

# Using the Chicago Homer to Track Phrases

One of the tools available online to help with word studies is the Chicago Homer. This document covers how to track repeated phrases. Many of these phrases represent formulae that would have been used in the composition/performance of oral poetry.

## What is the Chicago Homer?

The site describes itself as “a multilingual database that uses the search and display capabilities of electronic texts to make the distinctive features of Early Greek epic accessible to readers with and without Greek.”

Texts available are:

- *Iliad*
- *Odyssey*
- *Theogony*
- *Works & Days*
- *Shield of Herakles*
- *Homeric Hymns*

If you do not know any Greek, or very little, you might find the line-by-line translations useful. Please note, however, that these translations are under copyright so these notes will cite only very short passages.

## Types of Investigation

Amongst other things, you can use Chicago Homer to:

- Browse for particular passages in a given text: (see pt 1)
- Compare and investigate Greek terms (see pt 2)
- Search for phrases: (this guide)
- Carry out searches for related words (see pt 4):
- Perform detailed searches (see pt 5)

Please see the other guides in this series for more details. There is also a video demonstration on Hour 25: <http://hour25.heroesx.chs.harvard.edu/?p=9128>

## Tracking Phrases: Summary of Steps

1. Identify the phrase in a line of text.
2. Click on the small number that demarcates the phrase.
3. Click on the links to the additional passages.

## Tracking Phrases: Worked Example

If you do not already have the Chicago Homer open, follow this link, then click ENTER:

<http://digital.library.northwestern.edu/homer/>

Retrieve Book 5, line 771 of *Iliad*, (as detailed in pt1).

In this example, you will find a list of passages that include the phrase ἐπὶ οἴνοπα πόντον [*epi oinopa ponton*, 'on the wine-faced sea'].

1. Look carefully at the lines of text, and notice there are superscript numbers and square brackets. They mark out specific words and phrases.

In this example, look at the end of line 771:

[<sup>13</sup>ἐπὶ [<sup>14</sup>οἴνοπα πόντον,<sup>13</sup>]<sup>14</sup>]

There are two interlocked phrases, 14 and 13:

**13 ἐπὶ οἴνοπα πόντον**

IL.5.771 ἦμενος ἐν σκοπιῇ, λεύσσω <sup>13</sup>ἐπὶ [<sup>14</sup>οἴνοπα πόντον,<sup>13</sup>]<sup>14</sup>

