since his grandfather was Welsh, he proclaimed his inheritance of Arthur’s blood; and he christened his son Arthur at Winchester (English Camelot), responsive to Merlin’s prophecy about the return of Arthur. Henry VIII, furthermore, enacted the Act of Supremacy and set about expansionism on the ground that Arthur had been a world conqueror from Rome to Britain. Thus was the English crown staked upon the ‘historical’ Arthur, and the Arthurian literature was forcibly fused into the political tactics.

The manoeuvre of these Tudor kings raised the controversy as to whether King Arthur was merely a king in an imaginary world or was he a real hero who brought England glory with the knights of the Round Table. In this upsurge of dispute, a considerable number of chronicles and writings were successively brought out with a favourable or unfavourable stance on the historicity of King Arthur. This ‘battle’ of historians must have affected the reading of Malory’s *Morte Darthur*: the historical interest in Arthur, if it was carried too forward, might cause the romance to be equated with something like a history in its modern sense; and it might even weaken the fantastic enjoyment.

Malory suffered another prejudice on its matter: Roger Ascham, one-time tutor to Elizabeth, denounced the story in *The Scholemaster*, charging that ‘the whole pleasure of [the] booke standeth... in open manslaughter and bold bawdry.’ Such a downright contempt of Malory was not unreasonable from the literary criteria of the humanists, who called upon literature to be didactic as well as plausible.

In publishing Malory, Caxton, assuming an evasive attitude on the verisimilitude of Arthurian exploits, left its judgement up to the readers and instead, as if taking defensive measures against the neoclassical critics, emphasized the ethical utility and the diverting nature of the story:

Doo after the good and leue the euyl / and it shal brynge you to good fame and
renownee / And for to passe the tyme thys book shal be plesaunte to rede in / but
for to gyue fayth and byleue that al is trewe that is conteyned herin / ye be at your
lyberte / but al is wryton for our doctryne /

(Caxton's Prologue, folio sig. 3r / 33-38)

These prefatory words may have done much against the forthcoming transvaluation of
the book from romance to history among the Tudor intellectuals, and may have
helped to initiate the readers into a proper, casual way of appreciating the romance.

While exposed to the moralistic censure, Malory, with a subtle difference in attitude
of readers towards it, enjoyed a large audience and went through six (to be more
precise, seven) editions from 1485 to 1634. These black-letter editions are printed in
folio except for East's second printing in quarto; to put them chronologically, William
Caxton [1485: folio], Wynkyn de Worde [1498: folio], W. de Worde [1529: folio],
William Copland [1557: folio], Thomas East [c 1585: folio & quarto] and William
Stansby [1634: folio]. The last five editions are ultimately originated from Caxton's
Malory, but the immediate relation between each text and its exemplar may be
indicated as follows:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Caxton} & [1485] \\
\text{de Worde} & [1498] \\
\text{de Worde} & [1529] \text{-----} \text{Copland} & [1557] \\
& \text{East} & [c 1585: folio & quarto] \\
& \text{Stansby} & [1634]
\end{array}
\]

Each edition is deviated from its copy-text(s) and one can observe various kinds
of textual variants: punctuational, morphological, lexical and syntactic differences;
and some words or sentences are even added or deleted. The deviations are presuma-
bly due to the editor's or his compositors' stealthy or open hands. These editorial
practices may be attributed to the transition of literary tastes, to the change of
language, and, more dominantly, to the maturity of concept about 'sentence', 'coher-
ence' and 'unity', and to the demand for a more legible version, which naturally follows
the lowering and widening of audience caused by the introduction of printing.

Since de Worde's second edition [1529] has occupied a vital position in the
genealogical table of Malory from Caxton to Stansby, scholarly interest has been
focussed on it and the other editions, especially de Worde [1498], have unduly remained
unexamined. If, however, one is chiefly interested in making clear the internal or
external influences on literary texts by the introduction of printing, de Worde's first
edition will be the first to be investigated: Caxton is certainly the first printed version,
but it is conservative in the sense that it intentionally takes over scribes' usage so that
it may resemble a medieval manuscript. Or, if one takes an interest in the transforma-
tion of the text, de Worde [1498] should be as worthy of research; because most of the
variants that H. O. Sommer points out in his comparative study between Caxton and
de Worde [1529] come from the recastings made in de Worde's first edition, including,
of course, his famous interpolation in Chap. XII of Bk. XXI; and because further
rewritings, which may convey the shift of literary and linguistic circumstances, are
made during the period between his two editions.

The purpose of this study, which will be published in serial, is to collate Caxton and
de Worde [1498], and to give all kinds of variant readings except punctuational and
orthographic ones. The scope in this paper is Books XX and XXI.

Before commencing comparison, some preliminary sketch will be needed about each
edition. Caxton exists in two copies: one is in the Pierpont Morgan Library; and the
other in the John Rylands Library. The Pierpont copy is perfect throughout whereas
the Rylands copy wants eleven leaves, which have been supplied in facsimile by John
Harris. Besides a number of scattered minor variants between the two copies, E.
Vinaver finds them remarkably differed in signatures N 3, N 6, Y 3, and Y 6; and he
concludes that the Pierpont copy is a resetting. There are five substantive differences
in the sheet of N 3 • 6, and two in the sheet of Y 3 • 6. These variants naturally raise
the discussion as to which copy should be taken here to compare with de Worde.

