projects in which they are involved or on pedagogical and/or methodological experimentation in the teaching of Chaucer and related courses.

Subscription to the Newsletter is $4.00 yearly. Inquiries may be made to Donald M. Rose, The Chaucer Newsletter, The University of Oklahoma, 760 Van Vleet Oval, Norman, Oklahoma 73019

CONTENTS

THE ANNUAL CHAUCER LECTURE:
Fournival and the Old Chaucer Society
by Derek Brewer

ARTICLES:
Henry Amagor Kelly, The Genome Saint Valentine and Chaucer’s Third of May
Hope Phyllis Weismann, The Pardoner’s Vernicle, the Wife’s Coverchests, and Saint Paul
Alexandra Henryk, Chaucer and the Eighteenth Century: the Wife of Bath and Mell Flanders
Z.Dolly Hassan-Yusuff, “Wynneth thy cost”: Commercial and Feudal Imagery in the Friar’s Tale

PROJECTS AND RESEARCH IN PROGRESS:
Robert E. Lewis, The Chaucer Library: A Progress Report
Sherman M. Kuhn, A Report on the Middle English Dictionary
Clifford Davidson, A Report on Early Drama, Art, and Music
A. F. Johnston, Records of Early English Drama and Chaucer Studies
Paul G. Ruggiers, The Variorum Chaucer
Robert E. Lewis, The Index of Middle English Prose: A Report
Laurel Braswell, Research in Old and Middle English Medical Manuscripts

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE DIRECTOR:
Paul G. Ruggiers

IN MEMORIAM: George B. Pace 1915-1979
(The University of Missouri)

Printed in Norman, Oklahoma by Pilgrim Books
© Copyright 1979 by The New Chaucer Society
THE ANNUAL CHAUCER LECTURE:
FURNIVALL AND THE OLD CHAUCER SOCIETY

On this remarkable occasion, when I have been given the honor of saying something of Furnivall and the Old Chaucer Society, at the Inaugural Congress of the New Chaucer Society, it is most fitting that I should remind you of Furnivall's own passionate admiration of the United States, and of the tribute he paid to Professor F. J. Child of Harvard in his Temporary Preface to the first Chaucer Society Publication, the Sixth Text edition of The Canterbury Tales. Like most of Furnivall's writing it is too long to quote in full, because he prided himself on writing as he spoke, but it rings all the more sincerely when he roundly states that "the publication of these texts, and the foundation of the society, are due mainly to the accomplished American scholar, Professor F. J. Child... when an American, who had done the best bit of work on Chaucer's words, asked, and kept on asking, for texts of our great English poet, could an Englishman keep on refusing them? When that American had laid aside his own work to help, heart and soul, in the great struggle for freeing his land from England's legacy to it, the curse of slavery, could one who honored him for it, who felt strongly how much had been the feeling of England's upper and middle classes on the War, as contrasted with the nobleness of our suffering working-men,—could one such, I say, fail to desire to sacrifice something that he might help to weave again one bond between (at least) the Chaucer-lovers of the Old Country and the New? No. That educated England may never so again fail in sympathy with all that is noblest in the education of America, I sincerely trust..."

There is much of Furnivall here. He has just referred to his equal love of Chaucer and Tennyson. Literature was always for him an essential part of life. And in politics he retained the Shelleyan romanticism which has characterized so much modern political thought and feeling among University teachers and students. But Furnivall was also a patriot, even an imperialist, who furthermore continually expressed a generous internationalism. Although he had a special feeling for the United States, Furnivall was equally the friend of scholars of other nationalities, French, German, Italian, Polish, Austrian. (It is curious that he went abroad only once—though that was to walk forty miles a day through France “on a diet of bread, apples, and haricot beans.” It was a characteristic foray, undertaken for the benefit of a small party of working men, and immensely enjoyed though never repeated). There is also in the passage I have quoted a passionate feeling for the poor and oppressed, in the service of whom Furnivall spent an enormous amount of time and his own money. And the whole is expressed with a characteristically colloquial extravagance. He tells us that in 1864 he had told the publisher, Mr. George Ball, who had innocently proposed to bring out yet another Chaucer reprint, that his neck ought to be wrung if he merely reprinted Tyewhit's text.

I suppose that none of us usually addresses publishers that way nowadays—at least I would not recommend it. But that we have so many valuable publications in medieval English we owe mainly to Furnivall. Furnivall's energy, and impatience; his complete openness that allowed the wildest indiscretion; his lack of self-regard, and his self-indulgently hyperbolical expression; all made him tiresome sometimes even to his friends; but though he could not quite be our Sidney, our perfect man, we do well to honor in him the ideals which the New Chaucer Society would wish to follow. He was a most generous-spirited man; a scholar; a citizen who worked to remove poverty and oppression; a patriot whose patriotism incorporated its own self-criticism; an internationalist; a medievalist who saw past and present as a continuum. He was totally without affectation or self-seeking, a lover of poetry, of Chaucer, of learning, of liberty, of the United States.

As I will show, there are good reasons for not seeing anyone else in quite the same light as Furnivall, but I must take the opportunity here, while thinking of the founder of the old Chaucer Society, to express the gratitude of us all to the only begetter of this New Chaucer Society, Paul Ruggiers. We may note in him Furnivall's virtues without his faults, and I venture to say that Furnivall would have been enormously pleased to see this gathering brought together by an expense of quite Furnivallian energy and disinterested love of learning, and with its main center of gravity in the United States. With that I should also note with gratitude contribution made to the funding by the University of Oklahoma and by the N.E.H. And as we all know this sort of enterprise can only be achieved nowadays with the help of many others; a list would be too long here, but we all recognize in especial the contribution of Don Rose.

May I also, as an Englishman, express my sense of gratitude for the huge amount of work done on Chaucer in the United States, which even in proportion to population seems to me greater than is done in Britain. And it is a very splendid sight for me to see assembled at this congress...
nearly all the great modern scholars and critics of Chaucer, from many other countries beside the United States, whose names we have all known so long; to see so many others whose work is already known and valued, and still others coming on. I sum them up in that most Chaucerian figure, our president, Talbot Donaldson.

Perhaps you will also allow me to single out just one country as exemplifying the depth and breadth of Chaucer studies in the world. Of all the vastly growing activities of Japan, I sometimes think that Chaucer studies must be the foremost, and I particularly regret that his health prevents the doyen of Chaucer-studies in Japan, Professor Masui, since about 1900 a member of Hiroshima University, from being here today. The name of his city, and the presence here today of other valued Japanese scholars, encapsulates the extraordinary history and tragedies of our times, and the triumph of our own creation, which Furnivall would have so valued, of a genuine international community of scholars and critics, united in the love of literature and Chaucer.

Frederick James Furnivall was born on 4 February, 1825 to a rich country doctor who had eight other children. As boy and young man he helped on the farm, helped with the practice, learned to ride, scull, and row. When he went up to Trinity Hall, Cambridge, to read the usual course of classics and math he spent his time in happy physical activity, mostly on the river, investing at the age of 20 a very successful new outrigger for rowing boats; and also in characteristically intertemporal piety. This led him to study sermons daily, to become a vegetarian for the next twenty-five years, and never to touch tobacco or alcohol in his life; but by dint of giving up the piety, becoming a characteristically intertemporal agnostic, and applying himself to tea and buns he attained 86 years, vigorous to the last.

He was enthusiastic for modern literature and poetry. He knew Carlyle. He was a friend and admirer of Ruskin. It was Tennyson’s ‘Morte d’Arthur,’ published in 1842, when Furnivall was 17, which first aroused Furnivall’s enthusiasm for medieval literature. Arthurian literature was a potent modern force of a quite complex kind in the Victorian age. Furnivall also eagerly read his contemporary, Morris, and was a great advocate of the very different poetry of Browning. Furnivall’s first two editions of texts were Arthurian, but I cannot discover when or how he first came across Chaucer. It must have been early.

After Cambridge Furnivall read law at Lincoln’s Inn, London, and was called to the Bar in 1849, but he was not much interested in the law. He was caught up in the great whirl of Christian social reform that was so significant in the first half of the 19th century. He personally founded in 1848 a school for poor children, where he and other friends in the evenings taught working men. But his great effort of this kind, under the influence of Charles Kingsley and F. D. Maurice, came when he joined the Working Men’s Association, and helped start the Working Men’s College, which opened in October 1854, when Furnivall was 29 years old. There is a large chapter of Furnivall’s life here which I can only briefly mention but is typical of the man, and allowed him to touch for the fact that Chaucer was read in working men’s homes. He never had a university appointment, but he was the ideal College Tutor, who spent time not only on devoted teaching of English literature from Chaucer to the moderns but also spent Sundays on geological and botanical walking expeditions, and other time in boating, cricket, tea-parties. His interests, which he always shared, included political activity, helping the nascent Trade Unions, and also a vigorous improvement of social life by providing opportunities for the sexes to meet with dances and concerts. He organized dances and did his best to induce the council of the Working Men’s College to admit women to their classes. Furnivall was also true to his Shelleyan prototype in pressing for what I suppose we must now call Women’s Lib. When he was eighty he was a vigorous supporter of women’s suffrage, conceived in ardently idealistic Victorian terms. “Woman,” he said in 1905, “is the beauty and glory of the world.” Yet he was the least mealy-mouthed of Victorians, and there is no doubt that much of his appreciation of Chaucer was for the robust brawniness and apparent realism of so many of The Canterbury Tales. Being a sensible man, he liked women. The famous sculling club he later founded for working girls to enable them and eventually men to scull on the Thames on Sundays is the most famous if slightly comic example. At the A.B.C. tea-shop in New Oxford Street, where he did so much of his teaching, he was as charming to the waitresses as he was to lady scholars like Edith Rickert or Caroline Spurgeon. He treated everyone as equals, even women. It was his sympathy for the hard-working A.B.C. waitresses that led him to found the Girls’ Sculling Club.

It is perhaps not surprising that so impassioned a man nevertheless made a not very successful marriage. He married in 1862 at Hampstead Registry Office the sister of one of the student-teachers at the Working Men’s College, and I suspect that the unfortunate woman never understood him. It was not that he practiced a Shelleyan promiscuity; he was just impossible to live with. For example, at a party in 1881 a girl said to him, “Browning is just as difficult as early English; why don’t you found a society for him?” On his way home Furnivall bought a pound’s worth of stamps (letters went for a 3d then, so that’s 480 letters-worth!), spent the whole night writing letters, posted them in the morning, and a day later (the British Post Office being in those days rather different from what it is now) the Browning Society was in being. His wife once plaintively remarked to the German scholar
Brandl, who records this story in his obituary notice in 
*Archie*, "my husband spends pounds in postage." In the 
same obituary Brandl who of course was writing in the 
decent obsequies of his own learned German language 
records how Furnivall had an extremely hardworking girl 
called Teena as secretary. Mrs. Furnivall considered that 
Furnivall spent far too much time with the innocent Teena 
eventually gave an ultimatum that he must give up 
either his secretary or his wife. Furnivall's love of learning 
prevailed; and his wife left.

There were other storms—controversy in the Working 
Men's College, arguments in the press and so forth. Yet 
Furnivall though excitable was never rancorous: the por-
trait of him in Kathleen Murray's *Caught in the Web of 
Words*, is unfairly biased by Murray's own attitude, which 
was that of a very, very pious Scotsman.

That Furnivall, though fiery, was not uncooperative is 
shown by the societies he founded; the EETS in 1864 
(whose first secretary was his brother-in-law); the Chaucer 
Society, 1867; the Ballad Society, 1869; the New Shake-
peare Society, 1873; the Wadil Society, 1881; the Brown-
ing Society, 1881; the Shelley Society, 1885, apart from 
his sculling club, and helping to organise the military 
volunteers whom he joined for 12 years. The achievement 
was remarkable, and it was not Furnivall's fault that the 
British public and universities supported them poorly.

The main stalk of these was perhaps the one society 
he did not found, the Philological Society, which he joined 
in 1847. He became joint secretary in 1853 and sole secre-
tary from 1852 till his death 43 years later, keeping the 
minutes in his own hand. I have looked at these and mar-
velled at the regularity of his attendance. Often there were 
only four or five members at a meeting. The subjects had 
a tremendously range and Furnivall shows extraordinary 
loyalty and patience, since he was more interested in 
people than language. For example, W. Stokes writes from 
Calcutta in 1874 about coming home on leave and giving 
his paper on the Old Irish verb. I quote a bit of Stokes's 
letter:

I think I deserve my furlough—having during the last 
6 years with much other official work, drawn about 200 
acts; and thus recast nearly the whole of the written 
law of British India.

But his love was the Old Irish verb and Furnivall patiently 
listened. Out of the Philological Society came the project 
for the Oxford English Dictionary, in which Furnivall 
was the prime mover for many years, and to which he 
gave untiredly his time and energy, sometimes counter-
productively.

Out of the Philological Society also came the idea for 
the EETS, since Furnivall had begun printing early 
poems in the *Transactions* and wanted more room. He 
began the EETS with 75 subscribers, including Ruskin 
and Tennyson. We get an insight into how things were 
done from the Bradshaw papers in the University Library 
in Cambridge. Bradshaw was librarian, and a remarkably 
learned man, with a marked aversion to publication. A 
at, brilliant man, he is a subject in his own. He used to 
get to the library at quarter-to-six in the morning to do 
his own work, which was often other people's. Mr. George 
Painter has described him as "expiating with bewildering 
energy the guilt of a pathological splotch." He rarely an-
swered letters, but kept many of those he received. 
Furnivall venerated his learning and peppered him with 
requests and commands, and I have looked at many of 
these. It is nice to know that the University Library would 
load out its medieval manuscripts for years at a time, but 
I sometimes have a dreadful suspicion that a printer might 
print directly from them.

The first letter of Furnivall to Bradshaw I have found 
is dated 19th December, 1865 and is a request to borrow 
the MS of Merlin. The next letter I have found is formally 
addressed to the Syndics asking to keep the Merlin MS 
another year; it is accompanied by an informal letter to 
Bradshaw from Furnivall explaining it really can't return it.

Furnivall then begins an increasing flow of comments 
and requests about readings in early English MSS. On 
28th September, 1866 he writes:

My dear B.

Child wants his 4 or 5 Texts of the *Canter* Tales in 
parallel columns, & I shall either start a separate 
*Chaucer Soc* for it, or a *Chaucer Series* of the E.E. Text 
Soc.

Would you like to have a finger in the pie, & will you 
undertake a column of the best Cambridge MS. to 
correct a copy of the Bell text by such best Cambridge 
MS. and then read proof and revise with the MS . . . ?

Subser 4 guineas a year, and bring out as much as we 
can for it.

This wants an answer soon. So pray give it.

Yours ever

F.J. Furnivall

If we get up a Chaucer Soc will you come on the Com-
mittee?

This incidentally is quite different from the letter Brad-
shaw's biographer Prothero prints for September 1866 
(p. 214). Furnivall never let the grass grow under his feet.
Six days later, 4th October, he writes from his London 
house:

My dear H.B.

Leg of mutton here on Sunday at 1130. Come in then, 
or before or after, as suits you . . .
(Then follow some interesting calculations; he writes)
500 copies of 4000 lines, 6 texts, paper at 5/6—£25.14.14—copies at say 5/6, 100 members at 2/3—would do this.

