The Great Vowel Shift (GVS) is a mysterious linguistic phenomenon in which millions of English-speakers shifted the way they pronounced vowels. It occurred largely within a single generation with the most significant changes taking place between the years 1400 and 1450—just after Chaucer’s death. The tendency was for the vowels to shift up and forward in the throat and vocal cavity. To reconstruct Chaucer's English, we must move down and back in the throat and vocal cavity.