IL.5.771 his eyes, who sits in his eyrie gazing on the wine-blue water,

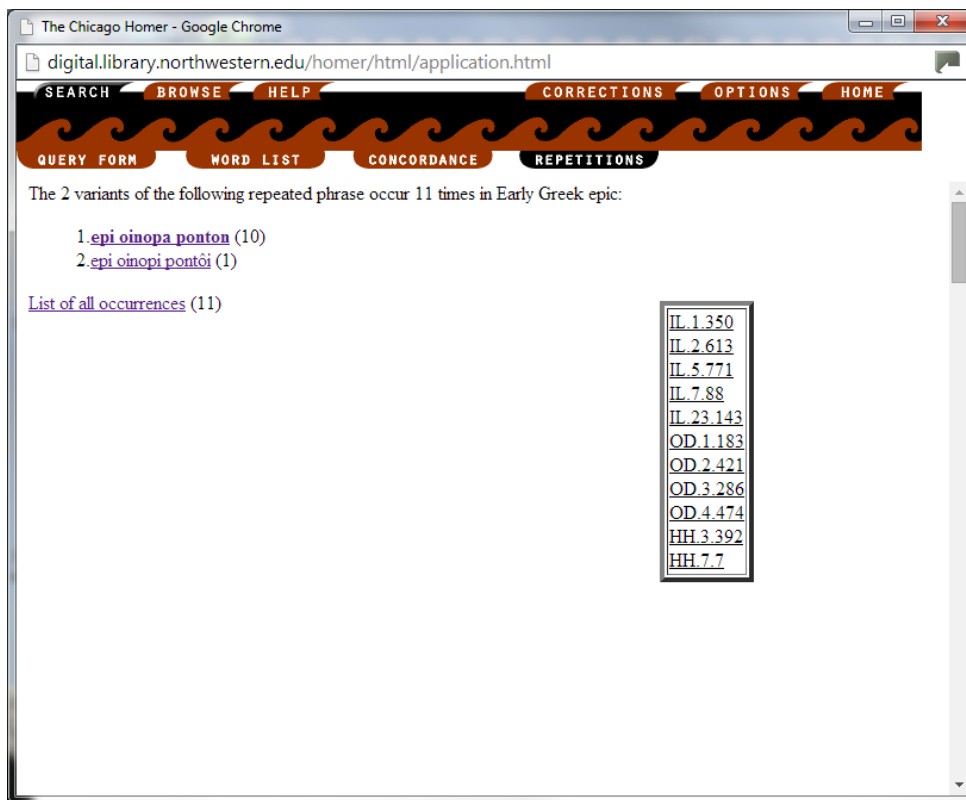
**14 οἴνοπα πόντον**

IL.5.771 ἦμενος ἐν σκοπιῇ, λεύσσω [<sup>13</sup>ἐπὶ [<sup>14</sup>οἴνοπα πόντον,<sup>13</sup>]<sup>14</sup>]

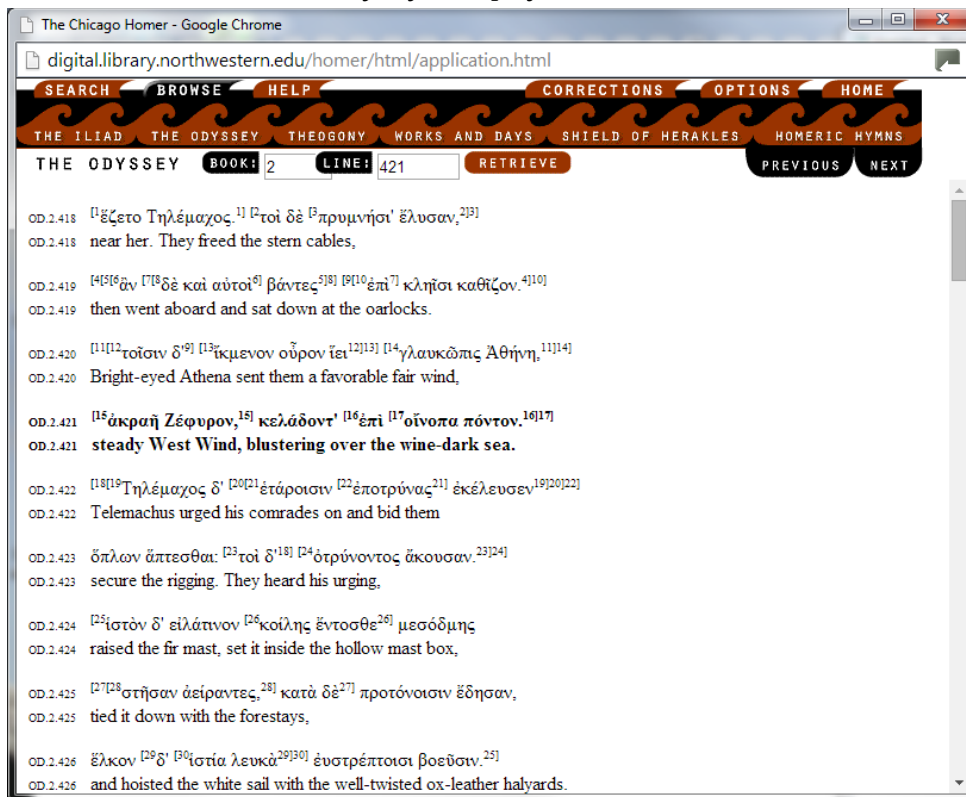
IL.5.771 his eyes, who sits in his eyrie gazing on the wine-blue water,

2. Click the link on the number **13**.

A list of passages is displayed:



3. Click the link for **OD.2 421**  
 The text for that section of *Odyssey* is displayed:



Notice that in this passage the phrase is shown with a different number. This is because there are a larger number of phrases marked on this page, and the numbering automatically restarts on every page of text. But the link works in just the same way:

OD.2.421	<sup>[15]</sup> ἀκραῖ Ἰέφυρον, <sup>[15]</sup> κελάδοντ' <sup>[16]</sup> ἐπὶ <sup>[17]</sup> οἴνοπα πόντον. <sup>[16]</sup> <sup>[17]</sup>
OD.2.421	<b>steady West Wind, blustering over the wine-dark sea.</b>

To return to the list of passages, click on the link on the number [16](#).