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FRENCH LESSONS IN LATE-MEDIEVAL ENGLAND

THE *LIBER DONATI* AND *COMMUNE PARLANCE*

Edited and translated from French by
RORY G. CRITTEN

ARC HUMANITIES PRESS



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SERIES EDITORS' PREFACE

IN OUR WORK with the French of England we and our students, like many before us, have been fascinated by the materials for the teaching of French in medieval England. We have long hoped to produce a volume for the French of England Translation Series that might introduce England's pioneering French-language pedagogy to a wider audience, and we are therefore especially pleased to see the present volume come to fruition. England produced the earliest known manuals for teaching medieval French (they are also referred to in scholarship as *manières de langage* after the titles in some of their manuscripts), which flourished in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and were consumed by a wide class range of clients. The manuals' lively sample dialogues and grammatical information, in addition to having much in common with good language teaching today, provide intriguing evidence for England and continental Europe's social and linguistic history. The lexical sophistication of the manuals, moreover, testifies to the high level of French already achieved by their users and thus to the continuing vitality of French in England.

In addition to his work on late-medieval English and French literary texts and on the late-medieval household, Dr Rory Critten has published extensively on these language-teaching manuals and their late-medieval career. His fresh and lively translations, presented facing the original texts, are the first translations of whole manuals into modern English. His detailed research and stimulating discussions make clear these works' interest as texts, as documents of late-medieval linguistic and socio-linguistic history, and as an important moment in the history of language teaching in general.

We are grateful to Anna Henderson as commissioning editor and to Arc Humanities Press for the opportunity to publish the volume.

Thelma Fenster
Jocelyn Wogan-Browne

For
Pat Hutchinson,
my first French teacher

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MY THANKS IN first place go to Prof. Daron Burrows, who in his role as Hon. Secretary and Treasurer of the Anglo-Norman Text Society granted permission to reproduce in an adapted form the French texts of two of the Society's publications: *Liber donati: A Fifteenth-Century Manual of French*, ed. Brian Merrilees and Beata Sitarz-Fitzpatrick, Plain Texts Series 9 (London: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 1993); and *Manières de langage (1396, 1399, 1415)*, ed. Andres M. Kristol, Anglo-Norman Texts 53 (London: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 1995), 1–36. I am grateful to FRETs editors Jocelyn Wogan-Browne and Thelma Fenster for inviting me to contribute this volume to their series and for offering much helpful commentary on my typescript. I would also like to express my thanks to this volume's anonymous reviewer, whose feedback has prompted me to clarify my thinking at some key junctures.

For answering various questions and for discussing my work on French teaching with me, it is a pleasure to thank Raphael Berthele, Ardis Butterfield, Ruth Clarke, Elisabeth Dutton, Ralf Oberndorfer, Julie Orlemanski, Sebastian Sobecki, Marion Uhlig, and Juliette Vuille.

This book is dedicated to my first French teacher, Pat Hutchinson, with gratitude for an inspirational introduction to language learning whose benefits I feel every day.

ABBREVIATIONS

AND	<i>Anglo-Norman Dictionary</i> < https://anglo-norman.net/ >
BL	British Library
CP	<i>Commune parlance</i>
CUL	Cambridge, University Library
DMF	<i>Dictionnaire du Moyen Français</i> < http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/ >
DMLBS	<i>Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources</i> < http://clt.brepolis.net/dmlbs/ >
FEW	<i>Französisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch</i> < https://apps.atilf.fr/lecteurFEW/index.php/ >
FRETS	French of England Translation Series
LD	<i>Liber donati</i>
MED	<i>Middle English Dictionary</i> < http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/med/ >
OED	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i> < http://www.oed.com >
s.v. or s.vv.	<i>sub verbo/verbis</i> (under the heading(s))
STC	<i>A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland and Ireland, and of English Books Printed Abroad 1475–1640</i> , 2nd ed., W. A. Jackson, F. S. Ferguson, and K. F. Panzer (1976–91).