

Ancrene Wisse Preface: Project abstract

The project developed from EETS Council's wish to explore the possibility of future publication of EETS editions of Old and Middle English works in electronic form—not as a substitute for traditional publication methods, but as a supplementary means of publication which might offer specific academic advantages, such as searchability and the inclusion of additional material (e.g., MS transcriptions and reproductions) which could not be as easily provided in a printed edition.

A subcommittee of Council reached the consensus that the most practical starting-point would probably be a 'translation' model, taking the printed edition as its starting-point and using relatively light mark-up (which could, if necessary, be done by someone other than the original editor).

This trial electronic edition of the Preface to *Ancrene Wisse* is based on a non-electronic edition of the full text currently being prepared for publication by EETS. It includes most of the components of a traditional EETS edition, but the electronic edition also includes a translation (no longer provided by most EETS editions), and reproductions and transcriptions of the relevant sections of three important early manuscripts.

Project aims

1. To develop an agreed set of conventions for marking up EETS editions for electronic publication in XML (eXtensible Markup Language), conforming to the TEI Guidelines. XML is currently being developed as an international standard mark-up language, less difficult to use and more Web-compatible than its predecessor SGML (Standard Generalized Markup Language). The resulting DTD (Document Type Description) should be usable with only minor modifications for future EETS editions.
2. To develop a user interface which will ensure that the electronic edition is at least as easy to use as a printed edition, and offers some added facilities.