You could multiply this quite reasonably by 10 or more; ten guineas would equal 50 dollars, so we’re getting our society on the cheap.

Furnivall had a good grasp of basic publishing costs, though it wouldn’t work today. I suppose 500 copies of the Six-Text edition were to cost £24.4.0. 100 members at 2 guineas each would give £231—a close-run thing! Not merely no profit: no overheads, no postage, and nothing for the editors. There were no grants and I have no doubt Furnivall put his own money into it. I hope the New Chaucer Society has safer margins. But he got at least 131 subscriptions, since Bradshaw kept a receipt numbered 131 for 8 guineas from Furnivall for 4 copies—and paid for, 13 months later, which I hope we won’t do.

I give a couple of examples from many letters to Bradshaw. Furnivall writes:

I forgive Sandys everything for saying that if Ch had lived later he’d have beaten Shakespeare as a comic poet. Of course he would.

(30 July 1888)

This Dan John Gaytrigge and Wydcl is rather a joke

(29 Sept 1888)

“I’m in a great state of delight,” he says, when in process of sorting out details of the journey to Canterbury on 5 Jan 1869, and 3 days later, after discussing the stages of King John’s journey:

Re the Frenchmen and the larky view of literature which you say they so strongly condemn. I thought you might be right, as some F[renchs] are silly, and won’t write as they talk. . . . There are a good many men in the world who take such things good humoredly—which is sensible of ‘em.

(8 Jan 1869)

He had a delightfully innocent interest in the human realistic detail of the past. In a letter to Bradshaw Furnivall writes of the hill above Boughton near Canterbury:

It is the difficulty of this hill which no doubt caused the danger to the sleepy Cook which causes the fun of the Manciple’s prologue . . . . No doubt you will say this is carrying the matter much too far. But all I want is to picture to myself the thing as it was, and anything which helps me to do this interests me.

In another letter to Bradshaw quoted by Prothero he writes:

(And so and so) cares for language, (so and so) for meter, I for neither, only story and social life and opinion; you for all, and that’s best.

Well, the man who cared neither for language or meter edited a hundred texts, some with introductions, besides all the work he did on other people’s editions. Of course his editions were little more than reasonably accurate transcriptions, and it is clear that his literary interests were much less subtle than ours. But as Brandl says he had a remarkable flair for the problems of research as they appeared in his time, without, as Brandl points out, any of the benefit of the German seminar system. Indeed English intellectual life and the universities come out very poorly in their relation to Furnivall. Indeed he accomplished vastly more than the universities even when London is added. His decisiveness, energy, and flair for organization were devoted to exactly the right ends, with a complete absence of self-regard and bureaucratic fuss.

He ended his life as resolutely and with as little self-regard as he had lived it. At the meeting of the Philological Society on 10 June 1905, at which only five members were present, Furnivall announced, as the Treasurer, H. A. Nesbit remembered, “in the tone of one who mentioned that he was going into the country next week, that the doctors had told him that he was not likely to live more than six months . . . . “ Ah well,” he said to Nesbit afterwards, “I have had a good innings and have enjoyed my life. I should have liked to finish two or three books I have in hand, but I suppose it is impossible.”

He insisted on going home alone, getting a cab for himself. In two months he was dead.

From the next meeting of the Philological Society, no mention of Furnivall is recorded, but it was proposed that a circular be addressed to members of the Chaucer Society that they should transfer their membership to the Philological Society. The matter was left open for further consideration.

Very characteristic of any Society, to postpone a decision. The matter was never referred to again. Furnivall was dead and gone indeed.

But his work lives on, and through it his spirit. Work was a favorite word with him. Brandl, in his admirable obituary notice, says that he valued only one thing in the world, good work, and one sort of men, good workers. "Recent Work at Chaucer" is the characteristic title of a representative essay of his in Macmillan’s Magazine, 1873, which sums up much of his attitude and is full of praise for the work of other scholars. His zest turned even the drudgery of transcription into a labor of love from which many generations have benefited. He, if anyone, exemplified, though not without eccentricity (as who does not?) the Augustinian dictum, “Love, and do what you want so
do." Brandel records that one of Furnivall’s closest friends told him “Furnivall is utterly lawless!” I cannot resist quoting the concluding passage from his Trial-Forwards to my “Parallel-Text Edition of Chaucer’s Minor Poems,” 1876, to remind us of his quality—the unaffected enjoyment, the self-indulgent, though not self-regarding, egotism; the chatty style; the sympathy; the feeling for England; the generosity towards others:

wide drag-net of French imitations. Scratch a Russian, and you find a Tartar, said Voltaire (?): Scratch Chaucer, and you find a Frenchman, says M. Sandras. Well, well, it pleases him, and doesn’t hurt us or our bright old English soul.

Here for the present: I must break off, as I haven’t time to study further the rest of the poems just now, and have been for six weeks, and am still, away from almost all my books and literary friends, among bluebells, honeysuckles, laburnums, cuckoos, and nightingales; Chaucer’s dairies under my feet, his heavenly harmony of birds about me, and his bright old England all around. Wasn’t he at Windsor Castle that we see so well from Cooper’s Hill? Didn’t he see and love ‘the river winding at its own sweet will’, and rejoice in all the sights and sounds of spring and early summer—chill and late though they were, like ours this year! Truly he did; and loved the sweet English girls around him—not only girls, but women all. His early hopeless love didn’t harden, but opened his heart. And one ought to work for the sake of him. But he’d have given us all a holiday, I’m sure: so, reader, let me put off Part II of these Trial-Forwards for a time; and join me in thanking Professor Tenn Brink, who first gave Englishmen a real outline of their great poet’s works; Mr Henry Bradshaw, from whom I have learnt all in this Tract that is true or valuable on the structure of Chaucer’s poems; Mr Brae and Mr Skeat, whose explanations of the astronomy of the Mars I have copied; Mr W. Allen Wright, who has kindly superintended the copying of all the Trinity (Cambridge) MSS, and read two of the revisions of them with the MSS; and Mr George Parker of the Bodleian, for his accurate copies of the Oxford MSS, and his reading the proofs or revisions of some of them—(I’ve read either proof or revise of all but the Tanner Mars myself, and both proof and revise of most of the poems.)

Walnut-Tree Cottage, Egham,
13 June, 1876

We may sum up his generous and unselfseeking spirit in the phrase with which his Introduction to the Chaucer Society terms begins: “To do honour to Chaucer . . .”

His views may now appear old-fashioned, idealistic, limited. He tended to think of the best literature as a good-hearted imitation of life. He loved the good, enjoyed the comic, and though he recognized evil enough in life, and did more than most to fight against it, he did not value literature for its cynicism. He was a Victorian, and our times and attitudes are different. But all of us, as professional scholars of literature, may well take inspiration, for this New Chaucer Society, and for all our work, from Furnivall’s confidence, from his sense of the interaction between life and literature; his admiration and love for literature; and from his noble work in sharing its literature-enhancing values with other people.

Derek S. Brewster
The Master
Emmanuel College, Cambridge University

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE


THE GENOISE SAINT VALENTINE AND CHAUCER’S THIRD OF MAY

Henry Angsar Kelly

How did the notion of Saint Valentine’s Day as a time of matchmaking get its start? There is no sign of any attention paid to Saint Valentine’s patronage of lovers before Chaucer’s time. The tradition that the February 14 Saint Valentine’s Day was associated with efforts to combat the Roman festival of Lupercalia on February 15 seems to have been created ex nihilo by Alban Butler in the eighteenth century. A recent attempt
to give this hypothesis some historical foundation has not been successful: the postulated connections range in weakness from the impossible (an early feast of the Purification celebrated in the West on February 14 to the improbable (Saint Valentine of Jerusalem considered as a fertility figure) and are furthermore widely separated by missing links.

There is one feature of Chaucer’s Valentine poems that may provide us with a clue to the origin of the tradition. Everyone has assumed that Chaucer is addressing an already established custom of “vital mating” on February 14. Yet he seems to set Saint Valentine’s Day in a decidedly post-Feburary time of year: he associates it with the high springtime and the mating of birds after the rigors of winter are over; and if any month is mentioned, it is May. Let me review the evidence on this point.

Of the four Chaucerian poems that deal with Saint Valentine, the most familiar is, of course, the Parliament of Fowls, in which the annual mating of the birds takes place on Saint Valentine’s Day. No doubt many readers have noted that the flowery springtime of the setting is in variance with the expected conditions of mid-February, but have dismissed the point as needing no comment, because of the unchanging conditions of the dream-garden—where, according to one side of the inscription over the gate, “green and lusty May shall ever endure” (130). The other half of the advertisement, to be sure, indicates that it is always winter: “Neere the fraye ne leves here” (137); but this assessment is plainly belied by the lush flora that Chaucer encounters after entering the garden. He also says that day never changes to night in this place (209-210).

However, this steady state of time and weather is called into question when he speaks of Venus resting until the hot sun moves to the west (266), and when he says that the parliament lasted from the morning “till downward drew the somne wondre Fame” (430). Moreover, the birds sing:

Now welcome, somer, with thy somne safe,
That hast this wintere wedres overthrow,
And driven away the longe nyghtes blake.

(680-683)

In the Complaint of Mars, Chaucer is no longer in a dream, though he can still understand bird-speech. He hears a bird on the high feast of Saint Valentine urging the other birds, and men as well, it seems, to awake and choose their mates if they have not already done so; the bird also calls for the “flowers fresh” to honor the day.

In the F version of the Prologue to the Legend of Good Women, Chaucer is once more in his waking state in the experience he describes as having occurred on the first day of May. He tells us that the little birds were rejoicing over their escape (and it seems like a recent escape from the sword of winter and the Fowler’s stakes). Some of them were singing in praise of their mates “and for the newe blissful semers take” (142), and the text of their song was as follows:

Blessed be Seynt Valentyn,
For on his day I chese yow to be myn,
Withouten repente, myn herte swete!

(145-147)

In the G version, he moves the time to the end of May, and has the encounter with the birds take place in his dream.

Finally, the Complaint d’Amours (which is not always attributed to Chaucer with certainty) was, according to the text of the poem, made on Saint Valentine’s Day, “whan every foughbel chese shal his make.” According to the Harley manuscript, it was composed at Windsor “in the last May preceding November.” The concluding two words of this inscription make no sense, but perhaps they are a garbled reference to the Ember Days of Whitsuntide, which often fall in the last part of May (it happened twenty-nine times in the second half of the fourteenth century).

It seems clear, then, that we have a discrepancy: between a traditional February date and settings in the late spring. Let us look at some possible explanations. Perhaps Chaucer put Saint Valentine’s Day in the high springtime out of ignorance or stupidity. This is the sort of explanation that one must resort to, for instance, when trying to account for the fact that U.C.L.A., to the scandal of the civilized world, each year holds a festival called “Mardi Gras” in April or May. In this case, however, there is question of a long-standing tradition being ignored or forgotten, or of a name, like the word “carnival” (which of course comes from the same tradition as Mardi Gras), that has become synonymous with festivity in general. But, as I have already pointed out, there is no evidence that this was so with Saint Valentine’s Day.

Coming from another direction, we might wonder whether the idea was so new that Chaucer did not know when Saint Valentine’s Day occurred, and simply guessed that it must fall at a time when birds and people most noticeably engage in mating activity. He may have seen the references to this theme in the poems of Oton de Grandson or John Gower, who only vaguely associate Saint Valentine’s Day with the springtime, and merely spelled out the implications of this conjunction of ideas.

There is, however, no convincing reason to believe that either Grandson or Gower anticipated Chaucer in speaking of Saint Valentine; they could just as well have been imitating Chaucer.

We must, of course, inquire into the possibility that spring, like love, at that time was not as spring is nowa-
days. Perhaps Chaucer’s Februaries were full of flowers and mating birds. For one thing, his calendar was nine days in advance of ours, so that the spring equinox fell on March 12 rather than on March 21. This means that his February 14 corresponds to our February 23. Moreover, many ecclesiastical calendars of his time date the beginning of spring on February 1, following the ancient Roman custom of placing the equinox in the middle rather than at the start of the season. There was, furthermore, at Durham a calendrical tradition of the birds re-commencing their song on February 12. And as I think likely, Chaucer did not have the least idea of the migration of birds; he would have thought that even summer residents like the cuckoo and the nightingale, which he mentions in the Parliament, were available in England (though normally silent and in hiding) on February 14.

It turns out, however, that Chaucer’s world was, if anything, colder than our own. It was on the brink of what climatologists call the “Little Ice Age,” which lasted from the fifteenth century into the nineteenth. (Perhaps we have here the explanation of the Great Vowel Shift—the vowel pitches may have been driven up by people gritting their teeth against the cold!) It might, of course, be argued that Chaucer was drawing on traditions of earlier and warmer springs from the period of the “Medieval Heat Wave,” which allowed for a flourishing wine industry in England, especially in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, in regions up to three hundred miles north of the present upper limit of wine districts in France. But February 14 was still too early for conditions of the sort that Chaucer describes, even during those warmer times and even in the more southerly climates of Europe. Nothing that Chaucer is likely to have read would have encouraged him to present such a picture, particularly in describing the England of his own day.

Let us then proceed to think the unthinkable, and suppose that it was Chaucer who first introduced the idea of Saint Valentine as the patron saint of the mating season, and that he placed his feast in the high springtime because he was thinking of a different Saint Valentine from one or other of the two main saints of that name whose feast-day was celebrated on February 14. It is even possible that Chaucer had never noticed the presence of a February Valentine in the church calendars in England, or that, if he did, he paid it little heed. The customs of dating events by saints’ feasts was not much practiced in his circles, as a survey of the Chaucer Life-Records will show. February 14 was a simple black-letter day, unlike, say, November 22, the feast of Saint Cecilia, which had nine or twelve lessons at Matins rather than only three. (I must admit, however, that I have found two exceptions to this rule in Benedictine circles: Saint Valentine was given twelve lessons at Dunster Priory [a cell of Bath Cathedral Priory] and at Hyde Abbey in Winchester. The monks of Hyde Abbey also celebrated the octave of the feast, in honor of the saint’s head, which Queen Emma had given to them in the year 1092.)

We are to look, then, for a spring festival of Saint Valentine. In some modern lists of saints, there are as many as fifty Valentines—two of them in fact on December 10, the mysterious date of Chaucer’s dream in the House of Fame. But there seems to be only one saint of this name for whom a real cult or actually observed feastday existed within what are ordinarily thought of as the spring months (that is, March, April, and May): namely, Saint Valentine of Genoa, the first bishop of that city. His body was discovered at the turn of the eleventh century, and in the Sermon commemorating the event, which was later incorporated into the liturgy of the saint’s feastday, Valentine is said to have died on the second day after the Calends of May, which, of course, would be May 3. However, his solemn festival was kept in Chaucer’s day on the vigil, May 2, no doubt in order to assure the saint his own religious and civic holiday, since May 3 was already the great feastday of the Invention of the Holy Cross. A similar arrangement had been made for another Genoese bishop, Saint Peter, who died on June 29, the feast of Saints Peter and Paul; Peter’s feast was celebrated instead on the octave of his death, July 5.

