

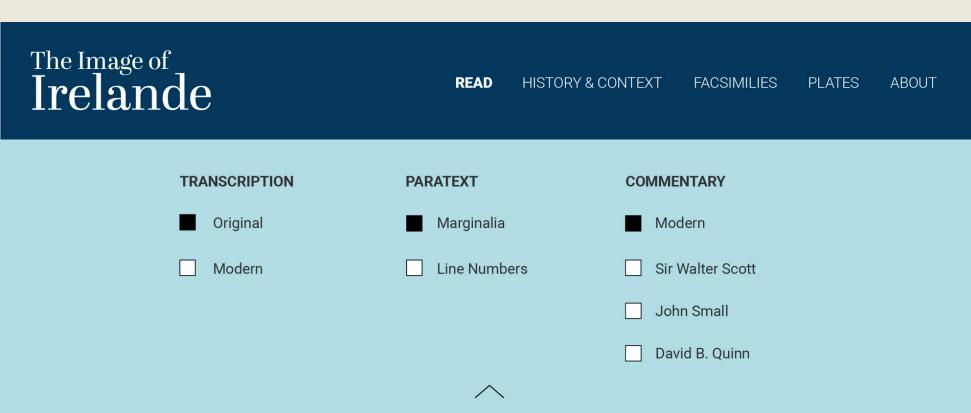
Enhancing Visual Storytelling for Accessibility: Preparing a Digital Edition of John Derricke's *The Image of Irelande, with a Discoverie of Woodkarne* (1581)

GitHub: <https://bit.ly/DigitalDerricke>

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Text and Contexts

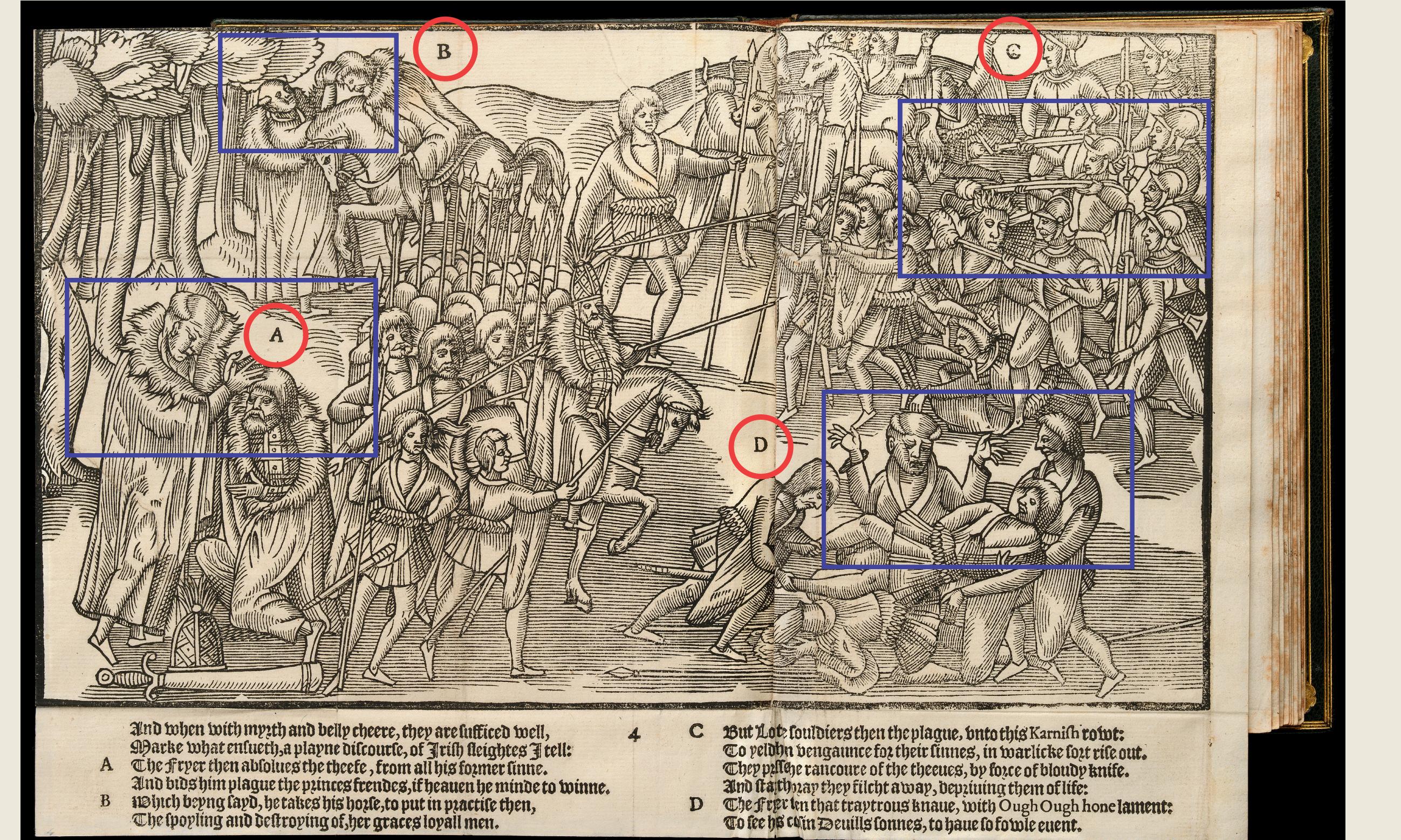
Published during the 16th-century British occupation of Ireland, the *Image* is a long-form poem (divided into three parts) with twelve woodcut "plate" illustrations. These illustrations constitute one of the earliest and most detailed visual accounts of Irish customs and culture. An impressive achievement in visual design and textual navigation (often compared to Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*), the *Image* is a text poised for digital intervention.



