

THE CANTERBURY TALES BY GEOFFREY CHAUCER



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Amazon.com Review

On a spring day in April--sometime in the waning years of the 14th century--29 travelers set out for Canterbury on a pilgrimage to the shrine of Saint Thomas Beckett. Among them is a knight, a monk, a prioress, a plowman, a miller, a merchant, a clerk, and an oft-widowed wife from Bath. Travel is arduous and wearing; to maintain their spirits, this band of pilgrims entertains each other with a series of tall tales that span the spectrum of literary genres. Five hundred years later, people are still reading Geoffrey Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. If you haven't yet made the acquaintance of the Franklin, the Pardoner, or the Squire because you never learned Middle English, take heart: this edition of the Tales has been translated into modern idiom.

From the heroic romance of "The Knight's Tale" to the low farce embodied in the stories of the Miller, the Reeve, and the Merchant, Chaucer treated such universal subjects as love, sex, and death in poetry that is simultaneously witty, insightful, and poignant. The Canterbury Tales is a grand tour of 14th-century English mores and morals--one that modern-day readers will enjoy.

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This carefully researched and lively edition of a part of Chaucer's masterwork is richly and beautifully produced. While Cohen admits that "Chaucer's words are best," her prose adaptation of four of his tales captures the zest and vigor of Middle English and makes his stories accessible to the modern child. This is not a pedantic translation or a bowdlerized retelling; Cohen does not substitute weak clichés for Chaucer's rollicking and earthy metaphors, nor does she sacrifice the rhythms of his text. Readers hear the bickering of the pilgrims as they decide on which tale they want to hear next, and the rambling voice of the good Sir John as he laments Chaucer's fate. Hyman's meticulous drawings not only evoke the rich panoply of 14th century England, but they are faithful to the text in the smallest detail. Each pilgrim is made particular: we see the Pardoner's limp hanks of hair and the Wife of Bath's gap-toothed smile and dainty ankle. One could not ask for a more enticing introduction to Chaucer's world. Ages 10-up.

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From School Library Journal

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THE CANTERBURY TALES BY GEOFFREY CHAUCER PDF

Nevill Coghill's masterly and vivid modern English verse translation with all the vigor and poetry of Chaucer's fourteenth-century Middle English

In *The Canterbury Tales* Chaucer created one of the great touchstones of English literature, a masterly collection of chivalric romances, moral allegories and low farce. A story-telling competition between a group of pilgrims from all walks of life is the occasion for a series of tales that range from the Knight's account of courtly love and the ebullient Wife of Bath's Arthurian legend, to the ribald anecdotes of the Miller and the Cook. Rich and diverse, *The Canterbury Tales* offer us an unrivalled glimpse into the life and mind of medieval England.

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- Original language: Middle English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 7.70" h x .90" w x 5.10" l, .79 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 528 pages

Amazon.com Review

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Most helpful customer reviews

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

this is the best version for the Kindle (Paperwhite

By hannism

In my humble opinion, this is the best version for the Kindle (Paperwhite, Voyage) or the iPhone (4.7 screen or smaller).

There is also a side-by-side version of this text, which would be better for a Kindle Fire or iPad, iPhone (5.5 screen).

This has a comparative version and a modern version. It is very easy to read and understand. Middle English although poetic, can be overwhelming. The Canterbury Tales is a masterpiece, and deserves a place besides Shakespeare.

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful.

Don't buy the Kindle edition

By Em

This is not easy to read in Kindle format. In paperback, it has two translations: one in Middle English, the other in Modern English. These are displayed side by side, with the earlier English on the left, Modern on the right. When it comes to the Kindle edition, there are no breaks between these translations. It switches back and forth without any notice, making it really difficult to follow. It would be alright if we could view it page by page (in it's original format), but without that option it's harder to understand. (Yes, it's obvious which part is which, but finding where it stops and starts takes away from the reading experience. It's too choppy.) In short, buy the paperback or perhaps a different Kindle edition. The format makes this a challenge to read.

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful.

good value for a nice edition

By J. Janssen

If you're looking for a fairly complete (includes The Parson's Tale) hardcover edition of Chaucer's unfinished masterpiece you could do far worse than this effort by Chartwell Books. The modern translation is by Frank Ernest Hill and is serviceable, if not considered particularly trendy by Chaucer buffs (try the Hackett Publishing edition w/ the Joseph Glaser translation if you want trendy). It includes a number of facsimile title pages (in B&W) from the exalted Kelmscott Chaucer published by William Morris in 1896. The woodblock prints were created by Edward Burne-Jones and add to the telling of each tale. Most include snippets of Chaucer's original middle english text.

This is a reader's edition in modern prose and should not be confused with the Riverside Chaucer or other academic publications. It's oversize, sturdily bound and very attractive to boot. At less than \$19* it's highly recommended.

* As a point of info for prospective purchasers; this volume is readily available from a variety of sellers and amazon is very price competitive when the volume is in stock. However, when the book was out of stock for the last month or so a flurry of "marketplace vultures" swept in charging \$50 & up for "new" copies. This is NOT the "Kelmscott Chaucer" that has been reintroduced; though it is a facsimile and a very nice edition. Don't be fooled and don't pay more than \$20 for it. The reintroduced Kelmscott (monochrome) sells for about \$40 and is still available.

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