Now let us put de Worde's readings by the side of these variants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sig. N 3</th>
<th>Pierpont Caxton</th>
<th>Rylands Caxton</th>
<th>de Worde</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. N 3r/9-10</td>
<td>to take the suerd &amp; assaye at my com-</td>
<td>to take the suerd &amp;</td>
<td>to take the swerde &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and at my com-</td>
<td>and at my com-</td>
<td>at my comaundement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>maundement</td>
<td>maundement</td>
<td>(sig. e6v, l/1-2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. N 3r/22-23</td>
<td>Thenne were there no moo that durst he . . .</td>
<td>Thenne were there no moo that durste he . . .</td>
<td>Thenne were there no moo that durst he . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>this is he</td>
<td>this he</td>
<td>(sig. e6v, l/22-23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. N 3v/32</td>
<td>this is he</td>
<td>this he</td>
<td>This is he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(sig. b6r, r/8-9)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sig. N 6</th>
<th>Pierpont Caxton</th>
<th>Rylands Caxton</th>
<th>de Worde</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. N 6r/19</td>
<td>at his table</td>
<td>at this table</td>
<td>at his table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(sig. e2v, l/37-38)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. N 6v/8</td>
<td>of the streme</td>
<td>of the strene</td>
<td>of the streme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(sig. e2v, r/35-36)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sig. Y 3</th>
<th>Pierpont Caxton</th>
<th>Rylands Caxton</th>
<th>de Worde</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Y 3r/19</td>
<td>a full fayr mayden</td>
<td>a fulfayre mayden</td>
<td>a full fayre mayde.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>good gentyl</td>
<td>good and gentyl</td>
<td>goode &amp; gentyll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(sig. b6r, r/8-9)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sig. Y 6
2. Y 6r/19 there falleth there befalleth there befalleth

(sig. X 2r, r/40)

All these variants considered, we may conclude that de Worde uses a copy-leaf of the same setting as in the Rylands text both in the sheet of N 3·6 and in the sheet of Y 3·6. Therefore, in principle, I shall prefer in this study the perfect Pierpont copy as Caxton’s edition, except where the Rylands copy is obviously de Worde’s exemplar.4

The only extant copy of de Worde’s edition of 1498 is now in the John Rylands Library.5 The correct collation of de Worde’s original edition [1498] should be as follows:

Signatures . 6; : 8; a-s in 8 and 6 alternately; t and v in 8; a — in 6; v — in 8; in 6; in 6; X 4; U 6; A-E in 6 = 326 leaves

The Rylands copy has been reported to want eleven leaves by Sommer and Vinaver. But, according to my examination, it wants more eleven leaves (signatures . 1; . 4; . 5; . 6; r 7; e 5; e 6; u 4; b 3; B 4; E 6) and the sig. r 2, which Sommer and Vinaver mention as wanting, is preserved; but, instead, it is sig. r 1 that is really lost in the copy. Thus the missing leaves are exactly twenty-two altogether: signatures : 1; . 1; . 4; . 5; . 6; a 3; r 1; r 7; e 3; e 4; e 5; e 6; e 5; u 3; u 4; B 1; B 3; B 4; C 6; D 1; E 2 and E 6.

In the Rylands copy of de Worde [1498], the first and the second quire are reversely bound so that, unlike Caxton, the table of contents comes before the prologue, followed by the text: the ‘Tubula’ runs from sig. : 1 to : 8; the same ‘Prologus’ as Caxton’s, a part of the first quire, begins on sig. : 2 and finishes on sig. : 3; and the text runs from sig. a 1 to E 5.