Of the three poets who first mention Saint Valentine, only Chaucer is known to have had a connection with Genoa and to have been able to speak Italian. Chaucer traveled to Genoa in the early part of 1373. Since he returned to England on May 23, he could not have been in Genoa for the celebration of Saint Valentine’s feastday that year. He could, however, have heard of the saint during his journey, for he was accompanied by several natives of Genoa, including two high-ranking agents of King Edward III, John de Mari and Sir James de Provan. He could also, of course, have had contact with these or other Genoese “sources” both before and after his journey. He may, for example, have had access to a breviary used by the Genoese community in England.

What I wish to suggest, then, is this: Chaucer’s fancy was touched by hearing of a holiday in Genoa at the beginning of May, honoring an unfamiliar saint named Valentine. He would easily have been able to connect it with the traditional observances to May practiced in his time, in Italy as well as in France and England. There may have been some association at Genoa of the general mating of the birds with this festival, or Chaucer may have hit on this idea himself—say, from his reading of earlier poetic accounts of various kinds of meetings of birds at the beginning of May. Other literary sources may also have been important, particularly the Teseida, one of the new works that Chaucer picked up in Italy, from which he took his
description of the garden in the *Parliament of Fowls*. In this garden, Boccaccio says, almost every kind of bird was heard sweetly singing through the branches, and some of them were lovingly building their nests (75a). In the *Parliament*, Chaucer describes this sort of activity as occurring on Saint Valentine’s Day. In the *Knight’s Tale*, his other major work based on the *Tresid*, Chaucer sets the beginning of the lovers’ feud, when Palamon and Arcite first see Emily, rather vaguely “in a moorwe of May” (1034); but he is quite definite in beginning their active challenge for Emily’s love on May 3. Did Chaucer choose this day because he thought it was Saint Valentine’s Day? If so, the parallels between the quarrel of Palamon and Arcite over Emily and the quarrel of the three great eagles over the formel can hardly be coincidental. Like Palamon and Arcite, the three aciponite suitors are prepared to fight over their beloved, and in both cases the ruling authority puts off the decision until the same time the following year.

Similarly, the prostrate Troilus’s actual courtship of Criseyde begins on May 3, at least through the offices of his very active proxy Pandarus. Pandarus himself starts out the day badly by suffering a “tree” of his own for love. Finally, there is the *Nun’s Priest’s Tale*, another story of avian romance, which takes place entirely on May 3. As with some of the birds in the *Prologue to the Legend of Good Women*, there has been trouble between Chaucierc and Partlet, in this case caused by the dream that he had “to-nights” (that is, during the night just elapsed). But they are finally reconciled, and Chaucierc says:

Madame Peretloste, my worldes bliss,  
Hebreneth thine blisful briddles how they syng.  
And se the freshe flores how they spryng:  
Ful is myn hearte of revel and solas.  

(*NPT* 3200–3203)

In the context that follows, Chaucierc’s victory over Russel, which is perhaps effected through the aid of Venus, confirms him in possession of his beloved.

The new date for Saint Valentine’s Day would also fit well with astronomical interpretations that have been made of Chaucierc’s poems. The *Complaint of Mars*, for instance, has been taken to apply to the year 1365. The planetary action can be seen to end on May 3 of that year, when Mercury receives Venus as his “frend ful dere” (line 147). The occasion of the bird’s recounting of Mars’s complaint might then be the anniversary of this event, May 3, 1365, when Venus was a morning star (as called for at the beginning of the poem).

Previous explanations for Chaucierc’s favoritism towards May 3, as a “dismal day” or as the feast of the Holy Ceres, have not been satisfactory. The latest hypothesis, that put forward by John McCall, holds more promise: he suggests that Chaucierc would have been able to see from Ovid’s *Fasti* that it was the last day of the Roman festival of Flora. If so, and if Chaucierc also considered May 3 to be Saint Valentine’s Day, it could be argued that he saw the latter as the Christian version of the former. From a literary point of view, the two festivals would be “concurrent,” and would mutually reinforce the pattern that Chaucierc establishes for the day—a pattern featuring the contests of love that characterize the mating season.

If, then, it was Chaucierc who first introduced the literary world to Saint Valentine as a springtime matchmaker, it must be concluded that the association of the February Saint Valentine with the mating process is a later development. As I have indicated above, Grandson and Gower are rather noncommittal about the precise season in which the feast of Saint Valentine occurs, and perhaps the reason is that they did not know for sure, having seen it treated only in Chaucierc’s poems. But Clarvoe in his *Book of Cupid* (that is, The *Cuckoo and the Nightingale*), which is an undoubted imitation of several of Chaucierc’s poems, does become specific. Clarvoe tells us that on the third night of May he goes to sleep in the hope of hearing the nightingale on the morrow. At daybreak he goes to the woods and sees the birds going in pairs.

Ryght so as they had chosen hem to-yeere  
In March, uppon Seynt Valentyynes Day.  

(*79–80*)

My guess is that Clarvoe, like Grandson and Gower, did not know when Saint Valentine’s Day fell, and that he must have gone to a calendar and found it next to the inscription *A.I.I. M. A.R.T.H.*, which he mistakenly believed to be the beginning of March. Later editors corrected his error and read February for March, but thereby added an extra foot to his line.

Other devotees of Saint Valentine who were more familiar with the Roman dating system of church calendars set the feast on February 14, beginning in 1490 with the court-of-love hour of Queen Isabel of France (who was no doubt inspired by Grandson’s Valentine poem), and followed by Charles of Orleans, John Lydgate, and others.

We may well wonder at the speed with which Chaucierc’s Maytime mating day must have taken hold on the wrong date, if my hypothesis is correct. But most of the early Valentine’s who held for February 14 manifest an awareness of or uncaresness about the earliness of the season—which leaves us with our original sticking-point, the full flower of Chaucierc’s Saint Valentine’s Day. And whatever happened seems to have happened fast.

University of California at Los Angeles
THE PARDONER’S VERNICLE, THE WIFE’S COVERCHIEFS, AND SAINT PAUL

Hope Phyllis Weissman

In a recent short article on the Pardoner’s vernicle, Theresa Coletti points out that the cloth which the Pardoner sports on his cap (GP 685) is more than a badge of professional accreditation. It is an allusion to, and a parody of, the Judeo-Christian doctrine that man is made in the image of God. Coletti’s recognition of the significance of the vernicle contributes, as she demonstrates, to our understanding of the articulation of the ventes home theme in both the portrait and the Pardoner’s Tale. Yet the image of the vernicle has a further significance, I believe, which extends beyond the Pardoner himself and the issue of his individual spiritual sterility. The vernicle image, and in fact the entire description of the Pardoner’s head covering, serves also as the most conspicuous iconographic device used by Chaucer to establish a symbolic relationship between the Pardoner and the Wife of Bath. It is the purpose of the following brief discussion to identify the salient features in the descriptions of the Pardoner’s and the Wife’s headwear; on the basis of this identification, to recognize a Scriptural source of the descriptions; and finally, to suggest an interpretation of the larger relationship which the headwear emblematizes.

Perhaps the most important observation to emerge from a comparison of the two descriptions is that the headwear of the Pardoner and the Wife are materially and conceptually antibithetical. The vernicle on the Pardoner’s cap, in all its sham, must stand as the most substantial element of his head covering, which is otherwise conspicuous for its proudly displayed lightness:

But hood, for jollere, weard he noone.
For it was trussyd up in his wetele.
Hym thoughte he rood all of the newe jet;
Dischevelle, save his cappe, he rood al bare.

(GP 680–83)

The Wife’s headwear, pointedly contrasted with the Pardoner’s, is conspicuous rather for its ponderous substantiality:

Hir coverchies ful flyne weren of ground;
I dorte swere they wPyObject ten pound
That on a Sunday weren upon hir heed.

(GP 453–55)

The Wife appears to resemble the Pardoner in proudly displaying her headdress, the pride in her case being legitimated by association with the “covering” of the earlier vers in Proverbs 31:22 ("tajgulassam vestem fecit sibi"). But despite this Scriptural legitimation, the Wife...
of Bath’s pride in one crucial respect must be qualified: the ostentatious elaboration of her kerchiefs cannot disguise the fact that her headdress lacks the distinctive emblem of Christian authority which the Pardoner so confidently sports. There may be in this omission an implied distinction between Old and New Testamental authority, but such a distinction is best understood as a secondary dimension of the contrast. Its central implication arises rather from a point of essential agreement between the authorities: that it is precisely the man, in the sense of the male of the species, who bears the image of God.

Considered in this light, the antithetical relationship between the two pilgrims’ headwear invites association with the most influential Scriptural discussion of the subject, Paul’s prescription of the headwear appropriate to men and women at prayer in his first epistle to the Corinthians. In a conceptually involved and textually problematic passage of the eleventh chapter, the Apostle characteristically determines the particular social question with reference to the fundamental concerns of the developing tradition—here, to the proper relation of man to God and of woman to God and man. The essence of Paul’s teaching on the matter is distilled in the following verses:

Volo autem vos scire quod omnis viri caput, Christus est: caput autem mulieris, vir; caput vero Christi, Deus. Omnis vir orans, aut prophetans velato capite, detur patra caput suum. Omnis autem mulier orans, aut prophetans, nea velato capite, detur patra caput suum: unum enim est ac si decalveatur. . . Vir quidem non debet velare caput suum: quaevis image et gloria Dei est, mulier autem gloria viri est. . . Iideo debet mulier protestare habere supra caput proprium angelorum.

(1 Cor. 11:3-16)

In recognizing, however, that the headwear of the Pardoner and the Wife is an imitation of the Pauline paradigm, one must also recognize that the imitation makes a travesty of the Scriptural original. Like other Chaucerian travesties, the game of headwear too involves a complex interplay of earnest and jest. The Wife’s sea-pound headdress, on one level, is simply a comic localization of verse 30 in the paradigm, which prescribes that a woman have potestas . . . supra caput, that is, be ruled by the authority of a man. But on another level, the headdress represents a subversion of the paradigm; for in assuming potestas supra caput on the model of the studii formis, the Wife has contrived to arrogate unto herself some measure of her patriarchal power. Although she cannot by this method appropriate its spiritual authority, the Wife does certainly challenge patriarchal hegemony in the socio-economic domain. Her challenge, that is, her self-willed assumption of the patria potestas, expresses itself explicitly in the con-

cluding image of her portrait, which represents the “good wife” in the guise of a knight (GP 495-77).

The Pardoner’s travesty of the Scriptural paradigm departs even more sharply from the spirit of the original; it is not only a comic literalization and subversion of the Pauline model, it is also a direct contradiction of it. For Paul, in developing his antithesis between the bare-headed male and the covered female, had extended his argument to the point of insisting that Christian males reject the long hair of ascetic sects like the Nazarenes: “Ne ipa natura docter vos, quod vir quidem si comman nutriti, ignominia est illis” (1 Cor. 11:14). After and in light of Paul, in the Western Christian tradition, long hair could serve as a symbol of mankind’s ignominia, a necessary covering of the shameful female nature but a shameful covering of the godlike nature of the male. Yet it is precisely the ignominia of long hair which the Pardoner exposes to the eyes of the pilgrims, and with no apparent sense of shame:

This Pardoner hadde heer as yellow as wax,  
But smooche it hroting as dooth a strike of flecs;  
By ounces benge his lockes that he hadde,  
And therwith he his shoulderes oversprallde;  
But thynke it lay, by colpon oon and oon.  

(GP 675-70)

In the context of 1 Corinthians, the Pardoner’s fleeced locks are more than simply shameless, however; they are a visible expression of his transgression of sex roles, and thus, a sign of his radical separation from the potestas viri. By the force, therefore, of this particular aspect of his description as well as others, the Pardoner is shown flagrantly to deny the source of his own authority. He is shown, accordingly, as being incapacitated to rule his flesh, rule a wife (cf. WBP 850-85)—and bear the image of God. Given the fact of the Pardoner’s abdication of the male role, it can be readily understood how the Wife has contrived to appropriate some of its power.

The feminization of the Pardoner and the masculinization of the Wife must, then, be recognized as dialectically related phenomena. It is possible that these phenomena can once again be seen as literalizations of Paul’s pronouncements in the eleventh chapter of his letter to the Corinthian church. For if Paul deliberately exaggerates the differences between the sexes in the chapter’s opening passage, he also attempts to mitigate differences in the verses which immediately follow:

Veramtamen neque vir sine muliere: neque mulier sine viro in Domino. Nam siue mulier de vibo,  
ita et vir per mulierem: omnia autem ex Deo.  

(1 Cor. 11:11-12)

The Wife’s assumption of male power literalizes this
Scriptural ideal on the social level, the Pardoner's display of long hair literalizes it on the biological; and both literalizations must certainly be regarded as cooptations of the spirit of Scripture for unauthorized private ends. As such, these privatized experiments in transversing established sex differences are perceived as transgressions which are punishable by sterility.24 Yet even as such, the perverse experiments of the two pilgrims can serve, like the veru danero and the nestle of their fables, to point their hearers to the truer way. For the pilgrims' experiments, precisely because they are parodic gestures, can also be regarded as assertions of a genuine need experienced by later medieval Christian culture—the need to fulfill the spirit of the Scriptural mitigation of sex differences for the "common profit" of both Church and state. By acting out the negative consequences of sex-role reification, the stock knight and the drag queen also are issuing an implicit invitation to their contemporaries: an invitation publicly to experiment in transcending sex differences in Domino—perhaps ultimately, to realize the promise extended by the Apostle in his epistle to the Galatians:

Non est Judaeus, neque Graecus: non est servus, neque Eber: non est masculus, neque feminæ.
Omnes enim vos unum exitis in Christo Iesu.
(Gal. 3:28)12

