## MATTER AND MAKING IN Early English Poetry

What is literature made from? During the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, this question preoccupied the English court poets, who often claimed that their poems were not original creations, but adaptations of pre-existing materials. Their word for these materials was "matter," while the term they used to describe their labor was "making," or the act of reworking this matter into a new – but not entirely new – form. By tracing these ideas through the work of six major early poets, this book offers a revisionist literary history of late-medieval and early modern court poetry. It reconstructs premodern theories of making and contrasts them with more modern theories of literary labor, such as "authorship." It studies the textual, historical, and philosophical sources that the court tradition used for its matter. Most of all, it demonstrates that the early English court poets drew attention to their source materials as a literary tactic, one that stressed the process by which a poem had been made.

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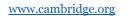
# MATTER AND MAKING IN EARLY ENGLISH POETRY

Literary Production from Chaucer to Sidney

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## Abbreviations and Editorial Conventions

CCSL	Corpus Christianorum Series Latina
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
CWE	Collected Works of Erasmus, gen. eds. Richard J. Shoeck
	and Beatrice M. Corrigan, 86 vols. (Toronto, 1974–)
DNB	Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, ed. Henry
	Colin Gray Matthew and Brian Harrison, 60 vols.
	(Oxford, 2004–)
EETS e.s.	Early English Text Society, extra series
EETS o.s.	Early English Text Society, original series
ELH	English Literary History
HLQ	Huntington Library Quarterly
JEGP	Journal of English and Germanic Philology
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
MED	Middle English Dictionary, ed. Hans Kurath
	(Ann Arbor, 1956–)
OODE	Opera omnia Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami, 50
	vols. (Amsterdam and Leiden, 1969–)
PIMS	Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies
PL	Patrologia latina, ed. JP. Migne (Paris, 1844–64)
PMLA	Publications of the Modern Language Association
RES	The Review of English Studies, new series
SAC	Studies in the Age of Chaucer
STC	A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England,
	Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and of English Books Printed
	Abroad, 1475–1640, ed. A. W. Pollard, G. R. Redgrave,
	et al., revised and enlarged second edition (London,
	1926–1991)
TEAMS	Teaching Association for Medieval Studies

## Abbreviations and Editorial Conventions

I have preserved the original spelling and orthography in my citations of primary sources, with certain exceptions. To make the text more legible to the modern eye, I've consistently replaced "j" with "i," thorn ("p") with "th," and yogh ("3") with "gh," "y," "w," or "z" as the case demands. I've also silently re-punctuated quotations as they appear in manuscripts and printed editions to clarify syntax and sense. In those instances where the original employs abbreviations, I have expanded them silently. Unless a reference is made in the notes to a translated version of a text in a language other than English, the translation provided is always my own.

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