De Worde has some more external departures from Caxton: unlike Caxton, the volume is printed in double columns, which, saving 106 leaves (432 leaves in the Pierpont copy of Caxton), enables a less expensive edition; woodcuts are used at the beginning of each book to attract readers’ attention and to give them a cue in hunting out a particular book; and, for readers’ convenience, the summary of contents of each chapter listed in the ‘Tabula’ is reproduced at the beginning of each chapter.
## Textual Variants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Caxton</th>
<th>De Worde [1498]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Book XX</strong></td>
<td><strong>In May</strong> (sig. aa 6r/1) <strong>At the season of May</strong> (sig. A 4v, 1/1) <strong>in deleted</strong> (A 4v, l/11—12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• So in this season as in the monethe of May (aa 6r/7)</td>
<td>• and the best of vs all had ben ful cold at the herte rote (aa 6v/3—4) <strong>the deleted</strong> (A 4v, r/21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• and alle was long vpon two vnhappy knyghtes (aa 6r/10)</td>
<td>• now is this Realme holy mescheued (aa 6v/22—23) <strong>the reame</strong> (A 5r, 1/9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• for and there ryse warre and wrake betwyx syr launcelot and vs (aa 6r/34—35)</td>
<td>• And thenne sir Arthur asked hem what noyse they made (aa 6v/25—26) <strong>them</strong> (A 5r, 1/18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• and the best of vs all had ben ful cold</td>
<td>• and I at al tymes youre true poure knyghte vnto my power (aa 8r/17—18) <strong>to</strong> (A 6r, 1/19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at the herte rote (aa 6v/22—23)</td>
<td>• Truly sayd the Quene I wold and it myghte please god / that they wold take me and slee me (aa 8r/37—8v/1) <strong>that deleted</strong> (A 6r, r/9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• And thenne sir Arthur asked hem what noyse they made (aa 6v/25—26)</td>
<td>• and I shall lette open this dore (aa 8v/8—9) <strong>the dore</strong> (A 6r, r/26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• and soo there came strydyng a good knyghte a moche man and large (aa 8v/15—16) &amp; a large (A 6r, r/38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• and syr Launcelot with helpe of the Quene and her ladyes was lyghtely armed (aa 8v/21-22) And thenne (A 6v, 1/7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• and that wyl I preue and make hit good vpon yow (aa 8v/36) And that I wol (A 6v, 1/29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• he stode in amongst them (bb lr/7) amonge (A 6v, l/41)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• and anone at the fyrst buffet he slewe sir Agravayne and twelue of his felawes after within a lytel whyle after he layd hem cold to the erthe
  (bb lr/7-10)
• and soo there he lefte the queene/and went vntyl his lodgynge  
  (bb lr/24-25)
• Whan syre Bors sawe syr Launcelot  
  (bb lr/26)
• Ihesu mercy sayd syr Launcelot why be ye all armed what meaneth this  
  (bb lr/27-29)
• we alle . . . were soo dremynge that somme of vs lepte oute of oure beddes naked  
  (bb lr/30-32)
• that sholde repente me  
  (bb 2v/34-35)
• nere thre yere  
  (bb 3r/3)
• the which was done by your elthers deuyse  
  (bb 3r/3-4)
• And thenne shalle ye brynge ageyne the quene to the kynge with grete worshyp  
  (bb 3r/9-10)
• loke . . . how shamefully that fals traitour kyng marke slewe hym  
  (bb 3r/15-17)
• With a groundyn glayue he threst hym in behynde to the herte  
  (bb 3r/18-19)
• They putte hem all in an enbusshement in a woode  
  (bb 3r/28-29)
• these preues & experyences caused kynge Arthur to commaunde the quene to the fyre  
  (bb 3v/22-24)
• for many causes . . . One it is though it were so that . . .  
  (bb 3v/27)
• a lytyll whyle he had layed  
  (A 6v, r/1-2)
• went to  
  (A 6v, r/26)
• So whan  
  (A 6v, r/31)
• why be ye all armed deleted  
  (A 6v, r/34-35)
• so dremynge  
  (A 6v, r/37)
• that sholde repente me moche  
  (B 2r, 1/12-13)
• nygh  
  (B 2r, 1/23)
• bothe auyses  
  (B 2r, 1/25)
• vntyll  
  (B 2r, 1/32–33)
• slewe that noble knyghte  
  (B 2r, r/2–3)
• Wyth a sharp grounded gleyue  
  (B 2r, r/5)
• theym  
  (B 2r, r/22)
• experyence  
  (B 2v, 1/31)
• One is / though it were so that  
  (B 2v, 1/38)
the quene is moche beholden vnto syr launcelot more than vnto ony other knyghte (bb 3v/31)
for oftymes we doo many thynges that we wene it be for the best (bb 4r/1-2)
And as for sir Launcelot sayd sir Gawayne I dare saye he wylle make hit good vpon ony knyghte lyuyng that (bb 4r/4-6)
why saye ye soo sayd kyng Arthur (bb 4r/14)
For soth ye haue no cause to loue sir Launcelot (bb 4r/15)
Thenne came kyng Arthur with sire Gawayne with an hughe hoost (bb 7r/1-2)
neyther he wold none of his good knyghtes to yssue oute (bb 7r/6-7)
al is in vayne that ye make at this syege (bb 7r/12)
for here wynne ye no worshyp but maulgre and dishonoure (bb 7r/12—13)
Lancelot (bb 7r/16)
I shalle mete the in myddes of the felde (bb 7r/16—17)
my moost noble lord and kyng sayd sir launcelot (bb 7r/25—26)
for ye wote wel with youre self wil I not stryue (bb 7r/26—27)
But I was enforced to doo batail with hem (bb 7r/29)
or els I muste haue suffred hem to haue slayne me (bb 7r/30—31)
my lady Quene gueneuer is a true lady vnto your persone as ony is lyuyng vnto her lord (bb 7v/3—5)
to ony (B 2v, r/2)
it is for the best (B 2v, r/16)
I dar sayne deleted (B 2v, r/20—22)
Wherfore saye ye sayd kyng Arthur to syre Gawayne (B 2v, r/36—37)
no grete cause (B 2v,r/38)
[sig. B 3 and B 4 wanting in de Worde]
& syr Gawayne (B 5r, 1/2)
neyther he wolde suffre none (B 5r, 1/9)
ye labour (B 5r, 1/21)
but dishonour & maugre (B 5r, 1/22)
syr Launcelot (B 5r, 1/26)
in the myddes (B 5r, 1/27)
my moste noble kyng (B 5r, r/2)
wyte you well (B 5r, r/3—4)
I woll not stryue with them (B 5r, r/9)
them (B 5r, r/10)
as ony is lyuyng vnto her lord deleted (B 5r, r/22—24)
and that wylle I make good with my handes (bb 7v/5)

and or I departed from her aduersary they consessid their vntrouthe (bb 7v/11–12)

me semeth I had lost a grete parte of my worshyp in my knyghthode / and I had suffred my lady youre Quene to haue ben brente / and in so moche she shold haue ben brente for my sake (bb 7v/17–20)

but by Ihesu / and by the feyth that I owe to the hygh order of knyghthode / I shold with as a good wylle haue slayne my neuewe (bb 7v/38–8r/2)

And therfore wete thou wel I shalle make warre to the / and alle the whyle that I may lyue (bb 8r/6–7)

Wel wel sayd sir Gawayne (bb 8r/25)

they called to them syre Palomydes (bb 8v/1–2)

we wille . . . doo bataille with hem (bb 8v/8–9)

I requyre you . . . sythen that I am thus requyred . . . to ryde in to the felde / that neyder you my lord kynge Arthur nor you . . . come not in to the felde (bb 8v/16–19)

is this the kynges quarel (bb 8v/20)

eyther party mad hem redy (bb 8v/26)

syre Arthur (bb 8v/30)
sir Ector de marys and other more bare hym in to the Castel (cc lr/7–8)

syr Safyr ouerthrowe many knyghtes (cc lr/11–12)

they made hem / redy to doo bataille (cc lv/2)

that I woll (B 5r, r/24)
aduersaryes (B 5r, r/34–35)
grete deleted

and deleted (B 5v, 1/1–4)

But by Ihesu sayde syr Launcelot

wyth as good a wylle (B 5v, l/33–37)

thou ryght well and deleted (B 5v, r/3–5)

So sayd syre Gawayne (B 5v, r/36)

vnto (B 6v, 1/15)

them (B 6r, 1/27)

that deleted (B 6r, 1/38–42)