Wesleyan University

NOTES

2. The same basic theme is most fully discussed by Robert F. Miller, "Chaucer's Pardoner, the Scriptural Eunuch, and the Pardoner's Tale," Speculum, 30 (1955), 180-99.
3. To date, the only substantial discussion of this relationship remains the very good one of Anne Karen, "The Archdeacon and the Eunuch," ELH, 42 (1975), 1-25. Karen, pp. 3-4, notes only that the head coverings of the two pilgrims demonstrate a common device to be fashionable.
6. The complexities of this subject as regard by Jewish and Christian writers go far beyond the scope of this article. Suffice it to point to one important area of discussion, the attempted sexualization of the two creations in Genesis 2:27 (male and female in God's image) and Genesis 2:25 (male in image of male) in favor of the latter. A useful collection of primary texts related to this inquiry, whether directly or implicitly, is Not in God's Image: Women in History from the Greeks to the Victorians, ed. Julia O'Shaughnessy and Laura Martines (New York: Harper and Row, 1978).
8. "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ: and the head of the woman is the man: and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying with his head covered, dishonors his head. But every woman praying or prophesying with her head uncovered dishonors her head, for it is all one as if she were shaven. . . . [The man] ought not to cover his head, because he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. . . ." However, the woman to have a power over her head, because of the angels. This and all subsequent translations are cited from The Holy Bible, Translated from the Latin Vulgate: The Old Testament (Douay) and The New Testament (Rheims) (Rockford, Ill.: Tan Books and Publishers, 1971, p. 689 ed.).
9. The Latin expression is a literal translation of the Greek kathmos ap, whose exact force in the present passage has been the subject of much discussion among modern scholars. For a good summary of opinion, see Joseph A. Ferder, "A Feature of Quaranian Anthropology and the Angels of I Cor. 11:10," New Testament Singer, 2 (1955), 31-50. The Gk Orthodoxia does not comment on verse 8, but its interpretation is predictable from the comment on verse 5: "... et per hoc est vir caput materinae, et est, materiam unius, quae requievit spiritus sanctus in eum." (Patrologia Latina, 111, col. 537).
10. It is important to recognize that the representation is carefully presented as a perception of Chaucer the Pilgrim (cf. esp. the simile in 1.470). It is therefore as much a reaction to the Wife's challenge as it is a depiction of it.
11. "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that a man indeed, if he nourish his hair, it is a shame unto him?"
12. The word "condit" is used advisedly; the statement does not ignore the fact that male coiffure throughout the medieval period was subject to many other influences than the Scriptural one. Thus, the "ladies' coiffe" of the Square (GP 84), were acceptable as a fashionable reminiscence of barbarian tradition—although the early books of Abbot, which "descended to a fane" (3167-3168), were laughable in presenting courtier tradition into a parody of the Old Testament canon.
13. "But yet neither is the man without the woman, nor the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, so is the man by the woman: but all things of God."
14. Chaucer makes it difficult, however, to be perfectly certain that the punishment—the Pilgrim's impotence—actually has occurred. For recent questioning of the assumption, see Donald R. Howard, The Idea of the Counterfactual Tale (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), pp. 145-46, on the Wife's, and Mary Carpenter's, "The Wife of Bath and the Painting of Lions," PMLA, 90 (1975), p. 221, n. 31.
15. "There is neither Jew nor Greek: there is neither bond nor free: there is neither male nor female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus." This idea which have been adumbrated in this short essay will be more fully explored in my book Counterfactual Women, now in preparation.
Although Chaucer's dependence on earlier writers has been thoroughly studied by such leading medievalists as Charles Muscattine, D. W. Roberson, Jr., and Paul G. Ruggiers, his influence on writers other than those of the thirteenth century has been neglected. Likewise, scholars interested in works of later periods have often neglected to investigate the possibility that the Canterbury Tales influenced those works. Critics of Moll Flanders, for example, usually find its antecedents in eighteenth-century novels about rogues and criminals. Although I would not deny that such narratives influenced Defoe, I should like to suggest that another source for his heroine is to be found in one of the most famous of Chaucer's women, Alisoun, the Wife of Bath. Although Defoe never mentions Alisoun in Moll Flanders, in other works he does refer to the General Prologue of the Canterbury Tales and must, therefore, have known her portrait. Both characters were created by male authors, but both female protagonists recount their own life-stories, and they are remarkably similar.

Chaucer's famous description of Alisoun's many marriages and love affairs could apply equally well to those of Moll:

Housebondes at chirche dore she hadde fyve;  
Without oother compassaige in youthe. ... 2  
(GP 460-461)

Moll also has five husbands and "oother compassaige" in both youth and old age. In addition, there are reasons to doubt the validity of some of the marriages which both women contract. Because medieval theologians speculated that only one marriage could be valid, Alisoun is concerned that her later marriages are not canonical:

Housebondes at chirche dore I have had fyve,—  
If I so ofte myghte have ywedded bee. ...  
(WBP 96-97)

Moll also has two bad husbands and there who are good because their incomes are "sufficient to a plentiful way of living" (p. 57). Nevertheless, each woman prefers one of her bad husbands to any of her good ones; Alisoun marries Jankyn "for love, and no riches" (WBP 56) and loves him even though he beats her "on every ben" (WBP 51). Likewise, Moll loves Jerry "entirely" (p. 204), although he is a poverty-stricken highwayman.

Both women know exactly what they want from marriage, and, when they obtain it, they become models of widely virtue. Alisoun values "maistrie" (WBP 298), and after she obtains it over Jankyn, she is "to hym as kynde / As any wyf from Denemare unto Ynde, / And also stowed" (WBP 823-825). Moll's ideal marriage provides "a settled state of living" (p. 112), and she reflects, "had I happened to meet with a sober good husband, I should have been as true a wife to him as virtue it self could have form'd" (p. 112). Despite their many love affairs, both women describe the ideal wife as "true" to her husband.

The two women are similar in many other ways as well. Both are clever and use their wits to reach their goals in life. Moll never divulges the true story of her life or the state of her finances to anyone, and she recommends the
use of "tricks" and "sham" (p. 64) to her readers; Alisoun also uses trickery to obtain money and fool her husbands, and recommends similar behavior to others:

Now herketh how I hear me presently,
Ye wise wives, that can understande.
This shulde ye speke and here hem wrong on hondre . . . .

(WBP 214-225)

Moll has "beauty . . . and good humor" (p. 39), and she loves "the company . . . of men of mirth and wit" (p. 53). Even after the age of forty, Alisoun is attractive in an earthy way, for "boold was her face, and fair" (GP 458), and "in felaweschipe wel koude she laughte and erpe" (GP 474). Moll likes "Nothing in the world better than fine cloaths" (p. 98), and Alisoun's attire is famous:

Hir covercheifs ful fyne were of ground;
I dorete swete they were ten pound
That on a Sondry werden upon her heed,
Hir hosen were of syn scarlet reed,
Ful strete yteyd, and shoes ful moyste and newe.

(GP 453-457)

Both are expert needlewomen, capable of supporting themselves by their handiwork in ages when few women could do so. Furthermore, both travel extensively, Moll journeying around England and voyaging twice to Virginia, and Alisoun traveling widely:

She hadde passed many a straunge strewn;
At Rome she hadde been, and at Bologne,
In Galice at Saint-Jame, and at Cologne.
She koude machel of wammerynge by the weye.

(GP 464-467)

Both have close women friends, so unusual an occurrence in literary works that Virginia Woolf comments that she cannot remember any work in which "two women are represented as friends . . . . [because] almost without exception they are shown in their relation to men." Although Alisoun is very concerned with her sexual partners, she forms closer relationships with her women friends than with men, especially with one "goode" (WBP 529), who, she says, "knew myn beste, and eek my privete, / Bet thanoure purreibe preeet" (WBP 532-533). Likewise, Moll's closest relationship is with another woman, her "governess," who is in turn Moll's midwife, fence, tutor in the arts of thievery, and confidante; as Moll says, she "is no relation to me, but she is a dear friend, and all the friends I have in the world" (p. 270).

Both women are famous for their discussions of theology, and many critics consider their knowledge of and interest in the subject incomprehensible. I should like to suggest that both Chaucer and Defoe deliberately present complex women who are concerned with subjects other than money and sex and who are aware of the moral standards which their own behavior violates. Just as Alisoun can interpret her description of the pleasure of sex as a lament, "Alas! alas! that ever we lust were" (WBP 614), so Moll Flanders also thinks about the virtue which she has rejected, and as an old woman, the repent and becomes devout. Both characters are considerably more complex and three-dimensional than they would be if they had no interest in spiritual matters.

The portrayals of Moll Flanders and of the Wife of Bath are so similar that they suggest that the former is an eighteenth-century analogue of the latter. Arlyn Diamond has pointed out that Chaucer's depiction of Alisoun suggests that "his great psychological perception and concern for all facets of human life . . . are strained by the bounds imposed by his culture." In a similar way, Woolf comments that Defoe's "chief virtue . . . is that he deals with the important and lasting side of things and not with the passing and trivial." In their efforts to depict "all form of human life" and the "lasting side of things," both novelists depict women faced with the business of survival in a hostile world, and by speaking through the mouths of female персонажи, they make their readers see inside human beings and thereby help them understand the human condition.

University of Colorado

NOTES

1. In Five Hundred Years of Chaucer Criticism and Alisoun: 1350-1950 (Cambridge: The University Press, 1953: 96), New York: Rout and Russell, 1950). Caroline E. Spurgeon lists these quotations from a reference to The Canterbury Tales: a general reference in Ruskin (vol. 4, p. 568), a reference to the "Miller of Husbandman" in a letter to The Whole Island of Great Britain (vol. 1, p. 568), and a quotation of the lines, "Physician know what is digesible / But their study is but little in the Bible," in a letter in The Little Review (vol. 3, p. 42). These references demonstrate Defoe's familiarity with The Canterbury Tales.


3. As Robinson says, "The term 'clerk' was applied to any clerical student as well as to a man in holy orders," Works, p. 458.


"WYNNE THY COST": COMMERCIAL AND FEUDAL IMAGERY IN THE FRIAR'S TALE

Z. Dolly Hassan-Yussuff

The use of imagery is one of the greatest tools of poetic expression. Caroline F. C. Spurgeon, in her monumental book, Shakespeare's Imagery and What it Tells Us, defines an image as the little word picture used by the poet or prose writer to illustrate, illuminate and embellish his thought. It is a description or idea, which by comparison or analogy, stated or understood, with something else, transmits to us through the emotions and associations it assures, something of a "wholeness," the depth and richness of the way the writer views, conceives or has felt what he is telling us.¹

Spurgeon's scientific enquiries into Shakespeare's use of thematic imagery, along with the trend set by such eminent scholars as Rosemond Tuve, Northrop Frye, and I. A. Richards to emphasize close readings, paved the way for a new awareness of the importance of verbal texture in poetry.² Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, critics began to recognize, reveals the remarkable conscious artistry of a poet who knows well how to handle a "little word picture." In no other tale is this art more striking than in the deftly and economically handled Friar's Tale. While commentators never fail to mention its thematic hunting imagery, they often overlook that in this work, an exemplum about two gamemen, Chaucer uses commercial and feudal imagery, which magnifies the summoner's moral degeneration and suggests competition with the devil incarnate.

The narrator of the Friar's Tale directly squares the summoner with a servant serving a suzerain in a feudal system. The tale opens with a description of the surreptitious dealings and with the expediency of the archdeacon, a disciplinary officer of the ecclesiastical court, who exacts payments from the poor under the pretense of expiating their sins. The archdeacon is assisted in this profit-making task by a

---


---

...someour redy to his hond—
A slyre boye nas soon in Engeland,
For scussilly he hadde his esquire
That toughse hym whan that hym myghte
availle.  

(PrT 1321-33)³

The principal aim in this management is for the spies to direct the summoner to profits. If the suggestion of the parallelism between the feudal hierarchy and the ecclesiastical order—of servants collecting profits for their masters—is not yet evident, then a further elaboration on the modus operandi of the summoner casts no doubt:

[He] hadde alwaye basdres redy to his hond,
As any hawk to lure in Engeland,
That tolde hym all the secree that they knewe,
For hire acqueyeance was nat come of newe.
They weren his approouewes privinely.
He toke hymself a greet profit therby;
His minester knew nat alwaye what he wan.

(PrT 1339-45)⁴

Chaucer undoubtedly has in mind the popular medieval concept of subinfeudation. In feudal economy, a lord may grant lands to his vassals who, in turn, may become lords themselves by parceling out lands to their men. The archdeacon is a superior lord to the summoner, an agent, who in turn oversees and governs his own men. From the narrator's description so far, the summoner functions as a type of feudal build, an officer or agent representing a manorial lord (in the collection of dues, revenues and rents) and keeping the manor's financial account;⁵ at the same time (by subinfeudation) the summoner has "approoouer," his own vassals. Interestingly enough, the Oxford English Dictionary defines an "approoower" as "one who looks after the profit or interest of an employer;
or who manages land for the owner; a steward or bailiff; an agent in any business." Throughout Chaucer's tale, the overall emphasis in the function of this lineage with its implication of subserviency is "profit" and winnings. The covetous archdeacon is ironically cheated by his more than equal match, the sly summoner, who ensures that his master does not know what he "win." In his long and bitter characterization of the summoner, the narrator stresses the former's dishonesty to his master in his function as chief collector (bailiff). In the diction of feudal economics, we are told that the summoner

... was a thief, right swich a thief he was;  
His maister hadde but half his due.  
He was, if I shal yeve hym his laude,  
A thief and eek a sumoner and a bailiff.  
He hadde eek wenches at his retense . . . .  
(FrT 1352-55)

And for that was the fruyte of al his rente,  
Therefore on it he sette al his entente . . . .  
(FrT 1373-74)

Words such as "due" (payment or amount due), "retense" (train of attendants kept by feudal lord), and "rente" (the sum paid by a tenant to a landlord) are all common feudal terminologies.

The summoner's aim, of course, is to win in his clandestine dealings. But while "win" literally means "to gain as profit," the word also means "to overcome one's adversary or competitor," The Prologue does explicitly state twice that this tale is about a "game" of a summoner (FrP 1275; 1279). The competitor with whom the summoner must play the game is no other than the devil himself.

The summoner, on one of his routine missions to exact money from the innocent, encounters a yeoman (who later turns out to be the devil) in a forest grove. This plain may very well represent the territory of shareholders in a manorial system, since each tenant, as Wallbank states, "was really a shareholder in the village community not only in the open fields but also in the meadow, pasture, wood and waste lands." The summoner—on the land of shareholders, so to speak—characterizes himself as one serving a feudal lord. He directly implies that his purpose is to collect feudal rent, and he deliberately allows the devil to draw the inference that he is a feudal bailiff on a voyage to obtain payment due:

"Heere faste by," quod he, "is myn entente  
To ryden fro to ryden up a rente  
That longeth to my lorde due."  
"Arowe thanne a bailiff?" "Ye," quod he.  
(FrT 1385-92)

Thus, in this tale the narrator characterizes the summoner as a feudal bailiff; moreover, the summoner himself grants that he is.

The devil identifies with the summoner's profession and likewise uses feudal and commercial imagery to describe himself and his occupation. To the summoner he states, "Thou art a bailiff, and I am another" (FrT 1396). While the devil grumbles about his wages and about the treatment meted out to him by his lord, he concedes that he "wynne[s]" all his "dispence":

My wages been ful streite and ful smale.  
My lord is hard to me and dangerous,  
And myn office is ful laborious,  
And therothe by extorsions I lyve.  
For sothe, I take al that men wol me yeve.  
Algate, by slyghte or by violence  
Fro yeve to yeve I wynne al my dispence.  
(FrT 1426-32)

The devil wins his "dispence" (expenses or charges) by taking his work seriously.

He now reveals his true identity to the summoner and repeatedly stresses his mission, not forgetting to remind his professional companion that their goals are identical—"to win:

I am a feond; my dwelllyng is in helle  
And here I ryle about my purchysyn  
To wynne where men wolde me yeve anynyng.  
My purchys is th' effect of al my rente.  
Looke how thou rydest for the same entente—  
To wynne good, thou rekkest neuer bow.  
(FrT 1448-53)

This passage, more than any other in this tale, demonstrates Chaucer's artistry in using image clusters to illuminate his theme. The poet not only draws attention again to the commercial imagery suggested by the duty to collect "rente" and by the aim to "wynne good," but he skillfully manages to blend feudal and hunting imagery which works gracefully in this tale. "Purchasing" and "purchas" may suggest (as the Oxford English Dictionary defines the word) "the action of hunting; the chase; the catching or seizing of prey." At the same time, however, Chaucer consistently retains the feudal connotation of the word, meaning collecting "the annual return or rent from land; in the phrase at so many years' purchase, used in stating the price of the land."

The summoner, not too shaken—if at all—by the devil's revelation of his identity, shows his degeneration by eagerly wanting to be schooled by the expert feudal bailiff himself, the devil. Prior to the summoner's knowledge of this
"brother's" identity, he had insisted that he be taught, not sparing his conscience, the tricks of the trade:

Tecche me whil that we ryden by the wyue—
Syn that ye been a bailiff as am I—
Sorn subsistee, and tell me feithfully
In myn office how that I may moost wyne... 