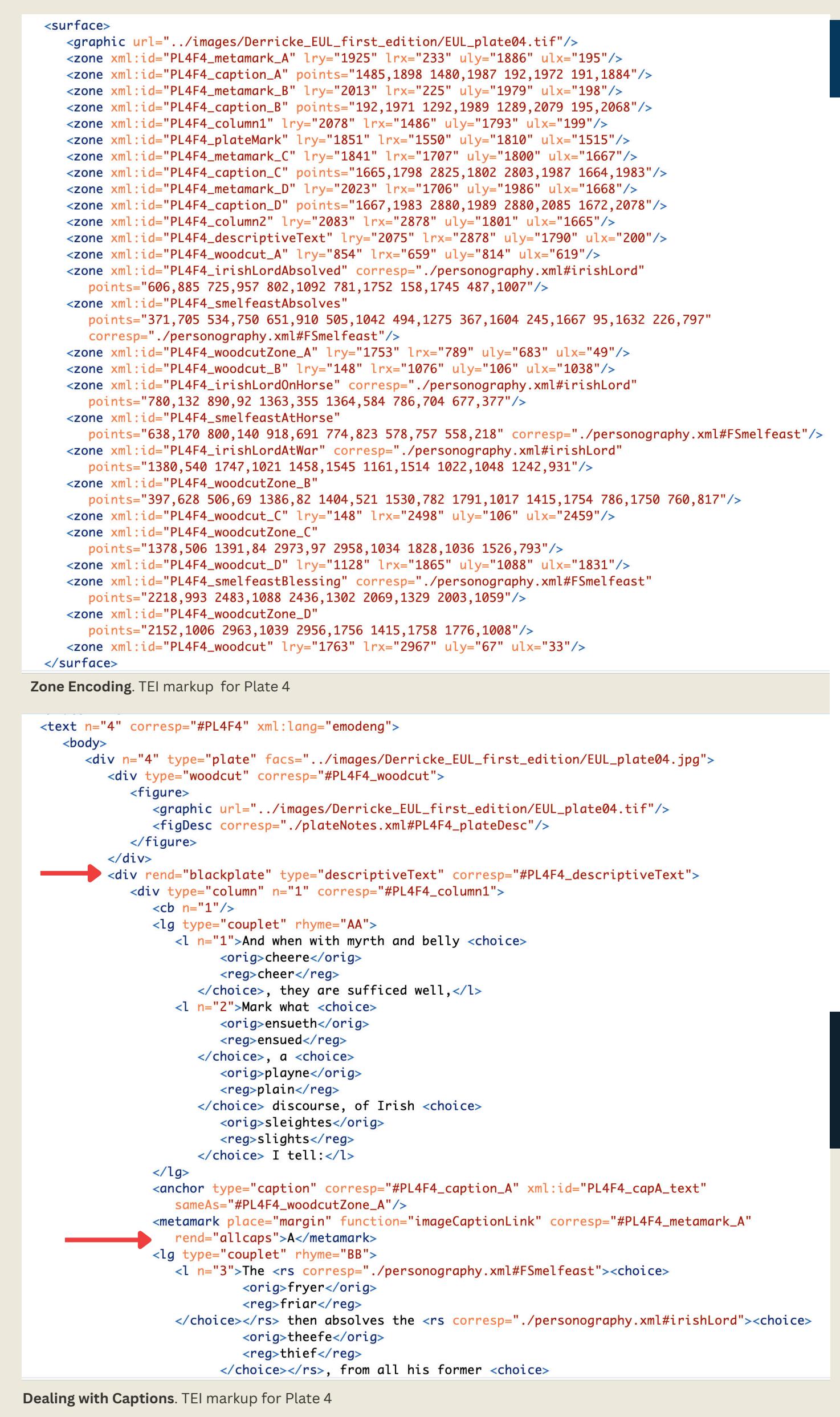
Secondary Sources

Only three previous scholarly editions were ever produced to contextualize this text: Sir Walter Scott, 1809; John Small, 1886; and David B. Quinn, 1985. These editions are limited in editorial commentary and are all woefully outdated, failing to reflect contemporary concerns ranging from the work's status as colonialist propaganda to its lingering influence in art history and media studies.

This digital edition will be the first to reunite the original text with the images that originally accompanied it and place previous and contemporary critical commentary in conversation with previous editions. As we work on encoding the illustrations in particular, we see exciting opportunities to improve accessibility and to encourage multimodal engagement with this understudied text.



Action-packed. Plate 4 illustrates four distinct moments occurring simultaneously yet in distinct poetic structures.