Is not this (B 6r, r/2–3)

them (B 6r, r/12)

knyg Arthur (B 6r, r/19)

other deleted (B 6v, 1/2–3)

ouerthrowe (B 6v, 1/9)

them (B 6v, r/12)
• as brym as ony bore (cc lv/4) also bŷm (B 6v, r/15)
• the despyte that syr Gawayn dyd hym that deleted (B 6v, r/18–20)
the other daye (cc lv/6–7)
• with alle theire myghtes of their horses them (B 6v, r/23)
and hem self (cc lv/8–9) furyously (B 6v, r/23–24)
• they mette to gyder soo felonely (cc lv/9–10)
• there was soo moche people slayne slayn on bothe partyes (C lr, 1/13–14)
(cc lv/29)
• And thenne for pyte syr launcelot wythdrewes his knyghtes / And so dide
withhelde his knyghtes / and suffred kynge Arthurs party for to withdraw
kynge Arthurs party also. And thenne sir launcelots them ou syde / And thenne sir launcelots
party withdrewe hem in to his Castel partye entred in to
(cc lv/29–32) ther castel.
• and eyther partyes buryed the dede eyther party (C lr, 1/19)
(cc lv/33)
• Of this werre was noysed thorou al noyse (C lr, 1/24)
crustendome (cc lv/36) moost noble knighte (C lr, 1/29)
• sir Launcelot that was called the moost Gladly he wolde accorde
moost noblest knyghtes of the world (C lr, r/7–8)
(cc lv/38–2r/1)
• ful fayne he world haue ben accorded reproued / of the kynge
with sir launcelot (cc 2r/11–12) (C lr, r/18–19)
• the queene shold not be spoken vnto / of wyth him surraunce (C lr, r/21–22)
the kynge / nor of none other
(cc 2r/18–19) (C lr, r/28/33)
• the Bisshop broughte hym me seme (C lr, r/33)
[ie Lancelot] sure assuraunce more glad
(cc 2r / 21–22) euer deleted (C lr, r/38–40)
• me semeth it was my parte for me & myn to coñ (C lr, r/42)
(cc 2r/28) to drede you (C lv, 1/8–10)
• I wylle be . . . more gladder to brynge her ageyne than euer I was of her
takyn away (cc 2r/31–32) more glad
• With this I maye be sure to come euer deleted (C lr, r/38–40)
sauf / and goo sauf (cc 2r/33–34) for me & myn to coñ (C lr, r/42)
• It shal not nede yow . . . to drede soo moche (cc 2v/3–4) to drede you (C lv, 1/8–10)
wyte ye wel

popes worshyp & my poore honeste to wyte

ye shall ryde vnto the kyng afore

afore me

my most redoubted kyng

most deleted

syr Launcelot rode . . . in the castel

in to the castell

thenne was there many bold knyghte

many a bold

ther deleted

they preued hem self

themself

syr deleted

I and myn haue done yow ofte better

have doon you

done in many dyuerse places

many deleted

no maner of knyghte

no maner knyghte to

but euer I had a faueour vnto them

to

and I sawe hym besy aboute to wynne

for to wynne

sire Gawayne

sire deleted

and two of them

twyne of them

for thou hast slayne thre of my brethern / and two of them ye slewe traye-tourly

thou slewest

but many causes causen me to be

causeth
• And at euery ten myles ende I wylle founde & garmake an hows of religyon of what ordre that ye wyl assyngne me ... to synge and rede 

(cc 4r/25-27)

• and there nys none of al these religyous places 

(cc 4r/31-32)

• I haue ryghte wel herd the speche 

(cc 4v/4-5)

• lete the kynge doo as hit pleasyd hym 

(cc 4v/6)

• and therfor thow shalte goo sauf as thow camest 

(cc 4v/17-18)

• sayd syre Gawayne 

(cc 4v/23)

• thow hast ben bothe fals vnto myn vnnenl kyng arthur and to me bothe 

(cc 4v/25-26)

• and there with the teres felle on his chekes 

(cc 4v/29-30)

• And therfor wete thow wel sire Gawayne I may lyue vpon my landes as well as ony knyhghte that here is 

(cc 5r/9-12)

• I pray yow charge me not with treason 

(cc 5r/14)

• for and I were as orgulous sette as ye are / wete you wel I shold mete yow in myddes of the felde 

(cc 5r/19-20)

• Make thow no more langage 

(cc 5r/20-21)

• and I had wyst of this shorte comynge / I wolde haue aduyed me twyes or that I had comen hyder 

(cc 5r/23-24)

• in heryng of the kynge and hem all 

(cc 5r/27-28)

and at euery x. myles ende / I woll founde. & cause make a hous of Religyon / of what ordre ye woll assyngne me ... to synge & to rede 

(C 2v, r/25-28)

there is 

(C 2v, r/35)

ryghte deleted 

(C 3r, 1/5-6)

as it pleyseth 

(C 3r, 1/7-8)

sauf syr Launcelot 

(C 3r, 1/26)

sayd syre Gawayne deleted 

(C 3r, 1/34)

bothe deleted 

(C 3r, 1/37)

out of his chekes 

(C 3r, r/6)

maye lyue as well vpon that is here 

(C 3r, r/28-31)

I pray you & requyre you charge 

(C 3r, r/37)

orgulous & prwdedly wyte ye well 

(C 3v, 1/4-7)

in the myddes of 

(C 3v, 1/7)

no more adoo 

(C 3v, 1/7)

this short answere that deleted 

(C 3v, 1/11-13)

them 

(C 3v, 1/19)
I byseche yow to praye for me / and saye me wel / and yf ye be hard bestad by ony fals tonges / lyghtly my lady sende me word (cc 5r/29-31) & sende me worde yf ye be noyed wyth ony fals tonges / lyghtly my lady lete me haue knowledge (C 3v, 1/21—25)

and thenne sir Launcelot toke his leue (cc 5r/37—38) And therwyth (C 3v, 1/33)

And thenn euer after he called it the dolorous gard (cc 5v/5—6) thenne euer deleted (C 3v, r/3)

for a flemyd man departed neuer oute of a realme with noo worshyp . . . I was banisshed man (cc 5v/13—16) banisshed (C 3v, r/15—20)

ther nys none of the good kny3tes (cc 5v/23) ther is (C 3v, r/31)