(FrT 1418-21)

Knowing exactly who the yeoman really is stimulates the curiosity of this man who is "ful of jangles" (FrT 1477). He questions the devil closely about his physical appearance in his "estat" (FrT 1490), or domain. Slightly impatient at not gaining anything yet and irritable at the summoner's annoying questions, the devil reveals his expertise in his trade by refusing to indulge in "jangles" and by expressing concern that he "wan" nothing so far but does "enteende to wynne":

... alle thing hath tyme.
The day is shrowd and is passed pryne,
And yet we wan I nothing in this day.
I wol entende to wynne, if it may,
And nat entende sore wittyn to declare.

(FrT 1475-79)

The devil does, however, manage to satisfy the curious summoner by ironically telling him that he will learn everything he yearns to know about that habitat through his own experience.

The summoner should have been warned by this shuddering remark and by the devil's expression of concern that their brotherhood might now be dissolved and their mutual agreement denounced. The blind ecclesiastical member, however, confirms his oath of brotherhood with his companion and even echoes the devil's words that they are both seeking "purchas":

I am a yeoman knownen is ful wyde;
My trouthe wol I holde, as in this cas.
For though thou were the deel Sathanas,
My trouthe wol I holde to thee my brother,
As I am sworn—and ech of us til oother—
For to be trewe brother in this cas.
And bothe we gowen abouen oure purcas.

(FrT 1524-30)

This strong binding oath of partnership is strikingly similar to the feudal oath of fealty. The summoner's pledge parallels the feudal contract between the lord and vassal, which, we are told, "was considered sacred and binding upon both parties. Breaking this tie of mutual obligation was considered a felony, because it was the basic agreement of feudalism..." The summoner insists on observing the oath even though he now discovers that he is dealing with Satan himself.

The bond between the two "bailiffs" invites a clear contrast of the ways of these characters, and the narrator adeptly directs attention to the growing unscrupulous principles of the summoner. On his way to extort money from a humble woman, Mabel, the summoner (in the company of the devil) notices a carter who, stuck in the mud, consigns his cart, horses, and hay to the devil. This struggling carter obviously represents an ordinary, toiling peasant in the manorial system. (The cart was one of the most important machines on the land in feudal times.) The summoner/bailiff is eager to collect dues from the peasant and in idleness wants to "have a play" or game. Assuming the role of Satan himself (analogous to the "serpent" whispering in the ear), he makes a fiendish suggestion:

.... "Heere, shall we have a play."
And neer the feend be drough, as nought ne were.
Ful prively, and rowned in his ere.
"Herkne, my brother, herkne by thy feith!
Heretow nat how that the carteere scith?
Hent it anon, for he hath yeve it thee,
Bothe hey and caste, and eek his caples thee."

(FrT 1548-54)

The devil, however, knows that the carter's words were not spoken in "erest" and proves his point after the carter—now out of the mud—withdraws his curse:

"Lo, brother," quod the feend, "what tolde I thee? Heere may ye se, myn owne decee brother,
The cart spak oon, but he thoghte another.
Let us go forth abouen oure viage;
Heere wyne I nothing upon cartage."

(FrT 1566-70)

With still the emphasis on the commercial word "wyne," the devil carefully retains the dictum of feudal economics by stating that he cannot claim anything upon "cartage."

"Cartage," according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, means—in feudal times—the "service of carrying, or payment in lieu of the same, due by a tenant to his landlord or feudal superior, or imposed by authority." The devil, therefore, as a feudal lord knows that he has no claim on his tenant's horses or cart.

The avaricious summoner, however, is dissatisfied at the loss, and—still in a reversal role—boldly offers to teach the devil how to "wyne" his "cost":

"Brother," quod he, "here woseth an old rebekke
That hadde almoost as lief to lese hire melke
As for to yeve a peny of hit good.
I wolde han twelf pente, though that she be wood,
Or I wol some hire unto oure office; 
And yet, God woot, of hire knowe I no vice.
But for thoos kanst nat, as in this case,
Wynne thy cost, takke heed ensamle of me.”

(FrT 1373-80)

When the zealous student of the most “practised bailiff” dangerously undertakes to act the role of teacher himself, the reader immediately becomes acutely aware of the turpitude of this summoner who is convinced he can surpass the devil’s art.

The final scenario shows the summoner—now a worse extortioner than the devil—ironically becoming the devil’s vassal and property. In his usual cunning and calculating manner, he slyly pretends to compute mathematically a cost, arriving at twelve pence, the figure upon which he had previously decided:

... “pay anone—

Twelf pen to me, and I wol thee acquyte.
I shal no proff ha therby but lote;
My maister hath the profit and nat I.
Com of, and let me ryden hastily
Yl me twelf pen; I may no longer tary.”

(FrT 1599-1603)

His callousness in his economic dealings with his insistence for payment of “dette” owed him (FrT 1615) and his unjustified treatment of an innocent woman, whom he derogatorily refers to as an “old virrytrice” (FrT 1582) and an “old soe” (FrT 1639), serve as a sharp foil against the devil who gently addresses the widow as “Mabel, my owene moder decre.” (FrT 1625). As an administrator of ecclesiastical justice, the summoner is vile; on the contrary, as a dispenser of doomsday sentencing, the devil is less exacting. This foil throughout the tale, which serves to portray even the devil as more humane than the summoner, shows that the former, as one Chaucer critic writes, “has no sense of true justice, thinks of exploiting the letter of the law, and he is perfectly odious in his sly, exultant and officious advice to the flock to look sharp.”

The summoner naturally fails to “win” money or the new pun from Mabel’s “hoold” or possession, but the devil—a quiet onlooker and silent gamesman—in all fairness ironically does “ wynne” as his “cost” not the monetary gain promised by the summoner but the body and soul of the summoner himself. The lesson in a sense is successful, but the outcome is contrary to the bailiff-teacher’s expectation. For Mabel, unlike the elder, is “errest” when she expresses the wish that the devil can have the pan and the vicious summoner fails to see that he is consigning himself to hell, forgetting that he had pressed the devil to take whatever is offered him. Satan, therefore, wins the round as he explains to his “brother”:

“Thou body and this cause been myne by right. 
Thou shalt with me to helpe yet to day,
Where thou shalt knowen of our privette
More than a master of dyvyndace.”

(FrT 1635-38)

The summoner has, in the vocabulary of feudalism, become “the man of another man.” He will at last satisfy his insatiable curiosity about the devil’s estate, hell, since he is now a loyal follower, a vassal (not an equal), of a strong lord, Satan. As in all of Chaucer’s tales, poetic justice is fully wrought.

By using the language of feudal economics, therefore, Chaucer equates the summoner (supposedly a servant of God) with the devil, both being competitive agents of one feudal lord—Evil. The corrupt summoner of this tale, clearly an alter ego of the one in the General Prologue, is meant to be representative of the typical summoner in Chaucer’s day. On a larger scale, the ecclesiastical order and feudal order—two important institutions of medieval society—are clearly analogous since in both systems the summoners and bailiffs were notorious for defrauding their superiors and the poor. The Friar’s Tale is one of the richest narratives, partly because of the precision with which the metaphoric parallelism of the two hierarchies is worked out to enrich and illuminate the central theme.

Silver Spring, Maryland

NOTES


5. The word “win”—or at least the base of the word—appears eight times in this relatively short narrative.

6. Wallbank et al., p. 335.

7. As many commentators have demonstrated, this tale is hardly charged with different levels of dramatic irony; see, for example, Germaine Dumonst, Dramatic Irony in Chaucer (Cambridge: The Humanities Press, 1934), pp. 186-89.

8. Wallbank et al., p. 335.


THE CHAUCER LIBRARY: A PROGRESS REPORT

Robert E. Lewis

The Chaucer Library began in 1945 as a project sponsored by the Chaucer Group of the Modern Language Association of America under the direction of an editorial committee whose first chairman was J. Burke Severs. The aims and principles of the project are essentially the same now as they were then. Chaucer, like most medieval writers, often made use of the works of classical and earlier medieval authors, but there are no editions of these works in versions that would have been available to Chaucer and his contemporaries in the late Middle Ages. Present editions, unless they are facsimiles, attempt to reconstruct an author’s original or the closest thing to that original, but before the invention of printing, when texts were reproduced by hand, a classical or medieval work could have been altered, often greatly, by each successive copying. The purpose of the Chaucer Library, therefore, is to present the works that Chaucer knew, translated, or made use of in his writings in versions that are as close as possible to those in existence, circulating, and being read by him and his contemporaries. These versions were, of course, not critical editions—they were filled with readings that the original authors did not write, with additions and omissions, and sometimes with glosses and commentaries—and it is necessary to reproduce such non-original material in order to have a true understanding of the ways in which classical and medieval texts were read and understood by medieval readers.

Very little observable activity took place during the first twenty-five years of the Chaucer Library. Volumes were assigned and contributors began their work, but only one volume was actually completed—Paul M. Clogan’s edition of Statius’ Achilleid, which he personally arranged to have published by E. J. Brill in 1968. Activity began to pick up, however, when Robert A. Pratt became chairman of the editorial committee in 1969. Steps were taken during that year and the next to find an official publisher, and in December of 1970 a formal agreement was signed with the University of Georgia Press for the publication of the whole series, without subscription, with the Modern Language Association and the Medieval Academy of America as sponsors. In 1973 the Press published a Handbook for Contributors to the Chaucer Library prepared by the general editor for the series, and, after some unforeseen delays, the first volume of the Chaucer Library to be published by the Press appeared in December of 1978, the treatise De Misericordia Condicionis Humane, by Letario dei Segni (afterwards Pope Innocent III), edited by Robert E. Lewis.

The next volume will be Nicholas of Lynn’s Kalendarium, edited by Sigmund Eisner, and it will be published late this year. In response to the special nature of this text (and a few others like it now in the process of being edited), the editorial committee has expanded its original editorial principles to include a second category, critical editions, to be reserved for Chaucerian sources for which it is impossible to determine the exact Chaucerian text (or for which the evidence is too limited to do so, as with the Kalendarium), which have not been printed before, and which will in all probability never be printed again. Three other volumes are now nearing completion: Edgar H. Duncan’s edition of sixteen medieval alchemical texts, Sigmund Wentzel’s edition of the Salmo de Virtutibus Abbessarum, and William and Edgve Coleman’s edition of the Chaucerian text of Boccaccio’s Tesida. In progress are editions of the so-called Liber Catoniense, Tresvèt’s Chronicles, poems of Machaut, sources and analogues of the Nuna’s Priest’s Tale and the Squire’s Tale, the Latin and French texts of Boethius, the Italian and French texts of Boccaccio’s Filostrato, St. Jerome’s Epistula Adversus Juovinam, Metastat’s De Compositione et Unitate Astrolabii, and others.

The editorial committee is encouraged by the progress of the Chaucer Library, especially during the past decade, and looks forward to the continued progress of a series that will benefit both Chaucerians and medievalists in general.

Robert E. Lewis
General Editor and Chairman for the Chaucer Library Committee:
Albert C. Baugh
Albert C. Friend
John H. Fisher
Robert A. Pratt
Merton W. Bloomfield
Siegfried Wentzel
Martin M. Crow
Ruth J. Dean

A REPORT ON THE MIDDLE ENGLISH DICTIONARY

Sherman M. Kuhn

The following is a true and faithful account (without glossing and with no faking of oare m Christie) of the present condition of the Middle English Dictionary, still in
prospects at the University of Michigan, 555 South Forest, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104. 

Publication goes on slowly but relentlessly. Since the first fascicle hit your desks in December, 1952, we have completed the letters A through N and an introductory fascicle. Total publication to date has been 55 fascicles, 7200 pages (with two columns to the page and 72 lines to the column). As you can see, our rate of production is faster than Chaucer's, but not so fast as Lydgate's.

Editing proceeds more rapidly now that the enlarged staff, made possible by the Mellon Foundation, has had time to master the principles and procedures of the MED. They have edited nearly all of the letters O and P, and have entered into Q and R. We have on hand enough edited copy to fill eight or nine fascicles, somewhere about 1000 to 1100 pages. But, of course, there is much further work to be done before the copy is ready for publication: all of it must be reviewed, checked and proofread, composed on the IBM machines, proofread again, and then set in page make-up for production by photo-offset.

Reading for the Dictionary continues. In the 1940's, we supposed that the corpus of Middle English available for use in the MED was virtually fixed and that its growth, through the discovery of forgotten manuscripts and improved editions of already-known texts, would be very slow. Then came the postwar explosion of medieval scholarship, which so far from subsiding, seems to be increasing with every year that passes over us. Since 1952, we have read 45 long Middle English texts which were previously unavailable except in the manuscripts, and have added hundreds of thousands of new quotations to our files. In addition to these, we have examined 33 new editions of already published texts, in order to correct and amplify our materials. These statistics do not include numerous minor newly discovered texts, consisting of but a few pages or a few lines, which have also been read and excerpted. Nor do they include a number of important word collections, chiefly of names and occupational terms, which have appeared since 1952, nor the many volumes of the English Place Name Society, which are so useful as suppliers of subsidiary evidence.

Naturally, much of the data in these new texts and new editions has arrived too late to be used in the earlier letters of the MED. Unused new words and new quotations will be included in a supplementary volume, after we have published the letter Z.

The Staff of the MED now includes (not counting the Editor-in-Chief) fifteen scholars, drawn from ten different universities: Prof. Sherman M. Kuhn (Editor), Ph.D., University of Chicago, 1935; Dr. Roy R. Barkley (Associate Research Editor), Ph.D., University of Texas, 1944; Dr. Karis Crawford (Assistant Research Editor), Ph.D., University of Toronto, 1977; Mrs. Lidie M. Howes (Research Associate), M.A., University of Michigan, 1955; Dr. David A. Jost (Associate Research Editor), Ph.D., Harvard University, 1955; Mrs. Helga W. Kao (Associate Research Editor), M.A., University of Michigan, 1955; Dr. Martha F. Krieg (Research Assistant), Ph.D., University of Michigan, 1956; Dr. Stephen F. Lappert (Associate Research Editor), Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania, 1955; Dr. Lester M. Matheson (Associate Research Editor), Ph.D., University of Glasgow, 1958; Mr. Richard L. McKelvey (Research Associate), M.A., University of Michigan, 1958; Dr. Robert C. Rice (Associate Research Editor), Ph.D., University of Oregon, 1955; Prof. J–L. Robinson (Executive Director), Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley, 1960; Dr. Ann Shannon (Associate Research Editor), Ph.D., University of Michigan, 1960; Mrs. Betty K. Sneadline (Administrative Assistant), M.A., University of Michigan, 1955; Prof. Bernard Van Hulst (Associate Research Editor), Ph.D., Northwestern University, 1956; Dr. Mary Jane Williams (Associate Research Editor), Ph.D., University of Michigan, 1954. Of these fifteen, ten are engaged in editing the raw materials from the MED files, turning them into finished (or almost finished) dictionary entries, with definitions and sub-definitions, illustrative quotations, form sections, and etymologies. The Editor-in-Chief now does all of the reviewing, assisted by the associate and assistant editors. Four of the fifteen, two of whom work part time, prepare the reviewed copy for photo-offset. Two members of the staff, both part time, look after the business affairs of the MED—least except subscriptions and distribution, which are handled by the University of Michigan Press, 839 Green Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104.