Dealing with Captions. TEI markup for Plate 4

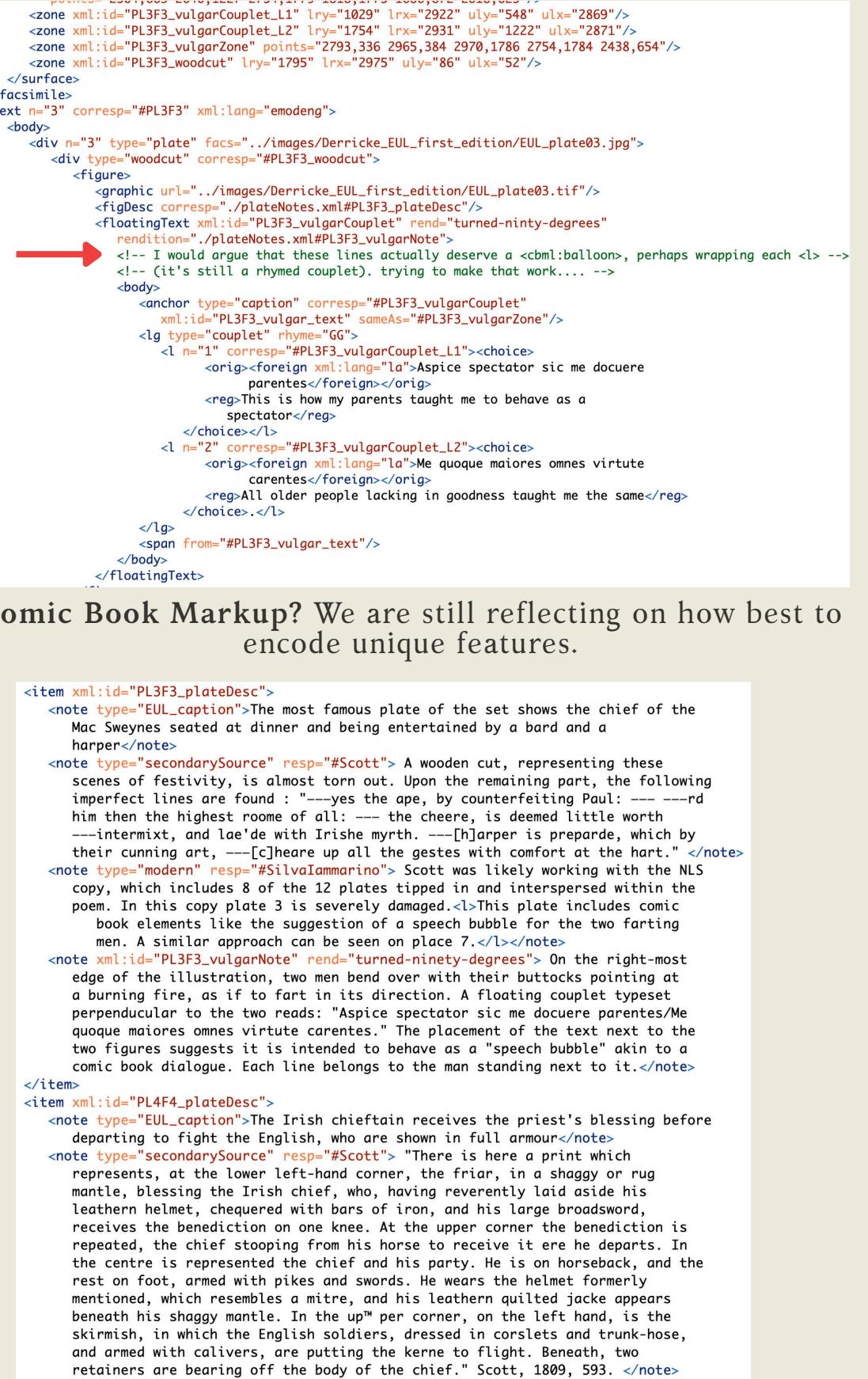
Movement and Multimodality

Part diagram, part graphic comics, almost half of the illustrations feature small letter keys connecting the actions depicted to poetic captions under each image and sometimes even referring back to earlier pages in the long-form poem. Sometimes the illustrations indicate non-linear action, and can be read in multiple directions

(in this case: B-C-A-D or A-B-C-D).