I wel vnderstande yow and as I can / thanke yow (cc 5v/30) I thanke you (C 4r, 1/1)

by the noble felaushyp of the round table was Kynge Arthur up borne (cc 6r/3—4) born up (C 4r, 1/20)

the kynge and alle his realme was in quyete and reste (cc 6r/5) in quyete & in rest (C 4r, 1/22)

a grete parte . . . was by cause of your noblesse (cc 6r/6) your grete noblesse (C 4r, 1/24)

I thanke yow alle of youre good sayenge (cc 6r/8—9) I thanke you of alle your good sayenge (C 4r, 1/28—30)

we alle shalle here of hem (cc 6r/12—13) them (C 4r, 1/36)

they . . . payd alle that wold aske hem (cc 6r/17—18) them (C 4r, r/4)

and holy an honderd knyghtes . . . made their auowes / they wold neuer leue hym (cc 6r/18—20) that they wolde neuer departe from him (C 4r, r/4—8)

he and his kynred reioyced it alle (cc 6r/25) alle deleted (C 4r, r/17)

and soo whan he had stabled alle these countreyes (cc 6r/29—30) stablysshed (C 4r, r/23)
• and there he [i.e. Lancelot] crowned syr Lyonel kynge of Fraunce / and sire Bors crowned hym kynge of al kynge Clandas landes and sir Ector de marys / that was sir launcelot yongest brother / he crowned hym kynge of Benwyk and kynge of alle Gyan that was sir launcelot owne land

(cc 6r/30-35)

• & thus he departed (cc 6r/34-6v/1)

(cc 6v/2-3)

• he anuanced them of his blood / that was syr Blamor / he made hym duke of Lymosyn

(cc 6v/11-18)

• and syr Neroneus he made hym Erle of pardyak / and sire Plenorius he maade Erle of foyse ... sir Bellangere le beuse he made erle of the laundes / . . . and syr Sadok he gaaf the Erldom of Surlat

(cc 6v/11-18)

• and al thynge was made redy for their shypyng

(cc 6v/26-27)

• we suffre hem thus to ryde

(cc 7r/4-5)

• suffre ye hem as longe as ye will

(CC 7r/5)

• lete vs kee our stronge walled Townes vntyl they haue hongre & cold

(cc 7r/8-10)

• Alyaunts may take ensample

(cc 7r/12)

• lete vs . . . shrede hem doune

(cc 7r/11)

• they shalle by processe brynge vs alle to noughte whyles we thus in holes vs hyde

(cc 7r/16-17)

• a man myghte seke in seuen kynges landes

(cc 7r/24)

sir Bors he crowned

hym deleted

sir Launcelots yonges brother

syr Launcelots owne lond

departed his hauour (C 4r, r/34)
those of his blode. fryrst he made syr Blamore (C 4r, r/36-38)

made hŷ

made hym

gaaf hym (C 4v, l/10-21)

made deleted (C 4v, l/38)

them (C 4v, r/17)

them (C 4v, r/18)

vnto (C 4v, r/4)

ensamples (C 4v, r/26)

them (C 4v, r/27)

whyle we (C 4v, r/36)

.vii. knyghtes (C 5r, l/6-7)
And yet my lordes I vnderstande ben full bare / for to susteyne ony host a whyle / for the myghty warres that whylome made kyng Clandas vpon this countrey vpon my fader kyng Ban & on myn vnkell Kyng Bors

(cc 7r/31-34)

So sir laucelot sente forth a damoysell for

(cc 7r/37-38)

to leue his warrynge vpon his landes werre

(cc 7r/38-7v/1)

and ther mette her a gentyl knyghte gentyl deleted

syr Lucan (cc 7v/3-4)

lucan (cc 7v/11)

alle the lordes were ful glad for to aduyse syr Lucan (C 5r, r/5)

the kynge (cc 7v/14-15) to aduyse (C 5r, r/10)

I wylle doo as ye wil aduyse me as thou wolt

(cc 7v/19-20)

saye ye to sir launcelot that it is wast labour it was ydle labour (C 5r, r/32-33)

tell hym now it is to late / & saye that that syr Gawayne so sendyth

I sir Gawayn soo sende hym word (C 5r, r/38-39)

(cc 7v/30-31)

I shal neuer leue hym / tyl he haue slayne me / or I hym tyl he hath slayne me (C 5v, 1/2)

soo sir lucan broughte the damoysel to her palfroy vnto (C 5v, 1/6)

lets vs . . . matche hem in myddes of the felde them (C 5v, 1/15)

as knyghtes loked oute (cc 8r/14) the knyghtes (C 5v, 1/31)

they defyed hem oute of the Towne / them them (C 5v, 1/34-35)

and bete hem from the walles

And at that tyme he smote sire Bors doune And so he

(cc 8r/24) (C 5v, r/4)

sir Gawayn had suche grace that he smote sir Lyonel syr Gawayn was so fyers. that

(cc 8r/29-30) (C 5v, r/12)
• And this sir Gawayne came every day / and he fayled not / but that he smote doune one knyghte or other
  (cc 8r/32–33)  

And thus and deleted
  (C 5v, r/16–18)  

[sig. C 6 and D 1 wanting in de Worde]

Book XXI

• & soo was he crowned at caunterburuye
  (dd 3r/6–7)  

• And soo he made redy for the feest / And a day prefyxt
  (dd 3r/10–11)  

• And soo whan she came to London she took the toure of London / and . . . she stuffed hyt
  (dd 3r/18–20)  

• quene Gueneuer wolde neuer for fayre speche nor for foule wold neuer truste to come
  (dd 3r/27–29)  

• therfor how may you wedde your faders wyf
  (dd 3r/35–36)  

• I shall curse you wyth book & belle and candell
  (dd 3r/36–37)  