Financial support of the project is provided by the generosity of the University of Michigan, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and the Horace H. Rackham Foundation.

There is no more to say but that we are grateful to our subscribers and friends, and to the many scholarly organizations and individual scholars, who have given us aid and support through the years. The chief reward of our labors is your approbation.

---

A REPORT ON A PROPOSED GUIDE TO THE OLD FRENCH FABLIBAUX

Benjamin L. Honeycutt

and

Thomas D. Cooke

Before the appearance of Per Nykrog's seminal study, Les Fabliaux, in 1957, virtually nothing had been pub-
lished in the twentieth century on the Old French fabliaux, and before this century most studies discussed the fabliaux merely as social documents rather than as literature. The year 1937 also witnessed the publication of a collection of fabliaux that have finally achieved a position of substance and study on the influence of the fabliaux and other medieval French literature on Chaucer, and the next year saw the appearance of yet another collection of fabliaux. As a result of the impact of these works, since those two years over 130 books, articles, and dissertations have appeared, and further studies are in progress, including a multi-volume variorum edition by a group of scholars under the direction of N.H.J. van der Boogard of the Institute voor Romanistiek at the University of Amsterdam. Recovering, therefore, from periods of either disdain or neglect, the fabliaux have finally achieved a position of substance and admiration, and scholars now realize that they are tales which deserve to be studied not merely as social documents but as artistic works.

Per Nykrog's book includes, the most complete bibliography of the fabliaux to date. It is basically a list of the most important editions, collections, and studies of these tales, and it generally deals with them as a group rather than individually. What is lacking at the present time is a list of all pertinent information for individual fabliaux, and hence there is no convenient way of studying the merits, influence, and importance of tales. It is this gap that our proposed guide will seek to fill.

For each of the approximately 160 fabliaux (following Nykrog's canon, and with a few more tales which Nykrog excludes but which other scholars feel should be included) the guide will provide the following information: (1) a brief synopsis of the tale; (2) a list of all known manuscripts; (3) a list of all texts in Old French; (4) a list of all adaptations and translations, particularly in the major European languages; (5) a list of all known analogues, particularly medieval, and finally (6) a list of all major critical statements on each tale, arranged chronologically.

Each of these six sections has its own significance. The synopses will be a handy way for scholars to refresh their memories of the plots, and the layman will find them a convenient way of becoming acquainted with the stories. Myth critics could find the synopses a valuable tool for studying significant motifs.

The next two sections, dealing with manuscripts and texts, will be essential for the scholar, but they will also give the beginning student and layman an indication of the popularity of each tale.

The list of adaptations and translations will serve a practical and a theoretical need. Someone whose knowledge of Old French is inadequate or non-existent would no doubt like to know where he could find a version of the story that he could read, and on the other hand someone who was concerned with shifting attitudes or literary styles might be interested in studying the many translations in various languages at different times in history. For example, one fact that these lists of translations and adaptations immediately reveal is that some fabliaux have been frequently translated (the moral ones) while some have never been taken out of their original language (the bawdy ones).

Perhaps the most important section in the guide will be the one on analogues, primarily medieval ones in the major European languages, which are the only ones that we feel we can systematically research, but also included will be ones that we stumble on in other languages and from later times. For example, one forthcoming study discusses two Orak folktales collected in this century which are direct analogues to two Old French fabliaux; these we shall include. This section on analogues will be of importance not only to scholars of Old French, but also to those in folklore, comparative literature, to scholars in the various languages represented, and even to scholars in social and cultural history.

The final section on criticism, arranged chronologically from the beginnings to the present, will give scholars the opportunity to follow all the major critical statements on each tale and thus to trace the development of critical thinking on that tale and to form a broad framework against which to measure their own critical thought.

Thus the bulk of the guide will be a list of all important information for each fabliax. We shall begin the work with an introduction that will briefly state the nature and purpose of the study, as well as our methodology, format, and criteria. This introduction will be followed by a list of abbreviations of all titles used in the body of the study. Then follows the information on each tale, and we shall conclude the work with some general observations on the state of current scholarship on the fabliaux and suggestions for further research. All the necessary bibliographic information will be included in the list of abbreviations, and we see no need for an index.

Work on this guide is still in the early stages. Professor Honeycutt has visited several European libraries in order to do a preliminary investigation of the manuscripts, and he and Professor Cooke have been working steadily on the synopses of the tales; to date they have finished about one-fourth of them. Their efforts have been partially supported by travel and summer research grants from the Research Council of the University of Missouri at Columbia, and pending is a year-long grant for 1979-1980 from the Research Materials Division of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Garland Publishers has offered Professors Honeycutt and Cooke a contract for the guide.
A REPORT ON EARLY DRAMA, ART, AND MUSIC

Clifford Davidson,
Executive Editor

It has long been recognized that because of their necessary incorporation of spectacle, medieval plays as they were originally presented must have stood in some kind of close relationship to the visual arts. Unfortunately, scholars who championed research in this area prior to the 1970's were often, following the banner of Émile Mâle, of the opinion that the medieval artists were the ones indebted to the players, whose theatrical presentations were allegedly the inspiration for new and more realistic designs in miniatures, oil paintings, sculpture, glass painting, etc. This approach, which will crop up from time to time, is often characterized by naiveté concerning the way the visual artists of the time worked, and we may well be reminded at times of the New Yorker cartoon which illustrates the Introduction to E. H. Gombrich's *Art and Illusion*; the scene is an ancient Egyptian drawing school, with eleven young artists seated in contemporary chairs and sketching a nude Egyptian woman model from life. Theater presents us with a very ephemeral art, and though the scenes that the artists represented may well have been embedded in the theatrical scene, we can hardly believe that medieval artists stood poised to catch the right moment when the traditional configuration would present itself to view on stage. Nevertheless, recent study has reinforced the idea that a relationship does exist between drama and the visual arts, though the normal direction of influence is now seen as flowing the other way—i.e., from the permanent and static scene as shown in the visual arts to the fleeting theatrical scene. Additionally, we now know that the artists themselves were the ones who were most likely to have taken part in the design of sets and even costumes; the York dramatic records, for example, tell us that the Doomsday pageant as designed in the early sixteenth century was the work of the shop of Thomas Drowseward, who was an artist famous enough to have been invited to submit a design for the tomb of Henry VII though the contract actually was awarded to an Italian.

The focus of the Early Drama, Art, and Music project is upon tracing in more specific ways than hitherto the connections that exist between the visual arts and plays written and produced prior to 1632 as well as upon establishing other cross-disciplinary relationships, including of course the matter of music and early drama. In order to obtain a more exact view of the art potentially relevant to drama, researchers are attempting to survey more completely than has ever been done previously the evidence of art from regions where dramatic activity has been recorded in England and also on the continent. Careful attention is being given to iconography and its local peculiarities and also to the crucial matter of exact dating. The model for scholarship of this kind has been established in the survey entitled *York Art: A Subject List of Extant and Lost Art Including Items Relevant to Early Drama* by the Executive Editor in collaboration with David E. O'Connor (EDAM Reference Series, 1) recently published by Medieval Institute Publications. Additional description of research techniques is contained in the Executive Editor's *Drama and Art: An Introduction to the Use of Evidence from the Visual Arts for the Study of Early Drama* (EDAM Monograph Series, 1).

Researchers currently at work on surveys of regional art are preparing subject lists for the following areas: Chester and Sussex (Sally-Beth MacLean, Toronto); Cambridge, Cambridgeshire exclusive of Ely, and Rutland (Peter Happé, Rutland Sixth Form College); Norwich (Alan Nelson, University of California, Berkeley); Southwest Suffolk—Bury St. Edmunds area (Gail McMurray Gibson, Princeton University); West Yorkshire and Lancashire (Thomas Niemann, Northern Kentucky University); Lincoln (Cynthia Haldenby Tyson, Queens College, Charlotte, NC); Ely (Marianne Evett, Cleveland Institute of Art); Coventry and Warwickshire (C. Davidson); and the Perugia region in Italy (Kathleen Falvey, University of Hawaii). As work progresses, arrangements are being made to place information from the subject lists on computer tape (see Drama and Art, pp. 71-99) to establish archival resources of photographs, slides, microfilms, and xerox copies at the Medieval Institute.

Easter sepulchres in England are being handled separately (by Pamela Shingiorns), and also currently in progress is an index of English emblem literature relevant to Elizabethan and Jacobean drama (Huston Diehl). Publication of these books as well as of the subject indices...
described above will be in the EDAM Reference Series, which will also include volumes providing similarly careful scholarly review of musical matters. For example, Joanna Durka of Erindale College, University of Toronto, is currently preparing a catalogue of music utilized in the English cycle plays. Her book will also contain the extant music for the musical items noted in her catalogue.

Scholarship which would not be appropriate for the Reference Series will be included in the Monograph Series. Recently published in this series was Patrick J. Collins’ The N-town Plays and Medieval Picture Cycles (EDAM Monograph Series, 3) which traces various motifs present in the visual arts through their appearance in a major English dramatic cycle. Though it is a short book, its methodolgy presents a challenge to scholarship which would take seriously the principle of “reciprocal illumination” (the term is F. P. Pickering’s) as applied to the visual arts and literary texts. Tentatively scheduled for publication next in this series is an edition in preparation of stage directions from continental medieval plays being assembled by several scholars at the University of Leode.

No provision has been made for encouraging similar studies except for notes published in the EDAM Newsletter which is issued twice yearly. However, first-rate studies of medieval drama utilizing interdisciplinary techniques of analysis are always welcomed by Comparative Drama, also published at Western Michigan University.

As in the instance of Records of Early English Drama, the rationale behind the EDAM project is the idea of coordinated research. The individual scholar can no longer handle the masses of information that are often necessary to make possible advances in the field, and surely the day of the critic even country gentleman has passed. We are faced with an array of downright deadly criticism and scholarship of little significance by individual writers who have been piling up publications since World War II. To be sure, not all that has been published during this period is bad, but it would be hard to argue that much is not severely crippled by methodological limitations and by inability to make use of larger sources of material that would provide much-needed perspective for the critical quest. A group of scholars, working on coordinated projects which mesh in ways that will build solid kinds of evidence capable of buttressing future work, simply is capable of doing much more that is likely to be significant than would be the case in the instance of an individual scholar.

Rapid availability of the results of scholarship is, of course, becoming more and more of a necessity at the same time that publishing machinery is grinding more and more slowly. It is always discouraging to think of an important work delayed by an editor or publisher for five or six years or even longer. Fortunately, utilizing offset printing and time-saving devices for preparing camera-ready copy, EDAM seems to be assured of fairly rapid publication under the auspices of Medieval Institute Publications. The project is served by a board of advisory editors, who include J. Leeds Barroll, III (National Endowment for the Humanities), David Bevington (University of Chicago), Audrey Davidson (Western Michigan University), Joanna Durka (University of Toronto), Robert Edwards (SUNY at Buffalo), Russell Fraser (University of Michigan), Alexandra F. Johnston (University of Toronto), Stanley J. Kahl (Ohio State University), Lynette R. Mair (University of Leeds), and Alan H. Nelson (University of California, Berkeley and London). Procedures followed with regard to EDAM publications are those established for scholarly publication by well-known presses. Proposals within the scope of EDAM as well as appropriate completed manuscripts are always welcome, and are submitted to outside readers for evaluation. Publication is recommended by the Executive Editor of EDAM to the governing board of Medieval Institute Publications (Thomas Seiler, Managing Editor). Editorial assistant for the EDAM project and associate editor of the EDAM Newsletter is Elise Jorgensen.

**RECORDS OF EARLY ENGLISH DRAMA AND CHAUCER STUDIES**

A. F. Johnston

One of the ways in which Dame Alison tries to assure her fourth husband to look beyond his own infidelity is to go to “ployes of myracles” (WBP 593) with her bosom Alice and the ubiquitous Jankin. The Miller is characterized as having a “Pilator voy” (MT 323) and he, in his turn, endows Absolon with bistoricke talent and has him play “Herdes upon a scaffold bye” (MT 114). Some scholars see the Miller’s Tale with its direct and indirect references to playmaking and Noah’s Flood as linked to craft guild drama. In this way, they see it providing a bourgeois parallel to the ceremonial, aristocratic tournament of the Knight’s Tale. These references, thrown out so casually by the poet, suggest a long established tradition known to both the poet and his audience—a tradition that by the end of the fourteenth century was an inextricable part of the fabric of English society. Unfortunately, very little documentary evidence survives in England of dramatic evidence from before 1376. Much, however, does survive after about 1450 that has until recently been largely ignored by literary historians.
The aim of Records of Early English Drama is to locate, transcribe and publish systematically all surviving evidence of public performance in Great Britain before 1642. The vast majority of unpublished evidence is from provincial cities and towns and found in documents as diverse as land deeds, guild ordinances, civic or guild accounts, proceedings of ecclesiastical courts, borough council minutes, wills and churchwardens' accounts. Our first set of records, those of the city of York, was published at the end of 1978 in two volumes by the University of Toronto Press. The second, the records of Chester, are in the press now and we expect publication by September, 1979. The typesetting of the third collection, from Coventry, will begin in June of this year. The Norwich records (to appear in two volumes) are well along in the editorial process. Research into the records of the following centers is in varying stages of completion: Newcastle, Beverley, Cumbria, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Hereford and Worcester, Leicester, Devon, Shropshire and the London guild and parish material. Work is beginning in Nottingham, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Bristol, Lancaster, West Yorkshire, Southampton and Cambridge. Other towns and districts are still to be explored.

The project is sponsored by the Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Toronto, and supported by a Major Editorial Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (formerly part of the Canada Council). An application for the support of REED research undertaken by American scholars has been made to the National Endowment for the Humanities. We employ two editorial associates who hold doctoral degrees in medieval literature, a research associate who holds a doctorate in Renaissance drama, a typesetter and a secretary as well as several graduate student research assistants. Although a good knowledge of early drama is an important criterion for us, we also need Latin and vernacular paleographers, Latinists, Anglo-Norman specialists, diplomats, historians, economists, Welsh specialists, computer programmers, and experienced editors. When we cannot supply particular expertise from within the project, we call on the human and scholarly resources of the University of Toronto, particularly the Centre for Medieval Studies.

The interest Chaucerians might have in the REED project, besides helping to elucidate the direct and indirect references to drama, music and other public performance referred to by the poet, is various. First, our editorial policy is conservative. All expansions are indicated by italics, the original capitalization is preserved and the text emended only in footnotes. Such an approach preserves the original scribal peculiarities and may be of interest to editors working with fifteenth-century Chaucer manuscripts. Second, the scribe's language is also preserved by this method and we have the great advantage of working with manuscripts that can be both dated and localized. We also frequently know the name and personal history of the scribe. All these facts will be of use to those studying such problems as dialect variants and scribal intrusion. We are providing select glossaries for each language (Latin, Anglo-Norman and English) and we are already adding new meanings to various technical words. If there is sufficient demand, we will be able to provide computer compiled concordances of all the words used in each text for those interested in the particulars of language. Third, although little of the documentary evidence survives from before Chaucer's death, nevertheless, much can be deduced from the records about late medieval civic, guild and ecclesiastical life. As we worked on our edition of the York records, which are dominated by the records of the city council and the craft and religious guilds, I was constantly reminded of the haberdasher, the carpenter, the weaver, the dyer and the tanner "cloathed alle in a lyvere / Or a solermene and a greet fraun" (GP 361-4) each hoping to be an alderman. And when the Lady Mayoress and the wives of the aldermen of York in an early manifestation of Women's Lib established their own counter feast to the good times enjoyed by their husbands at the Corpus Christi Play, I wondered if she had savored the first time she was called "madame". Just as Chaucer's boisterous characters went to the plays, so the people who produced those plays can give us an insight into the world from which the poet drew some of his most vital characters.