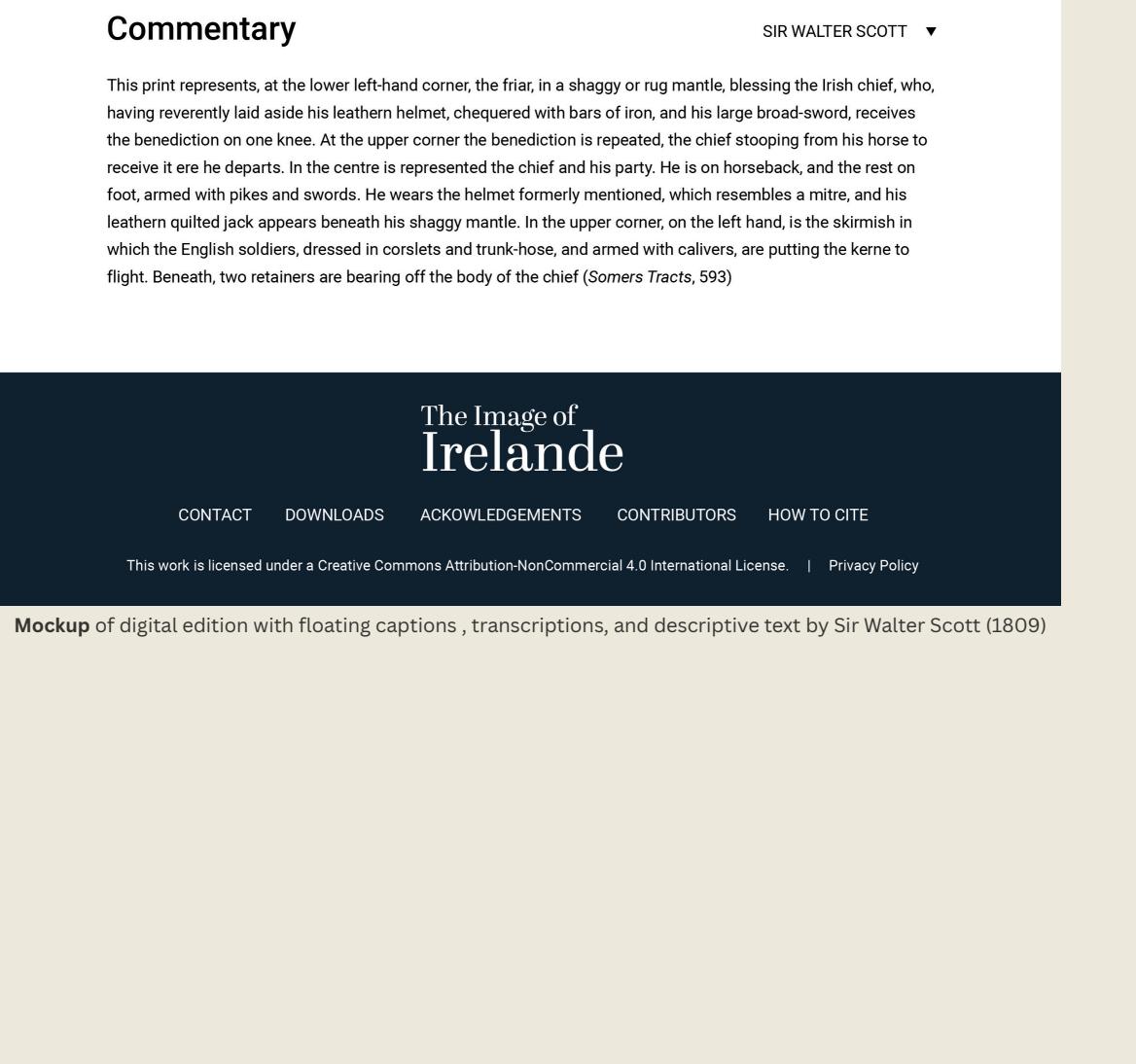
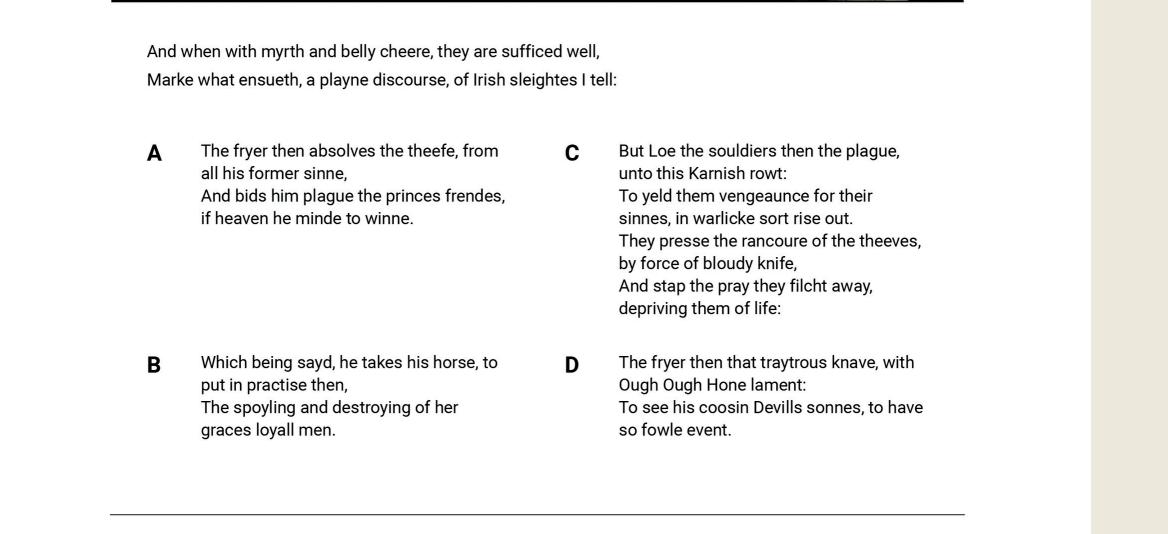