• Do thou thy werst
  (dd 3r/37)  

• sir sayd the bysshop & wyt you wel I shal not fere me to do that
  (dd 3r/38–3v/1)  

• where ye noyse where my lord Arthur is slayne / & that is not so
  (dd 3v/2–3)  

• there he was as preest Eremyte in a chapel
  (dd 3v/10)  

• she answerd hym shortelye
  (dd 3v/15)  

• Lo ye al englyssh men see ye not what a myschyef here was / for he that was the moost kyng and knyght of the world and moost loued the felyshyp of noble knyghtes / and by hym they were al vpholden / Now myght not this englyssh men holde them contente wyth hym
  (dd 3v/27–32)  

• Alas thys is a grete defaute of vs englysshe men
  (dd 3v/34)  

and so he was
  (D 2r, l/11–12)  

& at a day prefyxt
  (D 2r, r/1)  

she took the toure of London deleted
  (D 2r, 8/11–14)  

wold deleted
  (D 2v, l/6–9)  

may ye
  (D 2v, l/18)  

& deleted
  (D 2r, l/21)  

thou deleted
  (D 2r, l/22)  

Syr sayd the bysshop: I shal not
  (D 2v, l/24–25)  

noyse that my lorde slayne. it is not so
  (D 2v, l/25–27)  

a preest
  (D 2v, l/39)  

short
  (D 2v, r/7)  

Lo we alle Englysshe men. se what a myscheif

noble knyghtes & men of worshypp / & by hym

Now myght not we englyssh men hold vs content wyth hym. (D 2v, r/26–33)  

Alas alas this is
  (D 2v, r/37)
• Fer there may no thynge plese vs noo
terme And soo faryd the people at that
tyme they were better plesyd with sir
Mordred than they were with kyng
Arthur (dd 3v/35–38)
• with a grete nauye of shyppes and
galeys and Carryks (dd 4r/9–10)
• to lade vp the lande (dd 4r/11–12)
• no maner of knyghtes (dd 4r/16)
• maulgre sir mordreds and alle his
power (dd 4r/18–19)
• and thryes he there swouned
(dd 4r/25–26)
• And thenne whan he awaked / he
sayd / allas sir Gawayne my systers
sone (dd 4r/26–27)
• the man in the world that I loued
moost (dd 4r/27–28)
• my deth day is come (dd 4r/33)
• I fele wel I must dye (dd 4r/36)
• And thenne whan paper & ynke was
broughte / thenne Gawayn was set vp
(dd 4v/6–8)
• I syre Gawayne ... syster sone vnto the
noble kyng Arthur (dd 4v/11–12)
• this same day (dd 4v/21)
• For a of a more nobler man myghte I
not be slayne (dd 4v/24)
• and he hath lete croune kym kyng
(dd 4v/30)
• sir Gawayne praid the kynge for to
sende (dd 5r/5–6)
• syr Gawayn yelded vp the spyrYTE
(dd 5r/7–8)
• within douer Castel (dd 5r/9)
• and there yet alle men maye see the
sculle of hym (dd 5r/9–10)

at that tyme. for they were
with the kynge Arthur
shyppes. galeys & carryks
vpon
no maner knyghte
syr Mordred &
and thyes there he
sir Gawayne deleted
I moste loued
my dethes daye
I fele that I must
thenne deleted
systers sone
that same day
For of a
hymself
to sende
syrre Gawayne betoke hys soule in to
the hondes of oure lorde
within the castel of Douer
yet vnto this daye / alle
• And thene the Kyng lete serche all the townes for his knyghtes

(dd 5r/19−20)

• by the see syde westward toward Salysbury

(dd 5r/25)

• they of Kente Southsex and Surrey / Estsex and of Southfolke

(dd 5r/31−32)

• So the kyng seumed veryly that there came syr Gawayne vnto hym

(dd 5v/14−15)

• god hath gyuen hem

(dd 5v/23)

• I dyd bataille for hem

(dd 5v/24)

• and ye fyghte as to morne with kyng Mordred / as ye bothe haue assygned

(dd 5v/26−28)

• for a moneth day

(dd 5v/34)

• the kyng . . . charged them wyghtly to fetche his noble lordes

(dd 6r/1−3)

• the kyng tolde hem his auysyon

(dd 6r/4)

• syr Lucan de butlere

(dd 6r/7)

• two bysshoppes wyth hem

(dd 6r/8)

• mordred was agreyed for to haue . . . kente by Arthures dayes. After alle Englonde after the dayes of kyng Arthur

(dd 6r/14−16)

• and they see ony swerde drawen look ye come on fyersly

(dd 6r/23−24)

• I in noo wyse truse hym

(dd 6r/25)

• so bothe hoostes dressyd hem to gyders

(dd 6v/2)

• And kyng Arthur . . . sayd allas thys vnhappy day & so rode to his partye

(dd 6v/3−4)