Records volumes in the Records of Early English Drama series are distributed by the University of Toronto Press, Front Campus, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1A1, Canada. REED is also publishing the proceedings of its first Colloquium held in September, 1978. Information about that volume and the Newsletter that is published twice a year may be obtained from Professor JoAnna Dutka, Records of Early English Drama, 85 Charles Street West, Toronto M5S 1K5, Canada.

NOTE

THE VARIORIUM CHAUCER
Paul G. Ruggiers

In 1967, Professor Paul G. Ruggiers of the University of Oklahoma, and Professor Donald Baker of the University of Colorado, having decided that the time was ripe for a large scale summary of the scholarship on the works of
Geoffrey Chaucer, sought the opinion of fifteen leading scholars in the United States as to the feasibility of such a project. With their moral support, an advisory committee was formed under the general editorship of Professor Ruggiers. Those serving with Professor Baker on the Advisory Committee were Professor Emeritus Marie Hamilton, University of Arizona; Professor Robert M. Jordan, University of British Columbia; Professor Robert M. Kaske, Cornell University; Professor Tom Kirby, Louisiana State University; Professor Charles Muscamente, University of California, Berkeley; and Professor Charles A. Owen, Jr., University of Connecticut; and subsequently, Professor John Leyerle, University of Toronto. In 1976, the committee, having fulfilled its purpose, namely to help the Variorum Chaucer through its initial stages of planning and good setting, was dissolved.

The first meeting of the Advisory Committee was convened in May of 1968, at which time many problems of organization were resolved. Preliminary steps were taken to prepare the way for a guidelines brochure and for compiling a list of Chaucer scholars from which the editors for the individual parts of the Chaucer canon were to be selected. Thereafter, following upon the selection of the editors of the various fascicles, five biennial conferences were held at the University of Oklahoma for the editors in which a number of daunting problems were faced and resolved. Among these were those of 1) deciding upon the text, 2) resolving the matter of the base manuscripts for the Canterbury Tales, 3) deciding upon the text for the individual fascicles, and 4) formulating the textual apparatus by which each editor would be responsible for collating the base manuscript along with twenty printed editions. The collateral apparatus would result for the first time in a full-scale survey of the development of the Chaucer text for the Canterbury Tales from its manuscript origins through the various screening processes of the later printed editions subsequent to the age of manuscripts.

The Variorum Chaucer has been supported out of three sources: private donations, grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and grants from the University of Oklahoma. The private donations have been a necessary part of the support for the project inasmuch as money from the National Endowment could not be allocated to defray publication costs. The grants from the National Endowment have, however, provided the equally necessary and essential support for headquarters costs, the salary for a managing editor, and the expenses of the biennial plenary conferences. The University of Oklahoma has been extremely generous in tiding the project over many an emergency.

As with all major projects, there is always a time in which secure financing is wanting and major problems require scrupulous attention. The confidence of the editors in the project, maintained partly by the biennial meetings, was sufficient to see us through the difficult early years to the point at which we began to consolidate our gains and to make measurable progress:

1. We achieved contracts with the University of Oklahoma Press.
2. We produced a set of guidelines.
3. We provided first-draft text and collations for the individual editors for the Canterbury Tales.
4. We secured permission from the National Library of Wales to make a facsimile of the Hengwrt Manuscript of the Canterbury Tales.
5. We secured the services of Dr. A. L. Doyle, Durham University, and Professor Malcolm Parkes, Keble College, Oxford, to write the introduction to the facsimile volume.
6. With the assistance of the National Endowment for the Humanities we were able to hire a full-time managing editor, maintain a repository for manuscripts in microfilm, provide honoraria for vetting committees, and a variety of other functions.

By the meeting of 1976, when the fifth biennial conference was held, with thirty editors attending, we were able to present a model fascicle to the editors, the Maniple’s Tale, edited by Donald Baker) which helped once and for all to resolve many problems of presentation. The fascicle, now in a second draft, has provided a sound format and model for all the fascicles of the Canterbury Tales, several others of which are in the process of being completed. I name only a few of them: the General Prologue, edited by Charles Moser, the Physician’s Tale, edited by Helen Corsa, Sir Thopas, edited by Tom Garbey, and the Miller’s Tale, edited by Tom Ros. As each editor completes his first draft, his work is given careful reading by a committee, and subsequently a mini-conference is held for giving personal advice and guidance to the editor.

A recent decision has been made to give further scholarly support to the Variorum Chaucer by including, as part of the overall plan, the printing of fascimiles of the principal manuscripts which have figured largely in the establishment of the Chaucer text. The appearance of the fascimiles will service the Chaucer community at large as well as provide the resource materials for paleographical study in the United States, since a first-hand look at the manuscripts is not always easily available. In January of 1979 the facsimile of the Hengwrt Manuscript appeared, with full transcription and comparison with the readings of the Ellesmere Manuscript. In press at present is the first of two volumes, The Minor Poems of Geoffrey Chaucer, edited by George B. Pace and Alfred David, a work which...
gives promise of being a definitive edition of Chaucer's shorter poems.


Those interested in further information about the Variorum Chaucer should communicate with the editor,

Paul G. Ruggiers, 360 Van Vleet Oval, The University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma 73019. Tel: (405) 325-6900.

---

**THE INDEX OF MIDDLE ENGLISH PROSE: A REPORT**

Robert E. Lewis

An Index of Middle English Prose has been under development for nearly forty years—at least since the publication of Carleton Brown and R. H. Robbins' *Index of Middle English Verse* in 1943—been one of the main desiderata in Middle English studies (second only to the Middle English Dictionary), but it was not until 1975 that discussions among interested scholars began and not until 1977 that specific plans were made to produce such an Index. Because of the size of the undertaking, which will be much larger than that of the *Index of Middle English Verse*, it was clear from the beginning that more than one or two persons, as with the *Index of Middle English Verse*, would need to be involved. Consequently, the first steps taken were (1) to set up an Advisory Committee to chart the general directions of the project and (2) to appoint an Editorial Committee to administer the project and to oversee the actual preparation of the final Index. The Editorial Committee is made up of four scholars with experience in manuscript work, cataloging, and Middle English: A. S. G. Edwards of the University of Victoria as General Editor, and Norman Blake of the University of Sheffield, Laurel Brawell of McMaster University, and myself as Co-Editors. The Advisory Committee includes in its present membership some of the most knowledgeable Middle English scholars on both sides of the Atlantic: Derek Pearsall (York) as Chairman, R. H. Robbins (SUNY-Albany) as Honorary Advisory Editor, and Norman Blake (Sheffield), Morton Bloomfield (Harvard), Derek Brewer (Emmanuel College, Cambridge), E. Talbot Donaldson (Indiana), A. I. Doyle (Durham), Anne Hudson (Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford), Alexandra Johnston (Toronto), Valerie Lagorio (Iowa), Robert M. Lumiansky (ACLs), Malcolm Parkes (Keble College, Oxford), Elizabeth Salter (York), Ronald Waldron (London), and Siegfried Wenzel (Pennsylvania). The membership of both committees reflects the belief of those involved that the project is, and should be, international in scope.

Though there have been informal meetings of members of the Editorial Committee in 1977 and 1978 and two formal meetings of the British members of the Advisory Committee in 1977, a two-day Conference on Problems
in Middle English Prose held last July at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, was the first opportunity for all those involved in the project to discuss the scope and editorial methods of the various stages of the Index and the difficulties of indexing certain collections and kinds of material, to hear papers, primarily from those of us involved in the planning and administration of the Index, on these and other matters of interest, and to meet and exchange ideas with the other scholars working on the project. As a result of the Conference, we now have a clear sense of the general direction and emphasis of the project.

The Index will be organized in three stages, and work will proceed slowly and systematically. Stage 1 is the preparation of an Index of Middle English Prose in Print 1476-1976 by three members of the Editorial Committee (Norman Blake, Anthony Edwards, and myself), to be completed in 1980 and published by Garland Publishing, Inc. This Index will include every piece of Middle English prose published between the introduction of printing into Britain in 1476 and the present, with 1976 a convenient cut-off date. It will be organized by first lines arranged alphabetically, with each line followed by the relevant descriptive information (author if known, title, brief description of genre or contents, date) and a list of editions arranged chronologically; it will conclude with indices of the various items of descriptive information and a list of manuscripts. This Index will be a valuable bibliographical tool in its own right, since nothing like it exists in print, but, more important, it will provide the necessary bibliographical underpinning to the whole project, will give the Contributing Editors at Stage 2 invaluable guidance in identifying texts, and will be the model for Stage 3.

Stage 2, on which work is proceeding simultaneously, is the preparation of a series of full descriptive indexes of the Middle English prose in the major collections of large libraries in Britain and the United States (for example, the British Library, the Bodleian Library in Oxford, the Cambridge University Library, the Hunterian Museum in Glasgow, the Huntington Library in San Marino, California, the Morgan Library in New York) or in groups of smaller collections (for example, the Cambridge college libraries, the Oxford college libraries, the various libraries in Edinburgh, the Rylands and Chetham libraries in Manchester, the Newberry and University Libraries in Chicago, the libraries of Australia). Work on Stage 2 will be carried out by a number of Contributing Editors (at the moment approximately forty-five are involved), and their indexes will be published as they are completed (and approved by the Editorial Committee) by Derek Brewer Ltd.

Stage 3 will be the preparation by the Editorial Committee of the final definitive Index of Middle English Prose, which will be compiled from the individual indexes from Stage 2 but supplemented by materials from all other known collections (private collections, record repositories, smaller public collections not indexed at Stage 2, etc.) and put together generally on the model of the Index of Middle English Verse, though with a number of modifications that were suggested by papers at the Cambridge Conference and with others that will become apparent according to the nature of the problems that arise in the course of Stage 2. The advantage of including a Stage 2 rather than simply proceeding to Stage 3 is two-fold: (1) to make available to scholars as soon as possible the results of our work, without asking them to wait for the nearly twenty years it will take to complete the final Index, and (2) by offering parts of our material to public scrutiny and comment in advance, to reduce the amount of error in the final Index.

What we are undertaking is a bibliographical project unprecedented in scope and complexity in Middle English studies and perhaps in English studies in general. The sheer bulk of Middle English prose is enormous, far surpassing the verse (which itself, just in first lines, bibliography, and indices, fills a volume of 785 pages and a supplement of 351 pages); it was written over a period of more than three hundred years (ca. 1175-ca. 1500) and it is found in manuscripts and manuscripts not just in libraries in its country of origin but also in libraries in the United States, Canada, Western and Eastern Europe, and other less obvious places like the Soviet Union, Australia, and Japan. Because of the bulk, we will necessarily have to limit our scope somewhat, primarily by excluding those items that lend themselves better to calendaring than to indexing: deeds, statutes, wills, annals and close rolls, etc. But much of that material is already known to historians, whereas very little is known about other kinds of Middle English prose, and what is known is known only imperfectly. How much Middle English prose in fact exists? What is its nature? What are its genres? Who wrote it? How widely did it circulate? The Index of Middle English Prose will provide answers to these questions and others like them, and the answers will have important implications not just for the history of literature but for social history and the history of philosophy, religion, and science. Indeed, it is likely that the perceptions we have of many aspects of medieval culture will need to be revised in the light of the data in the final Index.

But such an Index can only be brought to a successful conclusion with a great deal of hard work and a large commitment of time by Middle English specialists and with the cooperation of scholars in other fields. So let me end this report with two requests. First, to the Middle English specialists among you: if you would be interested in working on the project, or if you know of any colleagues who would be interested, please get in touch with me or with
ANNUETVEMNTS FROM THE DIRECTOR:

SOME VIEWS ON THE INAUGURAL CONGRESS IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

You will be interested to read excerpts of letters from scholars who attended the meeting and who wrote to us about its advantages and disadvantages. We need this kind of information, so please feel free to write to us and give us suggestions of ways in which the conference can be made more pleasant and more profitable. Sufficient to say at this point, it was a rich learning experience for me and my staff; we want to share the following comments with you:

"Make the meeting of the New Chaucer Society a triennial affair. To put on every other year the kind of affair which you arranged this time is an impossibility." "Efficient ... vibrant experience ... Harry Bolling would indeed have picked up some pointers." "A very difficult job exceedingly well done ... worthy to be drawn to memory." "Congratulations for a magnificent job ... as our British friends say ... Fan-tastic." "Everyone I spoke to said it was an experience quite unlike any other ... a wonderful conference." "... a splendid occasion. I look forward keenly to the next one." "... the program was unusually rich ... and unlike so many other conferences, the atmosphere despite a very busy schedule was relaxed and

free." "... the Washington meeting of the New Chaucer Society was the most satisfying meeting that I have been to in several years ... the only disappointment is that I did not get to spend enough time with some people ... the social times kept the group from fragmenting." "... by far and away the best professional conference I have ever attended ... who among us will ever forget Derek Brewer's wonderful presentation at Dumbarton Oaks? ... having the opportunity not only to listen to but more importantly to meet and speak with scholars from all over the world whose works I have read and often been profoundly influenced by was a thrilling experience, one I shall long cherish." "... 8:30 meetings are not a particularly good idea ... why not schedule some free time? ... provide a list of conference participants ... how about summer meetings? ... what about meeting in the sun belt in February or March? ... I worry about the distressing tendency in our profession not only to elect but to re-elect the same people to positions of trust." "Everyone said that it was the pleasanter conference they had ever attended. ... It would be good if we could get a larger international gathering, and I hope more people will come from Europe and Japan. ... The only difficulty in the conference was finding time enough to meet all the people." "The meeting in Washington ... provided

RESEARCH IN OLD AND MIDDLE ENGLISH MEDICAL MANUSCRIPTS

Laurel Braswell

An annual bulletin, to be published as an appendix to the Society for Ancient Medicine Newsletter, ed. John Scarborough, will report on publications and research in progress on Old and Middle English medical manuscripts. News, announcements, offprints, etc. should be sent to Dr. Laurel Braswell, Dept. of English, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, L8S 4L8.
an excellent chance to meet a large portion of the Chaucerian scholars now active in the field. I enjoyed the opportunity to talk with many colleagues and friends and also to meet some relatively junior people in the field... the proposal to meet once every three years... strikes me as an admirable one." "... a superb conference—the best single conference I have ever attended. My ten graduate students came away with their first real glimpse of medieval studies as a group of people rather than as books or reputations, and they liked what they saw: I sense from them renewed energies, renewed commitment... the Congress was so good I hope you will not try to do it every year—let us look forward to it every three or four years... let an annual Chaucer Society lecture at the MLA or Mediaeval Academy meeting (along with the Newsletter and the Yearbook) provide the other continuity... an exemplary occasion." "... I was delighted to meet again with former teachers in such pleasant circumstances." ... the best of the papers were very good indeed, and there was something to chew over coming out of all the sessions I got to." "The conference seems to have gotten the New Chaucer Society off to an excellent start; there was a great deal of enthusiasm and of useful exchange of information about the various projects under way."