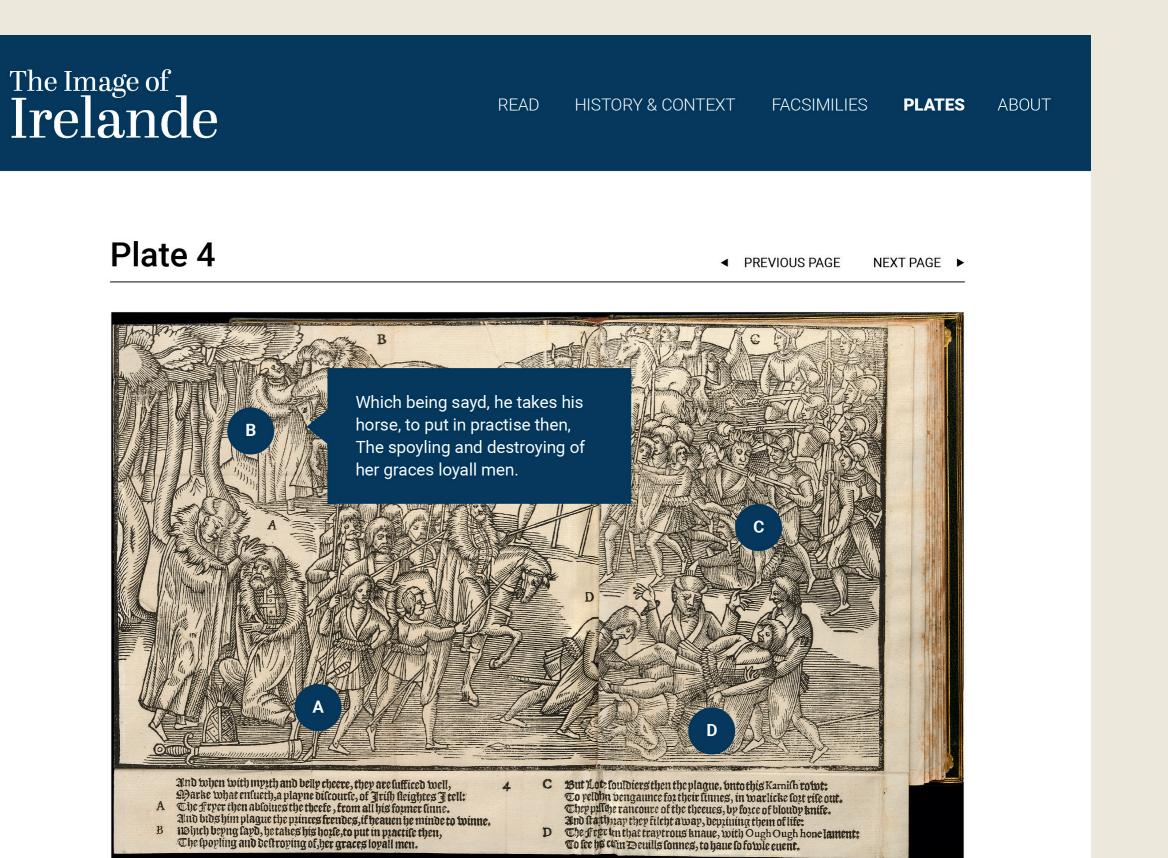
Speech Bubble. Detail from Plate 3 showcasing Derricke's unique visual style