• For there was but rasshyng & rydyng sewynge and strykynge

(dd 6v/6−7)
no moo on lyue but two knyghtes that
one was Syr Lucan de butlere & his
broder Syr Bedwere (dd 6v/19–21)
- Good lord remembre ye of your
  nyghtes dreme (dd 6v/32–33)
- For here we ben thre on lyne / and
  (dd 6v/36–37)
  on lyue (dd 6v/37–38)
  Tyde me deth betyde me lyf sayth the
  kyang (dd 7r/1)
  syr bedwere (dd 7r/4)
  he ranne vntyln hym (dd 7r/7)
- And right so he smote his fader Arthur
  wyth his swerde holden in bothe his
  handes (dd 7r/12–13)
  syr Lucan de butlere (dd 7r/17–18)
  And syr Lucan de butlere and syr
  Bedwere ofttymes heue hym vp
  (dd 7r/17–18)
- what bytokenes that noyse in the felde
  (dd 7r/23)
  myn hede werches soo (dd 7v/1)
  syr Lucan fyl in a sowne wyth the lyste
  that the parte of his guttes fyl oute
  (dd 7v/7–8)
- Now Ihesu haue mercy vpon hys soule
  (dd 7v/15)
  goo with it to yonder water syde
  (dd 7v/21–22)
  he behelde that noble swerde that the
  pomel & the hafte was al of precyous
  stones . . . yf I throwe this ryche
  swerde in the water (dd 7v/26–29)
- Therefore goo thou lyghtelye ageyn
  (dd 7v/35–36)
  but the waters wappe and wawes
  wannne (dd 8r/5)
- thou . . . wold betraye me
  (dd 8r/8–9)
  alyue but two knyghtes./: That was
  syr Lucan the butler & syr Bedwere his
  brother (D 5r, r/12–14)
  My good lord remembre well your
  dreme thys nyghte (D 5r, r/32–33)
  for here we ben thre a lyuetand
  (D 5r, r/40)
  alyue (D 5r, r/41)
deth tyde me sayd (D 5v, l/1)
syr deleted (D 5v, l/5)
vnto (D 5v, l/11)
in deleted (D 5v, l/21)
debutere deleted (D 5v, l/28)
heued hym vpp (D 5v, l/28)
what betokenyth (D 5v, l/36)
myn hede akyth (D 5v, r/17)
syr Lucan the knyte fell . . . that parte
  of his guttes (D 5v, r/27–29)
on soule (D 6r, l/11)
vnto (D 6r, l/11)
swerde wherof & haft were al
  (D 6r, 1/19–23)
in to the (D 6r, 1/36)
ageyn deleted (D 6r, 1/36)
water (D 6r, r/4)
woldest (D 6r, r/10)
• and thenne he threwe the swerde as farre in to the water as he myght
  (dd 8r/16-17)
• and than vanysshed awaye (dd 8r/19)
• that water syde (dd 8r/24)
• emonge hem al was a quene
  (dd 8r/26-27)
• Alas this wounde on your heed hath-caught ouermoche colde
  (dd 8r/33-34)
• I wyl in to the vale of auylyon to hele me of my greuous wounde
  (dd 8v/2-3)
• but euer the quenes and ladyes wepte
  (dd 8v/4-5)
• he sawe where laye an heremyte
grouelyng on al foure there fast by a
tombe was newe grauen
  (dd 8v/13-15)
• bysshop of caunterburye that syr Mordred flemed
  (dd 8v/16-17)
• here came a nombre of ladyes / and broughte hyder a deed cors / and
  prayed me to berye hym / and here they offeryd an hondred tapers and
  they gaf me an hondred besauntes
  (dd 8v/20-23)
• Syr Lucan de butlere (dd 8v/31)
• Thus of Arthur I fynde neuer more wryton in bookes that ben auctorysed
  nor more of the veray certente of his deth herde I neuer redde
  (dd 8v/36—ee lr/1)
• thus was he ledde aveye in a shyppe
  wherein were thre quenes / that one
  was kyng Arthurs syster quene Morgan le fay
  (ee lr/1-3)
• yet the heremyte knewe not in certayn
  that he was verayly the body of kyng
  Arthur
  (ee lr/13-15)

swerde in to the water as fēr as he
myȝte

And so
that waters syde
them
taken
for to hele
euer more
was deleted
syr Mordred banysshed
a nombre of a ladyes. / whyche
broughte a deed corps
tapers. and gaue me
syr Lucan the butlere
Thus of Arthur I fynde no more wryten
in my copy. of the certente of his deth.
in a barge
quene deleted
that it was
thys tale syr Bedwer knygght of the table rounde made it to be wryton

made it playnly to be wryton

Yet somme men say

Som men yet say

& so they lyuyd in theyr prayers & fastynges & qrete abstynence / and whan quene Gueneuer vnderstood that kyng Arthur was slayn & al the noble kny3tes syr Mordred & al the remenaunte / Than the quene stale aveye

thanne she stale away

Than was syr Launcelot wroth oute of mesure and

syr Launcelot very wrothe &

now me repenteth that euer he escaped my handes

I repète that

for alle I fele by the dolefu4 letter that my lord syr Gawayn sente me / on whos soule Ihesu haue mercy / that my lord Arthur is ful harde bestadde

wyte ye well

In wretche sholde

my lady deleted

syr Launcelot enquered

that deleted

the peple tolde hym that he was slayn

that deleted

al they . . . had as moche flesshe /

ale as they myghte ete

fysshe wyn & aale / & every man &

who come wolde

woman had xii pens come who wold

the whole sentence deleted

he . . . prayed hem to praye

them

& also there was a /M/ knyghtes / &

the whole sentence deleted

eche of hem offred a pounde

E lv, r/21

E lv, r/28

E lv, l/38

E lv, 1/35–36

E lv, 1/25

E lv, 1/17

E lv, 1/11–14

E lv, 1/31

E lv, r/28

E lv, 1/38

E lv, r/35–36

E lr, r/33

E lr, r/35–36

E lr, 1/24

E lr, 1/18–19

E lr, r/40–1/4

E lr, r/26–30
• syx yere (ee 3v/17)
• there was come syr Galyhud / syr Galyhodyn / sir Blamour / syr Bleoberis (ee 3v/12–13)
• than syr Launcelot took thabyte of preesthode of the bysshop (ee 3v/18–19)
• they toke no regarde of no worldly rychesse / . . . in prayers & fastynge (ee 3v/22–24)
• vnto almysbury (ee 3v/28)
• Launcelot (ee 3v/32)
• ye made you redy (ee 3v/35–36)
• in heryng of hem al (ee 4r/8–9)
• an holy oryson (ee 4r/18)
• syr Launcelot & his eyght felowes wente on foot from almysburye vnto glastynburye (ee 4r/19–20)
• the heremyte that somtyme was bysshop of canterburye säge the masse (ee 4r/22–23)
• syr Launcelot was the fyrst that offeryd / & than al his eyght felowes (ee 4r/24–25)
• & after she was put in a webbe of leed & than in a coffyn of marbyl (ee 4r/27–28)
• For whan I remembre of hir beaulte & of hir noblesse / that was bothe wyth hyr kyng & wyth hyr / So whan I sawe his corps & hir corps so lye togyders / truly myn herte wold not serue to susteyne my careful body (ee 4r/34–38)

