Date: 30 March 1839
Recipient: Arabella Moulton-Barrett (EBB’s younger sister)

Look for: I meant to write to Stromie—but really I can’t now. The letters I have written are just debts & long owing. I read his Chaucer most fluently & admiringly—and am thinking of erecting it on a scaffold in my room covered with velvet.

Questions: “Stormie” is the nickname for EBB’s brother, Charles Moulton-Barrett. How would you describe EBB’s relationship with these two siblings (Arabella and Stormie)? How would you describe EBB’s relationship with Chaucer and the book she references in this letter?
Date: 10 December 1840
Recipient: Mary Russell Mitford (a fellow poet/short story writer)
Look for: You can't guess what my business has been lately. Chaucer?—No!—not Chaucer. Chaucer was done with some time since, & I received him the evening before last, with a vernally green back like "a sweet new poem"

Questions: Is Chaucer a person here? How would you describe the relationship between EBB and Chaucer? How would you describe the relationship between EBB and Mitford? Does EBB sound pleased or frustrated with her work on Chaucer?
Date: 24 December 1840
Recipient: Thomas Powell (a fellow poet who often asked EBB for feedback on his work)
Look for: I am glad you like anything done by me, whether in the Chaucer or elsewhere-& will readily, if you continue to wish it, work as well as I can for the second volume.

Questions: Can you make out EBB’s signature on the last line? How excited does EBB sound to work on a second volume of Chaucer’s Poems Modernized?
Chaucer Letters from Elizabeth Barrett Browning

**Date:** February 1841  
**Recipient:** Richard Hengist Horne (a friend and the editor of *Chaucer’s Poems Modernized*)

...  
Talking of critics .. oh .. the Athenæum!— Have you seen it?—& seen in it how tender-hearted people keep themselves warm this cold weather by tomahawking their neighbours?— Everybody belonging to Chaucer is executed,—& you hacked at, with the degree of malice extraordinar[i]ly done to you as editor! Only Mr Wordsworth, is slunk round in a cowardly disingenuous manner (oh I *must* say it!) just because in right of his high Eminence of reputation ‘among the nations’, weapons of their sort could not hurt him. I must call the mode of the gliding round Mr Wordsworth very cowardly .. a sword in both hands & no prick of either for him—! Why, if the work be an evil design, his hands are as little clean as yours—or as mine, if I dared name such things *avec!*—

And by the way, *I* am commended, with others for selecting an imaginative part of Chaucer—a commendation as little deserved you know, as the cruelty upon the collective body of your “Innocents”.
Date: 20-21 January 1842
Recipient: Mary Russell Mitford (a fellow poet/short story writer)

Look for: Do you really think that Æschylus or Chaucer or your Fletcher ever did “adapt their writings to the public taste”? I doubt—nay, I disbelieve! Did Milton? Did Coleridge? Did Wordsworth? Did not the public go to all of them?

Questions: How would you describe EBB’s tone here? What do you think Mitford wrote to EBB? Why does Browning respond the way she does?
Date: 11 February 1843
Recipient: Benjamin Robert Haydon (friend / artist who wants to paint Chaucer)
Look for: I send you my Black letter Chaucer, & also Mr Horne’s edition of a modernized selection in which Mr Wordsworth, Leigh Hunt, & others less worthy, were fellow-workers.

Questions: Does it sound like Haydon requested books from EBB, or is she just being generous? How could Haydon (as a painter) use the books EBB is sending to him? How much trust would it require for you to send a 200+ year old book to a friend? What does this suggest about how EBB used her Chaucer book?