A CALL FOR PROSPECTUSES

As everyone will have noticed, the Washington meeting was largely invitational. To compensate for that feature of it, we issued a call for voluntary contributions from which we were able to choose ten papers for presentation during the conference. That practice gave us the opportunity to discover the kinds of research being conducted in the world (some of our papers came from Germany, England, Canada, and France) and to make some generalizations about the areas of research that are just now being developed in the graduate schools.

We are asking once again for prospectuses (no papers, please!), not to exceed two pages on either of the following topics:

1. Chaucer and the Question of Genre
2. Social and Historical Perspectives in Chaucer

Prospectuses should be sent to the Program Committee, New Chaucer Society, University of Oklahoma, 760 Van Vleet Oval, Norman, Oklahoma, 73019, to be received not later than 1 October, 1979. Notification will be sent to those whose prospectuses have been accepted for presentation on 1 November, 1979.

Owing to the number of presentations that had to be offered in the Washington meeting, the voluntary contributions were sometimes competing with the heavy artillery of the commissioned papers. The meeting in April of 1980 will avoid this unfortunate scheduling problem by a simpler plan that will allow the conferences to attend all sessions, should they desire to do so.

Paul G. Ruggiers
Executive Director
On May 16, after a long illness, George B. Pace died at Columbia, Missouri. Although he did not live to see its publication, the major work of his distinguished scholarly career—the text of Chaucer's minor poems—was essentially complete.

While the edition is the work by which George Pace will be remembered best, he also published widely on a variety of subjects: dialectology (especially the dialect of Missouri where he had taught since 1951); versification; what medieval physiognomy books tell us about the dark brows of the Summoner, Alisoun, and Morgan le Fay; why Sir Gawain sets out on his quest after Michaelmas; the scorpion symbol in the *Merchant's Tale*; medieval ideas about Adam's place in Hell. Two of his papers, a note on the octet of "The Whynowes" and "Linguistic Geography and Words Ending in -i" (words like Missouri and Cincinnati), were reprinted in collections of essays.

He edited the medieval section for the Macmillan anthology of English Literature.

His life work, however, was the editing of Chaucer's minor poems, starting with his dissertation at the University of Virginia, *The Text of Chaucer's Truth, Lack of Stedfastnesse, and the Purse*. From the late forties through the sixties, he published a series of definitive textual studies of individual poems and manuscripts in *Studies in Bibliography, Spenserian, and Medieval Studies*. At a time when most Chaucer manuscripts are known and classified, he was still able to experience the thrill of discovery, both in finding an eighteenth-century transcript of the Chaucerian part of a manuscript destroyed in the Ashburnham House fire and in transcribing and classifying Chaucer's poems in the lost and recovered Coventry manuscript. When the *Variorum Chaucer* was planned, he was the obvious choice as editor of the minor poems. These
were to include all those Robinson assembled under the heading "Short Poems," and he later agreed to include *Anelida and Ariste* as well. The completion of texts for twenty-one poems—several of them hardly "short"—with a complete corpus of substantive variants and elaborated textual notes was a superb achievement. When the volume bulked large, it was agreed to divide the fascicle into two parts. Part I is to be published next spring. George Pace had the satisfaction of receiving high praise for Part I from the general editors and two readers. The textual work on Part II, comprising the *ABC* and the "complaints," is finished but requires some revisions in format and completion of the critical introductions and explanatory notes by Alfred David, who joined the edition in 1974.

Although his writings show him to have been an excellent literary critic, George Pace regarded himself primarily as a textual scholar and was reluctant to impose subjective editorial judgment on objective data and the unsuspecting reader. He knew well the difference between reading Chaucer in even the best manuscripts and reading him in a modern edition. The Variorum, therefore, proved the ideal vehicle for his editorial talents. He chose to leave his copy-text unpunctuated, except for such pointing as it contained, and unemended except for obvious errors. He felt that every manuscript and every variant, no matter how dubious its authority, was of potential value and should be preserved accurately for whatever truth it might reveal about the transmission of the text. Though he himself would never have expressed the matter so grandly, the truth, even the truth about the text of a short medieval poem, was scattered in a thousand pieces, and an editor, too, "imitating the careful search that his made for the mingled body of Osiris, went up and down gathering up limbs by limb."

Although he was intensely independent, George Pace's generosity of spirit and his belief in the cooperative nature of scholarship made him a perfect collaborator. Two of his most important articles were done with the distinguished British scholar and palaeographer, A. L. Doyle. He was pleased to share the edition of the minor poems with a younger scholar, and the collaboration of Pace and David, carried on chiefly through a lengthy correspondence over a five-year period, was a happy and fruitful experience for both editors. His high standards, the keenness of his interest, the openness about the work at hand, his helpfulness, courtesy, and delicacy, and, not least, his humor inspired first respect and then admiration, friendship, and love.

Another posthumous instance of George Pace's expertise and his encouragement of younger scholars is the discussion by him and Linda Voigt, "A Boece Fragment," that recently appeared in the first volume of *Studies in the Age of Chaucer*. Last August he identified a wrongly labelled binding fragment as surviving from a hitherto unknown manuscript containing both the Latin *Consolatio* of Boethius and Chaucer's *Boece*. That identification, which had been overlooked by a number of scholars, grew out of his knowledge of manuscripts and familiarity with the Chaucer canon, but it also reveals his unselfishness, for, although he had made the initial identification, he was reluctant to have his name appear as co-author of the paper.

That George Pace should have made that identification is also singularly appropriate because the fragment is one of the most important in a valuable seventeenth-century collection of 217 *membras disjecta* that the University of Missouri acquired in 1968 at his instigation and urging. Indeed, work has been underway since the fall of 1977 on a catalogue of University of Missouri Fragments Manuscripts. That catalogue was planned as a Festschrift marking the occasion of his sixty-fifth birthday in 1980; now it will be a memorial volume.

When George Pace insisted that the University of Missouri purchase this collection, he did so less because of the realization that the collection was more valuable than the seller or most buyers could have known than because he was a teacher and a scholar. He saw the value of the collection, illustrating eight centuries of European hands, decoration, and book production methods, as a teaching tool, and it was a teaching tool he used. His students—often undergraduates—who marched with him to the library to examine leaves and fragments learned much on those expeditions.

This commitment to his subject matter and to his students must be emphasized. He unfailingly returned examinations—with extensive comments—on the first class meeting following the examination. His students from thirty years of teaching treasure the memory of his classroom for what he taught and for the dedication with which he taught it. Many of them have gone on to become teachers and scholars in their own right. It was in recognition of his distinguished career as a teacher and scholar that the University of Missouri-Columbia appointed him
Catherine P. Middlebush Professor of English Literature, awarding him the first endowed chair in the department.

His colleagues also extolled his loyalty. He frequently went out of his way to assist other members of the English department, and he usually did so unannounced. He wrote unsolicited letters of support for junior faculty and never revealed that support to those colleagues. Although he refused to take advantage of his prestige in departmental meetings, he could, when principle or duty were involved, argue a point with passionate conviction. So free of ambition was he that he once turned down a lucrative offer from another university with the understanding, which he insisted be written into his contract, that as long as he stayed at Missouri he would never have to be chairman.

Few of those who knew George Pace as a scholar, teacher, or colleague knew of his personal life. He was, above all, deeply devoted to his wife, Dorothy, to his daughters, Carolice, Mary Douglas, and Gaye-Jean, and to his son, George, Jr. Although their love of one another was private, no one who had seen them for any period, particularly in the last months of his life, could fail to sense the strong affectionate ties among them. Other aspects of his personal life were important to him as well: his years as a naval intelligence officer in the South Pacific during World War II, and the satisfaction he took in his difficult teaching assignment as a Fulbright lecturer in Athens in 1957–58. Only after his death did some of us find out that he played the classical guitar with great skill, or that once at an art show in St. Louis two of his oils were accepted for display. He studied and restored oriental rugs and knew more about them than many local dealers. Of these things he never spoke.

The illness that shadowed his life for many years and to which he finally succumbed deserves mention because it is remarkable how little it allowed him to affect him and his work. He fought it by ignoring it as far as possible and spoke of it only when circumstances obliged him to do so. Last winter he refused to enter the hospital before sending off Part I of the Minor Poems. He taught his last semester while undergoing intensive therapy. Hospitalized again shortly before classes ended, he obtained leave to teach his last class from a wheel chair. He made out final grades the day before his death.

We cannot help regretting that George Pace will not see his edition in print, but our regret must be tempered by the knowledge that, although he did not disdain the pleasure and recognition that comes with publication, these things mattered less to him than they do to most scholars. What mattered was the inner knowledge of work well-done, and of that he had full measure.

He lived by the advice of Chaucer's most famous ballade, the poem that came first in his dissertation and that he placed first in the edition. If he largely avoided the crowd where scholars congregate, it was not simply from reserve or, in later years, from poor health, but it was because he valued other things more. He sought no favor from Lady Fame or Fortune but was guided by his own convictions. Thus he achieved a freedom in his life and work that exemplifies Chaucer's refrain: "And trope of schal deytere it is no deede."
A CALL FOR PROSPECTUSES

The Program Committee for THE NEW CHAUCER SOCIETY is now accepting prospectuses from members of the Society of papers which will be read at the second International Congress during April, 1979.

The prospectuses are limited to five hundred words (500) and must be on one of the following topics:

1. Chaucer and the Question of Genre
2. Social and Historical Perspectives in Chaucer

Prospectuses should be sent to:

The Program Committee
The New Chaucer Society
The University of Oklahoma
760 Van Vleet Oval, Rm 219
Norman, Oklahoma 73019

NOTIFICATION WILL BE SENT ON 1 NOVEMBER 1979 TO THOSE WHOSE PROSPECTUSES HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED. THE MODERATOR OF THE PANEL WILL THEN GET IN TOUCH WITH THE PARTICIPANTS.
Companion to Chaucer Studies
Revised Edition
Edited by BERYL ROWLAND, York University, Toronto. Now in a revised edition, this collection of twenty-two essays is essential reading for every student of Chaucer's poetry. The contributions, which were written especially for this volume, represent some of the most distinguished Chaucerian scholarship of our time. Perceptive and lively, the studies explain the most significant aspects of Chaucerian scholarship, discuss the critical principles on which they are based, and provide sound, modern interpretations of the poetry. The second edition brings all the articles and bibliographies up to date and includes two essays that are new: one on the Legend of Good Women and one on Chaucer, the church, and religion. A convenient index is also new to this edition.
1979 464 pp. paper $5.95

A Chaucer Glossary
NORMAN DAVIS, DOUGLAS GRAY, PATRICIA INGHAM, and ANN WALLACE-HADRILL, all of the University of Oxford. A valuable companion to any of the widely-read editions of Chaucer, this glossary explains the meanings of words and phrases in the poet's works which are used in ways unfamiliar in modern English, and gives references to particular examples. It also illustrates Chaucer's use of many expressions not necessarily unfamiliar, but characteristic of his language. The glossary covers all the works generally accepted as Chaucer's and the doubtfully ascribed short poems.
1979 228 pp. cloth $19.50 paper $9.95

Chaucer Sources and Backgrounds
Edited by ROBERT P. MILLER, Queens College, City University of New York. One of the most comprehensive collections of primary source material available for the study of Chaucer's works, this volume offers selections drawn from works which Chaucer is known to have used, as well as works representing significant medieval attitudes. "A splendidly varied collection of documents and extracts...usefully annotated and cross-referenced to the works of Chaucer...a very useful and informative book...."
- The New York Review of Books
1977 528 pp.; 17 illus. cloth $15.95 paper $7.95

Prices and publication dates are subject to change.

Oxford University Press 200 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10003
"Medieval Literature and Contemporary Theory"

The most comprehensive collection of essays dealing with medieval literature and contemporary theory ever published.

Hans Robert Jauss, "The Alterity and Modernity of Medieval Literature"
Paul Zumthor, "From History to Poem, or the Paths of Pun: The Grands Rhétoires of Fifteenth-Century France"
Rainer Warning, "Notes on the Alterity of Religious Drama"
Eugene Vance, "Mervolous Signals: Poetics, Sign-Theory, and Politics in Chaucer's Troilus"
Maria Corti, "Models and Antimodels in Medieval Culture"
Paul Zumthor, "Comments on H. R. Jauss's Article"
Eugene Vance, "A Coda: Modern Medievalism and the Understanding of Understanding"
John A. Burrow, "The Alterity of Medieval Literature"
Brian Stock, "Antiqui or Moderni?"
Daniel Poirion, "Literary Meaning in the Middle Ages: From a Sociology of Genres to an Anthropology of Works"
Morton Bloomfield, "Commentary"

Special Issue: Volume X, No. 2, Winter 1979

The Johns Hopkins University Press
Baltimore, Maryland 21218, U. S. A.

NEW LITERARY HISTORY

Please send me ______ copy(s) of the "Medieval Literature and Contemporary Theory" issue @ $5.00 each (U.S.), $5.50 (elsewhere).

Subscriptions (3 issues per year) are available at a substantial savings from the single issue rate. Please enter my subscription to begin with the "Medieval Literature and Contemporary Theory" issue, Vol. X, No. 2:

☐ 1 year, $11.00    ☐ 2 years, $20.00    ☐ 3 years, $30.00
(outside the U.S. add $2.55 per year for postage)

Name ____________________________________________
Street __________________________________________
City _______ State ____________
Country ___________ Zipcode ________

_______ Amount enclosed (bank draft, check, or international money order payable in U.S. dollars).

☐ Please send a proforma invoice. I understand that prepayment is required before shipment.
In a later edition, the inaugural volume of THE VARIORUM EDITION OF THE WORKS OF GEOFFREY CHAUCER: A FACSIMILE OF THE HENGWRT MANUSCRIPT OF THE CANTERBURY TALES, with transcription and running comparison with the readings of the Ellesmere manuscript. This facsimile, on which the text of all subsequent fascicles dealing with THE CANTERBURY TALES will be based, is presented with the permission of the National Library of Wales. 1100 pages, 8 1/4 x 11 1/2, $100.00.

The Commentary fascicles are now in the process of production, the first of which, A COMMENTARY ON THE MINOR POEMS OF GEOFFREY CHAUCER, by George Pace and Alfred David, 2 vols., will soon be available. 8 1/4 x 11 1/2. $20.00 (tentative) per volume.

80% DISCOUNT COUPON OFFER

Yes! I want THE CHAUCER VARIORUM. I understand not all volumes have been released at this time.

I am ordering ________ copies of THE FACSIMILE (THE CANTERBURY TALES-154300) at $100.00, less my 80% discount.

Please contact me as each volume of THE COMMENTARY becomes available.

Please do not contact me as each volume of THE COMMENTARY becomes available.

NAME: ____________________________

ADDRESS: ____________________________

I am enclosing a check or money order ________

Please charge to my ________ BankAmericard/Visa

Master Charge Card # ____________

Exp Date ____________ Issue Bank # ____________

Please include $1.00 for postage.

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA PRESS
1005 ASP AVE
NORMAN, OK 73019