[sig. E 2 wanting in de Worde]

• .vi. yeres (E 3r, 1/15)
• sir Blamour deleted (E 3r, 1/6–7)
• of the bysshop deleted (E 3r, 1/17)
• rychesse in prayer fastynge (E 3r, 1/24–27)
• to (E 3r, 1/34)
• syr Launcelot (E 3r, 1/41)
• ye made ye redy (E 3r, r/8)
• them (E 3r, r/26)
• an holy & deuowte oryson (E 3v, 1/2)
• vntyll they came to Glastynbury (E 3v, 1/5–6)
• that was somtyme byshop (E 3v, 1/10)

And thenne offred all hys eyght (E 3v, 1/13–15)
And thenne (E 3v, 1/18–19)

for whan I remembre & calle to mynde her beate / bounte & noblesse / that was aswel wyth her kyng my lord Arthur. as wyth her. And also whanne I sawe the corses of that noble kinge & noble quene so lye togyder in that colde graue made of ethe / that somtyme were so hyely set in moost honourable places / truly myn hert wolde not serue to susteyne my wretchyd & careful body. (E 3v, 1/30–40)
they were both layed full lowe that were perles that euer was lyuyng of cristen people (ee 4v/1–2)
• this remembred of their kyndenes and myn vnkyndenes sanke so to myn herte that I my3t not susteyne my self (ee 4v/3–5)

Thene syr Launcelot neuer after ete but lytel mete nor dranke tyl he was dede (ee 4v/7–8)

and lytel he dranke that he was waxen by a kybbet shorter (ee 4v/10–11)
euermore day & ny3t he prayed bnt somtyme he slombred a broken slepe / euer he was lyeng grouelyng on the tombe of kyng Arthur & quene Gueneuer (ee 4v/12–14)

That they were bo[the] laid full lowe whyche were perles that euer were lyuyng (E 3v, r/1–3)
sanke and emprest so to myn hert. that all my strengthe naturall fayled me. so that I myghte not susteyne myselfe. (E 3v, r/4–9)

mete. ne dranke. but contynuelly morned vnyll he was deed. (E 3v, r/15–18)
woxen thenne by (E 3v, r/23)

but nedefully as nature requyred somtyme he slombred a broken slepe. And euer he was lyenge grouelyng: on kyne Arthurs & quene Gweneuers tombe. (E 3v, r/25–30)

O ye myghty & pompous lorde shynynge in the glory transitory of thys vnstable lyf / as in regnynge ouer reames. grete & myghte countres. fortified wyth stronge castels & tounes / edified with many a ryche cite. Ye also ye fyers & myghty chualers so valyaUte in auentourous dedes of armes: Behold beholde: se how this myghy conquerour Arthur / whom in his humayne lyf / all the worlde doubted / ye also this noble quene Gueneuer / that som tyme sate in her chare aourned wyth golde. perle & precious stones: now lye ful lowe in obscure fosse or pytte couered wyth cloddes of erth & clay Beholde also this myghty chapyon Laacelot / pyerles of knyghthode: se now how he lyeth grouelynge on the colde mould. now beynge so feble & faynt that somtyme was so terrible: how & in what manere oughte ye to be so desyrous of the mondayni honour so daungerous. Therfor me thynketh this present boke callid La mort darthu[r] is ryght necessary often to be radde. for in it shal ye fynde, the gracious kny3tly and vertuous werre of moost noble knyghtes of the worlde / wherby
they gate praysyng contynuell. Also me semyth by the oft redyng therof. ye shal gretly desyre tacustome yourself in folowynge those gracyous knyghtly dedes. That is to saye / to drede god / & loue ryghtwisnes / faythfully & courageously to serue your souerayne prynce. And the more that god hath geuen you the tryumfall honour / the meker ye oughte to be / euer feryng the vnstablynnesse of this dysceyuable worlde./ And so I passe ouer / & torn agaynne to my matere.

· ye shal be wel mended by the grace of god
· wyt you wel
· he fyl vpon a grete laughter
· they founde hym starke dede . . . the swettest sauour aboute hym that euer they felte
· al the ix knyghtes
· vij yere
· he alyght & put his hors from hym
· there he sawe men synge wepe
· than wente syr Bors vnto syr Ector
· whan he waked it were harde ony tonge to telle the doleful complayntes
· kyng Costantyn wold haue had them wyth hym
· Ihesu Cryst was quycke & deed
· I praye you all Ientyl men and Ientyl wymmen that redeth this book
· I am on lyue

ye shall well be amended bi
Wyte ye well
on
he felte
all those .ix. knyghtes .vij. yeres
alyghted
there he sawe men synge the seruyse fnll lamentably
to
awakyd
haued
bothe quycke & deed
that rede
a lyue
for this book was ended the ix yere of the reygne of kyng edward the fourth
(EE 6r/8-9)

Colophon
whyche book was reduced in to englysshe by syr Thomas Malory knyght as afore is sayd / and by me deuyded in to xxii bookes chapytred and enprynted / and fynysshed in thabbey westmestre the last day of Juyl the yere of our lord / M / CCCC / lxxxv / (EE 6r/17-21)

for this translac6n of this boke was fynysshed .ix. yere of the reygne of kyng Edward the fourth
(E 5v, r/11-13)

(E5v, r/27-37)

Notes
4. All the citations from the Pierpont copy will be from the facsimile version of Caxton's Le Morte Darthur (London: Scholar Press, 1976).
5. All the citations from W. de Worde's edition of 1498 will be from the facsimile version of the John Rylands copy.

(Received Oct. 31, 1983)