Descriptive Notes. TEI document with transcriptions from Scott, Small, and new additions by the editorial team

Access and Accessibility

Transcription of previous editions (particularly Sir Walter Scott's 1809 commentary, which contains detailed descriptions of the plates) combined with TEI markup will make the engaging movement and multimodal structures of the illustrations accessible to scholars with visual impairments and invite new critical approaches.



Dealing with Captions. TEI markup for Plate 4

Tools and Markup Choices

- TEI Zoner for image markup
- <metamark> element to annotate letter captions
- Comic Book Markup Language
- Dedicated notes file with historical and contemporary commentary

Editorial Practice

The digital edition will feature original spelling and modernized transcriptions of the original copy and contain three annotation types: 1) historical contexts and word definitions; 2) transcribed notes from the three modern editions; and 3) new critical commentary. We aim to encourage a view of editorial practice as multi-faceted and flexible: by showcasing Derricke's text from multiple perspectives, we will invite users to rediscover this text and consider it from complementary (rather than competing) angles.

Current Phase and Next Steps

A clean, updated, and marked-up full-text transcription (based on EEBO-TCP's file) is available on GitHub, along with in-progress markup of the transcriptions for the 12 plates. Transcriptions of past editorial commentary will be up by Fall 2025. Pending funding, TEI markup of the editorial commentary will begin in 2026.